ISCA NEWSLETTER

INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION

JOIN US ON #CAVEDAY!

The global show cave community is preparing to celebrate the International Day of Caves and the Subterranean World (#CaveDay) on June 6! Once again, show caves worldwide will participate in this special event, but we need your help to spread the word and make it officially recognized.

Exciting activities, special offers, and awareness events will take place on June 6, one of the most important events in our calendar. Share your local celebrations with us and use #CaveDay on social media. Let's make this day unforgettable!



BECOME AN ISCA MEMBER

Do you own or manage a show cave? Would you like to publish your own materials in our newsletters and share your own social media posts? Become a member of the International Show Caves Association. <u>Join us now</u> and get your ISCA Membership Certificate.

Latest member: Divaksa Cave (Slovenia)

JOIN US ON TELEGRAM!



Scan the QR code and do not miss anything related to ISCA and its community. Be the first to access our newsletter!



LETTER BY THE PRESIDENT



FRIEDRICH OEDL ISCA PRESIDENT AUSTRIA PRESIDENT@I-S-C-A.ORG

Dear ISCA members,

I hope this message finds you well. As we move forward in 2025, I am pleased to share with you several important events and milestones that reinforce our shared commitment to promoting and protecting the world's caves and subterranean landscapes. Right now, Juanjo and I are visiting BAPET (Bulgarian Association for Cave and Eco Tourism), engaging with fellow enthusiasts and professionals dedicated to the development of sustainable cave tourism and conservation.

On June 6, we will once again celebrate the International Day of Caves and the Subterranean World. This annual event is an opportunity to raise awareness about the beauty, significance, and conservation of caves while engaging the public in various activities. We encourage all members to actively participate by organizing special events, guided tours, educational programs, or social media campaigns to showcase the incredible subterranean world.

2025 also marks an exciting new initiative with the 1st Lusitanian Subterranean Tourism Meeting in Portugal. This gathering will bring together professionals, researchers, and enthusiasts to discuss best practices, innovations, and strategies for sustainable subterranean tourism. It is a fantastic opportunity to exchange ideas, learn from experts, and strengthen collaboration among our community.

Another key milestone for our association is the upcoming ISCA Congress in France in 2026. This event will be crucial for shaping the future of ISCA, and we strongly encourage our members to remain in good standing to ensure their eligibility to vote on key decisions that will influence the direction of our association. Your active participation and engagement are fundamental to ISCA's success.

ISCA is a reflection of its members, united by a shared vision to promote and protect caves worldwide. Our collective dedication and passion drive the association forward, and each contribution—whether through participation in events, collaboration on initiatives, or engagement in discussions—plays a vital role in shaping its future. By working together, we can make 2025 a year of meaningful progress and celebration for the entire cave and subterranean world community.

Yours,

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Fritz Oedl ISCA President





VOLUME 29

BY THE EDITOR



JUANJO TISCAR ISCA SECRETARY SPAIN SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG



Mom, dad and me at Altamira Museum (Santillana del Mar, Cantabria, Spain)

Dear ISCA friends,

Thank you one more time for downloading the latest issue of the ISCA newsletter.

While you are reading this, Fritz and I are visiting our BAPET friends in Bulgaria. We will provide more details in our next newsletter, but we wanted to express our most sincere gratitude to Ivo, Vesela, Lily and Slavi, and to everyone involved in our visit, for being the best possible hosts. Photos will be shared!

Besides, I have spent the Easter holidays visiting the north of Spain with my parents. We visited both Altamira and El Soplao caves and I highly encourage y'all to visit them. Also, it is only one month left until #CaveDay and it is really important for the show cave community to have you celebrate it with us. In the following pages you will find information about the event, and it would be really helpful if individuals and show caves worldwide decided to join us. Please use materials provided and share!

I will turn 37 on May 17 and if I could choose the perfect present, I would have no doubt: my novel! *The cave* is available on Amazon both in <u>English</u> and <u>Spanish</u>. Some of you know I would love to share it at different show caves around the world. It is my dream to have your visitors purchase their own copy and get to read it. Therefore, please contact me if you wish to share it in your wonderful show caves!

IN ENGLISH







ANDALSOIN SPANISH!:)





ISCA LIBRARY

2025

<u>Volume 28 - Mar. & Apr.</u> <u>Volume 27 - Jan. & Feb.</u>

2024

Volume 26 - Nov. & Dec. Volume 25 - Sep. & Oct. Volume 24 - Jul. & Aug. Volume 23 - May. & Jun. Volume 22 - Mar. & Apr. Volume 21 - Jan. & Feb.

2022

Volume 14 - Nov. & Dec. Volume 13 - Sep. & Oct. Volume 12 - Jul. & Aug. Volume 11 - May. & Jun. Volume 10 - Mar. & Apr. Volume 9 - Jan. & Feb.

2021

Volume 8 - Nov. & Dec. Volume 7 - Sep. & Oct. Volume 6 - Jul. & Aug. Volume 5 - May. & Jun. Volume 4 - Mar. & Apr. Volume 3 - Jan. & Feb.

2023

<u>Volume 20 - Nov. & Dec.</u> <u>Volume 19 - Sep. & Oct.</u> <u>Volume 18 - Jul. & Aug.</u> <u>Volume 17 - May. & Jun.</u> <u>Volume 16 - Mar. & Apr.</u> <u>Volume 15 - Jan. & Feb.</u>

2020

Volume 2 - Nov. & Dec. Volume 1 - Sep. & Oct.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE ANYTHING IN FUTURE PUBLICATIONS?

CONTACT SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG





JUNE 6: INTERNATIONAL DAY OF CAVE AND THE SUBTERRANEAN WORLD 2025



INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION

Every year on June 6, we come together to celebrate the International Day of Caves and the Subterranean World, a special occasion dedicated to raising awareness about the beauty, importance, and conservation of caves and subterranean landscapes. This year, we are thrilled to announce several initiatives to make this celebration even more impactful and far-reaching.

