

## **GANDARA**

### **CÁVA DEL RÍO GÁNDARA**

Coordinates: Datum (WSG84) 30T

X: 452360

Y: 4782140

Z: 735 meters

Approximation: 15 - 20 minutes

We will take as reference the small town of Asón, (known by all). From Asón we will ascend with our vehicle until crowning the highs of the same name. Continuing along the road we will reach the junction that goes towards La Gándara or towards the port of Sía. At this point, on a small esplanade that is to the right just before the crossing, we will leave our vehicles. From here we will walk up the road that goes towards the port of Sía about 150 meters approximately. Then we will go to the right to mount through until we find the path perfectly visible that is directed towards the mouth of the Gándara, (it is necessary to take it in its encounter towards the left).

### **CAVE OF CALIGRAFOS (Marked in red like 435)**

Coordinates: Datum (WSG84) 30T

X: 446889

Y: 4781092

Z: 1373 meters

Approximation: 35 - 40 minutes

We leave the village of Las Machorras towards the Puerada de Lunada by the road BU-572. Once the porthole has been crowned and next to the port signs on the left, there is a small esplanade where we can leave the vehicles. From here and to the right, starts a very marked path (the PR-66) that goes towards the hills of the Asón. We will take this path, which climbs without difficulty until reaching the hill of Bustalveinte. Following the trail, we started down the western slope of Picón del Fraile, facing us and slightly to the right a black spot in the cantilever, giving the sensation of being a cave, (it does not seem like it, it is The entrance to Calligraphers). You have to walk towards that point without losing altitude, heading to the right for small roads, possibly originated by horses or rafts of the area.

## DATA SHEET

☒ Total development of the system: More than 100 kilometers.

☒ Distance of the crossing: -638 meters.

☒ Development of the crossing: 11000 meters.

☒ Average duration of the trip: 18 hours.

☒ Rise time at the entrance mouth: 35 to 40 minutes

☒ Drop time from the outlet: 10 to 15 minutes

☒ Material necessary for the crossing: 60 meters of rope, 11 carabiners and 2 straps (for diverters) for the pitche that gives access to the Angel's room. You must install it before making the crossing. Rope of 20 meters (diameter 9 mm or less), several plates and a chisel equipment, to be able to repair some installation if necessary.

☒ Difficulties that we will encounter: Narrow steps, rolling mills, unfolded meanders, exposed passages, cornices at different levels, steps between blocks, ford of rivers, Up pitches (Various P-11, P-50 and P-40), descending Several pitches P-11 and P-15), and multiple projections and handrails. All these difficulties are currently (December 2015), installed in fixed, (except the P-40 that gives access to the room of the Angel, which must be installed before making the crossing) and in good condition. With the passage of time you have to be wary of these strings and installations.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE THROUGH TRIP

### CAVE CALIGRAFOS (Nº 435) - JUNCTION

After the small mouth of the entrance to the cavity, a gallery of very low ceiling leaves us in a few meters in a descending passage, (unobstructed by the French) with a strong current of air and something uncomfortable to overcome. Here we access the Du Léopard gallery. (Lizard Gallery), the name of the gallery refers to the ergonomic posture that we must adopt. This gallery is a semi-active course that descends in the form of a rolling mill with a slope of 7% which will be the predominant tonic in all this first section. We will have to progress crouched at best. We will continue downstream taking in all the bifurcations the branch that is left to us to the right, until we arrive at a first chaos of blocks. This first chaos we will overcome, first glued to the right wall, until we reach a point. We descend a little this point and turn left passing under a large block, reaching the wall on the left, where we see about 3 meters below the river. Destrepamos (not following the river) and we put ourselves in a small gallery to the right, that after a few meters returns to leave us in the correct way.

We continued down the river to the second of the chaos. Here we will have to go down to the river, looking for the passage, glued to the right wall. We continue descending until the gallery dies in a sack bottom. Here we turn abruptly to the left by a small meander leaving again to the main gallery.

