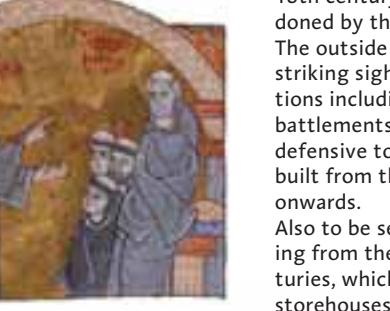


ROUTES AROUND THE MONASTERY OF SANT PERE DE RODES
THE HISTORIC SITES OF THE RODES HILLS, DOMINATED BY THE MONASTERY OF SANT PERE, ALSO INCLUDE A SERIES OF PLACES OF CONSIDERABLE HISTORICAL INTEREST. THESE CAN HELP TO UNDERSTAND HOW THE MAJOR FEUDAL POWER CENTRE RULED BY THE ABBOT WORKED, AND HOW THE LANDSCAPE OF THE AREA DEVELOPED.

WE WOULD LIKE TO RECOMMEND SOME PLACES OF INTEREST TO ROUND OUT YOUR VISIT TO THE MONASTERY OF SANT PERE DE RODES.



Benedictine monks.
© BNF - Service reproduction

1 Monastery of Sant Pere de Rodes
The first references to the monastery appear in documents dating from the 9th century, though recent archaeological excavations have revealed remains from the 5th century. The monastery as it appears today developed gradually from those distant beginnings up to the late 18th century, when it was abandoned by the monks. The outside of the monastery is a striking sight, with its fortifications including walls topped by battlements and the remains of defensive towers with arrow slits, built from the late middle ages onwards.

Also to be seen are buildings dating from the 17th and 18th centuries, which were used as storehouses, cellars and accommodation for the servants who lived with the monks outside the monastic cloisters.



The hospital was the place where the pilgrims could spend the night. It consisted of two storeys and its architecture features *opus spicatum*, or herringbone stonework, a type of wall which was typical of buildings of the 10th and 11th centuries.

Pilgrim.
Fototeca.cat



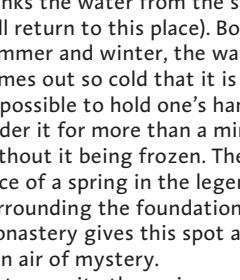
MHC

2 The pilgrims' hospital
This is an 11th-century building, connected with Sant Pere de Rodes' role as a centre of pilgrimage from the early middle ages onwards. The pilgrims were attracted by the numerous holy relics which were kept in the monastery church. In the year 1088 pope Urban II issued a bull allowing the celebration of a Jubilee at the monastery, every year in which 3rd May fell on a Friday. From then on the number of pilgrims increased considerably.



MHC

3 The field terraces
The steps to the right of the monastery square lead up to a point where there is a choice between two paths. The right-hand one is a goat track going up to the castle of Sant Salvador (point 10 on the route plan), and the left-hand one goes up a narrow path to an area of field terraces held up by dry stone walls. These walls, some of them in ruins, probably date from the 17th and 18th century, a period when there was a major expansion in wine-growing which led to the building of terraces on practically all the mountains around cape Creus.



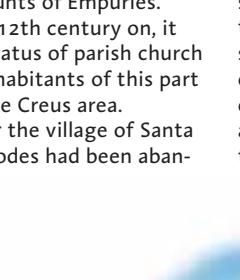
MHC

4 The vegetable gardens
The vegetable gardens were on the large piece of levelled ground in the south-eastern part of the monastery complex. All the cultivated land is surrounded by large buttresses which, by adapting the natural slope of the mountain, are able to support the whole of the garden area.



MHC

5 The water channel, tank and wash house
The imposing walls and buttresses which support the large levelled area of the vegetable gardens may have been built in two stages. The part with the first three buttresses was probably built in the modern period, perhaps in the 17th century, and has a dry stone wall, without mortar of any kind. Behind the walls lies a rubble fill which is up to a metre and a half thick. Between the car park and the road to El Port de la Selva there is a small hill. On the top of this some post holes cut into the rock can be seen, along with the remains of dry stone walls.



MHC

6 The buttresses
El coll del Bosc
The butresses
The font dels Monjos
The Abbot's palace
ALTERNATIVE ROUTE FROM THE MONASTERY TO THE VILLAGE OF SANTA CREU DE RODES: POINTS 11 | 12

Time: total 60 minutes, up and down. Difficulty: medium-high. Take great care near the cliffs, especially on days when there are strong winds.

