

CUEVA DE LA CARRERA

INTRODUCTION

Length: 8524 m

Elevation difference: 143 m (-138 m; +5 m)

Exploration and surveying: SC Dijon

Cave discovered on July 16, 2013, by members of SC Dijon during clearing the route of the "vertical kilometer" race organized by the Arredondo Town Council. The race runs between the town and Mosquiteru Peak (1213 m), which overlooks the Lavalle crag.

A violent current of air, 2 m³/s, was exhaled through a small blowhole. Once the clay and pebbles clogging the opening were cleared, access was opened to a beautiful cave, which once formed part of the Cañuela complex.

The East Gallery of Cañuela is 200 m away in plan from the Pedrito Canyon of the Carrera cave and situated at similar elevations

Cueva de la Carrera
(datum WGS84)

30 T 450449 4791063
Alt: 466 m



Entrance above, where the hard work of clearing the cave is evident. Bear markings near entrance.

1 km from the Socueva neighborhood on the CA-656 road that connects the neighborhood with Arredondo, we find on the left a small area where we can park up to four vehicles. About 80m down the road from the parking area and just past a pretty cabin, on our left the path begins that ascends in the direction of Buzulucueva and which, heading generally west, takes us to the Boca de Carrera cave entrance in a 1 km walk with a relentless 175m elevation gain **(The path begins to the right of the cabin, climb up on the right above the road, path is vague!)**

Due to the poorly marked route, it is necessary to follow the access to the cave entrance with the help of a track, which you can download from the Viana website, where you downloaded this same document (**use the wikiloc app**).

DESCRIPTION

The entrance to the cave, on the verge of becoming blocked due to the accumulation of clay and stones, was a small, violently ventilated fissure that was cleared until it became passable. Crawling, we crossed those two or three meters of narrow passage, and our gallery became a descending narrow passage that led us, following the Summer Tube, to a first small chamber. Another section of the passage led us to a second chamber, from which we exited by crossing a chaotic area that took us to a marked area (ZB) designated by the "Cave Conservation" program of the Cantabrian Speleological Federation.

We soon reached the junction of the Summer Tube with the Claw Gallery, to our right, whose entrance is no more than a meter high. This junction is easily recognizable by the chimney above the small hole in the floor, at the very point where the two galleries divide. This short gallery was chosen by the bears for hibernation, as it lacked ventilation. After 20 meters, with a low ceiling, it rises and reveals multiple claw marks from the cave bears on both walls.

Back at the Summer Tube, we went down a ramp, and the gallery continued comfortably, heading south. Our marked gallery continues until we reach a chamber with a large drop, which we must go around, to our right. Below this drop is the Pozo de la Nariz (P23), a necessary passage to continue our visit, and which we can access by two routes. Either by downclimbing some boulders after going around the drop, or by descending a mud ramp with a fixed rope, a little further on.



Pitch requires a 30m rope and 6 Krabs

We reach the top of the shaft by passing under a boulder, and after installing the approach handrail and the anchor, we begin the descent, which soon leads us to a ramp that ends at a ledge (the Nose), where we split the rope. A final 15-meter free-hanging pitch brings us to the Present Moment Gallery. We continue down the gallery, leaving a small drop to our right and a larger one to our left. We turn right and enter a ramp, under beautiful formations and flowstone, which we descend diagonally. We continue comfortably along the gallery with a marked path until we reach a simple crawl space about two meters long, from which the gallery stops heading south and turns west. We follow a well-defined route until we reach a group of beautiful wall formations on our right—flags, columns, and an organ.



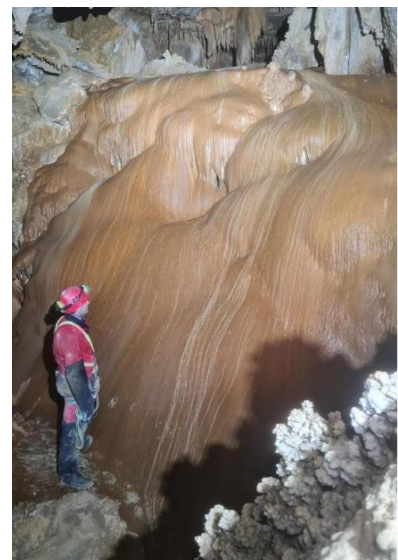
Easy downclimb of a ramp between beautiful flowstone formations, which we descend diagonally (phot opposite)

We continue along the gallery heading south and keeping close to the left wall, crossing an awkward area of boulders, until we reach, after a descending ramp, a chamber characterized by a circular dry rimstone pool, located next to its left wall. Next to this rimstone pool, some beautiful flowstone formations rise up the wall. From this chamber, we exit following the left wall, and after a short ascending ramp, we find also, on the left wall the fixed ropes of the climb of the Fan (E 12).

