



1 Introduction

In almost of the routes we won't find sources, so it's important to take enough water. In summer the sun warms up more intensely, especially in the middle hours of the day, so it's highly recommended to carry a cap or similar and sunscreen.

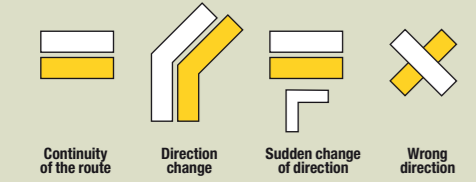
Indications of difficulties and guidance notes, no matter the nature that they are, are according to the moment at which is written this guide (April 2005).With the passage of time, routes may change or differ because of works, transfer of hikers, crops or any other reason. (Reviewed in 2014 without relevant changes)

2 "PR" and "GR" Signs

Some trails which are described in this guide have been marked with the international hiking signs. White and yellow (PR) correspond to "short distance" trails; white and red are "GR" "long distance" trails and also white and green (SL) which indicate "Sendero Local" "local trail". The only difference in terms of marks is in colours; shape and meaning are identical for all three cases. Mazarrón has the privilege to be crossed by two "GR": GR 92 that crosses along the Mediterranean coast and through Europe; and GR 252, which is one of the "Caminos de la Cruz" (The Ways of the Cross) which leads to "Caravaca de la Cruz", established for the Jubilee Year's celebration.

The main difference between the paths is the distance covered or the time that it takes to go over:

- GR** More than one day on the way.
- PR** They need less than a day but must have more than 10 km long, although they may have less than 10 km and remain a "PR", depending on difficulty, slopes, etc.
- SL** They cannot have more than 10 km and its difficulty is minimal.



3 Classification of difficulties

Physical:

- One heart:** Doesn't require great effort than a walking.
- Two hearts:** We have to make small efforts to overcome small slopes and/or the duration doesn't exceed three hours.
- Three hearts:** We find long slopes and/or the duration exceeds 3 hours.
- Four hearts:** Slopes are continuous with strong inclinations sometimes and/or the duration exceeds 5 hours.
- Five hearts:** Slopes are very strong and/or continuous and/or the duration is more than 6 hours.

Technical:

- One boot:** Routes or wide trails without difficulty.
- Two boots:** We find narrow paths or uneven surfaces.
- Three boots:** Hiking trails with stony stretches or steep terrains. The tour can be diffuse or hard to follow.
- Four boots:** Occasionally we have to rely on the support of hands. The trails become confusing paths or have points with orientations' and progress' difficulties.
- Five boots:** Some very difficult off-road stretches, because of the vegetation, or stretches where you need hands to surpass some projection.

4 Notes about the aerial photography (orthoimage)

When the line on the aerial photograph turns discontinuous, it means a path instead of a way.

We recommend the hikers take, previously to the itinerary, a moment to get used and train the eye to clearly differentiate the map's reliefs, peaks and cliffs; because they can sometimes be easily confused if you are not used to. Shadows tend often to cause mistakes. We must bear in mind that peaks or mountain chains project their shades on the picture.

- Beginning of a route**
- End of a route**

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From Puntabela through the Coves of Bolnuevo to Playa de Percheles and some alternatives

Technical datasheet

Distances

Red Routes: To 'Cueva Lobos' Beach: 1.6 km; to the intersection point of the Green, Red and Blue Routes: 2 km; to 'La Grúa' Beach: 2.9 km; to 'El Benzal' Beach: 5.8 km; and to 'Percheles' Beach: 8.7 km **(one-way)**
Green Route: 3 km (one-way)
Blue Route: 2.9 km (one-way)
Yellow Route: 1 km (one-way)
The black-marked stretches belong to two paved access roads to the last part of the Red Route. They can be used for pick ups with car.

Slope

Departure height and high point: Insignificant values except for the Green Route, that reaches a height of 90 metres above sea level.
Suitable for mountain bikes: This itinerary is apt to be done with mountain bike following the Red itinerary and avoiding the itineraries of other colours if we like 'trial lands'.

GPS Coordinates (UTM DATUM E1950)

Start from Puntabela: X 648734 Y 4158916
Red, Green and Blue Routes intersection point: X 642755 Y 4158715

1 Introduction

The coastline that goes along these itineraries is one of the last almost intact coastal stretches that possess the coast of Murcia. The botanical, geological and landscape wealth enshrines the need of its total protection. So pioneer in Spain, part of this coast area, formed by a series of coves, has been dedicated for nudism practice. We have to be respectful with this when we decide to make the itinerary.

