

# European Long Distance Walking Path E4 – Crete

**Note:** Warning - Many portions of this route include harsh and arid hiking conditions. Carrying supplies and especially adequate water are essential. All appropriate preparations should be made and detailed walking maps are a must. It is advisable to walk as a group of two or more and to inform someone who can check your progress, where you are and your intended next destination at each stage of the journey.

We receive reports of parts of this path being completely blocked, badly signed or not signed at all (Sougia to Agia Roumeli being specially bad and not always passable). Ask several people locally before starting out and allow for the possibility of having to return to your starting point after many hours walking. It is easy to get lost. Proceed with great caution.

**Additional warning:** We have been informed by some hikers that many of the distances shown below are inaccurate. We advise paying attention to detailed maps and to study them thoroughly before each day's route is planned.

## The Cretan highland

The E4 path on Crete forks in Sougia in Northern and southern parts.

The Northern part is purely alpine and requires alpine experience from the hiker. The southern part on the south coast of the island, is very rough at many points. At some positions between Sougia and Chora Sfakion the path is abandoned. Sure-footing is necessary for both branches. Neither branch goes through the Samaria gorge. The length of each branch is approximately 320 km and one needs 3 weeks for the complete hike.

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### From Kastelli

From Kastelli, one hikes south and over the village of Kato Paleokastro (2 km), Korfiana (2 km) Grigoriana (2 km), Polirinia (2 km), Galouvases (2 km), on asphalted route to Lousakies (2,5 km - restaurant), Zachariana (2,5 km), on asphalted route to Sfinari (7 km - lodging); from Kastelli: 22,5 km.

### From Sfinari

From Sfinari to Ano Sfinari (1 km) and through the following villages: Kambos (5 km), Keramoti 5 km), Amigdalokefali (3 km), Simantiriana(3,5 km), Papadiana 2,5 km), Kefali (1 km), Vathi (2 km), Plokamiana (2 km), to the monastery of Chrissoskalitissa (7 km from Sfinari, 32 km- visit - lodging; historic monastery). From Chrissoskalitissa over Elafonissos (1 km), Ag.Ioannis (4 km), Koundoura (4,5 km) to Paleochora (7,5 km) - from Chrissoskalitisa 14,5 km and from Kastelli approximately half a week; lodging.

### From Paleochora

From Paleochora, one reaches the historic Lissos (11 km; once Asklipios spa) and after a further 3,5 km reaches Sougia (6 hours from Paleochora; visit - and lodging). Here, the path forks into two, the alpine part and the part at the southern coasts of the island until Frangokastello.

### Course of the southern part:

The route of Sougia to Agia Roumeli, where the Gorge of Samaria exits, opened recently and is marked. From Sougia to Pikilassos-Tripiti (7,5 km), exit of the canyon (1 km), Domata 5 km, exit of the canyon (3 km), Agia Roumeli 6 km - from Sougia: 20 km-8 to 9 hours; visit - and lodging; connection with ferry to Loutro and Chora Sfakia).

### From Agia Roumeli

From Agia Roumeli hike the path along the coast to chapel Ag. Pavlos (3,5 km), Marmara - exit of the Aradena canyon (6,5 km), Loutro (3 km - from Ag. Roumeli: 13 km-5 hours; Visit and lodging).

### From Loutro

From Loutro to Chora Sfakia (6 km; visit - and lodging; Bus connection with Chania), Komitades (4 km; restaurant), Vraskas (1,3 km), Nimikiana (0,5 km), Ag.Nektarios (1,5 km), Frangokastello (6,5 km-from Loutro: 19,5 km-6,30 hours; Venetian castle; visit and lodging).

### From Frangokastello

From Frangokastello to Skaloti (4,5 km; restaurant), Argoules (2 km), Kato Rodakino 7,5 km - from Frangokastello 14 km; visit and lodging; from Kastelli Kissamou approximately 8 days). Here the path to the southern coast of the island stops. The path bends keenly northward and runs into the area of the Prefecture of Rethymno.