This climb is currently an ascending ramp with a fixed rope in three sections, the first of which is the steepest. Following the rope, we follow a narrow meander—about 80 cm wide—on a steep, ascending slope until it ends abruptly at a kind of balcony overlooking a chamber. To the right of this balcony, another narrow meander, now descending, finally leads us to a wide gallery, the Volcano Gallery. The floor is now smooth and compacted clay.



E12 on the left and The Great Colada, a gift from this Cave, on the left.



We comfortably continue along the marked area (ZB) of the FCE, until we reach a downclimb of about 4 meters. From there, after a turn to the right, we begin to see loose blocks on the floor.

We follow the right wall and cross next to a deep, narrow drop (about 6 meters deep). A little further on, heading south, and after climbing a small ramp, we encounter a short, somewhat cramped system of pressure tubes—no more than 10 meters long—from which we emerge into a wide area via an ascending ramp of slippery white clay. In front of us, one of the treasures this beautiful cave offers: a spectacular flowstone of an intense brown colour that will not leave us indifferent.

We continued along our route, to the right of the pipes we had come from, heading southwest, and soon reached a slightly more open area that marked a junction of routes. The gallery to our right, which begins with a short climb over some boulders, is the continuation of the Volcano Gallery, and the one that seems to continue straight ahead is the entrance to the Socueva Gallery, where on the left is the Rampa Shaft, and the gallery that was once connected to the caves of the Hermitage of San Juan.

Towards the Volcano

After the easy climb up the blocks that we had on our right, the gallery becomes a majestic tunnel with a smooth floor -marked (ZB) by the FCE- full of formations. This gallery will take us directly to the emblematic formation of the Volcano and ultimate goal of most visits to this cave (well worth seeing, photos below). After the Volcano, the gallery changes its name and becomes the Balcony Gallery, which, due to its comfort and beauty, is highly recommended for a stroll.



Black Widow Directions

Returning to the junction of the Volcano Gallery and the Socueva Gallery, we find ourselves at the same junction, at the beginning of the gallery, and next to the left wall, the Ramp Shaft, which gives us access to the Black Widow Gallery.

This shaft has an initial pitch—about 8 meters of free-hanging rock—before continuing, after a first section, as a gentle ramp. The ramp leads us to a balcony above a chamber with goures and potholes, which we can see from above. The continuation of the cave and the entrance to the Black Widow Gallery are to the right, in the direction the handrail leads us.

We continue through this gallery until we find a second volcano, not as spectacular as the previous one, but still quite striking. The gallery turns left, leading us through a small, heavily creviceed passage that ends in the Mordor Swamp: a narrow passage that will force us to crawl, or at best, crouch, over two feet of mud and water. From that point on, we are covered in brown and continue along a muddy pavement.

A series of descending ramps begins, the last of which is fixed with a rope on natural supports. The gallery becomes horizontal again, and the floor is maintained with compacted white clay, water, and mud. We thus enter a chamber with another large formation “volcano”) in the centre and a large chimney that rises almost twenty meters.

The descending ramps continue in a wide gallery. The floor, very slippery with mud, will force us to take care to proceed along the right wall. The wide gallery we have been following opens into a shallow drop, not very deep—3 to 5 meters—and about twenty meters in diameter, which can be traversed by following its perimeter along the top and right side. A marked path will guide us and force us to crawl at some points along the route.



Formations in the Black Widow gallery

An ascending ramp opens onto a chaotic area of large boulders, where the gallery takes on significant dimensions—its ceiling is 30m high. Continuing along the gallery, and without any possibility of getting lost, we reach a point where it seems to suddenly close off, requiring a 6m climb with a fixed rope (Viana 2024). This climb is the access to the Trapezoidal Meander 1

which is not continued.

Directions to the Caricaturists' Hall

Ten meters before the climb to the Trapezoidal Meander, we observe that on the right wall, a jumble of boulders plunges into a lower opening. Descending between the boulders and through this opening, the cave becomes continuous, and we can follow the rest of the Black Widow Gallery towards the Caricaturists' Hall.

