

RECORD OF THE EXPLORATION CAMPAIGN

“CODISERA 2025”

COLECTIVO PIEZO Y COLLABORATORS

This is an AI (*Google LLM*) translation of the text in the original pdf:
MEMORIA DE LA CAMPAÑA DE EXPLORACIÓN “CODISERA 2025”.

Page numbers and approximate layout in this English document correspond to the original Castellano document.

Juan Corrin 11/5/2026

INDEX

1. Objective and exploration zone 4
1.1. Coordinates 4
1.2. Nearby cavities of some importance 5
2. A bit of history 8
2.1. Chronology of explorations 8
2.2. Previous surveys 9
2.3. Geology and hydrology of Codisera 11
3. Explorations en 2025 13
3.1. Notes about the survey work in the cave 13
3.2. Explored sectors 14
3.2.1. Pozo Toni Asensio and Galería Fantasma Norte 18
3.2.2. Seven Simas 20
3.2.3. Sima o pozo de las Chinas 21
3.2.4. Popcorn Climb 24
3.2.5. Climbing the three pits 25
3.2.6. Gatera de arena – sala del pozo del eco – climbing to the exploration area 25
3.2.7. Sala José Luis Nieto - Paso de las pedaletas – Sala terremoto – Pozos Chinos 28
3.2.8. Hall Zabala – La bañera – Escalada Muelle – El tigre – La Gabarra – Galería fantasma Sur 31
4. Next objectives 39
5. Activities participants and acknowledgments 39

GLOSSARY AND NOTES

MCP: English exploration team Matienzo Caves Project.
CP: Piezo Collective.
ETRS89: Datum for all the coordinates.
Msnm: meters above sea level.

a. The anchors have largely been made of stainless steel, aiming to provide greater durability and safety to the installations. Another reason is to avoid deteriorating the space by including perishable anchors that would require future adjustments to the safety measures.
b. Galvanized anchors have been used in temporary locations where they will no longer be used.
c. Each text carries the author's name in this ink colour. The texts and drawings that do not have the author's name attached have been created by Ángel San Juan (Mortacleto) (general descriptive text).

1. Objective and exploration area.

The objective is the exploration of the Codisera cave, referred to by the Matienzo Caves Project as 0039. The aim is to carry out a topography of the cave to search for continuations. Likewise, on the surface immediately above the cavity, we want to review the existing cavities.

1.1. Coordinates

The exploration area is shown in the following graphic. The yellow polygon is included in the area awarded to MCP. The two entrances of the Codisera system are indicated: Codisera and Siete Simas.

The coordinates mentioned in datum ETRS89 are:

- Northwest: 30T 452367 4794391
- Northeast: 30T 452743 4794391
- Southwest: 30T 452367 4793918
- Southeast: 30T 452743 4793996
- Codisera: 30T 452552 4794367
- Siete Simas: 30T 452571 4794050

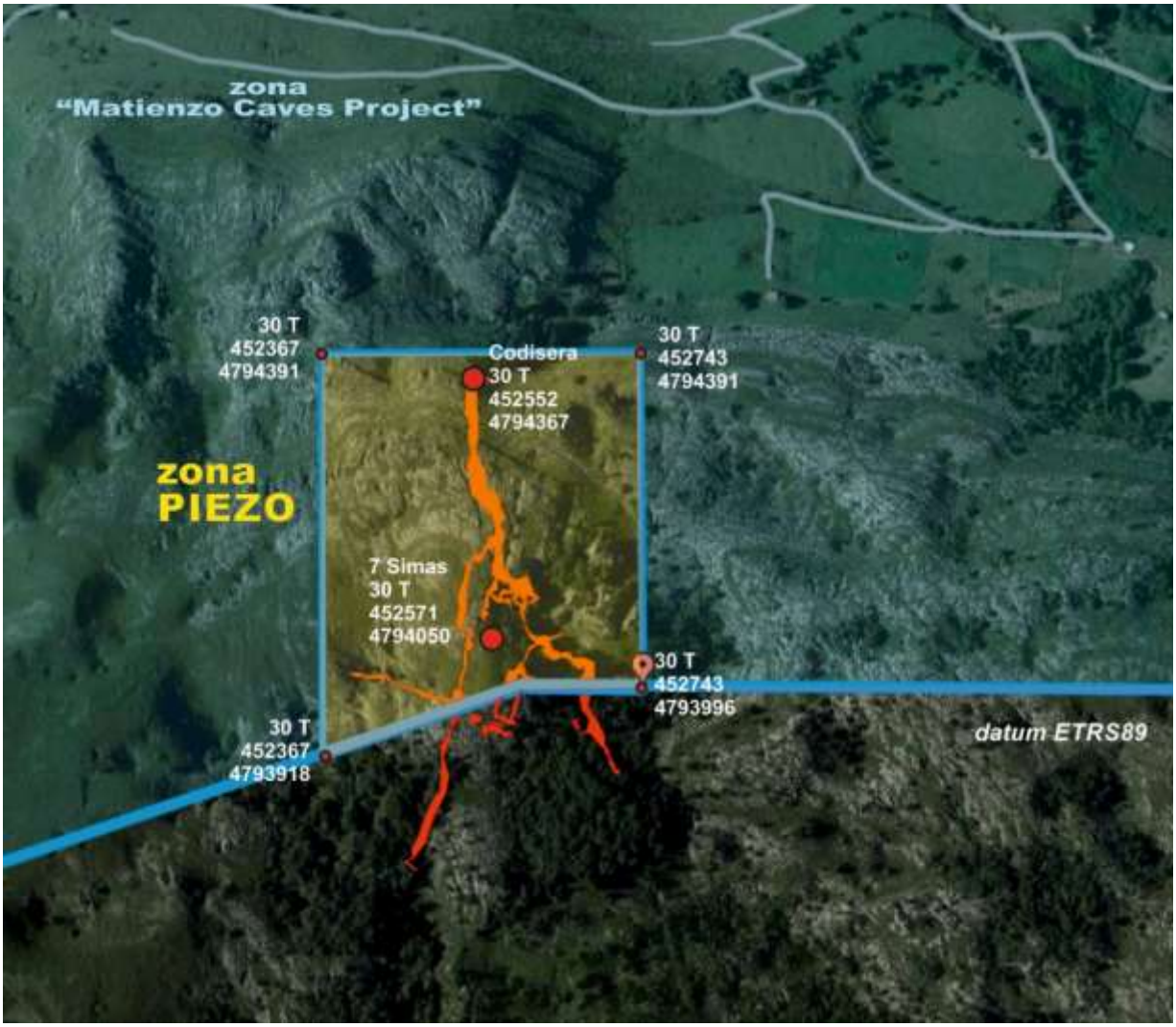


Figure 1: Map of the requested exploration area (satellite photo).

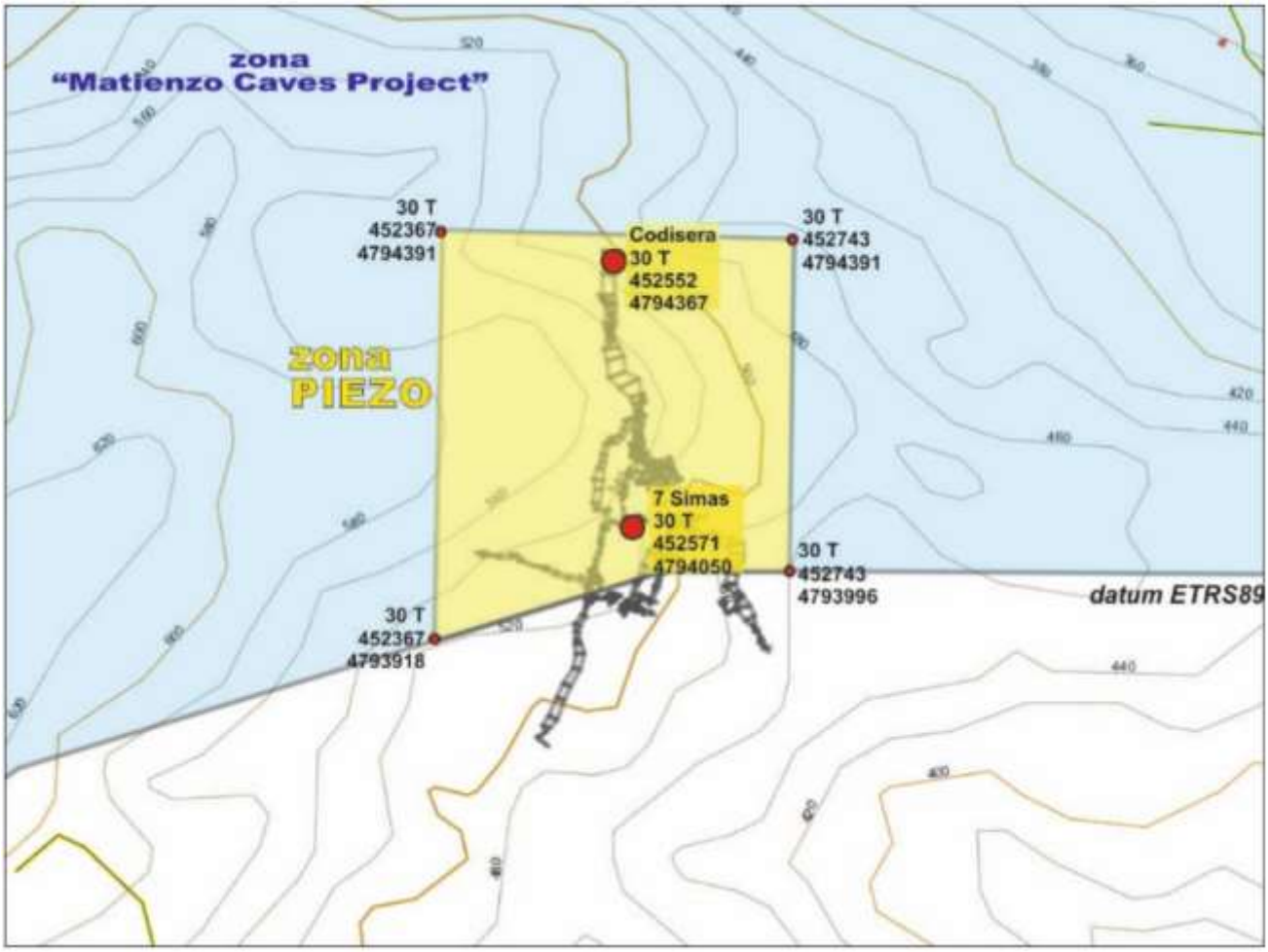


Figure 2 Map of the requested exploration area (topographic map).

1.2. Nearby cavities of some importance.

In the area, there are three cavities of some relevance: the Torca del Acebo, Torca Kunka, and the Torca del Muérdago. There are cavities of varying small depths that have been reviewed in the different MCP campaigns, as well as in several reviews of the CP.

TORCA DEL ACEBO 0687:

Nearby is the Torca del Acebo, with a depth of 80m and coordinates 30T 452395 4794022 545 m above sea level. Designated by MCP 0687, and described according to its publication:

"A blind shaft of 80 m with a holly at the entrance. A small stream flows just below the first ledge, at a depth of 60 m, and a second entrance comes from above. The bottom of the shaft is flat and the two small exits are obstructed with mud and filled with water." (1988)

TORCA DEL MUÉRDAGO 2081

This is located a little further from its entrance, but with features that may suggest common points with Codisera. Named 2081 by MCP, it has a length of 2131m and a depth of 213m, situated at coordinates 30T 452218 4794249 and at an elevation of 561m. According to MCP's description, this cavity is difficult and complex to explore. It has been revisited in various explorations, with progress made after overcoming some entrance blocks. It contains passages of loose rock, small galleries that can flood, and shafts with loose and unstable rock.

TORCA KUNKA 2437

This is a small torca that, due to its dimensions, we include in this selection. It is registered as 2437 in the MCP explorations, with a depth of 110m and a depth of 44m. Its coordinates are 30T 452408 4794150 and it is at 572 meters above sea level. It was originally explored by the Lobetum group from Cuenca, although we do not have more information. *"An open pit of 4 x 2 m with laurel presents a good sound and echo of the stones. A section of 27 m descends to a floor with an excavation. The other route descends 20 m in a crack with an additional drop of 17 m to a small stream. This route has been excavated at a couple of points and currently ends in another excavation in a very narrow crack, but with good drainage. During Easter 2009, the short section was descended and a short excavation entered a passage of 10 m with flows."*

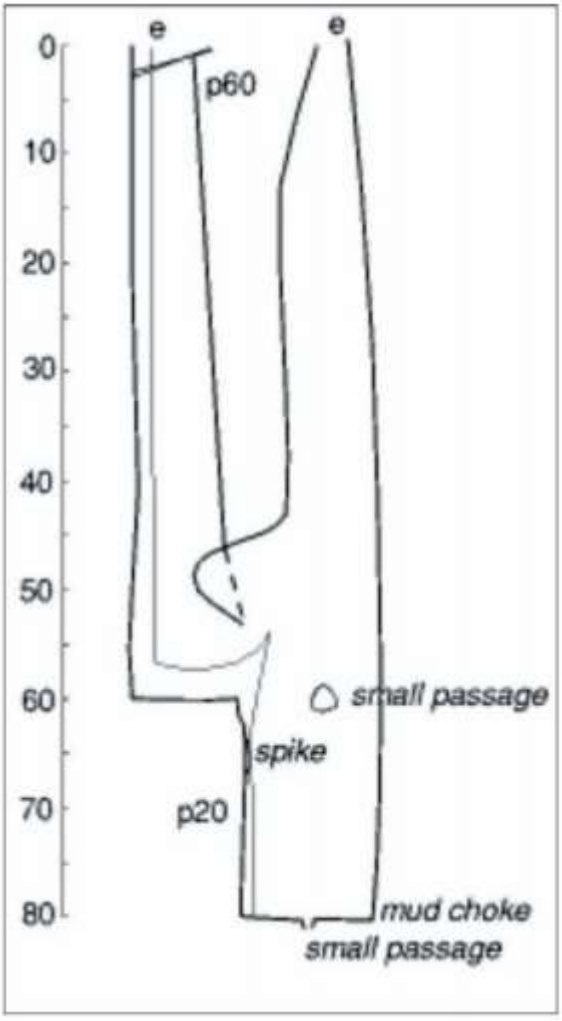


Figure 3 Torca del Acebo 0687 (MCP)

