

Dive into a sea of life

Scuba Diving in Xàbia



25 km of Coast
A Marine Reserve
22 dives



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Prologue

Xàbia has been one of the Mediterranean's most prestigious tourist destinations for over 40 years. This is the case because despite the growth of recent decades, we have not lost our identity as a town and we have not lost touch with our great natural heritage. On the other hand, if Xàbia is what it is today, if tens of thousands of people all over the world select us among all the destinations every year, it is because we like to share our lifestyle here; it is because we have known how to harmonize all the possible Xàbias: the urban lifestyle, culture (our own culture), innovation, entertainment options for children, young people and senior citizens, holiday festivities which liven up the streets, our peaceful town as well as our privileged natural scenery.

If we did not have this sea or this landscape, if we failed to take care of our green environment and the prime locations which define us, we would only be an additional point on the map, without anything special to offer.

But this is not the case. We have everything in our favour, including several lessons from the recent past. And based on this awareness, we focus on a sustainable and attractive tourism which is able to project Xàbia into the future without endangering the values which have enabled us to get here.

Accordingly, investing in a sector like scuba diving is a clear sign of how we want to do things. Scuba diving, by the professional companies which offer their sports services, teaches us the valuable lesson that in order to take full advantage of a resource, the best strategy is communication and conservation.

Likewise, our town, due to the features of its sea floor and the variety of areas which its 25-kilometer coast have to offer, is one of the most attractive destinations for scuba diving in the entire Mediterranean coast as thousands of fans around the world already know.

Under these waters, the life and history of our sea await you. And everything else awaits you on land.

Greetings. Welcome.

José F. Chulvi
Alcalde de Xàbia



As President of the Xàbia Fishermen's Association and as a sailor, I encourage you to dive into this guide and discover the passionate world of scuba diving.

It is said that scuba divers and professional fishermen have a conflict with each other or we have incompatible objectives. This is not true: if there is respect between both groups, then we will all mutually benefit- We both seek and defend the same idea: a healthy sea, full of life, in which we can take sustainable advantage both from the primary sector as well as the leisure and tourism sectors.

The existence of a protected zone such as the Marine Reserve of Cap de Sant Antoni and the regulation of good practices in its interior is the best guarantee for everyone. For diving enthusiasts or persons who shall live this experience for the first time, it permits them to have first-hand contact with plant and animal species which otherwise would have been seriously depleted by human pressure. And traditional artisan fishermen ensure the quality and quantity of today's and tomorrow's catch.

Our traditional fishing is a trade with a future which not only influences the fish markets, the local cuisines and restaurants but is also an essential key so that a form of culture, a link shall survive in which men and women from the Mediterranean continue to recognize ourselves.

It is no coincidence that the first guards and defenders of the Marine Reserve as well as legal and responsible fishing are us, the sailors and scuba divers. We have a lot at stake in this sector as does society. Likewise in this story, there will also be no partial successes: either we all win or we all lose. The decision is easy, right?

Together we enjoy the marine wealth of Xàbia, let this be our letter of introduction to the world and let's return to the sea, in the form of affection, respect and knowledge, a small part of everything which it continues to give to us.

José Serrat Cholbi
Presidente de la Cofradía de
Pescadores de Xàbia



The coastal sea floor of Xàbia constitutes one of the richest and most valuable enclaves of the Valencian Region: from the cliffs of Cap de Sant Antoni up to the transparent waters of la Granadella, passing through la Calablanca, Cap Prim, the bay: Bahía del Portitxol, Cap Negre, Cap de la Nau, the Ambolo beach and the islet called l'Illa del Descobridor; their waters have attracted the interest of numerous social groups. The spatial heterogeneity and the types of substrates have proven to be a key factor in the establishment of the major diversity of marine communities, among which we highlight scyaphilic algae with coral/anemone formations in the Marine Reserve of Cap de Sant Antoni, the prairies of Posidonia Oceanica (sea grass) in the north region of the Bay of Xàbia, the white sea bottoms of the Calablanca zone, the photophilic algae between Cap Prim and la Granadella, and the scyaphilic algae (or "penumbra"/semi-darkness") colonies present in the surroundings of the islands of Portitxol and el Descobridor.

A wide range of whimsical topographies which serve as refuge for a multitude of marine species, conspicuous and yet unknown. A Mediterranean location solely comparable with regions of the Costa Brava (Catalonia), Cabo de Palos (Murcia) or the pristine islands of Eivissa and Formentera (Balearic Islands).

Such is its charm that its sea floors are annually re-elected by the University teaching sector, professors who teach the practical courses of the subjects for the degree and post-graduate programs related to marine biology. Xàbia is also the usual destination for excursions and specialization courses organised by the Bioblau Association, sample taking of benthic ecosystems, submarine photography and nudibranches (sea slugs) among others, with numerous professionals who travel from Catalonia or Murcia, who all unanimously highlight - the great beauty and diversity of the plants and wildlife which inhabit the waters of Xàbia.

And even today Xàbia has been recently equipped with the IROX (Institut de Recerca Oceanogràfica de Xàbia [Institute of Oceanographic Research of Xàbia]), a non-profit association for the study and protection of the coastal marine environment. In this sense, the access to this rich natural submerged heritage by means of the sustainable practice of scuba diving represents a very appropriate conceptual framework where its genuine value can be revealed to the rest of society independently of their origin or professional context. We are familiar with the saying "you do not love that which you do not know".

Joan J. Soto Àngel
Laboratorio de Biología Marina
Departamento de Zoología
Universitat de València



Importance of the sea floors of Xàbia

The sea floors of Xàbia are a faithful reflection of the varied topography of its coast (cliffs, islands, reefs, beaches and coves). This combined with the premium quality and transparency of its waters have made this Mediterranean setting into an excellent place to practice free diving and scuba diving with oxygen tanks. We will provide a general overview of the habitats which we will find in Xàbia, separating them into rocky and mobile or soft environments.

Communities with rock bottoms

The rock sea bottoms have the most beautiful scenic landscapes, due to the changing profiles of their topography and the majority are completely covered by organisms, with strange shapes and colours of the sessile or fixed animals. Accordingly, since limestone or ('tosca') sandstone are the predominant rocks in Xàbia, they provide a wide variety of habitats (slabs, cracks, blocks, overhangs, vertical walls, caves, etc.) where communities of different organisms dwell depending on the light, hydrodynamics and sedimentation with their associated organisms.



With a simple mask, snorkel and fins and without much effort in free diving or holding your breath, we can enjoy the diversity of the sea bottoms which the Xàbia coast provides in 0-2m depths. Here we find 'brownish-grey kelp forests' (*Cystoseira*, *Sargassum*, *Dictyota*), on horizontal surfaces with a predominantly yellow-brownish colour; as well as the green algae called 'Japanese umbrella' (*Acetabularia*), during the summer months. Among them, we may observe sea urchins (*Arbacia*, *Paracentrotus*) and sponges with cream and black colours (*Ircinia*, *Sarcotragus*). A wide variety of fishes will observe us, among them, the Sparidae (seabream, "vedriada"), Labridae or wrasses (ornate wrasse, peacock wrasse), Serranides or sea bass ("vaca", young groupers), Gobioidae (gobies), Blenniidae (blennies), mullets (grey mullets, striped mullets), "llobarros" or sea bass and the black 'damselfish' (*Chromis chromis*). In the vertical walls, cracks and overhangs, with less light, the prevailing algae are red (*Corallina*, *Peyssonelia*) and green (*Flavellia*, *Halimeda*), where the sponges change into white, red and yellow colours. Among the fishes, the rainbow wrasse and cardinal fish are present.

With oxygen tanks, these landscapes continue in depths up to 18m, where the photophilic brown algae ('lovers of the light') give way to the green and red scyaphilic algae ('lovers of the penumbra' [semi-dark]), due to the water's absorption of light. The fixed animals become increasingly frequent, particularly the sponges with their varied colouration (red, yellow, brownish grey and black) and the white coral/anemone formations (*Eunicella singularis*). Among the mobile fauna, we find the purple sea urchin (*Sphaerechinus*), the red starfish (*Echinaster*) and common starfish (*Marthasterias*).

Also in the shelter of the caves, cracks and overhangs, we find the 'coralligenous' community, with the predominance of fixed animals and calcareous algae (*Lithophyllum*, *Mesophyllum*). Besides the sponges, the yellow encrusting anemone (*Cladia*), the madrepores (*Madracis*, *Polycyathus*), the 'false coral' bryozoas or "moss animals" (*Myriapora*) and the 'Venus lace' (*Reteporella*), and the red sea squirt (*Halocynthia*).

In the darkest zones, the algae disappear, giving way to the cave communities and the flashlight reveals a multi-colour panorama of sponges, madrepores and bryozoas.





The 'coralligenous' community is predominant in the horizontal surfaces starting from a depth of 30m, where the yellow (*Axinella*), orange (*Agelas*), red (*Crambe*) and purple (*Petrosia*) sponges are very frequent; the latter species with the Leopard sea slug nicknamed 'Swiss calf' (*Peltodoris*), roaming on its surface. The coral/anemone formations ("gorgonias") or 'sea fans' are also frequent, among them, the white (*Eunicella*), orange (*Leptogorgia*) and yellow (*Paramuricea*) species, together with the yellow encrusting anemone; the bryzoas called 'deer horns' (*Smittina*, *Porella*), along with the false coral and the 'Venus lace'; and the red sea-squirt. Among the mobile wildlife, we can observe large crustaceans like spiny lobsters, common lobsters and the large slipper lobsters (*Scyllarides*) smaller slipper lobsters (*Scyllarus*); the purple sea urchins and the red starfish; not the abundance of the beautiful sea slugs or nudibranches (such as the 'Swiss calf' variety). Among the fishes, we can find the "dentex" (*Dentex*), the "pargo" sea bream (*Pagrus*), the Serranidae family combers (*Serranus cabrilla*), the forkbeard (*Phycis phycis*), the "three-tail" or "alfonsiños" goldies (*Anthias antias*), groupers moray eels, conger eels, etc.



Mobile or soft sea bottom communities:

The soft bottoms, thus named due to their sediment composition (boulders, gravel, sand or sludge), in a simple view appear to have a monotonous and poor appearance (they are known as 'marine deserts'), at first glance, there are hardly any species that live above the sediment, where the wildlife buried underground predominate. However between a depth of 0-25 m, where the light arrives with enough intensity, they can be dominated by plants, such as the green seaweed called 'fulla de llimoner' (*Caulerpa prolifera*), or the marine plants (with flowers and fruits), known as sea grass species called 'algueros' (*Posidonia oceanica*) and 'gramín' (*Cymodocea nodosa*), which form green prairies or lawns of "sea grass".



These soft bottoms dominated by plant life consolidate the substrate and create characteristic habitats where many species find shelter, food and/or breeding zones (e.g. fishes, crustaceans, cephalopods). Among them, we highlight the *Posidonia Oceanica* (sea grass), where we can observe two different stratum: i) foliar, with ephemeral photophilic species which live in the leaves; and ii) rhizomes, with more long-lived scyaphilic species which belong to the rocky substrates. It is fitting to note that the 'noble pen shell' (*Pinna nobilis*), one of the planet's largest bivalves, is found in the *Posidonia* sea grass prairie, its characteristic habitat.

