

EU Community Initiative Programme Intereeg III B ARCHIMED

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“Discovering Magna Grecia”

The Greek-Byzantine Mediterranean itineraries – The Region of Rethymno

General Information

The town of Rethymnon, capital of the homonym prefecture, is located between the towns of Chania and Herakleion. It lies along the north coast, having to the east one of the largest sand beaches of Crete (length: 12 km) and to the west a rocky coastline that ends up to another large sand beach. To the North is the Cretan and to the South the Libyan Sea. In the east rises the mount of Psiloritis (Ida) and in the south - west the mountain range of Kedros. Between the two massifs is the valley of Amari. On the north - easterly border of the prefecture rises the mount of Kouloukonas (Talaia Mountain). South of the town is the mount of Vrisinas and in a south westerly direction lies the mount of Kryoneritis.

Access

Airports: Rethymnon is served by the airports of Chania and Heraklion.

Port: There is direct connection all year round from the port of Rethymnon to Piraeus.

Buses: Public buses can be used daily for travelling to Chania, Heraklion, Siteia and to the most of the townships and villages of the prefecture of Rethymnon.

Highways: The main transport routes in the province are a) the new national highway which runs parallel with the north coast, b) the old national highway, which is situated slightly south of the new road, and c) Rethymnon - Spili - Agia Galini - Sfakia road which runs north –south.

Natural Geography

Rethymnon stretches from the White Mountains until Mount Psiloritis, bordered by the provinces of Hania and Iraklion. It covers an area of about 1.496 km². The largest mountain ranges of the White Mountains, Psiloritis and Kouloukounas and the secondary ones of Kedros, Asiderotas and Vrisinas form a network of valleys, the main one of which is Milopotamos and the two valleys of Amari.

The few flat areas are found near the north and south coasts, while the plateau of Nida stretches over the mountainous mass of Psiloritis. The city of Rethymnon with its 23,126 inhabitants is the capital of the province. Smaller population centres are Anogia, Spili, Perama and Episkopi. The villages of the province have a small and constantly dwindling number of inhabitants, which average about 180 persons.

Countryside and climate

Rethymnon is Crete's most mountainous province. Of its 1.496 km², 507 km² are cultivated, 936 km² are pasture, 36 km² are covered by settlements and only 17 km² are covered by Mediterranean oak, pine and maple-tree forest.

The climate is mild Mediterranean and particularly dry and warm. There is sunshine 67% of the year and temperatures range from 12°C to 27°C. The prevailing winds are northerly and north-westerly, while occasional hot southerly arrive from the African continent with great strength.

While the environmental condition of the countryside is relatively good, the centuries of farming and grazing are beginning to take their toll. The quality of sea water is still amongst the best in Europe. Many of the mountains have been stripped due to overgrazing and summer forest fires.

Of the eight types of the land of the province (plains, semi-mountainous, sub-alpine, coastal, wetlands and gorges) only in the last two has human presence not been strongly felt.

The two most interesting gorges for wildlife are those of Patsos and Prasses.





Main products of Crete:

- Olive oil
- Dairy products
- Honey
- Wine

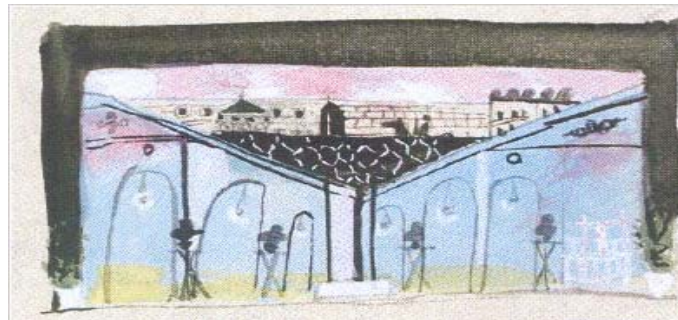


Flora

The island is famous for its rich flora; of the total number of plants, which flourish throughout Europe, approximately 70% are found on Crete. Thyme, oregano, savory, mint, dittany, chicory, sage, marjoram and many other aromatic plants rich in protein are characteristically found everywhere on the island.

