

# Cultural Routes





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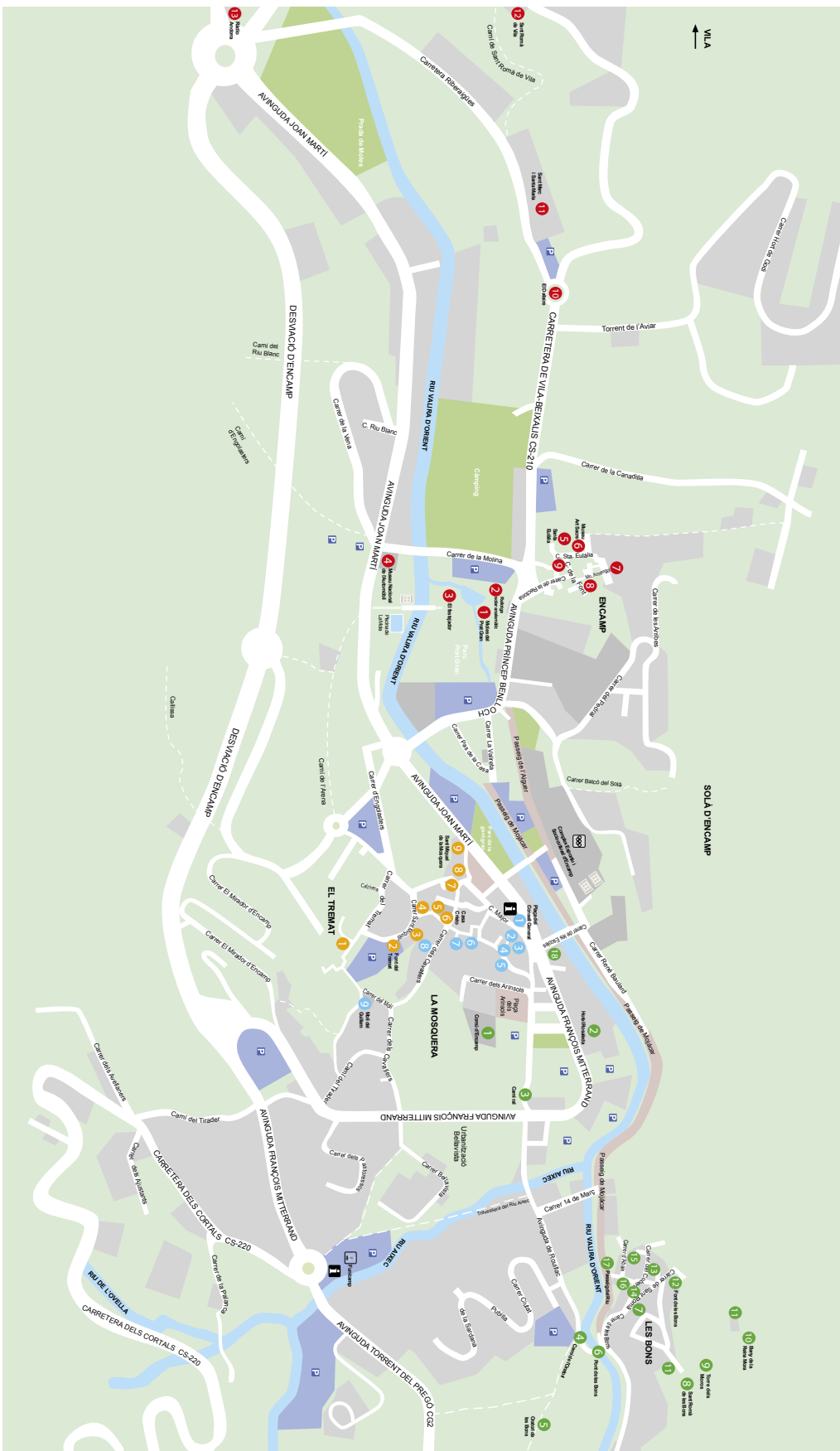
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# Les Bons Itinerary

## 1. Encamp Commune House



This contemporary building from 1987 is the headquarters of the Encamp Commune. It was designed by Roberto Suso Vergara in collaboration with Joan García-Borés and Jaume Viaplana, and was one of the first buildings in Andorra to be constructed using the curtain wall technique. It is seven storeys high. The three colours of the Andorran flag and the lilac of the parish are present on the facade, which is an immense mirror reflecting any movement and play of daylight in all seasons of the year. The building is geometrical in the strictest sense of the word: it is on a

triangular plan and the facade is almost square. On the facade is a large balcony with the senior councillor's office forming a projection at one side. It was an avant-garde building for its time. The open plaza in front of it complements it and involves it in everyday life and all the events which take place there. You can say that it is a lively building.