Please remember our dear scuba diver friends that you are a privileged visitor to this marvellous and fragile submarine world; follow the ten commandments of responsible scuba diving; always carry a signalling buoy if you are free diving; and prevent mooring the anchors on the *Posidonia* sea grass. Respect this delicate and fragile world so that future generations can continue to enjoy them as you are doing so now.

Alfonso A. Ramos Esplá
Dpto. Ciencias del Mar y
Biología Aplicada
Universidad de Alicante



Xàbia, Memory of the Mediterranean.

Xàbia represents a facet of the Mediterranean whose value has remained, maintaining a personality which is sustained in its relationship with **nature**, the **landscape** and **culture**. In just over 50 years, our town has made the transition from a rural economy and the surprising “Eden-like Garden” of the first tourists, into a model which aims to rediscover its identity. This is a two-way street in which we have changed; we have had gains and losses, and we have known how to conserve what is most important. What you will discover below continues to form a part of what is important.



Xàbia is a coastal town in the Marina Alta district. It involves a point in which the Betic System meets the sea like the streamlined bow of a stone ship, which gave shape to the profile of its spectacular; it is the most eastern end of the peninsula facing the Balearic Islands, with which it forms a natural and cultural continuity. It is located approximately 100 km from Valencia and Alicante (the nearest two airports) and is accessible by means of the AP-7 Toll Motorway and N-332 Road. In the south, the city of Benidorm is 53 kilometers away.

The coast line extends 25 kilometers from the **Cova Tallada** in the north up to the canyon called **Barranc de la Branca** in the south. Its profile combines the high cliffs of **Cap de Sant Antoni**, at whose feet, lies the rich **Marine Reserve** -continuation of the Natural Park of Montgó -, with urban beaches such as **La Grava**, family sand beaches such as **El Arenal**, emblematic coves such as **La Barraca**, **Ambolo** or **la Granadella**, and major landmarks such as **Cap de la Nau**, the islands of **Portitxol** and el **Descobridor** or diverse marine caves such as the **Llop Marí**, the **Tabaco** and the **Òrguens** caves.

In its central section, like a half moon formed between Cap de Sant Antoni and **Cap Prim**, the bay opens over the continuation of the **Muntanyar** beach, which comprises the natural connection between the **Duanes** fishermen neighbourhood and the Arenal leisure area.



The average annual temperature is 18° and the **weather is mild**, since the **Montgó** mountain protects it from the cold winds from the north and the sea breezes attenuate the heat of summer. This is also due to its South, South-East orientation. With regards to the water, in the coldest months, it never drops below 13° and in the summer, it rises up to 26°, hence scuba diving is a pleasant activity throughout the entire year.

The population is around 28,000 inhabitants, of which **over half are foreign residents** with a primarily European origin. The town also has three differentiated centres: the historical city centre around the Fortress Church of San Bartolomé from the 17th century, the fishermen's neighbourhood next to the fishing and yacht port; and the residential and tourist zone of Arenal. A fourth generic urban area is comprised by the scattered housing estates with single-family houses, which constitute the most widespread development model.

Likewise, it is important to emphasize that statistically, Xàbia is **one of the safest areas in the** entire Spanish coast, with a crime rate which is below the national average.





Natural Heritage

What has defined the transversal prestige of Xàbia as a tourist destination throughout time is the harmonious coexistence between the urban areas and the natural spaces. Distributed throughout the coast, there are **15 scenic viewpoints** (miradores) on the cliffs which offer views and sensations which are difficult to express in words. On the other hand, there is the **Granadella forest park**, which has 700 hectares of Mediterranean woods and shrubland, crossed by trails which are perfect for hiking or mountain-biking (MTB) excursions.

Also in a striking contrast, the central zone of the municipality is a vast fertile fluvial valley called "El Pla", in the **Gorgos** river delta – in which the diverse green crops predominate along with scattered small rural buildings.

However, assuredly the greatest natural heritage of Xàbia is located in the **Montgó Natural Park** and its continuation area below: **the Marine Reserve of Cap de Sant Antoni**. In Montgó, a mountain with a height of 753 meters protected since 1987 and its adjacent areas such as Las Planas, it is possible to find up to 600 different botanical species, several of which are unique endemisms.

Likewise, Montgó offers the **testimony of the relationship which men and women have had with nature** in the past: its profile is furrowed with white stone margins which delimited the terraced crop embankments and on its mountainsides, examples of the traditional architecture still remain in different conservation conditions: small houses, conquest sanctuaries, furnaces and lime kilns, etc.



With regards to the wildlife, **small land mammals** can be found such as the dormouse, the genet, the fox, the badger or weasel. And a **wide variety of birds** such as the Eurasian eagle owls, the common kestrel, the osprey, the peregrine falcon, the raven, the European shag or the grey heron.

Cap de Sant Antoni is the Natural Park's meeting point with the sea and offers a stunning view of the town, the bay and the inland mountains of the Marina Alta district.



Culture, leisure and gastronomy

Our town has an intense cultural program throughout the entire year which combines great festivals such as **Xàbia Jazz** (one of the most important venues of its type in the entire coast), with art exhibits, concerts of all musical styles and formats, short film series, conferences, popular theatre, dramatic street performances, or diverse workshops and handicraft exhibits. 12 months a year, cultural activities for all tastes and ages take place in the different public spaces of Xàbia which are complemented with the continually evolving initiatives of the businesses and shops which are in charge of providing lively days and exciting nights.





However the three urban centres also offer with another type of appeal, regardless of your lifestyle, your company or holiday plans: in **Duanes**, you may experience the genuine flavour of a fishermen's neighbourhood which still conserves its original features and spirit intact. In the **Historical City Centre**, golden "tosca" sandstone façades and black grilles await with narrow winding streets full of history where you may explore cosy shops, traditional businesses, the local "**Mercat**" (Market) or **the fortress church of San Bartolomé**. And **Arenal** is a synonym for tourism and entertainment; not in vain, the top quality leisure offers are concentrated here, essentially developed around the remodelled beach promenade. This is only a small part, but you understand that we cannot tell you everything in a couple of paragraphs. You will have to come here for yourself to verify what we are talking about.

Finally, a note about the cuisine: Xàbia has a close relation with the natural products which are served on our tables. You will discover unforgettable **rice dishes**, such as the "senyoret" (peeled and boneless paella), "arroz a banda" (seafood paella), "al horno" (oven-baked rice), "arroz negro" (black rice in squid's ink), "paella de espinacas y boquerones" (paella with spinach and anchovies), "paella de bacalao y coliflor" (paella with cod and cauliflower), "paella de verduras" (vegetable paella), "paella de bogavante" (lobster paella), etc. or "**fideuases**" (noodle paellas) which are able to concentrate the whole sea in each bite. You must try the "Cocas" (Valencian flatbread pastries) with vegetables made in the Moorish wood oven. Don't miss **the salted fish dishes** (dried octopus, poor cod, dried "musola" [shark]), **the seafood** (the excellent red prawn, spiny lobster, common lobster and slipper lobster), delicious "cruet" and "suc roig" fish **stews as well as the traditional** Arab and Mediterranean pastries. Let yourself be seduced by the gourmet cuisine of our fine restaurants which earn their deserved fame every season. Claim your spot in the most popular pubs and allow the hours to pass until you discover that you are exactly in the place where you wish to be.





Xàbia, the Ideal Sea for Scuba Diving.

Scuba diving allows you to discover a new world, make friends, enjoy the freedom of flying in the deep blue, experience adventures and sensations which you have never experienced before, explore the unknown, etc.

Likewise, **it is an easy, safe and entertaining activity** to practice from the first immersion; it is the perfect sport for families, since it can be carried out by boys and girls starting from the age of 10, up to adults where there is no age limit. Few hobbies are adapted to the level of each participant and permit group enjoyment in this way.

If you are thinking about scuba diving in Xàbia, congratulations: you have selected the perfect place, both for the beauty and wealth of its sea floors, as well as their variety and user-friendly access to the majority of them. In all the beaches and coves of the Xàbia coast, you may carry out any scuba diving modality: snorkelling, autonomous, nocturnal, technical scuba diving, etc.

On the other hand, in Xàbia, you will enjoy around 300 days of sunshine per year and superb sea conditions:

the water temperature ranges from a minimum 13°C and maximum 26°C, and the visibility conditions that it provides are ideal to enjoy this spectacular sub-marine world.

However, what undoubtedly distinguishes Xàbia above the rest of the scuba diving destinations is the existence of the **Marine Reserve of Cap de Sant Antoni**. Starting from the iconic cave called Cova Tallada towards the south, there are countless coves, beaches and islands where it is possible to carry out immersions suitable for all levels. We can also find refuge zones which look like small swimming pools with crystalline water and whose depths ranges from 3-6 meters. They are perfect for beginners who will have their first experience (locally known as "bautizo" or baptism) and their first scuba diving initiation courses.

In the coast which you are about to discover, there are 22 signalled diving zones, although in reality, there are many more since from practically any point you choose, you may submerge sheltered from winds and currents.

Of the 22 spaces available for frequent practice by the specialised companies, they range from the simplest spaces up to several sites whose depths reach 32 meters where you may explore labyrinths of tunnels and caves. There are also more technical descents from 40 to 90 meters in which you may explore priceless shipwrecks.

Finally, two recommendations:

- Make the decision to experience this splendid adventure.
- You may choose the expertise of one of the officially certified companies which operate in Xàbia. These companies can provide you with the best offers as well as the knowledge and safety that you require to enjoy the sea floors.



For sustainable, safe and responsible scuba diving.

Sustainable

Scuba diving represents a style of sustainable tourism which is based on a clear premise applicable to all fields: the best way to enjoy a resource is not to consume it but to conserve, discover and strengthen it. The social and economic benefit of preserving natural spaces is much higher than destroying them or altering them to obtain short-term gains. Accordingly in Xàbia, we are pleased that scuba diving is the symbol of this new tourism. If we enjoy with responsibility, we can always do so and we will achieve that the main industry of our town continues to grow without endangering what makes us unique.

Safe

At this point, you may ask yourself: Is scuba diving a safe activity? The answer is yes. Without a doubt.

Please note that companies will only take you scuba diving if the conditions are completely safe – which is almost always– and you will rely on a professional diver at your side who will orient and prepare you prior to the immersion, who has first-hand knowledge of the zone and once in the water, he/she will ensure that you have fun without any risks.



Useful advice

so that our immersion is free of problems:

- Remember that diving is not permitted without accompaniment.
- Do not dive if you are tired or if you feel nervous.
- Prevent heavy meals or drinking alcohol prior to your dive.
- Prevent excessive exposure to sunshine, above all in summer. Drink water to stay hydrated.
- Prevent turbulent or excessively cold water, above all, if you do not have suitable equipment.