Festivals

- During the summer, since 1987, the Municipality of Rethymno organises a *Renaissance Festival* in the town of Rethymno. In the Fortezza Theatre "Erophili", visitors can enjoy theatrical plays, music performances, exhibitions of paintings, speeches, dancing performances, pantomimes and film projections.



- In the end of July a *Wine Festival* is organised in the Municipal Garden of Rethymno Town. Visitors can enjoy traditional Cretan and Greek folklore music and dances. Wine is free for everyone, giving the possibility to taste all the varieties of the famous and excellent Cretan wines.
- "Vardinoyannia" meeting was first held in 1985, and since then it is being organized every year by the Athletic Club "Enosi Atromitou Rethymniakou", under the auspices of the Greek Sports Ministry and in cooperation with SEGAS. The competitions took place in the new - Olympic Standards - DAK Gallos Stadium "PAVLOS I. VARDINOYANNIS" of Rethymno.
- In the middle of August the village of Anogia organises a *Cultural Festival*. During this festival visitors have the possibility to listen the magical sound of Lyra (traditional lyre) and experience all kinds of cultural activities.
- In August the 15th the celebration of the Holy Virgin is held with religious ceremonies and great feasts with food, wine and dances all around the prefecture of Rethymno and in the entire island of Crete.
- The feast day of the *Holy Cross* celebrated on the 14th of September in the village of Axos followed by a huge feast.
- During the summer Municipality of Kouloukonas organizes the *Talaia festival*.
- The grandest *Carnival* of Crete is organised in Rethymno Town and is one of the most impressive of Greece, along with the one of Patras (in Peloponnesus). On Shrove Thursday a street party is organised and is the largest open-air party of Crete with all kinds of music, wine, appetizers and lot of fun. Another party is organised on the Sunday before the great parade during which the participating group are dressed up and perform various sketches. The party includes food, wine and dances until dawn. On Shrove Friday a "rehearsal" of the big day takes place during which all the participants present their masks and carriages. When Shrove Monday arrives, the entire town becomes an explosion of colour and music; everybody is masqueraded and sings, dances and drinks all night long. During the same day, in the picturesque mountainous villages of the prefecture of Rethymno, old traditions and customs revive for a magical and unique Carnival with games, performances, happenings and satires.
- On the 8th of November the commemoration of the Arkadi Holocaust is taking place in the entire prefecture and a religious ceremony is held in the monastery of Arkadi where locals bring flowers to the hundreds of Cretan who died there in the 19th century in order to avoid surrender to the Turks.

History

According to archaeological data, prefecture of Rethymnon was inhabited since Prehistoric period. There are lots of archaeological data (archaeological finds, settlements, sanctuaries, churches, monasteries, villages etc.) which indicate that the region was inhabited from Neolithic to Modern Times.

The existence of human life during Neolithic period (6000 - 2600 BC) is proved by archaeological findings which have been found in Ideon Andron cave on Mount Psiloritis, the Gerani cave west of Rethymnon, the Elenes cave in the Amari district etc.

During the Minoan period human activity spread throughout the whole province. Some of the most important sites of that period have been found in Chamalevri, Stavromenos (Rethymnon), Elenes, Monastiraki, Apodoulou (valley of Amari), Margarites, Perama, Aggeliana (Milopotamos area), Koxare, Spili (province of Agios Vasileios). Lots of the settlements of the Minoan period have been flattened by the earthquake of 1450 BC, catastrophic fire or sudden abandonment. Mycenaean took advantage of the destruction above in order to invade and be settled in Crete.