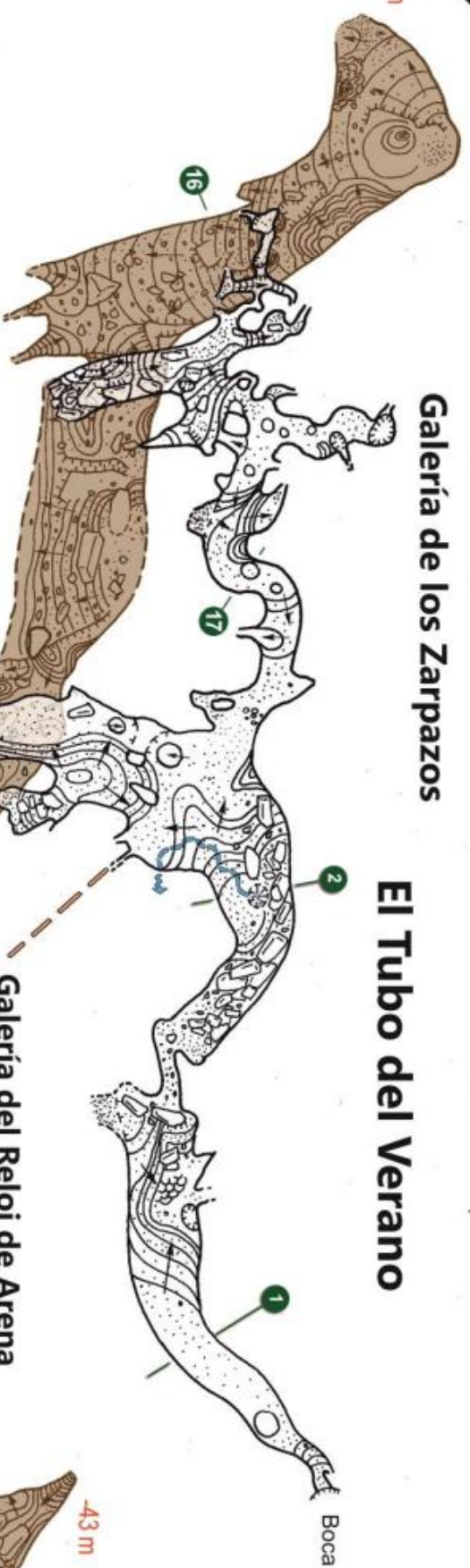
The gallery is now wide and continues predominantly westward. We turn behind the boulders and pass a sandy ridge that leads us to a shaft about 8 meters deep, which we must go around. A steep ascending ramp and about 50 meters of passage between boulders open us to the Caricaturists' Hall. From the Cartoonists' Hall, heading south, and after descending some steep ramps, we will enter the long Pedrito Canyon, the end of the cave and gallery that was once connected to the East Canyon of Cañuela.