The presence of 'seaweeds' in some of the coves indicates the excellent water quality. This alga is the 'Posidonia oceanica' (commonly known as Neptun Grass or Meditarranean tape weed), it forms large underwater meadows that are an important part of the ecosystem and it's an authentic 'bio-indicator' of the water quality.

During the walk, we will see a vegetation composed of different plants' species like 'cornical', 'palmitos' (Mediterranean dwarf palm), 'esparto grass', 'albarda' (summer-deciduous shrub) and 'tambo' (thyme), replaced in some more propitious zone to swamp by 'salidos', 'sosas' (prickly saltwort), 'barilias' and 'simeprievras' (plants that grows in salty sandy coastal soils).

This excursion is divided in several sections depending on available energy over time. Several walks can be made, some of them circular, or arrive till the end, at Percheles' Beach; this will force us to retrace our steps. The Red Route would be about 18 km there and back. Maybe we count on someone who can pick us up, or have two cars and leave previously one of them in Percheles' Beach. For that we need to move a car to the village called Caracá de Gallego (N-332), pass through it and follow the indicator of 'Percheles' to the left side, direction to the sea. Ask any resident for more indications. On the access road to Percheles, about 300m before arriving, is a red-and-white-painted iron arch, which delimits the height of vehicles that have access to the beach.

How to reach Puntabela

We have to arrive at the always charming 'Bolnuevo', following the same road that has brought us. We will pass in front of the curious Bolnuevo's erosions, known as 'La Ciudad Encantada' (The Enchanted City) and where no one can resist taking a photo. These formations are the result of wind erosion; the wind with suspended sand-particles eroded and erodes the cliff of a marine deposit of marl. Continuing straightforward, we go up a slope that takes us to an oval square with good views of Bolnuevo and its coves. We are now in Puntabela, so we can start the tour.

2 Hikings

GREEN ROUTE From Puntabela to the Picacho and the Coves of Bolnuevo

If we want to realize the Green Route, we will leave the oval square along a paved road, parallel to the sea. The beach is down on left side and is known as "Riñón de Bolnuevo" (Corner of Bolnuevo). Two hundred metres further on, the pavement ends and the road forks in one ascending way and another one descending. The green-marked tour on the aerial image starts here, taking the ascending way on the right. If we want to make a circular walk through the Green Route and turn back by the Red one when both cross, we recommend beginning by the path on the right. This one has most of slopes. We recommend come back by the left side (red route), flatter and closer to the sea and the beaches.

We start up to the right (ascending way), some stony, but cars move through it. We wind the south hillside of "Sierra de las Moreras" with some scattered houses. A climb continues with some occasional breaks, offering good views of the coves that we will visit later. We won't have many difficulties regarding the direction because the way is obvious. Five hundred metres after the last house, the way forks into two paths: the left one surrounds the small hill and the right one overcomes it and the main way joins again behind the hillock. There's a small distance difference between both, but the path on the left is better views.



continue the Green Route

Our way takes us to a place called "Picacho" (in Spanish 'peak or summit'). A few hundred metres before arriving to a small white abandoned building, a sharply descending way appears on the left. We will continue that way till we reach a dry ravine called "Rambla del Picacho", which will lead us to an often travelled roads' intersection, slightly more than one kilometre. We arrived to the meeting point with the Red Route. We have three options to choose from here on:

- A** Rightwards, the Red Route goes to the beach 'La Grúa' (be careful, is the second deviation on the left, 700m from here); to the beach of the 'Hondón'; 2.8 km from here; to the beach of 'Benzal'; 3.5 km from here; and finally to the beach of 'Percheles'; 6.7 km from this place.
- B** If we continue the ravine down, about 400m, we reach the beach 'Amarilla' (yellow beach). On right side appears a path which is the blue-marked route on the aerial photo. (See specific indications of the same one)
- C** And leftwards, if we want to return to the beginning (30 min. more or less) doing with it a circular tour through the main way of Bolnuevo's coves (Red Route). Confusions are not possible. We will pass next to several coves: the largest and first one of them is "Cueva Lobos", about 500 m.

RED ROUTE From Puntabela through Bolnuevo's Coves to the beach of Percheles



Starting from Puntabela's oval square, after 200m pavement, we have to follow the main way of the Red Route, it's the descending one on the left. There are not many indications to give for the 2 first kilometres. Our way is clear. We can get in and out of it to enjoy good views and swim in the sea. It could be first in "Piedra Mala" Cove, almost at the beginning. After a few 100m we will cross close to a short way that reaches the visible beach of "Cueva de Lobos" (at 1.5 km far away from Puntabela).