During the Geometric and Daedalian period (1100-620 BC) important cities such as Eleutherna and Axos (Oaxos), in the Mylopotamos area have flourished. Continuous development of the same areas can also be observed during the period of Antiquity (620-500 BC), when works of great artistic value were produced. According to the testimony of more recent sources, during Classical (500-330 BC) and Hellenistic (330-67 BC) times, the ancient town of Rithymna must have flourished; it was situated in the same place as the modern town of Rethymno is today. Simultaneously, the other large cities of the prefecture, as for example Eleutherna, Axos and Sivrytos continued to exist during the Hellenistic and the Graeco-Roman period (67 BC - 323 AD). During the Hellenistic and Roman periods, Lappa (near Argiroupoli) appears as the most important city. It was conquered by Quintus Caecilius Metellus c. 68 BC. Lappa had its own coins with the inscription *Lappaion*. The city was in the region near the modern village Argyroupolis.

During the First Byzantine period (330-824) when the capital of the Roman Empire was transferred to the Byzantium and the Constantinople was founded in 330, Crete was included in the East Roman Empire, constituting a separate district, which was governed by a Byzantine general. Henceforth Christianity expanded on the island, and in the 8th century the Cretan Episcopate was integrated with the Patriarchate of Constantinople. During the early Christian and First Byzantine period a large number of temples were built.

There is little information referring to the town of Rethymno during the First Byzantine period (325-824) and the period of Arab occupation (824-961). During the years 824 - 961, the island was governed by the Arabs, although very little evidence of this fact was found in the area of Rethymno apart from some Arabian coins, which were found in the village of Giannoudi. During the Second Byzantine period (961-1210) started in Rethymno the construction of fortification works.

Crete's liberation by Nikiforos Fokas in 961, followed by its re-integration into the Byzantine Empire, signalled the beginning of the Second Byzantine Period, which lasted up until the arrival of the Venetians on the island in 1204. At that stage a fortified wall was built around all the buildings, thus constituting the first fortified settlement, the so-called "Castrum Rethemi", which the Venetians later called Castel Vecchio.

The period of the Venetian occupation formally began in 1204, when Crete was passed over to Bonifatio of Montferrato, who later handed it over to the Venetians. However, in 1206 the Genoese pirate Enrico Pescatore invaded the island, and it was not until as late as 1210 that the Venetians actually succeeded in regaining control of Crete again. The Cretans were in opposition to their conquerors, which resulted in a series of revolutions during the period between 1211 and 1367. Despite the Cretan resistance, the Venetians embarked on successive administrative changes, according to which the island was initially divided into six, and later, during the 14th century, into four sections, with the capitals Chania, Rethymno, Chandakas and Sitia. The Duke (Duca), who had his seat in Chandakas, had sovereign power over the entire island. Rectors (Rettore), who were supported by two Councillors (Consiglieri), were in administrative command of the districts of Chania, Rethymno and Sitia.

Rethymnon was destroyed in 1567 when Algerian pirates conquered, robbed and burned it. The Turks took over Rethymnon at 1646.

The Turkish occupation is known as a dark period for Rethymnon. The economy became agricultural, education ceased for a few centuries and oppression became unbearable. The Revolution at Sfakia (Chania) in 1770 prepared for the uprising of 1821. In the revolution of 1866, Arkadi Monastery near Rethymnon became the martyrdom of its defenders.

Crete was eventually unified with the rest of Greece in 1913 and since then it has followed the nation's history. In May 1941, Rethymnon was one of the German Parachutists' three fronts. The memorable resistance of the local people led to the execution of hundreds of inhabitants and the levelling of whole villages.

During the period of Ottoman rule, Rethymnon fell into decline as did the other towns in Crete. During the difficult years of the struggle for independence, its inhabitants were actively involved and, as a result, many of its freedom – fighters were executed.

In 1897, the Russian army took up Rethymnon and held over it until 1909. In 1913, it became part of Greece, together with the rest of Crete.

During the German occupation, the habitats of Rethymnon took an active part in the resistance against fascism.

Nowadays, Rethymnon shows a significant growth because of the development of tourism, the University of Crete, the produce and export of Cretan products, the cultural communication with European Countries during summer etc.

