

FONT  
D'EN  
GURB

# FONT D'EN GURB ROUTE

Sant  
Hilari  
Sacalm



# Sant Hilari Sacalm

LesGuilleriesKm0.cat

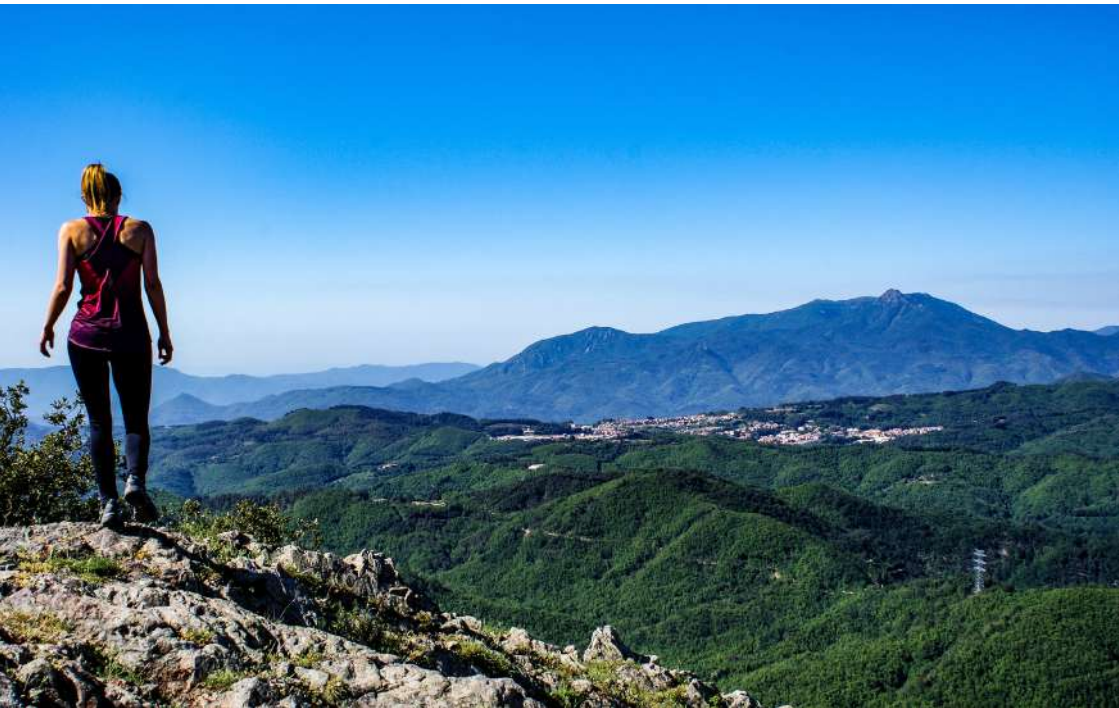
**Sant Hilari Sacalm** is the **capital of Les Guilleries**, the km 0 of a wild and -still- little-known massif near the Montseny, a mountain range. A place where nature, forests and water generously give us innumerable emotions and experiences to enjoy the privileged environment which surrounds us.

Les Guilleries is the ideal place for all nature lovers searching for authentic havens where you can connect with yourself and awaken all your senses. A place where you can live all kinds of experiences, such as enjoying cool moments drinking the natural water that comes from more than **100 municipal springs**. You can also have a bath in the transparent waters of some **streams or pools** hidden by the environment, or simply sit and close your eyes to listen to the force of the water falling from a waterfall while letting go your thoughts for a few moments.

For those who want to feel the adrenaline, you can **practice different high-intensity sports** such as hiking along long paths, mountain biking and trail running, among others. However, for those who want to enjoy a calmer experience, there are several routes to go for a walk along pleasant paths which allow you to **find out the most authentic and pure nature** of Sant Hilari Sacalm.

