

Centro Budista O-Sel-Ling

Start: Capileira

Distance: 14 km

Walking time: 4 ½ - 5hs

The Retreat Centre, high on the slopes of the Atalaya on the western side of the Poqueira valley, was opened in 1981 by the Dalai Lama, who named it "O-Sel-Ling", meaning "Place of Clear Light". It consists of a group of small stone-built dwellings known as "cuevas", a temple (Gompa), a library, a traditional Stupa and a magnificent Prayer Wheel. The Centre is open for visits daily between 15:00 and 18:00 hs, although walkers are usually permitted outside these times. Please note, however, that the land is privately-owned and it would, therefore, be courteous (if possible) to ask permission.

The Walk commence down the Camino de las Higuerrillas, which starts from the bottom of the village. From the hotel go down to the church and continue down until reach "Fuente de Ramón Torres". Turn right and next street left in order to continue going down. You will pass "Fuente Hondera" where the street will start curving. When the street dies turn left, you should be in Tajo Street, "Calle el Tajo", that dies in "Camino de las Higuerrillas".

The path is quite clear (though possibly wet in places after a rainy day) but in about 10-15 minutes be careful to follow this round to the right. The path passes in front of the Cortijo de la Higuerrilla and then zig-zags down and joins the Bubión path. Turn right and follow this down to Puente del Molino.

Cross the bridge, continue up the gully and at the top keep left. A little further on, where the path forks, either way can be taken but if you keep straight on (right) you will avoid some unnecessary climbing. The path alternately climbs and contours – steep and stony in places but quite clear. After crossing three gullies it leads through woods and into a meadow, with a marker post at the far end. Ignore this and turn right, passing in front of a large, ruined cortijo (Cortijo de Haza Polvo). Go around the end of this and turn right along and old, overgrown *carril*.

Turn left and follow the track for about 8-10 minutes, when you will come to a 5-way junction, with a *cortijo* on the left. Keep straight on, and straight on again (uphill) where the track swings down left (to *cortijos*). Continue until you come to a faded Sierra Nevada signboard, then fork back right along the track to O-Sel-Ling (signed). A steady climb of about 20 minutes will take you up to the Buddhist centre entrance.

Go up to La Atalaya (see reverse). From here you can return to Capileira following the Sulayr trail that appears a little further in Loma de la Matanza, where you will find a firebreak to follow 300 meters until an intersection. Continue by the trail going to Poqueira valley, after 100 meters you should reach Piuca forest path. Take this wide path to the right which descends for approximately 2 km, crossing Acequia Nueva and winding down until we reach a fork in the path. At the fork go left, avoiding the path to the right which descends several kilometers and links to Puente Palo trail. Go up the trail for 800 m and take the trail to the right just after crossing Barranco de Rosas. Begin the descent to the Río Poqueira trekking. Cross Haza Redonda Gully and descent to a trail crossing. Avoid the path to the right and take the trail to the left which lead us to Puente Chiscar at Río Poqueira. Cross the bridge and find confronted with the last part of the route, a short climb of approximately 1 km with height rise of 150 meters up to Capileira. You will enter the village from Eras de Aldeire.

