



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

Cretan Handcraft: Traditional (Cretan) chairs
Visit at a traditional joinery in Kastelli-Kissamos



The essay was written by "Lefteris" (*Prof. Günther Freiheit*), who lives in Crete and who accompanied us when visiting the traditional joinery and we here thank again for doing so; therefore see also www.kreta-kurier.com and www.kissamosnews.gr.



In Kissamos region there is only one carpenter who makes the traditional Greek chairs. This company was founded in 1930 and is operated exclusively by the family *Zouridakis* since then. Antonios (56) took over the company in 1970 from his father and is now continuing the traditional work, assisted by his three sons. Thus the survival of this operation will be (hopefully) secured for the next 50 years.

The picture shows Antonios (right) and two of his sons (from left in the picture).

Picture: *Lefteris*

Visiting the work Hall of Antonios, you get almost "slain" by chairs that are stacked up to the ceiling. In between there are two band-saws, a lathe and a planing machine. Decorations in the backs of the chairs are still "carved by hand" or cut out; see fig. below. At present, the family can not complain about a lack of orders.



Picture: *U. Kluge* (21.12.2005)



Picture: *Lefteris*

Customers are still private persons who provide their kitchens with the "uncomfortable for foreigners" chairs. Of course the biggest customers are still the occasional Kafenion or Tavern. But chairs are also ordered from other countries.

Also repairs are made by Antonios. The seats of chairs which are woven from bast or rob (in handwork) are given "out of Office"; see fig right Picture: *Lefteris*

Very good news is that the sons of Antonio maintain the tradition out of their own interests. Thus some typical Cretan craft culture is preserved.



Below some pictures from the working hall and examples of typical Cretan chairs from the range (and the prospectus) of family ZOURIDAKIS.



Pictures: U. Kluge (21.12.2005)

