

COLLECTION OF MINERALS FROM THE AUTONOMOUS REGIONS

INFORMATION SHEET 7 (CASES 112-138)

This collection is displayed in 27 cases located on the second floor of the museum. The aim of this exhibition is to present a selection of minerals that are representative of the diversity of Spanish deposits. The collection contains a wealth of samples from depleted mines or vanished deposits and also includes some of the new mineral discoveries made in recent decades.

CASE 112 REGION OF MADRID

The Region of Madrid presents a wide diversity of mineral deposits in igneous and metamorphic rocks in the mountains and in sedimentary rocks and evaporites in the Madrid Basin. Of particular note are the granitic pegmatites, such as quartz and feldspar from the La Cabrera pluton, which have contributed countless specimens to collections and museums. This piece of orthoclase + quartz from El Berrueco, measuring 14 x 12 cm, is particularly noteworthy.

CASE 113 LA RIOJA

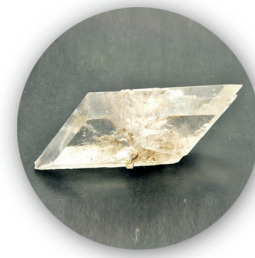
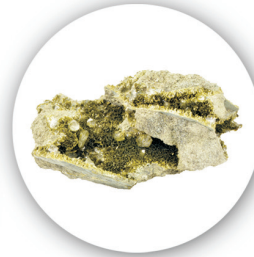
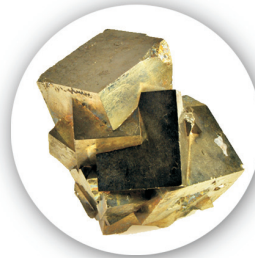
The pyrites from Navajún are world-famous Spanish minerals, and constitute one of the most important icons of La Rioja. Due to their spectacular cubic crystallisation, coupled with their brilliance and arrangement in a very fine-grained matrix, specimens from this locality are held in all the most important mineralogy museums. Specimen measuring 5 x 5 cm.

CASE 114 NAVARRRE

Eugui is another legendary locality in Spanish mineralogy. The transparency and rhombohedral morphology of the dolomite crystals from this deposit render this another high quality Spanish mineral with a strong presence in national and international collections. Specimen on matrix measuring 15 x 8 cm.

CASE 115 ARAGON

Gypsum produces beautiful crystallisations in druses and geodes from the localities of Fuentes de Ebro and Pina de Ebro (Zaragoza), and in the monocystal inclusions in carbon from the Utrillas Basin (Teruel), as illustrated by this outstanding specimen from Ariño measuring 22 cm long.



CASES 116-117 CATALONIA

One of the mineral deposits that have aroused most interest in recent years is that of pegmatites with amethyst, smoky quartz and feldspars discovered during construction of the AVE railway line through GeronaCambiado. The colour and morphology of the amethyst quartz render this deposit one of the most important Spanish mineralogical discoveries so far this century. Specimen measuring 8 x 7 cm.

CASE 118 CANARY ISLANDS, BALEARIC ISLANDS, CEUTA AND MELILLA

Of particular note in this case is this volcanic bomb measuring 16 x 9 cm. It is basically composed of olivine (forsterite) and comes from a deposit on the island of Lanzarote. This is an example of a "peridotite inclusion", in other words, a very deep rock that was enclosed and thrust to the surface by rising magma.

CASE 119 REGION OF VALENCIA

Ophites are subvolcanic rocks that appear intercalated with rocks from the Late Triassic (about 200 million years ago). They are used as ballast for railway tracks and as aggregates in construction. They are composed of pyroxene and plagioclase, although they are often altered to minerals such as clinozoisite, which in this specimen measuring 18 x 11 cm from "Cabezo Negro" in Albatera (Alicante) is accompanied by quartz.

CASES 120-122 CASTILE-LA MANCHA

The district of Almadén in Ciudad Real is home to the largest mercury deposit that has ever been mined. Since Roman times until the early 21st century, when the mines were closed, this was the principal mercury deposit worldwide. The mined ore, cinnabar, is beautifully crystallised, as illustrated by this druse with bright red crystals measuring 11 x 10 cm.

**CASES 123-126
ANDALUSIA**

Quartz veins are common in most mineralisations. However, such quartz is usually milky and is rarely well crystallised, so these amethyst druses from Villaviciosa de Córdoba are genuine rarities that rival the world-famous amethysts from Brazil and Uruguay. Specimen measuring 11 x 7 cm.



**CASES 132-133
PRINCIPALITY OF ASTURIAS**

Fluorite from Asturias is probably the best represented Spanish mineral worldwide. Thousands of specimens taken from deposits at Berbes, Caravia and La Collada now grace the collections of leading mineralogy museums everywhere. Here, this druse of bluish crystals with an edge measuring 9 cm Cambiadocame from the “La Viesca” mine in La Collada. Specimen measuring 17 x 13 cm.

**CASES 127-128
EXTREMADURA**

Salvador Calderón (1851-1911) was one of the most important geologists of the 19th and early 20th centuries. He published over 200 works on mineralogy, including “Minerals of Spain”, in 1910. It is not surprising therefore that a team of Spanish researchers christened this new mineral, discovered in 1984, in his honour: calderonite. Specimen measuring 3 x 3 cm.



**CASE 134
CANTABRIA**

The Áliva zinc deposits are located on the Cantabrian side of the Picos de Europa mountain range. The ore mined here (sphalerite) is zinc sulphide, which in this locality acquires the colour and appearance of hard toffee, giving rise to its traditional Spanish name of “blenda acaramelada” (caramelised blende). Cleaved crystal measuring 9 x 7 cm.

**CASE 129
REGION OF MURCIA**

The mining district of Cartagena-La Unión is another area that has contributed numerous minerals to collections and museums in recent decades. One example of these minerals is smithsonite. The area had been mined for silver, lead and zinc from Carthaginian times until the late 20th century, when the mines were finally closed. Druse measuring 16 x 12 cm.



**CASE 135
THE BASQUE COUNTRY**

Ferruginous deposits have been mined in the Basque Country since the Iron Age. Goethite, limonite and haematite are all oxides that have served as iron ore for forges and foundries, and subsequently, in the 19th and 20th centuries, for use in steel industry blast furnaces. Excellent examples of these oxides have been mined, as in the case of this botryoidal goethite measuring 13 x 11 cm, obtained from a classic deposit, La Arboleda in Vizcaya.

**CASES 130-131
GALICIA**

Cassiterite, from the Greek kassiteros, meaning tin, is a common mineral in tin-tungsten deposits and sometimes appears well crystallised in association with quartz and muscovite. Such is the case of this magnificent specimen measuring 21 x 13 cm from Penouta (Orense), whose large twinned crystals are highly prized by collectors.



**CASES 136-138
CASTILE AND LEÓN**

Small crystals usually present better crystallisation than larger ones. Sometimes however, large crystallised minerals appear, as is the case of the quartz, tourmaline and beryl obtained from the pegmatites of Salamanca and Zamora. This case contains a good example of beryl, measuring 25 x 15 cm.