Topo's below

46 m

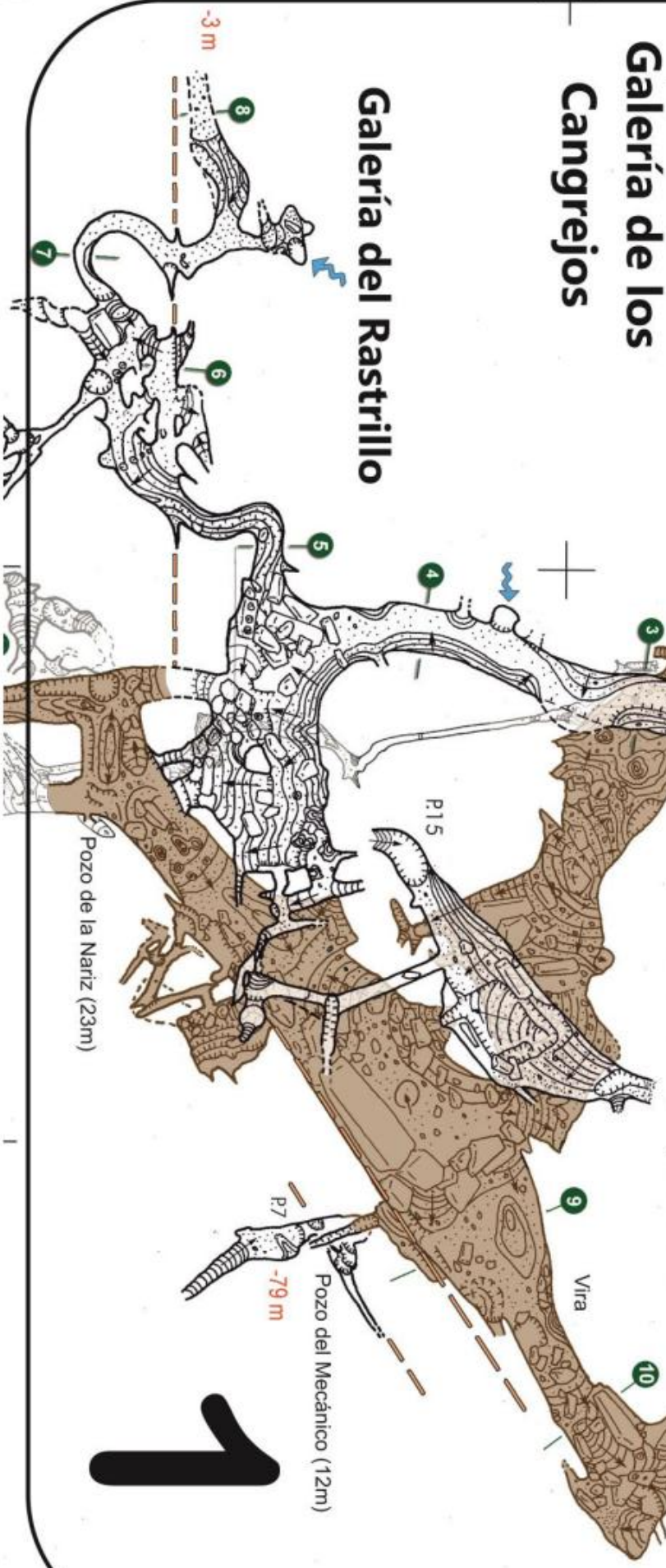
Galería de los Zarpazos

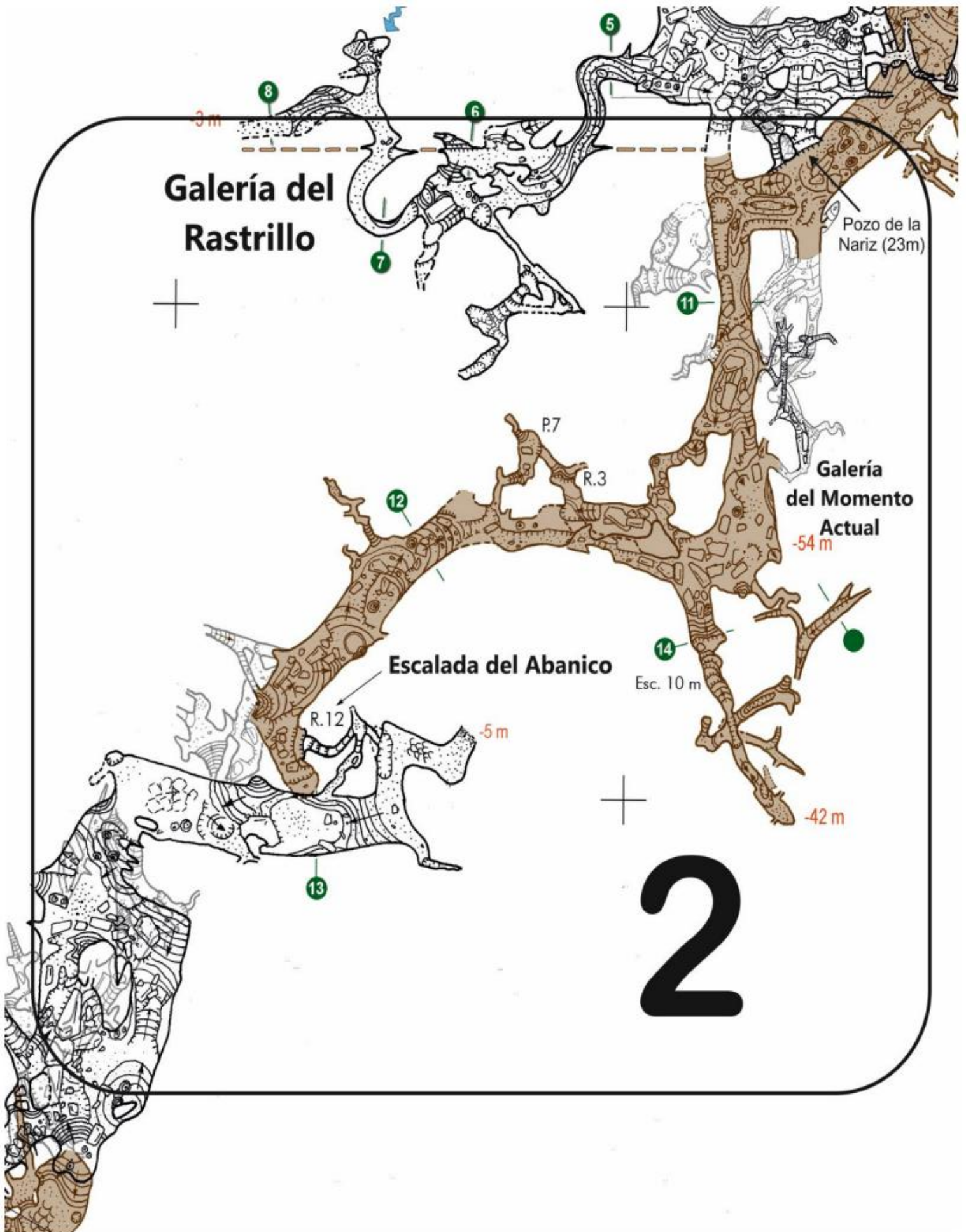
El Tubo del Verano



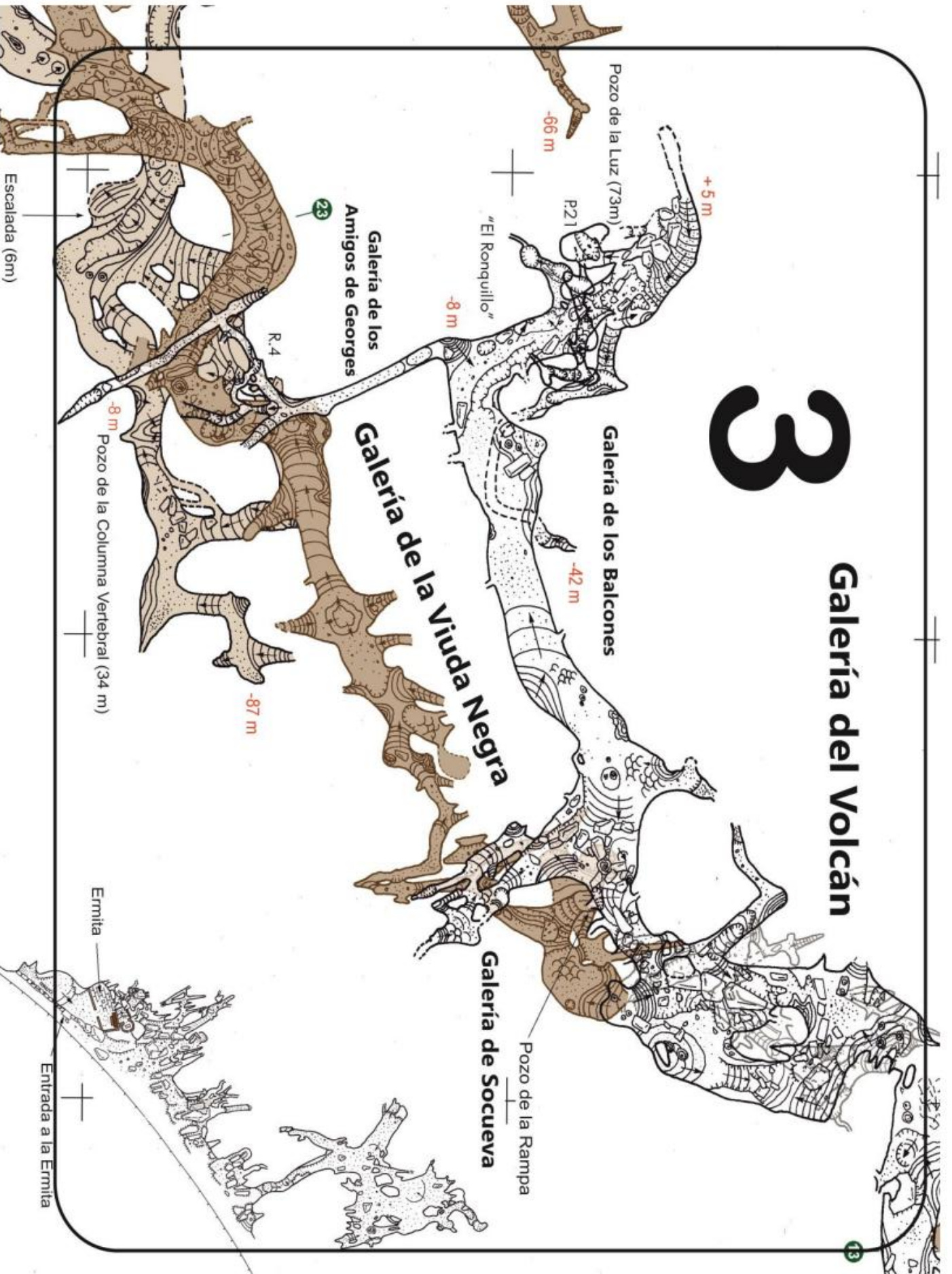
Galería de los Cangrejos

Galería del Rastrillo





3 Galería del Volcán



Galería del Colgajo

Pozo de la Luz (73m)

+5 m

-68 m

-66 m

P.2

-40 m

"El Ronqu"

Sala de los Caricaturistas

23

-91 m

-137 m

P.8 + 14

Pozo del Banquero
(30 m + 8 m)

Escalada (6m)

Escalada 5m

Pozo del Franciscano (34m)

