

The Natural Parks Network

Ensuring the territorial and environmental balance of the 100 municipalities within its geographical scope.

Barcelona Provincial Council's Natural Parks Network consists of 12 protected natural areas of significant scenic, ecological and cultural value.

It is comprised of 102,587 ha, spread out across 100 municipalities. These municipalities represent 22% of Barcelona province's territory and are home to 70% of the population of Catalonia.

The planning and management of the natural and agricultural areas is conducted through special plans drawn up with the participation of all the parties involved.

The Network protects the natural, agricultural, forestry, cultural and scenic values of each park.

It works towards achieving a balance between the preservation of the parks and the economic development of the area.

It also promotes environmental education and the public use of natural and cultural heritage.

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© Font de Planeses (c. 1925). Photo loaned to the Montesquiu Historical Archive by Nativitat Muñoz García

Landscape and history linked to the River Ter

The Park is located on the geographical boundary that separates the regions of Osona and Ripollès, in the so-called sub-region of Bisaura.

The 547-hectare area of the Ter is divided into two parts, a larger area on the left bank and another smaller area with a more gentle relief on the right bank.

Located between the municipalities of Montesquiu, Sant Quirze de Besora, Santa Maria de Besora, Sora and Vidrà, Castell de Montesquiu Park stands out for its dense forests of oak, beech and red pine crossed longitudinally by the meandering river.

The Park, as a transitional area between mountains and plains, is part of the Milany-Santa Magdalena and Puigsacalm-Bellmunt mountain ranges and houses places of great beauty. Its historical references date back to the Middle Ages, when Montesquiu Castle was built, an imposing fortified house dating back to the 10th century, now reconverted into a cultural facility and resource centre.

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App des Parks

Parks of Catalonia

Barcelona Provincial Council's Natural Park Network

Castell de Montesquiu Park, Les Guilleries-Savassona Natural Area, El Montseny Natural Park, Sant Llorenç del Munt i l'Obac Natural Park, El Montnegre i el Corredor Park, Serralada Litoral Park, Serralada de Marina Park, Serra de Collserola Natural Park, El Baix Llobregat Agrarian Park, El Garraf Park, Olèrdola Park and El Foix Park.



Diputació Barcelona | Àrea de Territori i Sostenibilitat

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Press and Communication Office. DL B 80726-2018

Parc del Castell de Montesquiu

English



Diputació Barcelona

Xarxa de Parcs Naturals

#DibaOberta

Forests, meadows, river banks and crops

The east-west mountain ranges of the eastern Pre-Pyrenees determine the Park's landscape.

The River Ter and the imprint of its inhabitants have shaped a diverse region that combines four main biogeographic units.

Sunny areas and plains feature dense black oak forests, although there are also shady areas where red pine and groups of beech, lime and box trees predominate. The meadows extend over the clearings and sunny areas; the best known of these being the meadows of rush-leaved daffodils. The riverside vegetation, spread out on narrow strips next to watercourses, is made up of elms, poplars, willows, alders and plane trees and has a remarkable diversity of fauna. Fodder and cereals are grown on the land surrounding the farms.

A wide variety of fauna finds refuge in the Park: otters, pine martens and stone martens, wild cats, badgers and foxes, along with roe deer, wild boars, squirrels and birds of prey such as the booted eagle.



© Kim Castells



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An area used by many people, an area of great beauty

The Park has been the site of human settlement since ancient times.

The most important architectural examples date back to the Early Middle Ages. These include the castle, numerous farmhouses and related structures called badius or sheds.

Montesquiu Castle is the most outstanding architectural example in the Park. Along with Besora Castle, now in ruins, and Saderra Castle, it was part of the necessary defensive structure at this crossroads. Examples of medieval buildings in the Park include the small church of Sant Moí, the bridge of Les Codines, the remains of the Llaés path and the evidence of primitive *strāta*.

Farmhouses such as Les Codines, Les Planeses, Sant Moí and the Masoveria del Castell are most likely of medieval origin too, although they underwent major transformations during the 18th century; and La Casanova and La Solana, rebuilt again in the 20th century. It is worth mentioning the *badius* or sheds; related structures characterized by a large semicircular arch at the front.

