

fact sheet

Name
ORDESA Y MONTE PERDIDO
Conservation status
Parque Nacional
Autonomous Community
Aragón
Province Area
Huesca
Superficie
15.608 hectares
Longitude **0° 1' 48" E**
Latitude **42° 38' 28" N**
Established on
August 16, 1918
Date of reclassification
July 13, 1982

addresses

ORDESA Y MONTE PERDIDO NATIONAL PARK
22006 Huesca

Tel. 974 24 33 61 Fax: 974 24 27 25
e-mail: ordesa@aragon.es

Góriz mountain hut
Open year-round. Tel. 974 34 12 01

Pineta mountain hut
Tel. 974 50 12 03

PNOMP information:

Torla: 974 486 472
Escalona: 974 505 131
Bielsa: 974 501 043

Online: www.reddeparquesnacionales.mma.es
www.aragon.es/ordesa

listed as

-  European Diploma for Protected Areas
-  Natura 2000 Network SPA and SCI
-  UNESCO World Heritage Site
-  UNESCO Global Geopark
-  UNESCO Biosphere Reserve

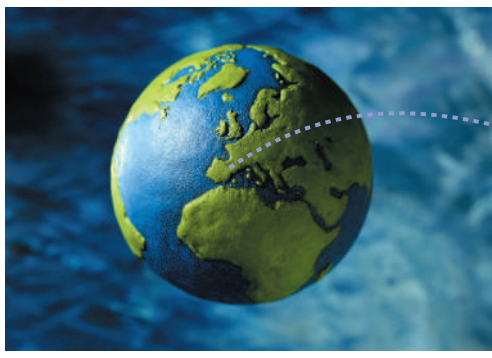


ORDESA Y MONTE PERDIDO
PARQUE NACIONAL

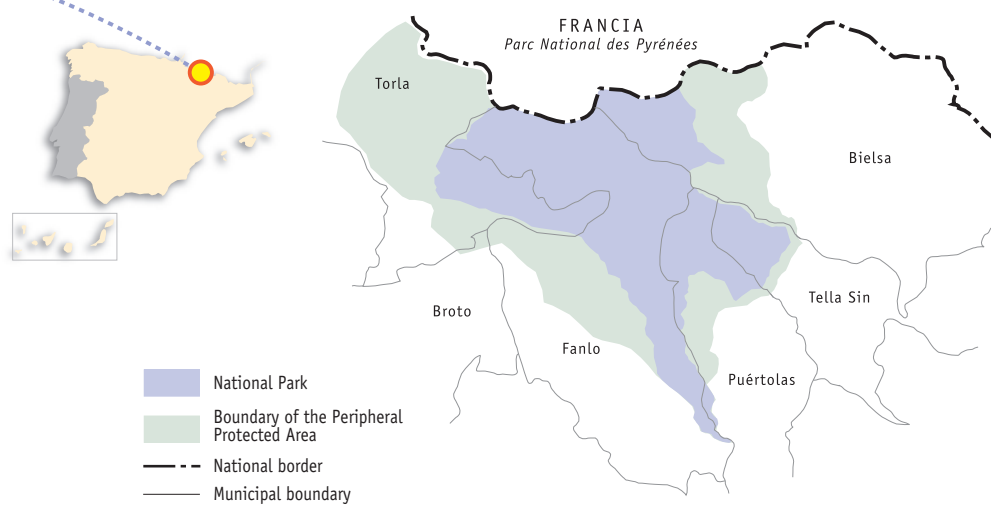


GOBIERNO DE ARAGON

Pineta Valley and cirque in winter.



The Ordesa y Monte Perdido National Park belongs to the Spanish National Park Network. It also belongs to the "Ordesa-Viña-Mala" Biosphere Reserve and, together with the glacial cirques in the Pyrénées National Park (France), has been declared the "Pyrenees-Monte Perdido" World Heritage Site by the UNESCO "Sobrarbe-Pyrenees". The park's territory includes the municipalities of Torla, Broto, Fanlo, Tella-Sin, Puértolas, and Bielsa.



