

Informationen zur Umwelt und für Naturreisende auf Kreta:
Information about the Environment and for travellers in Crete:**Souré-Cave:****Cave of “99 Holy Fathers” at Azogires / South-west Crete**

Azogires is located about 4.3 miles northeast of *Palaeochora* and can be reached via a well signed road. At the entrance of *Azogires*, the path to the cave leads (immediately before the first tavern) left in the mountains. From here its about 1.2 miles up to the cave, the first 500 metres on a asphalt road, the rest is a gravel road which sometimes is to navigate with a 4WD only. After exactly 1.43 miles points a sign (fig. left) to a path and the cave. From here you have to walk.

After 50 metres you will reach a fence-passage and after another 50 metres a gate. The following “climb” to the mountain is solved after approx. 250 m. The entrance to the cave than requires an approximately 30 metres deep climb-down because the entrance to the cave is located on a plateau within a rock circus (the climb-down is a relatively easy passage for adults but unsuitable for kids - due to the "step height"). The entrance to the cave is situated on the right side of the rock circus. Three (3) steep metal ladders (**Cau-tion**, some staves of the ladders are missing) lead down to a small "altar" and approx. 70 m deeper in advance into the cave. Although a little light incide into the cave through a cleft, it is not enough to explore the 2 aisles branching off the “Altar” or other parts of the cave. In addition to some experience and sufficient lighting applicable equipment is necessary; a "solo" is generally not recommended.

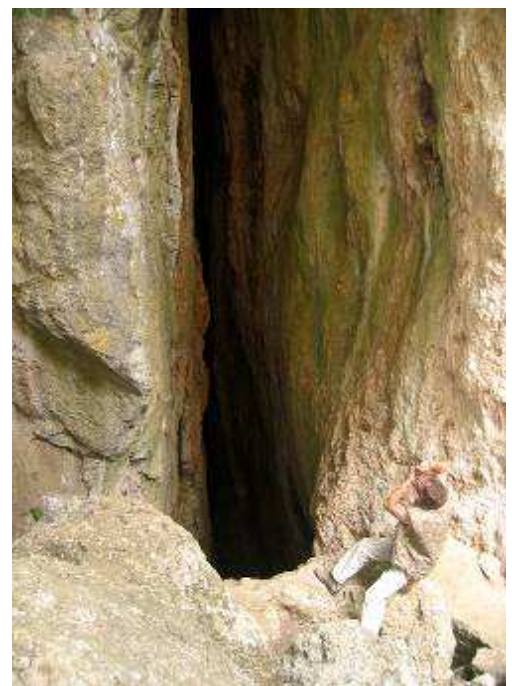


Figure left shows the access path to the entrance of the rock circus. The **picture** in the middle shows the climb-down to the plateau. The **picture** right show the cave entrance.



The upper **picture row** shows the climb-down area via the first (**left**) and second ladder (middle **picture**): right the cave exit seen from the 1st level of the cave. The **pictures below** show a view out of the rock circus (**left**) and the grottos church where the holy fathers should have prayed. It is located on the hillside opposite the cave.



Based on the history the "99 Holy Fathers" came to Crete from Cyprus at the end of the 12th Century under the leadership of Saint John. Here they lived until their death in the **Souré-Cave** near **Azogires**. Based on the legend, the cave at **Gouverneto** on the **Akrotiri** peninsula is in direct link to this cave; therefore see also our leaflet [No. 042-04/E](#) at our homepage. Saint John adjourns to here to live as an eremite. Previously the fathers swore that for the case that one of them dies the others would follow him to death. After Saint John died due to a "hunting accident" on **Akrotiri**, the "98 Holy Fathers" also died in the **Souré-Cave** near **Azogires**.

Fotos: (5556, 5650, 5662, 5678, 5684/30.07.2005) *U. Kluge* / (5411, 5420, 5421, 5433/30.07.2005) *H. Eikamp*