Otherwise, if you are searching for silence, you just need to relax in some of the town's viewpoints and enjoy the panoramic views that its landscapes give us, while listening to the birds singing and the rustling of the leaves moved by the wind.

So, Sant Hilari is a **privileged place** where nature lovers can **enjoy and feel it in a thousand different ways**.



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# Summary

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Views from G1-541 from the route path

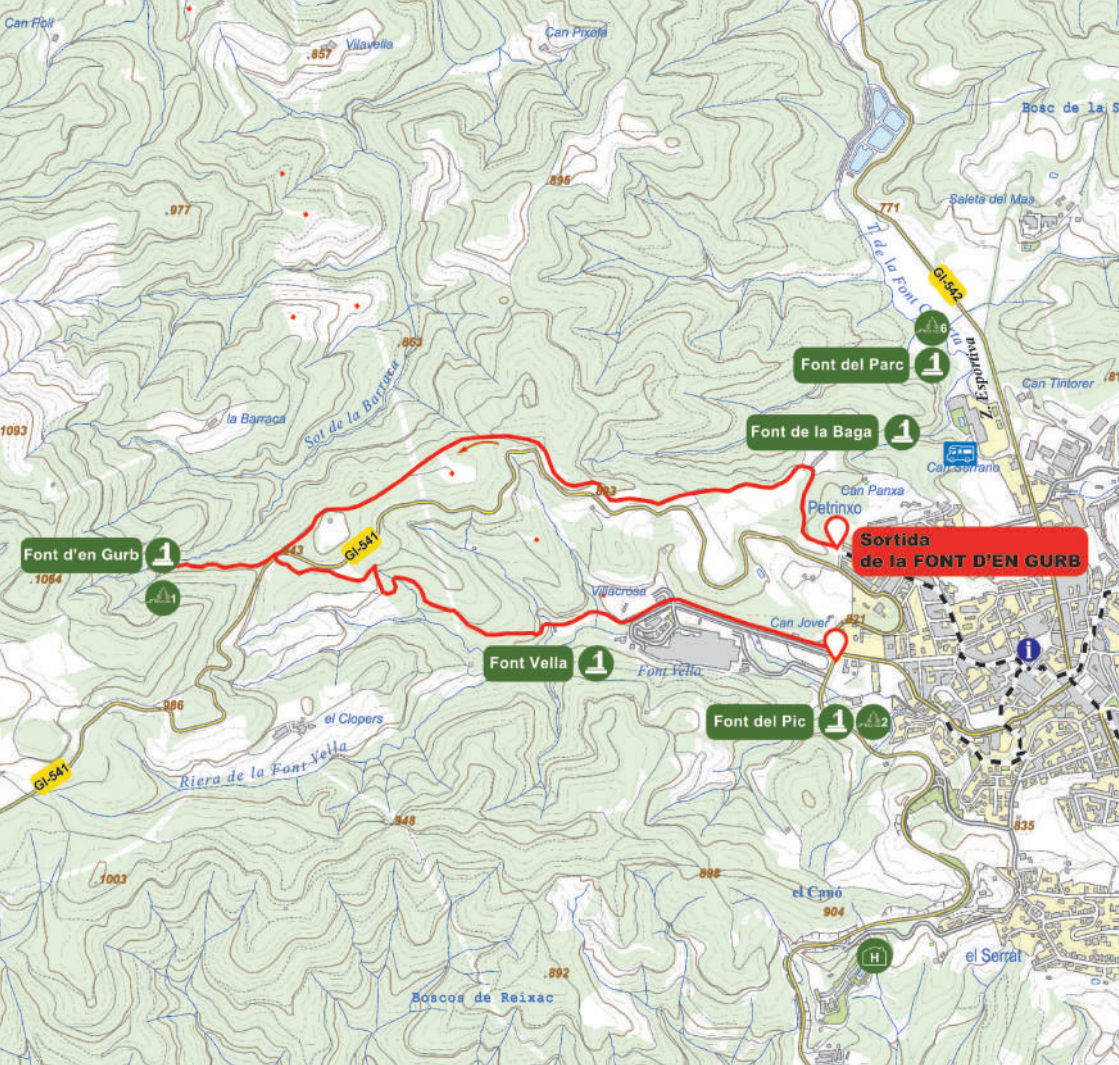
## General information

It is a short and easily accessible route that leads to **Font d'en Gurb**. The path runs along the old road to Vic. The path goes mainly through Douglas fir forests, fir plantations, chestnut and beeches pole plantations. Halfway you reach the spring, which is located in a shady area next to the stream Sot de la Barraca.

The way down goes through the forest until you reach the **park of Font Vella**, where we find the last stretch of the route.

The name Font d'en Gurb comes from the Gurb's domus or fortified house on the hill above the spring. The domus Rovira or **Castell de Mascarbó** is located on the edge of Pla de les Arenes.