7 The water channel, tank and wash house
The butresses
The font dels Monjos
The Abbot's palace
ALTERNATIVE ROUTE FROM THE MONASTERY TO THE VILLAGE OF SANTA CREU DE RODES: POINTS 11 | 12

Time: total 15 minutes, up and down. Difficulty: low

8 The Abbot's palace
El coll del Bosc
The butresses
The font dels Monjos
The Abbot's palace
ALTERNATIVE ROUTE FROM THE MONASTERY TO THE VILLAGE OF SANTA CREU DE RODES: POINTS 11 | 12

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ALTERNATIVE ROUTE FROM THE MONASTERY TO THE VILLAGE OF SANTA CREU DE RODES: POINTS 11 | 12

The foundation of a church dedicated to St. Helen is no coincidence if the link between this saint - mother of the emperor Constantine - and the discovery of the True Cross is borne in mind, together with the multitude of place names connected with the Cross in these mountains.

Restored in 1992, the church was included in the project to restore the monastery of Sant Pere de Rodes.

From the Santa Creu village square it is possible to go back through the southern gate, the side where the monastery is, or to pass through the northern gate, which takes one along a well-trodden path to the large La Pallera car park.

done, Santa Elena continued to be used for worship for a long time. During the 19th century gatherings and festivals were held there every 3rd May, the last time being in 1880. This was when a period of despoliation began, during which all the images and decorations were lost.

Like the village which surrounded it, the church belonged to the monastery from the 10th century onwards, having been donated by the counts of Empúries. From the 12th century on, it had the status of parish church for the inhabitants of this part of the cape Creus area.

Even after the village of Santa Creu de Rodes had been abandoned, the church continued to be used until the 19th century. Most of the structures which survive today go back to rebuilding work carried out in 1283. The castle belonged to the counts of Empúries, and its history is closely entwined with that of the monastery and the relations which existed at different times between the nobles and the monks. When the castle was abandoned as a military site, it continued to be used by the monks as a watchtower in order to warn the villages in its domains of the arrival of pirates.

Prominent among the ruins are the defensive structures: the walls and the base of the defensive tower situated at the northern end. There is also a water tank in the outer part of the castle, and a privy, or mediaeval toilet, near the cliff. However, the most impressive memory visitors take away with them is the spectacular view of the Empordà plain which stretches out beneath this 630 metre high viewpoint.

The village of Santa Creu de Rodes was abandoned in the middle of the 16th century, for unknown

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MONASTERY OF SANT PERE DE RODES

GUIDED TOURS BY ARRANGEMENT
Tours led by specialised guides are available for parties and school groups. Information and bookings: tel. 972 387 559

OPENING HOURS
From 1st June to 30th September:
10am – 7.30pm
From 1st October to 31st May:
10am – 5pm

FACILITIES FOR VISITORS TO THE MONASTERY
Toilets
Bar restaurant (Tel. 972 194 233)
Audiovisual
Guided tours
Shop (Tel. 972 387 559)

THE MONASTERY IS CLOSED ON THESE DAYS
• Every Monday (except public holidays)
• 1st & 6th January, and 25th & 26th December

FREE ENTRANCE TO THE MONASTERY ON THESE DAYS
• Every Tuesday
• 18th May, international museum day
• 20th May (local holiday)
• 23rd April (Saint Jordi)
• 11th September (Catalan national holiday)
• European Heritage Days

INFORMATION
Monastery of Sant Pere de Rodes
Camí del Monestir, s/n
17489 El Port de la Selva. Alt Empordà
Telephone 972 194 004
Fax 972 194 231

Museum of History of Catalonia
Plaça de Pau Vila, 3
08003 Barcelona
Telephone 932 254 700
www.mhcat.cat

Text / Content: Sònia Masmartí. **Design:** eggassociats. **Photographs:** Basi Moncayo. **Nature info:** Gonçal Luna / Agnès Perelló (AP). **Map:** Hugo Prades. **Coordination:** Anna Cisneros.

BASIC RULES FOR BEHAVIOUR IN A NATURAL SETTING
The natural setting of the historic buildings of the Rodes hills is part of the cape Creus natural park. This is a relatively fragile environment, and as such care must be taken at all times not to upset its natural balance.
During your stay in this area, it is important that you abide by the following rules of behaviour.

Pets
If you have a dog with you, you should always keep it on a lead and under control, as it can bother other people, frighten grazing animals or harm the environment by digging in the ground and destroying plants. Dogs are not allowed in the monastery. Dog owners are responsible at all times for any damage or harm which may be caused by their animals.