## 2. Hotel Rosaleda



The Hotel *Rosaleda* is a work by Adolf Florensa, a well-known architect of the Catalan *noucentisme* movement. Built between 1941 and 1943, it is one of the most important buildings in what is called "*granite architecture*" and is among the few examples designed in Andorra during the middle third of the 20th century by distinguished architects, using (in a mountain

country such as ours) outside and cosmopolitan expressive forms. When it was new, the hotel had 60 rooms and was the most luxurious in Andorra. From a good beginning, most of the rooms had their own bathroom (a real advance for that time). It was the first hotel in Andorra to have a swimming pool and a ballroom. There was a reading room with leather armchairs; the public rooms, painted with mountain allegory motifs from Hawaii, the Tyrol, Spain and Catalonia, were luxuriously furnished;

there was also a grand staircase, and one of the first electric lifts in the country. The hotel services were very select and were contracted with the best establishments in Barcelona, although there were also local people for other tasks. This was a hotel which never closed and was well known (clearly designed for people with a high discretion spend who would stay there for a week or a fortnight), and various international travel guides and travellers remarked on its excellence. Within its walls stayed the illustrious, the rich and famous, some of them descendants of European royal houses, and it is said that Aga Khan III spent some nights there. It is listed as of cultural interest. For more information: [www.encamp.ad](http://www.encamp.ad).

### 3. Camí Ral (King's path)



Although Andorra has never had kings, some of the old routes were called king's paths. They were the main communication routes in the country. They went from point to point in the valleys for general communication between them. In the Manual Digest (a collection of laws and customs, from 1748), the author, Antoni Fiter i Rossell, recommended in his maxim

46: "Procurar en tenir los Camins reals limpios abla millor disposicio" (try to keep the king's paths clear and always accessible).



### 4. Starting Camí de l'Oratori (the path to the Oratory)

An authentic living fossil among the communication routes of old Andorra, this was the principal way towards Canillo and France. It is of granite, polished and worn by use. Using these routes, men, news and goods went up and down. It is the natural

way towards the eastern valley and follows the line of the valley. At the side are fields and meadows, formerly mown for hay. Arriving at the oratory, on the right there is a meadow with several promontories, known as the *Queralt* market garden, where the exploitation used to be auctioned for a year, the profits collected being used for charitable causes and to provide dowries for young girls from poorer homes. The rectory was in charge and managed the enterprise.

### 5. Oratori de les Bons (Les Bons Oratory)



The Oratory, dedicated to the Mother of God, was built in the late 19th century. It is a simple building with a barrel vault in the popular style. Here pilgrims stopped and prayed to the Mother of God while they rested, as this is the first spot from which they could see the Meritxell sanctuary. In fact this is where the hardest part of the way begins. In the hermitage is a Majolica of the Mother of God,

a work by local artist Ramon Argilés, done in 1999. Legend tells that one summer's day in the mid-19th century, in the afternoon, three countrymen from Encamp were working in the fields nearby. All of a sudden, and how it appeared and where from no-one knows, the sky grew dark and a tremendous rainstorm fell on their heads. They ran to take shelter where they could and were so frightened that they made a vow to the Mother of God that if she saved them, then in thanks they would build an oratory. And so it was, by divine intervention, that they built this beautiful oratory on the spot where all this happened.

### 6. Pont de les Bons (Les Bons Bridge)



The present bridge dates from 1948; reproductions of the original can be seen in the bridges of *Prat Gran* park. It is the main access to the village of Les Bons. At the top, above the sign boards, is a row of stones, like a wall: these are the remains of a house which was called *Ca de Pont* (the Bridge House). It was a fine house, and its owners were proud to the point that, when someone asked something of them, they always said, "Water will cease to flow in the Valira before the cheese runs out at *Ca de Pont*." As the sages in the village say, everything goes in circles, and the Valira still flows quietly to the sea.