## Symbols and markers



1,8 KM



55 M

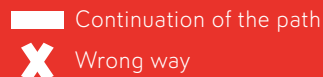


45 M



## Route markers

This route is marked in red in this way:



In addition, there are also small wooden signs along the route with a yellow mark indicating the way to follow.

Use wikiloc and see the route and all the information at the following link:  
<https://ca.wikiloc.com/rutes-a-peu/ruta-de-la-font-den-gurb-53594434>

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## Flora

The most common vegetation in this area is conifer plantations, above all on the western and northern slopes, the shadiest area of the mountain. There are also stone pines and the cork oaks, vegetation which is more common on the southern and sunny slopes of the mountain from 500 meters of altitude.

### **DOUGLAS FIR (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*)**

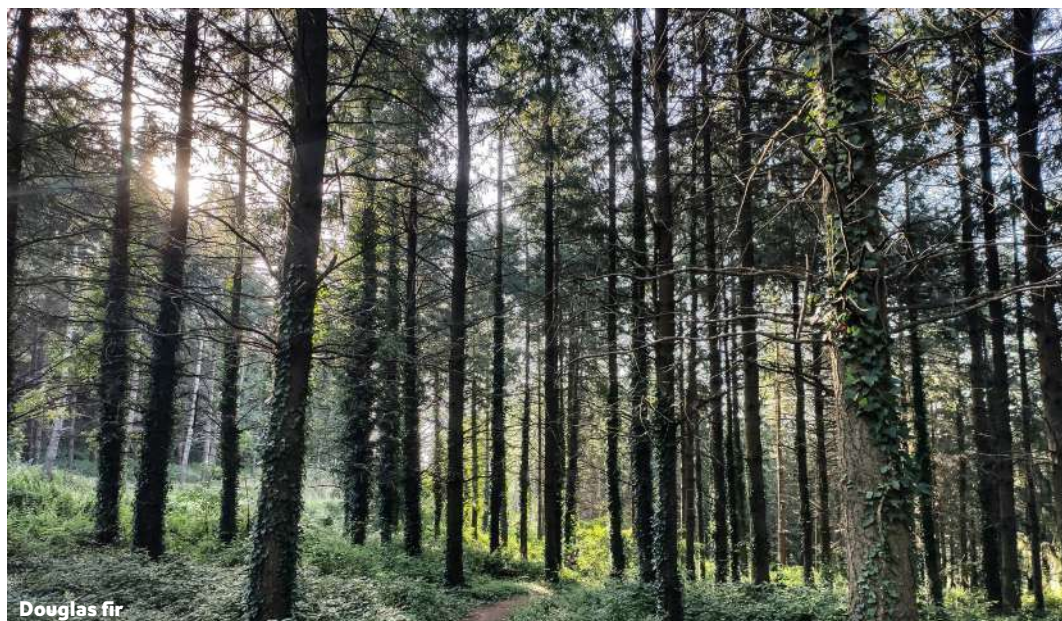
It is a conical evergreen tree which grows in a **conical shape** and can grow up to **50 meters**. From its bark, we can get **turpentine**, which is used to make paints and varnishes. Its wood is used to make **furniture, beams and paper**. From its bark as well as from its leaves, we can get turpentine oil, which is used as an ointment.