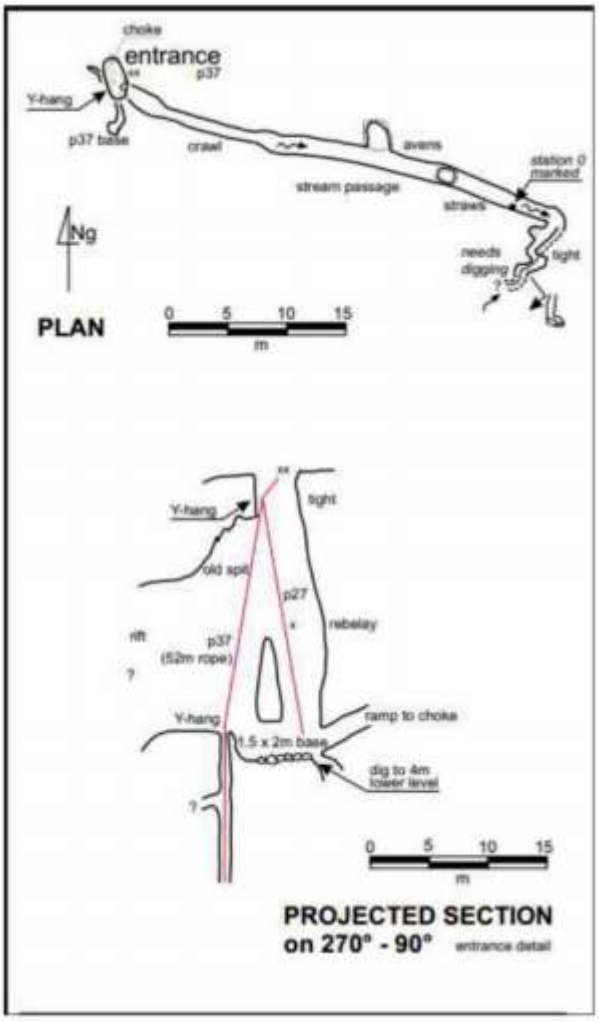


Figure 4 Torca Kunka 2437 (MCP)



Figure 5: Cavities of major relevance

In Figure 5, the proximity of the two most developed cavities, Torca del Muérdago and Codisera, is observed. The correlation does not seem easy; the final part of Torca Muérdago is at a Z=418m. The closest galleries of Codisera are at Z=481m on the first floor (left gallery in Figure 5) and Z=452m in the southern phantom gallery (right gallery in Figure 5). Between the two cavities, there is a sinkhole, which may be either in favor of or against their connection.

At a depth of 390m is the base of the Pozo del Marino, and something similar is found at the pitch of Toni Asensio. This seems to be the level at which a gallery that would connect both cavities should be located. This is something that does not exist, with a horizontal distance of about 250m.

2. A little history

2.1. Timeline of explorations

The Codisera or Coquisera cave has always been known. Due to its easy access, it has been explored for various purposes at different times. It has been used as shelter for livestock, presumably goats, even in more recent times, but there is no evidence of human use for habitation. We believe this is due to its high ventilation, the presence of temporary lakes just a few meters from its entrance, and the lack of a cozy and flat area in the light and shadow zones.
Its name relates to the number of animal bones, probably deposited at the horizontal entrance. There are four important points where they are found: -
- In the first depression near the entrance.
- A little further ahead, in a cubicle to the right.
- A few meters further ahead, in the Pozo de las Chinas.
- At the entrance through seven chasms, at the base of the pot.

Accounts have been documented since the 1960s, even with footage from NO-DO in 1965, a newsreel from the last century. The cavity has been the subject of various studies since the 1960s. Intensive exploration and the first topographic surveys began at that time, documenting the only rescue of which we have record. In 1965, two speleologists, Paco and Juan, entered with ladders to descend a shaft of -45m, which we understand to be the Pozo de las Chinas with the ladder at the top. One of them was left hanging by his ankle for 14 hours face down. Meanwhile, in the village, noticing they had not returned, three speleologists went in and were able to rescue the injured man alive. Everything unfolded in a very precarious manner and with a lot of luck and risk. This highlights the value and importance of the current training of rescue teams, as well as the current means of alerting to the activities carried out.
The first topography we have of Codisera is from the S.E.S.S. group, Speleology Section of the Sautuola Seminar (a seminar dedicated to archaeological research and study in the Cantabrian Museum). It is unknown whether speleological research was conducted until the arrival of MCP. MCP resumed exploration work from around 1994 until a few years ago. Exploration was conducted in specific areas, with climbs remaining to be completed that, in the early stages of the CP, helped to advance new discoveries. Initially, participation was as a collaboration with MCP, and later, in 2025, it was resumed, requesting the area.
This report, the new findings, and survey files will be shared with MCP. The compilation of Matienzo and surrounding areas is of unparalleled exceptionalism.
As an anecdote from excursions outside the speleological realm, we recount one that occurred during a winter exploration. The two temporary lakes were waist-deep, the first lake at the entrance and the one before the gallery of 400 pesetas. In the cold winter environment, due to the airflow inside the cave, we were waiting at the head of the Pozo de las Chinas for our companions who were in another area of the cave. The exploration is divided into groups of 3 or 4 speleologists to expedite the work and avoid long waits for large groups. We began to hear voices, thinking they were our companions. Upon seeing that they were coming from the upper path of the gallery of 400 pesetas, we assumed they were not. When we met, we saw that they were three young locals, about 20 years old, dressed in shorts and t-shirts, heading outside. They told us they had only come in for a walk through the cave and were completely soaked. They were coming out at night, probably having entered at night, while it was raining outside, and were returning at night with makeshift headlamps. We believe that the Guardian Angel of the Pozo de las Chinas is still working overtime.

2.2. Previous surveys



Figure 5 Survey of Codisera S.E.S.S. (around 1964-65)

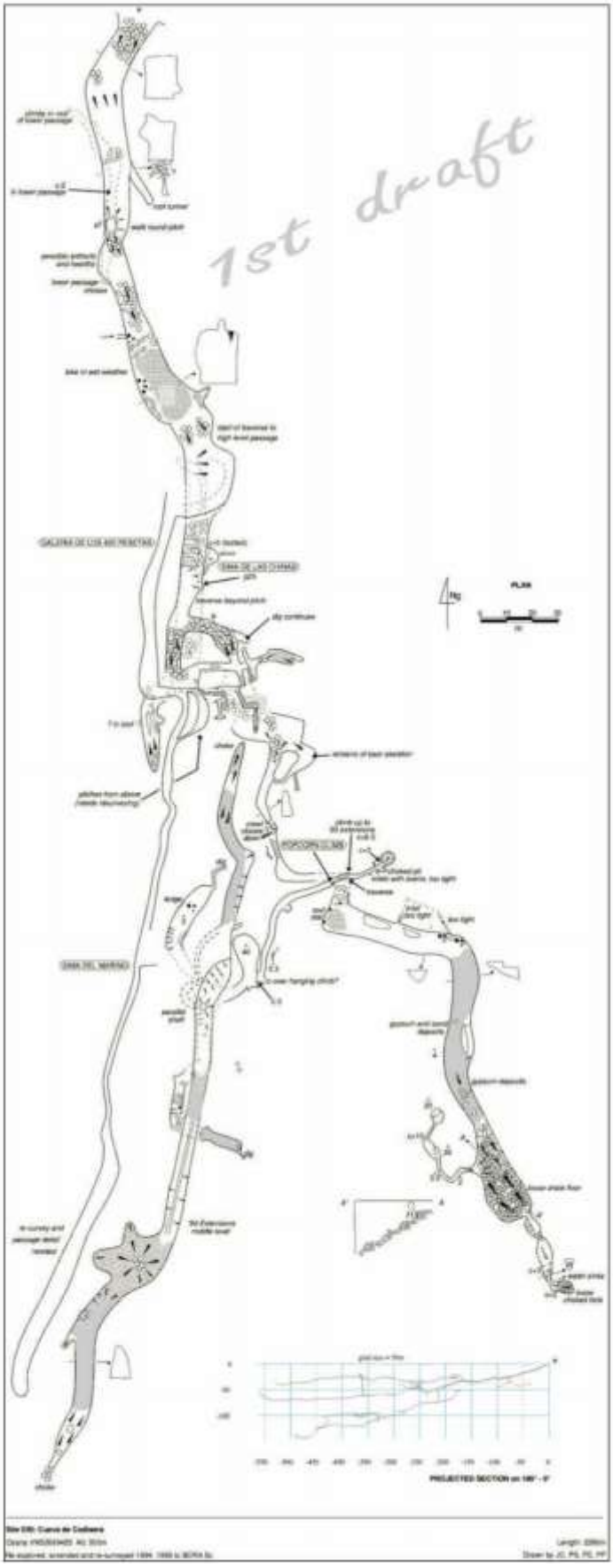


Figure 7 MCP survey 1994-5

2.3. Geology and hydrology of Codisera

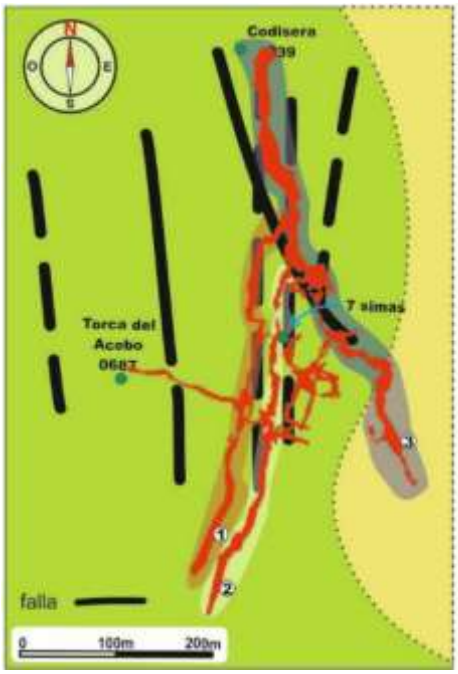


Figure 8 Formation of Codisera

The cavity is located on the geological map. Several well-defined faults are present, predominantly in the N-S direction. The topography perfectly coincides with them. We venture to deduce its origin from them.

The entrance gallery aligns with fault number 3. It is slightly different from the other faults with an orientation of about 117 degrees. It extends from the entrance mouth to the point where the river coming from the entrance merges. It maintains the orientation, losing slope as it progresses in length.

The fault number 2 is the Galería Fantasma South and North, both of similar size and shape. They occur horizontally, at a depth of about 52m. Both galleries are separated by a large well "Toni Asensio." Both galleries seem to originate from the same genesis, with the well that separates them forming later.

The fault number 1 coincides with the almost horizontal gallery of the first floor. It is located at an average depth of 20 meters.

Regarding the underground flows, we have two temporary lakes.

The first of the two lakes is near the entrance. It has an old cable to its right, which may have been used to divert water during times of higher rainfall. The early explorers used inflatable boats, and it was common to find a high water level. The source of this water is from a hole in the ceiling. We have no reports of it being climbed, but it seems difficult to continue since it is so close to the surface. The water from the lake drains slowly through a mud funnel, filtering into a lower gallery that connects below the gravel well. This course flows in the form of a small stream, partially filtered between the blocks. Part of this course forms slippery ramps, partially filtering through the narrow passage that divides the gallery. It appears with a greater flow on the other side of the passage, only to hide again shortly after, reappearing almost at the end of the cavity. It filters between weakly consistent rock and disappears.

The second of the temporary lakes is at the end of the meander connecting the entrance through "siete simas," when it coincides with the gallery of 400 pesetas. The intake is very close to surface contributions, and it also drains slowly through the mud funnel it forms. This flow disappears, and there is no record of whether it can lead to the Marino chasm, as the gallery of 400 pesetas does.

Another active stream is the one that occurs in the meander at the base of the Marino sinkhole. This stream appears from an impenetrable place, right below the coordinates of the holly sinkhole. This sinkhole has a unique well in which, at its central part, a stream of water emerges that disappears at its base, possibly heading towards the meander of the "Marino sinkhole." After the

base of this well, it disappears at 20 meters. We are unsure if this flow is directed towards the one coming from the entrance of the cave.
Another lake is located in the recently explored area. It is waist-deep at the time of descent, and we have named it "the bathtub." It may be connected to the meander of the "Marino sinkhole," as its elevation is very similar and close in the topography. This mystery is yet to be defined in future explorations, as the survey of this place has not been conducted.

