

Klissoura Gorge

The Klissoura gorge is 45 km south of the town of Heraklion, in the province of Monofatsio, near the village of Charakas. From there we start going up Asterousia Mountains leaving the panoramic view of the central plain of Messara behind us heading to the village of Paranympfi. We drive southeast after leaving Paranympfi following the dirt track road passing in front of the cemetery and after about two kilometers we find a small chapel on our right.

Driving carefully, we continue for another 200m looking to the right for the telephone poles (and not the electricity poles). That's where we leave our car. We turn right into a minor dirt track road directing southeast like the poles.

Unfortunately we have to wander for another 200m in a labyrinth of fences that go up to the entrance of the Klissoura gorge, which can be spotted only from a short distance. We discover the path on the eastern side of the gorge or a little further on. After going down the first meters the gorge widens revealing the fantastic view of the Libyan Sea nearly forcing us sit on a rock and look far away at the sea. Mind you! You've been watched!!

Everywhere around you the goats are your vigilant watchers and terminators of whatever green on land in cooperation with the patrols of harrier eagles in the air that check your movements! Half an hour later carried away by an association of thoughts we have walked a bit more than half the way and we can see a small island 50m from the coast in front of the gorge.



Instead of going down to the seaside we head west at the end of the rocks. We move parallel and down to the sea. In front of us we can see the built-up area of Tris Eklissies and the cape of Martelos, behind of which there is the Monastery of Koudoumas. We have to leave the path somewhere here going down to the road up to the built-up area. If we want to camp it's a good idea to go on to the next beach to the west. At weekends there are usually taverns open that let rooms if you like.

On the next day there are a lot of alternative suggestions like visiting the gorge starting inside the built-up area or following the path to the west for about three hours till we reach Koudoumas Monastery.

Of course we mustn't forget to dive into the normally crystal clear waters of the Libyan Sea. On the way back you can buy some local goat to roast in the oven (!) and ask for local cheese in Paranympfi. Have a nice walk and bon appetit!

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