Responsible

In any case, the main hazard underwater are people, hence we shall remind you of several basic instructions so that your visit to the sea bottom will leave no traces other than in your memory:

- Prevent mooring with an anchor to avoid harm to submarine life. Use the buoys installed for this purpose or ask your scuba diving operator to do this for you.
- Make sure that the entry point into the sea is the proper distance from the posidonia prairies and fragile sea floors.
- Control the buoyancy and prevent raising sediments when swimming with fins. Above all, monitor the tips of your fins since they can damage the sea bottom or any of its inhabitants.
- The animals are in their habitat: prevent touching them, feeding them or interacting with them. If in order to make a photo or video, you must disturb them, that image is simply not worth it.
- The more “invisible” you are for the animals, the better you will be able to observe them and learn about their fascinating behaviours.
- Think carefully before entering a cave or hollow cavity; your bubbles can detriment the organisms which live on the ceilings and walls.
- Know the rules of scuba diving, respect them and comply with them. Do not hesitate to notify the authorities if you observe any malpractice: only by acting in this way can we guarantee this heritage for everyone.
- Dive with professional centres which have a commitment to nature and legality.
- Do not throw anything into the sea.
- Never stop your personal training.
- Collaborate in all the communication and conservation actions of the marine environment.

However, above all...
Enjoy





You can scuba dive too!

Scuba diving is the perfect activity to share with boys and girls starting from the age of 10. In addition to being a healthy and relaxing sport, it allows them to gain confidence in themselves, enjoy direct contact with nature and become initiated in the knowledge of animals and plants. Likewise, it is an opportunity to share unique experiences with the entire family and always in a completely safe environment.

In fact, the age of 10 is the perfect age to experience the first scuba diving initiation or "baptism", since at this age, the curiosity and the desire to live new adventures combined with their primary school education will become an unforgettable moment.

And for minor boys and girls below this age, there is the option to go snorkelling (diving with mask and snorkel) in all of Xàbia's coves and beaches. In fact, this also guarantees that they can see the great variety of life and sea bottoms in calm and clear waters.

With regards to adults, the age, physical fitness or even the presence of a disability are not obstacles in order to enjoy this activity. The wide variety of immersion zones and the degrees of complexity which they possess allow everyone in Xàbia to enjoy scuba diving. All you need is the desire to do it!

Likewise throughout the entire year, you will find numerous companies which organize excursions and they will be delighted to help you find the perfect route.



Snorkelling

Snorkel, diving mask and a pair of fins. You do not need anything else to enjoy the beauty of the sea floor. Take advantage of the crystalline waters of our beaches to observe the lives of fishes and marine plants up close without having to use the oxygen tanks.

There is a fascinating world at your fingertips!





Cova Tallada

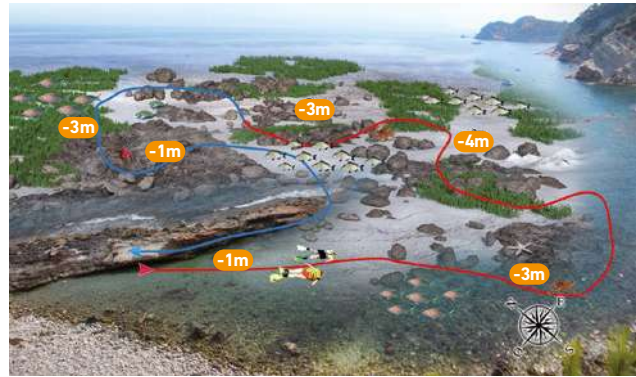
This is undoubtedly one of the best spots to go snorkelling. The Cova Tallada can be accessed by sea, where this is highly recommended by kayak or canoe or by means of hiking paths from the Montgó Natural Park. Once there, you may enter the water from the cave itself or from the other two windows in the rock face which face the sea. Here, we find a turquoise sea floor where the water is usually calm since it forms a type of pool sheltered from the open sea by a rock finger. The suggested route is to swim around the interior part of this area keeping the wall to our right as we swim.



Cala Tangó

The small cove, Cala del Tangó or Pope, as it is also known, is located to the left of the north jetty of the Xàbia port. Its access is not easy, since we must walk on stone blocks at the edge of the seaside under a restaurant terrace. The proposed route will lead us towards a wall on our left and during the route, we encounter several cliffs which extend above the water. In the degree that we separate from the coast, the depth of the water gradually increases as well as the size of the rocks on the sea floor, until at a depth of -3m, we can begin to perceive the appearance of the first clumps of the rich green prairie of *Posidonia Oceanica*.





Cala Blanca

We leave the busy Playa de l'Arenal behind and head south, until we reach the Cala Blanca. If we continue walking approx. 300 m, we arrive at a second cove, the place selected for our underwater route. This is a small cove which has a rocky tip which extends like a rock finger into the sea. We may enter the water from this point and discover its brilliant rocky sea floor. It has a relatively shallow depth, of -1m, however as we move away from the coast, it progressively gets deeper. When we have turned beyond the point and entered the open sea, we can access a luxuriant prairie of *Posidonia oceanica*. If we approach this rock finger from the north, we return to the sandy beach and once again to its extensive rock platform covered with algae.





La Barraca

The Cala de Barraca is one of the coast's most colourful coves, not just in Xàbia but in the entire Valencian Community. In this cosy large cove with gravel and boulders, there are a wide variety of options to go snorkelling. We choose to explore the North zone of the cove. Once we are in the water, we can observe that the rock platform is segmented, its continuity has been interrupted by fractures which give the sea floor a grid-like appearance. As we advance into the open sea and enter the platform, gaining depth in a gentle shelf, large boulders and rocky fingers appear like submerged islets, which we can bypass and then travel into the areas with *Posidonia oceanica* and the sandy banks.



Cala Ambolo

In order to reach Ambolo we must travel in the direction of Cap de la Nau up to the bypass to the cove, which we access at the street: Calle Richard Wagner. At first, a rocky bottom appears with medium size stones and as we advance, they merge into a prairie of *Posidonia* sea grass and stunningly beautiful sand banks. The proposed route consists in travelling completely around the islet which we find in the left zone, swimming around it and exploring the infinite points which attract our interest, since the extensive variety of sea bottoms houses an abundant biodiversity.





Technical Scuba Diving

Can you imagine diving next to a sunken ship? Dive where almost no one ever goes? Penetrate into caves and caverns which enter into the heart of the mountains? Everything is possible, Xàbia.

If you are a certified diver and have enough experience or you wish to go a step further in your immersions, you may try technical scuba diving. Furthermore, you will not be disappointed with the routes that we suggest for you.

Technical scuba diving involves descents which exceed depths of 40 meters; they require decompression halts, there is not direct access to the surface due to the different obstacles (shipwrecks or rocks) and it requires specific equipment and training. These routes should not be undertaken without the suitable materials and preparation or without the supervision of an expert instructor.



Technical Scuba Diving



In Xàbia, the scuba diving centres have qualified personnel to initiate those who are interested in this discipline; there are four instruction levels (cavern, introduction to caves, complete cave diver and technical cave diver), as well as to learn the most spectacular submarine locations. Likewise, the initiation in technical scuba diving also allows you to improve the recreational diving, since students acquire greater awareness of the errors which they were committing and the best way to correct them.



Underneath our waters, phantom-like ships await you which can be found at depths ranging from 33 to 90 meters. These include the century-old "Vaporet" (Steam ship), from a small merchant vessel named "El Casquet" and "El Danés", a ship with a 100 meter keel which represents a technical diving milestone due to its difficult access.

With regards to rugged natural features and spaces for cave-diving, the rock walls of the Cap de Sant Antoni are furrowed with infinite caverns. And in the Portitxol island zone, passing by Cap Negre and Cap de la Nau up to Granadella, divers can also visit diverse marine caves with amazing displays of backlighting. The majority are located at a shallow depth however for expert divers, there are two emergencies (movements of water masses) which extend inside the mountain for several kilometers. Tempting, isn't it?





Nocturnal scuba diving

Discover the night's magic

At night, the sea is very different; When the sun sets, bustling and colourful life awakens underwater which cannot be seen during the day. This is the time, for example, when the octopus and spiny lobsters come out to hunt and explore the sea beds and what appeared to be a monotonous green before is now transformed to ever-changing yellows, reds and blues; schools of fish also become active and move in an almost dreamlike spectacle.

At sunset and just before it becomes completely night, the diving centres prepare the ships and equipment and set sail to the immersion zone (for this modality, locations are selected with depths below 10 meters which did not involve a technical difficulty) where the adventurous divers must prepare their gear, put on their masks, bite the regulator, take a deep breath and let themselves fall into the sea...

... there, under the flashlight and following your group, a fascinating experience awaits you.





Sea bottom full of life and colour.

Counting from north to south and taking into account its characteristics, the Xàbia coast can be subdivided into three large areas which we will use to group the scuba diving zones:

- **North Coast and Marine Reserve of Cap de Sant Antoni.**
- **Bay of Portitxol.**
- **South Coast (Cap de la Nau, Ambolo and Granadella)**

The Marine Reserve of Cap de Sant Antoni.

From the mouth of the port of Dénia up to the middle of the Bay of Xàbia, the Marine Reserve of Cap de Sant Antoni extends, whose declaration took place in 1993. Inside the total area of the reserve, following a line with a depth of 20 meters, there is a space where fishing is prohibited and which is the nearest to the coast. Here is precisely where the largest amount of submarine life gather.

The part which corresponds to Xàbia starts in the Cova Tallada, a "tosca" sandstone quarry full of history and an almost baroque beauty, and extends up to Cap de Sant Antoni passing by the "Cullerada", the "Gorgonias" and the first and second "Ensenada" (bay).

In the entire reserve, the **benthos communities** (animal and plant organisms which coexist with the sea bottom, semi-buried, fixed or they can move without straying too far from it) are especially interesting.

The most interesting due to their ecological value and the major diversity of species which they shelter are the sciaphilic algae, the **coralligenous** reefs or the prairies of *Posidonia Oceanica* (Sea Grass). Also well represented are the infralittoral photophilic algae communities, the coastal detritus bottoms and the well calibrated fine sands.

However, it is under the blue waters of this Mediterranean spot where the monitoring and awareness tasks of the users have permitted the recovery of the extraordinary wealth in the form of groupers (Balears grouper), Dublin prawns, dentex, **spiny lobsters**, sea breams, scorpion fish (cabracho), **moray** eels, sargo bream (salemas), octopus, sea urchins, white and yellow coral/ anemone formations... a true fiesta for scuba diving fans, here they can make contact with species which otherwise would have been depleted by human pressure.

In addition, one of the most powerful natural spectacles is the **whale** watching (fin whales, the world's second largest animal) which from March until October, migrate from north to south in their journey between the Ligurian sea and the Strait of Gibraltar. At some points of the coast, they can be spotted less than 500 meters from land.

Schools of bottlenose **dolphins** also frequent these waters and are well-known to sailors and yacht navigators.





La Bahía del Portitxol

It borders the capes: Cap Prim in the north and the Cap Negre in the South which protect it from the winds of the first and second quadrant. This is one of the coastal sections with the highest ecological and scenic landscape interest in Xàbia, since its geological composition is very different from the rest of the coast. In addition since 1999, there are two micro-reserves of protected flora.



In this area to the north, we find marls and clays (in front of the usual limestone), which are easily eroded materials and they have caused the bay's cliffs to be low and they have a base of large stone blocks, due to the landslides. Their striking grey and yellow colours also contrast with the intense blue sea and create scenic views of breathtaking beauty.