Share our logo to spread awareness

Last year, and in order to help us highlight this important day, the <u>French Federation of Subterranean</u> <u>Tourism and Heritage (FFTS</u>) designed a customisable logo to represent national and international associations supporting #CaveDay. Magnets with this design were distributed among visitors as a way to spread awareness and foster appreciation for the hidden wonders beneath our feet. Besides, by displaying the logo in promotional materials, on social media, and at cave entrances, we can strengthen the global recognition of June 6 as a day dedicated to caves and subterranean spaces. Now we encourage ISCA members to become an active part of this initiative and distribute magnets among their visitors. Only in 2024, the FFTS distributed thousands of magnets all around France, Switzerland and Belgium! If you are an ISCA member and would like to participate, please contact us.

This year, the <u>French Federation of Tourism and Subterranean Heritage (FFTS)</u> also decided to distribute **#CaveDay** magnets (don't forget to use the **hashtag**!). A large amount of 5 cm fridge magnets have been manufactured and sent to FFTS members. Now, each site will be able to give it to their visitors (free of charge), and the image will become part of many homes in the years to come.







JUNE 6: INTERNATIONAL DAY OF CAVE AND THE SUBTERRANEAN WORLD 2025

Engaging politicians and representatives

In addition to public outreach, we are also working on securing institutional support for this celebration. We are drafting a formal letter addressed to politicians and key representatives, encouraging them to acknowledge and promote the importance of caves and the underground world. Their backing can help ensure greater recognition, protection, and sustainable management of these fragile ecosystems. Once drafted and sent, we invite worldwide organizations to join us in this effort by sharing the letter with their local authorities and representatives. Special thank to the <u>Spanish Show Caves Association (ACTE)</u> for their actions and support.



Social media promotion

We will be sharing and promoting all related events on our official Facebook page. If you or your organization are planning an event—whether it be guided tours, educational programs, lighting displays, or other creative initiatives—let us know! By sharing your event with us, we can help spread the word to a broader audience and encourage greater participation. You can also join our new Telegram Group in order to share your own materials.



We believe that by working together, we can make June 6 a truly global celebration, bringing caves and the subterranean world into the spotlight. Keep an eye out for our official press release in the coming months, and in the meantime, let's start preparing to make this year's International Day of Caves and the Subterranean World the best one yet!

For more information and to get involved, follow our updates on Facebook and reach out to us with your plans and ideas. Let's make the underground world shine on June 6!



JOIN US ON #CAVEDAY!





INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION



















Mark your calendar! The international community of show caves is arranging everything to celebrate the International Day of Caves and the Subterranean World (aka 'Cave Day') on June 6. We expect that caves and mines from all over the world join one of the most special days. However, we need your help in order to engage everyone else to participate in this celebration.



VTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIAT

Do not forget to use the hashtag #CAVEDAY on social media!

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INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIAT



INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAYES ASSOCIATION

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DOWNLOAD YOUR #CAVEDAY LOGO NOW...

Besides, both the FFTS and ISCA would like to encourage all of you to:

- Use the logo as your profile media image on social networks until June 6 is celebrated.
- Share the logo with your visitors and followers.
- Use the logo to create and share leaflets and online posts.
- Use the logo to manufacture other goodies. Magnets are an excellent idea!
- Organise your own events (special tours, conferences...) and use the logo to promote them.
- In summary, use the logo for any June 6 related event there might be.

As you know, we have been working for some time in order to have June 6 officially recognised by international institutions as the International Day of Caves and the Subterranean World, and these are the actions which will certainly help us succeed in our goal.

Therefore, we would like to thank those of you who have participated in the past and will certainly do it one more time within a month. But remember, you can start working now with publications and materials using the June 6 logo which you can <u>download on our website</u>.



Furthermore, and as every year, special offers, engaging activities for groups of friends and families, as well as other interesting events will take place in order to increase awareness on this day and promote its importance for our business. Therefore, we are interested in learning more about the activities and plans which are taking place near you. Therefore, we would greatly appreciate if you sent us your materials (especially photos with a description) to <u>secretary@i-s-c-a.org</u>.

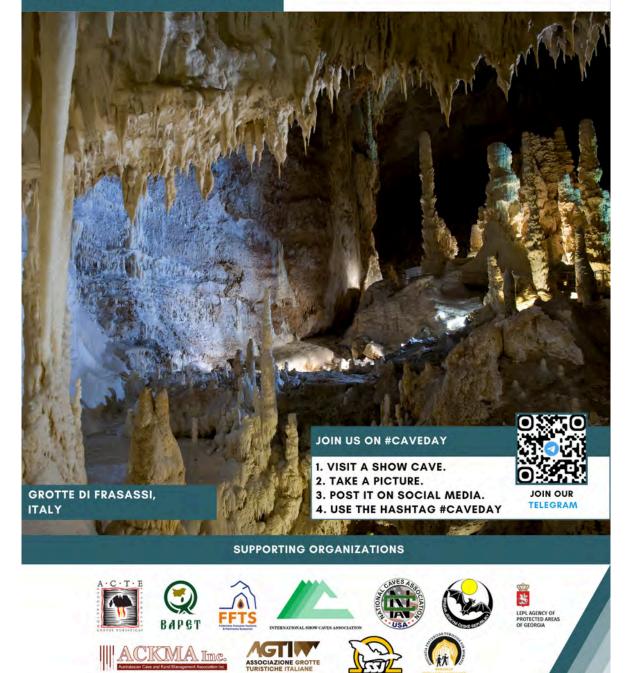




... AND DO NOT FORGET YOUR #CAVEDAY POSTER!

JUNE 6 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF CAVES AND THE SUBTERRANEAN WORLD





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#CAVEDAY POSTERS

We have also created different **posters**, each representing a show cave or association. Every poster is different from the rest and we highly encourage you to use them not only in online publications but also as a printed version to promote June 6. What caves/associations do have one or more poster/s? Those who followed the instructions which we sent a couple of months ago. These included:

- Sharing a high quality picture of your show cave (or a show cave representing your association) and indicate the name of the show cave.
- If the image has copyright which needs to be credited, please let us know (name of the photographer).

