



**100 GREATEST  
CYCLING CLIMBS OF**

# **SPAIN**

A GUIDE TO THE FAMOUS CYCLING  
MOUNTAINS OF MAINLAND SPAIN PLUS  
**MALLORCA AND THE CANARY ISLANDS**

SIMON WARREN



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MOUNTAINS OF MAINLAND SPAIN PLUS  
**MALLORCA** AND THE **CANARY ISLANDS**

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A guide to the famous cycling mountains of mainland Spain  
plus Mallorca and the Canary Islands  
Simon Warren



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FOR CHAR, LUX AND RYDER



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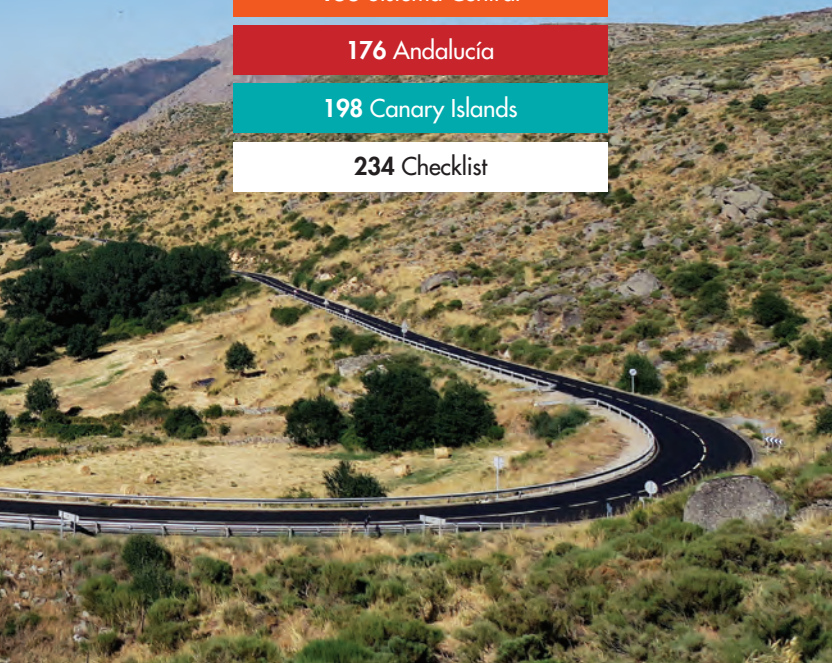
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# How to use the book

## FACTFILE

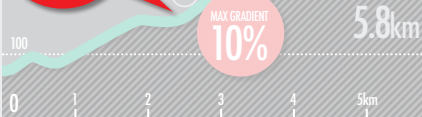
DIRECTIONS: Head north-west out of Palma on Camino de Génova then begin heading south through the two roundabouts on the MA-20.

START ELEVATION	380m
END ELEVATION	302m
MAXIMUM GRADIENT	10%
AVERAGE GRADIENT	5.2%

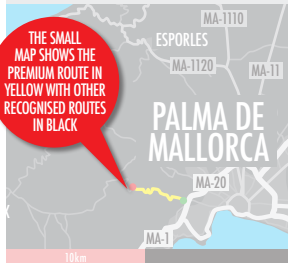
THE FACT FILE TELLS YOU HOW TO FIND THE START OF EACH CLIMB AND LISTS ITS VITAL STATISTICS

THE PROFILE GIVES YOU A SNAPSHOT OF THE CLIMB TOGETHER WITH ITS LENGTH

HERE IS THE APPROXIMATE PLACE WHERE YOU'LL FIND THE STEEPEST GRADIENT ON THE CLIMB



THE SMALL MAP SHOWS THE PREMIUM ROUTE IN YELLOW WITH OTHER RECOGNISED ROUTES IN BLACK



THE LARGER MAP ILLUSTRATES THE ROUTE LOCATION IN MORE DETAIL



## LOCATIONS

On each page you will find two maps: one showing the area the climb sits in and another that pinpoints the exact route. Although you should be able to locate each hill using these, I would always recommend you take a comprehensive map of the area or a GPS/satnav device to cross-reference.

