



Informationen zur Umwelt und für Naturreisende auf Kreta:
 Information about the Environment and for travellers in Crete:



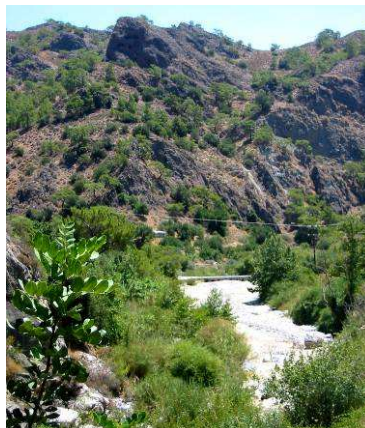
Hiking (uphill climb) through the Sarakinás-Canyon / Prefecture Lassithi

Best way to the Canyon is the “South coast road” (97) from *Ano Viannos* [Ανω Βιάννος] eastbound towards *Ierapetra* [Ιεράπετρα]. About 1 mile before *Myrtos* [Μύρτος] is left a turnoff towards *Mythi* [Μύθα] (at this point is the first sign to *Sarakinas-Canyon* [Φαραγγι Σαρακινας]). From this point there are 3.7 miles to the mountain village *Mythi* and than further on towards *Males* [Μάλοι]; from village exit exactly 0.6 miles. In front of a right-hand bend is the portion of an old dam wall and the “access to the car park of the canyon” left of the street. Here the brook bed of the stream “MIRTOS” show up which is dry during summer and fed out of the canyon. It ends after around 5.5 miles, close to the village with the same name, into the Libyan Sea.

In advance should be noted that the Canyon is during spring and winter, due to the large amount of water (see stream bed of Mirtos width), not able to wander through. During summer and autumn flows only a narrow stream which is (if you meet the right stones to jump) usually easy to cross. The official access to the Canyon is above the weir via a walkable, brick gutter, which leads after approx 60 meters to the sole of the canyon.

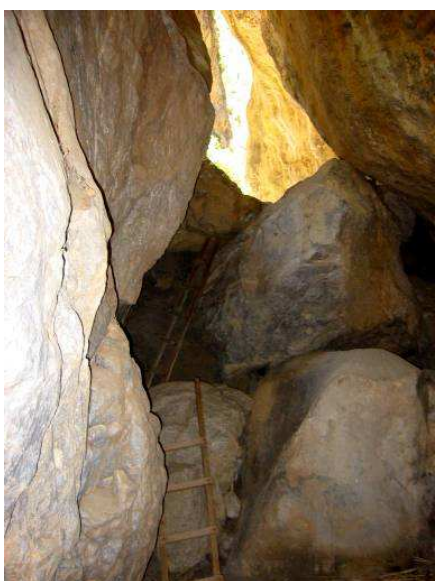
The hiking through the Canyon takes (depending on experience and fitness) between 1.5 and 2.5 hours. The deeper you get into the Canyon (following the "red dot marks"), the more often you must overcome high boulders besides water crossing; therefore some wooden ladders are placed at several points. The canyon isn't a "walk" (paseo), rather a climb with involuntary footbaths at the cross of water points. The Canyon is not suitable for children (even though they can climb well) because a sufficient leg length is necessary at some places. The narrow of Canyon walls and a constant flow of water create an own, beneficial cool microclimate, which gives even during noon hour in the summer lots of shadow places for a rest. At the end of the Canyon, you then have the usual 2 options: same way back (which won't be easier) or you follow the stream bed even a step further up and keep right than (through a Olive grove) to reach the road between *Mythi* and *Males*. From here its about 2.5 miles back to the parking lot.

See afterimages with short description to *Sarakinás* hiking and repeated advice (like everywhere for hikes in Crete); hike the *Sarakinás* Canyon only as a pair (or more); terrain specific behaviour (without excessive risk-taking) and equipment (shoes and water) should be this course!



Picture above show (from left to right): the access to the parking lot, the dry stream bed of MIRTOS behind the weir and the access to the canyon over the gutter beyond the weir.

Photos: H. Eikamp (20.07.2004)



After the water-bearing flat area at the foot of the canyon (upper images), which requires well-aimed “stone-jumping”, climb passages follow, which are often to be managed with ladders only. Also “breakthroughs” of karst formations are to be climbed or bottlenecks to be managed (middle picture row).

Picture left shows a tadpole of green toad (*Bufo viridis*), which completes its metamorphosis in a residual water pool. She lives in company with freshwater crabs, which are often to be seen in the flowing stream water while jumping at the stones.

Photos: U. Kluge / H. Eikamp (20.07.2004)

Translated by Michael Bloechinger-Daeumling

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