



formentera

DIVING
IN FORMENTERA

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FORMENTERA, LIGHT UNDER THE SEA

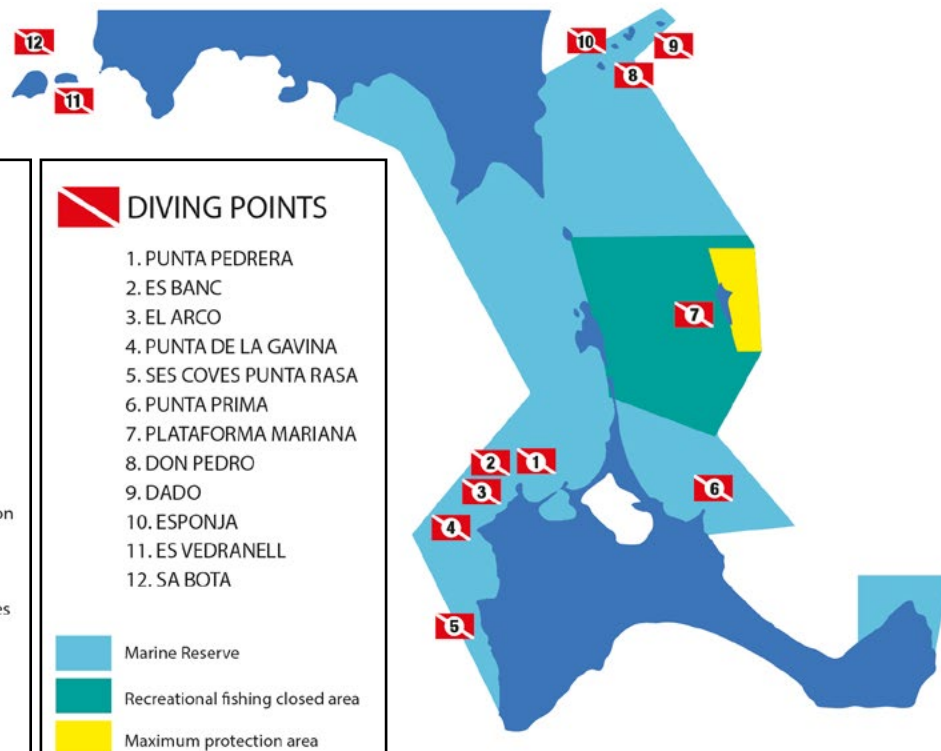
Formentera is home to some of the best diving spots in the Mediterranean. Along its coasts you will find exceptional seabeds, both in terms of the wide biodiversity they harbour and their rich landscape. The extraordinary transparency of its waters reveals natural scenery with arches and windows in the rock, multicoloured walls and lush seagrass meadows teeming with life.

Our knowledge of the seabed and the best places to dive provides the user with information that helps ensure their personal safety and the protection and conservation of the environment.

The dives that we show below are some of the most interesting that can be made from Formentera. They have been planned according to those carried out by diving centres, who are perfectly aware of their characteristics, details and the best way to approach them.

Welcome to the luminous underwater world of Formentera.

For those who have completed their introductory dive and want to continue immersing themselves in the world of scuba diving, Formentera's diving schools offer a range of courses from the basics to more specialist options: Open Water Diver, Scuba Diver, Advanced Open Water Diver, Rescue Diver, Dive Master, photography courses, Speciality Courses (underwater naturalist, deep sea diving, nitrox, EFR...) There are also courses for children, a great way to introduce children to the world of diving at a depth of about two metres, always closely supervised by an instructor.



DIVING ICONS

* Dive for divers of all levels.

** Dive for experienced divers



Sunken ships or submerged man-made structures



Protected area requiring application for a diving permit



Presence of arches, tunnels or caves on the route



Use of compass recommended



DIVING POINTS

1. PUNTA PEDRERA
2. ES BANC
3. EL ARCO
4. PUNTA DE LA GAVINA
5. SES COVES PUNTA RASA
6. PUNTA PRIMA
7. PLATAFORMA MARIANA
8. DON PEDRO
9. DADO
10. ESPONJA
11. ES VEDRANELL
12. SA BOTA



Marine Reserve



Recreational fishing closed area



Maximum protection area

The basic characteristics of the dive and its route are described by icons and by the representation of the seabed, which includes drawings of the most common animal and plant species, depth, suggested route and nature of the seabed.

An underwater photograph of a vibrant coral reef. The scene is dominated by large, white, branching coral structures on the left and a large, reddish-brown, textured rock formation on the right. Various colorful fish are visible, including a prominent yellow and black striped fish in the upper center, a small red fish near the bottom left, and another red fish near the bottom right. The background is a deep, clear blue.

PUNTA PEDRERA

1. PUNTA PEDRERA

Max. depth: -29m Level: ** GPS 38°44.165'N 1°23.727'E

Leaving the port of La Savina in a westerly direction, in a few minutes we arrive at our diving spot at Punta Pedrera. We descend along the anchoring line, which drops to a depth of -23 m, and after reaching a depth of about -12 m we take a 270° course and swim halfway down for a few minutes, staying at this height and passing over an extensive seagrass meadow until we reach a white sandy area where we descend and discover the crushed remains of an old fishing boat, with its twisted structure of plates, tubes and machinery parts. We are at a depth of about -26 m and this improvised refuge is home to a wide range of species, from moray eels shyly poking out their snouts to large groupers sheltering in the lower parts of the structure, while shoals of fish such as amberjack patrol in search of small prey, especially in the autumn. After enjoying this spectacle, we will head back to the anchorage point and find the wall, which in some sections takes the form of a vertical cliff and in others staggered terraces covered with seagrass. Meanwhile, on the sandy seabed lie a few large rocks, such as the one that serves as anchorage for the boat.

The wall has inlets and crevices covered with false coral and other bryozoans that show their splendid colours when illuminated by the spotlight. The anemones show off their bluish tips and if we look closely we may be able to spot the small harlequin shrimp, which takes refuge among their stinging tentacles. We will follow the wall, leaving it to our right, and at some point it retreats at a right angle. When so advised by the air level, we will ascend to the platform with its splendid, lush carpet of seagrass, where we will often find starfish, sea urchins, octopus and moray eels, until we reach the starting point of the dive.