After the meander we turn to the right, following the natural channel of the river, until we find that the gallery reduces its size leaving it in a small passage of very low ceiling where we will have to progress by the same bed of the river, (pay attention in Periods of heavy rains, can be siphoned). After overcoming it, we advanced without complications to a semicircular room. In this room, in the background and to the right, a small window with a rope installed in fixed leaves us behind 4 meters (R-4), again in the river. We only have to go down the channel a bit more until we find the JUNCTION, first of the important junctions of the crossing. We will know that we are on the right track because there is a topography mark with the number TS-115 and a reflector with the gandara G.

Estimated time: from 3 to 4 hours

Topographical plans numbers: 1, 2, 3 and 4

## JUNCTION - RIVER DU TIGRUE

At the junction marked on the mole as Junction and with the topographic point TS-115, here, we turn left taking the small gallery that is more to the right. Immediately we leave to the river of the Conjugation. This is the point where the road that comes from the cave of Bustalveinte (west direction) and the one that enters the system (direction E) joins us.

To the left (a little more up, 5 meters, and on the wall on the left we will find the poster in orange PVC 06-23, which indicates the place where we are inside the cavity). If we wanted to leave for Bustalveinte, we would take the conjugation upstream.

At the junction, (according to the sign 06-23 we will take Tangente Verde - Sardina Room). To do this, we will continue along the Conjugation river downstream, where some area is low ceiling. We will continue until the river makes a left turn. In this area we will find another orange PVC poster, 06-50. At this point we will have to leave to the left (North direction) by a small gallery that is directed towards the Green Tangent - Rio del Tigre. This gallery, the Green Tangent, we will travel North direction, always facing, letting pass all the branches that leave us to the right and left. Soon after starting the gallery there is a sudden change of direction almost forming a Z, leaving to a small water course. Here we will take to the right, we will make a climb and soon we put ourselves in a zone of defondamientos. The last one of them is lowered just before arriving at the diversion towards the gallery Bouillon, indicated in poster of orange PVC.

From the junction with the Bouillon gallery, we will continue straight ahead, direction Sala de la Sardina, and we will pass through a window, when we leave it, we will find a rope mounted as little shoes. We continue in front of the gallery, until at the end it turns to the right, leaving a front. We pass a narrow passage and we are already in the river Du Tigre, where when descending to the river we will find another orange poster on 04-12

This will be a good point to supply us with water, if we did not do it in the river Conjugation.

Estimated time: from 50 minutes to 1 hour

Topographical plans numbers: 5 and 6

## RIO DU TIGRE - SALLE DE LA SARDINE

On the sign 04-12 we will have to take direction towards the Sala de la Sardina. The crossing of the river Du Tigre is crucial for the crossing and we can only know if we are very attentive to the mole, as it is one of the galleries that come from the O. It is located about 10 minutes from the junction with the Bouillon gallery.

Once in the river Du Tigre we have to descend (we will continue to the right) through it until the first gallery that we are to our left. The gallery is indicated with a black arrow, a beacon and an orange PVC poster with a G, however it is easy to pass the entrance, since the gallery of the river Du Tigre takes us on the right side and the continuation leaves on the left. At this point, we will continue forward the gallery, without taking any of the bifurcations that we find, until a new G in orange indicates the good way to the E. Here, we turn gently to the right and we entered in a gallery Of small dimensions, that soon leaves us in a great room of sandy soil, that crosses tangentially. We are in the neuralgic centre of this part of the system.

When we reach the room we turn left, and then turn right again (if we continue straight ahead, we would reach a water course, the Patillote river) by a rolling mill. This laminator will take you to the right, until we go to a wider area and where we see a front gallery that tells us the exit of the Papillote River (orange PVC poster to the right of the gallery). At this point we turn right (North direction), and glued to the wall, without taking the branches with shot of air that go out to the left, we arrive at the poster of orange PVC 04-9.

From the sign 04-9 we take the left, direction North, taking the gallery des Plaques to Vent, direction to the Salle de la Sardine. We will continue through this gallery until we reach the great dunes, (galleries almost filled by large Super fine sandbars). Following a marked path and after making several turns we come to the Salle de la Sardine, when entering the room we turn left reaching the vivac4.

