



Information about the Environment and for travellers in Crete:

Around and through the Tripití Canyon / South Crete
 10 miles of impressive landscape at the Libyan sea



To get to the starting point of this Off-road-Tour, take the 97 from *Iraklion* via *Ag. Varvara* and *Agii Deka* further on in south direction towards *Lentas* (at the South coast). The secondary route from *Agii Deka* leads over the villages *Platanos*, *Apesokari* and *Miamou* to ***Krotos***, the starting point of the tour. Short after the village entrance of *Krotos* leads a sign on the left to the branch to the Tripití. There are about 10 miles of pure runway from here, which sidles along the rugged coastline, uphill and downhill up to a almost unspoiled beach. From here it goes further on along the ravine stream through the bottleneck of the Gorge (a cleft, which measures only around 3 metres at the closest place and whose walls rise up perpendicularly more than 40 meters) and over the brook bed again uphill. In a winding route along the ravine and after passing the mountain crest you get back to an open area and after few miles the village *Leto/Vassiliki*, which lies only few miles east of the starting point. The distance, in the following described in detail (by “stations”), can naturally be driven also in reverse direction (*Vassiliki - Krotos*).

From the branch in *Krotos* follow the runway for about 1.5 miles to the point where on the left is a “stone cot” (see fig. 1). The right path (almost straight ahead) leads to the west over a hard to manage path to *Lentas*, which you should not follow. At the “stone cot” turn left towards east and after approx 1 mile you reach a stream ford which leads only little water during the summer (see fig. 2). Hereafter follows a 2 miles roller coast ride along shore up to a



small, almost unspoilt beach (the end point of the Tripití Canyon) at the Libyan sea. Besides 3 caravans and a small wing of a building with a mini-tavern you can find sea caves, sea arches (see fig. 3) and a small but mighty pebble beach. Turn north again from here, follow the ravine brook bed and you reach after about 700 meter the “needle eye”, the canyon passage. On this part of the tour some cattle breeding is operated, primarily goats but in addition a few pigs. At the east wall of the ravine is a small cave church (see fig. 4 - 6), whose entrance (an iron door) is on brook bed level.



After passing the “needle eye” (S. Fig. 7 - 9) follow the runway along the ravine again uphill and you reach after 1 mile a small chapel and after further 2,5 miles (and the mountain crest crossing) again first buildings (of an animal breeding plant). Here also is the Canyon entrance, with an access possibility for exercised and above all experienced Canyon walkers.



The about 300 m long “needle eye” can be well driven through with a cross-country vehicle (if the ravine stream does not is in flood). Furthermore it is advisable, to do this only with closed top. In the steep walls, which are partly hanging over, many goats “do gymnastics” and often “kick” loose boulder; this is a source of danger not to be underestimated



The canyon is not simple to walk on (climbing tour) and leads water in some places still in summer; “wet feet” are usually unavoidable (see left fig. 10). It is then again about 2 miles from here until the runway meets a bitumen route and you reach the village *Leto/Vassiliki*.

Note: Like everywhere on Crete, Canyon walks shouldn’t be down alone; in case of an accident assistance is usually very far, also mobile phone is not “calming”, particularly since there is often (within the Canyon) only rare reception

The below pictures show snapshots from the tour; from left to right: view of the cliff coast on the way to the beach and 2 views out of sea caves (which are seen often on the south coast).



Pictures: (4) U. Kluge / (10) H. Eikamp (01.05.2005)