The environment and life

The Park is also a productive landscape in which agricultural and livestock activities are combined with forestry.

Part of the population in the area works on farms, which are often family-owned, with meadows for livestock.

The animals in the Castell de Montesquiu Park are mainly cows and horses, feeding on the meadows, crops and grass and stubble areas. This helps to keep the undergrowth in good condition. Fodder is produced on the agricultural land and then fed to animals on livestock farms to supplement their diet throughout the year. Another focus of economic activity in the Park is the forests, which are widespread throughout the region, and from which various types of wood and firewood are obtained.

This coexistence of economic activities over the centuries has resulted in the formation of a mosaic landscape in which land for pasture is interspersed with forests.

Make the most of it

This will be easy to do, whether you choose a spontaneous walk or a full programme of scheduled activities.

The Park offers you facilities and programmes that will allow you to get to know it better and enjoy everything you can do in it.

Castell de Montesquiu Park has an information point and a resource centre located in the castle, a programme of guided routes and several sign-posted routes, such as those exploring the Bufadors mountain range, the shaded and sunny sides of Les Codines or the sunny side linking Montesquiu Castle with Besora Castle or the Tres Pals hill. There is also a recreation area, a youth camp, educational and cultural facilities, audiovisual materials, permanent exhibitions, the Cabanya del Castell (which houses temporary exhibitions) and informative publications.

Activity programmes, guided tours and environmental education workshops are organised throughout the year, as well as recreational and cultural programmes such as *Viu el parc* (Experience the park) with the *Ral-li fotogràfic* (photo rally) and the *Coneguem els nostres parcs* (Let's get to know our parks) school programme; a whole range of proposals to discover and enjoy the natural environment, always in a respectful way.

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1 Montesquiu Castle

Stately and imposing, it is the most outstanding building in the Park.



COMMENTS:
In 1976, the castle and the estate were given by their last owner, Emili Juncadella, to Barcelona Provincial Council, which has restored it.

This large medieval building, linked to Besora Castle, has its origins in a tower or watchtower probably built between the 10th and 11th centuries. It now houses an information point, an exhibition and a resource centre, where visits, educational activities and workshops take place.

2 Montesquiu Castle gardens

Here you will find a scale model of the solar system.



COMMENTS:
The gardens are made up of a coniferous area in the lower part and a typical garden area near the building.

The gardens conceal a surprise. If you take a walk, you will find a model of the solar system in front of the Cabanya del Castell that is 550 million times smaller than the real thing. The size and colour, angle of the rotation axis, mass and volume and distance to the Sun of each planet is shown.

3 Cabanya del Castell

This old rural building is used as an exhibition hall.



COMMENTS:
The exhibitions have a multidisciplinary purpose and combine painting, sculpture and photography, among other artistic disciplines.

The role of the Cabanya del Castell, an independent building located next to the castle, was to gather and house crops and animals. Temporary exhibitions have been organized since 2003 to allow local artists and those from elsewhere to exhibit their work.

4 Les Codines bridge

This landscape, beautiful in its simplicity, has been the favourite of many painters.



COMMENTS:
The name of the bridge is believed to be related to the stones and is derived from the Latin term *cotulu*, short for *cote* (stone).

This medieval Romanesque-style bridge is located 2 km from the town of Montesquiu and was part of the old royal road that linked Osona and El Ripollès. Built of stone, it has a single arch without any railings and a slight double slope. It is about five metres long by two metres wide.

5 Sant Moi Hermitage

It stands next to the farmhouse of the same name, at Santa Maria de Besora.



COMMENTS:
Joan Amades refers to the tradition according to which Sant Moi lived in solitude in the small church and produced hand-made clogs for walkers.

This beautiful church, probably built in the 10th century, is an example of a pre-Romanesque (or very early Romanesque) building and consists of a small rectangular space, covered with a wooden structure, and a very slanted semicircular apse. The quickest way to get there is through the Farga de Bebié.