Arroyo de las Magdalenas

Meandro Trapezoidal

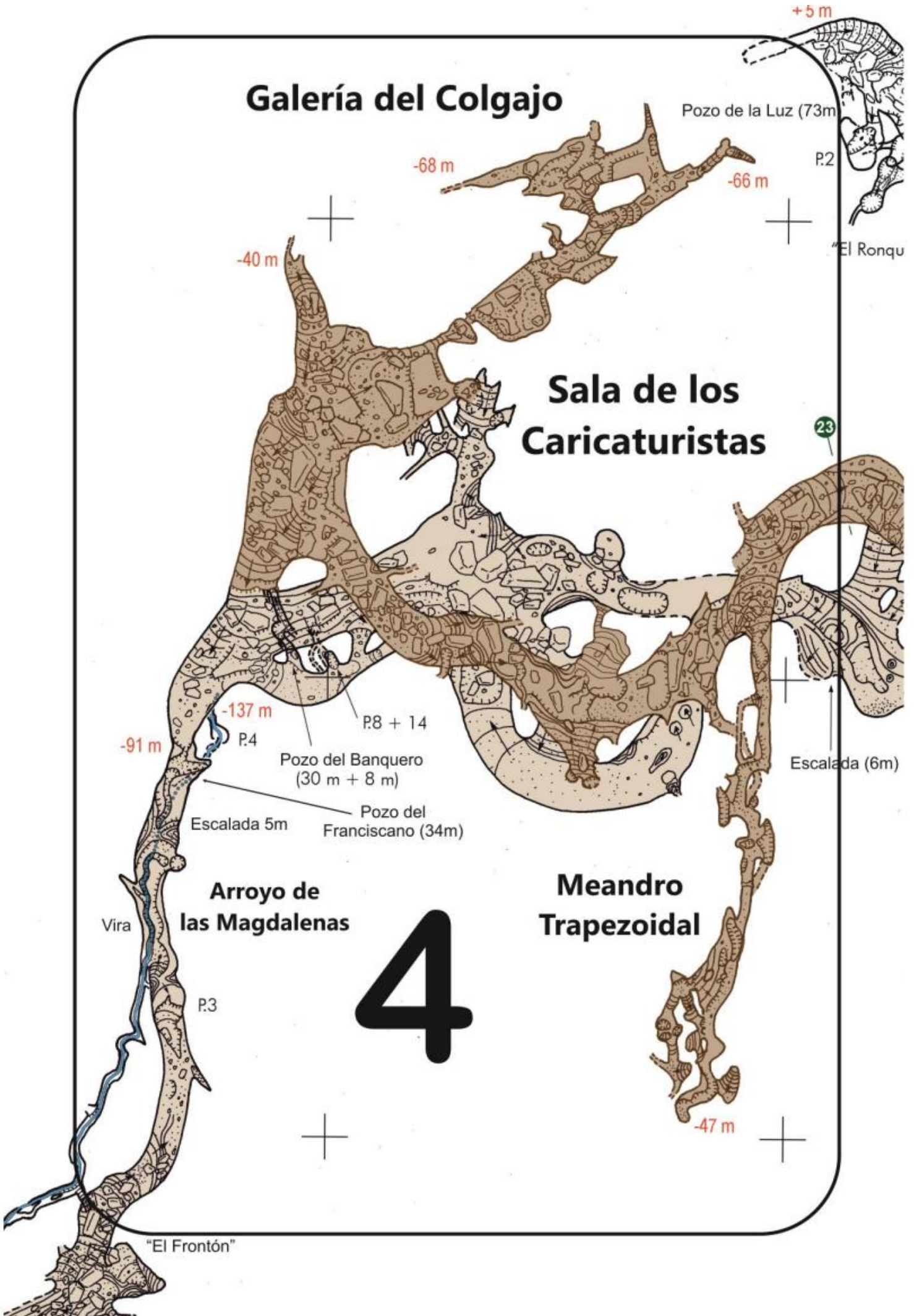
Vira

P.3

4

-47 m

"El Frontón"



Cañón de Pedrito

Arroyo de las
Magdalenas

"El Frontón"

Galería superior
de los Cerditos

Galería de la Pirámide

Pozo del Casco Colonial
(11 m)