## 7. Cal Cotxa (Cotxa house)



A family house typical of the traditional 18th century Andorran family homes. It has three floors and a loft, faces the sun and is excavated into the rock. It is built in granite and slate and has a ridge roof. The top floor is balconied, to take all possible advantage of the sun's warmth. Here the people living in the house came to take the sun, hang out the laundry and dry fruit. The iron balconies were a sign of wealth. They still survive.

## 8. Sant Romà de les Bons (St. Romain's church, Les Bons)



This Lombard Romanesque church was consecrated on 23 January 1164, according to the deed of consecration found inside the altar. Built on a rectangular plan and with a semicircular apse, it has a belfry with two openings which takes up the whole width of the west wall. The main door, in the west wall and decorated with a toothed frieze, is protected by a porch from a later time, from which one can see a magnificent panorama of the valley. The outer side of the apse shows decorative Lombard arches and bands. The original altar survives inside the church, with the remains of original murals on the walls. Those visible on the drum of the apse are reproductions of the Romanesque originals, now preserved in the *Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya*. In the upper part of the apse roof, on the walls and on the barrel vault of the nave some gothic murals are preserved. Other features worthy of mention are a 16th century gothic altarpiece and a small granite baptismal font from the 12th century.



## 9. Torre dels Moros (Moorish Tower)



This is an ancient military tower which could have been part of a fortified precinct. Its exact date is not known, although it could be from the end of the 16th century, at the time of raids into Andorra by the Huguenots. According to people from the olden times, when something was very old and its origins unknown, it was "from the time of the Moors", hence the name of this tower. The church of *Sant Romà* is

Romanesque and could date from that time, but in 1278 and 1288 the *pariatges* or treaties were signed, and these prohibited the building of any castles and ordered those existing to be pulled down. Therefore, the exact date of the tower is not known. It was lived in and a sink for washing dishes survives, draining to the outside; there are defensive loopholes, which were used for shooting; and above, under the roof (now disappeared), there are machicolations for defence of the tower in the event of attack. The reddish colour on the inside walls is evidence of a fire which damaged the building. One can go up to the top and enjoy a magnificent view of the village, the valley and the way on towards France.

## 10. Bany de la Reina Mora (The bath of the Moorish Queen)



Just by the Moorish Tower and the *Rossell* dovecot is a cistern excavated from the rock. Fed by the nearby stream from Les Bons, it was the old cistern for the walled enclosure. This is where rainwater and water from the stream collected and was supplied to the whole enclosure by means of a small channel excavated from the rock (it can still be seen today). Legend tells that, on the nights of the full moon, the Moorish Queen came out here to bathe and that the men of Les Bons came up here and hid so as to see her. Her beauty was enchanting and the men who had seen her fell deeply in love and remained bewitched and enchanted for the rest of their lives.

## 11. Colomers de Rossell i de Cotxa (Rossell and Cotxa dovecots)



Tower dovecots became the typical construction model in local architecture between the 16th and 18th centuries. They were used for raising domestic pigeons, and can be found both attached to the house and in the centre of a home field. Raising pigeons had two purposes: on the one hand, the birds were eaten as a normal part of the diet and, on the other, their droppings were used as natural fertiliser.

Not all the houses had dovecots. Some of them had a dovecot attached to the main dwelling or to the threshing floor, with openings on the facade, and only a few houses had tower dovecots, as these, as well as the functions mentioned, were signs of prestige: nearly all were the property of the wealthiest houses. The dovecot faces the sun and has two roofs,

between which there is a slab with openings big enough for pigeons but not for birds of prey. Also a series of slabs projects from the four walls. These were to prevent marauding animals and rats from getting in and eating the birds. The walls of these dovecots have holes in which the pigeons nested. The *Cotxa* dovecot is listed as being of cultural interest.

## 12. Font de les Bons (Les Bons water source)



A water source channelled from the stream in Les Bons. It was formerly a watering place for animals. Here the farm animals would halt on their return from exhausting days of work in the nearby meadows and fields. The water which flows here is extremely cold.

### 13. Túnel de cal Tona (Tona house tunnel)



We see here that the little amount of land available is used to the utmost. This building is a home on the upper floor; while on the ground floor the road runs through it. In olden times this was used as shelter from the rain for markets or village meetings.