Cueva de Lobos' Beach is so called like the isle opposite to it because it was a 'Monk Seals' refuge. Until the fifties and sixties they still lived on this zone and were commonly known as 'sea wolves' ('lobo' means in Spanish wolf). Right after this beach, our way climbs a small slope and turn to the right. We cross a trench and descend keeping the turn to the left, till we arrive to the ravine's bed. We will see that there is another path on the right. It's the meeting point of the Green and Red Routes.

However we arrived at this point, all those who want walk further have two options:

- A** Continue the same route (Red route), recommendable option for the cyclists. It's the main way, also used by cars to cross this area. It doesn't have orientation problems, although it goes sometimes considerably inland, but without losing sight of the sea, crossing places with inhospitable beauty. This route arrives finally at the beautiful beach or cove of "Del Hondón", where it meets the Blue and Yellow Routes. It's a little longer but less uneven. From the "Hondón", all the routes coincide in only once till Percheles. El Hondón is a cove easy to recognize because the path of the red itinerary goes just between it (on left side) and an old house placed between two stream beds, with a straight way about 100m that links it with the beach.
- B** On our left, the track follows the ravine down until the "Amarilla" Beach and where begins the Blue Route. From the right on, where from the track to the beach comes, leaves an ascending path through the cliff's edge. That path is the Blue Route.

(See specific indications of this route).

The most frequent visitors of these two idyllic places are naturist swimmers. After the recommended visit to any of these two quiet coves, we must follow our way, which will occasionally cross with others. We will descend a not-too-deep ravine and continue with our journey. Finally, we end in the Red Route about 100m before it reaches the beach of "Hondón".



BLUE ROUTE Track of Playa Amarilla to Hondón



This track is sometimes a mere path and other times joins other ways, although it's generally a trail. It's always the route closer to the cliffs. Be careful with them. If we continue more or less parallel to the coastline, we will arrive at the beach of "La Grúa".

It owes its name to an old quay where stone was loaded and where stones can still be found like quay. This cove is actually formed by two ("Playa de la Grúa" and "Cala Leño"), separated by a few rocks through we have to cross to go on from "La Grúa" to "Cala Leño", very similar both. By the Blue Route till its end we will find two more coves: firstly the idyllic "Cala Desnuda" very close to "Cala Leño" and further on the "Barranco Ancho" cove.

It's actually a path often created by the hiker; occasionally it forks into three or four paths that join together further. We recommend following the path, if you get lost, follow parallel to the coast because you will arrive to the little 'Hondón' Beach.



YELLOW ROUTE Intermediate way to the beach of Del Hondón

From the point where the Green and Red Route converge and the Blue one starts until the beginning of the Yellow Route, it's necessary to go over 1.100m, following the Red Route. We will recognize the yellow-marked way because after overcoming a short slope about 50m it has a pronounced bend to the left and immediately another one to the right, after this we will find the ruins of a house. From these ruins on, the way, which continues behind it, is the "Red" one, and the one on the front side (between the house and the sea) is where the Yellow route begins. For travellers who go on foot is the yellow road more recommended, less travelled by vehicles and shorter, but stonier than the red one. The yellow road goes almost parallel to the sea. From it we will have access by two perpendicular ways to our path and will arrive at two magnificent and reconite coves: "Cala Desnuda" first and the beach of "Barranco Ancho".

We follow the path and we will find on our right a small and ancient quarry of extraction of "lágunas" earth of bluish colour.

The path continues further until to reach the ravine bed. At this point the pathway forks. The trail continues to the right towards the ruins of a small house which is situated on the top of the hillock.

These ruins will be our reference to orient ourselves. We continue along the path towards the house and go slightly and gradually out the ravine bed by its left side. Don't follow another path that goes along the same ravine bed in Southwest direction. If we did, we would start the 'Pink Route', which we describe briefly below.

Ravine of Algezares and ascent to the Morro Blanco (Sierra de las Moreras)

T. D.

Distances

3,3 km (one way)

Altitude

Departure height: 60 metres above sea level.
Maximum altitude: 488 metres above sea level at the top.
Duration: About 3 hours and a half approximately.

