

17. Sant Eugènia

Three walks or one?

Grade: Moderate

Distance: 2.5km, 5km or 8.5km

Time: 1 to 3 hours

Start & Finish: Plaça Bernat de Santa Eugènia, in the centre of the village. No parking in the village centre but there is a car park in Carrer Josep Bulaguer, off Carrer des Sol, and on-street parking in general is not a problem.

How to get there: 10km along the Palma to Sineu road.

Map: IGN 699/I (1:25,000 – see reference chart in introduction)

Checklist: Walking boots; water; picnic; camera

So many choices: walk to the Puig de Santa Eugènia, enjoy the views, and return to the town, or continue for the whole circuit, with or without a visit to the old (ex-)hermitage on Puig d'en Marron (or Puig de Son Seguí, as shown on maps).

Although there's a small town hall in Santa Eugènia, as yet there's no tourist office. The nearby parish church dates from the 16th century and marriages have taken place there since 1693. There are a number of prehistoric sites near Santa Eugènia and surrounding villages such as the hamlet of Ses Coves. For a brief history of Santa Eugènia, see www.a2mallorca.com/detail/513.htm.

The Walk

Follow "Casa de La Vila" signs to the main square – Plaça Bernat de Santa Eugènia – below the high tower of the parish church. There's the Bar C'an Prim, opposite the town hall, for refreshments.

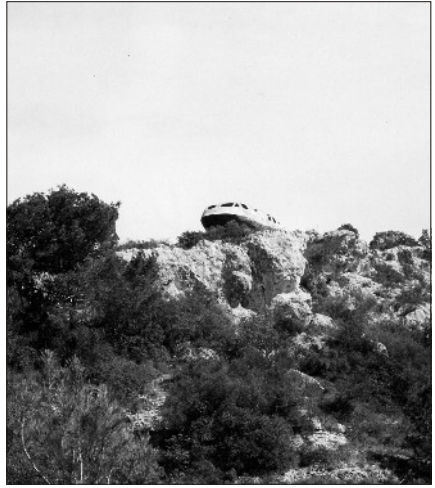
1. Leave the square towards the Sa Nostra bank and turn left up Camí des Puig. Bear right at a "No through road" sign then climb steeply uphill and turn right on a wide, tarmac road.
2. At the end of the tarmac, turn sharp left to follow a path uphill, between two walls. Pass a red dot at the end of the wall on your right (do *not* turn here) then carry on uphill for another couple of minutes to a clear track on the right, again marked with a red dot.

If you miss this turn you will get to the top of the hill and then need to retrace your steps. However, you may like to climb up anyway because, at the top there's a surprise: the remains of what looks like the front end of an aeroplane. How did it get there? Did it fall or was it placed? Thanks to Joe Miró Julia from the University in Mallorca, I have the answer: it's a submarine. Yes, really! It was built in about 1985 but it didn't work, so somebody decided to transport it, in

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sections, to the top of the mountain and convert it into a pub. That didn't work either, so there it – or what's left of it – remains. A few years ago it could be seen from far and wide but nowadays you have to walk there to see it.

Having turned right (at the red dot) off the main uphill track, follow a path to a gap in a wall (**20 mins**). There are some stone steps on the left here, but you go straight ahead and up to the cross at the top of Puig de Santa Eugènia.



The submarine: original location

From here, there are excellent views of the village below and the mountains of the Tramuntana range to the north. If the weather is clear you should be able to spot Puig Mayor with its radar domes and, further left, the famed Alfàbia ridge with two sets of antennae stuck on the far left of the ridge.

3. Go back to the gap in the stone wall. **For the second half of the short walk**, go almost straight ahead and follow the red dots to retrace your steps back to Santa Eugènia. **For the longer versions** of the walk, go right after the gap and head down the stone steps.

If you are continuing on one of the longer routes, and have turned right at the wall, as instructed, you should now pass through a prominent gap in the rocks. After this, turn right to follow the meandering path downhill and you soon come to a wire mesh fence.