In the south end of the bay, the landscape changes again due to the limestone composition of Cap Negre, which has a vertical descent over the sea and in whose base, it is possible to find numerous caves and marine cracks, as well as a small sunken promontory.

In front of La Barraca beach – one of the most popular and authentic beaches of Xàbia – the view of the island of Portitxol predominates, completely covered with pine trees, shrubland and large flocks of sea gulls all year round. At this beach, the water is excellent as indicated by the presence of Mediterranean *Cystoseira* brown algae.

This zone features interesting and extensive samples of geological formations as well as animal and plant communities. Accordingly, the immersions in the Portitxol bay area are guaranteed in this sense.



Around the island of Portitxol, four areas can be marked: North, South, East and West.

North: Bottom with large detached stone blocks and slopes with depths up to 20 m. It is easy to have pleasant encounters with barracudas, seahorses, sea fans, anemones, groupers, dentex, etc.

South: The zone most protected from the winds, with a gentle slope and prairies of posidonia which give way to sandy bottoms with large rock formations and variable relief which predominate in the "Escull" outskirts next to the island. Its sea beds are furrowed with small hollow cavities, arches and passageways which shelter plentiful wildlife.

East: Zone with smooth descending slope, highly exposed to currents, which gives way to sea floors with consolidated rock areas and changing relief. The presence of coral/anemone formations is impressive in this point.

West: Rocky bottoms with tapestries of algae with major presence of Posidonia Oceanica and schools of small fry and young fish which feed and dwell in these sea floors.

On the other hand, the **Cap Negre** zone has a rock wall whose characteristic dark colour has inspired the name of this rock formation; it descends to depth up to 22 meters. Under the waters which bathe this impressive rocky mass crowned with trees, large fish such as barracudas, dentex or scorpion fish live here.

Approximately half of the rock face, a finger of the mountain submerges into the sea in an arch with a large base on the bottom, completely pierced, where you may enjoy a dive in a cavity which conceals the typical fauna in these types of formations without direct light.



South Coast (Cap de la Nau, Ambolo and Granadella)

This is the final section of the Xàbia coast which combines several of the most stunning spots of the entire Valencia coast. It is no surprise that locations such as the Cala de la Granadella, the Ambolo beach or Cap de la Nau are annually visited by people from all over Europe who are attracted by its practically pristine beauty.

This is a coastal segment in which there are several key spots for scuba diving. Without going far, just 100 meters to the south of Cap Negre, there is a rock promontory which extends about 15 meters below sea level and in its base, it reaches depths up to 35 meters. In the base of this column, there are numerous caves and hollow cavities which are genuine nurseries of wildlife and they are quite exposed to the currents.

The "Escull" formation is penetrated by a 20 meter underwater tunnel whose exit branches into two openings. Whereas in the west face, there is a twin of the promontory with a smaller size which is completely submerged. This formation also houses numerous invaluable wildlife species such as spiny lobsters, groupers, octopus, sea bass, conger eels, etc.

In the degree that we advance towards the south, we find **Punta Plana**, a small land incursion in the sea which has received its name due to its amazing shape. Likewise, it is covered with large stone boulders from landslides. To the east of Punta Plana, there is the underwater "**Montaña Hundida**" (Sunken Mountain), a submarine promontory which extends 40 meters from north to south and whose walls are covered with algae and anemones. Here, you can easily see barracudas, sea bass, octopus, moray eels, lobsters or rays.





Finally, in the easternmost end of the peninsula, the Cap de la Nau, the cave called **Cova dels Òrguens** opens, a natural aperture with a high ceiling and cold crystal-clear water where visitors may feel as if they have been transported to a timeless world.

To close this chapter in reference to the south coast, it is mandatory to talk about the beaches with the highest evaluations in the Mediterranean: **Ambolo and La Granadella**.























The Cala de Ambolo is a detached rock zone with sandy sea floors, dotted with scattered large boulders and prairies of posidonia. In the north, there is a small islet crossed by an underground passageway. In the south, the cove is enclosed with the island called **Isla del Descubridor**.

The Bay of la Granadella is known for its unique physiognomy; it is protected from the north and east winds and it has extensive prairies of posidonia which provide shelter to large fish populations. The north section of the short bay of la Granadella is full of small caves and hollow cavities with plentiful wildlife and even outcroppings with fresh water. Here, encounters with large rays are frequent, as well as with flounders, ornate wrasses and other typical species of sandy sea floors.





-  Access with boat
-  Coast access
-  20m. Maximum depth
-  Difficulty level
-  Marine reserve Permit required
-  Posidonia
-  Cave and/or cavern
-  Scattered rocks
-  Cliff
-  Sand
-  Submerged mountain
-  Pecio
-  Technical Scuba Diving
-  Snorkelling
-  Family plan
-  Scuba Diving Initiation ("Bautizo")
-  Nocturnal immersion
-  Flashlight
-  Deco buoy
-  Compass

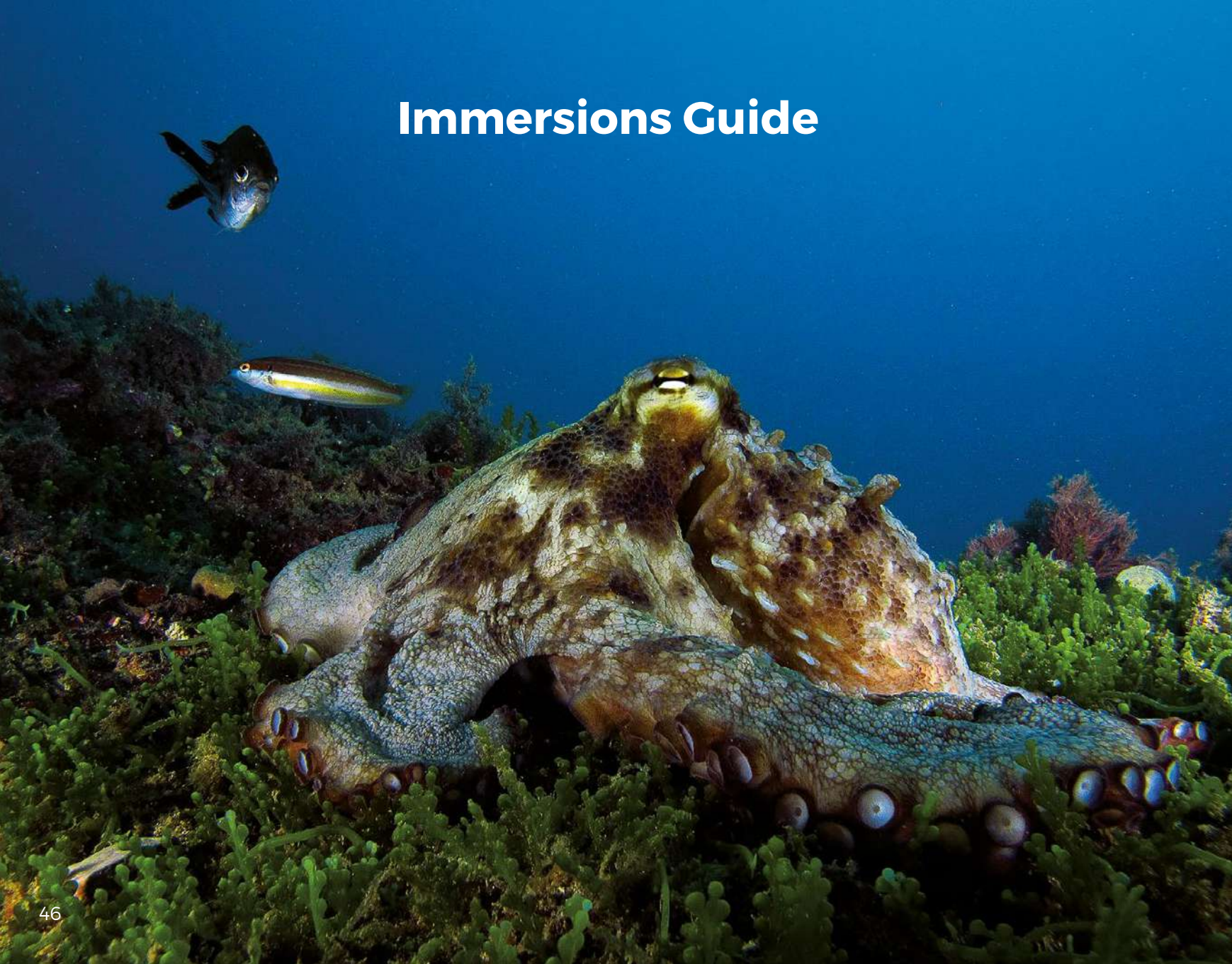
Telephones of interest

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| Emergencies | 112 |
| Maritime emergencies | 900 202 202 |
| Local Police | 965 790 081 |
| Marine Reserve of Cap Sant Antoni / Montgó | 966 467 155 636 840 535 |
| Natural Park | |
| Generalitat Valenciana | 012 / 963 866 000 |
| Tourist Info Xàbia | 965 790 736 |

Immersion Table

| ZONE | NAME | ACCESS | PROF. MAX | LEVEL | MARINE RESERVE PERMIT REQUIRED | LANDSCAPE | | | | | | | ACTIVITIES | | | | ACCESSORIES | | | PG. | | | | | |
|------|-------------------------------------|--------|-----------|-------|--------------------------------|-----------|--|--|--|--|--|--|------------|--|--|--|-------------|--|--|-----|--|--|--|--|----|
| | 1 Les Gorgonies | | 37m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | - |
| | 2 El Danés | | 90m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | - |
| | 3 El Casquet | | 42m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | - |
| | 4 La Cullerada | | 20m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | - |
| | 5 Primera Ensenada | | 20m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 47 |
| | 6 Segona Ensenada | | 20m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | - |
| | 7 Faro Cap de Sant Antoni | | 20m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 48 |
| | 8 Escull del Cap de Sant Antoni | | 21m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 50 |
| | 9 Tangó (El Pope) | | 11m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 52 |
| | 10 Cap Prim (Cova de la Verge) | | 23m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 54 |
| | 11 Cap Prim Sur | | 21m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | - |
| | 12 Els Pallers | | 21m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | - |
| | 13 Illa del Portitxol Norte | | 20m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 56 |
| | 14 Les Termes (Illa Portitxol Sur) | | 20m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 58 |
| | 15 Banyes de Neptú (Illa Port. Sur) | | 19m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | - |
| | 16 Escull de l'Illa del Portitxol | | 22m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 60 |
| | 17 Cap Negre | | 15m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 62 |
| | 18 Escull de Sant Pere o Bergantí | | 31m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 64 |
| | 19 Muntanya submergida | | 30m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 66 |
| | 20 Cap de la Nau | | 25m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | - |
| | 21 Illa del Descobridor | | 18m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 68 |
| | 22 Granadella | | 10m. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 70 |

Immersions Guide




Primera Ensenada

(Marine Reserve of Cap de Sant Antoni)




Prior to arriving at the Lighthouse: Faro de Cap de Sant Antoni, we find an “ensenada” or bay in which a buoy announces the boundary of the Marine Reserve. We can moor the ship to it and descend to a depth of approximately 16 meters, to a sea floor formed by large scattered rocks and sand. Remember that this a protected area and prior authorisation is required for scuba diving. Likewise, it offers an exceptionally lively and beautiful environment, with an abundance of species difficult to see in other places such as the slipper lobsters, sea breams, conger eels, groupers and curious white coral/anemone formations. It also has the advantage of the irregular scattered rocks and the moderate depth, which allows us to practically improvise any route; in any case, our proposal is to gain depth in the direction opposite the coast. Next on the right, there is a prolonged large rock formation which we go around to follow the 270° course and we detect new rocky crag formations in which there is abundant life in the form of sea bass, forkbeards and groupers.