PUNTA PEDRERA



A large school of barramundi (Lateolabrax semilineatus) swimming in clear blue water. The fish are silvery with dark vertical stripes along their bodies. They are swimming in a loose formation over a sandy seabed. The water is clear, and the lighting is bright, suggesting a shallow depth. The fish are of various sizes, and their movement creates a sense of a large, active school.

ES BANC

2. ES BANC

Max. depth -21m Level * GPS38° 43.539N 001° 23.391E

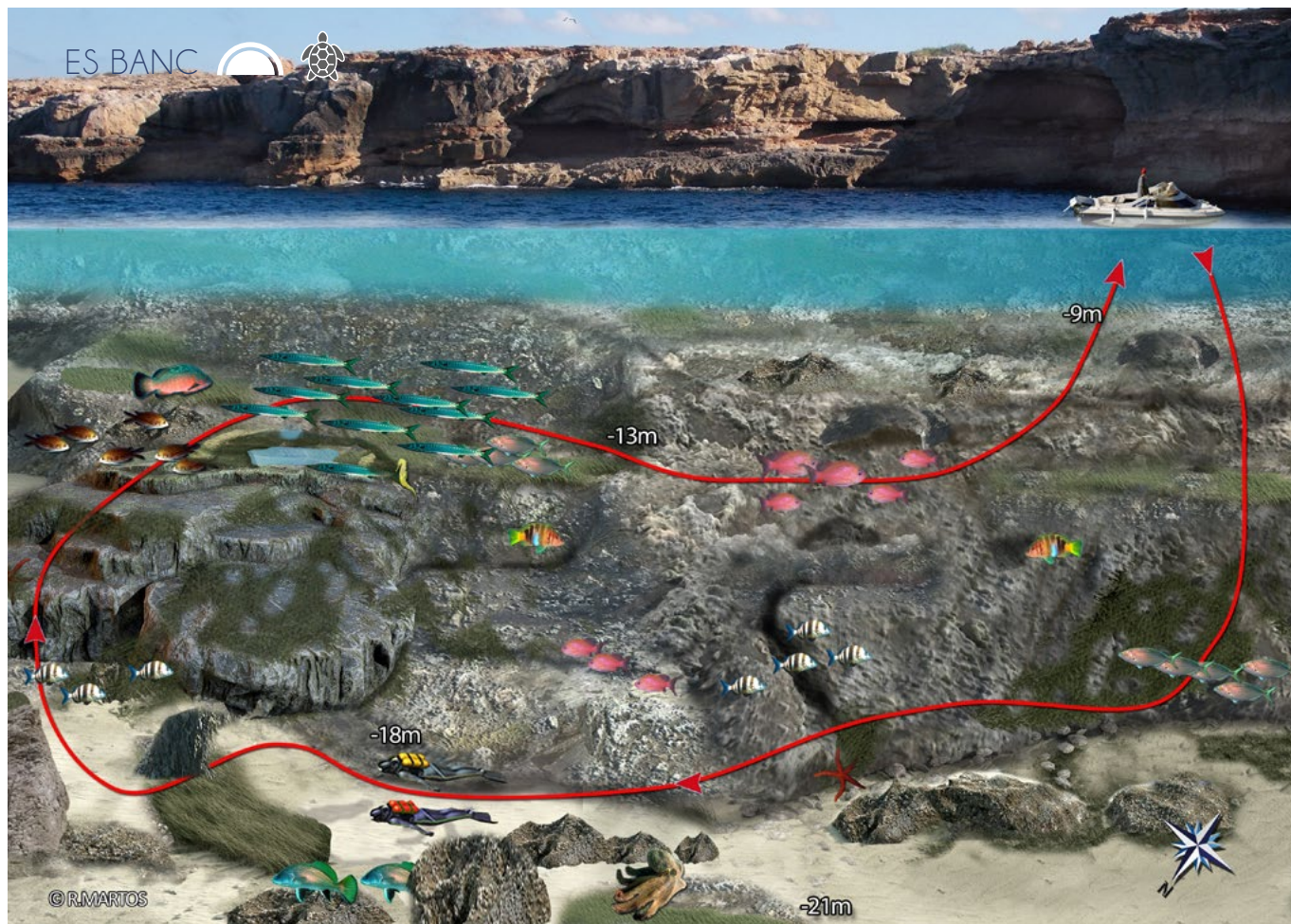
After passing Punta Pedrera and before reaching the dive known as El Arco, we find another outstanding dive site: Es Banc. This is a shallow platform from which we look out to find a steep drop-off leading to a sandy area.

After anchoring we move along the platform for a few dozen metres towards the open sea, at about 330°, and we drop down a vertical wall that comes to rest at about -22 m on a sandy seabed with some elongated rocks. On this dive we will leave the wall to our right, encountering cavities and crevices through which the light filters and which harbour an abundance of life, and it is not unusual to find the odd grouper and goldblotch grouper under the overhangs. The wall has marked ledges and shady hollows where it is worth taking a closer look and where you will find a delicate tapestry of organisms such as false coral, a bushy colony of strong reddish tones, as well as marine sponges among which small sea slugs can often be seen. Further on, a pile of rocks appears, followed by other larger formations, and we pass between them and the wall, which we then climb. The wall is no longer vertical but staggered, forming terraces that gradually become covered with seagrass.

We then turn round on top of the platform and soon find an attractive elongated arch with a window-like hole in the roof, where shoals of barracuda, bream and croakers usually graze, and with a bit of luck we may even find a seahorse. From here we head back across a superb carpet of *Posidonia oceanica* (seagrass) where, in season, we are sure to find flowering stalks.



ES BANC





EL ARCO

3. EL ARCO

Max. depth -22m Level * GPS 38°43.392' N 001° 23.152'E

We sail from the port of La Savina in a southerly direction and before reaching the Gavina tower we come to a rocky outcrop known as Punta d'Es Banc. As soon as we pass it we anchor on a rocky, seaweed-covered platform at a depth of about -4 m. From the anchorage point we will head out to sea at approximately 330° and we will see that the depth increases gradually dropping to a white sandy area at a depth of about -15 m.

