

MOLINO  
DEL SANTO

## 2 Molino del Santo to the Cat Cave

**Distance:** 4 km round trip

**Walking time:** 40 minutes each way – 80 minutes return plus stops

**Difficulty:** Easy

**Starting point:** Molino wooden gates

### **Summary:**

A beautiful flat walk through the valley to the famous Cat Cave – swimmable on a hot day, although the water comes straight out of the mountain so it's chilly! Check at reception whether the stepping stones are passable.

### **Walk:**

Head downhill from the Molino main gate, follow the lane to the left and cross the bridge across the stream. Turn right.

#### **If the stepping stones are passable (dry season):**

Cross the railway level crossing, and turn left at the first opportunity. Pass by a couple of factories on either side, then some country houses (one with a grand door on your left). Keep walking until the wider path turns into a small windy path, with the river on your right. Keep walking until you reach the stepping stones. Cross the stepping stones. After crossing the stepping stones, join the main path and turn left. Continue on this path.

#### **If the stepping stones are not passable (after rain):**

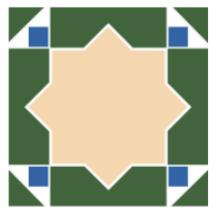
When you get to the railway level crossing, turn left and walk towards the station, with the railway on your right. When you reach Bar Ankanita, there's a fork in the road and turn up the hill, on the left hand road. When you reach the top of the hill and the path joins the main road, turn right and walk on the main road for 100m. Once you cross over the railway and the river, there's a house on the right below the main road and a path that turns down to the right, joining the main path below. Take this path to join the main path below, which sits alongside the river.

#### **For both options:**

Pass under the road bridge.

Arrive at Hotel Molino Cuatro Paradas. Skirt around the hotel keeping the main building on your left hand side. This is a narrower pedestrian path – not like the vehicle track that you have been following to this point.

Keep following the path with the river on your left for a kilometre until you arrive at Hotel Cueva del Gato. The cave is opposite.



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There is a footbridge crossing the river at this point to enable you to reach the cave and the pool.

Return to Molino via the same route. The alternative is the road from Ronda to Benaojan - but this is a fast road with no footpaths and is not recommended.

The cave is the end of a subterranean system which begins the far side of Montequaque, approximately 4 km of underground passages. A guide is essential if you would like to undertake this challenge. Ask for more information at reception.

The name of the cave comes from an imaginative interpretation of the mouth of the cave being a cat's mouth with two smaller caves higher up in the mountain being the eyes. It is easier to visualise from the road from Ronda to Benaojan.

**Hotel Cueva del Gato** is sometimes open for drinks - it can be worth checking if you fancy. There is also a venta - (bar/restaurant) called **Venta Cueva del Gato**, accessed via the road that climbs behind the cat cave hotel. In the summer, there is a bar in the evenings accessible from the path called "**El Gato Verde**".