Data

A kingdom of light; a natural aquarium in a sublime setting. The shallow zone is a sanctuary of small fry fish. Presence of crinoids shoal.

-  Scuba diving route
-  Scattered rocks
-  Difficulty level
-  Flashlight
-  Access with boat
-  Deco buoy
-  Maximum depth
-  Compass
-  Marine reserve Permit required



North
Coast




Lighthouse: Faro Cap de Sant Antoni

(Marine reserve)



It is prohibited to use the anchor in this zone, hence if there are no mooring buoys available, you must do Caribbean-style or drift scuba diving. In order to dive in this protected zone, remember that you must have a permit; once you obtain it, you can carry out spectacular immersions, in which you will be surrounded with life and colours. To do this route, we can take advantage of the existence of a specific current which is usually present in the tip of Cap de Sant Antoni, which we can use to reach the first bay. Here, there are fascinating huge rocks which are located on the sea floor and their whimsical forms create passageways and plays of lights which are truly a spectacle for underwater photography. Throughout the entire route, we can see specimens of white coral/anemone formations, and as we move away from the rock face, we can descend between 12 and 19 meters, at this depth, we can find a wider variety of interesting plants and animals.



Data

Perfect immersion to do a Caribbean-style or drift dive. Protected zone: please do not touch anything. There is permanent surveillance to prevent illegal fishing so that everyone may enjoy its beauty.



Scuba diving route



Scattered rocks



Difficulty level



Flashlight



Access with boat



Deco buoy



Maximum depth
20m.

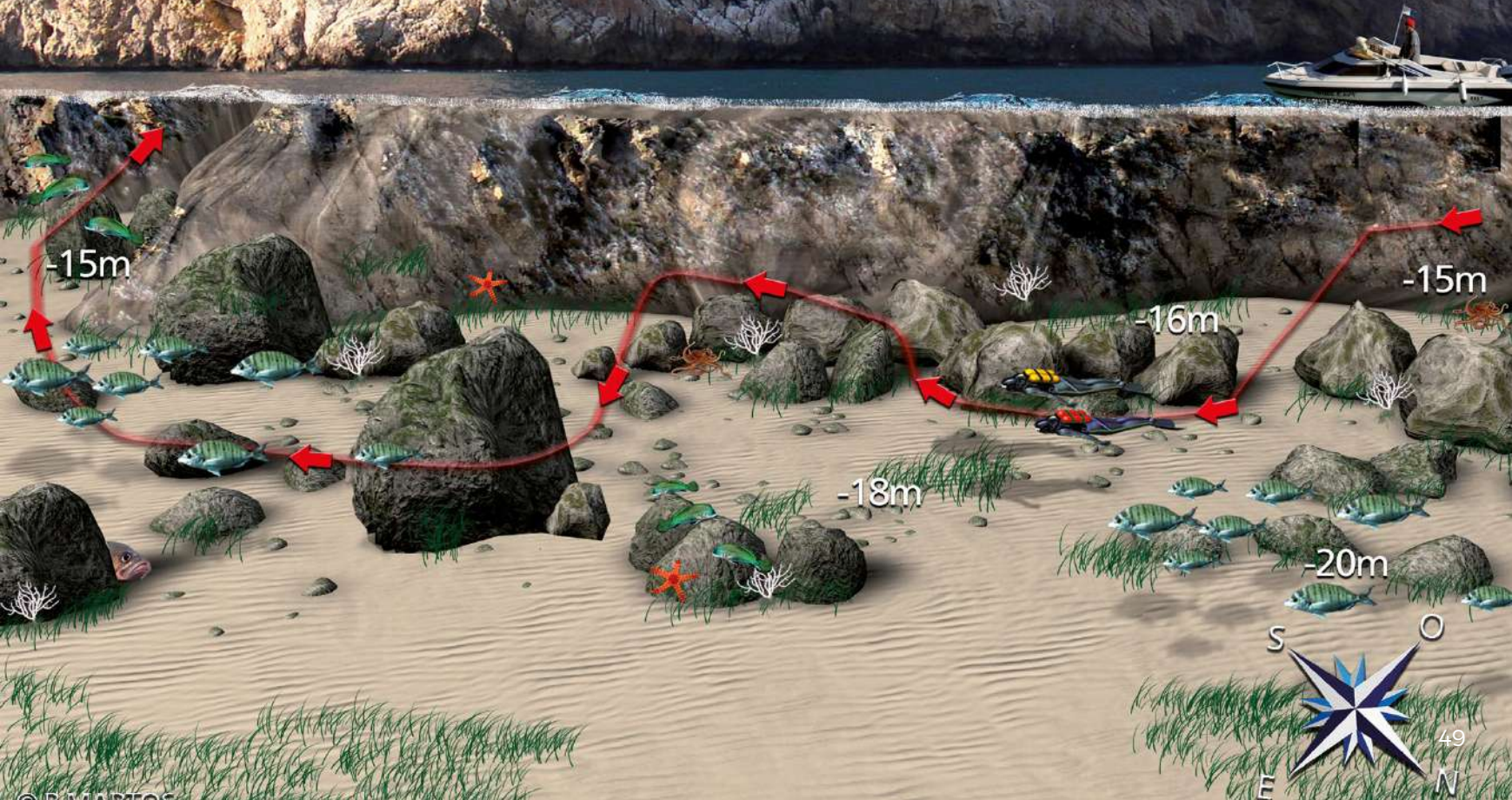


Compass



Marine reserve
Permit required

Lighthouse: Faro Cap de Sant Antoni

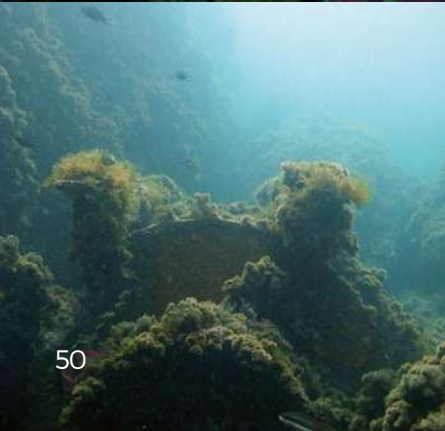





North Coast



Escull del Cap de Sant Antoni



Very near Cap de Sant Antoni, almost right on the coast, there is a small islet named La Mona. It provides the option to moor next to it in a zone with an 8 meter depth. From here, weighing anchor and a 60° course, we travel towards the islet, whose submerged section has different sloped descents which reach 20 meters, where we can find a sandy sea floor. The route travels in a circle around the islet, which involves no complications due to its small size. It is possible to see curious rock formations and wide variety of life, comprised above all by sargo bream, sea bass, octopus, moray eels or scorpion fish. We will also see European fan worms, especially dazzling in backlighting in the section in which the islet faces the cape, there is a narrow channel which obliges us to ascend up to 5 meters to access a calm water pool in which we can see the remains of a ship.



Data

Immersion in the boundary of the Marine Reserve and full of life. In the months of May and June, triggerfish gather here to mate.



Scuba diving route



Scattered rocks



Difficulty level



Sand



Access with boat



Flashlight



21 m. Maximum depth



Deco buoy

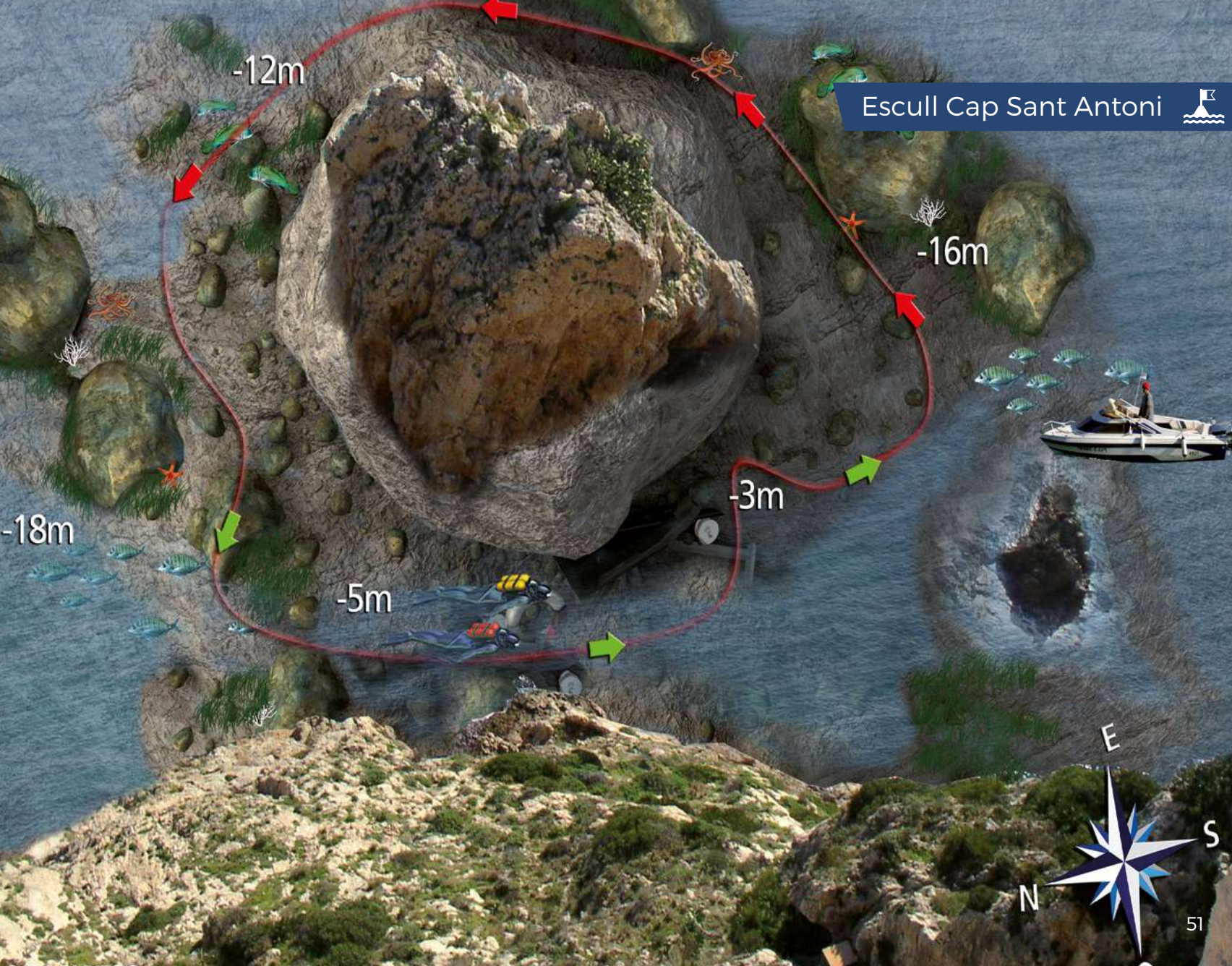


Posidonia



Compass

Escull Cap Sant Antoni





North Coast

Tangó (El Pope)




The Cala del Tangó or del Pope (as it is popularly known due to the presence of an Orthodox pope in the 20th century who used it as a refuge and rest area) provides a simple and yet very gratifying immersion.