### 14. Ca de Mas (Mas house)



One of the most important Andorran houses from the 16th-18th centuries, it preserves the remains of the original painting from that time on the main facade. It was a rich house and competed with *Ca de Pont*. Its owners were treated as leaders and often occupied important posts in the commune and general administration. An inventory from 1633 records that they had silver place settings and a big copper cooking pot, and there were books and ancient parchments. On one occasion, in the early 18th century, the burial

took place of the head of the house of *Ca de Mas*. The funerary honours were attended by 33 priests, "all the priests of the Valleys", an amazing figure and rather exaggerated. But this gives an idea of the power vested in this house since, apart from paying for the masses, they had to house the clergymen and their animals for several days.

### 15. Placeta de les Bons i safareig (Les Bons little plaza and washing place)



Here is the old washing place of Les Bons village, one of the few still surviving in the Valleys, where on Saturdays women cleaned their clothes and did the laundry with ash. Ashes were never thrown away in these houses. Ash was used as a fertiliser for the fields and used to make bleach. The soaps that they used were made with oil and caustic soda and used animal and vegetable fats. Then they would put the laundry out to dry in the open air, filling the village with a very characteristic clean smell.

### 16. Cal Toles (Toles house)



A traditional family home magnificently restored.

### 17. Passeig del Riu (Walk by the river)



There is a good view from here of Les Bons village. It makes a pretty photograph.

### 18. Hotel Oros



A pioneering hotel in the country, one of the first hotels of any category (long before the *Hotel Rosaleda*). The present building is the second to be built, as the first, dating from 1910, was swept away in the floods of 1937. The developer was Josep Mas of *Casa Oros*, the first lay teacher in the French school in Encamp and a very active man, in advance of his time. Correspondence between this gentleman and several international personalities has been preserved, including the then president of the United States, Woodrow Wilson.

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|---|---|
| <b>1</b> Encamp Commune House                                     | <b>10</b> Bany de la Reina Mora<br>(The bath of the Moorish Queen)                    |
| <b>2</b> Hotel Rosaleda   | <b>11</b> Colomers de Rossell i de Cotxa<br>(Rossell and Cotxa dovescots)             |
| <b>3</b> Camí Ral (King's path)                                   | <b>12</b> Font de les Bons (Les Bons water source)                                    |
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| <b>9</b> Torre dels Moros (Moorish Tower)                         | <b>18</b> Hotel Oros  |







# La Mosquera and el Tremat Itinerary

## 1 Plaça del Consell General (Consell General plaza)



The old plaza in La Mosquera, the nerve centre of the village, where all life and important occasions took place. Decisions were taken here, as the Commune offices (where the authorities of the village met) occupied what is now the Tourist Office from the mid-19th century until the 1980s. The grand festivals with musicians (often the military band from the Seu d'Urgell Spanish army barracks) lasted until well into the early hours. The plaza was boxed in and boys from other parishes were made to pay to come in, since if they wanted to dance with the village girls, they had to contribute to the costs of the festival. Of the original plaza there only remains the part with the oldest houses.

The houses in the rest of the plaza are new, since in 1937 there was a flood which swept everything away. The oldest

members of the village recall that in October 1937 there was tremendous rain and that, suddenly, a landslip on the river bank blocked up the river and formed a kind of dam. When the water rushing down with great force broke through the dam, all the houses, tools and animals were washed away down the river. The water came up to the middle of the plaza, taking away the Commune House and the house next door. Only a single wall remained standing. It was where there had been the crucifix in the Council chamber. The village people said that, thanks to the crucifix, there had been a miracle in that the water did not go down the street into the village. The people of Encamp took refuge on the *Roc del Puy* (today the location of *Ràdio Andorra*). They only suffered material damage and a number of dead animals, although the Commune archives were almost totally lost.





## 2 Casa Xampaina (Xampaina house)

The old house of the *Xampaina* family, a line which produced several distinguished people, including councillors and judges. The stone facade of the three storeys has good ironwork on the balconies, with the date 1889 and the initials of the head of the house who had them put there, JV, and those of his wife, AN: Josep Vilanova and Anna Naudi.

## 3 Casa Ché (Ché house)



One of the oldest houses of the village, it dates from the 16th-17th century.

The absence of a loft and the pyramidal chimney, the stonework protecting the facade and the measurements of the house, make us think that it could be a house of medieval origin. The balconies are of iron: originally they were timber.

## 4 Alley between Cal Xampaina (Xampaina house) and Cal Casas (Casas house)



We can see how they used the land to the maximum. A person can only just walk between the two houses. This alley connects the streets behind La Mosquera with those in front without having to go the long way round.