Its fruit is the **pineapple**, which can reach 10-15 centimetres.

Nowadays, in Sant Hilari there are different fields where you can see large fir plantations, which are sold at **Christmas**. Formerly, most of these fields grew potatoes.

### **SWEET CHESTNUT (*Castanea sativa*)**

It is a deciduous tree that can grow **up to 20 meters**. Its leaves are large, long and serrated. Its fruit is the **chestnut**, which is edible and really prized as a food in this area.





## Flora

The wood extracted from this tree is white and soft, and it is often used as **firewood or to make boxes**. Its fruit is the horse chestnut, very similar to the chestnut, although it is usually larger and does not have a tail. In the past, it was believed that carrying a chestnut in your pocket cured headaches, bruises and toothache.

### MONTEREY PINE (*Pinus radiata*)

It is an evergreen tree, very sensitive to pests, especially to the processionary caterpillar pest. It differs from the other pines in Catalonia because its **leaves** come in threes. They are very flexible, bright green, thin and quite short, from 7 to 15 cm.

It comes from the southern coast of California and it **grows quickly**, that is why it has often been used in repopulation. Its **wood** is often used to make paper pulp and furniture.

### SPANISH BROOM (*Spartium junceum*)

It is an evergreen shrub which mainly grows in **sunny places**, in dry sandy soils. It is typical of the **Mediterranean forest**, widespread throughout Catalonia. It is 1 to 3 meters tall and is a very branched shrub. The branches are long, thin, green, tough and very flexible.

It is known as **rush broom or weaver's broom**, since they were (and still are) traditionally used to make brooms as well as baskets and ropes. It blooms from April to June with very fragrant yellow flowers. It is often found on paths and roads slopes.



Chestnuts



Monterey pine

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## Flora

### THYME (*Thymus vulgaris*)

It is considered a semi-shrub plant which can be 30-40 cm tall. It lives in sunny lands, not too high.

It blooms in March and April. The **flowers** are small, pinkish white. It is aromatic and medicinal with many properties and uses. In ancient Egypt, it was used for embalming mummies, and the Romans used it in the kitchen to give an aromatic flavour to wines and cheese. It is probably one of the plants in our country which is most rooted in our traditional and popular culture.

As a remedy, it is a plant that cures everything thanks to the properties of "thymol" as a **bactericide and fungicide**. It also has other properties and uses; we can get essential oil from it. It is a digestive plant and stimulates appetite. It is antiparasitic since it fights the parasites and intestinal worms that children suffer from. Thanks to its bactericidal properties, it is perfect for caring for and keeping teeth and gums healthy, and for curing infections in the mouth.

It is a **good disinfectant and a good expectorant**, and it is used for colds, sore throats and coughs. It helps to close and heal wounds and cuts on the skin. It cures urinary apparatus infections. It helps to regulate the menstrual cycle and it is good for hair growth, since it stimulates capillary circulation.

As a food, it can be used to make soup, and it is one of the best plants for making honey, one of



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## Flora

the most delicious. It is a very powerful plant in aromas, a real extract of flavour. A good habit to enjoy it in the kitchen is to always add a pinch of dried thyme in any stew or salad.

It can be taken as an **infusion or drink**, obtaining a very vigorous tonic for both physical and mental levels, and for eliminating headache. It can be eaten dry, tender and even fried if it is harvested in the spring when the sprouts are tender. Moreover, it is a good mosquito repellent and it is also used to put in wardrobes in order to prevent moths on clothes.

### **OREGANUS** (*Origanum vulgare*)

It is a plant native to the Mediterranean regions, aromatic and used for medicinal and culinary uses.

