

**Informationen zur Umwelt und für Naturreisende auf Kreta:**
Information about the Environment and for travellers in Crete:**The Monastery Agia Marina (North Crete, Prefecture Iraklion)****[Complementary Info-leaflet to Leaflet 078-05/E]**An article from our NLUK member *Stephanie Krips*, Gournes

Preliminary note: In 2005 the Crete-Environment forum reported about the Monastery *Agia Marina* within its Info-leaflet 078-05/E [therefore see: http://www.kreta-umweltforum.de/Merkblaetter_en/078-05.pdf]). Our former concerns to indicate a landmark achieved its purpose – of course, when visiting the monastery you should not miss to visit the origins and get to know the backgrounds, which should be done with this info sheet. This is primarily a source that is said to have miraculous effects. And not only long time ago but year after year.

Agia Marina, the holy Marina means the Saint Margaret of Antioch. She is shown with a dragon or the Devil (the symbol of evil). The name day (Saint's day) of the Orthodox Church is celebrated on the 17th of July (Catholic Church 20.July). Thousands pilgrimage to the monastery of *Agia Marina*, not only from Crete but also from the continent and many walk. Several of those pilgrims even "go" the last 500 or 600 meters from the end of the village to the monastery on their knees. It promises help, some are waiting for a miracle, some are fulfil a vow. What kind of miracle is now expected or hoped for in this small monastery?

This explains the younger (71 years old and lives here since her 15th year of live) of the two last nuns who inhabit the monastery. "Monachi" (title of nuns in Greece) Marin, even she was disturbed from lunch, was immediately ready to answer and to tell the entire story of the miraculous source!

The miraculous effect of the source was already known about 1,000 years ago and an unknown placed the icon of St. Marina at this source (this icon should now be in America). During the Turkish occupation, a noble man on his horse was on the way to *Arkalochori* when he was attacked by a strong headache. He remembered that his father had told him about the source of the Saints Marina. After he had drunk and immediately was exempt from all pain, he loudly and full of joy announced this everywhere. The Turkish people were, however, not pleased at all and the Turkish owner of the land on which the source was located was extremely angry. He drove his livestock (sheep, cattle, pigs) about the source and let his children use this place as a toilet. He drove his livestock (sheep, cattle, pigs) over the source and let his children use this place as a toilet.

Than shortly after his livestock as well as the first of his children died he apology. His remaining children should not die, so he gave a donation for the construction of a chapel and disappeared on never be seen again.

You can see the rest of this first chapel behind the iconostasis (please do not go there, the access is permitted to faithful men only – by the way, nuns are not female but neutral). If you are interested someone will likely open the curtain for you (see pictures on the following page)



There is the miraculous source. As shown on the photo, it is now secured with a padlock (middle **picture** above). But as already about 20 years ago, when I visited the monastery for the first time, you still get the water for free. You can tap it from the silver tray in a cup for the immediately drink (see **picture** above right), but also get it filled in small plastic bottles to take away by the nuns. We also generously got icons and a little book/calendar about the priests and nuns of the monastery.



Picture left: icon of *Agia Marina* within the old chapel. Middle **picture**: the whole iconostasis. **Picture** left: the snake in the bottle is located on the button right of the iconostasis.

Finally to the question of “what kind of miracles does the source”? Generally it dispels all "Evil", mainly in the body. If someone not “pure in heart” comes to the source, or ignore the Ten Commandments, the flow of water goes back or the source dried up even for days. With the water of the source, you can bake bread without yeast or leaven. In order that all this works and helps, first and foremost you must believe. Monachi Marina gave us further "guidelines", which I like to tell to individual when requested but abandon here due to the lack of space.

Finally I like to thank Monachi Marina who explained and show everything to us and at *Manos Karabinakis* without I would have never understood the lovely nun.