The National Park. One of the most stunning geographical areas in the world. Monte Perdido dominates the landscape; the summit (3,348 m) is the highest limestone mountain in Western Europe, and the massif includes the Las Tres Sororas or Treserols peaks: Monte Perdido, Cilindro, and Pico de Aníscolo (also known as the Soum de Ramond) from which the arms of the Ordesa, Aníscolo, Escuin and Pineta valleys extend, carved out by the Arazas, Bellós, Yaga and Cinca rivers, respectively. The region's complex geological and morphological history, together with a singular climate, have resulted in a high peaks and steep slopes. The landscape is one of great contrasts. At higher elevations the mountains are covered by a layer of limestone karst, where water from rain and snowmelt seeps beneath the ground through cracks and fissures. And water is always a presence in the valleys, rushing over waterfalls and through ravines covered in lush vegetation. The wide variety of landscapes and natural environments has been extolled over the years by the likes of Louis Ramond de Carbonnières, Soler i Santaló, Lucien Briet, Ricardo del Arco, Lucas Mallada, Franz Schrader, and many others.

Main ecosystems

Forests and meadows. High mountains, with a geomorphology created by water and glaciers.

"The country of the Aníscolo and Arazas canyons is full of incomparable landscapes and displays, better than many others, the continuous interaction of the weather, the terrain, and the vegetation. It reveals certain traces of the weather in the past, but a regional weather quite different from that on the French side. A land that demands our attention by the magnitude of the natural forces that shape the face of the Earth".

The Ordesa Valley is home to thick forests of beech, pine, and silver fir, which flatten out and widen to cover several hundred meters across the valley, giving rise to the region's nickname as the "Paradise of the Pyrenees". Even the most seasoned nature lovers are awestruck before the singular beauty of the Cotatuero cirque and its waterfall. The river meanders gently through the lush forests, watering meadows full of flowers; and through a wide channel, between Tobacor and Mondarugo, it flows to the right of the Cotatuero waterfall, the end of a stream at the foot of the Brecha (Breach) and Falsa Brecha (False Breach), crossing an extensive plain, perhaps the highest meadows in the Pyrenees.



«Autour des cañons de Nisicle et d'Arazas», 1934 Pierre Chouard

legislation

The Ordesa Valley was declared a National Park by Spanish Royal Decree on August 16, 1918. It was later reclassified under law 52/1982 of 13 July, and was renamed the Ordesa y Monte Perdido National Park, expanding the total area from 2,100 to 15,696 hectares.

humans and their influence on the Park and its environment



Villages like Bestué are beautiful examples of humanized landscape.

Memorial stele dedicated to Luciano Briet, poet, writer, photographer, and Ordesa Valley pioneer.



Cultural aspects. The National Park is surrounded by a "humanized Pyrenean landscape". The villages emerge as a challenge to the forces of nature around them. The houses are built in typical Alto Aragón style, with a roof of sandstone slabs, stone walls, cone-shaped chimneys crowned by a stone known as the "espantabrujas" ("witch-scarer"), and traditional kitchens with wooden chairs and benches around a central fire. Human forces have shaped the landscape, creating terraces known as "fajas" on the slopes of the valley to grow and harvest grains and grass, small dams to harness the force of the water, and "mallatas" (pens) where shepherds and their flocks can find shelter at night. The locals have managed to organize the land in balance with the natural environment: town associations, regulations, grazing systems, treaties and agreements on using ancestral mountain pastures and passes, hunting methods... the local wildlife depends on how well humans take care of the environment. The villages and people of the Sobrarbe have maintained many traditional customs, working and living in harmony with the space around them.



Traditional architecture in the village of Vió.

