



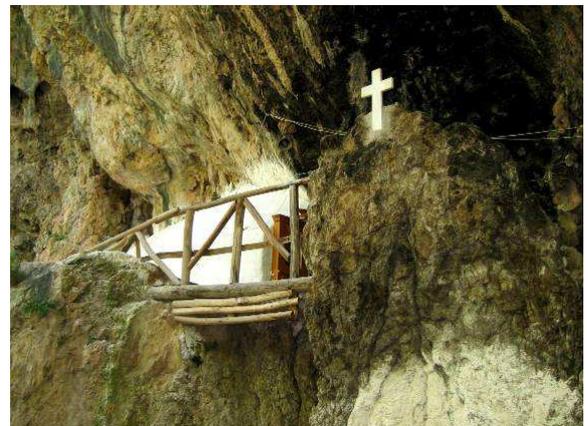
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**Excursion to the caves Agios Antonios
 and Fournare at Patsos / Middle Crete**

Nearby the village *Patsos* [Πατσός], two caves lie hidden in the mountain region of *Sorós* within a romantic, small canyon. It's suspected that *Patsos* stands on the foundations of an ancient site. The village *Patsos* is to be reached via the main connection from *Rethymnon* [Ρέθυμνο] to the South. Shortly before the town *Spili* [Σπήλιον], it is then left towards *Patsos*, and from there (follow the signs) around 2 miles to a small parking lot, the starting point of well marked hiking trail.

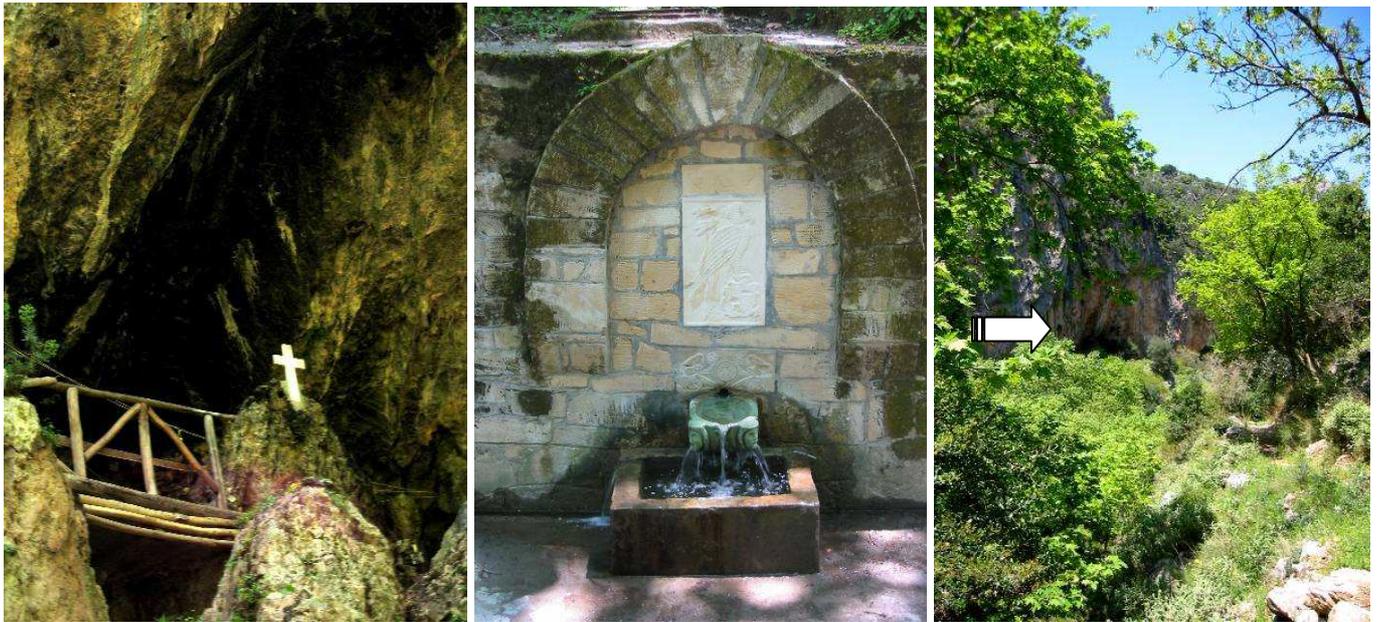
The cave of *Ermis Kraneos* (Hermes from the spring) was a holy place in ancient times and inhabitants call it "*Cave of Agios Antonios*", because a small chapel was built within its entrance in honour of this Saint. There is a second, much smaller karst cave, called *Fournare*, 300 m north on the opposite side of the Gorge. Systematic excavations haven't been done so far in any of the two caves, although objects from the Minoan, Greek and Roman period have been found again and again. See following pictures with further short descriptions.



The figure **left** shows an explanation board of the hiking area and found objects, primarily from the Minoan culture. Fig. **right** shows the chapel seen from the canyon sole.



Figure **left** shows the access to the chapel from the cave entrance. Fig. **right** shows the chapel hall inside the karst cave.



The **left** figure shows the "bridge" to the chapel in the entrance to the cave. The **centre** image shows the today lined "Hermes spring". It is located below the left shown Chapel cross on the ground of the canyon. The figure to the **right** shows the access to the *Fournare* cave.



The figure **left** shows a glance of the canyon hiking trail in the *Soros* region. **Centre** picture: Canyon sole stream bed leads much water in April and is to cross only over small wooden footbridges at this time of the year. The figure **right** shows evidence of earlier mountain fold; sheet lime of "Talea Ori Series" are turned on to this Geotope in the karst rock and almost vertical provided.

Photos: U. Kluge (29.04. 2004)

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