Each cave or association can send more than one image. Those who did it might find more than one version of their poster. Therefore, you can use all of them in different publications.

If you cannot find your poster, please follow the instructions mentioned and share your materials with us ASAP. You can send them to <u>secretary@i-s-c-a.org</u>. We will be adding new posters in the next few weeks so that you can join us during these important days.











CANGO CAVES, SOUTH AFRICA JOIN US ON #CAVEDAY 1. VISIT A SHOW CAVE. 2. TAKE A PICTURE. 3. POSITI ON SOCIAL MEDIA. 4. USE THE HASHTAG #CAVEDAY JOIN OUR TELEGRAM



SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

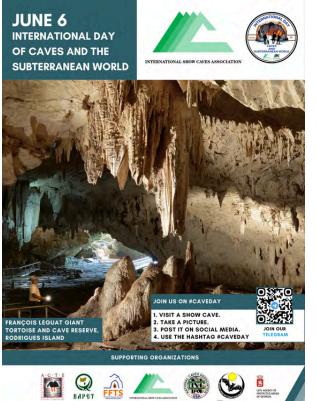
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JUNE 6 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF CAVES AND THE SUBTERRANEAN WORLD









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JUNE 6





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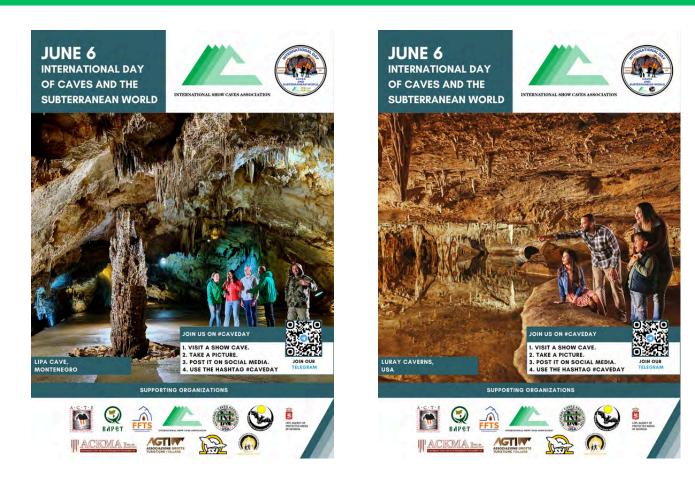
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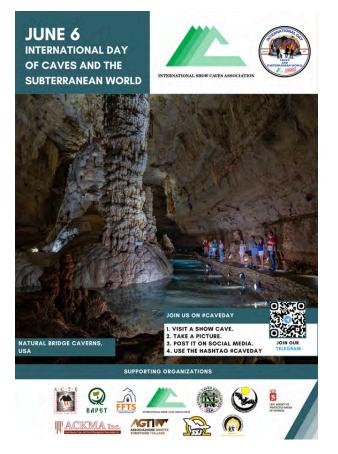
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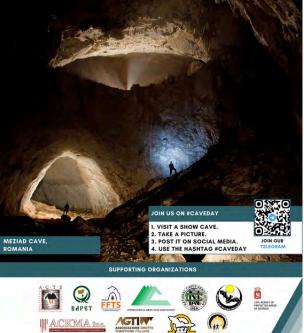


MAY, 2025





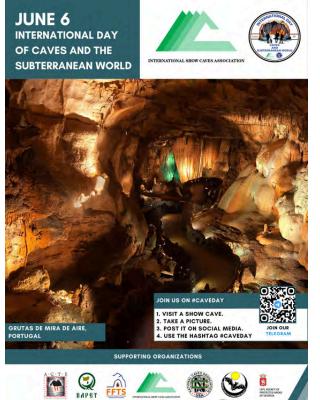
JUNE 6 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF CAVES AND THE SUBTERRANEAN WORLD



INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION

MAY, 2025





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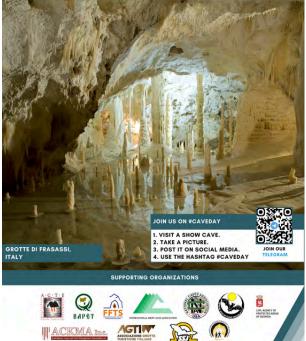
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JUNE 6



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INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION

ACKMA Inc.

TOWARDS THE OFFICIAL DECLARATION OF JUNE 6 AS INTERNATIONAL DAY OF CAVES & THE SUBTERRANEAN WORLD



INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION



On March 12, 2024, the Spanish Industry and Tourism Committee of the Congress of Deputies approved the Non-Law Proposition "to urge the Government to request UNESCO to declare June 6th as the International Day of Caves and the Subterranean World", an action supported by the <u>Spanish</u> <u>Show Caves Association</u> (ACTE) along with other entities and administrations.

This decision was made at the request of the parliamentary group of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE), which prompted the committee with a text calling this declaration as a way to preserve and disseminate the importance of this natural resources, allowing for the development of the rural areas of the country and the generation of employment and economic activity in natural environments, thus ensuring the proper exploitation of the cavities. This Non-Law Proposition represents an important step for the entire sector.

The Spanish Show Caves Association joins the International Show Caves Association (ISCA) in seeking official recognition of June 6th as International Day of Caves and the Subterranean World. This date is crucial, given that the majority of the cavities in both hemispheres are open to the public, aiming to highlight the role of caves in relation to different essential areas related with nature, science, employment, tourism and economic growth, among others.

Finally, the Spanish Show Caves Association will continue to carry out actions in defense of the caves and mines of the country, and it will support ISCA on the international stage to achieve the official recognition of June 6 as Cave Day. Now, the objective is to reach other national associations in order to urge their governments to do the same, as this objective is shared by many different countries worldwide.





