

# **OCASO**

## **Mallorca**

**Ela Spalding**  
**2025**

*I invite you to read these words aloud,  
for yourself and whoever you are with*

We emerged from the bottom of the sea, the mountain ranges that form the high points of this island.

We emerged when the African and the Iberian plate were approaching with inconceivable force, creating the Alps, the Pyrenees, the Atlas Mountains and the Betic Mountain range of which we are part, although a sea lies between us.

We are the last stretch of this mountain range and many of our deepest valleys are still under water.

Crossing our geography you can find a parade of colors, shapes, textures, fossil remains and grooves that tell of volcanoes, marine ancestors, shocking or sedentary events.

Millions of years of sediments and accumulated remains, valleys and caves.

The earth forms and without pause, transforms

Between limestone and the rain that runs through it, these mountains often harbor a world of caves and fresh water that fills the torrents of a riverless territory.

The rellars, rasclers, lapiaz, are traces of the water that has molded their surface with ruts, they tell of the porosity and the malleability of the rock.

They transpire

they breathe

with the wind

with time

And they fill up

At times we were one, Mallorca and Menorca, and at others there was a lake between the Tramuntana and the Llevant.

The rise and fall of the seas, of ice and thaw, shaped the island that embraces you today.

This island between lands that only 6 million years ago, had a warm Caribbean climate and had coasts full of coral reefs and mangrove forests.

To drink the water that springs from the rocks

It happened that we entered a period of time when the tropics and their inhabitants concentrated in other latitudes, and an Atlantic climate settled in these parts after the last glaciation.

Oak woods colonized the island, bushes, land and sea meadows, and forests of hazel and chestnut trees, yew or boxwood.

Large wetlands.

mysterious shadows, filtering rays of light,  
huge spaces like temples in valleys and mountains.



Animals and plants adjusted their size, hardness, prowess,  
the depth of their roots, to fit the available dimensions and circumstances.

Diversifying color, taste and smell

smell

smell

The island

paradise, the hereafter, the refuge, the shelter, the new horizon, home  
for the bipeds who found here an exciting world to inhabit.

They shook my foundations  
They tapped my sources,  
my herbs, trees, fruits and shoots

To make ice  
fire and lime  
To braid the defense  
To build shelter  
To shelter their dead  
To swing a name  
Hunt the demure  
Grow food that lasts and endures

They took advantage of the sun  
The sand, the paths  
The silence and the destination

Very hot summers, the green recedes.  
Two springs full of flowers where the cosmos return to earth.  
Winter regreens and the water insists, sprouts and persists

in the air,  
in the sea,  
in the rock

The island

paradise

Millenary species  
They live, survive and still visit

With help, they expand  
Multiply, take care  
They flourish

they get confused  
with the heat

Some remember  
Reciprocate, return to the soil what is hers  
They grow shade, food and nest

They live with the mastic, the vulture, the walls and crops,  
The vinagrella, the hierba sana and the rosemary  
they shudder and sway

to the rhythm of the place

Karoo,

Atacama,

Sonora

Resounding news of the approaching distempo

The tropics return,

the Caribbean is nearing

in the temperatures at night and day

The creatures migrate,  
if they can  
They follow the sound  
With all their seeds, spores, roots and robes

Meanwhile

The waves grow  
the seas change again

The posidonia forests stand off, protect

The temperatures rise and the earth remembers

The bipeds search  
hold hands, hug or turn

They close their eyes

eyes

eyes

They suddenly sigh  
and lay themselves in the sun

Here the heart widens, the body rests  
and the full moon seems to shine brighter from this port.  
A port that connects with the rest of the world by sea routes  
to other lands that also emerged from the bottom of the sea  
and that perhaps, perhaps, have mountains like these,  
full of fresh water and covered with green.

Words by Ela Spalding written in March 2025, inspired by the island of Mallorca and the following sources:

Conversations with Daniel Christian Wahl and the work of local organizations such as Fundación Vida Silvestre Mediterránea, Fundació Iniciatives del Mediterrani, Arrells Marins and Save The Med

*Los caminos del Agua en las Islas Baleares. Acuíferos y manantiales*  
by Rosa María Mateos Ruiz

The website *Geoturismo Illes Balears* of the Govern de les Illes Balears

*Historia Geologica Bàsica i Actualitzada de Mallorca* by Lluís Moragues Zaforteza

*Les Arrels de Puigpunyent, un viatge per la seva prehistòria* de Jaume Deyà i Just Hernández Marí

*Mallorca Mágica* by Carlos Garrido

*Plants of the Balearic Islands* by Anthony Bonner

*Coastal Hazards Under Climate Change. The Case of the Balearic Islands*  
Miguel Aguilles (Institut Mediterrani d'Estudis Avançats)

Articles in various newspapers in November 2024 where they interviewed Maria del Carme Garau, Chief of Producción Vegetal del Instituto de Investigación y Formación Agraria y Pesquera de Baleares (IRFAP) about future scenarios for the Balearic Islands