We will continue onwards, leaving the wall to our right and we will soon come across a spectacular arch that crosses the submerged tip of the rocky tongue. The extraordinary transparency of these waters helps highlight the grandeur of the arch, which, with the lintel at a little over -1 m and the base at -8 m, is surrounded by shoals of white seabream, goatfish and croakers. After admiring this amazing natural structure, we will continue through a landscape dominated by the superb seagrass meadow with shoals of dreamfish gliding through it. It is worth taking a look at the edge of the wall where you will discover numerous cracks and rocky visors that are generously covered with false coral, sponges, sea squirts and countless other colourful organisms. After a few minutes swimming, the wall continues drifting eastwards and we come to the second great arch that characterises this dive. This arch is somewhat narrower and rests on a seabed with a depth of -15m. In these impressive natural structures, it is common to find groupers, croakers and goldblotch groupers standing guard under the rocky portico. We must not go through it to avoid damaging its fragile covering. By now, the air gauge is probably telling us it's time to turn round and make our way back past the first arch as we comfortably decrease the residual nitrogen on the anchoring platform.







PUNTA CAVINA

4. PUNTA GAVINA

Max. depth -23m Level * 38°43.191N 001°22.824E

Sailing from La Savina and following the coastline to the south, after passing Punta Pedrera, a few minutes later you will see a small old watchtower at what is known as Punta Gavina. This will be the anchorage point for another memorable dive in the inviting waters of Formentera. We anchor on a platform, at a depth of about -8 metres, profusely covered with brown seaweed and *Padina pavonica*. We then swim away from the coast, heading northwest until we reach a vertical drop that falls to a seabed at a depth of about -20 metres, with rocky blocks, green seagrass meadows and, beyond that, immaculate, white sandy areas.

We will advance leaving the wall to the left, admiring the rich tapestry that extends virtually uninterrupted in the form of yellow cluster anemone, false coral and other bryozoans or "moss animals" as these delicate small colonial organisms are also known, which filter the water from which they obtain nutrients, and which here provide the landscape with a strikingly colourful appearance.

The crevices in the wall are home to croakers, always discreet shadow dwellers, and it is very common to come across curious groupers that seem to be watching us and even posing for a photo. During the route, we come across interesting rock formations, especially two enormous pinnacles that we can observe from the base, at a depth of about -23 metres. These form a gorge with the wall, which we can swim through and marvel at the shoals of white seabream and goatfish that flank them. On reaching a rocky ledge and sandy seabed we find the entrance to a small cave, like a bite out of the wall opposite a mushroom-shaped rock. This is a good moment to head back, turning round to swim through the seagrass-covered gorge or passageway between the two pinnacles and the wall.

Numerous rock formations will make their appearance and attract our attention by creating evocative scenes that shelter moray eels and enormous octopuses. We will also come across a small arch and gradually ascend to the platform and spend the last few minutes admiring a crater-shaped hollow with colourful visors next to the anchorage point, full of croakers, white seabream and the odd grouper, an excellent place to flush out the nitrogen and return to the surface after this magnificent underwater experience.





An underwater photograph showing a diver in silhouette swimming towards a bright, circular opening in a dark rock formation. The water is a deep blue, and the light from the opening creates a strong contrast. The diver is positioned in the upper left quadrant of the frame.

PUNTA RASA

5. CUEVAS PUNTA RASA

Maximum depth -14m Level * GPS 38°41'00.0"N 1°22'55.0"E

This dive site is located to the west of the island of Formentera, in an area of cliffs not far beyond Cala Saona. It is an area of impressive rock walls with folds and troughs falling vertically to the sea and continuing in the same way below water level, as is the case with the caves that we are now going to visit, which are actually no more than deep inlets.


We anchor some 30 metres from the wall, over a sandy bed at a depth of -12 metres, dominated by the colour white but with rocky outcrops and seagrass clumps forming small islets. We head east towards the cliff and when we get there, we leave it to our right. Its most striking feature is its varied and colourful cover of cyanophilous algae and colonies of animals such as yellow cluster anemones and sunset cup coral. The shoals of fish such as damselfish will attract our attention, as well as the fleeting movements of mating rainbow wrasse.

We will soon find the access to the first cave, with its whitish sandy floor. It is a large rocky portico, the entrance to an authentic natural cathedral with walls covered by sponges and corals. The cave is about 20 metres deep with a circular trajectory, although the light is always present. You can even access air pockets on the surface and see how the light enters from below with force, as if it were a spotlight. After enjoying this scenery, we descend again and continue onwards through about 330°, following the wall. At one point, the wall forms a pronounced point flanked by a large rock formation, and we can pass between the two before coming across a couple of folds in the wall that leave us at the entrance to the second cave we are going to visit, at a depth of about -8 metres.

It also has an impressive portico that is wide enough for us to pass through comfortably and which continues for several metres into the cave and then turns to the left in an L-shaped path that soon takes us back to the entrance. It is a good idea to carry a torch to enjoy this protected landscape to the full, where it is not unusual to come across the odd forkbeard, which always seek shady areas, as well as numerous prawns and the odd slipper lobster. On the way out we retrace our steps towards the anchorage as we recognise the numerous rocky formations which, like islets, hold many attractions in the form of a wide variety of underwater life.





An underwater photograph featuring a moray eel with a dark body and yellow spots, looking towards the camera. The eel is surrounded by large, dark sea sponges with circular openings and vibrant orange coral. The scene is dimly lit, with light reflecting off the eel's scales and the surrounding marine life.

PUNTA PRIMA

6. PUNTA PRIMA

Max. depth -28 Level * GPS 38°43.696'N 1°28.370'E

At this dive spot we usually anchor at the tip of the cape, where a submerged tongue of rock extends sharply out to sea.

The route begins by following the wall to our right, although we will be somewhat distanced from it in order to pass between the enormous rocks that sit on the sandy seabed at a depth of about -27m.

Groupers and croakers find perfect refuge in the balconies formed by these huge rocks, delicately covered with coralligenous organisms, sponges and bryozoans that display their intense colour when we shine the spotlight on them.

In this way, we will wind our way through the rocks which will decrease in size as we go along. Some of them form windows and arches which it is better not to pass through in order to avoid damaging the fragile organisms that cover them. When we reach a point where the wall bends and forms a trough, it is a good time to turn round and start heading back, this time close to the wall and at a shallower depth, although the abundance of wildlife remains, with octopus, moray eels and, in season, the occasional slipper lobster keeping us entertained until we get back to the point and the anchor line.