-69 m

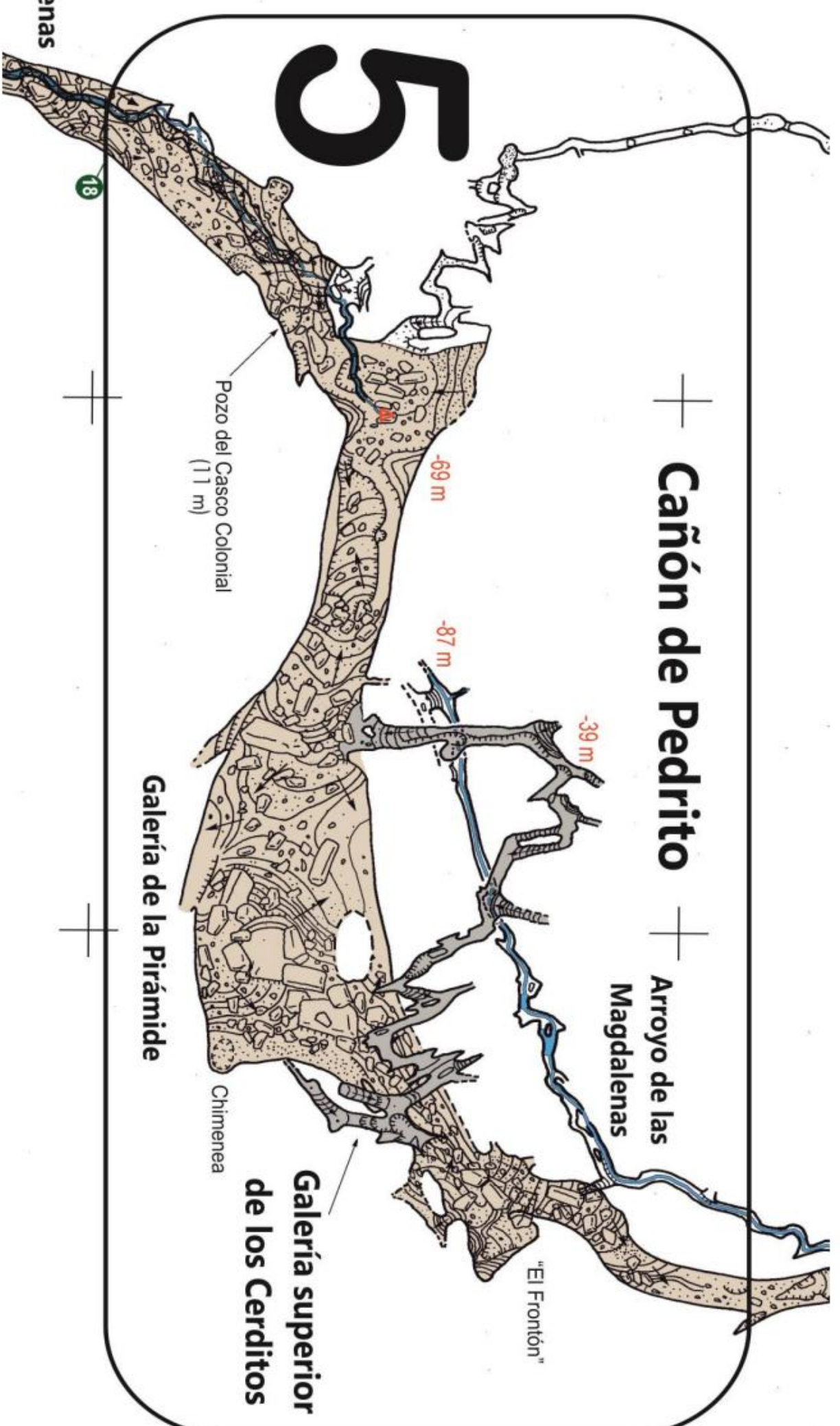
-87 m

