



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



### Ship-Tour to the island Dia / Prefecture Iraklion

#### Kri-kri: the Cretan goat (or Cretan ibex; Agrimi) [*Capra aegagrus creticus*]

The island *Dia* [Διά] (once conspicuous by its Cretan goats Kri-kri) is located 4.3 miles away from the harbour of *Gouves* [Γούβες]. There are now many shipping lines offering day trips to the island between *Gouves* and *Malia* [Μάλια] (especially in *Chersonissos* [Χερσόνησος] – Euro 30,- per person). Unfortunately these tours are usually inappropriate for an island exploration; 3 Hours travel time (back and forth); 2 Hours “bay anchor” with time for swimming (around the boat) and “Mixed Grill” on board leave little time (maximum 1-2 hours) for a real island investigation.

For example you need around 30 minutes from the *Dia* port “St. George” to the ruins of an old Venetian Chapel; 1958 a new Chapel, dedicated to St. George, has been established in their immediate vicinity. In 1972 Jacques Cousteau with “Calypso” quested close to *Dia* the sunken “Atlantis”; he has not found Atlantis, but an old Minoan Harbour. The Minoan civilization of *Dia* (like in Crete) was probably destroyed around 1450 BC by the volcanic eruption of *Santorini* Island with its effects (earthquakes, giant ocean waves, etc.). Today the island is a nature reserve for rare birds and primarily for the wild mountain goats *Kri Kri*; of which unfortunately none are more on the island. A resulting crossbreed population (from domestic goats and *Kri Kri*) has been deliberately “removed” during the last 3 years (of those some could save themselves in higher situated caves) to later settle a genetically pure *Kri Kri* population on *Dia* (once the last yet very few crossbreed animals are “away”).



The top left picture shows the upstream east of *Dia* Island *Paximad*. Picture right shows one (of two) upstream north located small islands seen from *Dia*.

Picture below left shows the port St. George, the ferryboat and in the background the shadowy coast line of Crete. The picture below right shows the chapel of St. George on the peninsula of *Korakias* in the western part of the *Dia*.

Photos:

U. Kluge (2004)



The figure left shows a Canyon in the South of the island DIA, in its extension line the small lighthouse is on the peak. Figure right shows a cave just above the waterline, as they are often on the South coast of the island, especially in the area of "Pirate Bay". These caves are only accessible "from the water".  
**Photos: U. Kluge (21.07.2004)**



### Kri-kri: the Cretan goat

The most famous and largest wild mammal of Crete is wild goat, also named *Agimi* or *Kri Kri*. 10,000 Years ago goats were domesticated and already after the Neolithic brought to Crete by the Minoans. The *Agimi* is repeatedly shown on Minoan seals. In the last century it was present in all Cretan Mountains - today it is unfortunately only on postcards (or in the municipal park of Hania, which is hosting a small Zoo).

*Kri Kri* is a separate breed of Bezoar ibex in Asia, the wild principal form of domestic goat. It is larger than the domestic goat. Both sexes have a very conspicuous bent back and inward, strongly compressed horns, its front edge is narrow and has a few, separated from each other, humps. The horn of male animals is much bigger and stronger trained than the females. The body length of animals is 1.30 m and their shoulder height up to 80 cm. Their coat is brown with a black line passing from the neck to the tail. The animals leap capability is notable with more than 10 m. They live in loose associations, where however the males outside the mating are loner.

Finally some tips for those who plan a ship-tour to *Dia*:

Calculate alternative date; from wind force 6 the ships may not leave the port, which means your posted tour is postponed until the next day, or the day after, etc. - and this decides usually only 10 minutes before the scheduled expiry. Despite the "Mixed Grill" on board you should plan your own catering, except chips and cold drinks, you have no other shopping on board. It is also important to first ask about the return transfer and firmly agree it (if you are from another location to the port of discharge); otherwise you wait in vain for an collector.