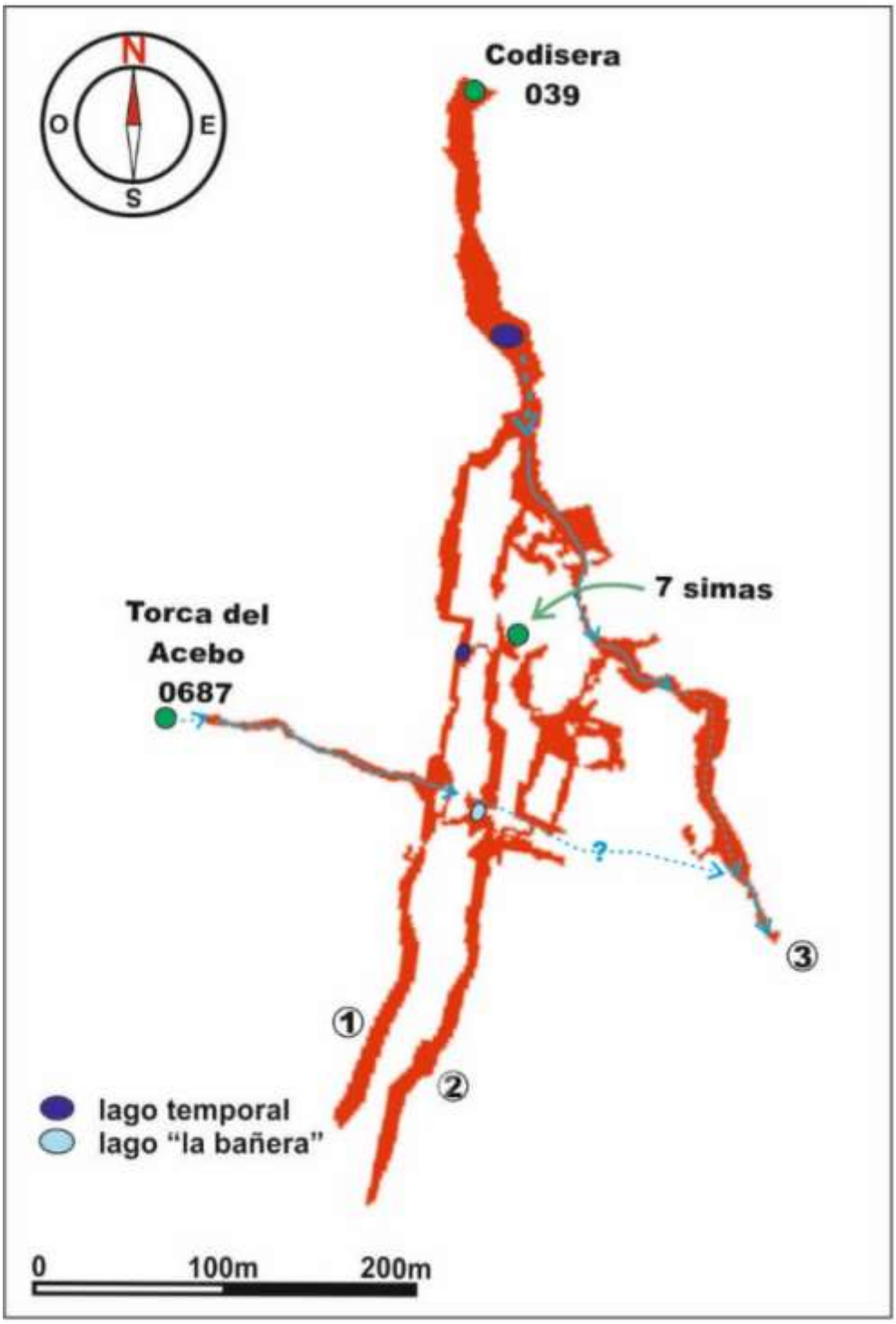


Figure 9 Hydrology

2. Explorations in 2025

The idea of exploring in Codisera arose from seeing the old installations of the "popcorn climb." This easy climb was re-equipped, and from there to the next one, which is just a few meters away. The original idea was to create an updated and complete topography of the cave. The CP got in touch with Peter Smith from MCP, and the idea of collaborating in their exploration area began to develop. The idea was well received by the English team, who shared their explorations from previous years with us. With much English patience and coffee at the Matienzo bar, we developed the idea further. The warm reception from Peter Smith, Juan Corrin, and Phil Papard, their great memory discussing past explorations, and the excellent work they have been developing encouraged us to embark on this project.
The initial idea was: to create a new topography and update the old facilities. Peter mentioned nearby places due to topography that were not connected. Little by little, by reviewing climbs that had not been completed, the project began to take shape.
The exploration days were followed by others of surveying. The unknowns were noted for subsequent prospecting. Many of them have been mapped and resolved, but others remain for future explorations.

3.1. Notes on the survey work in the cave.

Rafael Coronado

"In the initial explorations carried out by this team, the original topography created by the S.E.S.S. group in the 1960s was used as the main guide for the location and identification of galleries. Additionally, it was necessary to rely on a sketch made in 1994 by the MCP group, which represented some galleries and conduits discovered after the original topography. Both this sketch and the historical topography served as references in the first incursions made by our team.

The localization and discovery of new passages in the cave made it necessary to initiate systematic survey work. The use of new electronic devices significantly facilitates and speeds up the taking of survey measurements inside, allowing the legs to be visualized in situ during data collection. The survey stations are marked with eco-friendly paint, remaining referenced for the subsequent drawing phase. This work methodology allows for the division of effort into two distinct phases: the first dedicated to data collection and the second focused on the detailed survey of the cavity for the drawing.

The re-exploration of this cavity requires a thorough review of all the conduits, galleries, and ceilings, where, thanks to current artificial climbing methods, it is possible to access passages that were previously complex or inaccessible. This high level of detail is reflected in a highly radiated survey and in an exhaustive drawing, which is why it is decided to undertake the complete realization of the topography and the integral drawing of the cavity. For the creation of these drawings, the traditional method of paper and pencil is used, representing in detail the outline of the conduits, the relief of the galleries, the changes in height—including pits, ledges, and unevenness—as well as the unique elements of the cavity, such as formations, water inputs, blocks, debris, and other geomorphological features of interest. In this phase, experience, observational skills, and a certain interpretative component are essential to accurately capture the morphology of the cavity. These initial drawings usually contain a large amount of detail, which serves as a basis for selecting and subsequently representing in the final drawing those elements that are most relevant or unique.

3.2. Sectors explored

As we discussed, we started by surveying the first floor or entrance gallery with the joining of the 400 pesetas. We reviewed and changed anchors in this well-known, examined, and traversed place. The idea was set in motion.

From the entrance, just a few meters in, we found a depression. A new handrail was installed to provide safety for the continuous traffic.

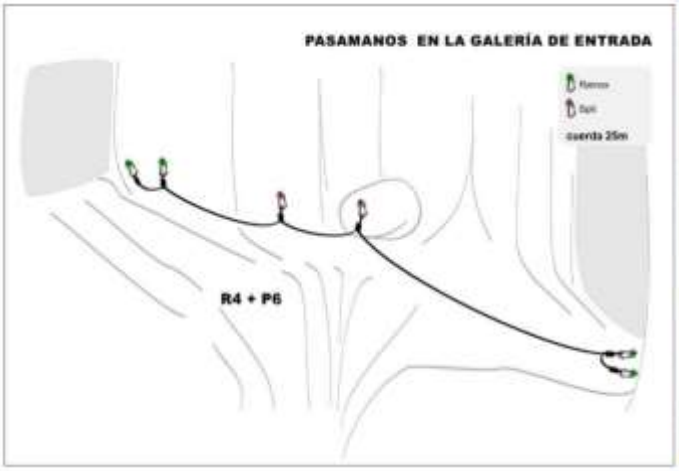


Figure 10 Handline in the entrance gallery



Photo1: Re-installing the handline at the Pozo del Marino.

From there, we move to the first temporary lake, to continue ascending the ramp that leads to the gallery of the 400 pesetas. This ramp is secured with a fixed rope. After passing the second temporary lake, which is formed by the contribution of the second entrance through "7 simas," we continue through a succession of blocks that must be navigated at different heights. In a passage between descending blocks, a safety rope is installed to access the "Pozo del Marino." We carry out the new installation of the handrail that crosses the pitch, to continue straight along the gallery. To the left, the access to "Toni Asensio's pitch" appears, and the fossil gallery continues to the end. At the end, the proximity to the surface is sensed, small insects appear, and some cobwebs are visible.

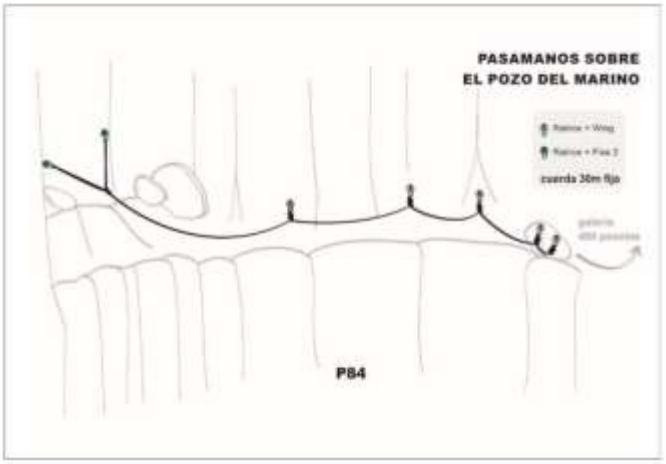


Figure 11: Handline over the Pozo del Marino



Photo 2: Second temporary lake with quite a high level.