It grows on forest edges and in wet meadows. The **leaves** are small and oval, dark green, with fuzz on the underside. They have stimulating effects and promote digestion. It blooms in early summer and the flowers are small, pink and group forming very attractive sprigs.

Its **leaves** can be used to make oil to cure respiratory illnesses and burns. In Mediterranean cuisine, it is mostly used when it is dry and chopped into soups, to marinate meats, salads and very popular to give its peculiar taste to pizzas.

### **BRECKLAND THYME** (*Thymus serpyllum*)

This perennial, aromatic shrub with medicinal properties belongs to the thyme family. It is also



Oreganus

known as wild thyme, creeping thyme or elfin thyme. It **smells** like a mixture between thyme and oregano. It grows up to 25 cm. Its **leaves** are small and dark green. It blooms in early summer. Its **flowers** are small and purple-pink.

As an infusion, it is good for stomach aches and it soothes cough. This plant grows in **arid, poor and well-drained soils**. It tolerates water shortages and periods of drought. It is also used in gardening since it requires little maintenance.

### SPANISH LAVENDER (*Lavandula stoechas*)

It is a small shrub that can grow up to 80 cm. It is also known as topped lavender and French lavender.

It blooms in spring and the **flowers** are pink to violet produced on spikes at the end of its stems. Its leaves are 2 to 4 cm long, tomentose, and with the ends turned inward.

It is a **medicinal plant**, traditionally used to cure chest diseases, to combat fatigue, headaches and nervous tension. It is used in medicine for its disinfectant properties. Its flowers were used to produce aromatic wine.

You will avoid moths if you use them to make small bundles and put them among your clothes in wardrobes and drawers. It was thought to have the magical property of scaring spirits, that is why bouquets were hung at front doors.





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Font d'en Gurb

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## Fauna

The **fauna** of Les Guilleries is very diverse. In this itinerary, we stand out mainly birds and some mammals.

With regard to **birds**, one of the most frequently seen is the finch, a small bird that has a white stripe on the wing. It usually flies in groups. They are usually seen in crops, pastures, forests and groves. During the breeding season, the male sings a loud song because it has a territorial instinct and defends a piece of land from which it gets the seeds it eats.

We also find the common linnet, a bird that has a song similar to that of the **canary**. Regarding its food, it mainly eats herb seeds, although the offspring also reinforces its diet with caterpillars. Regarding its colours, the male's chest is intense red. They have dark cheeks with a small light spot in the centre, grey nape and short grey beak.

Another bird also seen along the route is the **European goldfinch**. This bird also has a very cheerful song similar to that of the canary. It mainly eats sunflower seeds, wheat and some insects during breeding. Regarding its plumage, the head has three colours: red, white and black. The front of the body is formed by ochre, white and brown tones.

On the other hand, the most present mammal on this route is the **hedgehog**, although it is



Finch



European goldfinch

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## Fauna

difficult to see during the day. It weighs about 1kg and measures 13 to 30 cm; males are usually larger and heavier than females. Its nose is mobile and pointy, its eyes and ears are small and rounded.

Although they cannot be seen along the way, it is important to remark two species of mammals very present in the territory of Les Guilleries, in general: the **fox** (*Vulpes vulpes*), a species that has given its name to the territory because the toponym of Guilleries means "land of guilles (foxes)" as they used to be plentiful in this area; and the **wild boar** (*Sus scroga*), a mammal that has recently reproduced so much in this area that we could even be talking about overpopulation. Nowadays, the dominant is of a hybrid breed from the mating of two specimens: pigs and semi-wild pigs.



Hedgehog



Wild boar



Path to Font d'en Gurb



## Places of interest - Font d'en Gurb and Castell de Mascarbó

The route goes through a wooded area, but always parallel to the old road to Vic. It is an area where many residents go for a walk, it is easily accessible, with lots of vegetation and near the village. Along the way you can find different points of natural and cultural interest such as:

### FONT D'EN GURB

This spring is located in the middle of the route, at about 3.5 km from the town centre. There are currently **two springs** and also a picnic table where you can sit and eat.