I LUSITANIAN SUBTERRANEAN TOURISM MEETING



<u>Grutas de Mira de Aire</u> will be hosting the I Lusitanian Subterranean Tourism Meeting, set to take place from October 24 to 26 in Mira de Aire, Portugal. With the collaboration of the <u>International</u> <u>Show Caves Association</u> (ISCA) and the <u>Spanish Show Caves Association</u> (ACTE), the event is expected to welcome people from all over Europe as well as other parts of the world.

The meeting will feature presentations, roundtable discussions, and local excursions, offering valuable insights and experiences. A highlight of the program will be an official dinner inside Grutas de Mira de Aire. However, due to the cave's limited capacity, attendance for this special event will be restricted. Additional activities will also be available to enhance the experience, particularly for those traveling long distances or wishing to extend their stay.

Alongside ISCA and ACTE representatives, attendees of other international organisations are expected to participate. Companies involved in subterranean tourism will also take part, fostering discussions on the shared goals of show cave associations.

If you want to learn more about the venue of the event, download <u>volume 28 of the ISCA newsletter</u> and get to know one of Portugal's seven natural wonders. Furthermore, we would like to encourage you to watch <u>**Can't Skip Us, Can't Skip Portugal**</u>, a video featuring the wonders of this incredible country.



INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION











2026 ISCA CONGRESS

In 2026, the International Show Caves Association (ISCA) will host the 10th ISCA Congress in Dordogne, France. Organized in collaboration with the <u>French Federation of Tourism and</u> <u>Subterranean Heritage</u> (FFTS), the event will provide a platform for participants to exchange insights on show cave management and explore some of the region's most spectacular caves.

While the exact dates are yet to be confirmed, the congress is expected to take place in late September or early October, ensuring ideal weather conditions for attendees.

More details will be shared soon, so stay tuned for our updates. In the meantime, feel free to reach out with any suggestions, ideas, or questions—we'd love to hear from you!







INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION





19TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF SPELEOLOGY



Only two months remain until one of the most anticipated events of the year: the <u>19th International</u> <u>Congress of Speleology</u> (ICS). This prestigious gathering will take place in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, from July 20 to July 27, hosted by the <u>Brazilian Speleological Society</u> (SBE) and the <u>National Center for</u> <u>Research and Conservation of Caves</u> (ICMBio/CECAV). The event will also celebrate the 38th Brazilian Congress of Speleology (CBE) and mark the 60th anniversary of the UIS.

Seventy-two years after the first congress in Paris in 1953, the 19th ICS returns with the theme "60 Years of the UIS: History to the Future." As highlighted in the second circular, the ICS aims to unite leading experts in cave and karst science, showcase global speleological explorations, and foster the expansion of knowledge to support the conservation of speleological heritage.

More details are available on the next page, and you can also download their latest circular.







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19thINTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF SPELEOLOGY

20-27 July 2025 - BELO HORIZONTE - MINAS GERAIS - BRAZIL

THE CHEAPEST ICS IN UIS HISTORY Full Registration - €100 (until January 31, 2025)

www.speleo2025.org

- 16 Committees and 6 Subcommittees
- 12 Symposia
- 25 Pre- and Post-Congress Excursions
- 16 Wednesday Excursions
- Photo Salon
- Cartographic Salon
- Art Salon (SpeleoArt)
- SpeleMidia
- SpeleOlympics
- UIS 60th Anniversary Party
- Michel Le Bret Awards Party
- Congress Awards Party
- UIS Awards Party
- Banquet and closing ceremony
- Printed Proceedings
- Congress bag with many souvenirs

Except for pre- and post-congress trips, which must be paid separately, all other events and benefits will be available - at no additional cost - for participants registered in the FULL CATEGORY.

For those registered in the Partial Category it is possible to purchase Wednesday Excursion (€50), the printed Proceedings (€100), and the Closing Banquet (€50) separately.

Take advantage of this exceptional opportunity. Visit the congress website and secure your registration at the lowest price.

The Brazilian hospitality and its exuberant karst in six different biomes are waiting for you and your family.

Website (for registration) - https://www.speleo2025.org/

FULL REGISTRATION FEE

Early Registration - € 100 - until January 31 Intermediate Registration - € 130 - from February 1st to March 15 Regular Registration - € 200 - from March 16 to June 30 Late Registration - € 400 - From July 1st to the congress

PARTIAL REGISTRATION FEE

Early Registration - € 60 - until January 31 Intermediate Registration - € 80 - from February 1st to March 15 Regular Registration - € 120 - from March 16 to June 30 Late Registration - € 240 - From July 1st to the congress



Cave of São Mateus III, Terra Ronca, São Domingos, Goiás, Included in the pre-congress program PRE-11 TERRA RONCA COMPLEX AND CAVES OF GOIÁS (GO) - Complete description of the program on page 50 of the 19th ICS Second Circular. FHOTO JOSÉ HUMBERTO M. DE PAULA



NTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION

"GUYS, COME DOWN, WE'RE IN AMERICA"



DIVAŠKA JAMA DIVAČA, SLOVENIA <u>WWW.DIVASKA-JAMA.INFO</u> <u>INFO@DIVASKA-JAMA.INFO</u>



The Hall of King Matthias. Photo: Divaška Cave.

Divaška Jama (Divaška Cave) was discovered in 1884 by Gregor Žiberna. Upon reaching the cave's depths and looking around, he excitedly called out, "Guys, come down, we're in America!" The cave stretches 700 meters in length, with a total of 1,000 meters of arranged paths for guided tours. Visitors descend to a depth of 77 meters and climb 100 steps during the tour. This cave is one of the oldest preserved tunnels of the Reka River, which disappears underground near the village of Škocjan, flowing into the renowned Škocjan Caves. It is believed that millions of years ago, the river once carved its way through Divaška Cave. Due to its great age, the cave boasts a remarkable abundance of stalactites characteristic of the Divača Karst region. Inside, visitors can marvel at colorful stalagmites, slag pits, cypress formations, delicate curtains, and striking candle-shaped formations. The most precious chamber, known as the Treasury, features stunning white-red curtain formations, helictite outgrowths, and large crystals. The cave is also home to a rich variety of cave-dwelling creatures, including bivalves, cave spiders, and beetles. Several species of bats from the horseshoe bat family reside here, along with regular visits from the tawny owl (*Strix aluco*) and the European pine marten (*Martes martes*).