GPS Coordinates (UTM DATUM E1950)

Start: X 647021 Y 4161727
Ravine House: X 646954 Y 4160489
Hill: X 647131 Y 4160242

1 Introduction

This tour goes through one of the most emblematic places of the municipality: the "La Sierra de las Moreras" (the Mulberry's trees mountains). It shares name with the "Moreras Ravine" due to the abundance of these trees in its vicinity, several centuries ago. These mountains, like others, suffered serious deforestations in the 16th century caused by the need of fuel for the mining ovens. The road goes through several extractions' areas of gypsum and furnace for the calcination of them.

Apparently, the itinerary lacks plant wealth, but we will know in this excursion the heart of the mountain where we will discover a pine forest and then climbing to the "Viboras" or the "Morro Blanco" hills, we will enjoy the great panoramic that offers its top and discover its fauna and flora. Not in vain, these mountains enjoy the protection of their cataloging as 'Protected Landscape', LIC (Place of the European Community Interest) and ZEPA (Special Protection Area for Birds), therefore is necessary to request caution and care to minimise damages to the flora and fauna along the way.

Botanically we highlight the "cornicales" (*Pericopsis angustifolia*), Mediterranean dwarf palms, and "brovales"; aromatic plants like thyme, rosemary, Artemisia and Lavender. In a remote area from the mountains is a population of "Cypress of Cartagena"; also some 'sábina' (tetracelinis also called "arar", a cypress species) in the crags, rockroses; herbaceous like navelwort, "orquídea abejera" (orchid species), etc. In terms of the fauna we can be surprised to see the "tortuga mora" (spur-thighed tortoise or Greek tortoise), the "águila perdicuena" (Bonelli's eagle), the peregrine falcon and the Eurasian eagle-owl (Bubo bubo).

2 Hikings

We will arrive at the beginning of the itinerary going through the N-332 (Mazarrón-Aguilas road). Supposing that our direction of travel is from Mazarrón to Aguilas, we have to find a way that deviates at right angles of our road on the left side. We find it when we're about to surmount a steep slope of a couple of hundred meters, popularly known as "Cuesta la Dura" (the Hard Slope). From the last roundabout (which has an old yellow public works machine, just after passing Mercadona supermarket of Mazarrón town) to where we will find the way are 1,700m or conversely 500 meters before reaching a large circular that it gives access to the ring road of Mazarrón.



Upon entering the way we find the ruins of a house. We park and prepare us for hiking. On the right side of the house we will see a way that goes towards the mountain and whereby we have to follow without any difficulty. After a small hill reach a cultivation of olive trees surrounded by the road, and continue for start the itinerary of the Ravine of Algezares (Note 1). We introduce us into it passing a path that crosses the ravine at right angles. Our way continues straight leaving the pipe behind and few meters onward disappears as way and becomes a little stony path. On our left, on the other side of the ravine, we see remains and parts of the old mining trail that transported the gypsum product of the ravine and the "lágunas" (coloured earth) (Note 2).

We follow the path and we will find on our right a small and ancient quarry of extraction of "lágunas" earth of bluish colour.

The path continues further until to reach the ravine bed. At this point the pathway forks. The trail continues to the right towards the ruins of a small house which is situated on the top of the hillock.

These ruins will be our reference to orient ourselves. We continue along the path towards the house and go slightly and gradually out the ravine bed by its left side. Don't follow another path that goes along the same ravine bed in Southwest direction. If we did, we would start the 'Pink Route', which we describe briefly below.

T. D.

PINK ROUTE Variant of the Collado de la Paridera

4,5 km Approximately 4,5 km (one-way)

Distances

Departure height: 60 metres above sea level.
Maximum altitude: 488 metres above sea level at the top.
Duration: About 3 hours and a half approximately.

GPS Coordinates (UTM DATUM E1950)

Start: X 647021 Y 4161727
Ravine House: X 646954 Y 4160489
Hill: X 647131 Y 4160242



It's an old footpath to cross the mountains by the hill named "Collado de la Paridera". The beginning of the hill is quite simple from where we are. But we have to warn that in the ravine, next to the path, is a well, eight or ten meters deep, without protection, so please take care. Further, after crossing the hill, the path disappears. It doesn't have orientation problems due to the open ravine looks us by its bed, but now down. Just when we are about to reach the end of the ravine, difficulties appear. We don't recommend the route for persons not very used to steep and sloping terrains. This is the difficulty point 5 within our technical difficulty scale.