## RATINGS

The climbs are rated within the context of the book. The rating is an amalgamation of gradient, length, the likely hostility of the riding conditions and the quality of the surface. All the climbs are tough, therefore 1/10 equals 'hard', and 10/10 equals 'almost impossible'.



## KEY TO THE MAPS

Motorway	
D Road	
Minor Road	
Climb	
Climb	
Border	
Town	
Scale	





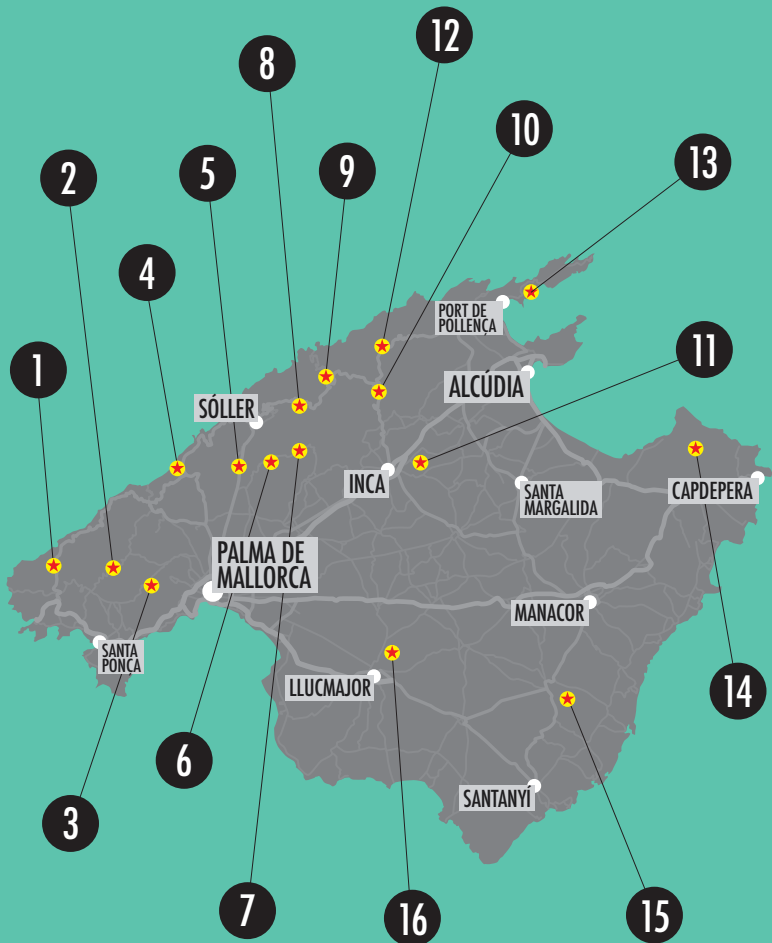
## WARNING

One last thing before we get started. While it may be 30 degrees Celsius in the valley, that doesn't mean it won't be snowing at the top! So always, **ALWAYS** take a jacket. Now, to the mountains!



A scenic view of a winding road on a rocky mountain in Mallorca, with the word 'MALLORCA' overlaid in large teal letters. The road is paved and curves through a valley with sparse green vegetation and grey rock. In the background, more mountains and a clear blue sky are visible.

MALLORCA



MEDITERRANEAN  
SEA



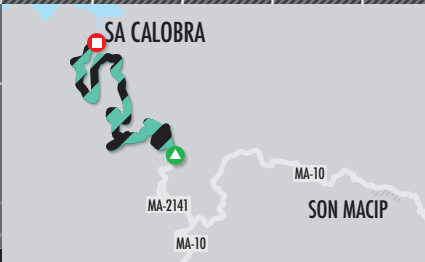
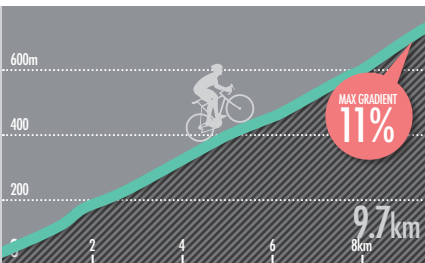
## 9 Sa Calobra

