

Arkadi Monastery

The **Arkadi Monastery**¹ situated on the island of **Crete** doesn't solely belong to this island; it belongs to Greece, Europe and to all five continents – to the whole world.

It is one of the **Eastern Orthodox Monasteries** underlining the catholicity and universality of the Church. Each year the Monastery receives and hosts many visitors and pilgrims from all over the world, from distant civilizations. Here are



blended many languages, cultures, traditions, history and polymorphism. Nothing from the above can impede the faith unity, the catholicity of the orthodox spirit, the universality of the ecclesiastical testimony.

The **Arkadi Monastery** has a unique natural beauty, a

prestigious history, numerous legends deeply rooted in the time, heirlooms and thesaurus richness. Possibly because the old is livelier than the new, and the modern is often more mature than the aged. Each pilgrim and visitor feels something which is exclusively his, personal, original in his experiential and spiritual experience.

It is built at an altitude of 500m, on a fertile plateau with olive groves, vineyards, pine, cypress and oak trees. Around the monastery there are several picturesque chapels and from there starts the beautiful Arkadi gorge.

A brief historical Monastery

As first founder is Heraclius in 6th foundation of the believed that it was Emperor Arkadios in the 12th century. According to another version, the name is taken after a monk called Arkadios, who first founded the monastery. Moreover, the monastery was called Tsanli Manastir by the Turks (i.e. beneficiary bell), as the Arkadi monastery was the only Cretan monastery that had the right to ring its bells.



reference on the Arkadi

referred the Byzantine Emperor century. The exact date of the monastery is not known, but it is actually founded by Byzantine

¹ Sources: <http://en.mae.com.gr> and <http://www.cretanbeaches.com/en/religious-monuments-on-crete/monasteries-in-crete/arkadi-monastery>

The initial church of the monastery was dedicated to Saint Constantine and some ruins of it are preserved in the northwestern part of the monastery enclosure. The Monastery has been a continuous and inseparable part of the Cretan history during the last eight centuries.

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The Monastery multi-passage of time. Sources been a centre of education also produced needlework the 17th and 18th centuries



faceted deed unfolds in the show that the Monastery had and manuscripts copying. They embroidered with gold during dazzling the whole world.

The Monastery battles against the conquerors inspired the whole world. The sacrifice of the people living and dying there, affected and attracted the attention of the rest of the world. The Cretan occupation by the Turks occurs during the prosperity of the Monastery.

The monks participate in the 1821 Revolt and play a leading part in the events. The first havoc is on the way. It is then that the Monastery is ransacked and abandoned by the monks for a small period of time. However, they return soon. The highest offer of the Monastery is its self-sacrifice, heroism and pious altruism. It is the Holocaust of November 8th 1866. The Monastery gave its fights against slavery. Even today you can see the marks of the swords on the dining tables. It managed to shake off the traces that the enemy fiercely desired to settle and succeeded in changing the course of the Cretan history. The result of the holocaust of Arkadi, as this drama has prevailed in Greek History, was: 114 men and women prisoners, 864 dead Cretans and about 1500 dead Turks.

In the cypress of the monastery there are still bullets of that battle. Pasha believed that his victory would stop rebels in Crete. However, this battle was learned in Europe and opened the closed doors of European diplomacy, changed the mindset and tactics of the Great Powers towards Crete and led to its liberation in 1898.

Ever since the Monastery bears the brunt of the history on its shoulders and continues taking part in the battles which followed the much afflicted island of Crete and strives in all possible ways to meet the expectations of its glory past. Arkadi is certainly the most historic monastery of Crete and has become the most sacred symbol of the Struggle of the Cretans for Freedom. It is the theater of the tragic battle of 1866, which opened the way for the liberation of the island in 1898. Indeed, UNESCO has designated Arkadi as a European Freedom Monument.