## 5 Cal Canart henhouse and washing place



Using resources to the maximum was a priority for our forebears. Here we find a very curious construction, a henhouse which is above the courtyard of the house and retains its original period door. In front is *Cal Canart*, with its patio, and inside, the washing place of the house, which is preserved intact. The painted facade and wrought iron balcony from 1926 are notable. This is a pretty corner for a picture.

## 6 Cal Picart (Picart house)



Going on down the street, there is a large yellow house: it is one of the old rich houses of the parish. It owned forges and reached its zenith in the 18th century. The little wall which gives access to the garden was built with the honeycomb wall technique, characteristic of granite architecture (1930-1940), in which the stones are shaped like a honeycomb, and are fitted perfectly together. On the facade are wrought iron balconies (from the 19th century), half-moon grilles called *estripages* fixed to the lowest windows of the house to prevent small animals or thieves from getting in, and masks (human or fantastic heads or faces used for decoration and, according to legend, to protect the house against evil spirits, witches and spells). These can be seen on the five beams which support the roof.

They date from the 18th century and are a treasure, as very few have survived until now. The thickness of the walls of the houses around is remarkable.



## 7 Mallador de Picart (Picart thresher) and narrow alley



This little area was used to crush grain and was multifunctional. Above it is an attic which connects this family house with another annexed to it. You have to look carefully to see a little wooden windowsill balcony. As this was in a side street, they did not use iron; timber was sufficient. Passing through the alley, we continue to the left, and upwards.

## 8 Capella de Cal Joan Antoni (Chapel of the Joan Antoni house)



This baroque chapel is from 1721. It is a private hermitage and belongs to the adjacent house, *Cal Joan Antoni*. The chapel was consecrated with a dedication to St. Anthony of Padua. The weathervane on the little belfry is a wrought iron cockerel. The cockerel was used on weathervanes from the 8th century by the Church and symbolises St. Peter's three denials of Christ and also light, since just at the break of day, when the sun rises, the cockerel is first to announce it. The light of the church is Christ. Weathervanes had always to be placed on the highest parts of the buildings. This little hermitage is only used by the owner's family.

## 9 Molí del Guillem (Guillem Mill)



An old flour mill driven by waterpower, belonging to the *Casa Guillem*. It dates from the 16th-18th centuries. It still has all the original machinery and is kept in working order. The waterwheel under the archway of the main facade still works today.

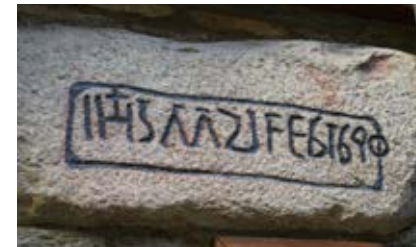


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# The Tremat Itinerary

## 1 Cal Mals Avinguts (Wrongs Resolved house) (IHS 1690)



On the main facade of the new house you can see a stone which was found during the refurbishment but which certainly belonged to the old house. The inscription says, "Jesus, Maria, 21 February 1690". This house was called *Cal Mals Avinguts* because in the old days, when couples did not get on well together, they could not separate, but they could come here (the house was publicly owned) to spend some time until they could sort things out.

## 2 Font del Tremat (The Tremat Watersource)



The shield of Andorra is traditional and comes from centuries ago, it was officially adopted as a national symbol in 1969. It also appears in the centre of the Andorran flag.

Quarterly: Quarter I, Gules a bishop's mitre Or lined and embellished Argent over a bishop's crosier Or (the arms of the Episcopal co-prince, the Bishop of Urgell); II Or three pales Gules (the arms of the French co-prince, the Count of Foix); III Or four pallets Gules (for Catalonia); IV two cows passant per pale Gules, horned, collared, belled and hooved Azure (for Bearn).

Beside the tap is a chamois, a typical Andorran mountain animal.

## 3 Cal Joan Antoni (Joan Antoni house)



Another grand house of the parish, dating from the 12th century. The facade is balconied, with wrought iron grilles and arcades, and has a sundial on the south wall. One must remember to adjust the time for one hour in the winter and two in the summer.





#### 4 Cal Cosomet (Cosomet house)

A small medieval house restored in the 20th century. The ironwork and quality of the balcony grilles is outstanding, these are true works of filigree by the Andorran blacksmiths of the 19th-20th centuries.



#### 5 Casa Nova Sigarró (Nova Sigarró house)

A blend of tradition and modernity, the carved woodwork – in Andorra this is called *musicada* – represents typical scenes of life in the old days and life today in the country. The carved timber is from the present day.



