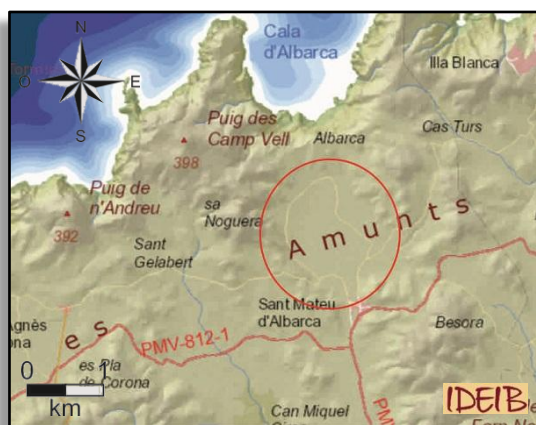


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## Polje of Sant Mateu d'Albarca

### Location



Municipality: Sant Antoni de Portmany

U.T.M. coordinates (31N ETRS89):  
X: 359643  
Y: 4323421



### Difficulty and duration



5 min

### Access

From Santa Agnès de Corona take the old route to Sant Mateu (PM-812-1) and follow the indications to the village.

It is recommended to make a circular route around the polje, which takes 2-3 h long on foot.

### Principal interest

Geomorphological

### Secondary interest

Stratigraphic, tectonic

## Description of the locality

The Pla d'Albarca (the Albarca plain) takes its name precisely from its extensive flat orography, surrounded by hills. Geologically speaking this structure receives the name of polje.

A polje is a large karstic depression of kilometric dimensions which presents an irregular perimeter and a flat bottom, normally covered with silts and clays originating from the erosion of its surrounding reliefs which, due to the oxidation of the little iron they contain, produce very reddish tonalities (*terra rossa*).

This depression is caused by the collapse of subterranean cavities, sometimes, helped by the action of faults.



Polje of Sant Mateu d'Albarca.

In the case of the polje of Sant Mateu d'Albarca, this karstic depression was favoured by a series of faults which present NW-SE and NE-SW orientations, which caused the collapse of blocks. Later, the groundwater took advantage of the planes of weakness to gradually dissolve the rocky substrate and thus favour the karstic processes.

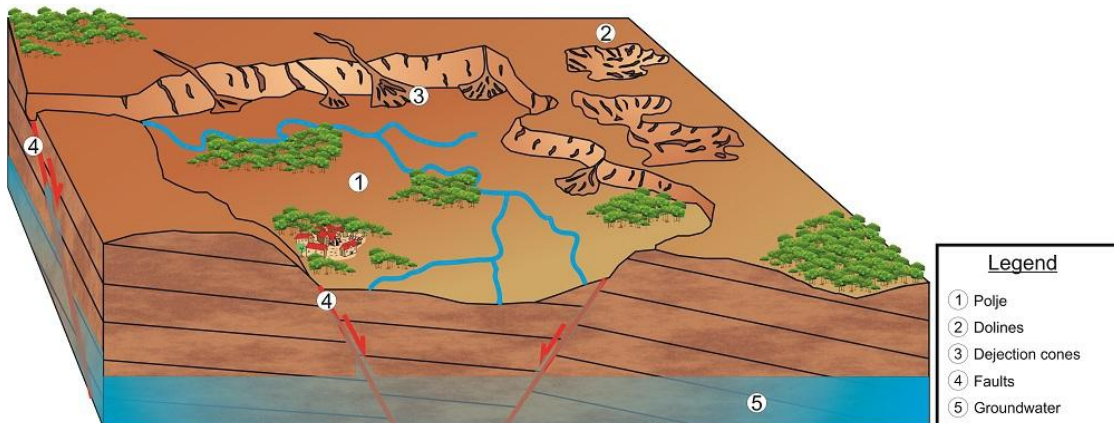
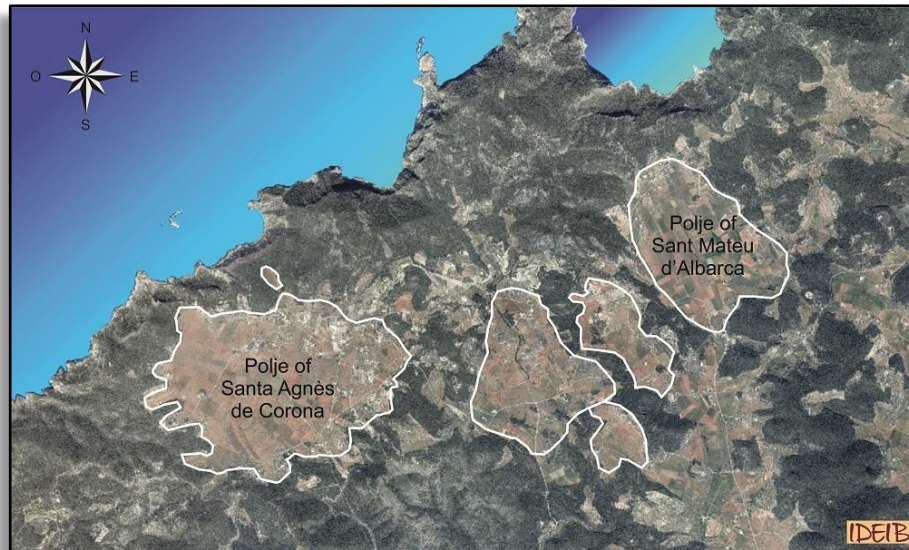


Diagram representing the formation of a polje.

This depressed geomorphology has meant that nowadays the Pla de d'Albarca behaves like an endorheic basin, that is, like an accumulation plain of the waters and sediments proceeding from the torrents of the hills surrounding the polje which have no outlet to the sea. The surface waters are absorbed by the ponors.

The poljes of Sant Mateu d'Albarca and Santa Agnès de Corona are the two most important examples of this type of karstic modelling, although it is possible in aerial photographs to observe other smaller poljes and dolines.



Aerial photograph delimiting the two principal poljes and the secondary dolines and poljes.

### For more information

Durán Valsero J.J. (Coord.), 2006. *Islas de Agua. Patrimonio Geológico e Hidrogeológico de las Islas Baleares*. IGME, Govern de les Illes Balears. 254 pp.

Mata Lleonart R. & Roig i Munar, X., 2016. *Eivissa i Formentera: camins i pedres. Descoberta geològica i geomorfològica*. Axial Natura. 218 pp.

### Recommendations

It is recommended to make the circular tour on foot or by bike to enjoy the landscape more peacefully.

You can also visit the polje of Santa Agnès de Corona, very similar to that of Sant Mateu. Along the way you can try to identify the dolines that are the origin of the principal cultivated plains.