## Course of the alpine part of the path

1. from Sougia to Livadas (6,5 km), Koustogerako (4km), Agii Theodori (10 km), centre of the Omalos plateau (4 km). Hotel and Motels. 8 hours.

2. from Sougia directly through the canyon of Agia Irini to the center of the Omalos plateau (15 km) 7.30 hours. From Omalos to the Kallergi refuge (5 km) 2 hours. The refuge is farmed in the summer. From the refuge to the summit Melidaou (6 km), from there to Katziveli, where the refuge Chouliopoulos stands (7 km). Total (18 km) 7.30 hours . The refuge is closed normally and the keys are kept by the EOS (Greek Mountaineering Association) of Chania.

## From Katziveli

From Katziveli to Livada, Siderokefalo, Kanaki, Poussia (Mikros Trocharis), Koutalas, Fanari (side), Niatos (plateau), Tavri (plateau), Askifou. Entire 20 km, 10 hours. Inn, Motels.

## From Askifou

From Askifou to Imbros (5 km), through Imbros Gorge to Komitades (4,5 km) where one hits the path on the south of Crete and then to Frangokastello. Entire (19 km) 6.30 hours. The route separates here again. The alpine part proceeds: Patzianos (2,5 km), Kallikratis, Asi Gonia, Argiroupoli. Entire (27 km), 9 hours. The path runs into the area of the Prefecture of Rethymno.

## From Argyroupolis

From Argyroupolis to Kato Poros, then south 2,5 km, again east 1 km and now north to Moundros, then south through the Moudriano canyon, then east, southeast until Agoulia (23 km - 7-8 hours). Rooms, Motels.

## From Agoulia

From Agoulia southeast to Koxare, Agia Pelagia, Ano Mixorouma, (Motels), Spili (13,5 km - 4 hours) Motels, Rooms, bank, post.

## From Spili

From Spili take the path southeast by the route to Kissos, approximately 1 km after the village near the monastery where it bends north-east and then east to the summit of Mt Kedros (1776 m). From there the path to Gerakari (from Spili 18,5 km - 8 hours). Only Coffee shops.

## From Gerakari

From Gerakari to the villages Elenes, Amari, Opsijas, Lambiotes, Visari to Fourfouras. Rooms, Motels, shops. From Gerakari 5 hours.

## From Fourfouras

From Fourfouras the marked way to the refuge of EOS of Rethymno at the south slopes of Psiloritis to high 1400 m. The refuge is not always open. From Fourfouras until the refuge, the hike lasts 3,5 - 4 hours and the difference in altitude is approximately 1000 m.

## From here the way leads north

From here the way leads north through a rocky land steeply to the summit of Psiloritis -Timios Stavros (2454 m), reached in 3 to 3.30'. The area is arid and treeless. From the summit, one has a splendid view of the whole island. From the summit on a well stepped and marked path, one reaches & descends to the Nida plateau in 2,5 hours. Here the two branches meet again and proceed as a uniform path up to the east coast of the island. Above the Nida plateau is the Ida grotto (or Ideon cave), where Zeus was born by goat Amalthea according to the saga.

## Course of the southern branch

Course of the southern branch of the E4GR (traveling-part) from Rodakino to Nida. From Kato Rodakino north directly to the village of Agios Konstantinos (20,5 km - 7 to 8 hours). 3 km later the route bends to the alpine part of E4GR. Here Rooms, Motels.

## From Agios Konstantinos

From Agios Konstantinos east to Kaloniktis, Ano Valsamonero, Armeni (15 km - 5 hours). Rooms - Motels. Graveyard dating from minoan age in the village.

## From Armeni

From Armeni to the biggest part of forest-route - and field tracks through the village Selli (at the chapel Agia Fotini, where the route bends to Rethymno), Charkia and Kamvoussion to Arkadi (29 km - 9 to 10 hours). Motels, lodging in the monastery.

