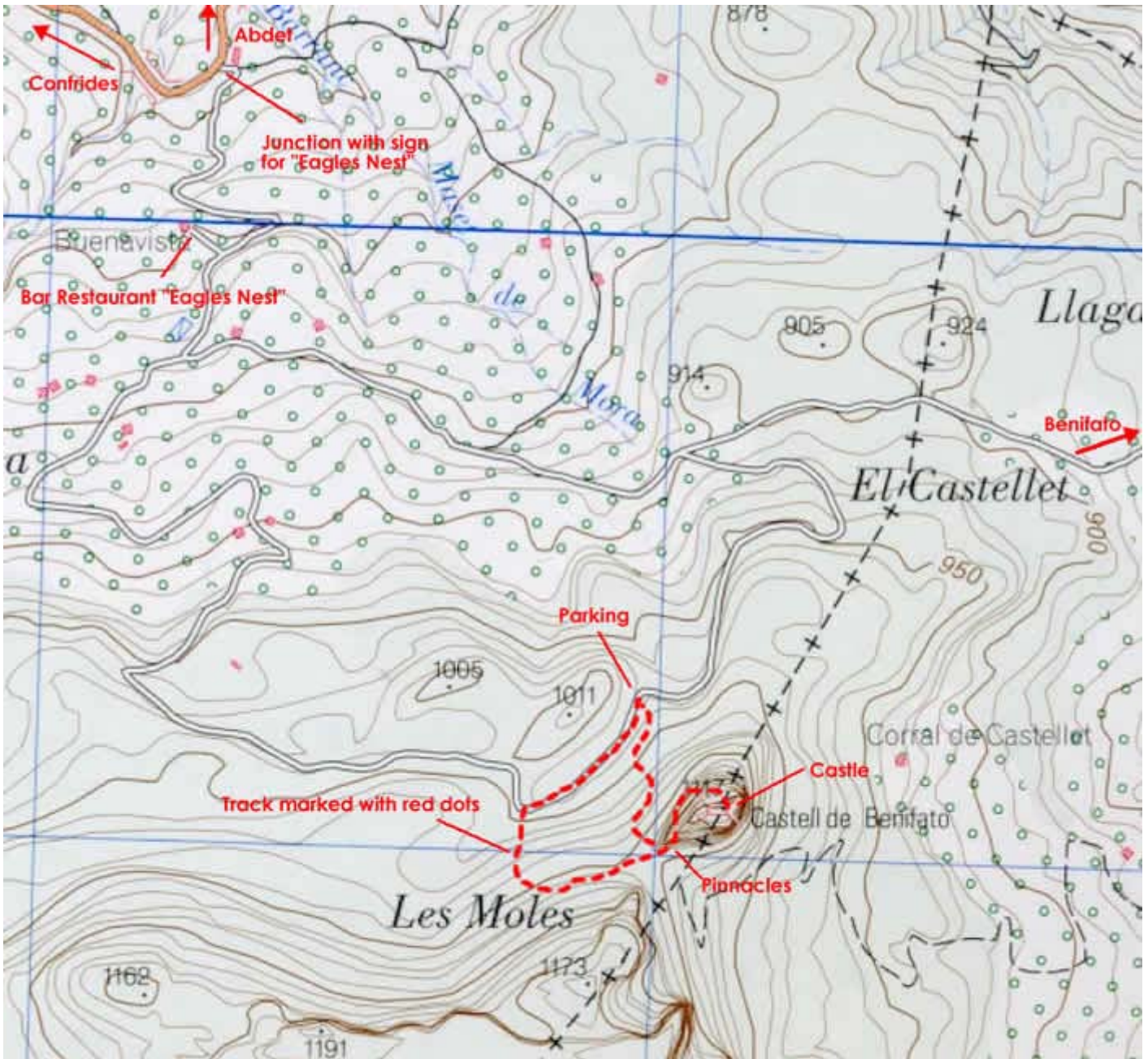


Local Route 4 - Confrides Castle

A short but exciting walk that visits the spectacular ruins of Confrides (Benifato) Castle. A great time to do this walk is just before sunset when the sunlight picks out the pinnacles of the serella ridge above Abdet and lights up the castle whilst the valley below falls into shade. The last section to the castle involves some rocky steps, and there are steep drops from the castle ruins. With care this walk is OK for most people, and although the terrain appears intimidating it is actually reasonably straight forward.

Take your binoculars with you, it's possible to pick out the houses in Abdet from the Castle ramparts.





The Castle at sunset



Looking back to the approach path

For the short walk the best parking space is just near the col on the road below the castle. From Abdet drive to the Eagles Nest Restaurant, this is signposted near Confrides. Continue past the Restaurant and drive around several hairpins until the Castle comes into view. Drive until you see a small parking area on the left side of the road. The castle is now directly above you.

Start by walking back along the road until at a bend a track heads left up to some flattened grassy terraces. A good track heads up the hill (marked with occasional red dots). After a steep section it bears left towards the coll between the Castle and the impressive rock butresses above it.

Take your time on this section as the views to the multiple ridges of Serella are excellent. Soon you reach the col and the shattered pinnacles that guard this side of the Castle. The path heading right drops down to Benitfato, we bear left between some of the pinnacles and past some recently collapsed cave entrances. In cooler weather you can feel the warm air blowing out of these holes. Now come a couple of rocky steeps and the remains of an arched doorway before the final steep climb to the castle.

Be careful of the hole in the floor (a vaulted roof has collapsed). Also the Southern side of the castle has completely vanished so there are unguarded drops at this side. In the walls you will see some prominent stones that once supported wooden floors and there are also many smaller holes that were probably used to support wooden scaffolds during the building process. It is possible to walk to the Eastern edge as well to get a good view of the whole castle.

The panoramic views are worth the effort. The Bernia Ridge with its Matterhorn profile, the immense white butresses of rock to the South, the villages of Confrides and Abdet and of course the Serella ridges are just some of the views to absorb.

When ready descend via your approach route to the col. You have a choice here. The direct route goes down a steep path towards the parking place. If you are confident on steep and occasionally loose path/scree then it gives a bit of variation. Otherwise retrace your steps. If you timed your walk right the castle should be lit up by the setting sun whilst you descend into the shade. Spare a thought for the people who built the castle in such a dramatic location.



panorama