Here near the bivouac we can supply water, we simply have to follow the sound of water.

Estimated time: from 50 minutes to 1 hour

Topographical planes numbers: 7 and 8

## SALLE DE LA SARDINE - RIO VISCOSO

From the bivouac of the room of the Sardine we glued to the left wall North direction, passing between big blocks and some other passage underneath them, until we reach the river of the gallery Du Vieux Fusil. This can be a good place to get water. In the beginning, we will progress along the river, until we turn left by a mega chaotic gallery (climbing, climbing, exposed steps, climbing, etc ...), that takes direction East (we will recognize the good road because we will have to do a few climbs 4 meters at a point where there is an important drip, we will pass on a large block riding on it). This gallery is difficult to describe and locate on the map. What we will have to do is follow the direction East, (if we do not take this course, we are on the wrong road), until we reach a wider galleries (all the way is marked with landmarks and some reflective).

Shortly after arriving at those larger galleries, we turn left to the left, entering the Salle Du Scooter, easy to identify because at first the whole floor is upholstered in a very slippery white mud. Then we descend in zigzag until we reach the tighter section, which divides the Salle Du Scooter de la Salle Catalane. Already in the Catalan room we will continue following the marks until arriving at the center of the same one, where four black arrows indicate to us the way to follow between the blocks to arrive at the river Viscoso.

Estimated time: from 1 hour 50 minutes to 2 hours

**Topographical plans numbers: 9 and 10**

## RIO VISCOSO - P-50 BASE

After descending the chaos of blocks and placing ourselves in the viscous river, we will advance a few meters and soon we will take a small gallery of ceiling under the left that is directed in the opposite direction that we were bringing. If we follow the viscous, it is filled by a great chaos of blocks.

This little gigantic gallery makes several turns until it leaves us again in the river. We will continue downstream where laminators predominate. In the first of the crosses we take the gallery to the right and in the next one again to the right, which after a narrower area leaves us in a small network of galleries. In this framework we will take the gallery that is left to the right, following the course of the river. If the river is very heavy and we cannot go through the 2-meter ledge, we can do it for a By-Pass that is a little earlier. All this way is full of exposed steps that transit through narrow ledges more than 10 meters from the ground. The road is marked by black arrows.

Continuing downstream we will pass through a series of very narrow meanders and unfounded (hanging 10-15 meters from the ground), which make our hair stand on end. We will continue the river passing through another area of rolling mills until we leave to an extension of the gallery. Here we find a climbing rope (P-11), which leaves us in a fossil gallery. Here we will have to exaggerate the precaution, since the whole first section of gallery is upholstered with a white mud very slippery, being able to cause problems of stability. We will continue along the gallery trying to advance along the left wall, continue until we find, on the right wall and at the bottom of the gallery a rope that descends, another P.11. After the rope, again we are in the Viscoso, we follow the river, and after passing several steps of low ceiling we went out to an extension of the gallery. Just out of a low pass, in front, we found the continuation of the crossing. Leave the river for a 1.5 meter curb to the right.

If we pass this detour and continue downstream, we would draw the attention that the gallery begins to flood, and especially where it makes a sharp turn to the right, having to juggle not to get wet. If this is so, you have to go back and look for the step mentioned above.

Leaving the river we will have some rise and fall, one of the climbs with knotted rope. We will proceed through the south-facing gallery to a large room. Continue on the right wall until we reach the bivouac 3.

A few meters ahead we will find a gallery that goes to the right, here it is possible to get back to water. We will walk a few meters and descend to the active course to pick it up, after refueling we return on our steps until the bivouac.

From the bivouac3 we will hike through the gallery leaving all the branches that pass to the right until we reach the base of the P-50, installed with double rope, but on the same anchors.

At this point drastically changes the morphology of the ducts of the system that we must follow, we will leave the extracts of sandstones that have accompanied us all the way.

Estimated time: from 2 to 3 hours

Topographical plans numbers: 11, 12, 13 and 14

## BASE P-50 - ROOM OF THE GREAT PITCH

The P-50 rises in two runs. The first one is 30 meters in flight, reaching a small cornice, (a lot of caution, there are loose stones and can be accidentally thrown with the bag). After the fractionation, another roll of 20 meters in flight, we pass a diverter and we arrive at the head of the pitch and the beginning of the gallery of the Myottes.

