

**Informationen zur Umwelt und für Naturreisende auf Kreta:**

Information about the Environment and for travellers in Crete:

**The ancient *Falásarna* – a stranded port!**

Αρχαία Φαλάσαρνα  
Ancient Falasarna

**Directions:** *Falásarna* is located quite in the West of Crete below the peninsula *Gramvoússa*. Out of *Kastelli (Kissamos)* go towards West to *Trachilos* and past the village turn (right, further on towards west) on the branch road to *Kaliviani* and *Azogirás*. At *Azogirás* follow the sparsely signs through the village; at the village end the asphalt road goes over into a gravel road, which you follow towards the target for approx. 1.5 miles (during the first third of the section through greenhouses). The track is not optimal but also passable with a normal car (carefully).

The remains of the ancient port of *Falásarna* are along the shoreline on the northern edge. Founded only in late Minoan time and inhabited during Roman times it probably was abandoned (after the earthquake in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century A.D.), probably also because the Western coastline lifted slowly but steadily from the sea, while the eastern sag. Meanwhile the former port of *Falásarna* is on dry land. The port was below the fortifications on the South side of the headland; today it's properly, former facilities are difficult to identify. Two towers (in ruins) from the time around the 4<sup>th</sup> Century BC once raised North and South of the ancient port. Of the former township, focused further north on a hill, is hardly anything to see except the remains of a curtain wall; the remains of the ancient "Acropolis" are found in outlines only. Rock chambers and -tombs are seen at the present seafront, even if very difficult to access (surge area). Unfortunately the extensive excavation point "on-site" does not shows the picture as described in many literary descriptions so you should not have to high expectations when visiting the area. The same applies to an old "stone quarry" on the coast, which is often mentioned as "antique building material provider". It does not correspond in its dimension to the proportions as often shown in guidebooks. A visit is recommended for holidaymakers "from close to"; but only to a limited extent for a visit with longer journey.



**Figure** on the left shows a "Royal seat" carved in stone, which is located at the "entrance" to the excavation site. The picture in the Middle shows remains of the curtain wall at the "Acropolis". The **figure** right shows the remains of a tower in the Northern excavation area; a second remnant stands further South. They formerly bound the port area.



**Figure** on the left shows a rock formation, on whose basis you come (over the "stone quarry area") to the sea. Rock chambers are to be seen (**fig.** right) behind the stone quarry (within the surge area); access is possible only by climbing.



It depends on the perspective: The **figure** left shows a picture of the probably ancient stone quarry from a travel guide; it seems colossal! The middle **figure** shows the same stone quarry something closer; its gigantism is greatly reduced! The **picture** right shows the real size in comparison to a person; its real high is about 3 metres (~ 9.8 ft) and its dimension shrinks to a minimum. The overall "stone quarry area" is no more than 10 x 15 metres (33 x 49 feet).

A note on **environmental protection**: (found at [www.online-guide-kreta.de](http://www.online-guide-kreta.de)): Almost everywhere in and around Falásarna are signs which "prohibit the dumping of waste". This is in principle necessary and commendable. However, since the locals like to blame the tourists for the pollution of Crete, it really wonders that all these signs are written in Greek, not in English also! Everything everywhere (at Crete and in Falásarna) is written bilingual ... expect for the special waste prevention signs; curios!

We can fully confirm the read from our own experience "on-site"!

**Pictures:** (6) U. Kluge / (2) H. Eikamp (06.05.2005)

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