ROUTES OF INSPIRATION OF G. CHORTATISIS



G. Chortatsis – fresco, Ag. Paraskevi

Georgios Chortatsis is the first dramatist of modern Greek literature. He was the son of Ioannis Chortatsis, born in the middle of the 16th century (1545) and died in the beginning of 17th century (1640?) (at a time when the island was under the Venetian occupation).

The writer was quite educated, belonged to the middle class, was well-off and had friendships in the higher class, educated circles.

He lived on the trade of the products of his lands. He did not attend any foreign University – he was taught by Italian and Greek tutors in Crete.

It is believed that the grave that is located in the Asomatos Monastery area, inside the church of Agia Paraskevi belongs to the well known writer. This implies the inscription which is ascribed on the grave:

«Δέησις των Δούλων του Θεού
Γεωργίου του Χορτάτζη
και της Συμβίου Αυτού»

G. Chortatsis – along with V. Kornaros and D. Solomos – are the three major artists that contributed to the evolution of Greek literature from the end of the 16th century to the end of the 19th century.

Through his prolific and diverse literary work, G. Chortatsis (c. 1550-1610) of Rethymnon played a leading role in bringing the theatrical form from Italy to Crete and radically recast the methods, aims and expectations of literary production on the island, thus opening the way for the birth of the modern Greek theatre.

He was followed by many other writers, most of whom remain anonymous. To the traditional types of drama (tragedy and comedy) which at last re-emerged after centuries of silence, were added the “mixed” genre of the pastoral and religious drama, which it may be noted, was not related to the late medieval mystery plays. The pastoral is represented by the elegant and lights - spirited Voskopoula (Shepherdess).

Of Chortatsis plays are saved besides Erophili, the pastoral comedy “Panoria”, the comedy “Katzourbos” and various Intermedia. It is most probable that the comedy “Stathis” that was saved incomplete and unsigned was also written by Chortatsis. All these plays were written during the years 1590-1610.

The finest achievement of the Cretan theatre was Erophili by Georgios Chortatsis, a five-act tragedy written along the lines of Italian classicizing drama. The theme of Erophili is inspired from the Italian play Orbecche of Giovanni Batista Giraldi (1504-1573: Ferrara-Mondovi – Pavia), the tragedy of Filostrato e Panfila of Antonio Cammelli il Pistoia (1436-1502: Pistoia- Ferrara) and the tragedy Il Re Torrismondo of Torkouato Taso (Sorrento – Napoli – Rome- Urbino- Venice- Padova-Bologna- Ferrara).

In Erophili’s theatrical play, King of Philogonos reigns in Egypt, after having murdered his brother and rightful King of the country and having seized his throne and married his queen. In the Court, his daughter Erophili is being brought up alongside with Panaretos, a young boy who is also of royal descent, but King Philogonos is unaware of this fact. The two young people fall in love and, after a war during which Panaretos saved his country from sheer catastrophe, exchange reigns in secrete marriage.

But Erophili’s father intends to give her hand in marriage to one of his opponents, the Kings of Persia and the East, in order to establish the peace. Furthermore, the assigns of Panaretos with the task to convince his daughter to accept such a marriage. After Erophili’s denial to consent, Philogonos discovers his daughter’s secret marriage and decides to punish Panaretos, despite of his attempts to persuade the King of his royal descent. Finally Philogonos executes Panaretos after horrible tortures and, predating he agrees with his daughter’s marriage to her beloved one, he offers her, as a wedding present, a box containing mutilated parts of Panareto’s body. Erophili mourns over the remnants of her husband’s body and then kills herself. Philogonos is the beaten to death by the Chorus.

Despite of its tragic conclusion, Erophili is a work of deep humanity and dignity, and stresses the right to follow the calling of the heart. This explains its enormous popularity. It went through numerous reprints, and many of its verses became popular saying or entered the oral literary tradition, while the tale itself passed into folk legend.

Only a few plays have survived from the dozens that were composed during the golden age of Cretan theatre, due to the abrupt termination of Venetian rule by the Turks.