Historic buildings
Do not climb on historic buildings or stone walls; you may damage the walls and the mortar which holds them together, and this can be dangerous. If you go up to the castle of Sant Salvador de Verdera, take great care near the cliffs and above all keep an eye on any children who are with you.

Unauthorised camping
Unauthorised camping is not allowed anywhere on the mountain.

OTHER IMPORTANT POINTS. RECOMMENDED PICNIC PLACES
Fire
Never light fires of any kind, anywhere on the mountain. In summer and during periods of drought, special care must be taken to prevent any risk of fire. Never drop cigarette ends or used matches on the mountain.

Rubbish
Do not leave or bury rubbish in the countryside, as this may cause harm to people or animals and pollute the environment, as well as messing up the landscape. Rubbish must be taken away and placed in the containers at La Pallera car park, or in the first village you come to.

Noise
Loud noises should be avoided as far as possible, including shouting, radios and the like. In the countryside noise travels a long way.

Plants and flowers
Please keep to existing paths and tracks. Do not break off branches or pull up plants and flowers. If you want a souvenir, take a photograph.

The Natural Setting
The cape Creus peninsula is made up of various spurs of the Rodes hills, where the monastery of Sant Pere de Rodes is located. The area includes mountains over 600 metres (2,000 feet) in height, with ravines carved out by streams. The vegetation of this landscape is typically Mediterranean, the result of many years of development, in which a mosaic of dry meadows and patches of forest have replaced former vineyards. The animal life is equally rich, and a wealth of species take advantage of the monastery's surroundings as a habitat. Since 1998 the area has been part of the natural park of cape Creus, which includes both marine and land environments.

The Holm Oak (*Quercus ilex*)
This perennial tree is the most typical species of Mediterranean landscapes, and is prominent around Sant Pere: its leaves are dark green and shiny, leathery on the front and downy on the back. The latter feature means that the species experiences minimal transpiration during the extremely dry summers of this geographical area. Holm oak wood was the traditional raw material for making charcoal.

The White-Leaved Rockrose (*Cistus albidus*)
This is one of a group of shrubs which are highly characteristic of the Mediterranean region. Its whitish leaves may wither during periods of drought and swell up again when water becomes available once more. Its appearance is not particularly attractive, but it produces large flowers of a bright fuchsia colour.

The Resinous Rockrose (*Cistus monspeliensis*)
This is also known as the black rockrose because of the colour of its leaves, which are long and blackish-green. Paradoxically, its flowers are brilliant white in colour, with yellow hearts, though smaller than those of the white rockrose.

ROUTE AROUND THE MONASTERY OF SANT PERE DE RODES

French Lavender (*Lavandula stoechas*)
The aromatic herbs which give Mediterranean woods their smell. One of the most common species here in the park is French lavender, which can be seen along the way from Santa Creu to the monastery. In Catalan it is known as a donkey's head because of its inflorescences topped by purple bracts in the shape of donkey's ears.

GOING FROM THE MONASTERY TOWARDS THE CAR PARK
THE VILLAGE OF SANTA CREU DE RODES
• Time: 15 minutes from the monastery
• Difficulty: low

THE ABBOT'S PALACE
• Time: 2 minutes from the monastery
• Difficulty: low

THE CHURCH OF SANTA ELENA
• Time: total 15 minutes, up and down
• Difficulty: low

LA FONT DELS MONJOS
• Time: 2 minutes from the monastery
• Difficulty: low

ALTERNATIVE FROM POINT 3
THE CASTLE OF SANT SALVADOR DE VERDERA
• Time: 60 minutes from the monastery (up and down)
• Difficulty: medium-high
• Recommendations: care should be taken between points 4 and 5

ROUTE PATH AROUND THE MONASTERY: FROM POINT 1 TO POINT 9
THE MONASTERY OF SANT PERE DE RODES
• Time: 10 minutes from the car park
• Difficulty: low

THE PILGRIMS' HOSPITAL
• Time: 1 minute from the monastery
• Difficulty: low

THE FIELD TERRACES
• Time: 3 minutes from the monastery
• Difficulty: low

THE VEGETABLE GARDENS
• Time: 5 minutes from the monastery
• Difficulty: low

THE WATER CHANNEL, TANK AND WASH HOUSE
• Time: 5 minutes from the monastery
• Difficulty: low

THE BUTTRESSES
• Time: 7 minutes from the monastery
• Difficulty: low

Historic buildings
Restaurant
Caution
Information
Car park

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Museu d'Història de Catalunya

ROUTE AROUND THE MONASTERY OF SANT PERE DE RODES

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