Arkadi Monastery, the bullet on cypress tree

TIMELINE

- 6th century: The Byzantine emperor Heraclius establishes the monastery of Arkadi.
- 12th century: The Byzantine Emperor Arcadius rebuilds the Monastery of Arkadi in the area owned by Kalergis family.
- 14th century: The church of Saint Constantine is built, which is now ruined.
- 1587: Monks and bothers Klimis and Visarionas Hortatzis renovate the monastery of Arkadi and build the present magnificent temple.
- 1610: The stables of the monastery are built
- 1645: The Turks occupy the town of Rethymno and the monks find refuge in the Monastery Vrontisi, except two of them who are massacred. The monastery gets looted and destroyed. The abbot of the monastery manages later to distract the privilege of ringing the bell, something forbidden for all other monasteries of Crete.
- 1658: Mustafa Pasha prohibits bell ringing, but the abbot indicated the permission of the Great Gate and Arkadi is excluded again.
- 1670: The magnificent dining room of the monastery is built.
- 18th Century: The great library manuscripts of the monastery are sold and the monastery declines.
- 1822: Yentim Ali occupies the monastery, but it soon re-conquered by the Rebels and most Turks are killed.
- 1831-1841: During the brief ten-year Egyptian Era, the monastery flourishes.
- 7-9 November 1866: The battle of Arkadi, one of the most tragic events of European history.
- 1870: The ruined monastery is restored.
- 1933: Timotheos Veneris founds the museum with the historical relics of the monastery.

ANCIENT ELEUTHERNA²

Archaeological Site and Museum.

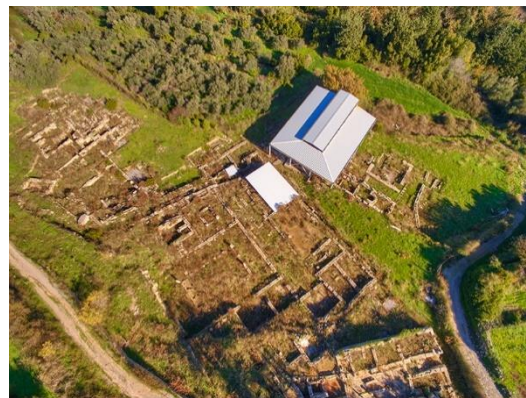
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On the northwest slopes of Mount Ida (Psiloritis), where eagles nest and the cradle of the greatest of the gods, Cretan-born Zeus, stood, the ancient wind still blows secretly whispering the foundation and acme of a uniquely revealed ancient city, Eleutherna.

The site resembles a vast stone ship pointing its prow towards the northwest, moored among the ineffable green of olive trees, vines, kermes oaks, carob trees, and styrax shrubs. The elongated marly limestone hill of Prines (modern Archaia Eleutherna) belongs to the lowest northwestern-most foothills of Psiloritis, the formerly densely forested Mount Ida. It rises approximately 380m above sea level. Its top is divided into two almost flat, fairly wide strips of land: a northern stepped one (Pyrgi) and a wider, higher one at the centre. Its north end forms a saddle in the middle of which rises the Byzantine-Medieval tower. The terrain closely resembles actual promontories that project into the sea, hence the modern name 'Nisi' (island) of the ancient city's western section on the Eleutherna hill.

The abundance of drinking water from natural springs, streams, wells, etc.; the view of the sea off Crete's north coast; the close proximity to arable land, pastures for livestock, forests for timber, aromatic and healing herbs for burnt offerings to the gods for healing the suffering; limestone quarries, primarily on Peristere hill, and iron mines (?) on Mount Kouloukonas (Tallaia Mountains, in the east of the city's territory); and, finally, the pleasant climate are some of the reasons that rendered the area suitable for the development of a great ancient city.

The ancient located on the which belong of Archaia Eleutherna Hellenistic buildings, and built over a were



Katsivelos on hill. Dedicated, according to the dedicatory inscription, to the Archangel Michael, the basilica was built in AD 420-450 (a later date has also been suggested) and destroyed in the seventh century AD.

Archaeological Site

city's main nuclei are Prines and Nisi hills, to the modern villages Eleutherna and respectively. retaining walls, Roman a Christian basilica Hellenistic cemetery uncovered at the site of the east foot of Prines

² Source: <http://en.mae.com.gr>



Around it were several tile-covered and cist graves of the sixth and seventh centuries AD. The Roman buildings include three houses, which were destroyed by the powerful earthquake of AD 365 and a bathhouse with two furnaces. A stone-paved street and a large public building, probably of the Hellenistic period (second-first centuries BC), but also used during the Roman period (first-

second centuries AD), were also revealed.