Sketch from the pastoral comedy “Panoria”



Programme from a production of “Erophili” at the theatre of Karolos Koun, 1934 (Archive of the Y. Tsarouchis Foundation, Marousi, Athens)

In the 17th century the cultivation of the literary styles and forms of the preceding period was continued, though momentum gradually waned as writers of the caliber of Chortatzis and Kornaros, competent to undertake the task of renewal, did not materialize. At the same time Cretan literary composition in Italian gained greater currency. Its organic incorporation into the literary environment of Crete required further abilities and skills that the younger writers either did not possess or, possessing them, failed to exploit sufficiently. Although Cretan literature had experienced the pastoral genre and its formal demands with works such as *Panoria* and *Voskopoula*, the mediocre anonymous rendering in Greek of the Italian *Il pastor fido*, together with *Amorosa Fede* by Pantimos, while including a number of local features, provide clear evidence of the new literary climate that emerged in Crete during the first decades of the century. Lastly, the rejection of Baroque as a means of artistic expression and as a source of inspiration led to a decline in the inflow of cultural models from Italy, which in turn led Cretan writers to look increasingly towards their own literary production for inspiration and to reproduce material that extended to a more limited geographical area, namely, the Aegean and Ionian islands. The plays written in the 17th century reproduces the structural characteristics of the recent past (e.g. Markos Antonios Foskolos: he copied Erophili and wrote a comedy, *Foyrtounatos* (1665)).

By studying the life, work and historical background of artists of 16th century we believe that we will have the opportunity to know better their work and their influence from and to foreign artists. Also it will be very interesting to travel around the areas where they were born, lived and inspired, to enjoy their theatrical plays, to visit the monuments that have been built and have been illustrated with icons or have been used as the last residence etc.

Artists of 16th – 17th century could inspire our target. In the eparchies of Milopotamos and Amari can be seen lots of examples of that period of art. There are lots of monuments which mirrors the art of the 16th – 17th century and also a very important theatrical writer who lived in and inspired from the area.

It is obvious that the plays of G. Chortatzis played a very important role in Cretan theatre. The man who probably was born, lived and educated in the areas above wrote such important plays that even today Greek and foreign artists choose them for the theatrical scenes (e.g. during the periods of *Renaissance Festival of Rethymnon*, *Talaia Festival of Municipality of Kouloukonas*, *Cultural festival of Anogia* etc).

Furthermore in the area of Milopotamos and Amari tourists can rent rooms in order to enjoy the writer's country, to know more about their traditions and their habits (such as their handicrafts), to taste their local - hand made products, to watch how to make cheese, wine or even to construct their own pots etc.

Vitsenzos Kornaros, Georgios Chortatzis,
Nikos Engonopoulos, 1979,
charcoal and pencil drawing on paper
(private collection)



CULTURAL EVENTS IN THE SUGGESTED AREA

A. MUNICIPALITY OF KOURITES

Summer 2007

- Local District of Lampiotes: Children's festival of Saint Kirikas
- Local District of Nithavr: Theatrical play
- Local District of Lochria: Theatrical play
- Local District of Petrochori: Concert of priest Stephanus Nikas
- Local District of Kouroutes: Theatrical play
- Local district of Fourfouras: traditional music evening
- Local District of Agios Ioannis: Theatrical play
- Town Hall (Local District of Fourfouras): Presentation of National Resistance recollections
- Local District of Fourfouras: Traditional threshing
- Local District of Platanos: Theatrical play
- Local District of Fourfouras: Traditional musical feast
- Local District of Fourfouras: *Marakeia* (local football tournament)
- Local District of Vizari: Backgammon competition
- Local District of Petrochori: *Prefa* (game with cards) Competition

EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Cycling Race

Place of event: Run on Local Streets
Organizer: Municipality of Kourites
Region: Vathiako
Participation: Free

Cretan Wedding Revival

Place of event: Spiritual Club of Fourfoura
Organizer: Municipality of Kourites
Region: Fourfouras
Participation: Free



Cretan Lady kneading



Cretan Lady; the bread is ready

Shooting Tournament

Place of event: Profitis Ilias Vizariou
Organizer: Municipality of Kourites
Region: Vizari
Participation: No Free



