

Benahavis – River deep, mountain high

To paraphrase the Ike and Tina Turner's hit that first published the 1966. It was not a big seller in the U.S. even though the song is considered to be producer Phil Spector's best song. In England, beating the other hand, it came third on the bestseller list. The song was released again in 1969 and has since been Tina Turner's signature song. What does this have to do with Benahavis? I will describe two walks around the village with these characters.



Let's start with the heavenly journey. We took the car and turned left up the hill at the beginning of the main street and drove past the police station, on up to the roundabout, turn right and go all the way up on the tarmac. Right from the start you will be mesmerized by the views down towards Marbella and all the way down to the lighthouse in Faro.

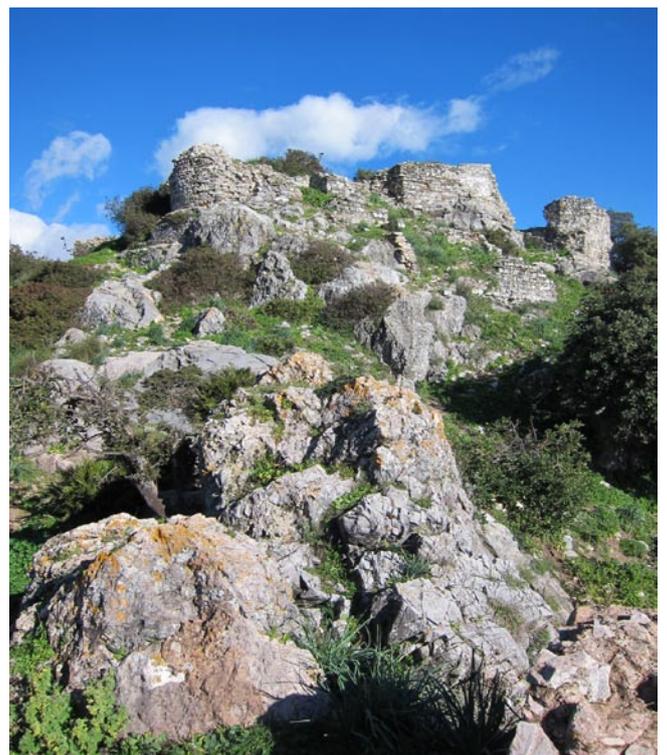
The road up to the Castillo Montemayor is on forest roads or perhaps we should

say the jeep roads. It is steep. Good shoes are a must. Maybe also good golf fitness, if one can say so.

Halfway up, you see a pair of gates belonging to a lonely house on top of a mountain. Magnificent views in all directions. Here you can stand and take brake and just enjoy the views.

Our road goes sharply to the left and continue up. We go and chat and look down in the vales. To the right is the closed Monte Mayor golf course. After a few hundred meters is a turning area. We take a break under a large tree. Little water and a few minutes rest will do fine before the final route.

Here begins a climb up to the castle. The trail is steep and narrow. It descends quite steep and the trail has gravel and stone surface. One need not be afraid, but take it slowly. It gets a little climbing up on the rocks, but soon we are up at





the castle ruins. It was a little smaller than I expected. But given the views I understand the moorish sultan Havis when he around year one thousand built the castle up here at 576 meters altitude.

From here you can see the attacking ship - everything from Gibraltar to the lighthouse Faro. Pirates were quite common at the time. This was also the robbers. Havis build several defenses in the area, for example, in Benahavis, Dadin, Los Arqueros. To mark the highest point, they have put up a little pillar on top of the ruins. It's pretty hard to get an idea of how the castle looked like, even if you can identify where the towers stood.

On the way down you can see three golf courses, Marbella Club, Padierna Golf Club and said Montemayor. They are a bit secluded, away from the coast hectic golflife. The trail gets a little more difficult to go down

with its loose gravel, but after a few hundred meters, you are back on the road and enjoy the downhill all the way down to the village. Overall, our walk has taken one and a half hour.

In the area around Benahavis are several tracks by the moors as watchtowers. Torre Esteril in Los Arqueros, Torre Tramones, Romera, Campanillas, Bena Navy are some of the historic buildings that you can explore.

So to the River deep. At the other end of Benahavis is water reservoir which gets its water from the Guadalmina river, which later goes down to the Mediterranean. To get there, just continue past the Restaurante El Castillo straight ahead.

There is plenty of parking. Walk the road over the bridge. The house on the left side usually have a couple of donkeys grassing on their meadows.



You will pass the cute house that is located on the shore and owned by the Water Board. Now you are in front of the dam and going across to the other side. Then just follow the shore back to the parking lot. The walk around the pond takes only twenty minutes, but there's a little detour well worth taking.

At the western point of the reservoir is a walkway down to the village along the edge of the river. Take it! Go about three hundred meters. There are two benches in the sun. Perfect for a cup of coffee. Turn back, there's nothing to see the rest of the way. You'll be right down to the back of the sports hall.

Once you are back to water reservoir continue around. A comfortable round in about an hour.

It is a popular area for local residents Spaniards to walk in.

