

Villena via ferrata (Costa Blanca)

NEW! In 2008 the Villena via ferrata has been upgraded. A new section has been added below the original and provides a worthwhile extension (original via ferrata shown in the topo below). Combining both sections will double the length of via ferrata encountered and includes an exposed cable traverse in free space. This is still the easiest and shortest of the 3 via ferratas on the Costa Blanca. To access the extension, approach as for the original via ferrata but when you reach the original start continue down on wire cables for several hundred metres. An Iron Ladder marks the beginning of the extension which goes up and traverses left to join with the original ferrata just before the wire bridge. Continuing to the top and then descending the original makes for a good round trip.



The Via Ferrata at Villena is relatively short and straightforward compared that of The Ponoch and is a good introduction to Via Ferrata. It is easily completed in a leisurely half day and could be combined with some rock-climbing at the nearby cliffs in Sax or a drink in the bar at the La Cruces monument, which overlooks the town of Villena.

Approach

Follow the A31 motorway – signs for Madrid. Leave the motorway at Villena and follow the road round the east side of town. You will reach a roundabout where the second exit is signposted for the centre of town; take the first exit up the hill on the right. Follow signs for 'La Cruces' which lead to parking at a small monument which consists of 3 crosses, overlooking a large castle.

Walk straight up the hill behind the crosses on a vague path until you come to a good path which contours across the hill. Follow this left until you reach a sign pointing uphill to the via ferrata. Follow the path (marked with yellow diamonds) up to the col. Gear up here.

Via Ferrata

Descend slightly then contour left (facing downhill) along wire cables to the base of the via ferrata. Ascend the rungs with two steep sections and a wire bridge in the middle.

Descent

There are two possible descents.

1) It is possible to abseil from bolt stations starting just to the right of the top of the via ferrata and then retrace your steps.

2) Follow the ridge to the summit (with unsightly radio masts) and descend back along the hillside on a good path (marked in yellow and white) to reach the carpark.



This topo provided by www.ryanglass-mountaineering.co.uk