Cretan Lady ready to put the bread in the oven

Ascension to Psiloritis

Place of event: Psiloritis
Organizer: Municipality of Kourites
Region: Fourfouras
Participation: Free



Cretan saddle maker

SIGHTS

Vizari: Three aisled-basilica

Near Vizari, in the location Ellinika (signposted in the village) there are the remains of an important three-aisled basilica with an adjoining narthex, one of the oldest churches in Crete. The well-preserved church probably had a wooden roof. Now only remnants of the walls remain. It was presumably used as a bishopric church of Sivritos around the seventh century.

Vizari: Church dedicated to Agios Nikolaos

The Byzantine church of Agios Nikolaos is a small church on the top of a hill visible from a distance. The church also contains frescoes.

Vizari: Venetian Villa

Near the centre of the village Vizari, there are also the remains of the Palazzo dei Saonazzi and its sundial.

Vizari: Old Mill and Aqueduct

An old mill (mylos) is also near Vizari village. It is located on the west edge of the artificial lake below Vizari and to reach it, take the road towards Ellinika; do not turn right at the Ellinika sign but turn right on the next path which goes by the artificial lake. The aqueduct for the mill starts from the artificial lake and by following it, the well can be reached.

Vathiako: Church dedicated to Agios Georgios

The Byzantine church of Agios Georgios is in the Vathiako village. The church is visible from the road on the west side of the village. The early twelfth century frescoes in the church are well preserved.



Vizari : Rimoklisia



Vizari : Agios Nikolaos



Rizikas: Agios Panteleimon



Municipality of Kourites, Fourfouras, Agios Georgios

B. MUNICIPALITY OF SIVRITOS

- August: Various cultural events in all the local districts of the municipality in dates defined every year (there are announcements).

EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Local district of Gerakari

- 1st of January: New year' Cake cut in the chamber of the cultural association
- Clean Monday: Celebration of the Lent come by making a multi-coloured- ribbon-pole (*gaitanaki*)
- Good Saturday: burn of Judas' model
- Easter day: celebration in all the village gathering in houses
- 1st of May: celebration in the country - making of garlands with flowers
- 8th of May: Saint Ioannis celebration, big festival with food and drink
- 19th of July: On Prophet's Helias celebration Eve people climb the mountain where the homonymous church is, they spend the night there celebrating with food and drink.
- 20th of July: A feast in the village square completes the celebration of Prophet Helias
- 22nd of August: memorial service for the heroes killed by the German conquerors on the 22nd-8-1944
- First fortnight of November: *Kazanemata*: distillation of Raki (local drink), during which people celebrate with food and raki.

Local district of Vrisses

- 26th of July (celebration of saint Paraskevi): feast at Kardaki
- 15th of August (dormition of the Maddona): feast at the village
- 22nd of August: memorial service for the heroes killed by the German conquerors on the 22nd-8-1944

Local district of Kalogerou

- 1st of January: New year' Cake cut with the participation of all the residents and visitors. Women cook traditional dishes
- 18th of January (celebration of saint Athanasios and Kirillos): The whole village becomes a big company, singing, dancing and playing traditional musical instruments (lira, laouto)
- March: During the carnival and on Clean Monday, people celebrate the coming of the Lent, women cook traditional dishes and various games and events take place
- July: one- day excursion somewhere in Crete
- December: Edition of calendar with pictures of the life in the village and singing of Christmas carols in all the houses

Local district of Meronas

Meronas is a village with rich tradition, which there is a big effort to be kept alive even nowadays, through cultural events that are organized. At the feasts of the local saints that are celebrated throughout the year, all the residents go to the country churches and a festival follows the ceremony. Marriage in Meronas is carried out with all the traditional customs.