After the end of the ravine, we find an irrigation reservoir and a way that leads to a big greenhouses. As you can see on the aerial photo, we will continue along the edge of the plantation until finding a half-abandoned way behind earth mounds. This one reaches the Red Route. Once there, we decide which variant to choose.

(See specific explanations for that route).

We continue and cross an old gypsum quarry area that retains remains of rudimentary brick furnaces. This oven area is divided on two terraces, one higher than the other, where the path forks and passes through both. It's indifferent take one or the other, as long as we don't lose the reference of the house's ruins of that we already begin to lose sight due to white difference and vegetation that separates us from them.

It is a good place to rest. If you want to take the usual photographs and undertake the return, all the way up to this point has been enough stroll to see the ravine of Algezares.

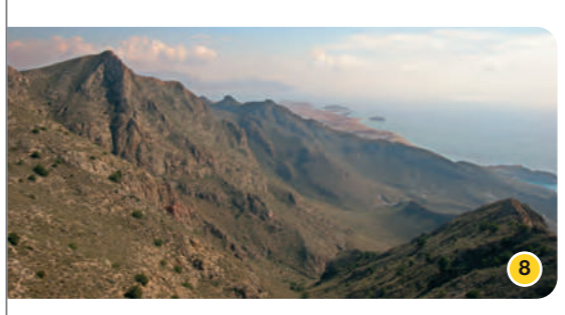
Others will continue towards the house. We will be forced climb a strong slope that ascends perpendicularly a runoff-made sidewalk by the hikers, until the house.

Once arrived there, take the opportunity to recover. The path starts from the left of the house and goes to the hill which is in the South.

We head toward the hill along a steep path that forks and intermingles among itself of erratic form. Another effort will take us to the hill. We find, for the first time, the great panoramic view of Mazarrón's coast.

The hill is a good place for considering finished the tour for those who don't intend confront the last section that develops through the ravine of Algezares. The hill is a good place for considering finished the tour for those who don't intend confront the last section that develops through the ravine of Algezares. The hill is a good place for considering finished the tour for those who don't intend confront the last section that develops through the ravine of Algezares.

Note 1: This place-name highly probable comes from "aljequir", popular name given to gypsum stones.
Note 2: "Láguna" is the name given to a kind of clay in the region. It goes from burgundy to blue and, previously, was used to cover and waterproof the houses' roofs.



San Cristóbal and Los Perules Mining Hills

Technical datasheet

Distances

Slope

Slope: not much relevant slopes.
Duration: About 3 hours.

GPS Coordinates (UTM DATUM E1950)

Entrance from El Portichuelo: X 648217 Y 4163240
Entrance by way of the cell tower (at the beginning of the way): X 648520 Y 4162905

Remarks

This tour goes through abandoned mining areas. Mine shafts abound, most of them marked. Time has produced cracks in certain places and some terrans's area are not much compacted. We must point out that it's not so many dangers if we respect the route and avoid approaching the wells. If you realize the tour with children, don't leave them alone at any time. The spectacular landscape justifies the route. Please respect what still endures.

1 Introducción

The different 'Mazarróns' which have existed throughout different periods, were it mostly for its mining wealth (iron, lead, silver, zinc, copper, alum and red ochre). The first evidence dates from the Phoenician era as proved several deposits and the only discovery in the world, of two Phoenician sunken boats, 2,700 years ago, in the beach of "La Isla" in Puerto de Mazarrón.

Proof of the rich Phoenician trade is that historians of the antiquity, as Diodorus Siculus, did chronicles like this: "... The Phoenician merchants who sailed to Beria ... when his boat was overloaded with silver ... removed the lead from their anchors and, instead of lead, they did the stock of silver".

Phoenicians, Greeks and Carthaginians passed along our coasts until the Second Punic War brings the fall of 'Cartago Nova' (209 B.C) and the Roman conquest. The Romans are those who undertake the greatest exploitation of the antiquity.

Within the grounds of "Coto San Cristóbal" ("coto" means property) and "Los Perules" is "Corta Romana", popularly known as "El charco de la aguja" (Needle's puddle). It's a quarry which was originally a large front of mining works (extracting profit of the mines down the required labours or excavations, fortify the area, arranging traffic in the enclosure and extracting usable ores), over 300m long, with an average height of more than 25m.

Elsewhere in the town, as "Coto Fortuna" in Leiva, are conserved important works of Roman engineering like a draining gallery about 2km, one of the works of these most important characteristics of the Empire (not visitable nor visible because the gallery is located at 8 metres underground). The Roman company that exploited it, was named 'Societas Montis Argentaris Ivro', and ingots with this Roman company brand have appeared even into the Tiber, near the same Rome. The life of these miners must not have been easy, according of the finding of a human limb chained with shackles to a gallery.