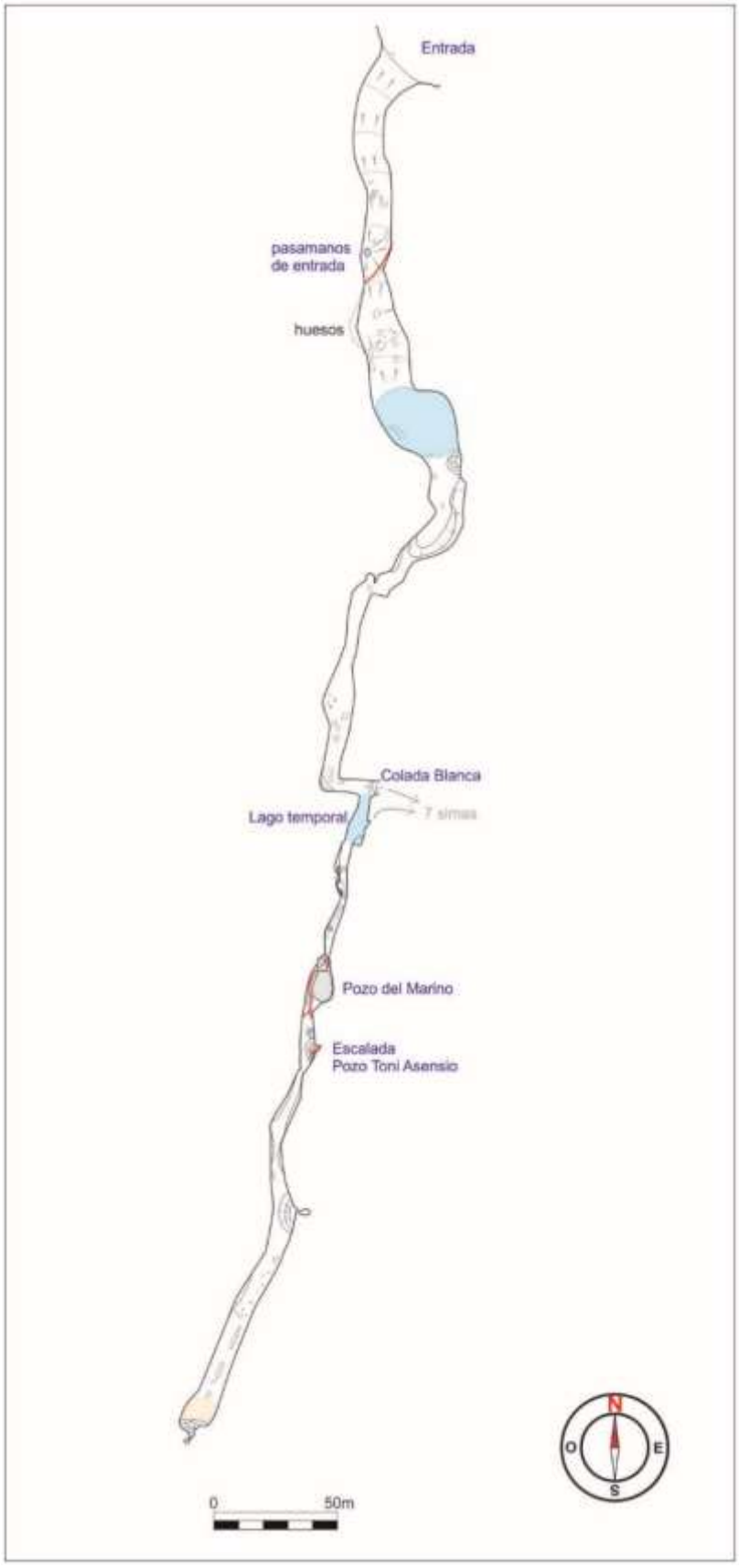


Figure 12: New survey of the top level

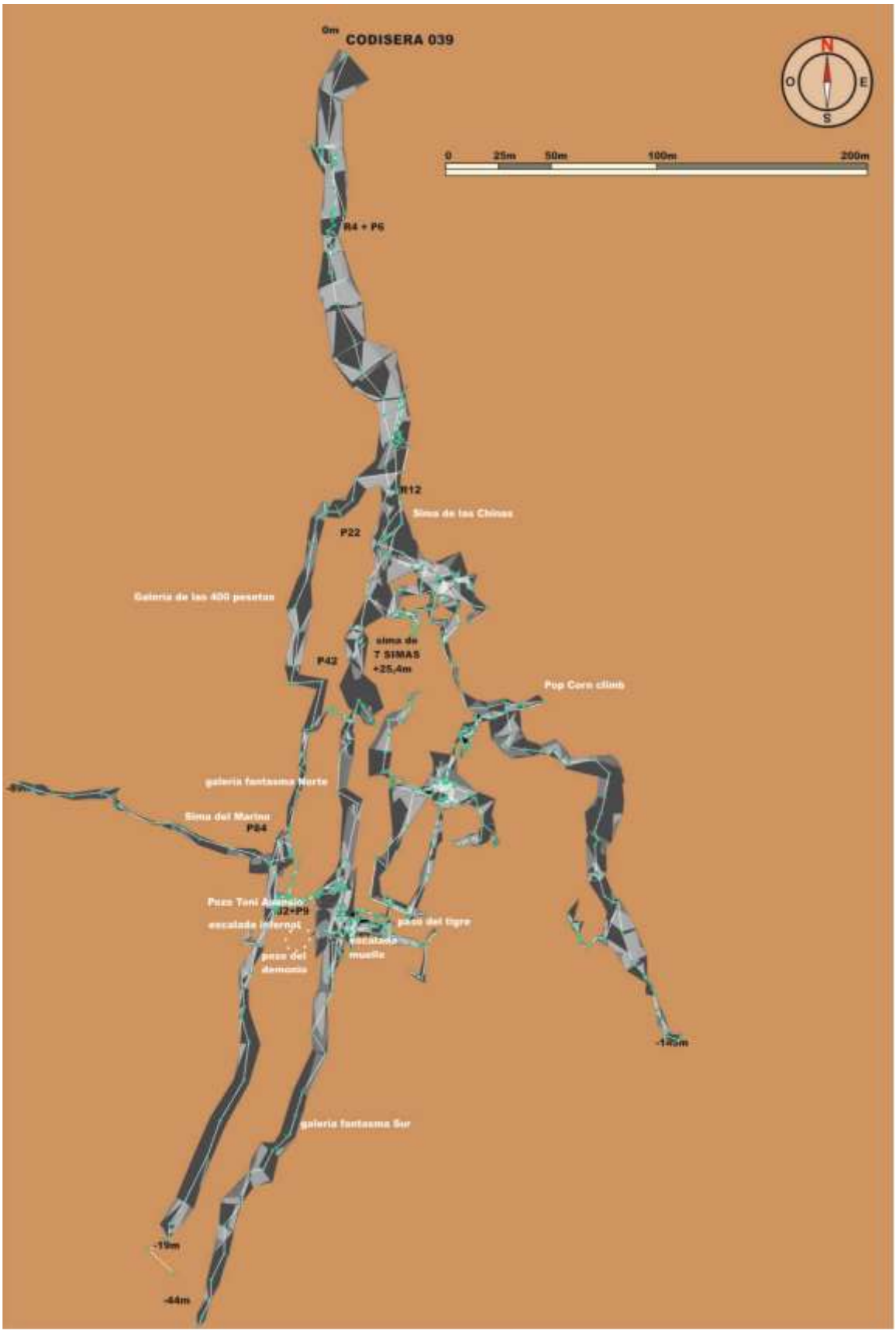
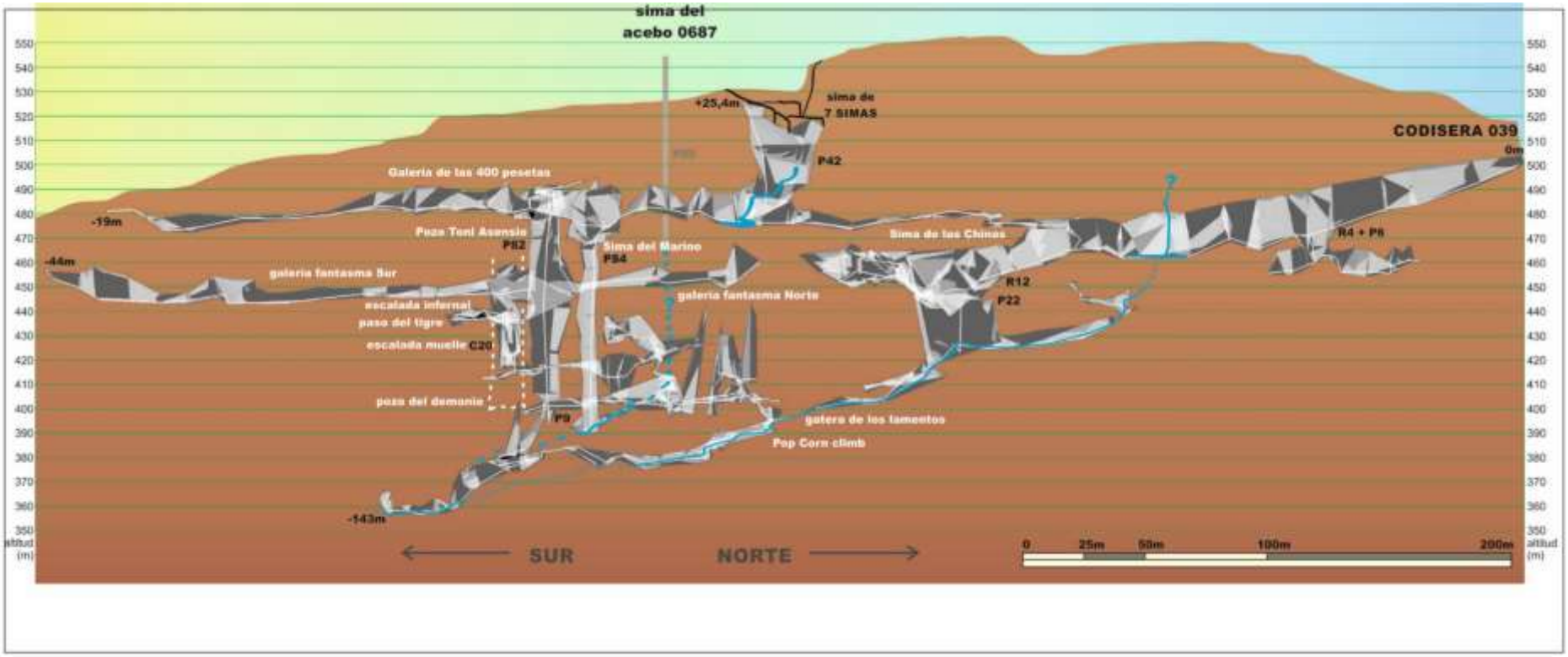


Figure 13: Codisera plan with all sectors surveyed in 2025.

Figure 14: Updated Codisera elevation to 2025.



3.2.1 Toni Asensio pitch and Galería Fantasma North

Susana Llonín

"During the re-equipping of the traverse line that bypasses the Marino Shaft, this pitch was discovered, initially named the '10-Second Shaft.' The bored cavers who found it while killing time recount that this is how long it took for a stone thrown down the massive hole to hit bottom. An approach to the shaft was installed—nonexistent at the time of its discovery—providing access to a 'tube' of dizzying dimensions, which isn't nearly as imposing from the pitch head."

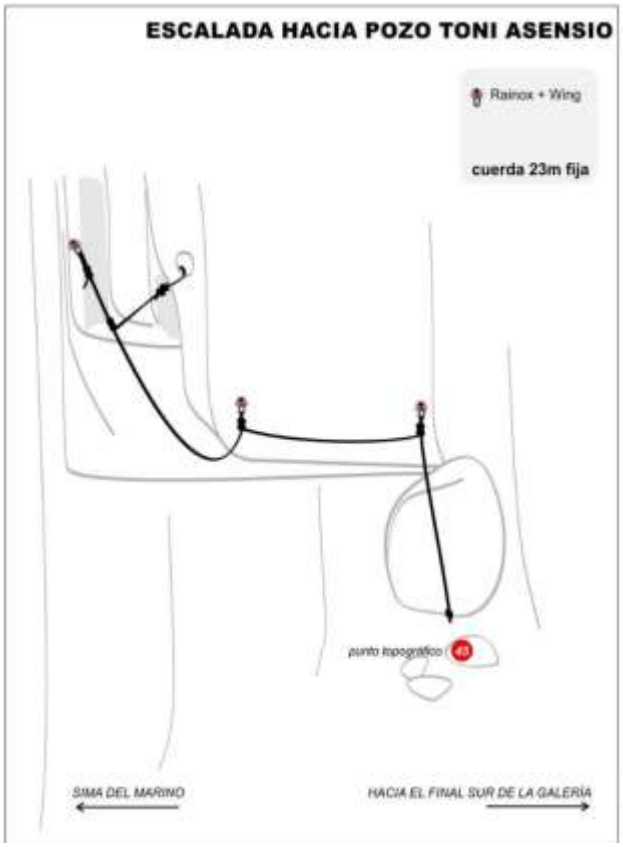


Figure 15: Climb to the head of the shaft Toni Asensio.

It was descended for exploration, and its new name serves as a posthumous tribute to a fellow caver. From then on, it would be known as the Toni Asensio Shaft.

The shaft is of impressive magnitude, with a depth of 86m; at its base, there is a tight hole that provides an extra depth of 9m, though it has no continuation. There is also a horizontal rift, about 8 metres long and very narrow, which has significant airflow; for now, it is on hold while we determine how to carry out clearing the obstruction.

According to the survey, the horizontal dimensions are 15x25m. The shaft does not appear on the British survey, although a passage is drawn there; thanks to this discovery, we now know its location. To us, it was the 'ghost passage,' and it will keep that name throughout our exploration.

'Ghost North' was spotted from a distance, crowned by a large white formation. We attempted to gain a few metres through the meander behind the pitch head, where we discovered some old spits (anchors)—presumably from the MTC (?MCP]. This work took two long sessions, and we rigged the route with a provisional installation. On each occasion, a pair of team members headed into the unexplored zone. Because the work was laborious and slow, we limited the number of people at the push front to two, keeping them active and warm while they spent long periods hanging on rope, while other teammates surveyed nearby areas.
On the second attempt, we reached the objective and discovered footprints, which we assume belong to a member of the MTC. [?MCP]
The fossil passage heads north, providing easy horizontal travel about 6m wide by 4m high. It ends at a ramp of choked boulders with no further way out, located via the survey directly beneath the entrance to 'Siete Simas.' In terms of horizontal distance, the survey ends just a few metres from a similar ramp in the small passage leading to 'Sima de las Chinas.'
From its entrance, we discovered what would become 'Ghost South' for us, located on the opposite side and presumably separated by the collapse that created the great Toni Asensio Shaft.

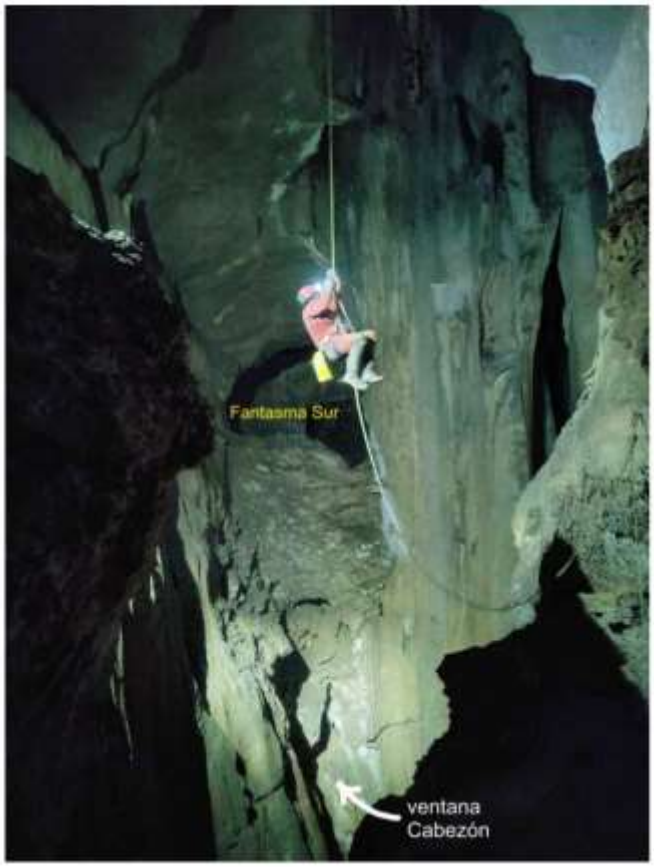




Foto 3: Galeria fantasma Norte.

Photo 4: Halfway down the well Toni Asensio. With the location of later explorations.

Miguel Ángel Molleja (Miki) – Pozo Toni Asensio
The upper half of the shaft has truly spectacular floor dimensions. The shape of the pitch does not allow for a complete view of the rest of the shaft from the rigged line. As you descend, walls begin to appear, dividing the shaft into sectors; based on visual checks made through the windows we accessed, these new sections pinch out or blind off above the level reached by the main descended section.
The base of the shaft is considerably smaller in size than its maximum cross-section.

3.2.2 Siete Simas

As the second entrance to Codisera, it is relatively little known. It consists of a 42m shaft, divided into two sections of ramps containing loose rocks. Shortly into the descent, several high openings can be seen letting in daylight—perhaps where its name comes from. At the bottom, we found the access point that reaches the white flowstone of the '400 Pesetas Passage.' A small but constant flow of water feeds this formation. From the other section, after a small 3m drop, you enter a high, narrow, and highly polished meander, which provides access to the intermittent lake in the '400 Pesetas Passage.'

