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## CALÓ DE RAFALET

**GEOGRAPHICAL AND PHYSICAL DATA:**

**Municipality:** Sant Lluís.

**Other place names:** unknown.

**Associated urban areas:** s'Algar.

**Access:** on foot, either from the s'Algar area, or following Camí de Cavalls.

**Beach location:** South East.

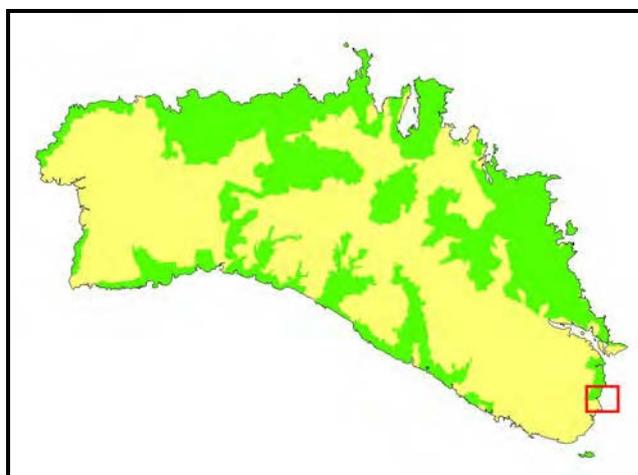
**Surface area of the beach:** 50 m<sup>2</sup>.

**Beach length:** 2 m.

**Average width of the beach:** 17 m.

**Beach's level of occupation:** medium, in high season.

**Geology of the surroundings:** Upper Miocene of carbonated platform, made up of white limestone.



**Composition of the sand:** of organic carbonated origin (+90%), with a high proportion of fine white grains.

**Natural protected area:** included in the Natural Areas of Special Interest Me-9.

**SURROUNDINGS AND LANDSCAPE**

**Beach ranking according to CIME:** type C beach (natural with no road access).

**Distance to parking area:** 950 m from the s'Algar area and 800 m from the final point of Camí de Cavalls where vehicles can circulate.

**Lifeguard services:** none.

**Other services:** no other services available.

### SURROUNDINGS AND LANDSCAPE

This tiny cove is formed by the exit of the Rafalet ravine into the sea. The exit is quite narrow and has vertical walls of more than 25 metres in height. The cove offers little space to lay down a towel to sunbathe (see adjacent photo), but instead it offers a quiet place to bathe in the middle of a virgin place, just a few minutes from a residential area.

In the rocks of the cove, erosive karstic type morphologies can be seen hung on the coast leading to cavities and recesses.

The road leading to the cove passes through a forest growing at the bottom of the Rafalet ravine which offers shade and coolness, even in the most humid days of the summer. The ravine, especially in the highest parts, is quite artificial with abundant dry walls beside the river bed, which suggests the agricultural or forestry presence in these places.



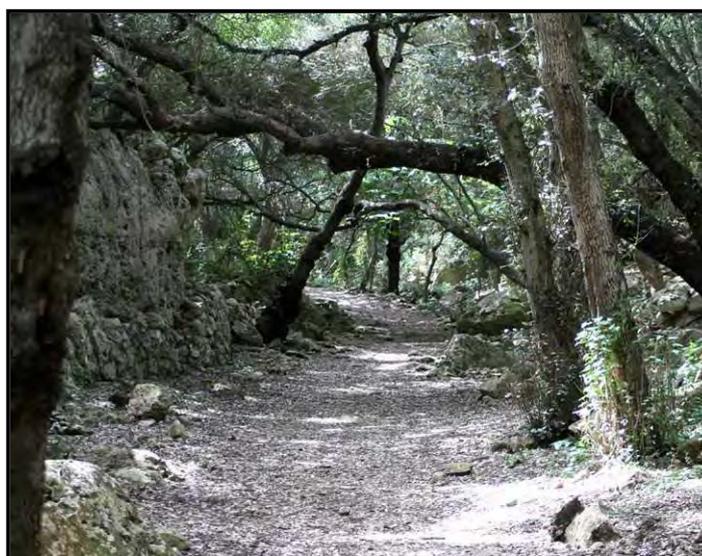
### PLANTS AND VEGETATION

In this cove, which has a large aesthetic value, but is small in size, sand acting as substratum for the ground's vegetation practically does not exist. The whole coast line is made up of rocky substratum, except more inland, where the tiny beach forms a less stony space.



Because of this, practically no sand plants can be found. Instead, those of the coast line are more frequently found, with plants such as rock samphire (*Crithmum maritimum*) (see photo on the left) or some species of marine basins such as the endemic *Limonium minutum* or the more extense *Limonium virgatum*. Likewise, other less known species can be seen on the cliffs such as the small *Silene sedoides*. As well as this, this corner of the Menorcan coast also guards small jewels like marine fern (*Asplenium marinum*), a fern which can only be found on the cliffs of the coast line, which are dark and in whose crevices the coolness of the whole year is maintained.

Equally, and most exceptional among the coves of Menorca, the most important aspect of the vegetation of this place is the fact that it is surrounded by more typical inland vegetation. Especially unique is the fact that the forest (*Cyclamini-Quercetum ilicis*) (see photo on the right) almost arrives to the first line of the sea. This is something quite unusual, and in Menorca can be found in a couple more coastal places, which in this case is explained by the depth of the ravine forming the cove and which remains protected from north winds and strong waves.



## ANIMALS



In such a small cove, with a forest so close by, one can only speak of the wildlife of cliffs and forests. In marine cliffs, due to the number of caves and holes, there live a large number of rock pigeons (*Columba livia*), which can surely be seen from the cove itself.

More inland in the forest, the wildlife forms a forestal atmosphere with birds such as woodpigeons (*Columba palumbus*) or the turtle dove (*Streptopelia turtur*). Among the butterflies, the most frequent in these environments are speckled wood (*Pararge aegeria*), meadow brown (*Maniola jurtina*) or holly blue (*Celastrina argiolus*).

## IN THE SEA

Rafalet cove, being so narrow and situated on a high cliff, has a lot of shade. Because of this the algae communities living there are quite different to those found in the majority of coves.



More inland, sea lettuce (*Ulva lactuca*) is abundant, at least in winter and spring (see green algae in the photo on the left). In summer, generally, there are fewer nutrients in superficial coastal waters and these algae tend to disappear. The same cannot be said for algae living a little deeper, such as *Corallina elongata* or *Pterocladia capillacea* (red algae typical of shady areas). Another alga found in abundance in

this cove is *Cladophora prolifera*, which has plumes of a dark green colour. It is curious that the red tropical alga *Asparagopsis taxiformis*, which has been found in Menorca since 1993, is found in such abundance in this cove (see photo on the left).

In terms of animal population, snakelocks anemones can be found (*Anemonia sulcata*) (see photo on the right) which are large in size, at the bottom of the creek, and some sea tomatoes (*Actinia schmidtii*) in the shore..



## HISTORY AND PECULIARITIES

The cove and the ravine are well surrounded by dry wall, something which indicates the long running agricultural activity of its environment. Another curiosity found at the end of the ravine, on the Camí de Cavalls side, is a small stone quarry made of *marès* stones.