7 Besora Castle

Its history is linked to that of Montesquiu Castle.



COMMENTS:
The sign-posted route that joins the two castles passes through places of great beauty and with spectacular views such as the Revell plain and the small hill of La Mongia.

The remains of this castle and the Romanesque church of Santa Maria are perched at a height of about 1025 m. The area, declared to be Heritage of National Interest in the Historical Monument category, is worth a visit due to its architectural, historical and geographical value.

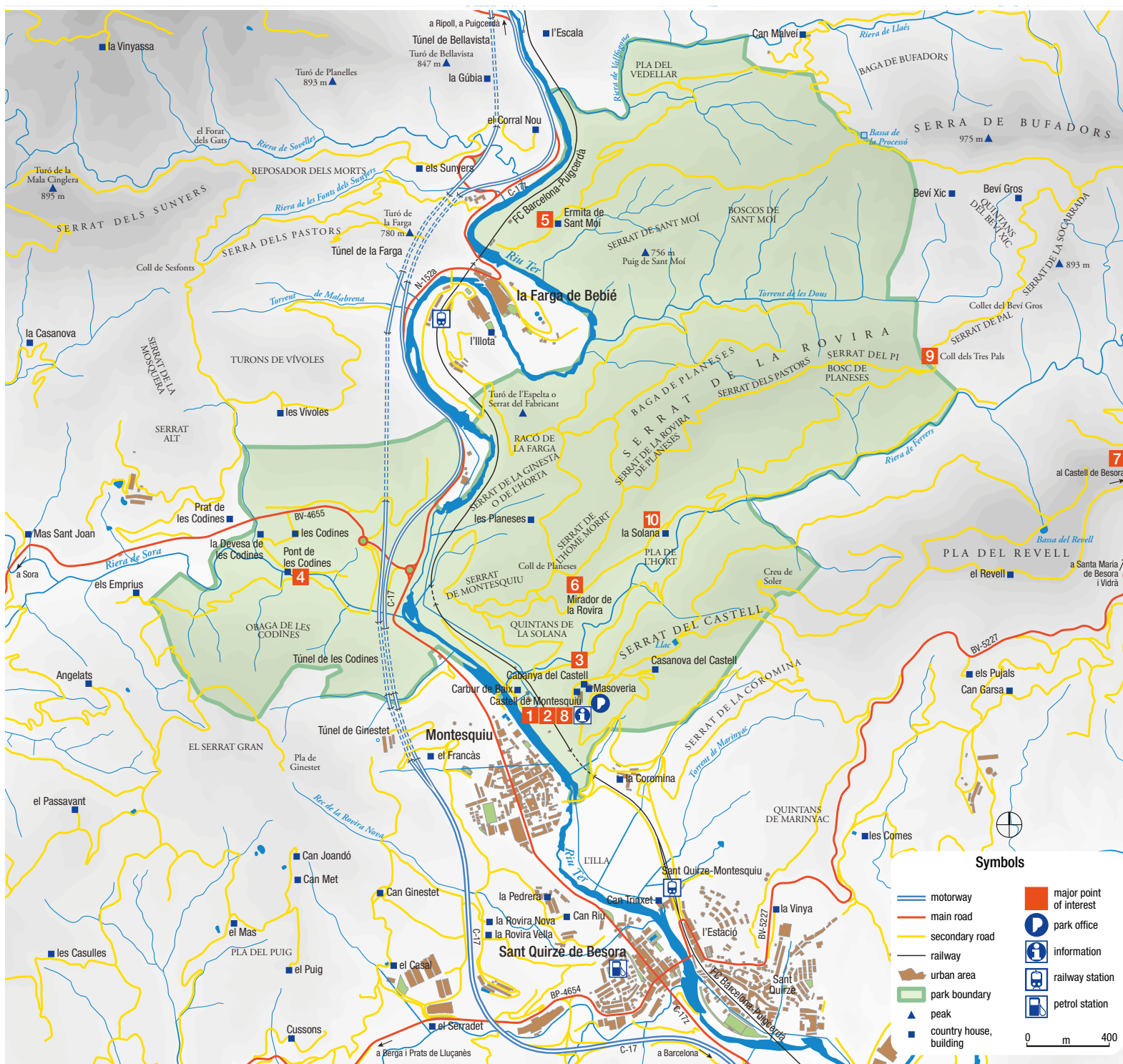
9 Tres Pals hill

One of the highest points of the Park.



