

# SOLVIEJO – TORCA DEL RAYO DE SOL

## ACCESS

From Secadura, follow signs for Solórzano. At kilometer marker 6, at a sharp right-hand bend, a concrete track leads off to the left. Take this track and continue uphill, passing two cabins on the right and a descending fork on the left, until you reach a gate on the right that leads to a meadow with a cabin at the far end (UTM coordinates, European datum 1950, sheet 30T 455,536/4,800,104). Several cars can be parked here, and also a few meters before. From this point, continuing on foot, the track begins to descend steeply until you reach the vicinity of a water tank. Here you will find a gate that you must cross. A few meters further on, you will find a second gate that you must also cross. This gate leads to a eucalyptus grove. Following the path through the eucalyptus grove, we will reach a ruined cabin on the same path to the left; a little further on we will find another one. When we reach the second cabin, we must turn 90° to the right (north).

Continuing straight ahead between the eucalyptus trees As we ascend, we will come across a small limestone outcrop among the undergrowth. At this outcrop, we will find a small footprint trail that will lead us through the undergrowth to the entrance of Sol Viejo.

To reach Rayo de Sol, from the ruined cabin in the eucalyptus grove, we will follow the path we came on. At the end of it, the path turns sharply, descending to our left, where it gradually disappears. If we continue descending (southbound), we will reach the dry ravine where the entrance is located, passing through the trees. It is on the left bank of the ravine, quite hidden due to its small size. There is a visible plate there.

## DESCRIPTION

Note: The article by Isidoro Ortiz in his book *Grandes Travesías* and the one by Iván Expósito (*Espéleo Socorro Cántabro*) describing the current state of the facilities after the re-equipping of the traverse by *Espéleo Socorro Cántabro* have been used as references.



Característica galería de entrada

The entrance to Solviejo Cave, although wide, is located amidst abundant undergrowth. This entrance immediately continues as a slightly descending gallery with a section resembling a keyhole, 3 to 5 meters high and 2 meters wide, with a mud-covered floor.

About 30 meters from the entrance, we will find a handrail mounted with bolts on the left wall. This provides access to the first shaft of the traverse, a P19 equipped for two rope pitches of approximately the same length. This shaft is climbed in a double rope and has a rope for a guided rappel. Once on the floor, we will be in a large chamber with several rimstone pools. The traverse continues ascending up a slippery flowstone on the opposite side (right –East–) of the chamber from which we descended.

*(It's worth taking a detour from the main traverse, and at the base of P19, heading north to explore a large section of the system that is not part of the main traverse, but is notable for its abundant formations. First, we must climb a slippery ramp using a fixed rope, which leads us to a sizable chamber, the Neuron Chamber. Next, the gallery turns slightly to the left and becomes somewhat chaotic (the Haste Gallery). Shortly after, we'll find P18, which leads us to a small stream that continues along a small meander).*

This ramp has a fixed rope that will assist us on the ascent. After this flowstone, we find a wide gallery, called the Mysterious Passage. At this point, we will have reached the same elevation as we had in the Prisa sector (described in a footnote). After a little over fifty meters, we will find the handrail (actually a safety rail) that allows us to approach the P20 that will open up to our left.

We will descend this shaft, and at its base, we will have to climb among boulders to regain considerable height, on the opposite side of the shaft we descended (in fact, we will see the top of the P20 we just descended almost at our eye level). Here we will find a fixed rope that will help us climb an R2 (equipped on excellent bolts). Next, we will find another P20, divided into -3 and -11m sections, which we must descend. At its wide base, we must look for the continuation through a narrow passage on the opposite side of the wall we descended.

We will cross this narrow passage carefully to avoid getting wet from the puddles on the ground, emerging into a deep meander. In this meander, about 150 meters long and narrow in places, we can advance without great difficulty, except for a small 2m step that we can climb using opposition climbing (there is a fixed rope to help with the ascent). After this step, the meander will narrow, leaving us at a P4, followed by a short and easy downclimb. This P4 will have left us in the Camp Room

*(To the left of this chamber, we find a long and comfortable gallery with large formations, and to its right, a short, chaotic gallery where ascending shafts and some water sources converge.*

*Years later, a large area was discovered in the gallery to the right of the camp, not shown on the map we offer, featuring the Siesta Shaft, the Altar, the Tintin Gallery, and the Ferret.*

*If we continue in the opposite direction (Northeast), we will reach the terminal siphon at -111 meters after descending several shafts (one of which has a large circular lake at its bottom, the Lake Shaft [Pool Pitch]).*

Practically where the rope from P4 leaves us in the Camp Room we will find the top of a P9. We will have to downclimb a little to access it. Once we descend this P9, we will find ourselves on a lower level. Here we must continue in a southwest direction. We are in the Chocolate Crunch Series galleries.