Perfect. Utterly perfect. Well, almost. The first tip for riding Sa Calobra is get there early, especially if it's your intention to put down a fast time, because by mid-morning the coaches will be starting to arrive, ferrying tourists to the fishing village at the bottom. Blocking the hairpins and polluting the air, they are annoying, but without them and the visitors they carry we would not have what is regarded by many as the ultimate cycling climb. Just shy of ten kilometres long, this magnificent tangle of tarmac twists its way from shore to sky through the simply exquisite rocky landscape. To ride it you must of course descend first, so on your way down you can marvel at its beauty and the genius of its construction. Then, after arriving at the base, turn right round and smash it back up. Almost faultless from start to finish, there are two more features, one natural and one man-made, that embellish the road even further. First, after two kilometres, you come to the famous narrowing as the road squeezes between two giant rock faces. Then, within a kilometre of the summit, you reach the 360-degree corner where the road loops round and passes over itself before the final push for the summit, which, to be geographically correct, is the Coll dels Reis. Enjoy!

### FACTFILE

**DIRECTIONS:** Head north from the junction of the MA-10 and MA-2141. Climb up and over the Coll dels Reis, drop down the other side then turn round and GO!

SUMMIT ALTITUDE	723m
HEIGHT GAIN	667m
MAXIMUM GRADIENT	11%
AVERAGE GRADIENT	6.9%







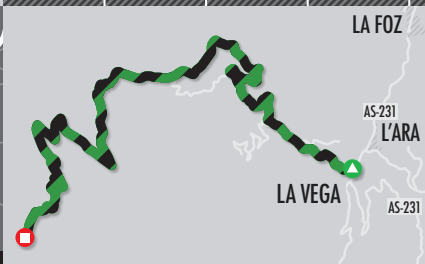
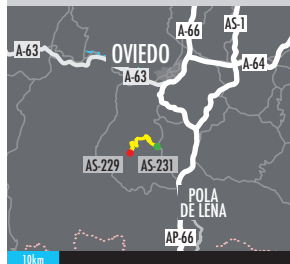
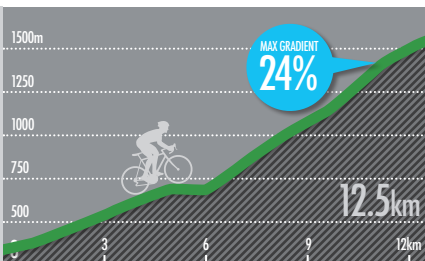
# 38 Alto de l'Angliru

I first rode this beast in the autumn of 2014. Full of bravado, I hit its slopes armed with a 39 at the front and a 28 at the back and it duly pulled my pants down and spanked me. Never before had I been beaten by a mountain and had to do the walk of shame, but never before had I come up against a foe as mighty as the Angliru. Leaving La Vega, the first few kilometres are relatively tame, and they are followed by a short levelling and descent. Following this, however, the madness begins. Hitting you in waves, the sections of stupid-steep 20%+ gradient suck the very marrow out of your bones. One of these savage stretches of gradient you could cope with, it's just all of them added together that keeps punching you until you can't take any more. Each vicious section has a name, such as Les Picones, Cobayos or El Aviru, and, the worst of the lot, Cueva les Cabres. With three kilometres to go, it's here that I was forced to dismount; it was either walk or snap my knees. Reaching 24% at its peak but spending far too long above 20%, this is where the Angliru seals its reputation. Following on, there are more hard ramps, but shorter so allowing better recovery, and then the final kilometre is all but flat to allow you to compose yourself and arrive triumphant at the summit.

## FACTFILE

**DIRECTIONS:** In the centre of La Vega, leave the AS-231 and head west on the RI-2 down the small descent following the sign to Cima L'Angliru.