The beach – what remains of it due to the natural erosion – is located next to the port jetty and access to the sea when wearing the equipment is complicated, because it is necessary to bypass the remains of successive landslides.

The Tangó cove faces to east, with the Cap de Sant Antoni to the north. Its sea bottom is shallow and is covered with posidonia; clear sandy floors alternate with stone blocks or rocky fingers oriented to the south. This location houses interesting species such as moray eels, octopus, barracuda, and during the season, lobsters.

In our route, we will follow a southeast course to gradually search after the cape wall face. In this area, the depth reduces even further and we found a sea bottom of small rocks.



Data

Ideal for a nocturnal immersion.

A very safe cove for the entire family. You can even see seahorses among the prairie of

- Scuba diving route
- Difficulty level
- Coast access
- Maximum depth: 11 m.
- Posidonia
- Scattered rocks
- Sand
- Snorkelling
- Family plan
- Scuba Diving Initiation ("Bautizo")
- Flashlight
- Deco buoy
- Compass






Bay of Portitxol

Cap Prim

(Cova de la Verge)

In the south end of the Xàbia bay, there is Cap Prim and an islet in front of it. We can moor between both rugged rock formations in a zone with a depth of 6 meters. Starting from here we can gain depth until at approximately 50 meters from our mooring point, there are 2 entrances in the ground which lead to the entrance of the Cueva de la Virgen (Virgin Cave). it is necessary to enter with precaution to avoid raising particles from the sea floor, since this will make the water murky and hinder the vision. It is easy to find sea bass and forkbeards. You may also see groupers, conger eels, moray eels, octopus and other species of dark zones such as the cardinal fish. On the cave floor, there is a painted ceramic image of the Virgin Mary called "Virgen de los Desamparados". The backlight from the cave's interior is perfect for photographers – whenever they are the first ones to enter-. Upon exiting, we follow the wall and gain depth until we reach 22 meters. It is recommendable to pay attention to the numerous wall cavities since there is abundant presence of life and you may encounter a lobster. A few meters away, there is another tunnel with arches and pretty backlighting.

Data

A mythical immersion is never disappointing. Large schools of fish will accompany you during the route.

- Scuba diving route
- Difficulty level
- Access with boat
- 23m. Maximum depth
- Posidonia
- Cave and/or cavern
- Sand
- Walls
- Snorkelling
- Family plan
- Nocturnal immersion
- Flashlight
- Deco buoy
- Compass






Bay of Portitxol

Illa Portitxol Norte

This immersion in the north part of the island usually has moderate or strong currents, which gives us the opportunity to find large schools of fish such as damselfish, sargo bream and barracuda. The immersion begins in the east tip where we will find a mooring zone marked by large rocks. Here upon reaching a maximum depth of 18 meters, we discover a rock shoal followed by large stones between which groupers and octopus dwell. It is also worth having a look upwards because it is possible that the majestic sunfish will pass above our heads. It is recommended to explore the entire north face of the island at the maximum depth to start the return among the large rocks which are attached to the wall. Here you may enjoy the presence of numerous sponges and multi-coloured anemone. Likewise in the zone, the nudibranches of different species are frequent, which provide spectacular photos.

Data

This immersion will oblige you to look in all directions so that you will not miss a single detail!


-  Scuba diving route
-  Difficulty level
-  Access with boat
-  20m. Maximum depth
-  Large rocks
-  Snorkelling
-  Flashlight
-  Deco buoy
-  Compass



Les Termes

(Illa Portitxol Sur)

We will moor in the southwest face of the island of Portitxol where the depth is 8 meters. This involves an immersion in which, with good visibility, we will experience the intense joy of the arches, backlights and rock cliffs which we encounter. We begin by advancing in a parallel way along the island wall, which remains to our left, and next, we find a large sunken islet which stands out among the set of bottom rocks. If we follow this line to our left, two stone arches appear which we can cross through to now leave the island on the right. Rocky substrates alternate with sandy floors and scorpion fish, sargo bream and salema porgy breams are frequent. The islet wall also has scattered cracks and holes in which we can observe crustaceans and sea bass. The route continues following the new islets and arches until we return to the point in which we left the ship.

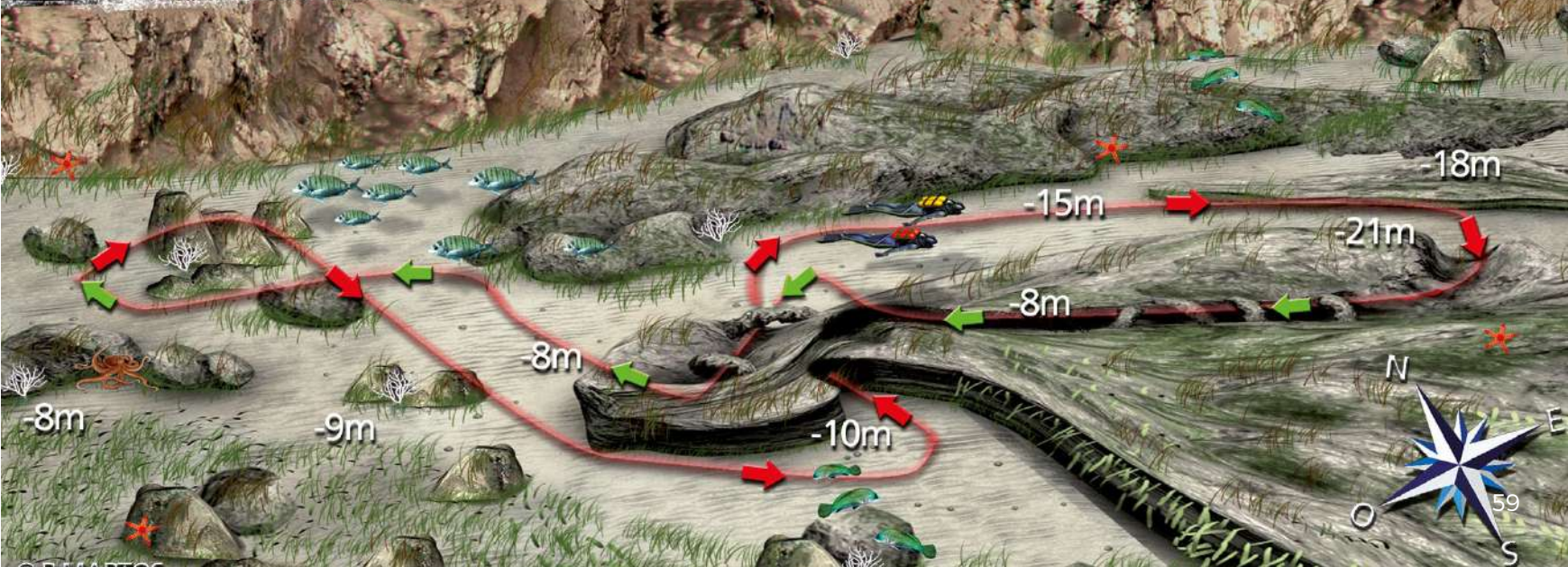



Data

One of the most whimsical and intriguing environments.

Let an expert guide lead you through its arches and tunnels.

-  Scuba diving route
-  Cave and/or cavern
-  Flashlight
-  Difficulty level
-  Sand
-  Deco buoy
-  Access with boat
-  Snorkelling
-  Compass
-  Maximum depth
20m.
-  Family plan
-  Posidonia
-  Scuba Diving Initiation ("Bautizo")

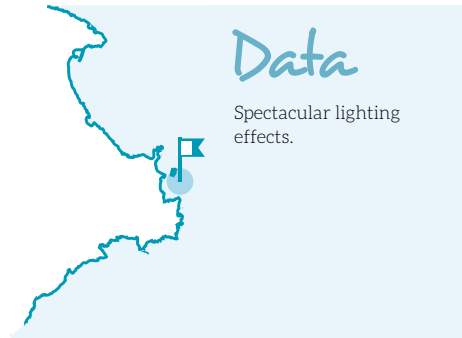














Bay of Portitxol

Escull de l'Illa del Portitxol

Past the island of Portitxol in the direction towards Cap de la Nau, we find a small islet known as "La Mona" or "María Claudia". In this immersion, we propose a circular route in its perimeter and for this purpose; it is convenient to moor in front of it so that we remain in a southeast direction. Shortly after submerging and following the anchor line, we find the entrance to a natural chimney at a depth between 7 and 11 meters. Inside it, there are window openings which create spectacular lighting effects. However, we will access the chimney in the final section of the immersion; previously we will completely swim around L'Escull, whose walls progressively descend in mild slopes in some points and in steep cut-offs in others, revealing cavities and small caves always brimming with life. The bottom is located at a depth between 15 and 22 meters and it is sandy with large rocks. A parallel rocky finger also extends along it which we can follow until we return to the starting point. At this time, we can enter the chimney, moving our fins carefully to avoid making the water murky.



-  Scuba diving route
-  Cave and/or cavern
-  Flashlight
-  Difficulty level
-  Sand
-  Deco buoy
-  Access with boat
-  Scattered rocks
-  Compass
-  22m. Maximum depth






Bay of Portitxol

Cap Negre





This immersion is suitable for all levels and provides the option to see numerous wildlife, such as octopus, moray eels, spiny lobsters, Dublin prawns, small shrimp and sporadically even a grouper or two.

Due to its location sheltered by the cape, the diving zone is protected from the south winds. We propose an approach in a boat up to the "ensenada" or bay, with a depth of 7 meters, to dive here and follow the cape wall in an east course. In this section, we advance guided by the local rocks; as we contemplate how the bottom gradually makes the transition into the prairies of posidonia. The route, in addition to the opportunity to see the diverse wealth of wildlife in this area, also has the appeal of an attractive cave (in reality, a type of tunnel excavated in the wall face itself), which has zero technical difficulty and nevertheless offers an amazing show of lights and shadows. Likewise, the base of the cape has a large number of small cavities which we can explore in search of their inhabitants.



Data

Attractive route for both day and night dives. The beauty of the geological formations and the amazing quantity and variety of the fauna are never disappointing.