The gallery of the Myottes at first becomes very comfortable, but soon it becomes a rise and fall of mounts of blocks. Some black and reflective arrows will help us to pass with more comfort. Throughout this section we will have to overcome four projections and handrails installed with fixed rope. After the last two ledges with diverter, we reach the end of the gallery. First by the right to cross under a block and continue glued to the left wall to exit through a small window to the room of the Gran Pozo. Caution in this area, we left almost at the edge of the large pitch.

Estimated time: from 1 hour 50 minutes to 2 hours

**Topographical plans numbers: 15**

## ROOM OF THE GREAT POZO - VIVAC 1

From the window overlooking the great hall, we left with great caution and turned over to the right, bordering the large pitche. We will continue along the pitch until we find a small window to the left, installed with a small rope as a kettle.

**If at this point we need water, from the rope that gives access to the window and taking West direction we will look for a passage through the sandy mills until we find the vivaci 5 and about 20 meters later we can get the water. Following this gallery a little further on we can climb a ramp of blocks to take the gallery that goes to the right direction East that between steps somewhat exposed would lead us to the head of the P-11 that we must go up the way of the sale.**

This window gives access to a small meander, we will advance for it until we arrive at a climb of 2.5 meters, that is made by the left. After surpassing it, we finish in another rope that climbs, (P-11). After climbing the pitch, we came to a much larger and larger gallery. At this point we take the right (east direction). This gallery runs above the Proue gallery and is more direct. The gallery is almost horizontal but we will have to raise and lower some chaos of blocks that hinder the passage. We no longer leave it until we reach the junction; we identify this junction because to leave the projection there are mounted stones as steps that facilitate the passage.

After the steps we turn to the right and descend this gallery, where we will find a highlight installed in fixed (R-5). Thus we arrive at a small room with a landmark in its center. At this point we enter a small meander that starts to the left. At the end of the meander a rope in fixed gives us the projection of 4 meters. This R-4 leaves us in a very steep room that ends in a 15-meter blast.

After lowering the projection, a rope as a handrail brings us safely to the head of the P-15, which is lowered in two runs. Once on the ground we turn left and follow the gallery until we reach a large block, which we will have to go through oak, (called the horse's jump). After this, we arrive at a cornice that we will pass crawling twisting to the right.

We will continue without problems through this gallery until we start to descend, at the beginning of the descent and on the right wall we find a G in orange cardboard that indicates the good way.

We continue descending between blocks and small galleries, always glued to the left until in the background and to the right we find a step Unobstructed and very small that it introduce us in the cave of Gándara. After passing it we turn to the right and we advance by water tubes, there is an ascending step with steps to facilitate the advance, until we arrive at a window that is to 3 meters of the ground. Here we have a rope like a small rope on the right wall. After surpassing it, we turn to the left and soon we find another cuerdecita that helps us to overcome a slippery step. After this and without further difficulties we advanced through the gallery and reached a meander that cuts the main gallery. We descend with caution, already in the meander, we turn to the right, in the opposite direction to the pitche Zambrum. To the few meters we are in a projection of 5 meters installed with a fixed line. Thus we arrived at a course of seasonal waters, and going up on the right wall we came to the vivac1.

Estimated time: from 1 hour 50 minutes to 2 hours

Topographical plans numbers: 16 and 17

## VIVAC 1 - GÁNDARA CAVE

We left the bivouac and moved forward to the right wall until the gallery is plugged by a chaos of blocks. After introducing ourselves in the blocks, we will rise until half height and we will go advancing by them pulling towards the left, until we leave by a window to the great gallery of Crucille.