The archaeological remains atop the northern part of Prines hill (Pyrgi) suggest that this was the ancient city's centre throughout time. They include buildings of the Late Bronze Age, a pottery kiln of the Geometric period, an Archaic sanctuary (which was probably also used in later periods), as well as Roman, Late Roman, and Byzantine buildings.

On the west slope of Prines hill is the famous cemetery of Orthi Petra. Established, according to the evidence available thus far, in the Late Protogeometric period (870/850 BC), it was used until the Archaic period (600/650 BC). Part of the cemetery lies beneath houses and streets of the Hellenistic and Roman city. An entire city quarter of the Hellenistic period, with several houses and a sanctuary enclosure with a five-column Doric propylon (400 BC) were excavated on Nisi hill, the ancient city's western hill.

According to tradition, the city was named after Eleutheras, one of the Kouretes, who protected the infant Zeus by beating upon their bronze shields thus preventing his father Cronus from hearing his cries and devouring him. Current archaeological evidence shows that, Eleutherna was one of Crete's most important ancient cities, a capital city of the Geometric and Archaic periods – that is, the periods when the Homeric poems were disseminated and recorded in writing. The city minted its own coins in the fourth century BC. In the third century BC, Eleutherna fought against Rhodes and its ally Knossos. In 220 BC, when the Cretan cities fought against each other, Eleutherna sided with Knossos, but a siege forced it to break the alliance. In 68 BC, when the Roman general Metellus attacked Eleutherna, the city managed to resist for some time because of its fortified location, but was finally conquered through treason.

The poet Linus, the philosopher Diogenes, the lyric poet Ametor, and the sculptor Timochares, father of Pythokritos of Rhodes (by adoption), creator of the famous Victory of Samothrace, were all natives of Eleutherna.

Systematic excavations have revealed important archaeological remains of the ancient city, whose life spans essentially from the Geometric to the Early

Byzantine periods, and evidence for settlement from the Early Bronze Age (third millennium BC) to modern times.

Archaeological site Management

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Eleutherna was recently declared an archaeological site and zoned into areas for complete protection (Zone A) and controlled development (Zone B), so that both the core of the archaeological site and the surrounding area are effectively protected. In fact, the area has been designated a landscape of historic significance and natural beauty since the 1960s, because, in addition to the antiquities, particularly those uncovered by the University of Crete over the past 30 years, which have triggered the interest of the international scientific community, the natural landscape, which coexists with the cultural heritage, also requires protection.

Thus, the 2000s saw the creation of the Eleuthernian Grove, an archaeological park with dirt and stone-paved paths, wooden steps and handrails, rest areas, outdoor sitting areas, and signs in both Greek and English, connecting the excavated areas and other places of interest. There is also a plan to create a unique botanical garden with Cretan plants, where visitors will learn in detail about their therapeutic and aromatic properties and their use from antiquity to the present day.

Next to the old olive trees, cypresses, carob trees, pomegranate trees, oaks, oleanders, etc., which dominate the landscape, several other endemic trees were planted, particularly during this past decade, so that the visitors use these to find their way around the site. For example, visitors follow the path lined by the almond trees in order to reach the necropolis or turn at the three cypresses in order to reach the museum.

The archaeological site already features two shelters, the construction of which was funded by the Third National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF), a curved shelter over the necropolis on the west side of Prines hill and a stepped shelter over the basilica on its eastern side. Moderate restoration was carried out respecting the site's character both in the necropolis and the ancient city, in order to enable the general public to easily identify and understand the different monuments while preserving the character of the excavation area.