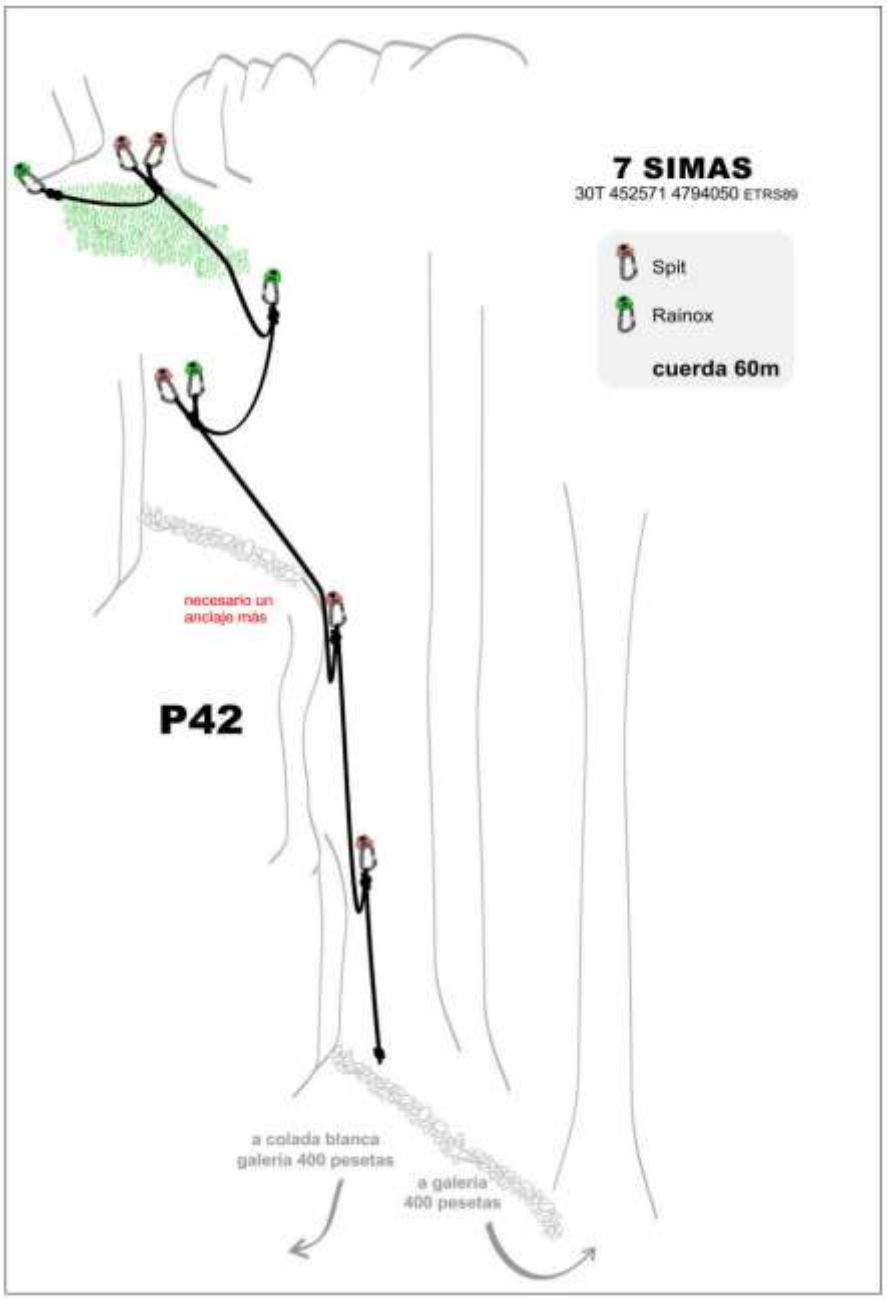


Figure 16: Second entry via the "Shaft of Seven Pits" system.



Photo 5: the base of the Siete Simas.

3.2.3 Sima or Pozo de las Chinas

From the Codisera entrance, without ascending the fixed rope that leads to the '400 Pesetas Passage,' we find a boulder slope with a 12m vertical drop. The descent is made by rigging an easy traverse line along the left side of the passage. The traverse provides access to a 22m free-hanging pitch, broken by some large perched blocks. At the base, there are numerous bones from animals that have fallen in. Being one of the most frequented areas in the past, the bones are heavily weathered.

This pitch has been re-equipped; the old, rusted rigging forced an 'athletic' traverse. It used to be one of the most awkward sections in the entire cave, though it was easily rectified. It certainly caused some moments of struggle for cavers entering the exploration for the first time.



Photo 6: At the rebelay for the free-hanging descent in Sima de las Chinas.



Photo 7: Almost down in the Pozo de las Chinas

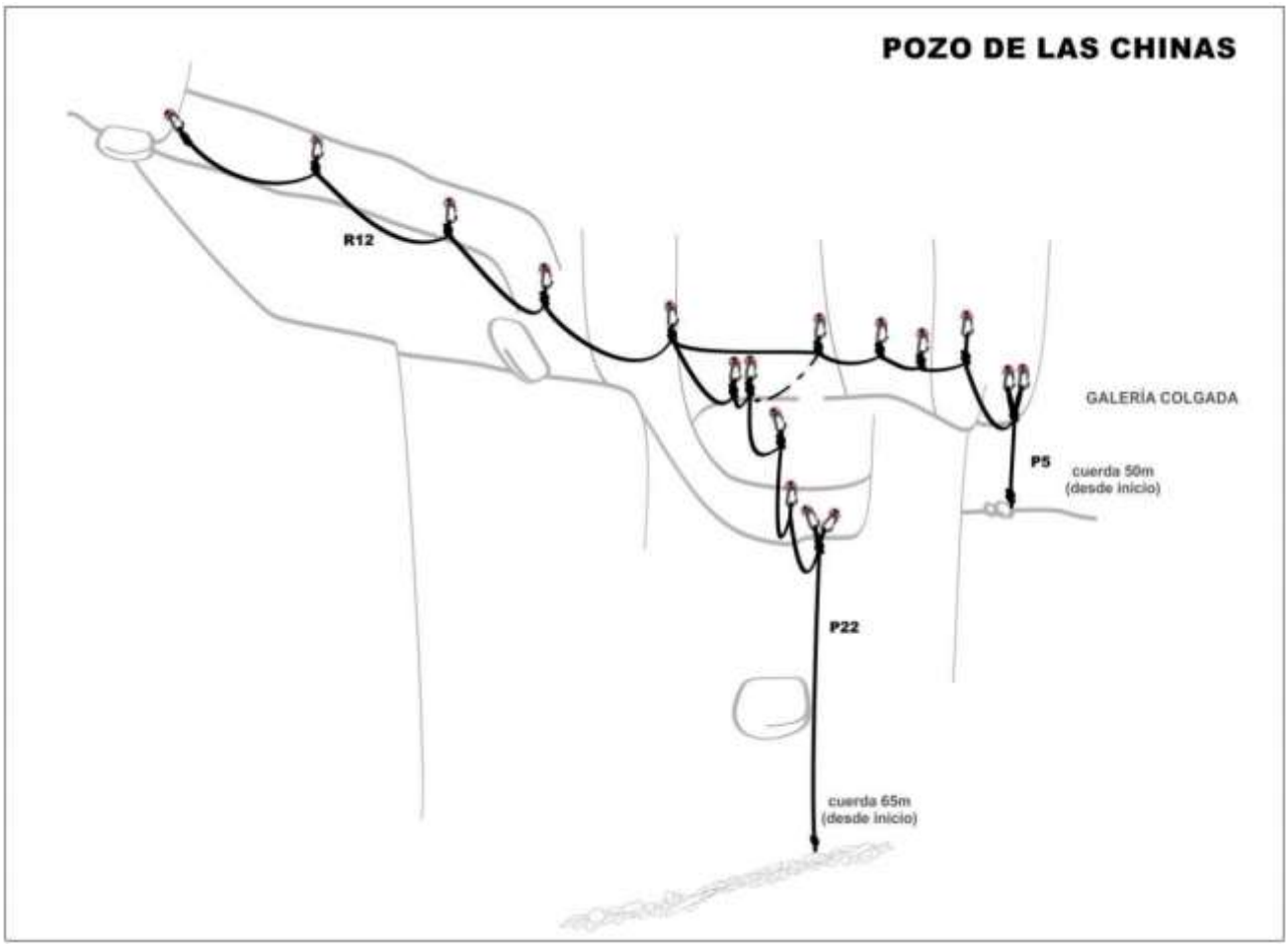


Figure 17: Pozo de las Chinas and the traverse line towards the continuation of the gallery.

Before starting to rig the ramp, the continuation of the passage can be seen directly opposite. The collapse that formed the Sima de las Chinas divided the passage in two. Upon starting to rig the ramp, but before reaching its steepest section, an old traverse line was re-equipped. There are two routes into the passage seen opposite: the first is a steep ramp of loose blocks directly above the Chinas Shaft; the second is through a chamber, which leads to another steep sandy ramp. Small fossil meanders branch off the sides, occasionally accessible via short climbs. In some spots, stones or blocks were cleared to access very tight areas, but no onward leads were found.

Heading south in a straight line from the traverse, the passage maintains the large dimensions of the entrance. After down-climbing and climbing over a floor collapse, a ramp leads up to a ceiling blockage. This point is close to the one mentioned previously in the 'Ghost North' passage. We believe that debris from 'Siete Simas' has choked the passage here. One day was spent moving blocks to try to force a way through; despite shifting a massive amount of rock from the left side of the ceiling ramp, our efforts were unsuccessful, as the internal rocks are consolidated and very difficult to move.

At the base of 'Chinas Shaft,' according to the survey, the water filtered from the first intermittent lake (upper level) arrives here. Upstream, there is an easy but very awkward climb. We left a rope on natural anchors to assist the ascent through a smooth rift washed by the watercourse. Once at the top, heading south leads to a dry section among rifts and unstable blocks, which ascends to levels similar to the pitch head of Chinas Shaft. We found no passage that allowed further progress in that direction.Heading north, we climbed a mud ramp leading to a small pitch and a medium-

sized chamber. This chamber occasionally floods. The area lies beneath the intermittent lake and has not yet been surveyed due to how grueling the location is.

Downstream from 'Chinas Shaft', following some slippery ramps, there are several floor collapses with no onward passage. During the descent on the left-hand side, the heavily deteriorated bones of a bear were found in a bear den. Reaching the bottom of the ramp, the slippery floor turns into a flat, wet slab ending at the 'Crawl of Laments' (Gatera de los Lamentos). We don't know if it had another name, but this seemed the most appropriate for such an unpleasant place. The crawl is a narrow bedding plane; the entry is somewhat easier as it is downhill. It is covered by a thin film of water that becomes very disagreeable during the rainy season.

On the other side of the crawl, the passage opens up to large dimensions again. Water emerges here from the main streamway. The passage continues easily until it ends at a steep sandy ramp. The river sinks into an impenetrable area of very poor-quality rock.

Rafael Coronado

On the next day of exploration, part of the team focused on the surveying of the upper passage, from the entrance to 'Chinas Shaft.' From this point, once the pitch was descended, they proceeded to survey the lower passage following the watercourse. This passage, which has large dimensions, shows a significant accumulation of sediment, and a small, fossil-like streamway runs along its central axis. It ends abruptly at a descending ramp that leads into a meander where the water sinks, coinciding with a geological fold. Several smaller conduits branch off from this passage and were also surveyed.

After several hours of work, it was decided to continue surveying the intermediate passage that branches off from the passage known as 'Popcorn.' The hours of work added up to a particularly long session, lasting over twelve hours, finally reaching the climb that gives access to the 'José Luis Chamber' (Sala José Luis)—the point where the day's surveying was concluded.

During a third working session, part of the team focused on surveying the upper passage, starting from 'Chinas Shaft' and heading towards the head of 'Asensio Shaft.' Progress was interrupted by rising water levels in the intermittent lakes that form at the connection with '7 Simas.' In this sector, a climb was completed that established a new connection with '7 Simas' at a different point. Given the impossibility of continuing the survey in this area, the surveying team decided to return to 'Chinas Shaft' and access the middle zone.

This zone is only accessible via a considerably long traverse line that skirts the shaft; in its widest part, it features a large talus slope connecting various points, forming a complex network of small interconnected chambers, meanders, and crawls. Identifying clear reference points and correctly interpreting the spatial layout of this sector proved particularly difficult, but after several hours of work, a detailed and coherent survey of the entire area was completed.

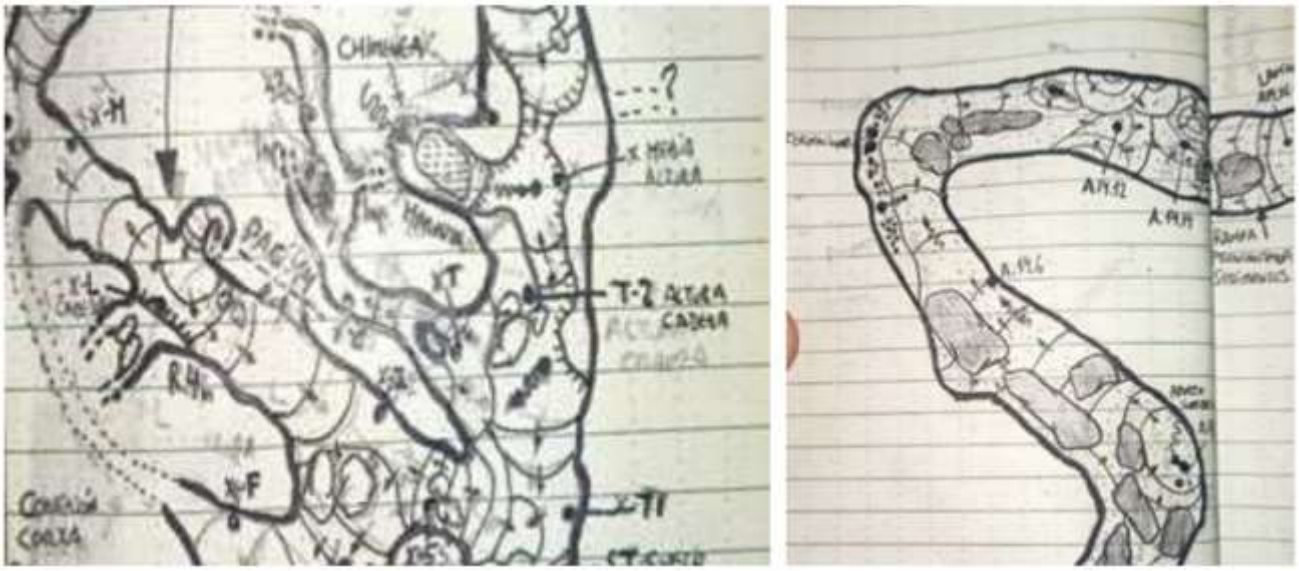


Figure 18: Field drawings by Rafael Coronado for the survey in the gallery behind the Las Chinastraverse line (left) and the gallery after Lamentation Passage (right).

3.2.4 Popcorn Climb

This point is located just after the crawl. It was the discovery that prompted us to re-evaluate the exploration of the cavity. The MCP (Matienzo Caves Project) survey indicated a series of passages that were complex to interpret. The rigging was very old and precarious, requiring an upgrade to continue. Abel set out to bolt the route, which he began in order to ensure safe passage. In the upper section, there are some floor collapses and an easy climb, though no further progress was made in those directions. Above the climb, a traverse line was re-equipped over a sandy floor above the main passage. Right at the end, another short climb provides access to an upper passage with an abundance of sand on the floor (C3).

