

Building licenses suspended for 200 sectors along Catalan coast

Turó del Caldors de Cadaqués and Vall de Santa Magdalena affected by the measure

CATALAN NEWS AGENCY

The Department of Territorial Policy and Public Works has suspended the approval of building licenses for 200 sectors of the Catalan coast, including one area near Cadaqués.

The reason given for the measure was to comply with a Master Development Plan and thus protect some areas of the coastline from overdevelopment.

On May 28 the initial Master Plan for the coastal area was initially approved which affected land not for development and for non-specified development land, establishing three types of protection along a strip 500 metres from the coast.

As a result of the analysis of the master plan the Department of Territorial Policy and Public Works has decided to extend the protection to land for development, and the Minister of the department Joaquim Nadal has commissioned a drafting of the of the Master Development Plan for the Coastal Area.

The general manager for development, Joan Llord, explained yesterday in Girona that the new plan will mean that 200 sectors of land for development along the Catalan coast are within the 500 coastal strip, for which a second master plan will be need to be drafted and that he would like to suspend the licences



/ A recent decision means fewer flats will be built along the Catalan coast / ABRAHAM SEBASTIÀ

for partial plans until the second plan is in an advanced state of development.

VALL DE SANTA MAGDALENA

The Girona Development Commission has resolved to suspend the development project from the preliminary plan from Vall de Santa Mag-

dalena. The project has been approved by the city council and the Commission has decided not to provide it with information as the sector has no guarantee of vitality. The general manager of Development has affirmed that "access to the valley is not guaranteed, there is no public throughfare, there is no man-

agement of the issue of vitality, and for that reason the fundamental issue of accessibility has not been resolved. For this reason, the commission has agreed not to provide information and propose to the minister of the Department of Territorial Policy and Public Works

13 districts show high level of fire risk

The risk of forest fires was high in three provinces of Catalonia, according to the Minister of Environment. The provinces at risk were Baix Penedès, conca de Barbera, Priorat i Ribera d'Ebre, Segarra, Noguera, Pallars Jussà, Garrigues, Segrià i Alt Urgell, Anoia i Alt Penedès and Alt Empordà. Most of the rest of Catalonia had a moderate risk of fire, while the regions near or in the Pyrenees mountains had a low level of risk.

Rafters set out on Noguera Pallaresa River

More than 400 rafters from 30 clubs and associations throughout Europe will attend the 14th annual International Rafting Meet in the Noguera Pallaresa river this weekend. The main attraction of this meet will be a perilous descent by a group of rafters through a 3 km stretch of rapids in Congost de Collegats. Others will go down a calmer section of the river near Pont de Claverol.

Mediaeval fair in Calella this weekend

Calella has been turned into a mediaeval town for the weekend during the 6th annual Mediaeval Fair. The main event for the fair is the opportunity to see artisans producing cakes, cold meat, jewellery. Visitors can watch craftsmen working with leather, wood and ceramics, as well as painters painting. Old-style herbal medicines and books are also on sale. There are also performances of dancers and jugglers for children as well as fortune telling.

3,000 expected for pilgrimage to Montgarri

As many as 3,000 will participate in the traditional pilgrimage to Montgarri today in Val d'Aran. Most participants will be from the valley area, but some will come from nearby French villages as well from the districts of Pallars Sobirà and L'Alta Ribagorça. Ex-Catalan president Jordi Pujol and his wife Marta Ferrusola are also expected to make the pilgrimage on foot to Montgarri

Summer sales predicted to be higher in 2004

ROBERT KIMPLETON

Summer sales got off to a brisk start yesterday in Catalonia with more than 33,000 businesses participating. The sales period will go until August 30, with discounts of as much as 50% off normal prices.

Sales figures during the period are expected to be about 15% higher than last year, and many stores have taken on additional staff to meet the demand. Catalans will spend an average of 150 to 200 euros each on the summer sales.

Many stores will open this Sunday, 4 July as one of the holidays when businesses are allowed to open. Since the hot weather got off to a late start this year, shops report that they have not sold off as much seasonal merchandise as usual, meaning that there will be 10-15% more merchandise on the shelves compared with other years.



Merchants are expecting to sell about 15% more than they did during last summer's sales / EFE