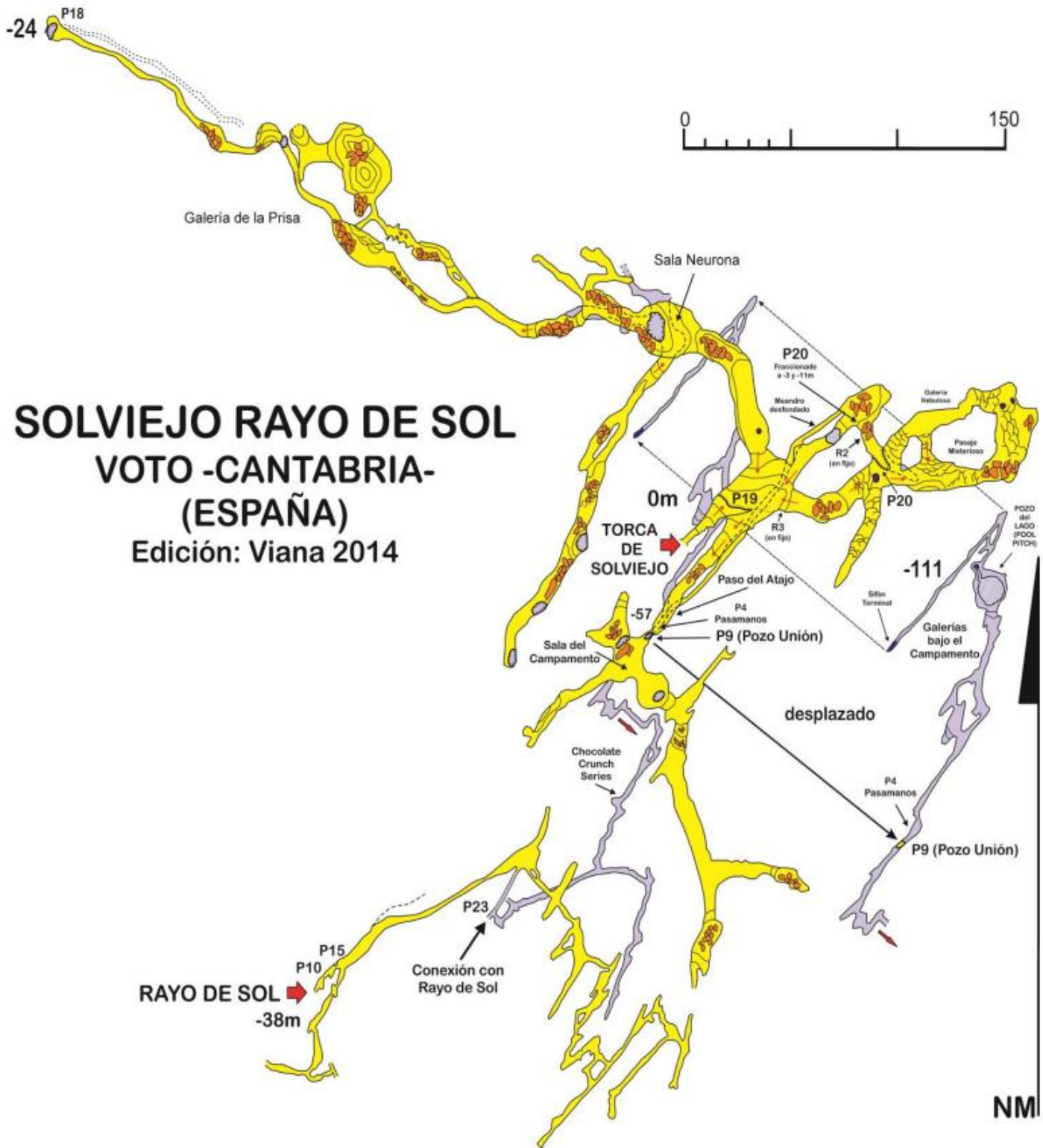
This area begins with a phreatic tube, approximately 2 meters high and shaped like a keyhole, which intersects, at 200 meters, a narrow, low-ceilinged transverse gallery. This gallery is characterized by its dry, chocolate-colored floor, which produces a distinctive crunching sound when stepped on. After a little over 200 meters of gallery from the base of P9, a junction of galleries is reached. At this junction, take the right branch, crawling to a point where the gallery widens slightly, allowing you to approach the head of P23 on foot.

P23 is actually a ramp-like crack (a rope is needed) that leads to the lower level and, therefore, to the galleries of the Torca del Rayo de Sol (Sunbeam Sinkhole). At the base of P23, continue following the obvious path to your right through a narrow, sloping meander. We will continue along the obvious path, to leave the meander and proceed through an area between boulders, with some loose stones, which will ascend to the pits of the Torca del Rayo de Sol.