The place is in a ravine through which a stream passes, known as Sot de la Barraca. This spring was repaired in 1926, coinciding with the year when some excavation works were done in the castle on the hill. In fact, the name of the spring comes from the domus (fortified house or castle) located just above.

### CASTELL DE MASCARBÓ

The castle is located just above the hill where the spring is currently located. The castle, fortified house or domus, belonged to the Gurb family, one of the wealthiest in the town. It was formerly known as **Domus de la Rovira**, but is now popularly known as Castell de Mascarbó.



## Places of interest - Font Vella

The castle is documented from **1252**, but is now in ruins. There are only four walls left, a staircase and some loopholes. It is a privileged place for its panoramic view. In 1926, after some excavations were made, Font d'en Gurb arose.

**Gurb's family** is honoured on the coat of arms of the town and, moreover, two of the four giants of the town are named after them: Bernat and Blanca.

### FONT VELLA

Font Vella is a natural water spring which was first analysed in 1917 and was **declared for public use** on 27th March 1956. The spring analysis described it as a **very pure and superb water**.

In the 20th century, Font Vella became an **emblematic place** in the town where the first holidaymakers who came to spend their summer in Sant Hilari went to take the demineralised water from this spring in order to complement the intake of waters from the Font Picant, which were calcium and bicarbonate-rich waters.

Over time, more or more people summered in the town, which provided economic growth in the town. Apart from their healthy interest, the springs soon became a **meeting point** where



Castell de Mascarbó ruins

## Places of interest - Font Vella

young and old had the water with anise and people spent the summer afternoons in the cool under the shade of the trees that are still preserved in the park.

To complement the offer to the park visitors, a hut was built, where they could buy food and all kinds of drinks.

Some years later, Font Vella also became a large bottling and distribution company which has spread the name of the town to all corners of the country.

Nowadays, there is a **monolith** at the top of the spring, work of the sculptor **Domènec Fita**. On it, there are sculpted some verses **Jacint Verdaguer**, one of the great Catalan poets, wrote in 1983 on the occasion of his visit to Sant Hilari to talk, in a process of reconciliation, with Bishop Morgades. His verses say, Tenia set d'aigua pura, lo meu cor enfebrosit, i enyorava la dolçura de la deu de l'infinít. Com el raig d'eixa Font Vella aboqueu vostra canella en mon cor que s'esbadella i em veureu, Jesús, guarit. In English, we could translate them as I was thirsty for pure water, my heart was feverish, and I missed the sweetness of the fountain of infinity. Like the lightning of that Font Vella, pour your cinnamon into my shattered heart and you will see me, Jesus, healed.



Font Vella



Parc de la Font Vella



Views from Castell de Mascarbó

## Recommendations when going to the forest:



Plan your trip well before going into the woods.



Before setting off, keep the weather in mind.



Adapt your equipment (clothing, shoes...) to the activity.



It is advisable to bring some food, water and a mobile phone with the battery fully charged.



Calculate the time of the activity well. Count how long the trip will take, so that you won't have to leave when it gets dark.



Call the emergency teams at 112 if you need so.



If you see any incident along the route (fallen trees, broken signs, etc.), you can send the photos and location to the email [oficinaturisme@santhilari.cat](mailto:oficinaturisme@santhilari.cat) or by Whatsapp to the phone 972 86 96 86.



In case of bringing a dog or a pet, it is advisable to bring it tied. You can find cattle grazing near the routes.

## And remember that in Sant Hilari Sacalm we take care of nature, please:



Do not leave or throw rubbish in the forest



Do not break or pull up vegetation



Do not light a campfire unless it is in an enabled space.

\*From 15th March to 15th October, no fire can be started on forest land without permission.

# Sant Hilari Sacalm

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