The cave tour lasts approximately one hour and it is advisable to wear sports shoes and warm clothing, as the cave maintains a constant temperature of 8°C. You can find more photos of this incredible cave on the <u>Divaška Cave official site</u>.

On behalf of the International Show Caves Association: WELCOME to ISCA!





CAVE LIGHTING: A YEAR UNDER THE FRENCH SPOTLIGHT



CAVE LIGHTING CL HERBORN, GERMANY WWW.CAVELIGHTING.DE INFO@CAVELIGHTING.DE



Grottes de Blanot. Photo: Cave Lighting CL.

Michel Renda - Expanding Cave Lighting in France

France boasts numerous show caves open to visitors, showcasing breathtaking geological formations and prehistoric art. These caves are well-organized under La Fédération Française du Tourisme et Patrimoine Souterrain (FFTS), the <u>French Federation of Tourism and Subterranean</u> <u>Heritage</u>, which includes nearly 80 members, primarily featuring some of the most renowned show caves in France and beyond.

Cave Lighting's journey in France

<u>Cave Lighting</u> was first introduced to French show caves in 2008 when Alexander and Luba Chrapko participated in lighting tests at Grotte de la Verna. The company's first major project in France came in 2010 with the lighting renovation of Grottes de Clamouse, where Cave Lighting managed the entire installation. After this successful project, there was a long hiatus until 2017, when Cave Lighting connected with Michel Renda during the Chameau Cave project in Morocco.



Nearly five years ago, Michel Renda was among the first people to appear in the ISCA newsletter. Download volume 2 (November-December 2020) to learn more about his life and projects: **ISCA newsletter vol. 2**





Who is Michel Renda?

Michel Renda is a renowned French speleologist, explorer, topographer and photographer. A member of the Fédération Française de Spéléologie (FFS), Michel has discovered and explored numerous caves. His photography, capturing stunning cave formations and crystals from all around the world, has been showcased at international speleology conferences (E.G., Muotathal, Switzerland, 2012). He has also collaborated with other cave photographers to capture the beauty of underground worlds and founded an international team <u>La Salle</u>. He started his collaboration with Cave Lighting in 2018. Over the past eight years, his reputation has helped Cave Lighting gain multiple access to multiple projects in France. To date, Cave Lighting has been able to realize 13 different lighting projects in France, including 6 in 2024: Grottes de Blanot, Grottes d'Azé Rivière, Grottes d'Azé Préhistorique, Grottes de Thouzon, Grottes de St. Christophe Supérieure and Grottes de St. Christophe Inférieure.



Michel Renda. Photo: Cave Lighting CL.

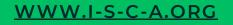
Grottes de Blanot and Grottes d'Azé: Project Background

The projects at Grottes de Blanot and Grottes de Azé Rivière et Préhistorique were commissioned by the Département de Saône-et-Loire in 2022, with planning overseen by Agence Rossignol. Initial discussions were challenging, requiring Cave Lighting to make a strong case to guide the project in the right direction.

The primary objectives were:

- To enhance the caves' natural beauty while incorporating a sustainable, energy-efficient lighting concept.
- To equip these historically and archaeologically significant caves with a lighting system suitable for both scientific exploration and tourism.







Grottes de Blanot: A Natural and Historical Treasure

Located in Burgundy (Saône-et-Loire), near the village of Blanot, about 20 km southwest of Cluny, Grottes de Blanot is an impressive karst cave system known for its geological and historical significance. This cave has multi-level formations extending over 80 meters deep, including diverse formations and underground rivers that have played a key role in the cave's development. Evidence suggests the caves have been used since prehistoric times, being discovered and explored by various speleologists during the 19th and 20th centuries. After being recognized as a protected natural monument, it was open for guided tours. These last approximately 45 to 60 minutes and cover 350 meters, requiring moderate physical fitness. Availability of tours typically covers the months from spring through fall and temperature is constant (11°C), so warm clothing is recommended.

Grottes d'Azé: A Prehistoric and Geological Marvel

Grottes d'Azé is one of the region's most significant prehistoric and geological sites, offering a fascinating glimpse into both natural history and early human presence. It offers a karst cave system featuring multiple rooms and passages, including an underground river winding through the cave and stunning formations. The 560-metre Rivière tour takes approximately 1 hour and includes educational exhibits on geology, hydrogeology, and geomorphology. Another option (Préhistorique) follows a 190-meter guided path which takes nearly 40 minutes and features multiple cave entrances. Besides, the site has archaeological and paleontological significance thanks to evidence of prehistoric human settlement, including tools and fireplaces. fossils of extinct animals such as the cave bear and discoveries dating back to the Paleolithic period.



Grottes de Blanot (left) and Grottes d'Azé (right). Photo: Cave Lighting CL.







Lighting Installation

Following productive discussions, the project management team decided against using torch lights, pit lights, or colored DMX lights in the caves. Thanks to Cave Lighting, the caves now maintain a natural aesthetic, with visitors appreciating the subtle and authentic illumination and the smart switching system implemented across all three caves.

- Grottes de Blanot: Installation began in autumn 2023 and was completed in April 2024.
- Grottes d'Azé: Work followed and was also completed in April 2024.

The installation utilized Cave Lighting's proven solutions, including LSQ2, LQP2, and LMT luminaires, as well as CN2, CD2, MMC2, and CP2 control units.

- Grottes de Blanot was equipped with an analog lighting system.
- Grottes d'Azé was fitted with a PLC-controlled system with a fiber optic network.

