

Information about the Environment and for travellers in Crete:

There is more than one way to the Limnakaro Plateau Exploration of *Peristeria Cave* remains a challenge.



With leaflet No. 262-08/E (therefore see at our webpage's at [http://www.kreta-umweltforum.de/Merkblaetter_en/262-08E.pdf] we reported about the Limnakaro Plateau and the local *Peristeria Cave* for the first time. Now, with this issue, we would like to extend and specify our statements from 4 years ago and inform about innovations.

It belongs to the innovations that in the meantime, there are 3 approach roads to the Limnakaro Plateau. One “moderately severe“ (to be used only with cross-country vehicles, see above link to the leaflet No 262-08/E), one “heavy“ (4.5 miles which we drove this time from *Agio Georgios*) and one “easy“ (2.5 mile long concrete runway, which we took as „way back“ and which ends in the village *Koudhoumalia*).

For the “heavy” route take at *Agio Georgios* the “ring road” towards Eco-Park; halfway between is left a sharp branch (signposted) which leads after 4.5 miles to the Limnakaro Plateau. The distance is to be mastered only with a cross-country vehicle and appropriate experience: narrow gravel runway, stony, in parts very narrowly and bumpy by diagonal grooves. The route leads uphill through trench, past on the right of ravine with a stream bed (see fig. left) that must drive through later and ends, after a once more „uphill drive“ on the plateau (see fig. right).



For the “way back“ to the Lassithi Plateau, you can take then “the light“ route, which leads from the north end of the Limnakaro as a narrow concrete runway (2.5 miles) to the village square in *Koudhoumalia*. If you should select this way as “approach road“ to the plateau (drivable with a normal car), bend in *Koudhoumalia* (e.g. from *Plati/Psihro* coming) at the village square with the well (see fig. left) right off and afterwards, directly the next road again left (signposted).

Geo-Info about the Lassithi Plateau (KULL 2012): The Plateau is the largest Polje (25 km² / 9.6 mi²) of the Cretan mountains. The surrounding mountain-slopes are partially of disk lime (Aloides formation), otherwise predominantly of Tripolitza limestone, where east also the Phyllite quartzite outcrop.

The disk lime of the central part of the large Dikte Anticline appears particularly within the range of the west and southwest slopes of the Dikte massif. The difference between limes and Phyllite quartzite rocks is good to recognize in the spring to early summers also by the vegetation, which prospers on the latter many more sumptuously.

Peristeria Cave

The Peristeria cave is located on the west slope of the Limnarako plateau on the contour of 1200 m and is recognizable as “cut“ (see fig. right). One needs about 45 minutes for the way up and down (a climbing tour through the phrygana [garrigue] and over rocks). The cave entrance is attainable likewise only by a „leading downward“ climbing tour; it consists of two „entrance parts“, separated by a large rock. The left side is very tight and should be seen as „crawling passageway“. The right side probably forms the main entrance (6 x 3 m). However, the cave throat (and the cave inside) is arrived only with a roped party; a 4 to 5 m perpendicular descent is to break again, in order to arrive the cave inside. Based on our past investigations the cave is not yet investigated and/or committed (with the difficulty of the area also understandably) - and so the exploration still remains a challenge even for us, to which one should take only in a team with experienced speleologists.



The way up



The entrance ... (N 35°14.5918; E 25°47.9932)



The Cave



The way down