Orthi Petra cemetery

Klotho, Lachesis, Atropos ... the triptych of ancient Greek beliefs on life and death. How does one write the history of life and death in a Cretan locale in the years following the formation and narration of the Homeric poems? How much light can the excavation of a cemetery shed upon the darkness of time? How wide can one open the curtains of time and speak of that part of life that begins with the ritual of the jar-burial, burial in a simple pit, or cremation? In fact, how eloquently can a place of silence, such as a cemetery, speak of the practices, customs and beliefs of the deceased and their relatives at a personal, both private and public, level, of their health and illnesses, their daily activities,

and, ultimately, of their perception of themselves and others? On the west slope of Prines hill, the Orthi Petra cemetery – through its excavation and documentation, the conservation and publication of the finds, and finally, site itself – is a that is easy to at Orthi Petra and cremation (jar-burials, and a wealth



Among the impressive the funerary dates to the late eighth century (730-710) BC. It belonged to a warrior, a prominent member of the local community, who was cremated at the age of approximately 30.

the conservation of the well-written book, one read. Burial practices include inhumation in their many variants (simple burials, etc.) of grave gifts.

most important and finds at Orthi Petra is pyre ΛΛ/90-91, which

In the northwest of the pyre lay the headless body of a stout 30 to 40 year old man, contorted in an unlikely position and deprived of grave gifts, probably a captured enemy, who was executed before the warrior's pyre as an act of retribution. This burial is the first instance where archaeological evidence corroborates the Homeric description (*Iliad*, Book XXI) of Patroclus's pyre and the killing of twelve Trojan captives in his honour.

Another important feature is Building M, the burial place of four women (aged 70-72, 28, 16, and 13) of a prominent Eleuthernian family, the oldest of which held an important place in local society, as suggested by grave gifts characteristic of her aristocratic lineage and priestly role.

Other rich burials of warriors and other Eleuthernians portray a society very close to that described by Homer: wealthy and extroverted, with frequent and close contacts with the outside world, as indicated by the many artefacts that reached Eleutherna from different places in the Aegean, Cyprus, Asia Minor, and primarily, the Near East (Phoenicia, Syria) and Egypt.

Exhibition layout and museographical program

To the powerful image of Crete's Minoan civilization and its palatial centres, the excavation of the city of Eleutherna would add the second component of Crete's history: the historical period, from the Early Iron Age to the Byzantine period. Even if ancient Eleutherna unfolds its secrets from approximately 3000 BC to the 14th century AD, by a stroke of good fortune, excavations at the Orthi Petra cemetery shed light on much of the so-called 'Dark Ages' (9th-6th c. BC), which correspond to the dawn of Greek civilization, the period referred to by Homer in his poems the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

The finds from this cemetery illustrate the Homeric verses: the funerary pyres as described in the *Iliad*, particularly in the passage narrating Patroclus's pyre (Book XXIII), thus vindicating Aristotle over Plato for accepting the epic verses as based in truth; the description of Achilles's shield (Book XVIII); aspects of the Homeric *daita* (diet); but also the travels and trade contacts across the Mediterranean recounted in the *Odyssey*.

For these reasons, the current exhibition focuses on Homer in Crete and Eleutherna. Although all periods are represented, Homer and his relation to Eleutherna is the exhibition's backbone, connecting thread and protagonist. Museums throughout Greece showcase prehistoric and historical artefacts, but no other museum focuses on the dawn of Greek civilization and Homer. Crete can now stand firmly on two feet: the Minoan civilization and Homer. These are the strong points in its ancient history.

Entrance

Standing before the entrance is the museum's emblematic piece: a bronze shield from the Tomb of the Warriors dating to 830/20-730/20 BC. This shield belongs to a type known through several examples from the pan-Cretan sanctuary of the

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other sites
name 'Idaion
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example
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One of the
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the finest
early Cretan
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and Urartu. Next to the shield are modern casts for educational purposes and for those visitors who wish to explore it through touch.

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North Syria

Hall A

The objects provide a first glimpse of Eleutherna's political, religious, social, and private life through time. The display cases to the right illustrate the site's prehistory and history. Tools, weapons, jewellery, vases, statues and figurines, inscriptions, architectural members, and coins represent a small part of the excavated artefacts of all periods. They are representative of both the various materials used in antiquity (obsidian, clay, stone, gold, silver, bronze, marble, glass, faience, ivory, etc.) and of the development of techniques and styles over the centuries, of the smaller and greater changes from one period to the next. A separate display case on the left houses the stamnos from Tomb A1/K1 (Tomb of the Warriors), which contained the cremated remains of an aristocrat and was

covered by a bronze Phoenician bowl. The combination of the stamnos and bowl, the origin of the two artefacts (Thera and Phoenicia), and their date led to their association with the story of Phronime as told by Herodotus (*Histories*, 4.154-61). Opposite the chronologically arranged display cases, which represent the linear development through time, is the large display case illustrating the 'odysseys' of objects imported from other Cretan sites, the Aegean, and the Mediterranean (or the use of materials or imitations of artefacts imported from these regions).