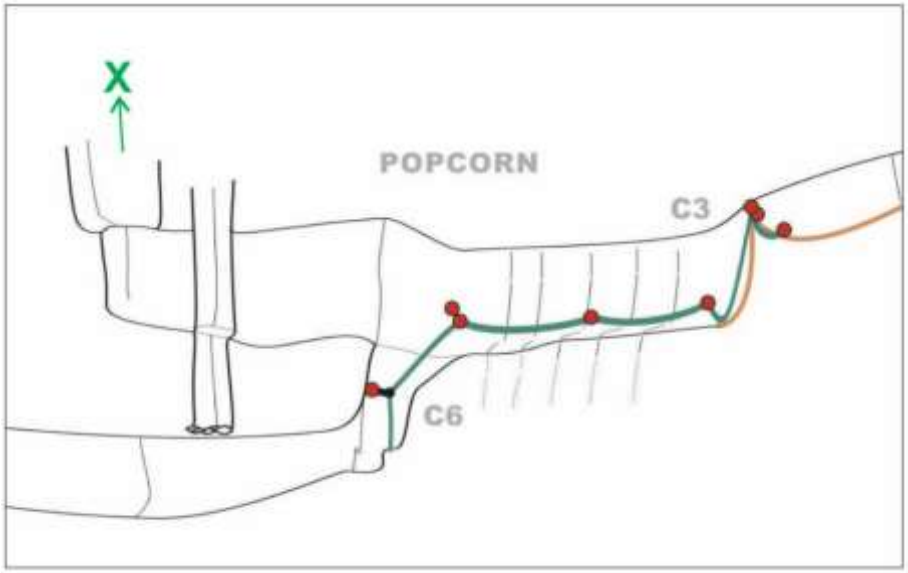


Figure 19: Popcorn Climb

3.2.5 Three avens climb

After the sandy ramp, a small step leads to a 5m floor collapse that is easily bypassed on the right. An old climb still had some heavily rusted spits. Upon checking that area, three shafts (avens) were found. A laser measurement of 32m was taken in the tallest one. There are no signs of them having been climbed previously, and no continuation is visible to the naked eye.

To the right of another aven, which measured 22m in height, a rift on a steep descending ramp leads to the head of a 12m pitch. At its base, a debris cone collects material from the upper ramp. A lateral bedding plane crawl was cleared by moving large blocks. After about two metres of crawling, another descending ramp becomes impenetrable, blocking any further progress.

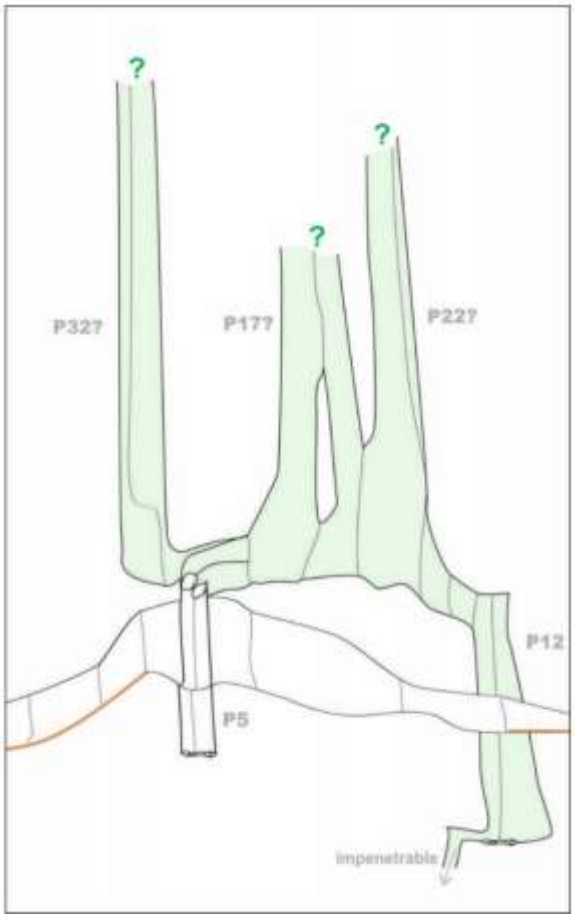


Figure 20: 3 pozos (avens) climb



Photo 8: Starting to re-do the climbing of the 3 shafts (avens)

3.2.6 Sand Crawl – Echo Shaft Chamber – Climb to the exploration zone

Returning to the start of the previous climb, we continued along a short passage where the ceiling drops to become a crawl with a floor of fine sand. After a few tight but manageable metres, it emerges onto a balcony with a small 6m drop. We are now in the Echo Shaft Chamber (Sala del Pozo del Eco); to the right, you descend to the base of the 26m pitch where your voice booms, creating an echo. Continuing to the left, some blocks lead to an 8m climb originally completed by the MCP. The anchors were replaced and fixed ropes installed to reach an upper window. On the other side of the window, a descending traverse line leads to a further 12m climb.
This marks the starting point of the CP explorations. Up to this point, the cave had been reviewed, a new survey completed, and a new interpretation of the various zones established. From here, you reach a point beneath the—until then—unknown chamber, which we would name *'José Luis Nieto Chamber,'* in honour of a recently deceased teammate.

'Echo Shaft' - unnamed until then - had already been recorded. However, it was unknown that its pitch head contained the entire development that prompted our exploration.

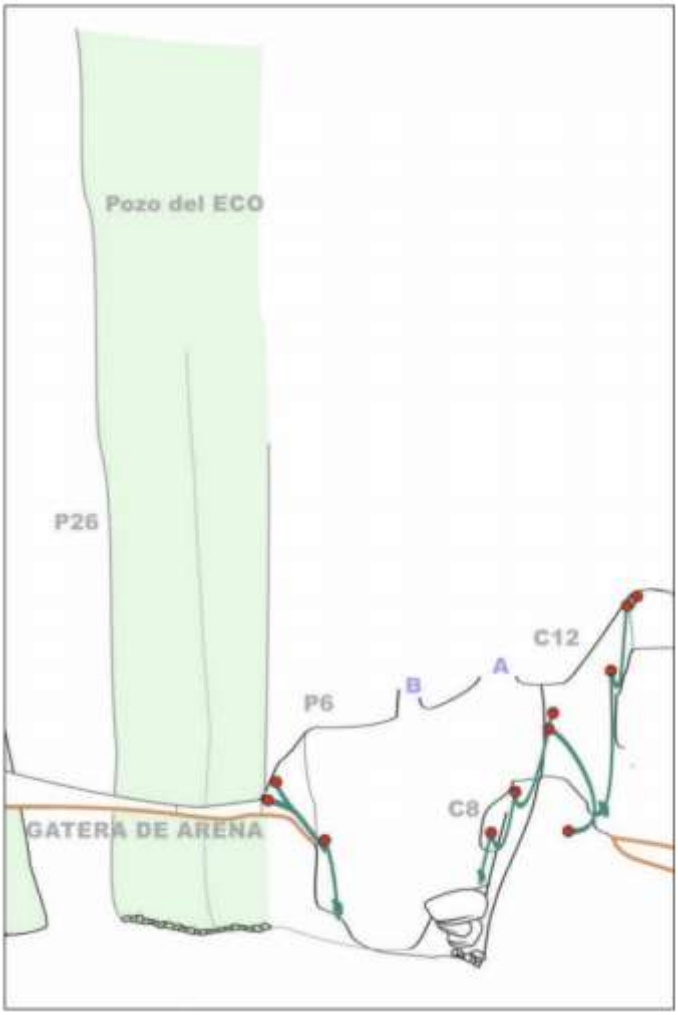


Figure 21: Echo Shaft Chamber and the starting point of the explorations.

Returning to the 12m climb where the exploration began, we reach a comfortable chamber. To the right, there is another climb that has not yet been attempted. We find a shaft in the form of a rift, which carries water when it rains. A little further to the left, about 1.70 metres above the floor, a ledge opens up, providing access to a new passage from two different points. Taking care not to damage the formations, we reach a meandering passage heading north. Accumulations of sediment in the form of lateral earth ramps—often black in colour—are a reminder of a past water flow that washed the material in. This passage eventually narrows until it becomes impenetrable. The survey shows the path looping back, very close to the 'Crawl of Laments'. It appears to be a primitive route for the water from the main streamway, which originally carved out the Crawl of Laments before diverting to its current course.

Back in the chamber at the 12m climb, the main route leads south through a very easy, meandering passage. This is the fossil descent for the flow that seems to originate from the previous passage. Sandy ramps and sediment have also accumulated on the bends of the meander. The end becomes impenetrable due to a series of very tight upper crevices. We have found no way through in any direction.



Photo 9: Re-explored passage.



Photo 10: Final squeeze of the re-explored passage.

Rafael Coronado

Returning to 'Popcorn,' we continued the survey until reaching the climb that leads to the 'José Luis' chamber. Without ascending, we followed the main passage, surveying until its end point, where it is blocked by a boulder choke. On the way back, before the traverse line with the orange rope, we located a small opening on a ledge 1.70 metres above the passage floor. This ledge is easily accessible, but the hole is hidden among formations, right in the corner. This small opening leads into a passage with various formations attached to false floors, filled with a large amount of sandy sediment and gypsum.

In its final section, we found a squeeze between formations that leads to a crawl, which is heavily choked and ends in an obstruction after about 15 metres. We completed the survey of this area and confirmed that it is a passage already explored by the Matienzo Caves group and shown in some of the cave's sketches. Until now, we thought this passage or zone of the cave belonged to the upper level—the 'Ghost Passage'—an area we had not yet been able to access.

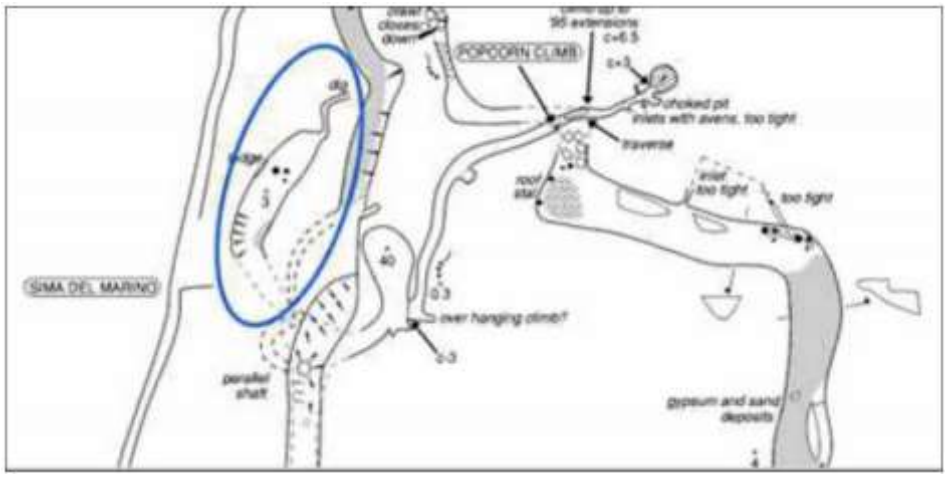


Figure 22: Sketch made by JC, PS, PE, and PP of the Matienzo Caves Group in 1995.

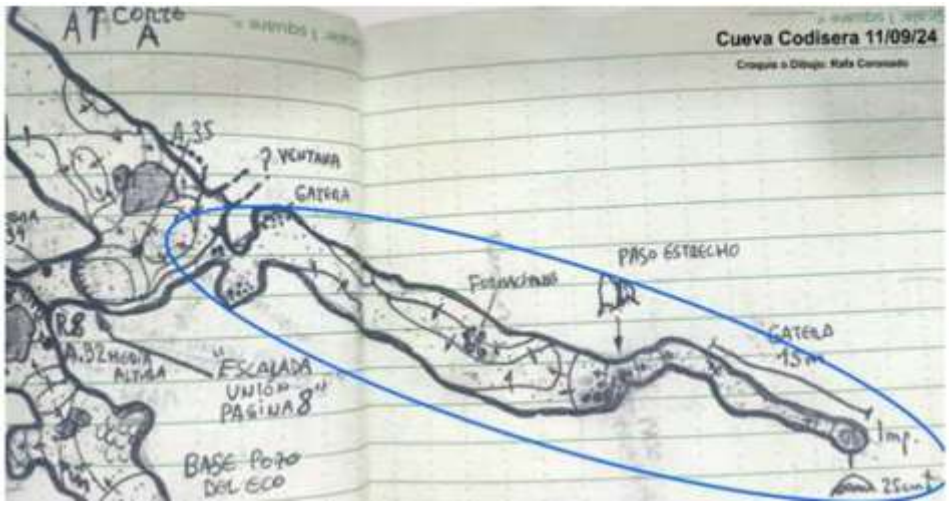


Figure 23: Drawing made by R. Coronado. Detail of the re-explored passage.

3.2.7 José Luis Nieto Chamber – Etriers Pass – Earthquake Chamber – Pozo Chinos

Ascending C12, the climb that marks the start of the exploration, we pass through a window into a very short passage. At its end, we enter another passage with a floor that has collapsed into a rift. The floor collapse is easily bypassed; we can see that it connects to the 'Echo Shaft' chamber. A narrow ledge leads to a ramp that reaches the ceiling. This point is known as the 'Pedaletas Pass'. We carried out an effective and rapid clearing of a large quantity of stones from a hole in the ceiling at the top of a sandy ramp. This route, which is mandatory, is somewhat unstable and must be navigated with caution. On the other side, we found the 'José Luis Nieto Chamber,' named after a deceased member of our club.

The exit from the Etriers (Pedaletas) Pass is a sandy funnel that provides access to various areas of the cave. To the north, we ascend past formations, including some characteristic columns. We encounter the head of an open shaft, which turns out to be 'Echo Shaft.' To its right, a ledge ends at a clearly visible crawl. This traverse line was rigged by Nacho using self-tapping bolts. He explored the crawl on the other side and found no continuation. This area remains unsurveyed. While de-rigging, Nacho realised he had dropped the handy krab from his descender. Returning for it, he also found his car keys, which he had also lost. This spot has been named 'Key Crawl' (Gatera de las Llaves). In this shaft, which appears to have no continuation, a fixed rope still needs to be installed to provide an alternative access route to this location.