An underwater photograph showing a massive school of small, silvery fish swimming in a circular pattern around a central point. In the lower center, the dark silhouette of a diver is visible, looking up at the school. The water is a deep, clear blue, and the lighting creates a strong contrast between the dark diver and the bright, shimmering fish.

PLATAFORMA MARIANA

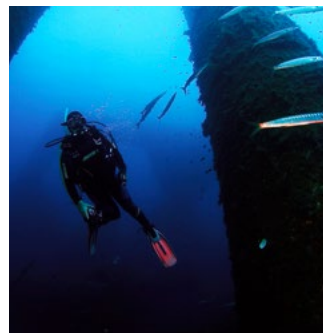
7. PLATAFORMA MARIANA

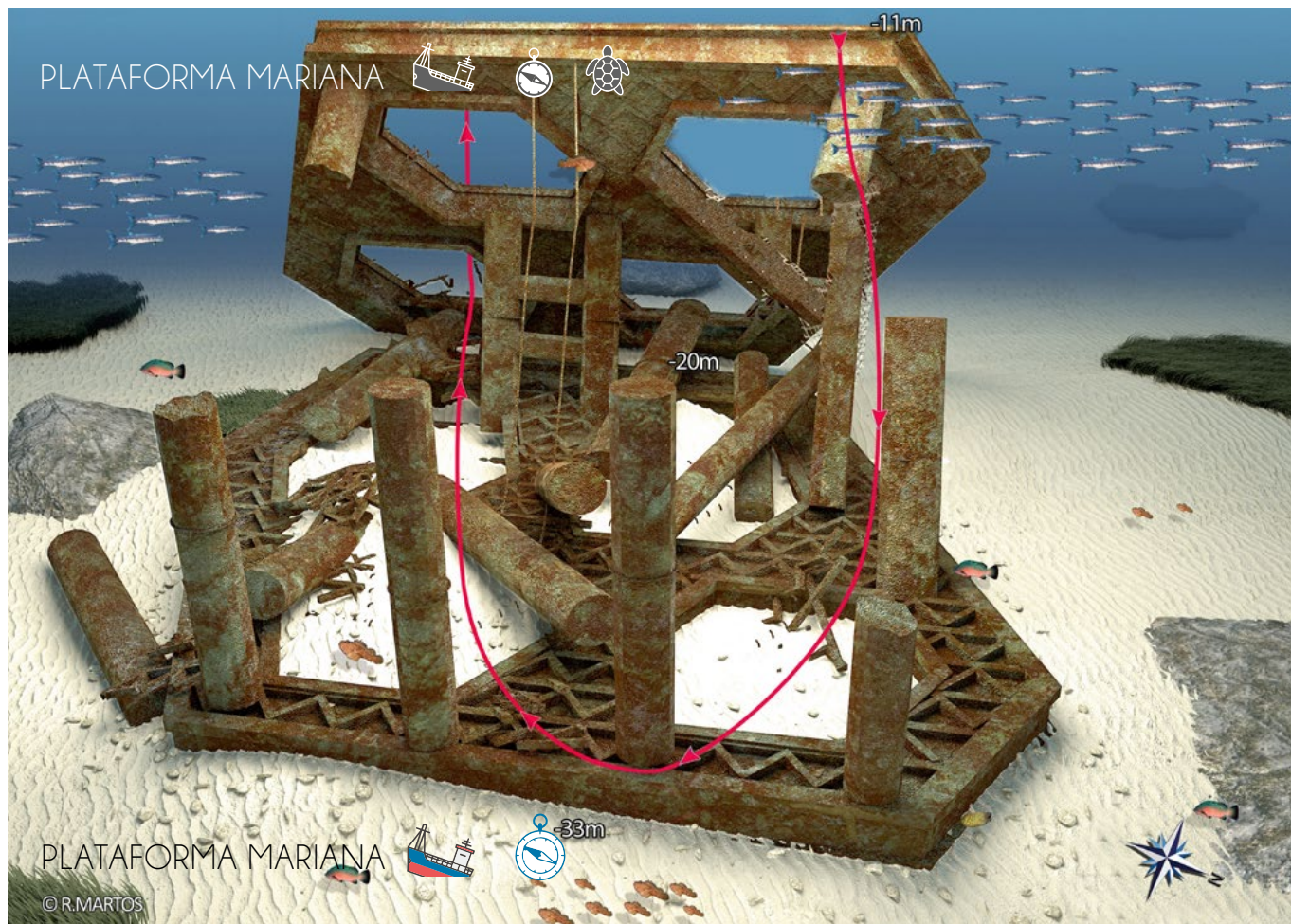
Max. depth: -33m Level: ** GPS 38°47.383'N 1°28.350'E

The Mariana Platform is the name given to a fish farm dedicated to the fattening of gilthead bream, built in the sea some 500 metres off the west side of the island of S'Espardell, in the channel that separates Ibiza from Formentera. As a result of its neglect and lack of maintenance, some of the pillars and flotation elements that supported it gave way and the platform collapsed, moving sideways until it hit the seabed.

This dive is always an unforgettable experience. If wrecks always attract divers and tickle our fancy, on the platform we will be simply overwhelmed by the fantastic landscape created by concrete columns and metal structures that evoke anything from a submerged Atlantis reminiscent of classical Greece to a space station in which the divers feel like astronauts floating around weightlessly as if they were on a spacewalk.

As the shallowest part of the Platform is only -11mts and the bottom is only -32mts, it is advisable to overcome the temptation to simply admire the structure and descend to the maximum depth we can and explore the labyrinthine landscape of the base, in which countless hollows shelter groupers, moray eels and large scorpionfish that remain impassive to our presence. We can then begin to ascend progressively, enjoying the view of this peculiar wreck, entering through the large arches of the platform to exit between the columns and ultimately let our body and mind fly as we witness the spectacle of the orderly shoal of barracudas that calmly patrol this fascinating submarine landscape.





An underwater photograph showing a shipwreck structure made of large, rusted metal beams. Two divers are visible: one in the center background near a horizontal beam, and another in the bottom right foreground with a large air tank and a trail of bubbles. The water is clear blue, and green seaweed is attached to the metal structure.