SUMMIT ALTITUDE	1570m
HEIGHT GAIN	1248m
MAXIMUM GRADIENT	24%
AVERAGE GRADIENT	9.9%

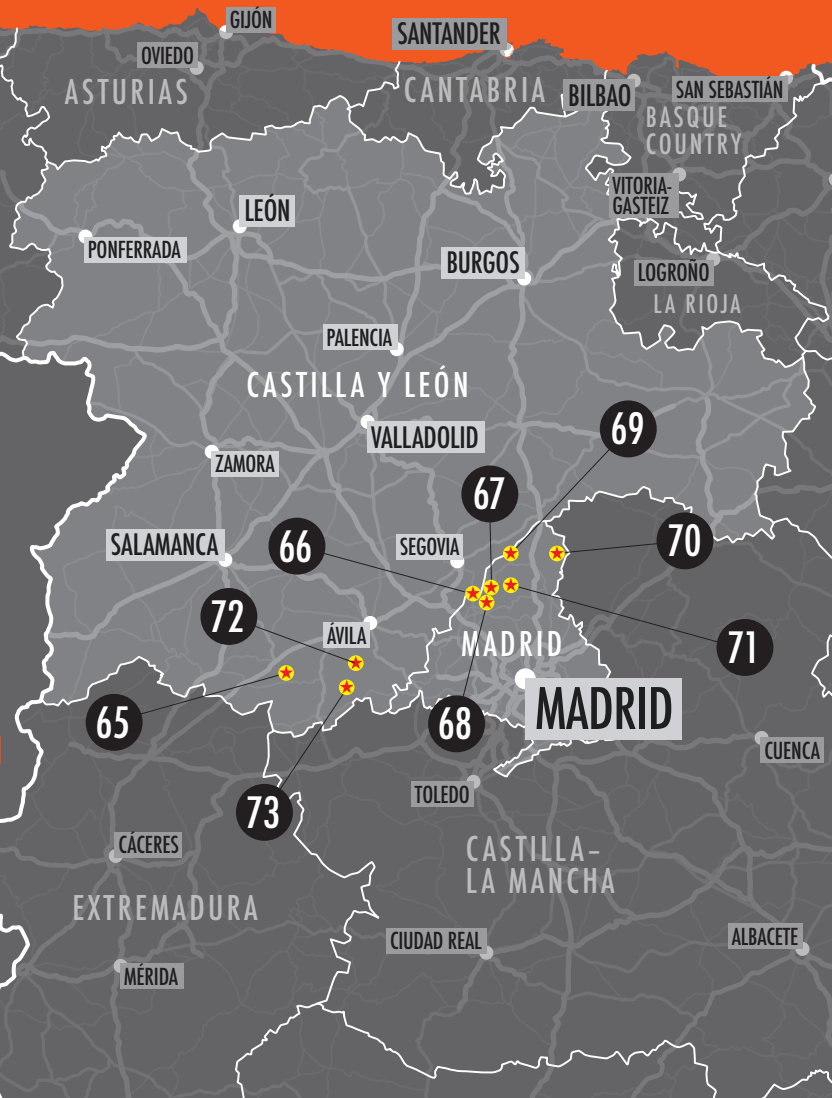


A scenic mountain landscape with a lake and a paved area in the foreground. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The foreground shows a paved area with a wooden railing. The background features rolling mountains and a lake.

# SISTEMA CENTRAL



# BAY OF BISCAY





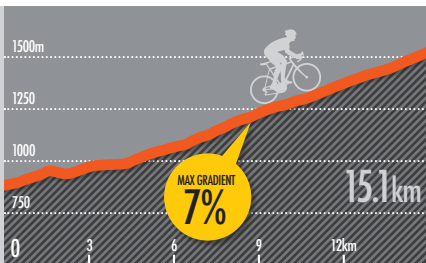
# 72 Puerto de Navalморal

After cresting the summit of this climb, I rolled back a few metres to grab some photos down the valley and at the same time pay homage to the utter perfection of its new surface. It must have been laid just weeks, maybe even days, before my arrival, because it was the finest pitch-black carpet of asphalt I'd ever seen. Hats off once more to the road builders of Spain: you are masters of your craft. Top pro riders tackle this road at close to 30kph thanks to its slope never really exceeding 5%, so it's one you can enjoy romping up rather than grinding up (maybe). Starting in Burgohondo, you can split the ascent into two parts: the first almost-seven kilometres to Navalморal which are extremely easy, and then the eight kilometres that follow which to be honest aren't much tougher. Riding into Navalморal, you reach the Avenue de Gredos which bisects the town and, resisting the urge for a café stop, cross straight over to start the second half. This is the most rewarding part of the ride as you snake across the arid, boulder-strewn hillside that's been baked for millennia under the blazing Spanish sun. Closing in on the summit, you reach the only hairpins en route, a couple of wide, sweeping corners which allow you to soak up the magnificent views before rolling over the top.