Figure 24: Drawing by Rafa C. for the survey of the José Luis Chamber.

To the east of 'José Luis Chamber,' we find the 'Chinese Shafts' (Pozos Chinos) and the access ledge to 'Earthquake Chamber.' The 'Chinese Shafts' are two parallel blind shafts about 12m deep, joined at their base by a narrow rift and a step. Their survey remains pending. 'Earthquake Chamber' is accessed via a small 4m climb up a ramp that leads to a ledge. Natxo and Susana rigged a fine, athletic traverse that bypasses the head of the larger 'Chinese Shaft.' This new chamber increases in size; two steeply inclined ramps—one heading west and the other south—terminate at their upper ends.

On the southern side of 'José Luis Chamber,' a low-ceilinged passage leads to the top of a rift with a collapsed floor. We descended into the centre of the rift by rope to access an athletic and wet traverse. Josu's skill and reach quickly overcame this obstacle. The traverse ends with another ascent up a sandy ramp to reach a small upper passage. This area was first explored by Natxo and Susana and has been named the 'SUNA Series.'

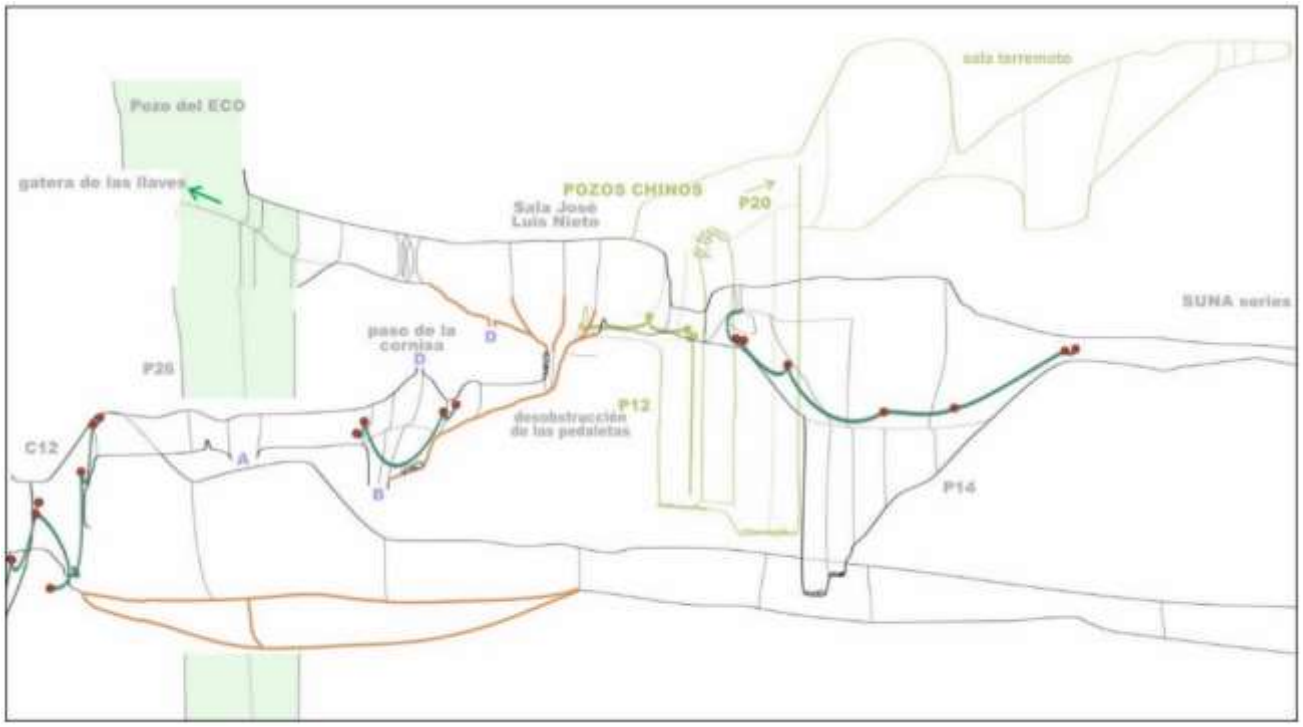


Figure 25: José Luis Nieto Chamber and access to the SUNA series

The "SUNA Series" consists of a passage of modest dimensions, becoming meandering in its final section with two side branches. The first branch on the right forms a small ascending rift that quickly ends. The second branch on the right is an ascending rift that intersects the passage, providing access to the "Zabala Hall." The end of the passage becomes impenetrable at a bedding plane with a beautiful, brittle floor.



Photo 11: Exploring the Pozos Chinos



Photo 12: Installing the traverse line in Echo Shaft leading to the Keys Crawl.

Alberto Martínez

From the access chamber to the Pedaletas Pass, a hole is visible in the ceiling; while waiting to figure out how to reach it, Susana, Natxo, and I begin clearing stones from a collapse to kill time. We manage to dig through a passage into the upper José Luis Chamber. Once inside, we see it is unexplored territory due to the lack of footprints. This chamber, which contains a fair number of formations, has several shafts. To the 'right' are two shafts with an apparently unstable collapse—the Chinese Shafts (Pozos Chinos). These are about 12m deep and connected beneath the collapse by a crawl; they appear to have no further outlets or connections at the bottom, and despite their height, there seem to be no other passages crossing them from above.In the 'left' zone, there is a large shaft (Echo Shaft) that connects to the previous section. After passing through the sandy crawl, several narrow passages can be seen high up which apparently have no continuation. In this

same 'left' zone, but on the opposite side of this shaft, there is another pitch accessed through an area of detritus. We rigged the wall to bypass it and reach the other side. Álvaro descended and confirmed there was no continuation.

Susana Llonín

The orange rope, the starting point of the exploration, leads us into a very comfortable passage. Although its dimensions are not massive, progressing with a tackle bag requires no great hardship. At the far end, a cluster of formations creates a wall, ending what could be called 'THE CORRIDOR' and leaving a gap on the right-hand side as an access point to a small chamber with a collapsed floor.

Along the walls, a narrow ledge allows us to traverse the perimeter without having to climb down and back up; later, we rigged a short rope for the down-climb to the floor and the small climb on the opposite side—purely due to Ángel's persistence—to make it easier for larger or less acrobatic teammates. From that point, we can already see a possible continuation; on the opposite side, what looks like a passage is visible, but it requires a short climb.

We are carrying gear to continue the exploration, but it won't be necessary; on one side, there is a small hole:

- Is it choked? - It looks a bit unstable.

So, I start clearing some stones while my teammates assess the climb.

I call Natxo over, and suddenly there are two of us removing sand and rocks. Caught up in the excitement, Albert joins in, and then there are three of us. This is getting interesting.

It looks like an ascending crawl that we are 'de-constructing' by clearing away sand and stones. The fun of it motivates the three of us as well as our teammates, who are enjoying watching us; it seems the climb has already been forgotten.

Easy at first, but the stones in the middle of the passage are large, and removing them requires tossing them over our heads.

We could have gone to fetch a rope, but we are cavers, and our etriers (pedaletas) were right at hand.

I remember it as a very fun day; the three of us competed to be the next one to poke our head in and tie off a rock—the bigger the better—within that unstable passage we were creating, before returning to a safe position to pull. The falling sand and large stones rolling downhill made us think of the San Fermín bull run; we would tie off another rock, hold on carefully from a safe spot, and pull. Three etriers gave their name to this ascending crawl: THE PEDALETAS PASS, which allowed us into what would be christened the 'José Luis Nieto Chamber.' A beautiful chamber, large - very large - where the first footprints were our own. That day, Codisera gifted us many new metres, new projects, and a new sense of excitement—a joy surely shared by our honoured teammate, wherever he may be.

3.2.8 Zabala Hall- The Bathtub- Spring Climb- The Tiger- The Barge- Ghost Passage South

Near the end of the 'SUNA Series,' there is a 3m climb that provides access to 'Zabala Hall.' This small junction serves as the base of a 20m shaft. A tiny overhang provided shelter during the explorations above to protect against falling rocks. Heading east, Rafa rigged a traverse line to reach a meander visible opposite. After a short climb, you enter a narrow meander, which becomes descending in its final section. The meander drops into a shaft of about 12m (unsurveyed) containing a large pothole, known as 'The Bathtub' (La Bañera). Descending into the pothole, possible upper continuations can be seen, though progress over the mud would be difficult.

Without descending into 'The Bathtub,' a traverse line was rigged along a ledge to the left. On the other side is another descending shaft, this time dry. Descending this dry shaft reveals the same situation: potential but difficult upper continuations due to the mud.
From 'Zabala Hall,' probable continuations in the upper section were clearly visible. Miguel Ángel Molleja (Miki Muelle) completed an impeccable 20m climb in a single session. Below, Alberto patiently belayed for hours on what was dubbed the 'Spring Climb' (Escalada Muelle). This point is not far from the Codisera entrance, but the 'athletic' obstacle course required to get here, the weight of the exploration gear, and the time-consuming process of climbing and rigging fixed ropes resulted in exploration days lasting 12 to 14 hours.
At the top of the 'Spring Climb' is a meander of modest width that offered a glimpse of another one above it. Upon ascending, it was confirmed that the well-formed upper meander pinched out.
From the previous point, descending to the left in an easterly direction, you reach another meander with two routes. The lower route descends a concretionary ramp with active formations. After several down-climbs, it reaches a dead end. According to the survey, it is very close to the radials taken from the access ledge to 'The Bathtub,' but they do not connect. To progress along the upper route, a traverse line was rigged over a flowstone to reach the 'Gours Passage.' At its end, the way is blocked by a tight squeeze that was enlarged over two sessions in solid rock, until it was possible to pass by doing a bit of contortionism. The squeeze is called 'The Tiger' (El Tigre), named after a conversation while preparing for the next trip:

Ángel: 'Do you really think you're going to get through there? All you're going to achieve with the drill is making scratches on the rock like a tiger's claw.'

Juan: 'I'm very stubborn—we're getting through.'

After passing through, there is another even more harrowing squeeze. This new obstacle took less time to force, but it was in a descending rift on a slippery ramp. Juan and Rafa managed to get through, but Ángel didn't even try (author's note: not a chance). Some short passages were surveyed with no possible continuation. The squeeze had to be enlarged for the return journey because it was even harder to climb back up. Between the two squeezes, there is a narrow 10m climb with a draught, which is a target for future trips.
From the top of the 'Spring Climb,' on the opposite wall, a fairly athletic traverse line was rigged, providing access heading south to 'The Barge Chamber' (Sala de la Gabarra). A round chamber opens up with semi-dry mud, the scene of several 'slips onto our backsides.' An active pothole likely forms here during the rainy season. From the entrance of 'The Barge,' a 45º descent over a sandy floor on the left-hand side leads to a point above the 'Spring Shaft'. On the left, Susana free-climbed a narrow meander that becomes very tight at its end. Directly ahead, Nacho nearly free-climbed a steep ramp perched over the 20m 'Spring Pitch' to reach a window. This window had been the subject of much discussion by Juan; he had even bought a very powerful torch specifically to investigate this spot. Juan talked about this window so much—and referring back to previous paragraphs—that it was dubbed 'Stubborn Man's Window' (Ventana del Cabezón). According to the survey, we were expected to connect with the 'Toni Asensio Shaft,' and indeed, there it was.
Thanks to photos from the exploration of the 'Toni Asensio Shaft,' it was clear that the 'Ghost South Passage' was located above this window. Another impressive and clever climb by Nacho and Natxo (the name combination made us laugh too) successfully reached the long-awaited 'Ghost Passage.' Reaching this desired passage became a top-priority objective; it was known to the British teams, but the Spanish team had not yet managed to access it. Many conversations with Peter Smith led us to wonder how to get there, as the vast free-hanging distance and the lack of rock for an approach left us out of ideas. Thanks to the 'Barge' crossing and the 'Stubborn Man's Window,' we had finally achieved it.

The 'Ghost South Passage' is of generous dimensions, as large as the one on the first upper level. As you enter, a rusted bolt hanger (anilla) and some rope-rub marks on the floor are visible to the left. We are not sure if this is from the MCP team, but it suggests it was used to assist with the recovery of a massive pendulum swing to get back into the vertical of the 'Toni Asensio Shaft.' A few metres further on the right, Natxo and Juanjo climbed an ascending shaft that turned out to lead nowhere. A few metres later on the left side, a descending rift that narrows sharply connects with a shaft. At this point, the survey data coincided with the 'Barge.' The author of this account (Ángel) dropped a glove while taking it off to do the surveying, and it disappeared down the rift. It turned up in 'Zabala Hall,' proving that the survey was on the right track. Continuing straight, the passage—in a practically virgin state—retains beautiful forms and colours until it ends in a slight ascent among blocks with no possible continuation. According to the survey, it comes very close to the southern hillside facing Arredondo.
We believe that this end of 'Ghost South,' much like the end of the upper passage on the first level, was never easily connected to the outside. There are no talus deposits, animal bones, or even bear dens.

Rafael Coronado

The first detailed surveys began by taking advantage of the clearing work carried out at the so-called 'Tiger Pass' (Paso del Tigre), where an extremely restrictive squeeze was overcome, providing access to a new chamber. The need to document this sector both topographically and graphically—due to its tight dimensions and complexity—marked the beginning of the project to create a more detailed and exhaustive survey of the entire system. From this point, the upper zone of the 'Spring Shaft' (Pozo Muelle) was also accessed by using the fixed rigging left by another team on previous sessions, allowing for the completion of the survey in these newly discovered sectors.
On this occasion, we headed to 'Tiger Pass,' a narrow and short bedding plane that appeared to lead into a new chamber or passage. This squeeze had been unsuccessfully forced in previous sessions. It is located in a very interesting area of the cave, near the zone known as 'The Barge' (La Gabarra). We navigated this pass by breaking off a few sharp edges using the drill and wedges. Although access remains tight, Juan and Rafa managed to enter, discovering a new chamber that ends abruptly in an impenetrable meander.
Between these two chambers, and right at the Tiger Pass bedding plane, there is a narrow chimney that appears to possible continue.