DON PEDRO

8. DON PEDRO

Max. Depth -45 Level: ** GPS 38°53.080N 1°27.169E

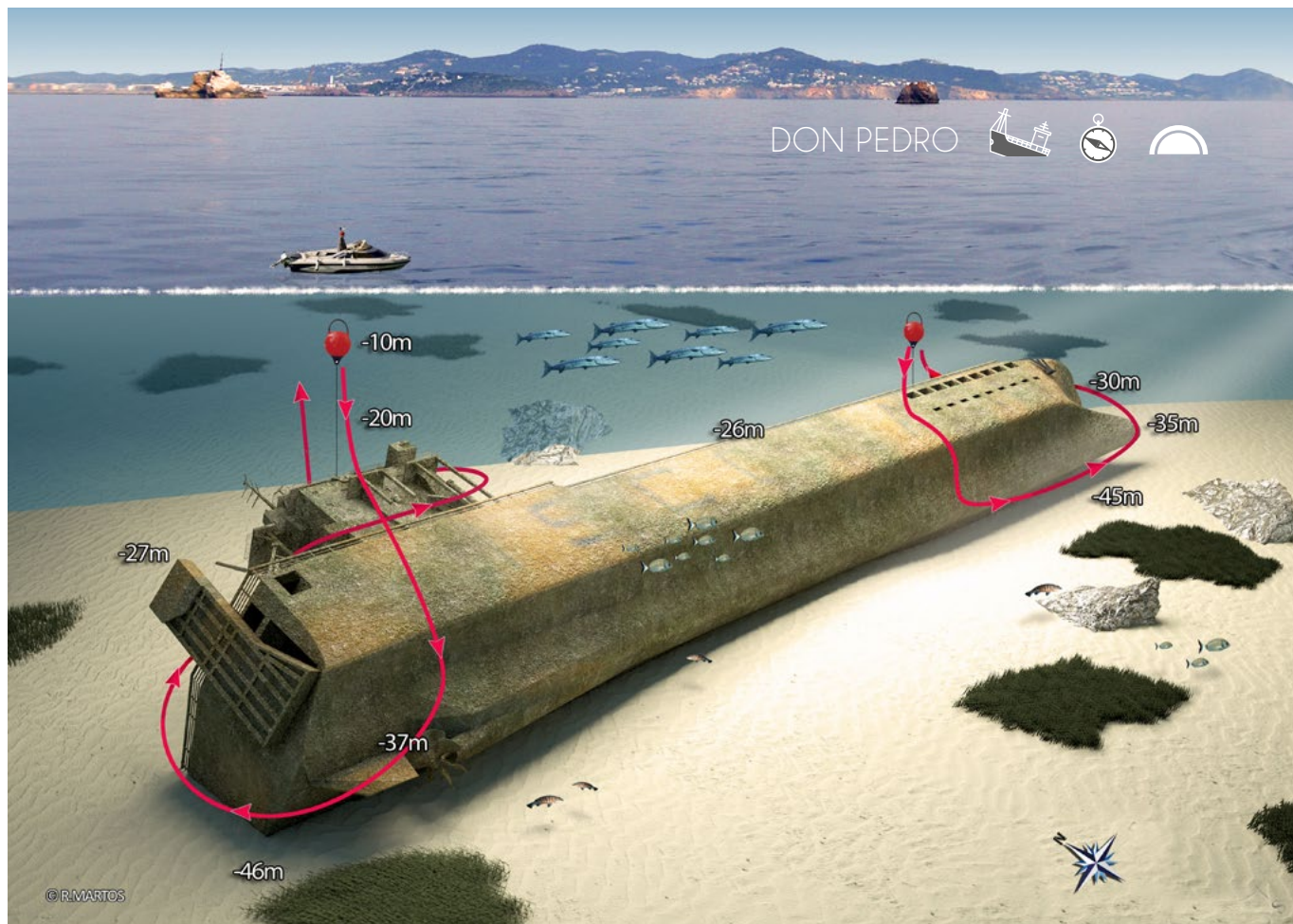
The Don Pedro was a Ro-Ro type vessel which, after colliding with the small Dado islet, sank to a depth of -45 metres. Following the tragedy of any shipwreck, the Don Pedro has become an authentic ecosystem of underwater life, which has wasted no time in colonising the infinite nooks and crannies and spaces offered by this immense hulk of more than 140m in length and almost 20m in breadth, offering an incredible gift for divers, who can enjoy the always fascinating and evocative visit to a sunken vessel.

The Don Pedro lies on its port side, with the bow at 105°, and its shallowest part is at -24mts, so a visit requires a good level of training and preparation on the part of the diver. The considerable length of the ship and its high average depth make it necessary to make more than one dive if you want to see all of it. As the ship was carrying its cargo of lorries and merchandise, after the sinking the accesses to the interior were sealed off. It remained that way for a few years until the deterioration of the structure caused part of the deck to collapse in the stern area, creating a large hole that allows access to the hold from a depth of about -33 m.

We recommend the exterior visit to the wreck, as the interior dive is not only prohibited in recreational diving, as it has obvious risks, not only because of the considerable depth but also because it takes place under cover, so that once the route towards the bow has begun the only way out is through the entrance hole itself, which will become increasingly more distant as you advance, or through a window in the bow area

which is not fitted with safety grilles. Therefore, the interior dive is reserved exclusively for trained divers with the appropriate equipment for confined environments. The centres are usually moored to submerged buoys and from here you descend to the starboard side to go to the deepest area in order to see the propeller at -36mts, the loading ramp and the sterncastle if you choose the stern end, or the anchor, propeller and bulb if you choose the bow.