Festividades. Several religious pilgrimages take place during the summer and early fall, along with the region's numerous festivals that preserve ancient traditions and form an important part of the region's annual calendar. Pilgrimages as unique as the one to the San Urbez shrine, livestock shows, traditional town and village festivals and celebrations like the colorful carnivals, with the one in Bielsa the biggest and most popular, give locals the chance to forget about work, far-away family members, the cold winter mornings, and the silence of these mountains.

local flora and fauna

Flora. The National Park is home to a rich range of plants, including over 1,500 native Pyrenean species. The Ordesa y Monte Perdido National park is like an expansive high-mountain botanical garden, where common (although no less beautiful) species live side by side with other endemic species unique to these mountains, such as the Pyrenean honeysuckle and the Pyrenean violet, a species that can be traced back to the region's tropical past and which thrives in moist limestone cracks. A countless variety of species grow in every corner of the Park, from the high peaks to between the crevices of rocks and the shade of the beech trees. These plants bloom during spring, when warm weather and snowmelt create the perfect conditions. Primroses, gentians, lilies, hen and chicks, rockfoils, cinquefoils, and mountain colchicums are some of the Park's most unique species. The valley floors are generally lined by forests. The beech, white spruce, and Scots pine are the dominant species, and their distribution depends on the orientation and characteristics of each valley. A riparian zone, lush with water-loving vegetation, lines the river banks with willows, birches, ashes, etc. In the Aníscolo Canyon, oaks and beeches exchange "their natural ground" due to temperature inversion, while Scots pine is again growing on exploited land in the Escuin Valley, and black pine does everything it can to survive at the edge of the tree line. The high-mountain pastures and passes are home to the greatest biodiversity in the Park, places where shepherds and their flocks have lived in balance with this crucial natural resource for centuries.

Fauna. The Park is home to an extensive range of Pyrenees animal species, particularly those that live in alpine and subalpine high-mountain habitats. A total of seven species of amphibians, eight reptiles, four fish, at least eighty breeding birds and over fifty mammals have been cataloged to date. The park has several breeding pairs of bearded vulture, a predatory scavenger under threat of extinction. The golden eagle, yellow-billed chough, and griffon vulture are birds that live in rocky mountain habitats in constant battle with the heights. The frigid waters of the rivers and ravines are home to abundant trout and the endemic Pyrenean newt. The Pyrenean frog was identified as a new species near the park in 1992. Marmots and herds of Pyrenean chamois are mammals often spotted in the high subalpine meadows. In the higher areas bird species including the snowfinch, the wallcreeper, and the alpine ptarmigan manage to withstand the difficult conditions of their forest habitat.



The Barranco de la Pardina, in the Aníscolo Canyon.

- FLORA**
- 1 Edelweiss
 - 2 Pyrenean violet
 - 3 Scots Pine
 - 4 Black pine
 - 5 Rhododendron
 - 6 Beech
 - 7 Pyrenean columbine



- FAUNA**
- 8 Bearded vulture
 - 9 Yellow-billed chough
 - 10 Pyrenean chamois
 - 11 Wallcreeper
 - 12 Rock ptarmigan
 - 13 Marmot
 - 14 Pyrenean newt



Flowering scorpion plants provide an extra burst of color to the Park's landscape in spring.



The Arazas River at the bottom of Ordesa Canyon, carved by glaciers.



The Cola de Caballo waterfall is one of the Park's most popular spots.

Forests cover 20% of the Park's terrain.

Visitor Centers and Information Points



Pyrenean chamois (*Rupicapra rupicapra pyrenaica*)



Sunset in the Ordesa Valley in early fall



Pyrenean violet (*Ramonda myconi*)



Head of the Añisclo Canyon in early spring



North face of Monte Perdido. Marboré glacial lake and glacier

General Information. The National Park can be reached through the towns of Torla (Ordesa), Escalona and Fanlo (Añisclo), Escuin and Tella-Revilla (Escuin), and Bielsa (Pineta). The National Park is open yearround and entry is free. A wide range of accommodation options (hotels, cottages, campsites, and hostels) are located near the Park.