Figure 26: Field drawing of the zone of "The Tiger".

Susana Llonín

The sessions are getting longer, though Miki's reach helps resolve the climb in record time. Ángel and Natxo tackle the upper meander—Ángel somewhat reluctantly, while Natxo, in the second position, pressures him to push on a bit longer.

Moving to the opposite wall requires a very athletic traverse. It was finished during that session without managing to round the corner; the exposure makes bolting the route a task for the brave.

We are excited; one thing leads to another, and Natxo and I decide to make an incursion. Reaching that point is fast when there are only two of us. We already know where to wait and where we can move together.

Natxo is prepared to continue the rigging; the turn is finally within reach of his drill, and this time it is his partner who pushes him to stretch a little further and advance those few centimetres—objective achieved.

We continue with a traverse line, more comfortable though very unstable, to reach 'The Barge' (La Gabarra).

A floor full of semi-dry mud and marks on the wall indicate that it may hold water at certain times. Its name is influenced by the moment—the football celebrations; the excitement in Bilbao leaves no one indifferent, even if you don't like football.

We continue down a 45-degree slope that is completely unstable, crumbling with every step. I check a rift that leads nowhere, hoping to avoid the climb ahead since it's just the two of us. We call it a day, and once outside, we call Ángel, the soul of this exploration. He waits nervously for our 'WE ARE OUT' message, eager for all the news... He has made Codisera more than just an exploration for all of us; he is the soul, and together, we are the heart.

Alberto Martínez

After bypassing that shaft, a beautiful meander leads to another small chamber, accessed via an equipped 3m climb. In this chamber, there is a 20m wall that Miki rigged to reach the upper section, known as the 'Spring Climb' (Escalada Muelle). We call this place 'Zabala Hall'; in the 'left' zone above the climb, Rafa spotted a small passage leading to a narrow meander with gours on the floor, which opened into a passage with several branches.Down to the right was 'The Bathtub' (La Bañera). Juan and I rigged a rappel to descend into it. About 12m deep, as we descended we could see marks on the muddy walls from different water table levels, with a lake covering the entire floor except for a small beach at the far end. Several narrow passages are visible high up above that beach, but they are inaccessible due to the mud on the walls.

Juan Cruz – The Bathtub

The Bathtub Chamber is accessed from 'Zabala Hall' via a fairly narrow passage, with small potholes below that must be dodged to avoid getting wet. We enter the 'Bathtub' chamber, which has a downward slope immediately upon entry with a 6m floor collapse; this must be rappelled to reach the small [pool] of transparent water below, which gives the chamber its name. The lower area is full of clay, which requires stepping along the edge—clouding the water—to circle the chamber and see it in its entirety. In the furthest zone from the rappel, a window of about four square metres is visible at a height of 4 metres, which swallows the light from our torches. We have the feeling the cave could continue through there; the climb, if attempted, has an overhang, which gives the

impression that it won't be easy to overcome.Seeing that we could not easily advance from the bottom, we returned to the upper part of the chamber by ascending the rope we had previously rappelled. From the pitch head, a window is visible directly ahead; we headed toward it via the left-hand side passage (keeping the entrance at our backs), encountering a floor collapse that had to be bypassed by rigging a traverse line.This traverse took us half a working session, and we finally reached the window, which seemed much more accessible than it actually was. We were hoping this window would connect with the other one we saw from below. As soon as we arrived, we found that another rappel was required, leading us to a maze that is apparently deeper than the level of the 'Bathtub.' After reaching the bottom and scouting around, we saw that it did not obviously continue toward another chamber. We returned to the pitch head to exit the cave, as our exploration session had ended and it was time to head back. This area should be meticulously re-examined, as only two people descended quickly without paying much attention; since time was running out, we only looked at the most obvious leads.

Juan Cruz – The Tiger

At the top of the 'Spring Climb' (escalada muelle) to the right, an 8-metre traverse line was rigged, ending in a perched passage. At the end of the passage was a calcite flowstone that nearly reached the ceiling, leaving only a small gap. Through this tiny opening, a larger passage was vaguely visible in the distance, extending transversely and hiding what lay beyond. The next day we headed to the flowstone, equipped with a drill, a lump hammer, and plugs and feathers (quas de cantero).

Personally, it was my first time digging out a passage and also our first time using the wedges. The flowstone at the bottom was of intermediate hardness, making it very difficult to break; the ceiling was hard rock, which yielded more easily by drilling and then breaking the stone with the wedges. To our surprise, we encountered a rift before reaching the chamber we were targeting. It was quite narrow, but just large enough for a person to enter, and it extended about 4 metres to the right and 10 metres upwards. The height is an estimate, as it has not yet been climbed. Furthermore, we noticed that this passage has an upward draught, meaning it likely continues. On another day, we returned to continue the clearing and finally managed to enter 'The Tiger Chamber' (Sala del tigre). It is entered via a downward slope. The chamber continues to the left, where it ends quickly, and to the right, where it continues a bit further and contains some potholes and small formations. The disappointment was great upon seeing that it did not continue and offered no further leads; Codisera gives nothing away for free.

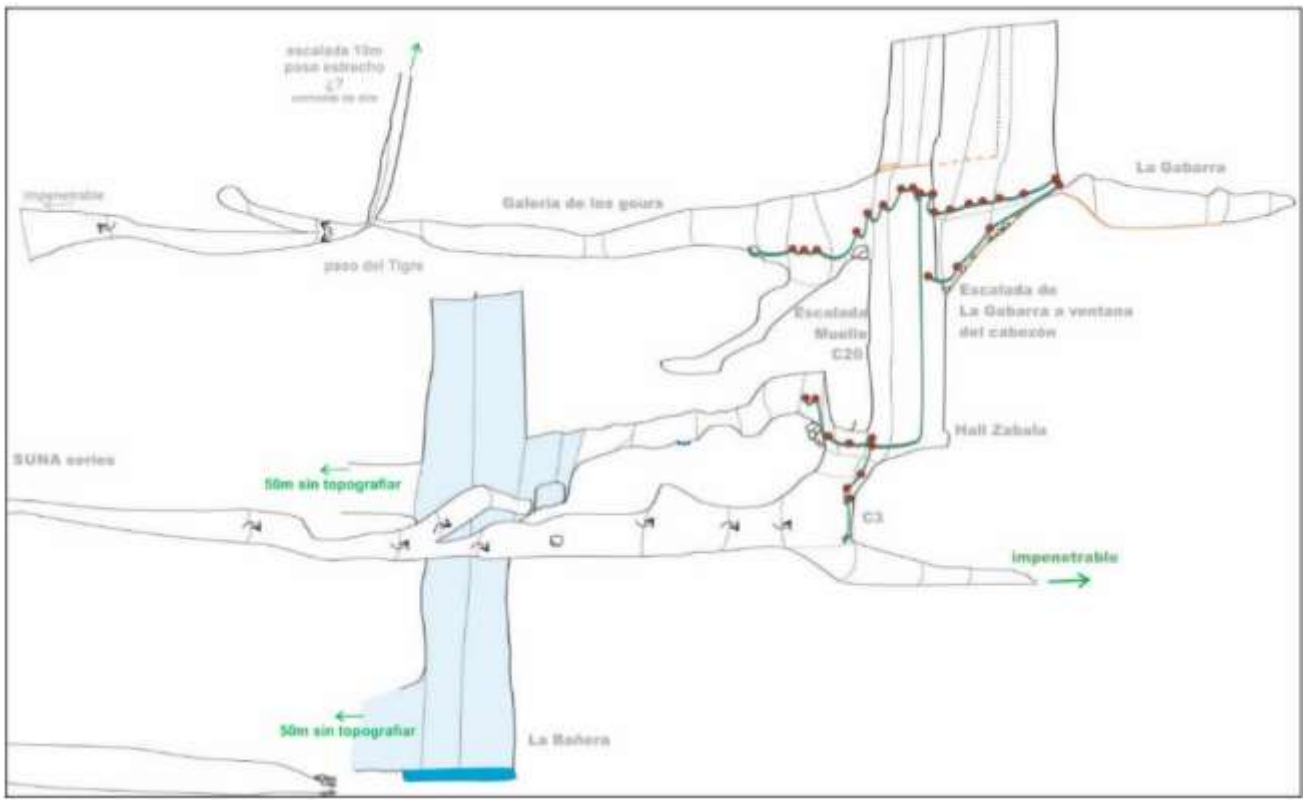


Figure 27: Zabala Hall Sector: junction for the routes to The Bathtub, Spring Climb, The Tiger, The Barge, and access to Ghost South via the Stubborn Man's Pass.



Photo 13: Ghost Passage South



Photo 14: Ghost Passage South

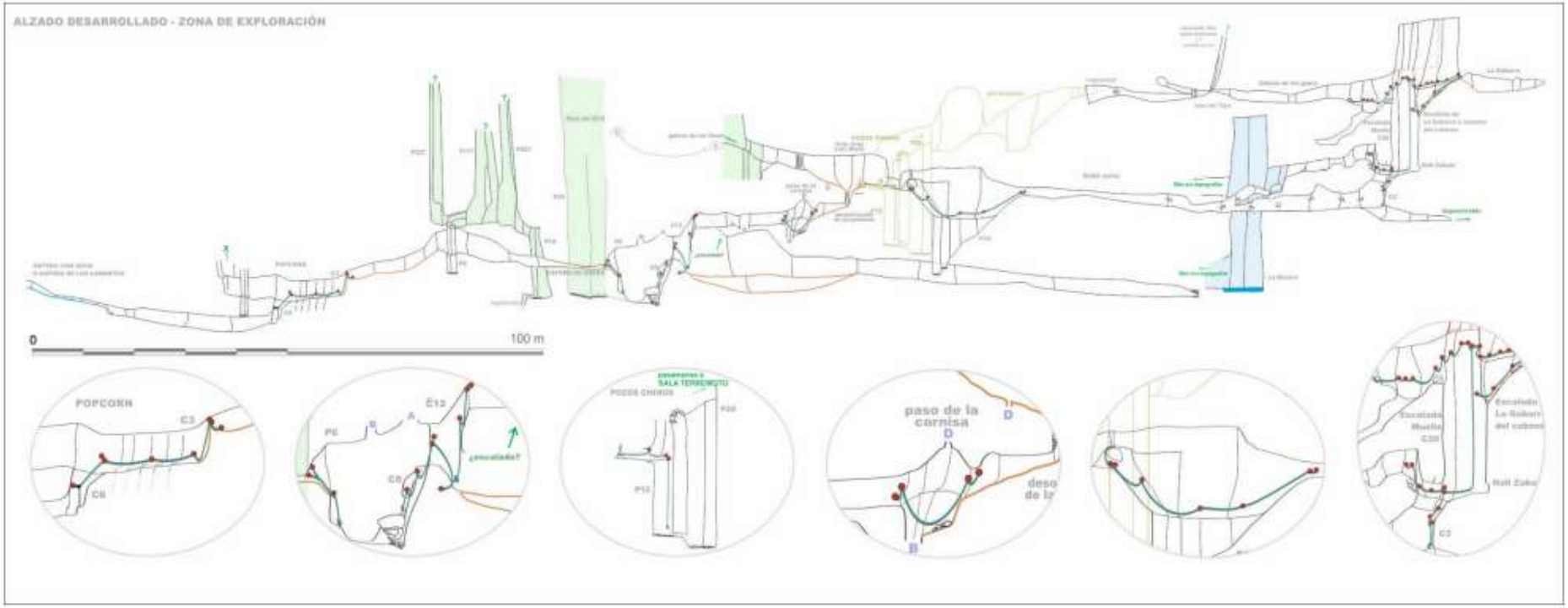


Figure 28: Drawing of the exploration zone.

4. Next Objectives.

There are still points to review in both the old and new zones. Most of these are climbs averaging about 20m in length. These areas are difficult to progress through because the climbs are on muddy walls. Sections with strong draughts also remain to be explored; experience tells us there is always something significant where there is airflow. We do not have one specific objective to follow next. Obviously, it is necessary to survey areas like 'The Bathtub' before exploring higher-difficulty zones. For now, an underground camp does not seem necessary, even though the sessions are starting to become excessively long. If something is found that increases the time spent inside, the option of an overnight stay may need to be considered.

The development of the cavity stands at 3,606 metres, which is easily extendable with the areas left to be surveyed. The maximum vertical range is 168m, with a sequence of +25m in 'Siete Simas,' 0m at Codisera, and -143m at the lowest point where the water—which comes from near the entrance—sinks. It is not a cavity of massive development or depth, though it is given scale by the dimensions of some of its passages and the athletic, continuous physical effort required to traverse it.

On the surface, near Codisera, we want to review the existing small caves. We haven't ruled out finding cavities that might belong to the system, even if they don't physically connect. We also find it worthwhile to document the surrounding area as a project complementary to the Matienzo Caves Project, with whom we are committed to maintaining contact to report our progress. The idea is for MCP to have free use of the data shared in case they wish to include it in their impeccable compilation of the region.

5. Acknowledgments and participants in the explorations.

Any exploration work, small or large, requires different types of cavers: from those who provide heart and effort, regardless of their skill level; the strong, skilled, and determined cavers; those who never fail when the question is asked, 'Shall we go to Codisera?'; those who come up with the clever ideas of where to push next; the artists, technicians, the knowledgeable, and those with an extraordinary spatial mind; those who patiently and without complaint contribute to the slow surveying sessions; and those who spend hours and hours at home documenting all of this. The sum of all these individuals makes a project like this possible. Everyone is necessary, and we all carry more than one type of caver within ourselves.

In the low moments, our catchphrase is: 'Codisera gives nothing away for free.' Standing in the middle of a miserable or grueling moment, you think, 'What am I doing here?' The answer is very simple: we love this sport, we love the underground world, and we are driven by the thrill of exploration.

By making a list, one runs the risk of forgetting someone; the author of this account asks for forgiveness if that occurs in the following summary.

The participants in 2025, including permit collaborators and members of the Colectivo Piezo, were:

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