EL DADO

9. DADO

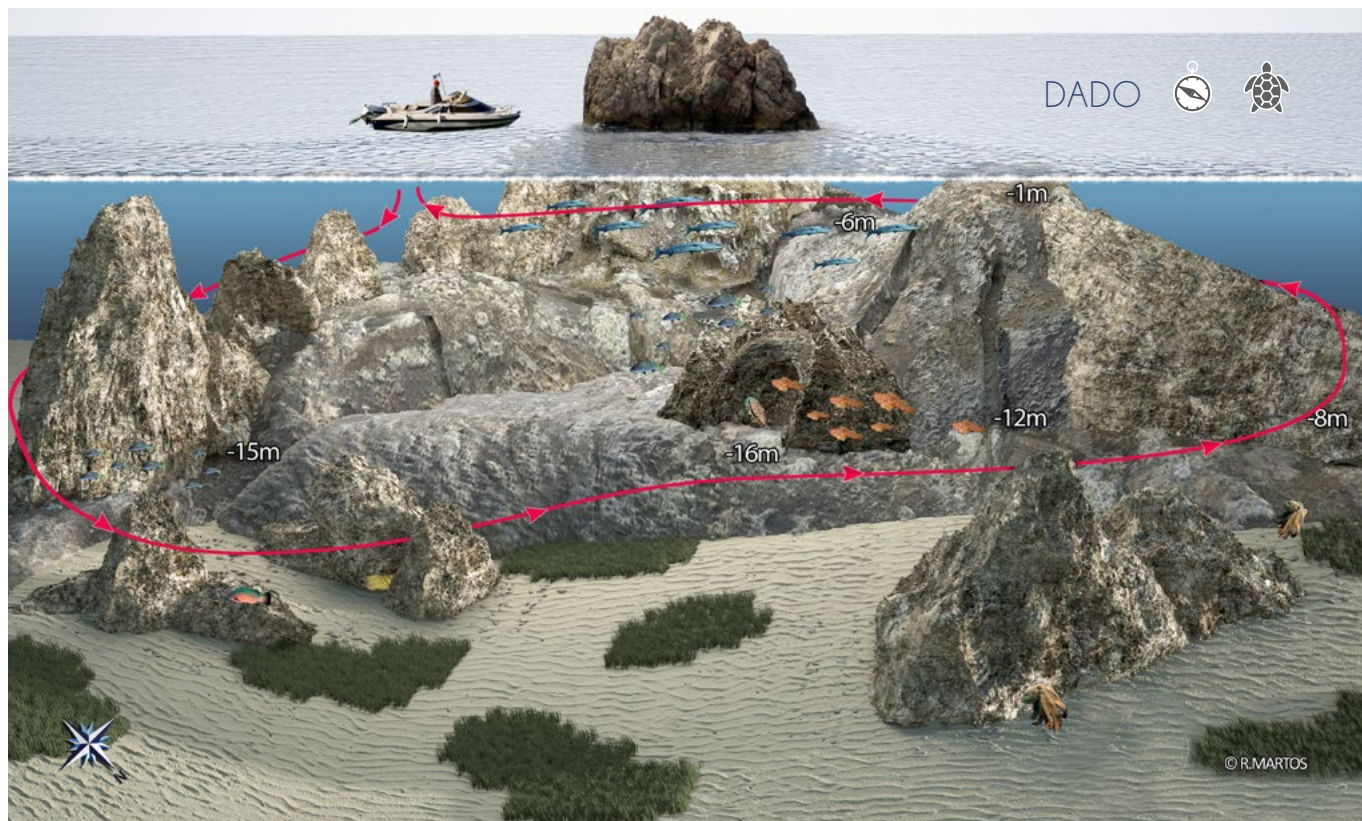
Max. depth: 16m Level: * GPS 38°53.308N 1°27.271E

Very close to the Ibiza Nueva marina, less than 3km to the southeast, there are two small rocks known as the Dados. The larger one has a luminous beacon, while a little further down is the so-called small Dado, against the bottom of which the ship Don Pedro collided and ended up sinking.

We anchor on the east side of the small Dado at a depth of just -5mts to find a rock formation which, following a course of about 90°, gradually gains depth and appears as an elongated mound with vertical walls that drop to -30mts. We follow this natural wall, leaving it to our left and enjoying its countless attractions, and we skirt it, now heading west. Large rocks appear in which impassive scorpionfishes and octopuses shelter, while in the longitudinal rips in the wall, groups of croakers graze peacefully apparently indifferent to our presence. Meanwhile, at the base of the wall there is a balcony-shaped inlet that reveals an orange-coloured covering of false coral and yellow anemone, and at a depth of -16m we find a small cave with a silty floor marked out by large fan mussels.

We follow our course to immediately find a mound or seca that rises almost to the surface and on which the collision with the hull of the famous Don Pedro took place. We circumnavigate the seca and after turning round we pass through a channel between the mound and the Dado, returning to the starting point without forgetting to look up from time to time as we will probably see shoals of slender barracudas.







LA ESPONJA

10. ESPONJA

Level: */** Max. depth -30 GPS 38°52.502N 1°25.582E

La Esponja (The Sponge) is a small islet to the southwest of Ibiza, across from the Torre de sa Sal Rossa. Its proximity to the port and Platja d'en Bossa make it a popular destination for the diving centres that operate in the area, so the point of immersion is just a few minutes' sail away. Being an island, the anchoring point can be chosen in such a way as to be sheltered from the wind. Moreover, its small size makes it possible to completely circumnavigate it with no effort at all.

We are going to anchor on the north side where the seabed is at a depth of -8m. Initially we will find a steep slope covered with small green algae that drops to -30m and ends up in an area of sand and seagrass. But it will not be necessary to descend that far. Following the wall and staying at a comfortable depth depending on our level of expertise, we will leave the wall to our right. Soon we will come across large rocky formations on the seabed covered with bryozoans such as the *Pentapora fascialis*, a colony of microscopic animals common to rocky seabeds of a certain depth, whose branches resemble a moose's antlers. It will be fun to survey these rocky reliefs where the always discreet croakers find shelter.

Then we will see another rock at -27m, visor-shaped and dotted with yellow anemone, which will lead us southwards to other large rocks where conger eels usually take shelter. After identifying them we return to the wall, which now appears as a vertical cliff that drops from the

surface to -20mts and then gives way to a rocky tongue with a promontory and a passage at -12mts, which we swim through to approach the northwest face of La Esponja. Other large, compacted rocks now cover the seabed and as we leave them behind, we advance along the wall, enjoying the many interesting features that mark out the route to the boat on our return to La Esponja.