Visitor Centers and Information Points. The Park has a main Visitor Center in the village of Torla and a sensorium for the physically handicapped, "Casa Oliván", located in the Ordesa Valley a kilometer before the La Pradera parking lot. Tour reservations, tel. 974 48 64 72. The Escuin area has a Visitor Center in Tella. There are additional information points in Escalona (tel. 974 50 51 31), Bielsa (tel. 974 50 10 43), Escuin, Pineda and La Pradera de Ordesa. Admission to the Visitor Centers is free of charge.

Routes
Trails. The Park has a network of hiking trails. These trails are properly marked, except in certain sections at higher elevations. There are forest trails that are restricted from use both in and surrounding the Park.

Hikes. Please contact local specialized companies to arrange a guided hike or ascent.
Public transport to the Ordesa Valley. Access to the Ordesa Valley in private vehicle is prohibited during the summer months and Easter week. A public bus service will provide transportation to the Park during these times. There is a parking for buses and cars in Torla. An alternative pedestrian entrance is the Turieto Bajo path.

Other seasonal limitations. The traffic on the HU-631 road through the Añisclo Canyon from Fuente de la Salud in Puyarruego to San Úrbez is one-way and uphill during peak visiting times (summer and Easter week). For more information, tel. 974 48 64 72 and 974 50 51 31.

tips and safety

Warning: caution! You are in a **high-mountain** landscape. At times, this stunning region can pose a number of different risks. The **weather** in mountain ranges like the Pyrenees is unpredictable and can change very quickly. **Violent storms** can be accompanied by lightning, hail, and heavy rain that can flood rivers and waterways. **Steep** slopes can make even a short hike more difficult and tiring. The accumulation of **snow** and **ice** in many areas of the massif of Monte Perdido can cause avalanches (landslides) or slippery and unstable conditions. Use suitable mountain equipment and remember to bring enough food, water, and warm clothing. **Fog** can make it easy to get lost on unfamiliar terrain. Do not leave the trails, or hike at night. There are **steep areas** and **high cliffs** that pose a risk of fall as well as falling rocks and boulders. These mountains are extensive and wild and have nothing in common with urban areas: before visiting the National Park, we recommend you read about the area in **guidebooks** and check detailed **maps** of the area. Go to the Park's **Visitor Centers** and **Information offices** and ask Park staff for tips and information about how to get around the Park and safely discover this protected natural space. Stay on the Park's paths and trails.

don't miss

- ▶ The grandeur of the Ordesa Valley, naturally carved from sedimentary rock to create unique contours and shapes.
- ▶ The deep cleft called the Añisclo Canyon is carved out of steep high-mountain meadows.
- ▶ The stunning Escuin Valley. The sunniest area of the park features limestone karst, cirques, ravines, and gorges.
- ▶ The Pineta cirque, roughly twelve kilometers from the valley of the same name, with its large rushing waterfall.
- ▶ Roland's Breach at 2,880 m. is a legendary spot, a natural gap that connects the Park with the Pyrénées National Park in France.
- ▶ The ascent to Monte Perdido should always be attempted with caution.

It is important to remember that the follow is prohibited inside the Park:

