

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



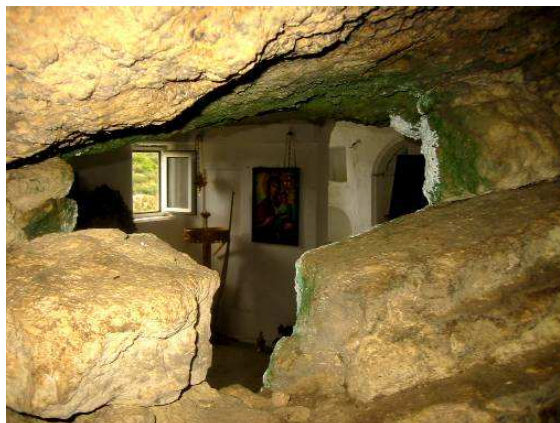
Grotto Chapel and Cave at Prinos / North Crete

Prinos is reached over the North coast road **Rethymno – Iraklion**, if you turn off at **Stavromenos** to the “Old Road” towards **Iraklion**. After a few miles you then turn left at the village **Magnissia** towards **Prinos**. To get to the Cave and Grotto Chapel drive through the village Prinos (towards Roumeli/Panormo) up to the village exit. At the village exit leads left a small asphalted road uphill (in front of a bridge with “stone balustrade”, which traversed a small valley with a creek bed) which you follow for about 300 metres and which leads again in the upper village part of Prinos. From the starting point (after approx. 300 m of the described small way), the goal is (on the right side) on the hillside. Unfortunately the Grotto Chapel and the Cave are not to see from this perspective (relatively steep slope).



For a better orientation, you should cross the above referenced bridge at the village exit and follow the street after a following left bench for another 200 metres further uphill. At this point you can see the final destination on the opposite hillside and are able to notice some landmarks. The destination is located about 100 metres below the small road on the hillside and is accessible via a (visible only in summer) terrace path. The path disembogues at the Grotto Chapel which is built into the hillside and the “interior” is formed by a karst cave. The relatively undecorated Chapel is not always open but still visible from the just a few metres to the right located cave. The cave has a “line of sight” (breakthrough) to the cave and therefore to the interior of the chapel. The cave consists of two small main halls (Head-

high, roughly 10 x 5 m) from which multiple, smaller tunnels (creep tunnels) branch off. All creep tunnels end after a few metres (max. 15-20 m) in rock. The cave speleological offers nothing special, even if the over 20 cm high “cultural layer” floors of the cave in the small main halls suggest historical use for centuries. It might be archeologically interesting since the geographical landscape location of the cave is predestined for a prehistoric settlement. However, it is worth to visit!



The fig. above shows the Grotto Chapel and the Cave from the orientation point; The yellow arrow marks the start point of the terrace path. The fig. left show the Chapel and the cave „on site“; and right a view into the Chapel from the cave through the “breakthrough”



The fig of the upper series show (left) the cave entrance (from outside) with a max. height of 1.6 metres; right one of the two small main halls with a ceiling height of around 2 metres, which is (roughly 10 m length) reduced on their end to about 1.2 metres. It shows (as well as the second small hall) unique "finishing marks" in form of straightened side walls, which identify the halls as former "useful spaces". The middle image series shows 2 branching tunnels that are shaped as "crawl corridors"; left with about 60 cm diameter, right approx. 120 x 80 cm. While the left tunnel shows "naked rock", the right tunnel (primarily in the transition area of the hall to the tunnel) show a "cultural layer", which height indicates a very long "using".

The fig right shows the cave entrance seen from inside.

Fotos: H. Eikamp (29.12.2004)

Translated by Michael Bloechinger-Daeumling

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