A full-page background image of a scuba diver in a cave. The diver is wearing a black wetsuit with 'AQUAZUL' on the sleeve, a bright green BCD, and a black mask with yellow trim. He is looking directly at the camera with his hands clasped in front of him. The cave walls are covered in orange and yellow coral. A bright blue light source is visible in the distance, creating a strong beam of light. The text 'ES VEDRANELL' is overlaid in the center in white capital letters.

ES VEDRANELL

11. ES VEDRANELL

Max. depth -26mts Level: */** GPS 38°52.131N 1°12.433E

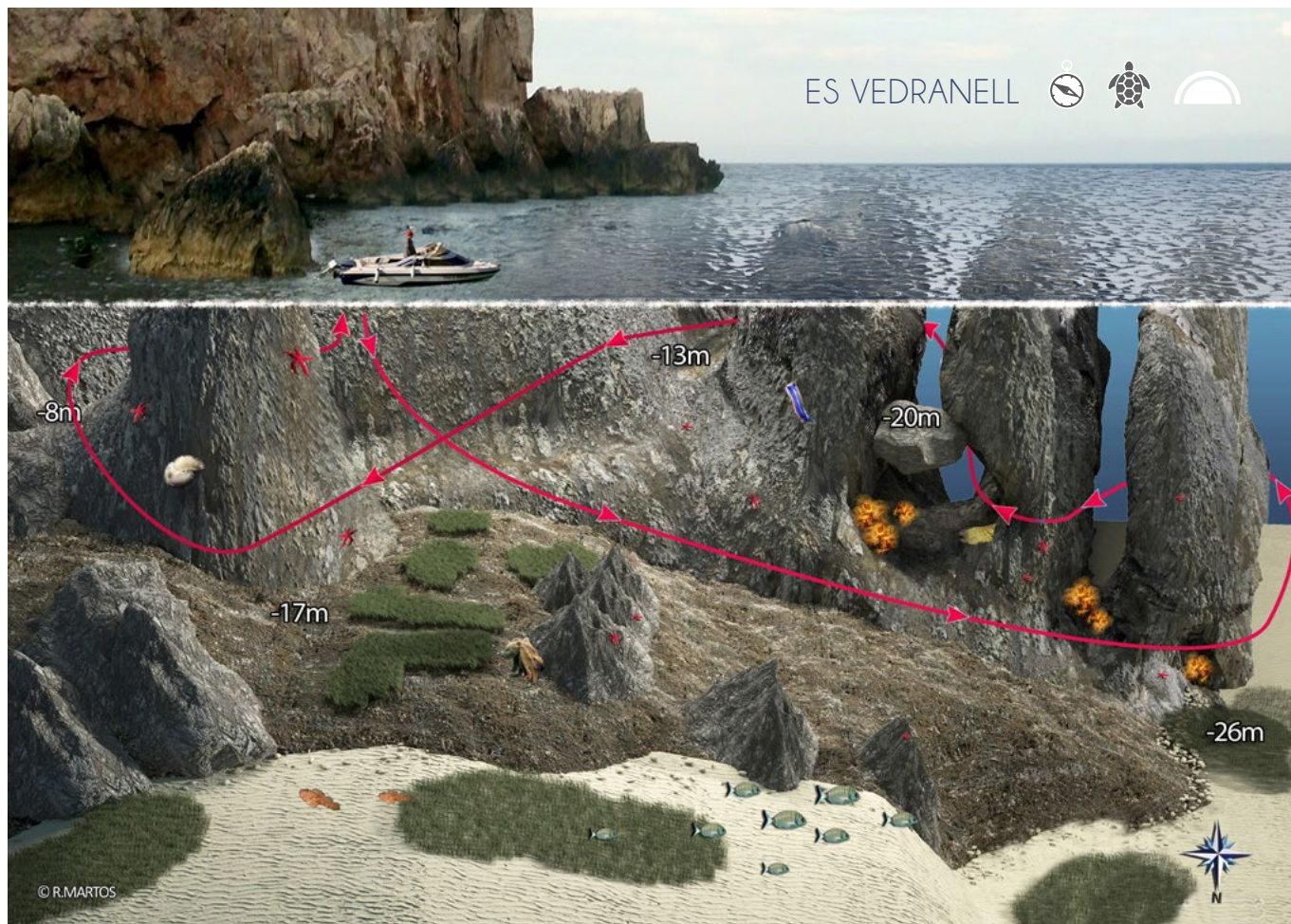
Es Vedranell is the horseshoe-shaped island to the east of Es Vedrà, which is where we will be going for this exciting dive. We head towards the westernmost point of Es Vedranell and, depending on the wind, we anchor either on the north side or on the south side, where there is a small trough.

In either case, we will follow a winding path through some canyons that run parallel to one another in the direction of the neighbouring Es Vedrà. If we anchor on the north side of the point, between the point and a small islet, we will descend to a bed of rock and seagrass at a depth of -8m. It would then be best to follow a south-westerly course to reach the greatest depth, which lies at the last needle that forms the third canyon, at around -26m. This rocky mass has an overhang on the outside full of yellow cluster anemone and delicate colonies of bryozoans, a texture that will recur throughout most of our route.

We circumnavigate this spire to immediately find the first canyon which, with a height of about 25m and a width of up to 3 metres, offers us a colourful upholstered passageway. After exiting and leaving the wall to our right we immediately find the second canyon, which also has a maximum depth of -25m and is notable for the large round boulder that is wedged into it. This time we swim though it on a southerly course and when we come out we turn round and pass through the third canyon which, with a maximum depth of -12m, is also full of delicate animals such as small sea slugs.

As we head towards the boat, the depth decreases as we approach the small islet next to which we have anchored and which we will go around to finally reach the anchor line and put an end to a sensational dive through some stunning geological architecture.







SA BOTA

12. SA BOTA

Max Depth: -40 Level:** GPS 38°52.777N 1°10.769E

This is the name given to the underwater mountain approximately one mile to the northwest of Es Vedrà, which rises in the middle of the sea from a depth of more than -40m to just a few centimetres from the surface, so that only the waves can reveal its presence.