## FACTFILE

**DIRECTIONS:** Start the climb on the AV-900 from the T-junction with the AV-902 in Burgohondo and follow the sign north to Navalморal.

SUMMIT ALTITUDE	1514m
HEIGHT GAIN	676m
MAXIMUM GRADIENT	7%
AVERAGE GRADIENT	4.5%





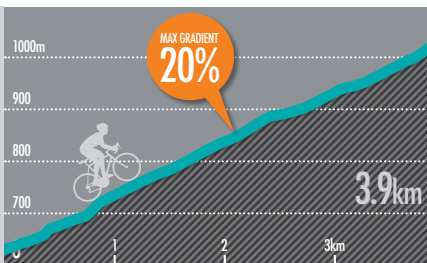
# 92 Wall of Masca

This was the last climb on the last day of my first research trip to the Canaries, and it not only killed my legs, it dug a grave and buried them. I'd heard the rumours about the Wall of Masca, but they had somewhat gone over my head thanks to my preoccupation with Teide, but make no mistake: this road IS a wall. Also, to say it's a popular spot is a slight understatement. The road, its views and the village of Masca are favoured by tourists and cyclists alike, so if you want to avoid congestion on what is in places a very narrow road, then time your ride accordingly. Four kilometres at over 10% is just half the story; yes, this is incredibly tough, but it's also incredibly beautiful with jaw-dropping views over the valley as from Masca this wall snakes across the verdant hillside like that other wall, the Great Wall of China. Lined with neat concrete bollards and littered with hairpins where the gradient can spike as high as 20%, the road inches up the rock face in search of an end. The first time you reach what you expect to be the top, though, I'm sorry, it isn't. The second time? Nope. By now, your will is likely broken, so, thankfully, after two false summits, it's third time lucky and finally you reach the end of one HELL of a road.

## FACTFILE

**DIRECTIONS:** Start the ascent from the roundabout at the eastern edge of Masca and follow the TF-436 all the way to the top.

SUMMIT ALTITUDE	1045m
HEIGHT GAIN	420m
MAXIMUM GRADIENT	20%
AVERAGE GRADIENT	10.8%







# 95 Teide

This is why you've come to Tenerife. All of the island's other climbs are just bit-part actors; Teide is the star, and rightly so. There are many ways to the top, and I urge you to ride them all, but I must choose one for the book and I have picked the route up from Los Cristianos via Vilaflor. The first part of the climb rises relentlessly past villages, a few welcome cafés and through the sparsely tree-covered mountainside. The views are magnificent, the road surface impeccable and the ascent pitched just perfectly on a 6.5% gradient. Reaching a peak after a mere 34 kilometres, you have essentially conquered the climb, but you have only just arrived at the best part. Crossing the summit, you roll across into an alien world of wonder that for all your life could be another planet. Crossing the vast plateau in the shadow of Teide, you soon begin to climb again to the famous Paradores Cañadas del Teide hotel. Here, pro riders check in to live at altitude to boost their bodies' red blood cell count so that when they return to sea level their blood can carry more oxygen to their muscles. However, this is of no concern to us mortals. We are just here for the sights and the journey up to the eventual high point of the road which is one of the most dramatic places you can ride a bike. **JUST AMAZING.**

## FACTFILE

**DIRECTIONS:** Start the climb on the TF-28 once you have passed under the motorway (TF-1). Ride up to La Camella where you turn left on to the TF-51.

SUMMIT ALTITUDE	2324m
HEIGHT GAIN	2248m
MAXIMUM GRADIENT	10%
AVERAGE GRADIENT	4.6%