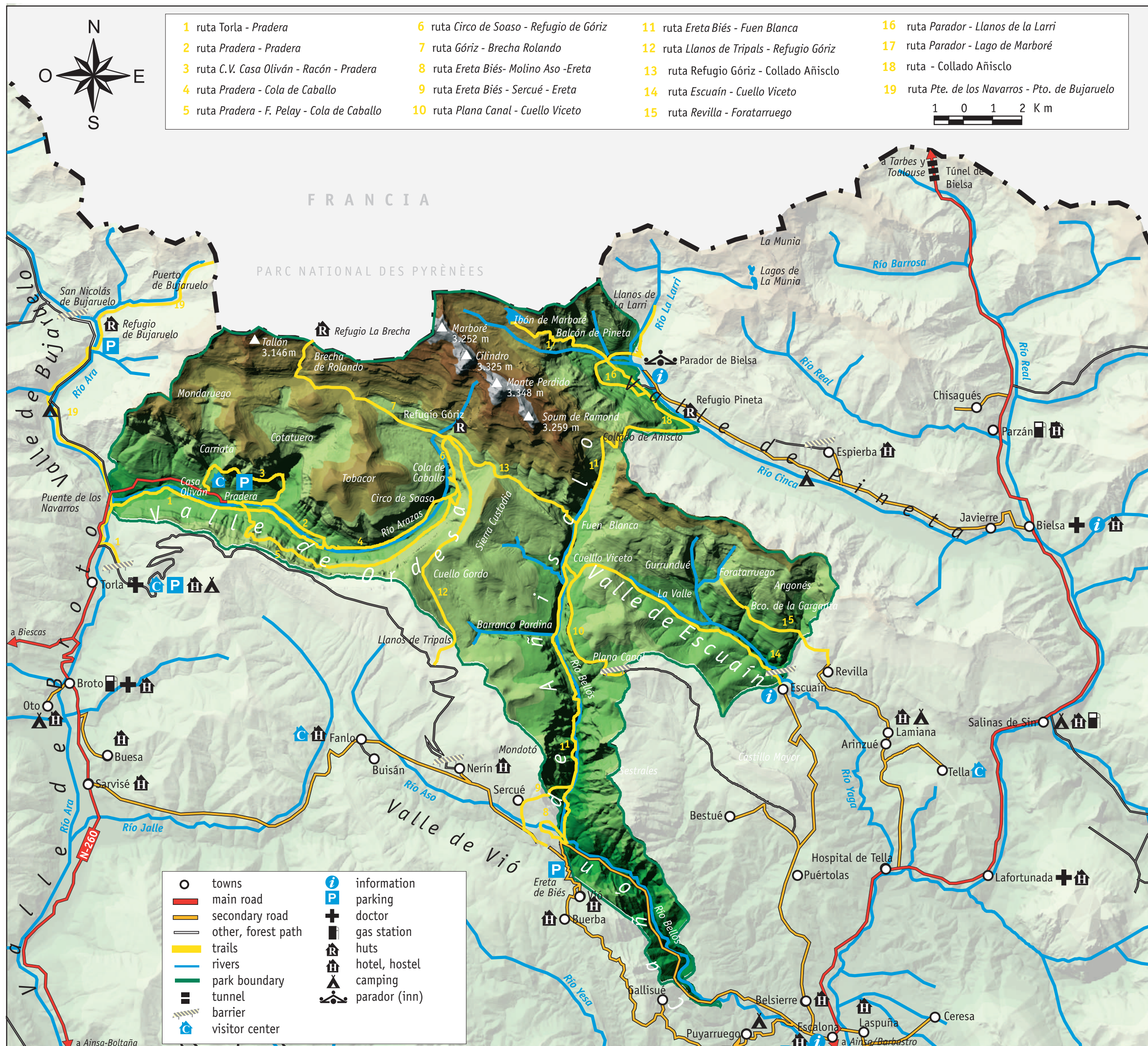


* Bivouacking or camping at night, with or without a tent, is permitted at the following elevations:
- Ordesa area: 2,500 m. When the Góriz hut is complete, bivouacking and camping at night for a maximum of 50 people in the area adjacent to the hut will be permitted. Once the Góriz and La Brecha (France) huts are renovated, bivouacking and camping at night shall be prohibited at any elevation, except for a maximum of 50 people in the Góriz. "Area or Wild to Moderate Use" if the huts are at capacity.
- Añisclo area: 1,650 m. (Fuenblanca) - Escuin area: 1,800 m. (La Balla) - Pineta area: 2,550 m. (above the Balcón de Pineta)

map of the Ordesa y Monte Perdido National Park



Although your safety is our concern, it is ultimately your responsibility.



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Ask the staff at the Park information offices and points for more information on trails