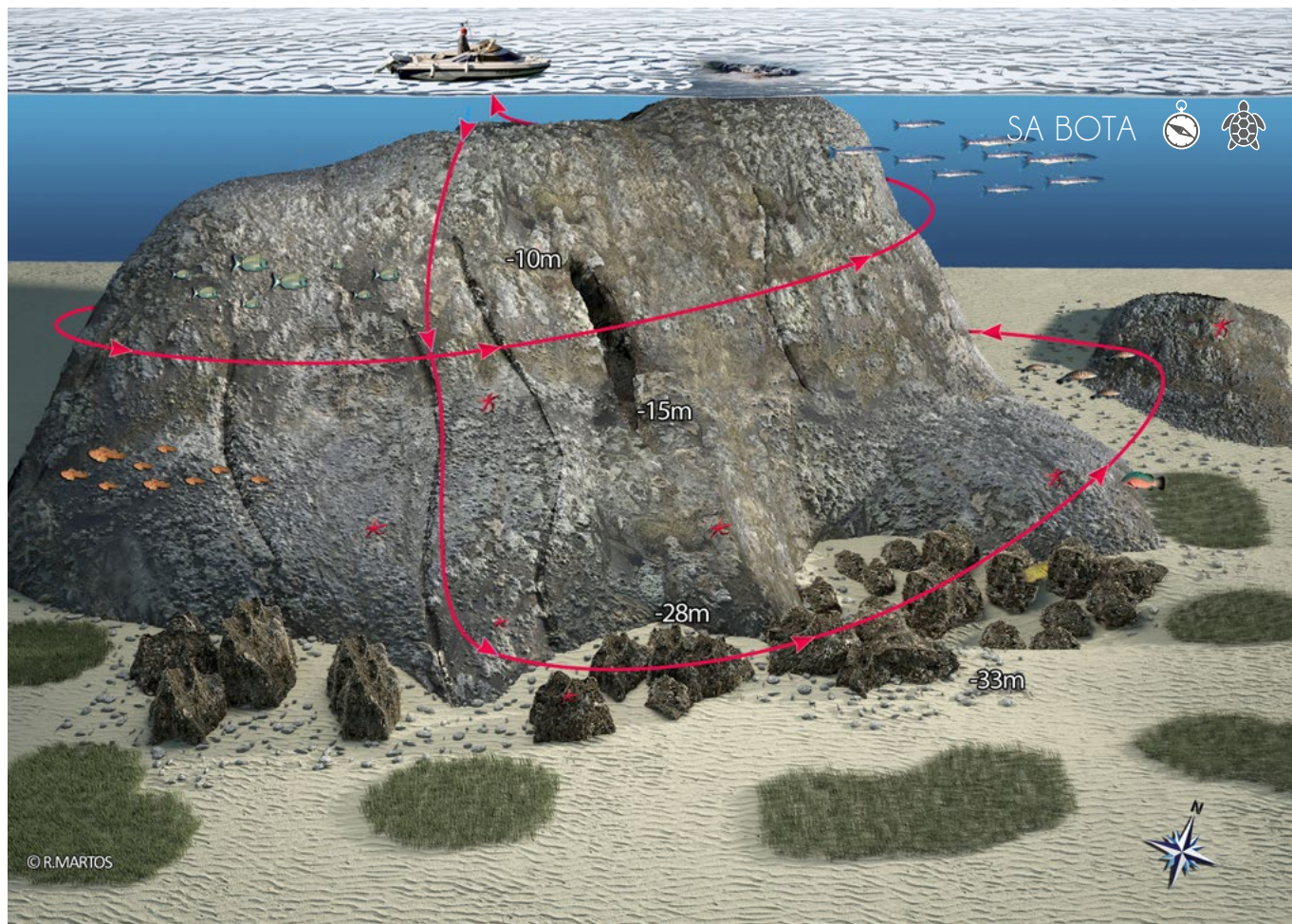
This spot, well known and highly regarded by scuba divers, is certainly one of the best diving spots on Ibiza's excellent seabed. The considerable distance from the coast allows us to frequently observe pelagic species such as tuna or amberjack and, almost always, orderly shoals of barracudas.

The dive is simple, although we must be careful of the possible current. As it is a more-or-less rounded mountain, after anchoring we will descend to the maximum desired depth and from there begin to circumnavigate the islet, which on its south and east sides has a more gradual slope, while on the north and west sides there are vertical walls. In any event, we will find good plant cover on the walls and countless hollows where small fish abound and, at greater depths, lobsters, slipper lobsters, moray eels and perhaps the odd grouper.

The whitish sandy seabed has some medium-sized rocks and in 0° navigation there is a small island to the right, at a depth of -25 to -35m. During the trip we will be on the lookout for the fleeting appearances of amberjacks that voraciously patrol the seabed and, little by little, we will

reach the top of the islet in a gradual ascent. Close to the surface, at around -10m, we can stop to observe the almost certain presence of shoals of barracuda that skim the surface in a frantic hunt for their small prey.





RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE DIVING

- We will anchor at the buoys, and if there are none, on the sand to avoid damaging the rocks and seagrass.
- When descending, we will control our buoyancy so as not to land on the seabed.
- During the dive, we will ensure we are well balanced, endeavouring not to disturb the seabed with our flippers.
- It is advisable not to carry hanging objects to avoid them dragging or getting caught in the rocks.
- Do not feed the fish as this creates habits in them which, as well as changing their behaviour, can lead to metabolic alterations.
- Do not touch or disturb the species. We must respect them however insignificant they may seem to us.
- Do not turn over rocks or move organisms such as shells, as this alters the environment and exposes its inhabitants to the risk of predation.
- Do not remove any living thing from the seabed. If we want souvenirs, it is better to photograph them.
- Do not throw waste into the sea. If we see plastics, we will try to remove them to prevent them being ingested by the animals.
- Avoid staying inside caves or arches as the bubbles can harm their inhabitants.
- When observing animals, avoid making sudden movements or chasing them.
- Knowledge of the species will help us to enjoy the dive more and to respect the environment.
- Plan the dive and learn the route to follow in advance. The weather conditions, personal conditions and diving equipment conditions are what will determine whether or not the dive will take place.

DIVING COMPANIES

There are three diving companies on the island that organise dives at the above mentioned point and they are:

Formentera Divers (+34) 971 18 05 61 www.formenteradivers.com

Vell Mari (+34) 971 32 21 05 www.vellmari.com

Orcasub (+34) 639 601 839 www.orcasub.com







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