#### 6 Casa Cristo (Cristo house)

The Ethnographic Museum, displaying the *modus vivendi* of the humble Andorran in the late 19th century and early 20th. The house has survived intact to our own day. It is worth visiting.



#### 7 Casa Sigarró (Sigarró house)

An 18th century house, with semicircular arches on the lower windows. Note the height of the chimney and the date the house was built: 1789.



#### 8 Sant Miquel de la Mosquera (St. Michael of La Mosquera)

A small church dedicated to the Archangel Michael and John the Baptist, of uncertain date. It was extended in the 19th century. The apse is not differentiated from the nave and above the west wall is a bell tower with a single opening. Inside the church is a 16th century altarpiece dedicated to the patron saints – with scenes relating to them – and there are murals on the vault and on the walls of the presbytery as well as the vault of the nave. These paintings, which portray as a central theme the Transfiguration of Christ, are from the late 19th century and were done by Oromí, the Master from Seu d'Urgell. This church has two small curiosities: the first, looking at the ceiling, one of the commandments is missing from the 19th century paintings, and the second is the altarpiece, which includes a portrayal of Judes Iscariot, which is very unusual.



#### 9 Cal Notari (Notary's house)

An old house of one of the notaries of the village. It has a carved doorknocker on the old front door, ironwork on the balconies and plastering which imitates bricks. Formerly, if it was not one of the poorer houses or an inn, the house would never be left with the stone visible. Of the original house, there only remain the facade and the little balconies.



- 1 Cal MalsAVINGuts (Wrongs Resolved house) (IHS 1690)
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- 4 Cal Cosomet (Cosomet house)
- 5 Casa Nova Sigarró (Nova Sigarró house)
- 6 Casa Cristo (Cristo house)
- 7 Casa Sigarró (Sigarró house)
- 8 Sant Miquel de la Mosquera (St. Michael of La Mosquera)
- 9 Cal Notari (Notary's house)



# Encamp and Vila Itinerary

## 1 Prat Gran millstones



Old flour millstones from La Molina, now the Automobile Museum. The fine one was the *volandera* and went on top of the heavy one, which was called the *sotana* and was fixed. The round opening in the middle was for the shaft which turned them. .

## 2 Analematic sundial



with the exact time difference.

## 3 The window seat



Sculpture by Joan Canal of the traditional window seat in the old Andorran family houses, where legend tells that the young people courted under the eyes of a watchful parent. All the elements of the sculpture – stone, wood and grille – represent the house. These seats were typical of the windows in the oldest houses, pre-18th century, and were used to get the best out of the light from the window.



#### 4 Museu Nacional de l'Automòbil (National Automobile Museum)



The National Automobile Museum offers the visitor a magnificent collection of vehicles, some unique, which range from the earliest days of motoring – for example, the steam-powered Pinette of 1885 – to cars produced in the 1970s. The Museum also has a collection of period motorbikes and around a hundred bicycles, some very old and strange. Several showcases with objects related with the world of motoring complete the exhibition in this interesting museum.

#### 5 Santa Eulàlia (St. Eulalia)



The present parish church of *Santa Eulàlia* in Encamp was built in the late 11th century or early 12th. The bell tower is 23 metres high and is the highest Romanesque bell tower in Andorra; it was added in the first half of the 12th century. It has three levels of windows – the first two are paired and the last is simple, having been altered to accommodate the bells in the 16th and 17th centuries – and Lombard style decoration of blind arches, with the particular feature of being tilted to the left. This Romanesque church has been restored on various occasions: first, in the 17th century, when the nave was widened on the north side and the *Roser* and *Sant Antoni* chapels were added; the other two important restorations were in 1924, when the chancel of the nave was altered,

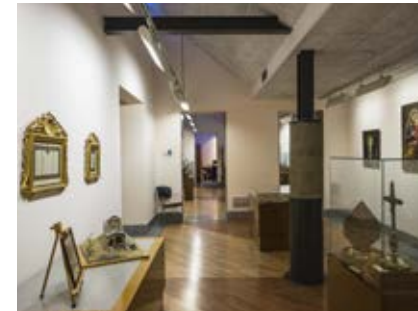
and in 1988, when it was enlarged and a parish centre was created adjacent to it. In front of the church are two features: a porch, documented as early as the 14th century, protecting the Romanesque portal, and a little 17th century building with a hip roof and a window in each wall, which was used for prayers to protect the people from storms.

