



CULTURAL LANDSCAPE / The evolution of the cultural landscape

The Tramuntana cultural landscape has been and still is the result of the area's historical evolution, succession of cultures and ways in which the land has been used. Alternating periods of prosperity and shortages have left their mark on the landscape. Traditional agricultural and livestock farming has left a strong imprint on the area, through its irrigation systems, the dry-stone walls of hillside terraces, and olive trees, complemented by traditional uses of the woodland, coastal areas and peaks of the mountains.

The specific marks that each successive historical period and culture left on the Tramuntana area can still be seen. The period spanning man's arrival on Mallorca and the fall of the Roman empire represented the first human change to a landscape that had hitherto remained untouched, with the extinction of species and introduction of allocthonous ones, the introduction of agricultural and livestock activities and deforestation. In particular, the development of technically complicated irrigation systems, dating back to Moslem times and still surviving today, offer an image of fertility and prosperity that contrasts strongly with austere olive groves in very steep areas or others with bare rocks. Olives could be grown thanks to the design and construction of complex hillside terrace walls that evoke periods when it was necessary to extend crop-growing areas to a maximum due to the pressure of a growing population on an island with limited resources. In conjunction, this unique rich variety of archaeological, architectural, ethnological, artistic and intangible features highlight man's cultural response to the environment.