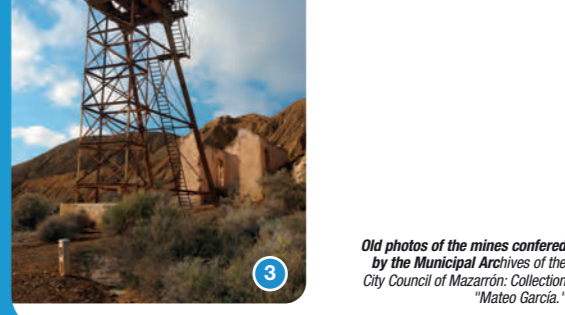
Mining developed during the Visigoth and Muslim period, although few testimonies were left. A large decline is perceived pointed to almost disappear.

Mining industry rebirth with the Reconquista and the Christian settlements, and with it the "embryo" of what will be the current municipality of Mazarrón. Dependent on the Council of Lorca, it appeared the workers house called "Casas de los Alumbres de Almazarrón" (Houses of the Alum of Almazarrón). 1462, Henry IV of Castile granted the privilege of the exploitation of the mines to the mercaderes of Villena and Vélez, keeping its splendour about 1592. Alum was used mainly as mordant to fix the dyes, exporting for the production of tapestries in the Netherlands. Also as an astrigent and disinfectant intervened in leather tanning, lighting of codex and in glass manufacture. This mining wealth causes the segregation of the town and formalized in 1572 with the privilege letter signed by Philip II.

In the 19th century, Mazarrón reached unprecedented and unexpected technological, economic and population levels.

Free prospecting on public lands through a simple notification to the Administration, causes an authentic mining fever. Mazarrón grows rapidly and international mining companies decide to invest and modernize works. In 1886 a railway linked Mazarrón's mines with the foundry of Santa Elisa in Puerto de Mazarrón and, 1893, the mines already enjoy electricity. Thanks to its mines, Mazarrón leads the mining sector of Murcia and is situated at the national forefront. It came to undertake works up to 600m deep.

Old photos of the mines collected by the Municipal Archives of the City Council of Mazarrón's Collection "Mateo García."



At the entry of 20th century they started to feel the first symptoms of decline. Some reasons for this decline are:

- a) Flood of wells and incapacity for water evacuation.
- b) Drop in prices of lead.
- c) Depletion of richest veins.
- d) Civil War.

At the closing of the mines, Mazarrón suffers a significant emigration.

Mazarrón has managed to adapt to the times recovering the ancient splendour with activities of other sectors such as tourism, the service sector, construction sector and tomatoes' cultivation.

2 Hikings

Because of the richness of this route, we won't opt for none in particular. On the picture of the reverse we mark several possible itineraries. We simply indicate two possible accesses to the mining area. We leave you to choose the way that more attract your attention, always without leaving the ways and with proper precautions.



First and most simple access way. The Avenida de la Constitución (Constitution Avenue) leaves the urban area becoming highway, direction Murcia. After leaving the last houses, a bend to the right goes up a slope known as "El Portichuelo". A few meters before the mentioned bend, departs a path on the left of the road. We take it and immediately we park. It's a good place to get into the mines area. "San Cristóbal's Hill" (186 m) is located on our left and "Los Perules" right.

Second access way. Looking as reference within the urban core for the "Plaza del Ayuntamiento" (Town Hall Square), we find a small square of the street "Pintor Agustín Navarro" and go up the Lardines Street and the street Marín Baldo towards mines. We will find a way, which as reference, goes toward a cell tower on the hillside of Mountain San Cristóbal. This steep but passable way is reachable by vehicle till the base of the cell tower, but it is recommended let it down. From this place you will reach soon on foot the area of "Santa Ana". (See photo)

Free prospecting on public lands through a simple notification to the Administration, causes an authentic mining fever. Mazarrón grows rapidly and international mining companies decide to invest and modernize works. In 1886 a railway linked Mazarrón's mines with the foundry of Santa Elisa in Puerto de Mazarrón and, 1893, the mines already enjoy electricity. Thanks to its mines, Mazarrón leads the mining sector of Murcia and is situated at the national forefront. It came to undertake works up to 600m deep.

Free prospecting on public lands through a simple notification to the