EVENTS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

- 1st of January: New year' Cake cut with the participation of all the residents and visitors. Women cook traditional dishes
- Clean Monday: Celebration of the Lent come by making a multi-coloured- ribbon-pole (*gaitanaki*), celebration with a traditional cretan musical group and traditional events (games and sketches):

sketches

- Lerades
- The bear
- Chotzas
- The cobbler
- The wedding
- The Camel



The Camel Sketch



The Bear Sketch

Games:

- The Pepper
 - The Chairs
 - The old woman's heap
-
- During the Holy Week the children of the village gather chops of wood, they collect them somewhere near the church and this is called "Orfanos" (orfan), which together with a model of Judas, they burn in the night of the Resurrection. On Holly Thursday the residents of the village bring garlic in the church so that it will be blessed and then they eat it in order to keep them safe from scorpions' and other insects' bites. On Holly Saturday, before the bells ring for the Resurrection, groups of children go around the village ringing horse-shoe shaped peaces of iron and they invite the residents of the village to go to the church. Then each family- man sets fire to a big peace of prickple called "Achinopoda" outside his house and goes to church.
 - On the first week after Easter the housewives sweep their houses only with *azogiros* a kind of bush, so that insects and bugs won't get into their house
 - Night of the Resurrection: fireworks
 - 1st of May: celebration in the area of Saint Nicolaos
 - Celebration of the holy Spirit ib Xiloskali
 - 23rd- 24th of June: event for the opening of *Klidonas*
 - July: Traditional threshing of the wheat seeded by the members of the association
 - 27th of July: day on which the patron saint, saint Panteleimon, is celebrated, a big feast is organized in the village.
 - August: threshing in a traditional way
 - August: organisation of a theatrical play or musical event in cooperation with the municipality of Sivritos. Especially this summer the play which was presented had to do with Georgios Chortatsis: "Chortatsis and Ergina" (Georgios Hatzidakis).
 - August: Organisation of artistic photo exhibition or other event
 - August: One-day excursion in some place of Crete
 - October: *Kazanemata*: distillation of Raki (local drink), during which people celebrate with food and raki, telling traditional legends and old stories
 - November: Wheat seeding in traditional way
 - Christmas period: Traditional decoration of the village, singing Christmas and
 - New Years' carols accompanied by traditional music
 - January: Edition of a calendar decorated with pictures of different scenes of life in the village

FAIRS IN OTHER LOCAL DISTRICTS OF THE MUNICIPALITY



30th of June, Saint Apostles Fair

Fair Place: Apostolon Square
Organizer: Municipality of Sivritou
Region: Apostoli
Participation: Free



17th of July, Saint Marina Fair

Fair Place: Monastiraki Square
Organizer: Municipality of Sivritou
Region: Monastiraki
Participation: Free



6th of August, The metamorphosis of Christ Fair

Fair Place: "Koloidenas" Monasteri
& Ano Meras Square
Organizer: Municipality of Sivritou
Region: Ano Meros
Participation: Free



15th of August, Virgin Mary Fair

Fair Place: Vrisses Square
Organizer: Municipality of Sivritou
Region: Vrisses
Participation: Free



Saint John Fair

Fair Place: Pantanasa Square
Organizer: Municipality of Sivritos
Region: Pantanassa
Participation: Free



24th -25th of August, Saint Titos Fair – Kasimatia (Running and other athletic events tournament)

Fair Place: Saint Titos Church & Amari Square
Organizer: Municipality of Sivritos
Region: Amari
Participation: Free



15th of August, Virgin Mary "Patsos" Fair

Fair Place: Patsos Square
Organizer: Municipality of Sivritos
Region: Patsos
Participation: Free

SIGHTS

Meronas: Church dedicated to Panagia (Virgin)

In the centre of the village of Meronas is the Byzantine church of the Panagia (Virgin). The architecture of the church is distinctive because the dome is supported on the north side of the church. The three aisles of the church are unequal in length and of different ages. On the back walls of the church there are blind arches in each one of the three semicircles of the apses. Above the door is the coat-of-arms of Kalergis (an important Cretan family during the Venetian era). The doors and windows are elegantly carved, and there is also a decorative melon carving. As well as some very distinctive frescoes the church also contains a fourteenth century icon of the Panagia. The village priest has the church key.