-  Scuba diving route
-  Cave and/or cavern
-  Nocturnal immersion
-  Difficulty level
-  Sand
-  Flashlight
-  Access with boat
-  Snorkelling
-  Boya deco
-  15m. Maximum depth
-  Family plan
-  Compass
-  Walls
-  Scuba Diving Initiation ("Bautizo")



-15m

-10m

-7m






South Coast













L'Escull de Sant Pere o Bergantí

To the south of Cap Negre and in the direction of Cap de la Nau, there is the little islet of L'Escull, which is nothing other than the promontory of a completely submerged mountain. We can moor in front of it and descend along the anchor line to follow a northwest course. When we reach a depth of 22 meters, we can see the entrance to a stunning cave 25 meters long which completely penetrates it and inside it, it has complete darkness due to its "L-shape". For this route, it is essential to rely on a good guide. At the cave exit (there are two, one at a depth of 27 meters and the other at 23 meters), we can explore the foot of the mountain, covered with yellow anemone and populated with octopus, moray eels and lobsters. It is also possible that we will encounter a school of fairly big barracuda. The play of lights and shadows provided by the stone arches and small caves is highly recommendable.



Data

One of the classic immersions of the Xàbia coast. There is a huge presence of life in the form of octopus, groupers, lobsters, dentex, etc. The spectacle of lights and colours is really worth seeing.

-  Scuba diving route
-  Cave and/or cavern
-  Deco buoy
-  Difficulty level
-  Scattered rocks
-  Compass
-  Access with boat
-  Sand
-  Flashlight
-  31 m. Maximum depth






South Coast

The Submerged Mountain

Passing Cap Negro and L'Escull de Sant Pere, prior to reaching Punta Plana, there is a sunken mountain, which is difficult to find if you are not familiar with the area. We will moor in waters with a depth of 7 meters and we will begin the dive on the east side of the mountain, keeping it on our left. Here, we can find various crannies full of animal life in a descent which takes us down to a 20-meter depth. At the bottom, we can see loose rocks and perhaps a colourful manta ray resting in the currents. At the mountain base, a passageway 14 meters long opens in which we can find schools of large sized barracuda. At the end of this hall, we reach the maximum depth (30 meters) and it is possible that we will be surprised by the presence of groupers. At this point, we begin the return along the west section to be sheltered from the currents and we will ascend following the wall until we return to the boat.

Data

If you are prone to sea sickness, perhaps you should select another immersion since the currents can condition the scuba diving in this zone..

-  Scuba diving route
-  Cliff
-  Deco buoy
-  Difficulty level
-  Submerged mountain
-  Compass
-  Access with boat
-  Scattered rocks
-  30m. Maximum depth
-  Flashlight

The Submerged Mountain






South Coast

Illa del Descubridor

As soon as we pass Cap de la Nau, the islet called illa del Descubridor appears, a spot for simple and interesting dives. This will be a circular immersion, which goes around the entire island. We will moor near the narrow canal which separates the island from the coast, next to a small crag on the SW face of the island where we start our excursion to swim around it and we will discover a small passage which crosses it, featuring the first magnificent display of backlighting. We will continue always following the island wall on our right and will descend to -4 m latter continuing on a 90° course. The sea floor has scattered large rocks, with an average depth of -14m however the wall, covered with colourful encrusted yellow anemone surprise us along with several tunnels, which like parallel passages to the wall face, are wonderfully illumined by large window-like formations. We continue and to our left, we swim by a large rock finger located at -16 m as we now return to the starting point.

Data

The Great Unknown. Simple immersion which despite the infrequent visits represents a very pleasant submarine excursion.

-  Scuba diving route
-  Cave and/or cavern
-  Flashlight
-  Difficulty level
-  Scattered rocks
-  Deco buoy
-  Access with boat
-  Snorkelling
-  Compass
-  18m. Maximum depth
-  Family plan






South Coast

Granadella



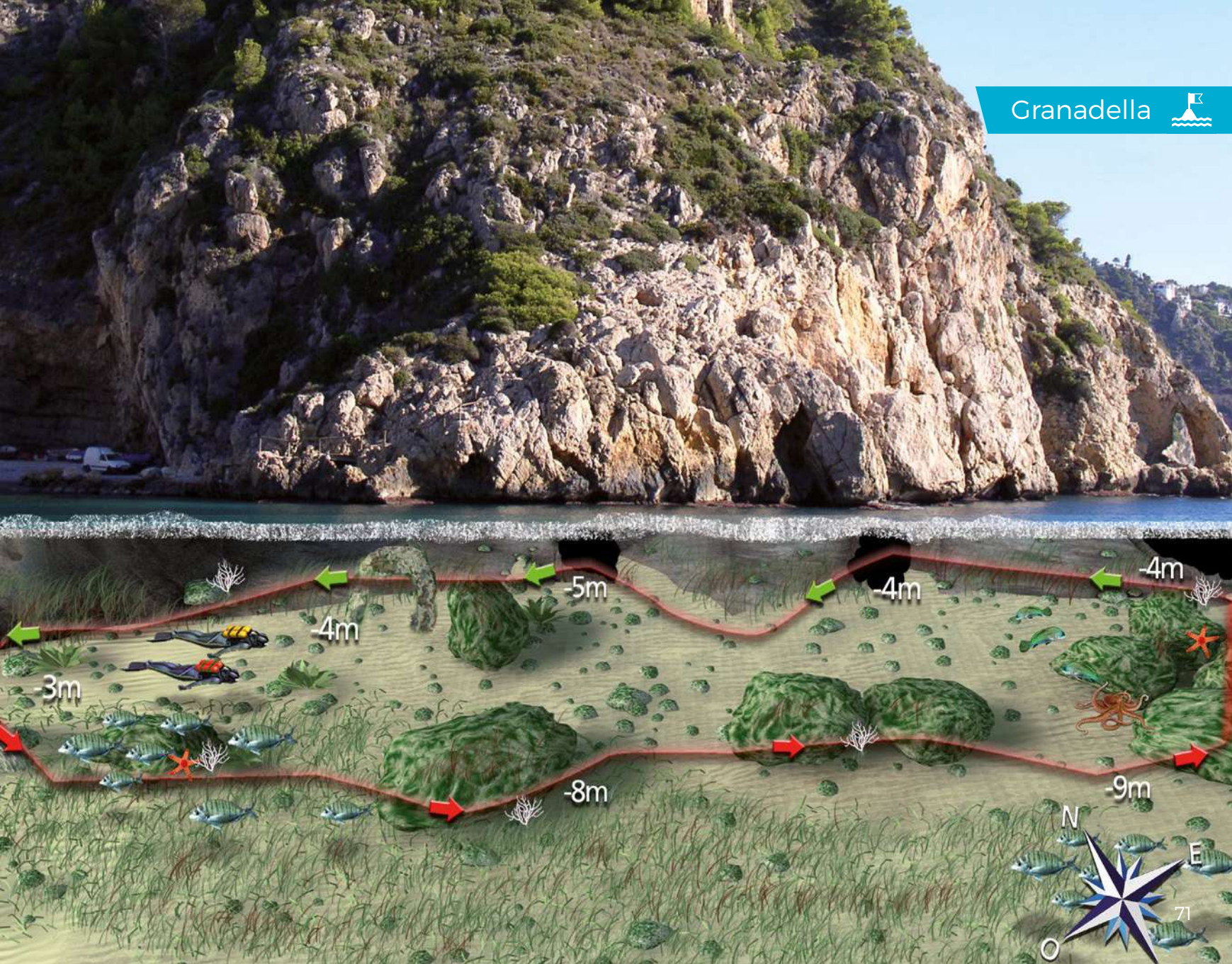
This is one of the most emblematic coves of Xàbia and the entire coast and it offers a simple immersion for divers of all levels. We can swim out to the left wall of the cove and there at a depth of just 3 meters, we can find a small rock arch through which we can pass to continue our parallel route along the rock. On the bottom, there is abundant posidonia, with large scattered rocks and it is very easy to encounter octopus and moray eels. The maximum depth which we may descend is 10 meters following this route in a south-southeast direction. At the end of the wall and when the sea floor becomes more monotonous, giving way to sandy bottoms, we can turn around and explore the rock. In the degree that we return to the beach and we ascend, we will observe caves and galleries in which we can find sea bass, crustaceans and perhaps even conger eels. The caves are short with no exit, although some have luminous lateral windows.



Data

Turquoise waters in a unique setting.
Presence of cave-dwelling fish, cypreas (shells) and decapods (crustaceans).

-  Scuba diving route
-  Cave and/or cavern
-  Nocturnal immersion
-  Difficulty level
-  Scattered rocks
-  Flashlight
-  Coast access
-  Snorkelling
-  Deco buoy
-  10m. Maximum Depth
-  Family plan
-  Compass
-  Posidonia
-  Scuba Diving Initiation ("Bautizo")



Submarine Archaeology

Museum of Xàbia.



Submarine Archaeology

The wealth of Xàbia's sea floors means that the experience of the sea and scuba diving can also be continued on dry land. If you wish to learn everything which our sea floors have to offer and discover the history of the Mediterranean, the Museum of Xàbia offers you one of the most comprehensive collections of the Valencian Community.

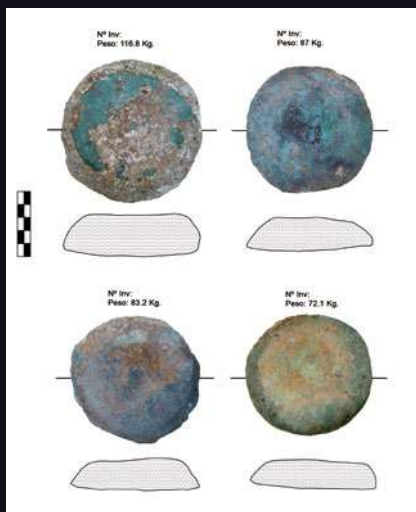
Many archaeological discoveries have been made in our coast. Amphoras, ceramic pieces of all types, stone, iron and steel anchors as well as the remains of ships have been found in diverse points of the coast.

These materials, evidence of the intense trading activity with other tribes, are the only documents in many cases which allow us to know and reconstruct our history.

We have been able to date the most ancient evidence the end of the 8th century B.C. or early 7th century B.C. Other evidence, which has appeared in land archaeological sites, such as the caves of Montgó or Cap Prim, indicate that at the end of the Prehistorical period– in the second half of the 2nd century B.C.– contacts and possible maritime commerce existed.

Nevertheless starting in the 3rd century B.C. at the start of the Romanization period, this is when the contacts multiplied which would represent, between the 2nd and 4th Centuries A.D., 30% of the total submarine relics and materials which have been recovered in the Xàbia coast. At the end of the Roman Age between the 5th and 7th centuries A.D., the percentages only reach 2% and then they significantly increase once more in the Andalusian period, especially during the last three centuries of Islamic domination. The lower Middle Ages period between the 13th and 15th centuries marked a new descent in the contacts, which once again experienced an upturn starting from the 16th century which culminated in the 19th century with the major trading activity which was focused in the current port.





Copper ingots from the Roman age, 3rd century A.D. Origin: shipwreck of Cap Prim. Hall III. Museum of Xàbia. Drawing by Carles de Juan.



Ceramic items from the 19th century. In the foreground, Dutch Gin bottles. Origin: Tangó area. Donation by Miravet-Lafaurie. Submarine Archaeology Room of the Museum of Xàbia.

