

The search for water on Mars finds allies in the minerals found at the Pulpí Geode

LOCATION: Almería

DURATION: 1'41"

SUMMARY: Minerals found in Mars have revealed that they share a lot of similarities with others from the Mina Rica del Pilar in the Pulpí Geode, in Almería. These are minerals that during their formation have been in contact with water, which means one step ahead in the search for this liquid element in Mars. A recent study has deeply analysed the minerals of the Pulpí area so they can be easily recognized in a future mission to Mars, helping to determine where water could be found.

VTR:

These minerals at Mina Rica del Pilar in Almería, where we can find the Pulpí Geode, may be the key to find water in Mars. During sampling carried out in the red planet, minerals similar to the ones found in this mine were located.

JOSÉ MARÍA CALAFORRA
Geologist University of Almería

"These minerals indicate that there was water in that planet. Sulfate minerals have been discovered in Mars, containing sulphur and water, like jarosite, a mineral typically found in the Almazora Caves and also in the Pulpí area."

There are a lot of similarities between the mineral found in Pulpí and the ones found in Mars, what indicates that they had a similar past. So, if millions of years ago there was water in Almería during the formation of these minerals, it should have happened the same in Mars. But why insisting in the search for water on Mars?

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"Because we essentially relate water with life."

So the study of these hydrated minerals...

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"Would mean that we have more chances to find life easily. To achieve this, we would have to look for the places where at least there was water, and those places are marked by the search of these hydrated minerals."

The universities of Almería and Valladolid are the only ones in Spain which have participated in an international study along with the United Kingdom and Italy. They have taken samples and deeply analysed these minerals so they can be easily recognized and compared with the ones that will be found in Mars during the Exomars Mission of the European Space Agency in 2018.

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