



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



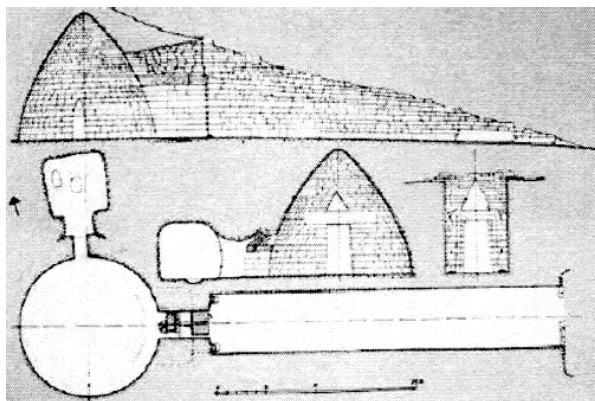
Tholos tomb near Margarites, Prefecture Rethymno
Artichoke (*Cynara scolymus*)

The Tholos tomb near Margarites (the 2nd well known pottery village on Crete besides Thrapsano) is around 1.5 miles outside the village towards Iraklion/Rethymno. The way is marked as a right turn. The sign tells



300 meters but the way over a small asphalt road is around 500 meters. Here you will find another sign, again pointing to the right, telling 200 meters, this time it is a gravel "road". And again it is 200 meters

more than shown on the sign. The Minoan tomb is located left of the road. The excavation site is roofed but accessible and the sidewalls of the *dromos* (access to the chamber tomb) are equipped with staves. The actual burial chamber is round,



empty and has a typical design (for this period). The very professionally executed excavations (and reconstruction) show a tholos tomb as it is often to see in Crete; however, a visit is recommended especially its dimension is rare and its state of preservation is exceptionally. Here some pictures.

The drawing shows a **sketch** of a **Tholos tomb** using the example of the "Atreus Treasury of Mycenae", ~ 1300 BC

Source: *Grundkurs Alte Geschichte (Dr. M. Fell), 2. Sitzung: "Die minoische Kultur auf Kreta"; Uni Kiel.*



The fig. are showing (from left to right) the roofed excavation, the entrance to the "treasury" and a view in the tomb dome.

Pictures: H. Eikamp (17.05.2006)

Artichoke (*Cynara scolymus*)

The artichoke is a thistle-like plant of the aster family (Asteraceae). She comes from the Mediterranean and the information concerning their home range from the Eastern Mediterranean to North Africa. She can be found on Crete occasionally wild growing and cultivated in gardens (because of their eatable blossom head); also within field-vegetable-cultivation. The artichoke was mentioned in Egypt already 500 BC.



It is growing up to 5 feet high out of the strengthened root stock where leaf-rosettes form during 2 years. The aculeate leaves are sessile, green on top and slightly brighter on the bottom. The fist sized flower heads will be harvested when they are still closed and the outer scales slightly stick out. Their multilayer imbricate husks taper upwards. Below is a fleshy floor used as a vegetable. The taste of artichoke is fine tart to slightly bitter. Only the lower, fleshy part of the shed sheets and the receptacle (artichoke hearts) is edible. An appetizing, digestive and blood-purifying effect is ascribed to artichokes.

Except as a vegetable their leaves are used in juices, tea, dry extracts and tinctures. Its medical and dietary effect is attributed to the presence of specific flavonoids and quinic acid derivatives. Already in ancient Greece artichoke heads are priest as medicine, to help the digestion after fat meals; the artichoke was also popular as an aphrodisiac. Although this is not proved so far it's perhaps worth a try. Finally we all know: "The way to man's heart is through his stomach"! And if it is useless, it tasted at least!

The large photos show stages of artichokes flowers. Pictures: K.Eckl (Lagou/Lassithi, 19.07.2006)



Those who want to try with artichoke cultivation: seed in February or March (inside, 20-22 degree C), make cooler after germination (12-16 degree C), transplant after 2-3 weeks. Bed out in May (distance 1 x 1 meter); 5-10 cm deeper as they stood in the pot. Many flowers buds artichokes only in sunny, sheltered locations. Leave only 2 pedicles with 2-3 blossoms during the first year, to develop large receptacle. Not more than 2 flower stalks should stand in the second and third year (see large pictures above). In the first year, the harvest of the closed buds can happen in September, in the following years from end of June.

Translated by Michael Bloechinger-Daeumling

[Art.-Nr. 2.868; Zitat-Nr. 7.082] impr. eik.amp 9/2010