Follow the fence until it breaks away to the left. Continue ahead from here and head downhill. The path approaches a recently constructed house and turns left, then continues parallel to the drive with the fence on your immediate right. Where your path meets a wide stony track, turn right.

4. Continue along this wide track and join a slightly wider tarmac lane (**45 mins**), where you turn right and pass the gates of Ca'n Elisita on your right.
5. After a further 150 metres you will see, on your left, a pair of iron gates – usually open, but in any case there's access to the left of them.

The hermitage diversion

This optional excursion takes about an hour.

Turn left at the iron gates, “Camino Particular” so far as vehicles are concerned. Walk up the winding tarmac track for 20 minutes until the track levels out, with a “Coto Privado de Caza” sign.

Along the way, pass an old well on your left and, a few minutes later, ornamental black swans on gateposts, which must surely be a first!

Turn right along a roughly stone-surfaced track on your right, the turn also being marked by a small cairn on the left. From here, continue on the obvious wide track. Do not turn left or right, however tempting the paths may seem – most lead to summer dwellings or farms.

After about five minutes, pass a castellated building surrounded by a wire fence – this is *not* the hermitage, so keep going!

Warning – the hermitage is not easy to find, so follow this next part carefully. Well-intended waymarks in the form of rough red outlines of a chapel are infrequent and only moderately accurate!

- 5a. A minute or so later, keep right at a large red arrow on a rock. Then keep uphill on the main track.
- 5b. This leads to a high wire fence, where you turn left, crossing a chain barrier and noting a small building on the left. Keep the fence on your right and pass a *huge* trig point marking the top of Puig d’en Marron/Son Segui (320m) and a still higher observation tower. Pass these on your left, then enter a wide clearing/picnic area at about the 30-minute mark.

Go to the far right-hand corner of the clearing and cross a gap in the wall. Just two minutes later, following a downhill path and keeping right at another clearing, you come to the entrance to the hermitage, with its well and three old wooden crosses.

Some restoration work has been done on this beautiful old building. It’s a pity (though understandable) that the entrance is locked. However, walk over to the far side for a view of the grounds.



Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No – it’s a submarine!

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Return from the hermitage by retracing your steps to the gap in the wall. Cross it and turn left to pass the trig point and observation tower on your right. Reach the wire fence and follow it round to the left, passing the small building and crossing the chain again. Ignore the track that you soon see on the left and, where you see the large red arrow, ignore the track on the right. Just follow the main track back to the tarmac, where you turn left and return downhill to the iron gates, where you turn left and pass Ca'n Vicens – it's tarmac all the way now.

Main route

Continue walking along the road. Add one hour to all the following times if you made the hermitage diversion.

6. At a junction (**55mins**), showing that you have walked along Comellà des Rafal, turn right to the hamlet of Ses Coves. Pass a well in the middle of the road and you will soon see, on your right, an iron gate (**1hr 10 mins**).

The caves were used, so they say, to hide contraband. The gates tend to be locked nowadays.

Go along the main village road. Ses Coves is a pleasant place with many well-restored buildings but there's not a lot to see – no church, not even a bar – so turn right and walk down to the main Ma-3040 road (**1hr 25mins**).

7. Unfortunately, there's no alternative but to turn right here and walk on the road for about 1km to Santa Eugènia.

Along the road, pass "La Naranja Rosa", whose owner seems to enjoy painting his trees – well, he does have a lot of them!

Take the first right turn into the village and return to the square by way of Carrer de Bisbe Sastre and Carrer Mayor.

Other Walks in the area

See Walks 15 and 16 for two walks from Algaida.

Places of interest

Sineu, 15km to the west, once had a royal palace, and still has many large and elegant old houses; on Wednesdays there is a large rural market. The railway station includes a contemporary art centre. **Binissalem's** many hectares of vines provide grapes for the some of the finest wines in Mallorca. Children will enjoy **Parc Natura** with its collection of animals, birds and plants. It lies about 1km south of Santa Eugènia on the Carretera de Sineu; tel 971 144078.

The view down Es Barranc towards Sóller (walks 27 and 28)