The project was led by Adrian Titus Kondacs, who oversaw a five-person Cave Lighting team throughout the installation process.



Grottes d'Azé. Photo: Cave Lighting CL.

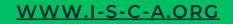
Special Features of the Project

This project presented unique challenges, marking the first time Cave Lighting had to navigate a highly demanding public administration process.

A major obstacle arose in January 2024, when authorities discovered around 10 bats hibernating in Grottes d'Azé Rivière. Since the installation was already in progress, bat protection measures were immediately enforced, halting work in the Azé caves and causing delays.

Following further discussions, additional guidelines were introduced to specify where and how work could proceed within the caves. While these adjustments required extra effort, Cave Lighting remained committed to wildlife protection, ensuring the project aligned with conservation priorities.







Grottes de Thouzon: A Subterranean Wonder

The Grottes de Thouzon, a stunning stalactite cave near Le Thor in southern France, was discovered by accident during quarry work in 1902. Since then, it has become a must-visit destination for those fascinated by underground wonders. Known as the "Golden Cave" due to the distinctive yellow hue of its stalactites, it offers a glimpse into a world shaped over thousands of years. Originally carved by an underground river, remnants of this ancient waterway are still visible today. The cave maintains a steady temperature of 13°C year-round, making it a comfortable and captivating place to explore. Visitors can experience its beauty through a 45-minute guided tour along a 180-meter path, where impressive lighting installations highlight the breathtaking rock formations. Expert guides share insights into the cave's rich geological history, making the visit both educational and awe-inspiring. Located in the Vaucluse region, not far from Avignon and L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue, it is an ideal spot for a day trip, especially for families and nature lovers.

Between January and February 2024, a major transformation took place at Grottes de Thouzon, led by the Cave Lighting team—Alejandro Hernaiz, Dan Ciulpan, and Vladimir Vashkevich. Working closely with cave manager Stephan Mathieu and his team, they completed an ambitious lighting project in just six weeks. Advanced LED luminaires and a DMX-controlled system were installed, along with custom-designed control units operated via remote control. Beyond standard lighting upgrades, the cave now features a spectacular light and music show, created by scenographer Jan Ptacin. This immersive experience, which incorporates original music, custom scenography, and exclusive projections, has elevated the cave's atmosphere to new heights.

From March 2024, visitors have been able to witness the cave in a whole new way, with 3D lighting effects, enhanced depth perception, and mesmerizing visual accents. The transformation exceeded expectations, captivating visitors and even surprising the Cave Lighting team with the overwhelmingly positive response. Grottes de Thouzon now offers an even more magical underground journey, making it an unmissable experience for all who visit.



Grottes de Thouzon. Photo: Cave Lighting CL.





Grottes de Saint-Christophe: Geology and History Meet Together

The Grottes de Saint-Christophe, an awe-inspiring cave system in the Savoie region of France, lies within the rugged Massif de la Chartreuse, between Chambéry and Lyon. Shaped over thousands of years by the Guiers Vif River, these limestone caves showcase remarkable rock formations while holding deep historical and archaeological significance.

Evidence of prehistoric settlements reveals that humans have long found shelter within these caves, and over the centuries, various cultures have left their mark. The site also played a key role as part of an ancient trade and pilgrimage route once traveled by the Romans. A striking remnant of this past is the Pont Romain (Roman Bridge), a historic stone bridge that once connected the regions of Savoy and Dauphiné.

Today, visitors can explore the caves through guided tours that offer fascinating insights into their geological wonders and historical importance. Special light and sound installations enhance the experience, bringing the stunning rock formations to life. Beyond the caves, the surrounding landscape invites exploration, with scenic hiking trails that offer breathtaking views of the Chartreuse Massif.

Whether you're drawn to nature, history, or adventure, the Grottes de Saint-Christophe promises a captivating journey through time and geology.



Grottes de Saint Christophe. Photo: Cave Lighting CL.

Realization of the Project in Grottes de Saint-Christophe

This project marked the conclusion of Cave Lighting's year in France. The work took place from late August to October, led by Adrian Titus Kondacs and his team of four. The project was commissioned by the municipality, with documentation prepared by the planning office and overseen by Guillaume Vieu. The project involved two caves: Saint-Christophe Supérieure and Saint-Christophe Inférieure. While these caves feature primarily meandering passages and a few stalactites, they presented a unique challenge. Both caves are designated bat habitats and are subject to strict conservation regulations set by DREAL, the French bat conservation authority. Local planners and authorities were under pressure to meet DREAL's requirements, as failure to comply could have led to the caves being closed.







Cave Lighting's Approach

To address these restrictions, Cave Lighting adopted a two-step strategy:

- 1. Adhere to conservation conditions: All initial conservation conditions were met.
- 2. Propose alternative solutions: After discussions, alternative solutions were approved by the bat conservation authorities.

Through collaboration, the project successfully balanced the ecological protection of the caves with the implementation of the lighting system.

Implemented Solutions

- Path Lighting: Installed using warm white LED lights.
- Accent Lighting: A mix of warm white and neutral white LED luminaires provided optimal visibility while preserving the natural ambiance.
- Bat-Friendly Approach: The bats' living areas were kept completely unlit to minimize disturbance.
- Zone Lighting Control: The cave was divided into separate lighting zones, with each independently controlled to meet conservation needs.

Thanks to this seamless execution, the caves were opened before the bat protection season for Halloween 2024, allowing visitors to enjoy a new and enhanced experience.

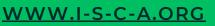
Technical Overview

Two separate analog lighting systems with PWM control were installed. In the Supérieure cave, a DMX-controlled island solution was implemented in the large hall. The following solutions from Cave Lighting were used: LSQ2 LED Lights, LQP2 LED Lights, LMT LED Lights, EQP2 LED Lights, CN2 Control Units, CP2 Button Controller, MMC2 Multimedia Controller and RR Radio Receiver.



Lighting installed at Grottes de Saint-Christophe. Photo: Cave Lighting CL.