## From Arkadi

From Arkadi through the villages Eleftherna (Rooms, Motels), Kato Tripodio (lodging), Margariti (Rooms - Motels), Orthes (Motels), Kalantare, Kalamas, Passaline, Choumeri, Dafnedes, Episkopi, Garazo (32 km - 11 to 12 hours). Motels, shops.

## From Garazo

From Garazo to Anogia through Moni Diakouriou (Diakouriou monastery), Zoniana, asphalted route to Anogia (16 km - 5 hours). Motels, lodging, Rooms.

## From Anogia

From Anogia to Zomithos (11 km) and afterwards to Nida plateau (11 km), altogether 6 hours. The uniform long-distance-footpath E4GR here extends from the Nida plateau till the east coast. Despite its consistency, there are two branches at the start, from the village Kamares, where a grotto is situated, to the border. Branch 1. From the plateau to the summit (approximately 1000 m), then south-east till a fork (ca. 2 km), where one must follow the branch eastward. After more than 5,5 km, the path reaches a forest, turns south, to chapel Ag. Ioannis, through Gafari canyon to the village Zaros (19 km - 5,30' hours). Hotel, Motels. Branch 2. From the summit Timios Stavros, after approximately 5 km there is a marked forking of the path to Kamares (altitude 1900 m). To Kamares (9 km - 3 hours) - hotel, Motels, bus to Rethymno. From Kamares further to Vorizia (3,5 km - 0.50' hours), Zaros 9 km - 2.40' hours).

## From Zaros

From Zaros (first branch) up to the chapel Ag. Ioannis (7 km - high 900 m), Gyristi (7,5 km - high 1700 M.), EOS refuge (3 km - high 1100 M.), Ano Asites (entire 21,5 km - 9 30' hours). Only coffee shops, bus to Iraklion.

## From Ano Asites

From Ano Asites mainly on field and forest tracks, partially also on asphalted roads, hike to villages Kerassia (3,5 km), Veneraton (1,5 km), Kiparissi (7,7 km), Profitis Ilias (4 km). Motels, castle. Ano Archanes (9 km -3 hours), coffee shops, bus to Heraklion, Motels. Archaeological museum.

## From Ano Archanes

From Ano Archanes to Kato Archanes (2 km), Myrtia (9,5 km), Astraki (1 km), Apostoli (11,5 km), Kastelli (4,5 km) (Motels, Bus to Heraklion), Xydias (3 km) (Motels, Bus - Archaeological area), Kastamonitsa (3,5 km), Kato Metochi (9,5 km), Psychron (3 km - hotel, Motels, grotto, archaeological museum. Metochi and Psychron lie on the plateau of Lassithi, 850 m high.

## From Psychron

From Psychron through the Lassithi level to Agios Georgios (2,5 km), where there is also the refuge of the mountain climbers and skiers of Lassithi Club. The Vice president of the club is the priest of the village. Here, there is a hotel and Motels. From here the path goes south, one climbs to the saddle (1800 m) between the summits Dikti (2147 m) and Afendis Christos (2140 m). Before the saddle, the path bends east and proceeds descending to the Alm Salakano (17 km from Agios Georgios), where there is only a taverna.

## From the Alm Salakano

From the Alm Salakano east to Prina (18 km-5 Stds - high 550 m), Masseleri (3,5 km), Vassiliki (15,5 km - high 100 m, deepest portion of the hike), crossing of the Ierapetra-Agios Nikolaos road to Monastiraki, again climbing the slopes of mountain Thripti to the village Thripti (high 880 m - 5 km-2 30' hours), further along the slopes of the mountain to Orino (high 650 m - 6,5 km), Ghryssopigi (6,5 km), Papagiannades (9 km), Chandras (4 km), Ziros (4 km), descending to Ano Zakros (250 m high- 11 km from Ziros), (rooms, motels) to Kato Zakros through the Valley of the Dead (5,5 km-7,50' hours). Rooms, motels. Places to visit: palace. Kato Zakros lies on the east coast of the island and is where the the European long-distance-footpath E4GR of Crete finishes.