Inside the church are several pieces of interest: a Romanesque baptismal font, three baroque altarpieces, dating from 1620, 1689 and 1701, two iron grilles and a bell wheel, among others.

Also visible is the base of the early Romanesque semicircular apse and some contemporary stained glass made in 1998 by the local artist Agustí Ríos. Two curiosities are worth noting: the Archangel Gabriel is a woman and there is a dog in the nativity scene.

To complete the visit, it is worth admiring the works on show in the Museum of Sacred Art, situated in a modern annex forming part of the same group.

#### 6 Museu d'Art Sacre (Museum of Sacred Art)



The architectural group of *Santa Eulàlia* includes, in the area occupied until the 1930s by the cemetery, a modern annex building for the display of various liturgical objects from the churches in Encamp and other pieces of artistic interest stored in the parish church archives.

Among the articles displayed in the different sections (gold and silver, textiles, documents), are a Romanesque wrought

iron candelabrum, a 14th century bronze censer, a cross from 1571, a baroque chasuble and a parchment with musical notation, known as *neumes*. There is also a facsimile reproduction of one of the editions of the medieval illuminated codex called the *Beatus of Liebana* with miniatures of exceptional quality.

#### 7 Rectoria (Rectory)



Building dating from the 17th-18th centuries and now the home of the rector of the parish. Its thick stone walls are notable, still preserving the buttresses, and the large sheltered timber balconied main facade.

#### 8 Cal Jaumet (Jaumet house)



17th century house, plastered and dated 1618 on the window lintel. It has windowsill balconies.





## 9 Cal Areny (Areny house) and Cal Tresà (Tresà house)



Two important houses in the parish, notable for their typical structure and iron balconied areas, from the early 20th century.

## 10 Sculpture of a reaper



From 2007, a work by the sculptor Àngel Calvente, it portrays a reaper in the old days in the Valleys, with his scythe and his whetstone on his belt. The chosen setting is no accident: this is where men and women in the old days spent long days reaping in the nearby fields.

## 11 Sant Marc i Santa Maria (St. Mark and St. Mary)



Santa Maria church has been surrounded, since the 1930s, by the commune cemetery. Built during in the late 11th century, it was restored during the 16th and 18th centuries.

Part of the church rests on a structure that archaeologists have dated from Roman times, probably a mausoleum.

The church is on a rectangular plan, while the existing apse, built over the remains of the Romanesque semicircular, is a trapezium. Above the west wall is a belfry with two openings, which has the special feature, in the upper part and on both sides, of the head of a man carved in the stone.

The church has been restored recently and has inside a good altarpiece from the 17th century, dedicated to

St. Mary, and the stone base of the Romanesque altar.





## 12 Sant Romà de Vila (St. Romain of Vila)



Church of Romanesque origin, restored in the 19th and 20th centuries. Today the apse is quadrangular, but on the outside the base of the Romanesque semicircular apse can still be seen. On the west wall is a little belfry.

In the church is a reproduction of the polychrome altar table of the church, the original of which, from the 13th century, can be seen in Barcelona, in the *Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya*. The uprights, decorated with plant and geometrical motifs, support three panels: the frontal shows Christ in Majesty, flanked by the tetramorph and by four pairs of apostles, while on the sides are the Assumption of St. Mary and three more apostles.

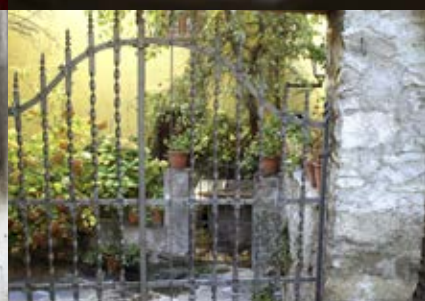
## 13 Ràdio Andorra (Radio Andorra)

The broadcasting home of the very popular *Ràdio Andorra*, since the 1930s. On the facade are various architectural features, such as the round tower and the paired windows, and the window on the side facade, which are all copies of various different architectural styles of the Valleys. The round tower is taken from the bell tower of *Santa Coloma*; the side window from the *Casa de la Vall*; the main facade, from a Catalan farmhouse facade, and the side facade from an Andorran family house. On the angle stones are the arms of Andorra.









encamp  el pas de la casa

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