Finally, the central display case is dedicated to gold jewellery (pendants, sewn ornaments, and more), an illustration of this indestructible, magical, diachronically precious material and its multiple uses primarily in the 'Homeric' period, at the dawn of Greek civilization in Crete.

Hall B

The display life and Eleutherna Age to The large first display to cover the urn in Tomb Warriors).



presents religious worship at from the Early Iron Christian times. bronze bowl in the case had been used mouth of an ash A1/K1 (Tomb of the This bowl is unique

both for its size and elaborate decoration, which represents a ritual dance of women holding each other by the wrist, a motif also depicted on Achilles's shield according to the Iliad (Book XVIII).

Artefacts (figurines, sculptures, reliefs, inscriptions, etc.) from the sanctuaries of the historical period are displayed at the far end of the room, to the left. The first display case on the left showcases the finds from the impressive three-nave basilica at Katsivelos, whose founder Euphratas, Eleutherna's first bishop, identified in the mosaic dedicatory inscription in the building's narthex, participated in the Fourth Ecumenical Council at Chalcedon in AD 451.

Opposite these are the architectural members and sculptures from Funerary Monument 4A. This fairly large, almost square building in the Orthi Petra necropolis featured stone shield-bearing warriors on its roof, its 'speaking symbols' and a possible reference to the Kouretes, the mythical warriors who clashed their shields in front of the cave on Mount Ida (Psiloreitis) to prevent Cronus from hearing the cries of the newly born Zeus and devouring him. These warriors would have served as models of military virtue for Early Archaic Eleutherna's youth. Since the building contained no human remains it is possible that it functioned as a heroon or cenotaph, one of the earliest monuments to the unknown warrior in world history.

The small display case opposite the entrance on the right houses the lower part of an Early Archaic kore. This sculpture, from the area west of Monument 4A's euthynteria, recalls the famous 'Lady of Auxerre', now in the Louvre, which dates to c. 640 BC. In addition to stylistic similarities, macroscopic, microscopic, and above all, petrological analysis showed that the two sculptures and others from the same building were all made of limestone from the Eleutherna quarry (99.73% affinity). The comparison with other limestone statues from Crete (Prinias, Gortyn) proves beyond doubt the Lady of Auxerre's provenance from Eleutherna.

The screen next to this display case shows a fictional rendering of the famous statue's adventure from the moment of its discovery to the identification of its



provenance by Professor N. Chr. Stampolidis. The two statues, the Eleutherna Kore and the Lady of Auxerre, were reunited for the first time since the latter was removed from Crete, probably in the late nineteenth century, at the Museum of Cycladic Art in Athens in 2004-5 for the exhibition Eleutherna:

Polis, Acropolis, Necropolis.

Hall C

Hall C is dedicated to Eleutherna's cemeteries. The display, however, deliberately focuses on the finds from the Orthi Petra necropolis. With its cremation burials and rich finds, this cemetery is a reference point, as it illustrates the Homeric description of Patroclus's funerary pyre (*Iliad*, Book XXIII), thus confirming its veracity, for which there was disagreement, even on the slaughter of the twelve Trojan prisoners, between Plato and Aristotle.

To date, two main burial practices have been identified in the Orthi Petra cemetery: cremations and interments. Cremations appear to have been employed almost exclusively for adult male warriors, as mentioned in the *Iliad*. The deceased were cremated on a wooden structure, together with their personal belongings and grave gifts. Their remains and some of the grave gifts were then placed in ash urns next to the funerary pyre or inside rock-hewn chamber tombs. The most important chamber tombs at Eleutherna are Tombs A₁/K₁ (Tomb of the Warriors) and A₁ (Tomb of the 'Kosmos' and his Family). Originally, cremations were carried out in a cremation pit, but later, after the end of the eighth century BC, in separate funerary pyres at various locations, primarily below the large tumulus to the cemetery's northeast. Interments include jar burials and simple interments.