What were the goods of this trade? The first known evidence, with containers originating from the Phoenician-Punic areas (Andalusian Coast and Eivissa), indicate that the main imported good was wine between the 7th-6th centuries B.C. Together with an exceptional piece such as the funnel of Etruscan origin from the 6th century B.C. discovered in Cap Prim, this allows us to assess the importance and power of the local Iberian elite inhabitants. In the beginning of the Roman civilization process, during the 2nd and 1st centuries B.C., the main imported commodity continued to be wine, with an almost exclusively Italian origin.

During the first two centuries of the Roman Empire, the goods and areas of origin diversified: wines, salted fish and oil from the Baetica and Tarraconensis areas and to a lesser degree, other locations such as the Italian peninsula, Gaul or the east Mediterranean region. Between the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D., the main product which arrived to our lands was oil, which now mainly came from North Africa. Starting from that time, the submarine archaeological evidence declined, several containers from the east Mediterranean North Africa were found, amphoras which contained wine and oil.



Submarine Archaeology Room of the Museum of Xàbia. Information panels.

Submarine Archaeology

Subsequently in the Medieval and modern ages, the submarine archaeological evidence allow us to clarify which goods were exchanged. Other sources such as written documentation, tell us about the arrival of cereals or the exportation of other agricultural products such as green almonds or raisins. Although it was in the 19th century when the production and export of the muscatel raisins reached its zenith, which was shipped in large quantities to destinations such as Great Britain, southern France and even North America.



Iron anchor from the medieval period (probably).
Portitxol area. Photographs by Dieter Jary and Rab





Species

A brief inventory of the fauna and flora which inhabit our coast



Red algae

Peyssonnelia squamaria



Red algae

Sphaerococcus coronopifolius



Peacocks tail

Padina pavonica



**Mermaid's wine glass or
Japanese umbrella**

Acetabularia acetabulum



Green seaweed

Caulerpa prolifera



Invasive sea grapes

Caulerpa racemosa



Sponge ball

Codium bursa



Posidonia (sea grass)

Posidonia oceanica



Little Neptune grass

Cymodocea nodosa



Encrusting orange sponge

Spirastrella cunctatrix



Kidney-shaped sponge

Chondrosia reniformis



Yellow sponge

Clathrina clathrus



Common sponge

Ircinia variabilis



**Feathered Hydroid
(nicknamed Christmas tree)**

Pennaria disticha



Mauve stinger jellyfish

Pelagia noctiluca



Barrel jellyfish

Rhizostoma pulmo



Snakelocks anemone

Anemonia sulcata



Yellow gorgonian

Eunicella cavolini



Mediterranean coral loaf

Cladocora caespitosa



Yellow encrusting anemone

Parazoanthus axinellae



Tube anemone

Cerianthus membranaceus



Pink flatworm

Prostheceraeus roseus



European fan worm

Sabella spallanzanii



Green spoonworm

Bonellia viridis



Octopus

Octopus vulgaris



Cuttlefish

Sepia officinalis



Purple sea slug

Flabellina affinis



Blue sea slug

Felimare bilineata



**Leopard or "Swiss Calf"
seaslug**

Peltodoris atromaculata



Noble pen shell
Pinna nobilis



Hermit crab
Dardanus calidus



Common lobster
Homarus gammarus



Spiny lobster
Palinurus elephas



Slipper lobster
Scyllarides latus



False coral
Myriapora truncata



Red starfish
Echinaster sepositus



White spot cucumber
Holothuria poli



Black sea urchin
Arbacia lixula



Red sea-squirt
Halocynthia papillosa



Torpedo ray
Torpedo torpedo



Moray eel
Muraena helena



Conger eel
Conger conger



Wide-eyed flounder
Bothus podas



Bucchichs Goby anemone
Gobius bucchichi



Tompot blenny
Parablennius gattorugine



Red scorpionfish
Scorpaena scrofa



Red mullet
Mullus surmuletus



Seahorse

Hippocampus guttulatus



Peacock wrasse

Symphodus tinca



Doncella

Coris julis



Green ornate wrasse

Thalassoma pavo



Brown meagre

Sciaena umbra



Cardinal fish

Apogon imberbis



Painted comber

Serranus scriba



Dusky grouper

Epinephelus marginatus



Common two-banded seabream

Diplodus vulgaris



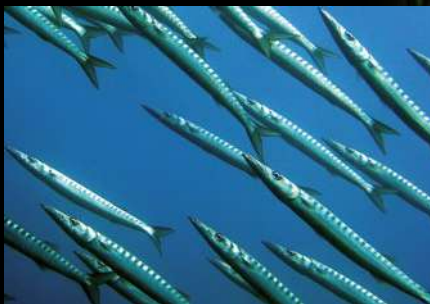
Saddled seabream
Oblada melanura



Salema porgie
Sarpa salpa



Damsel fish
Chromis chromis



European barracuda
Sphyraena sphyraena



Dentex
Dentex dentex



Sunfish
Mola mola





Accommodation and services



Xàbia has a full range of hotels, campgrounds, apartments, bungalows and villas, located in the city centre and residential areas, for those who seek a little more peace and quiet.



We also feature an extensive range of restaurants, where you may enjoy the local and international gastronomy or chef cuisine, as well as a wide variety of services.

You can find all the information related to our offer in the section: **"Plan your Trip"** of our Web Page:

www.xabia.org



Scuba Diving Centres.

Insist on professional services, dive with:

Buceo Cabo La Nao

C/ Canal Sur, 2

609 672 856

www.cabolanao.com

Diving Jávea

Ctra. del Portitxol, 105

Urbanización Toscamar

616 919 133 / 96 647 27 82

www.divingjavea.com

Hammersea

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Canal Marina Nou Fontana Norte,

amarre 160

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www.hammersea.com

La Rana Buceo

Ctra. Del Portitxol

Urbanización Toscamar

639 41 20 30

www.laranabuceo.es

Mardays Resort

Marina Nou Fontana

Muelle Sur Local S/N

96 503 28 32/ 665 496 333

www.mardaysresort.com

Paradive Adventure

Av. de la Fontana, 5

685 072 762

www.paradiveadventure.es

Pelicar

Club Náutico de Jávea,

Muelle Norte, s/n

96 646 21 83 / 629 876 284

www.buceopelicar.com

Puerto de Jávea

Escollera sur (South Jetty).

Port of Xàbia.

96 579 41 00 / 690 32 07 06

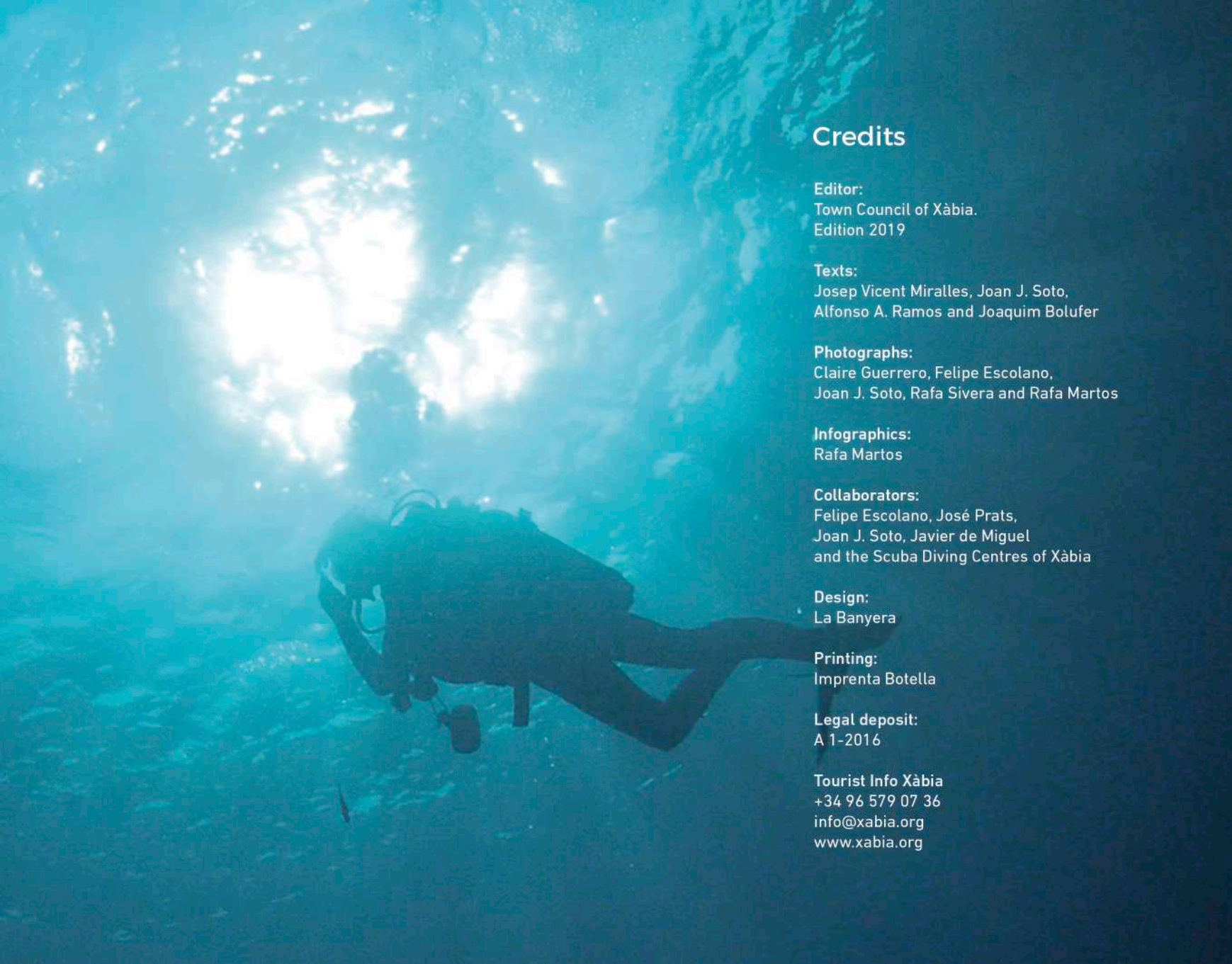
www.buceopuertodejavea.com

Revolution Dive Xàbia

C/ Burdeos, 9, L. 1

618 406 991

www.revolutiondive.com

A full-page background image showing a scuba diver in silhouette, swimming horizontally in clear blue water. Sunlight filters through the surface, creating bright, shimmering patterns. The diver is positioned in the lower-left to center area of the frame.

Credits

Editor:
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Texts:
Josep Vicent Miralles, Joan J. Soto,
Alfonso A. Ramos and Joaquim Bolufer

Photographs:
Claire Guerrero, Felipe Escolano,
Joan J. Soto, Rafa Sivera and Rafa Martos

Infographics:
Rafa Martos

Collaborators:
Felipe Escolano, José Prats,
Joan J. Soto, Javier de Miguel
and the Scuba Diving Centres of Xàbia

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La Banyera

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Tourist Info Xàbia
+34 96 579 07 36
info@xabia.org
www.xabia.org



Tourist Info Xàbia
+34 96 579 07 36
info@xabia.org
www.xabia.org