Water, an issue to deal with

Caves, including show caves, typically have 100% humidity, requiring fully waterproof installations. All components, from control cabinets to luminaires, must have at least an IP65/IP67 protection rating and be positioned to avoid dripping water or condensation. Active river caves, at risk of flooding, require additional precautions.

In France, three of the six show caves needed custom waterproofing solutions:

- Grottes d'Azé Rivière: Floods up to three times a year, sometimes reaching the ceiling. The UV3 cabinet and control units were installed high under the ceiling and sealed with silicone.
- Grotte de Blanot: Connected to an underground river that occasionally floods. Distribution cabinets were placed in drier zones, with carefully selected cables.
- Grottes de Saint-Christophe Supérieure: A meandering cave with an active river. A subdistribution system inside was impossible, so all controls were placed outside, with 24 VDC power running 200 meters inside. Wireless control ensures seamless operation.

Bat protection

Of the six show caves installed in France, five were subject to bat protection regulations. Only Grottes de Thouzon was not affected by these regulations and remains unaffected to this day. At the start of the project in Grottes d'Azé, no bat protection regulations were in place. Installation began in November 2023, but in January 2024, authorities were notified of the presence of several bats. As a result, the project was halted, and work came to a standstill. After some negotiations, new regulations were established, including:

- One zone in the middle of the cave had to be sealed off with polyurethane.
- However, work at the far end of the cave was still allowed to proceed.

According to Cave Lighting, incorporating break periods for bat into the timeline and budgeting for associated costs could have helped ensure a smoother integration of environmental considerations.



Water and bat protection became two of the main project issues. Photo: Cave Lighting CL.





Results

Installing six show caves in a single country within a year is no small feat. Successfully executing such projects requires effective project management, well-coordinated logistics, and a high level of responsibility from everyone involved. Crucially, the active participation of the customer plays an essential role in ensuring the success of the project.

At times, administrative processes can complicate the smooth progression of projects. However, through open discussions, Cave Lighting consistently find compromises and effectively meet their clients' expectations. Adapting to the unique challenges each project presents—depending on location and stakeholders—is also an integral part of Cave Lighting's work.

Some of the most smoothly executed projects have been in privately managed show caves, such as Grottes de Thouzon. These projects tend to benefit from streamlined processes, which allows for greater efficiency and steady progress.

Overall, all projects have been successfully completed, and the caves have already welcomed their first visitors, who are thrilled with the new lighting installations.

Finally, Cave Lighting would like to express their gratitude to all customers for their trust. Special thanks go to their internal and external teams, whose efforts made this success story possible.



Grottes de Thouzon. Photo: Cave Lighting CL.





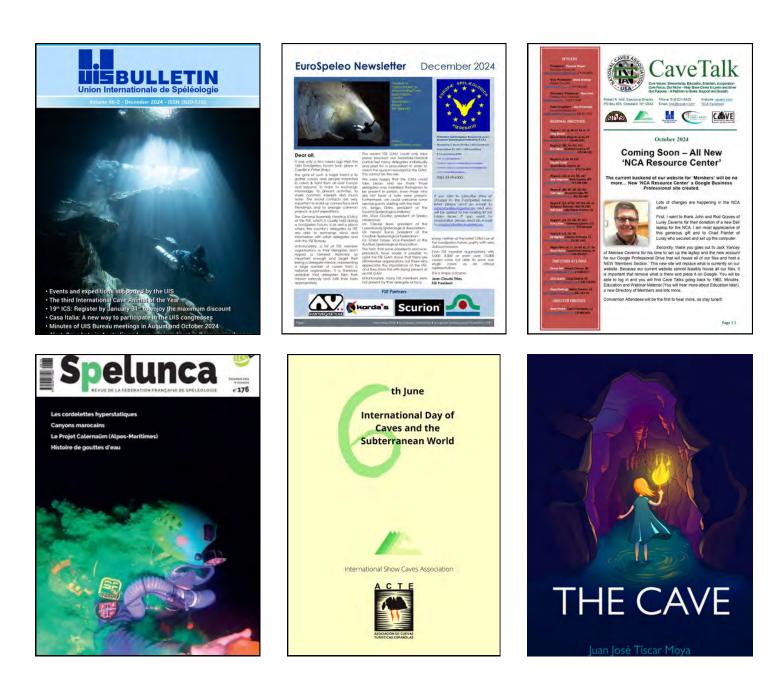
Cave Lighting CL is an ISCA associate member. You can find more information about their incredible projects on their official site:

www.cavelighting.de





PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST



WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE A PUBLICATION? SEND IT TO US AT SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG





SUBTERRANEAN FRAMES



Grotta di Monte Cucco (Italy). Photo: Leonardo Presta.

Would you like to share your own photograph? Send it to SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG

ISCA MINI SURVEY

In this new section, we will be sharing a one-item survey each publication.

Question #1 is: **'Are you celebrating the International Day of Caves and the Subterranean World on June 6?'**



Results will be shared in our next publication. Do not miss it!





WHAT CAVE IS IT?

CAVE #41



What cave is it? Photo: visitkras.info

HINTS

HINT #1 - This cave is near the famous Škocjan Caves and features stunning underground formations.

HINT #2 - Archaeological findings here include Neolithic and Bronze Age artifacts, showing early human presence in the region.

DO YOU KNOW THE ANSWER? SEND IT TO SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG

PREVIOUS ANSWERS

Last month's CAVE #40 was Stump Cross Caverns (United Kingdom).

Stump Cross Caverns (United Kingdom) is famous for its stalactites, stalagmites, and prehistoric remains, it offers guided tours showcasing its underground beauty. A popular tourist attraction, it features a visitor center, café, and activities for families and geology enthusiasts.