The first display case on the right contains part of the finds from the tomb known as Building M, a stone-built structure in the north section of the Orthi Petra necropolis, dating before the mid-seventh century BC. The building's east section contained the remains of four women aged 13.5 to 72 years, according to the anthropological study. The tomb's monumental aspect and the deceased's rich grave gifts, personal objects and garments, suggest that the four ladies held an important place in the society of Early Archaic Eleutherna.

Their high social status is further confirmed by the anthropological analysis, which provided evidence for high quality diet, but also –in the two older women– for wear of the arm joints related to weaving, a female activity *par excellence* even for aristocrats (e.g. Penelope in Homer's *Odyssey*). This funerary assemblage placed Eleutherna among the top 10 archaeological sites for 2009-10 according to the magazine *Archaeology*.

The large display case opposite the entrance to Room C contains finds from Tomb A₁/K₁, an unlooted rock-hewn chamber tomb (see small-scale reconstruction) in use from 880/70 to 660/50 BC. The anthropological study of the skeletal remains showed that these belong mostly to male warriors of various ages, a representative sample of part of Eleutherna's population over a period of more than 200 years.

The display ends with Funerary Pyre ΛΛ, the unique funerary pyre of a young aristocrat warrior, aged approximately 30 years, who was cremated with his companion in c. 720-700 BC. This pyre contained a unique find at its northwest edge: the remains of a well-built man 30-40 years old. The body's position at the edge and clearly outside of the pyre's limits, its unnatural crescent-like posture, the fact that it was headless, unburnt, and essentially without grave offerings suggest that it belonged to a man who did not die of natural causes. It is difficult to say whether this was an ordinary execution, ritual revenge, or a propitiatory sacrifice. The most widely accepted hypothesis is that the man was a prisoner-of-war who was executed in front of the warrior's pyre. Based on this unique discovery and on the Homeric description of a similar event (*Iliad*, Book XXIII, 110-179 ff.), Professor N. Chr. Stampolidis was able to reconstruct the funerary ritual with his collaborators and students in 1996. Thus, the core of the saga of Patroclus's funerary pyre, with its Cretan protagonists Idomeneus and Meriones, appears to have Cretan origins. The importance of the Orthi Petra necropolis lies not only in the fact that it provides the tangible remains of a Homeric burial practice, but also in that it forms a typical illustration of the verses of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* relating to a specific ritual. The film was awarded the first prize in the Rovereto Archaeological Film Festival.

Ancient Eleutherna and its museum are located in an area favoured both for its natural beauty and for its close proximity to other destinations of great cultural interest.

Margarites Village

Five kilometres east of Eleutherna lies Margarites³, a village with Venetian roots, mentioned by sixteenth-century travellers. In the nineteenth century, Margarites was a flourishing town, whose centuries-old ceramic tradition began at least as early as the Ottoman period. Margarites is undoubtedly the most important pottery centre in western Crete.

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Visitors can still visit the remains of stone-built workshops of pottery kilns that once produced all of the necessary household objects including storage vases, and even ritual toys. Nowadays, modern ceramic workshops produce a variety of utilitarian and decorative objects.



still visit the stone-built and pottery kilns produced all of household including storage vases, and even ritual toys. Nowadays, ceramic workshops produce a variety of utilitarian and decorative objects.

The tradition of pottery goes back many generations in this village and you will be able to find an elder to show you how the pots are hand thrown.

The pottery centre of Margarites

Many craftsmen still use age-old traditional techniques and skills, whether for small pieces of pottery or the large storage jars used on the island in the Minoan period, as evidences by the large jars found in all Minoan palaces.



The craftsmen, each of whom has a particular specialization, supervise

the entire production process from the right choice of clay, the sifting and moistening of the soil, the gradual formation of the large jars on the wheel, their decoration in typical patterns, and finally, their firing in special kilns.

In the past, since these jars were not easy to transport, it was the craftsmen themselves who moved around. Groups of potters (from Margarites and Thrapsano in the Heraklion Prefecture) traveled around the villages, took orders and set up their workshops and kilns wherever there was a demand.