Apostoli: Church dedicated to Agios Nikolaos

The cemetery church of Agios Nikolaos contains fourteenth and fifteenth century frescoes and the paintings of the donor, the man in a strange white gown, are shown. The church, to the right up the steps in the village, has a superb view of the Amari valley. The village priest has the key.

Monastiraki: Church dedicated to Michael Archangelos

The Byzantine church of Michael Archangelos is on a small square in the village. It has an elegantly carved front door and pleasant decorations on the windows. There is only one fresco in this church, that of the Assumption of the Virgin, but it is of very good quality. The bell of the church has drawings of Michael Archangelos and the date 1601 on it.

Lambiotes: Church dedicated to Panagia (Virgin)

In Lambiotes is the Byzantine church of the Panagia which contains frescoes with a western influence. There is also a coat of arms on a tomb on the exterior wall of the church. Follow a dirt road starting below the main road at the end of the village. The church is about 500 metres below.

Lambiotes: Church dedicated to Agios Georgios

The church of Agios Georgios in the west part of the village has a well- preserved fresco of the Virgin and Child.

Gerakari: Church dedicated to Agios Ioannis Theologos

The area of Gerakari contains several old churches. In the location Foti, on the main road, is the Byzantine church of Agios Ioannis Theologos with well-preserved thirteenth century wall paintings. The church is a single room and has a narthex in front of it and a dome. The dome is decorated with blind arches made with bricks.

Pantanassa: Church dedicated to Agios Ioannis and Agia Triada

Just before entering the village, on the road, is the two-aisled Byzantine church of Agios Ioannis and Agia Triada. The two aisles are separated with arches with relief decorations in the form of melons. Externally, the church has very attractive door decorations and an inscription of 1645 on its bell tower. Inside there is a grave with an coat of arms, inscriptions and decorations.

Amari: Church dedicated to Agios Theodoros

The Byzantine church of Agios Theodoros at the far end of the village on a dirt path (signposted) has a few frescoes and inscriptions from 1588. The church has a bell with a relief of the Panagia.

C. MUNICIPALITY OF KOULOUKONAS

CULTURAL EVENTS

TALLEA FESTIVAL: Tallea is a festival held every summer. During the festival a variety of events take place in different local districts of the area. The events which took place this summer for example were the following:

- SATURDAY 4TH AUGUST 2007, 21.00 p.m., Axos, G. Hatzidakis, “Fronimi, the princess of Axos” (theatrical play)
- TUESDAY 7TH AUGUST 2007, 21.00 p.m., Aloides, G. Hatzidakis, “Fronimi, the princess of Axos” (theatrical play)
- WEDNESDAY 8TH AUGUST 2007, 21.00 p.m., Dafnedes, W. Shakespeare “Measure for measure” (theatrical play)
- THURSDAY 9TH AUGUST 2007, 21.00 p.m., Apladiana, G. Hatzidakis, “Fronimi, the princess of Axos” (theatrical play)
- FRIDAY 10TH AUGUST 2007, 21.00 p.m., Kalivos, M. Balamoutsou “The misfortunes of love” (theatrical play)
- THURSDAY 16TH AUGUST 2007, 21.00 p.m., Garazo, A concert with Hainides (cretan traditional band)
- MONDAY 20TH AUGUST 2007, 21.00 p.m., Agia, “The flower of Zakynthos” (theatrical play)
- TUESDAY 21TH AUGUST 2007, 21.00 p.m., Drosia, M. Zervakis “Why?” (theatrical play)
- WEDNESDAY 22TH AUGUST 2007, 21.00 p.m., Livadia, D. Psathas, “Fon Dimitrakis”
- THURSDAY 23TH AUGUST 2007, 21.00 p.m. Krioneri, N. Kazantzakis “Captain Michael” (theatrical play)



Axos: Transfiguration of Christ



Axos: Agia Irini

C. MUNICIPALITY OF ARKADI



Arkadi Monastery



Eleutherna, Agia Anna



Skouloufia, Panagi