

Priorat holy virgins or Mothers of God as they are known here, must surely be great connoisseurs of wine.

They also appreciate the surrounding countryside, its silence, the land.... Legend says that the Virgin of Our Lady of Consolation was found by a shepherd in a little cave. The hermitage dedicated to the virgin was to be built on the very same spot but, surprisingly unlike other virgins, Our lady of Consolation ran off up the mountainside. She wanted her hermitage to be built at the top of the mountain to be able to observe the bell-tower-like hills which rise up out of the "llicorella" (local name for slate in Priorat). **This is Historic Priorat's most famous hermitage, cherished by the people of El Lloar, La Vilella Alta and La Vilella Baixa, Torroja and Gratallops alike. Yet, it was far from easy deciding in which direction (of all the villages) the statue of the virgin had to face.**



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Consell Comarcal
del Priorat



PRIORAT REGION TOURIST OFFICE
Plaça de la Quartera, 1. 43730 Falset. Tel. 977 831 023 www.turismepriorat.org

ENG



La Vilella Alta

FALSET

Level: Gentle walk, apt for all types of public, including children

Time needed: 2h 30 min (there and back)

Ascent: 150 m

Distance: 7,5 km (there and back)

Map: Camins del Priorat 1:30.000
Editorial Piolet

Suggestions:

This is a charming route, suitable for children and all walkers. It offers sweeping views over the nearby countryside and an intense feeling of peace and well-being.

Buil & Giné winery is really worth a visit, as it is very close to the hermitage. Take the farm track down to the main road and turn right. Follow the road for about 200 metres. To return, re-trace your steps back along the road and track until you reach the hermitage, where you will find the path to Coll de la Creu.

Nature Guides:

Catsud T. 636 162 426

El Broguet Guiatges T. 689 006 199

GPS track at: www.turismepriorat.org

From La Vilella Alta to Consolació Hermitage

The route starts at the bottom of **Carrer Nou** (Nou Street) where the fountain is to be found and further on there is a little car-parking area **1**. There are two paths here. The one on the left climbs upwards to the **Coll de la Creu**. We take the right-hand path **2** which carries straight on and is indicated with yellow painted trail markers. We reach a fork **3** where the left-hand path would take us up to Coll de la Creu (which will be our return route). We turn right and pass through a little wood of holm oaks. Further on, we come to a wide mountain pass, just below the **Punta dels Vinyets** **4**. There used to be an olive tree at this point, known as L'Olivera de la Salve. The monks of Escaladei used to walk as far as here where they would recite a Salve Regina prayer before returning to the monastery.

Keep straight on. After a short while, we pass by a small, yet charming farmhouse built halfway up the mountainside **5**. Further on, we come to a fork and we turn right and head downhill. We reach a small mountain pass and keep straight on **6**. The path continues below another small farmhouse and climbs upwards through an olive grove to disappear through a small gap in the hills, where it joins the old pack-horse trail. This pleasant ridge way path continues, between low dry stone walls and old farming terraces which have been reclaimed by the woods, until it reaches the foot of the hermitage **7**.

It is worth walking all the way around the hermitage to your right first and then climbing straight up towards the entrance **8**. A hermit who loves her solitude lives here. There is a sign which says: **"...place of peace, prayer and serenity. Please respect the peace and silence. Thank you"**. We re-trace our footsteps until we reach the path which leads up to the Coll de la Creu **9**. We turn right, climbing slightly until we reach the peak **9** where we join the **GR 174** (European Hiking Network Long Trail). The path continues straight downwards until it reaches the first few houses of the village.



The paths of the Priorat Hiking Paths Network are marked with painted yellow waymarkers except for those which coincide with parts of GR (European Hiking Network Long Trails) or PR (Short Trails). On these paths, the FEEC (Catalan Rambling Club Federation) waymarkers are used