³ Source: <https://www.we-love-crete.com/margarites.html>, <http://www.crete-kreta.com/margarites>



Margarites also hosts a **Pottery Collection** which is housed in a hall owned by the **Geropotamos** municipality, was set up by the very active **Margarites Cultural Movement**, in cooperation with the **Centre for the Study of Contemporary Pottery** in Athens.

The **exhibition** explains the **entire process of pottery-making**, a profitable but **difficult craft** that could be carried out for just a few months of the year, from **May 21** (the last day of Saints Constantine and Eleni) until **August 15**.

There are models of **stone workshops** and **double kilns**, explanations of the **types of clays**, their particular characteristics and the way they were dug out of the earth, the **proportions** used for the different **kinds of pots**, the way the clay was prepared in **stone containers** and how the craftsmen kneaded them by treading on them with careful **circular movements**.

There are displays of pots and reproductions of designs, and photographs showing all the stages of jar-making. Margarites also features many churches, the most important of which is the church of Saint John the Evangelist, which is a dependency of the Mount Athos.

There are Venetian churches and plenty of narrow winding streets,



doorways, Byzantine cafés to relax in, perhaps to village, which has some architecture and lovely is well worth exploring.

Kalyves

Kalives⁴ is a pretty seaside village in the area of Apokoronas in **Chania**, on **Souda** Bay, 19 km east of Chania and is one of the resorts on Cape Drapanos, along with **Almyrida** and Plaka, popular worldwide for their lovely beaches. Besides, Apokoronas is one of the green areas of West Crete and you will be astonished by the diversity of the beauty of the place. The area manages to combine a scenery of woods, hills and mountains as well as trees with the amazing Greek sea and the original rustic Cretan architecture.



Kalives is a fishing village that is located near the highway from **Chania** to Rethymno at a distance of 19 km from Chania and 42 km from Rethymno. The village is built in an amphitheater form along the beach of Kalives among two hills and the river Xydas that divides the village in two aspects with graphics bridges, from which guests are welcome to observe the ducks, gives the area a totally different sight.

Thanks to River Xydas -and another a river, Kylaris, which flows west of the village- Kalives is located in a fertile valley and is full of green and surrounded by olive groves. This is an on earth oasis for the hot summer nights that will make you feel amazing.

Due to its fertile soil and strategic geographical location at the entrance of Souda Bay, Kalives has been inhabited at least since the ancient times and this is something magical that you will see for your own. Also, in the eastern hills of Kalives was Kissamos -not to be confused with Kissamos Kasteli- one of the two ports of ancient Aptaera, which is very close to the major attractions the area, called 'Ippokoronion'.

In the eastern hills of the village you may find the ruins of the Castello Apicorono. In the 16th century Kalives village was destroyed by the pirate Barbarossa and the following centuries were a focal point in many battles, including the battles in all phases of the Cretan Revolution.

⁴ <http://www.completely-crete.com/kalyves.html>, <http://www.explorecrete.com/crete-west/EN-Kalyves.html>

Brief history of the region

The geographic location of Kalives, combined with its fertile soils, is a reason for the habitation of the area from the very ancient times. Kalives is considered to be the site of the ancient city Amfimatrion. In 1206, the fortress Castel Apicorno was built, east of the village, to alienate prospective attackers, while in 1538 Kalives were destroyed by the pirate Barbarossa.

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What to see

At the harbor, German cannon up till the other At the end of the window, where and the sea is



Furthermore, the beautiful

of the village and end up in the central square of the village with the large plane tree, near the church of Agia Paraskevi. The church has painted frescoes and was built during the German Occupation.

you can see the hidden in a cave dug side of the mountain. tunnel there is a small the view to the cliffs fascinating.

you should walk in narrow scenic streets

In Mesopotamos is a Venetian mill, which was the most complicated mill of Crete. It is built of stone and kourasani (mortar and ground tile mix), which is famous for its resistance.

The central beach with its sandy beach of about five hundred meters, with shallow waters is inviting you to discover the area's magic. A great advantage of the beach is with no doubt the big trees, so be certain to find natural shade. Of course, the beach has been awarded with a Blue Flag and a lifeguard so that you will feel secure all the time.

Apart from the main beach, there is another smaller and less organized beach in the village on the other side of the river Xydas, for you that you prefer a more relaxed swim.