As we leave the meander, the route becomes very clear due to the air current and the vegetation debris drifting in from outside. A short climb to the right leads to the base of the ascending P15, followed by a short crawl of about 10m, to the entrance P10 to the Torca del Rayo de Sol. The traverse will require a final effort to exit from the top of this P10 to the street via a short but awkward ascending crawl.

## **EQUIPMENT AND CONDITION OF THE INSTALLATION**

Bring two 30m ropes or one rope and a retrieval cord. The route was completely re-equipped by the FCE in 2015, but before starting the traverse, it is essential to visit the Rayo de Sol exit to confirm that anchors **P10 and P15 are in place.**



**SOLVIEJO RAYO DE SOL**  
**VOTO -CANTABRIA-**  
**(ESPAÑA)**  
 Edición: Viana 2014

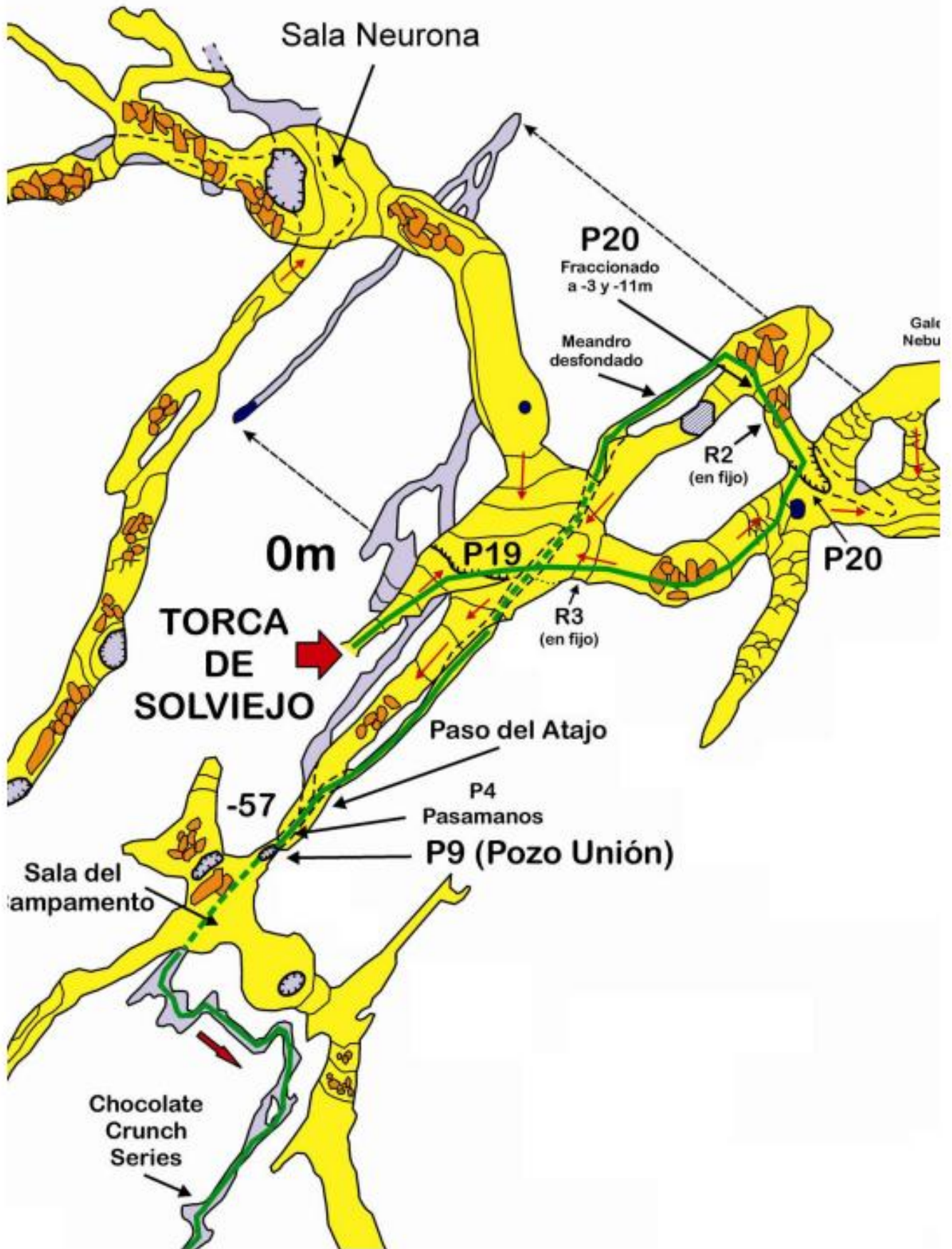
**RAYO DE SOL** →  
 -38m

Conexión con  
 Rayo de Sol

desplazado

NM

# DETALLE (1) CON LA RUTA MARCADA



**DETALLE (2) CON LA RUTA MARCADA**