COMMENTS:
From the north face you can see Puigmal and the Bufadors mountain range and, to the south, the Revell plain and Besora Castle separated by the Mongia hill.

From Montesquiu Castle, you can walk up the sign-posted route that leaves the car park, goes down to the Solana stream and then up the track that goes round the hill of La Rovira. You pass through oak and red pine forests and can enjoy some magnificent views once you get to the top.



10 La Solana Forestry Development Centre

The Park cannot be understood without the richness of its forest mosaic.



COMMENTS:
Professionals from the forestry industry and those in charge of managing the natural area have been trained here for more than a decade.

Whether it's Central European deciduous forests with pubescent oak or beech, or the Mediterranean incursion of mountain holm oaks, the forest will accompany you during your visit. As an unmistakable sign of this prominence, the Park is home to La Solana Forestry Development Centre.

Access

BY ROAD

C-17 (Barcelona - Vic - Ripoll Motorway)

BY RAIL

Renfe. Tel. +34 902 240 202
R3 line (L'Hospitalet de Llobregat - Puigcerdà via Vic). Get off at Sant Quirze de Besora.

BY BUS

Sagalés. Tel. +34 902 130 014
Torelló - La Mambra - Montesquiu line. TEISA. Tel. +34 972 204 868
Camprodon - Barcelona line. Get off at Montesquiu.

www.mobilitat.gencat.cat

Facilities

PARK OFFICE

Masoveria del Castell
08585 Montesquiu
Tel. +34 934 727 600 and +34 938 529 234
Email: p.montesquiu@diba.cat

INFORMATION POINTS

Montesquiu Castle Information Point
Tel. +34 934 727 600 and +34 938 529 234

OTHER FACILITIES

Montesquiu Castle
Tel. +34 938 550 522
Montesquiu Castle resource centre
Tel. +34 938 529 234 and +34 934 727 600
Cabanya del Castell
A few metres from Montesquiu Castle.

Castell Xic spring recreation area
A few metres from the Masoveria del Castell.

Devesa de les Codines youth camp
Les Codines farm
Road BV-4655 Montesquiu to Sora, km 1
Tel. +34 934 727 600

Les Codines nature school
Road BV-4655 to Sora (Montesquiu)
Tel. +34 934 744 678

La Solana. Forestry Development Centre
Castell de Montesquiu Park
Tel. +34 938 592 226

Casanova del Castell restaurant
Montesquiu
Tel. +34 938 529 022

You can consult the Park's opening hours and facilities at:
parcs.diba.cat/web/montesquiu

6 La Rovira viewpoint

The Bellmunt and Montseny mountains are a natural balcony overlooking the castle.



COMMENTS:
On cloudless days you can see the Matagalls mountain, Les Agudes, the Turó de l'Home, Montesquiu and Sant Quirze de Besora, the Bellmunt mountain range, the Salt de la Minyona, and so on.

From this privileged natural observatory, located in Montesquiu, you can see forests made up of red pine and oak in the sunny areas and magnificent beech forests in the shady areas. The shady area of the Revell stands out, stretching from Montesquiu Castle to Besora Castle.

8 Castell Xic spring recreation area

A cool, quiet corner where you can rest and eat something.



COMMENTS:
There are wooden tables and chairs, drinking water, toilets and a rubbish collection system that will allow you to have a pleasant time in comfort.

Located a few metres from the castle and the Masoveria del Castell (where the Park Office is located), this leisure and picnic area is the perfect place to stop and recharge your batteries before continuing your visit. It can accommodate up to 24 people at three tables.