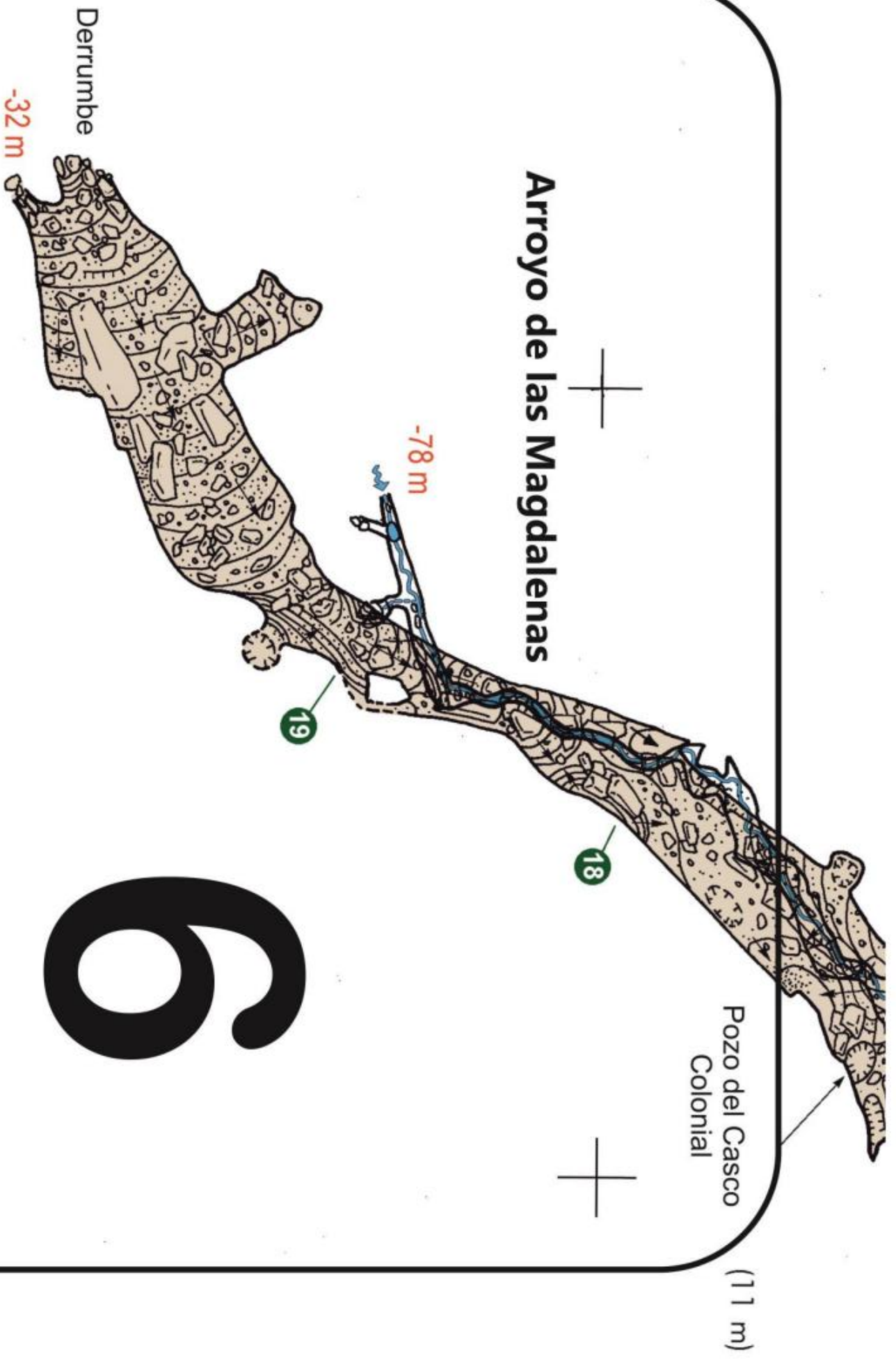
-39 m

5

Magdalenas

18





6