ISCA CALENDAR

INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION

2025

June 6 - International Day of Caves and the Subterranean World

July 4 - International Toast of Caving Friends

July 20 - 27 - <u>19th International Congress of Speleology</u> (Belo Horizonte, Brazil)

September 22 - 25 - 2025 NCA Convention (Luray Caverns, Harrisonburg, Virginia, USA)

October 6 - 10 - National Cave & Karst Management Symposium (Ely, Nevada, USA)

October 24 - 26 - I Lusitanian Subterranean Tourism Meeting (Grutas de Mira de Aire, Portugal) November 18 - 21 - <u>IAAPA 2025</u> (Orlando, Florida, USA)

2026, 2027...and more!

September 2026 - ISCA 10th Congress (Dordogne, France)

- 2026 CUEVATUR X: Spanish Congress of Show Caves and Mines (Spain)
- 2026 2026 NCA Convention (Diamond Caverns, Park City, KY, USA)
- 2027 2027 NCA Convention (Rushmore Cave and Adventure Park, Rapid City, SD, USA)
- 2028 2028 NCA Convention (Cave of the Mounds, Blue Mounds, WI, USA)
- 2028 CUEVATUR XI: Spanish Congress of Show Caves and Mines (Spain)

NOTE: THESE DATES MAY SUFFER CHANGES.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SHARE AN EVENT? CONTACT SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG











2025 ISCA CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP



2025 ISCA Certificate of Membership for the French Federation of Subterranean Tourism and Heritage (FFTS).

Many of our members should have received their ISCA Membership Certificate so far. If you have not, please do not hesitate to contact us and let us know in order to take care. This year, we will be sending dues notice for the year 2026 starting in September, which means that the 2026 ISCA Membership Certificate will also be ready in advance so that our beloved show caves can display it before the ongoing year is over. If you wish to receive yours, please do not hesitate to contact us and learn more on how to become an ISCA member.

PAYMENT AND RENEWAL FORM UPDATES

The recommended method for members in **Europe** and other countries with minimal or no fees is:

BIC/SWIFT #: RVSAAT2S IBAN/Account #: AT36 3500 0000 4212 9189 Beneficiary Bank Account Name: ISCA

Payments coming from **outside Europe** can be made through **PayPal** as fees could be lower. Our PayPal account is **isca@eisriesenwelt.at**

Update: you do not need to send us a Renewal Form if your data have not changed.





ISCA TELEGRAM GROUP

The International Show Caves Association has its own Telegram group. By scanning the QR code below you can join us and share your expertise with the ISCA family. We will be using this group for many different purposes, which include:

- Sharing publications related to show caves (articles, official guidelines...).
- Sharing ISCA-related materials (newsletters, surveys, press releases, photos...).
- Sharing information about future events (congresses, conferences, meetings...).
- Meeting new people and learn from them.
- Sharing your own materials.
- And many more interesting things and details which cave lovers will enjoy.

Of course, you will still be receiving our correspondence in your e-mail addresses, but this is also a great way to stay in touch and communicate with all the ISCA community. We would like to build a Telegram community where we can all be in touch. The more, the better! Join us!



JOIN US

How to become an ISCA member?

- 1. Send the ISCA Membership Application Form and a recommendation by an ISCA Full Member.
- 2. Wait for approval by the ISCA Board of Directors.
- 3. Annual due should be paid after approval. Check ISCA Membership Application Form for info.
- 4. You are now an ISCA member, congratulations! You will receive your **ISCA Membership Certificate** soon.

MORE INFORMATION ON OUR WEBSITE

ANY MORE DOUBTS? CONTACT SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG

Is there anything else you need?

Make sure you visit our website in order not to miss anything:



NEWSAND PUBLICATIONS







<u>ABOUT US</u>



ORGANIZATION

DO YOU NEED ANY FURTHER INFORMATION? CONTACT SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG

YOU CAN ALSO MEET US ON TELEGRAM BY SCANNING THE QR CODE BELOW







FUTURE ISCA EVENTS DEPEND ON YOU

Would you like to host an ISCA event?

- ISCA Congresses. They are held every four years, preferably during the months of October and/or November. The venue for future congresses shall be determined in the General Assembly of the preceding Congress. General Assemblies take place during each ISCA Congress and they are expected to be held over a period of one day.
- 2. ISCA Conferences. They shall be held two years after the celebration of a Congress, preferably during the months of October and/or November. Applications for sanction to hold a Conference shall be received by the Secretary not less than six (6) months before the proposed Conference is scheduled to commence.
- 3. ISCA Meetings. Meeting may be held in the intervening year between a Congress and any Conference. No more than one ISCA Meeting per year may be sanctioned. Applications for sanction to hold an ISCA Meeting shall be received by the Secretary not less than six (6) months before the proposed ISCA Meeting is scheduled to commence. Applicants must be made by a Full Member of the Association.

Download the ISCA Constitution and learn more about these events.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN HOSTING AN ISCA EVENT? CONTACT SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG

ISCA Congresses



LINKS OF INTEREST



ARE WE MISSING YOUR ORGANIZATION? SEND YOUR LOGO (HIGH QUALITY) TO SECRETARY@I-S-C-A.ORG





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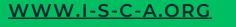
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INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION



INTERNATIONAL SHOW CAVES ASSOCIATION

ABOUT US

The International Show Caves Association (ISCA) was founded in 1990 and is headquartered in <u>Frasassi/Genga</u>, Italy, ISCA is an international organization of persons, associations, corporations, and government agencies who own, manage or operate <u>show caves</u> that are open to the public. ISCA provides a critical forum for show caves to network and collaborate on matters that pertain to their caves. ISCA aims to promote, encourage, and support the cooperation of show cave operators, speleologists and cave enthusiasts through the sharing of information and to promote the preservation and conservation of caves, while increasing public interest in the world of show caves by way of unique marketing and the evolution of methods to enhance the show cave experience.

> Would you like to contribute? Contact us! Special thanks to everyone who collaborated. If you no longer want to receive our e-mails, please contact us to unsubscribe.

ISCA Newsletter

May 2025 - Volume 29 Editor: Juan José Tíscar Moya E-mail address: secretary@i-s-c-a.org

