

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

Two (2) Minoan archaeological sites at Archanes (Prefecture Iraklion) Phourni and Vathypetro, at the foot of the mountain Jouhtas (Iuktas)

The Minoan cemetery Phourni

The archaeological excavation site *Phourni* can be reached from the main road in *Archanes*, when following the sign (coming from *Iraklion* / see fig.), turning right, driving uphill. The narrow road forks after 200 m; turn left here – and the same again after additional 100 m. After approx 300 m the asphalted road transitions into a gravel road which you follow (partly through pine groves) for another mile (straight, without arms) to its end. The end is a parking area directly at the **most of the time closed** archaeological site. Before planning a visit, you should ask at the Archaeological Museum in Iraklion, whether (or when) the site is open for sightseeing.



The Minoan cemetery, located on the upper east site of the hill “*Phourni*” (is descended from the Greek word for oven) is undoubtedly one of the most important archaeological sites; especially it was in “use” for over 1000 years (and all Minoan period’s). It is also important because unspoiled burial chambers of 2 women have been discovered here, who were probably of “Royal birth” and come from the late Minoan period. Altogether 5 Tholos tombs have been found on the cemetery complex with different sizes graves (known as Tholos Tomb A to E), in which probably also different funerals have held. Sarcophagi from the tombs, burial objects and much more are displayed in the archaeological museum in Iraklion; here you can also find important details. The following pictures show some on-site impressions at the excavation area.



The pictures are showing (from left to right): sepulchral border, a Tholos tomb (with eastern view to Archanes) and the Tholos tomb in a detail view with “*Dromos*”.

Pictures: H. Eikamp (12.05.2006)

Apart from the first seven, most of the sepulchral borders are no longer remaining. They have been cut into the rock; a small Larnax (Sarcophagi) was placed into them.

The Tholos graves stand out by a long *Dromos* (access). Although all 5 Tholos graves (probably already in ancient time) were plundered, valuable insights have been won, e.g. within Tholos tomb A. Here a horse and a bull skull bones were found in a side room (near the entrance). This “burial objects” indicate that both animals probably were sacrificed to honour the person, which was buried here.

The Minoan manor Vathypetro

You will reach the Minoan manor **Vathypetro** from Archanes when driving further in south direction to **Houdetsi** (main direction **Pirgos**). Around 3.5 miles after Archanes is right of the road a sign (see fig.) pointing to the excavation site. Following the branch to the path, you reach after 200 m (left the path) a gravelled parking lot; it's about 50 m from here by foot. Opening times see fig. right.

Αρχαιολογικός Χώρος Βαθύπετρου
Archaeological site of Vathypetro

ΑΡΧΑΙΟΛΟΓΙΚΟΣ ΧΩΡΟΣ ΒΑΘΥΠΕΤΡΟΥ	
ΩΡΑΡΙΟ ΛΕΙΤΟΥΡΓΙΑΣ	VISITING HOURS
ΘΕΡΙΝΟ ΩΡΑΡΙΟ	SUMMER SEASON
ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ - ΚΑΙΣΙΤΟΣ	MONDAY - CLOSED
ΤΡΙΤΗ-ΑΡΧΑΙΚΗ 8.30-15.00	TUESDAY-SUNDAY 8.30-15.00
ΧΕΙΜΕΡΙΝΟ ΩΡΑΡΙΟ	WINTER SEASON
ΔΕΥΤΕΡΑ - ΚΑΙΣΙΤΟΣ	MONDAY - CLOSED
ΤΡΙΤΗ-ΑΡΧΑΙΚΗ 8.30-15.00	TUESDAY-SUNDAY 8.00-14.30



The Minoan manor complex of Vathypetro consists of several building remains, inner yards and workshop rooms. A Minoan wine press (probably the oldest wine-press of the world) have been preserved in addition to individual houses remains, a installation for the extraction of olive oil, Minoan pottery, loom installations and the remains of an ancient pottery workshop. The excavations began in 1949 (until 1953) by the Greek archaeologist *S. Marinatos*. Since then archaeologists discuss about the meaning of the complex (Manor House, Villa or small Palace) and its classification and the theories are more diverse (*J. Sakellarakis*, 1979). Anyway, the site is worth, a visit since it is very close to the Minoan cemetery Phourni and you can combine both. See the following pictures for the complex.



The upper series shows views of the excavation site; the left image shows the area of the site of the so-called "triple shrine". The lower series shows the wine press house and the wine press, whose functioning demonstrates the sketch (left).

Pictures: (1) *H. Eikamp* / (7) *U. Kluge* (12.07.2006)

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