This gallery we will walk until its end, predominating in the march to be glued to the left wall, that seems to us more comfortable, although in fact it is advanced by where it is possible, since the road is uncertain. After the Crucille gallery we arrive at ascending ramps that at the end have a great shot of aie, we will advance by the one that is more to the left, without introducing us in a small gallery that starts in the middle of the ramp. At the end of the ramp and pass the blower hole we are in the room of the Angel, in the area of the eccentrics. Now we only have to go around the room on the right and climb a strong ramp installed with stretches of handrails to avoid any fright if there were slips. If we need water, after the room of the eccentric, on the right we can supply easily with a few blocks.

In this way we get into a meander that to progress through it we have to overcome several projections installed with fixed rope, until we reach the rope that comes from the ceiling (P-35 Pitch of the Angel). This rope must have been installed before the crossing.

At the head of the pitch we will advance by a small ramp and then turn to the right to introduce us through a small hole that leaves us in a series of catheters. The last one of these gateras is ascending and very slippery, that after surpasses it deposits us in a more ample galleries and that precedes the denominated Delator.

We walked comfortably through these galleries, until we reached a crossroads. Here we turn to the right and we are in the Delator, (meandriform galleries with low or very low ceiling). We will have to overcome several Z (5 in total), until it ends in a block plug. This is overcome by a small step, which after passing it leaves us in the Sala Du Fisc. This room is marked by preservation of cavities, we will cross it by its center following the marked path and in the crosses we turn left, entering this way in the Des Alizés Gallery, which is the one that takes us directly to the outside. We advance through the Du Alizés gallery until it fades into the Bear pit (P-49), which is overcome with a handrail on the right wall. After passing it, we will only have to climb the stony ramp, glued to the right wall, which leaves us in the unobstructed passage that in turn takes us out into the street.

Estimated time: from 2 to 3 hours

Topographical plans numbers: 18, 19 and 20

## RECOMMENDATIONS

☒ Before making the crossing, it is essential to leave the pitche that gives access to the Angel's room installed. If we find this pitche installed in fixed we recommend leaving our own rope.

☒ Due to the great complexity of the system and the possibility that the reflectors can be moved, we recommend to recognize, before starting the crossing, part of the galleries. For the Gándara we recommend to know the intermediate network, especially until the confluence with the gallery of Anesthetists (G on orange PVC). By Calligraphers it is necessary to know until the room of the Sardine, although it would be more rocomendable until the Catalan Room.

☒ The state of weather must be taken into account, since a heavy downpour can be quickly noticed. Attention therefore to the various siphonable points, especially in the gallery Du Lézard. Keep in mind that the river Viscoso can increase its flow quickly, leaving some passages impassable. In case of snowfall, the cavity is practically covered, and its access can be very, very complex.

☒ The use of compass, description and a pitche-detailed topography is indisputable.

☒ We recommend to carry personal minisacas and optionally a collective with some water and some common utensils (stove, Chinese noodles, candles, etc.)

☒ It is highly recommended to carry a 20-meter rope, a pair of veneers and hoisting equipment to repair possible damage to installations that are fixed.

☒ We recommend good knee pads and elbow pads.

☒ We recommend respecting the biological cycles, this will allow us to undertake in a better conditions a journey as demanding as this.

## ESTIMATION OF THROUGH TRIP TIMES

☒ Times are calculated for groups of 4 speleologists in good physical-mental form and with good knowledge of orientation and topography.

☒ Any unforeseen, unaware of the system, stops to eat and rest, photographic stops, etc ... can imply an exponential delay, being able to take more than twice in the initially estimated times.

☒ These estimates, which are detailed below, are for groups that knew the entire system pitche. Hence, each one must draw his own estimates and conclusions

AREAS OF CROSSING	HIGH SPEED Hours	MEDIUM SPEED Hours
CUEVA CALIGRAFOS – JUNCTION	3	4
JUNCTION - TIGER RIVER	0.5	1
TIGER RIVER - SARDINE ROOM	0.5	1
ROOM OF THE SARDINE - RIVER VISCOUS	1.5	2
VISCOUS RIVER - BASE P-50	2	3
BASE P-50 - ROOM OF THE GREAT PITCHE	1.5	2
ROOM OF THE GREAT POZO - VIVAC 1	1.5	2
VIVAC 1 - GÁNDARA CAVE	2	3
ESTIMATED TOTAL TIME	12.5	18