



On Saturday March 14th we traveled to Rethymnon.

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The first we did was go for a walk up to the old castle, [Fortezza](#). In the picture above we see the entrance, [the eastern gate](#).

In the picture to the left we see the street to the fortress from the old town. We parked at the ferry dock, however, so we came up another road, to the left in the picture.



Some of the walls of the fortress.



Here we are at church, [Agios Theodoros](#).



Here we go further past the church.



Here we are at the northeastern corner.



Further west we come to the [mosque](#). It was originally built by the Venetians in the 16th century as a Catholic cathedral, dedicated to St. Nicholas. After Rethymnon was conquered by the Turks, it was turned into a mosque, dedicated to Sultan Ibrahim Han. The cathedral was actually demolished and the mosque was built from scratch.



There was once a minaret next to the mosque, but there are only remnants left of it today. We can see the foundations of it at the nearest corner of the mosque.



Here we look further towards [warehouses](#) to the left. Here it was stored gunpowder, foods and it was also cisterns here.

At the back we see the building where one of the [councillors](#) to the governor lived. Today there are workshops for the conservation of antiques found here.



Adjacent is what is left of the governor's palace. It was built in 1581 and completed by the Venetians. The remains were later used as a prison by the Turks.



View from the fortress in the direction of Drapano Peninsula where we lived.



This is the church [Agia Ekaterini](#).



Lot of flowers.



The mosque and the church.



This is the [San Lucca bastion](#). It should reinforce and defend the north western part of the fortress. There is a sloping ramp up to the top where there was transported canons.



More flowers inside the fortress.



Before we go out again, we take a last picture over the castle.



Finally a picture from the [Erofilo-theater](#).



This is from one of the small squares in the old town, Platanos Square. The fountain on the left is called the [Rimondi fountain](#). It was built in 1626. It is drinkable water that flows out of lion heads.



The fountain.



One of the lion heads.



Then vi are at [the Venetian harbor](#).

It's a completely different mood now in winter time compared to summer. In the summer there are restaurants along the harbor and bustling life, especially in the evenings.



This is eastward from the harbor where most of the tourist hotels are located. The nearest beach is the city beach and behind the pier, which we barely glimpse, there are long sandy beaches.



The lighthouse at the end of the Venetian harbor.



A statue at the Venetian harbor.



One of the small streets of the old town.



Here we are at Mikrasiaton Square. One of the buildings here are massively decorated. It is OK, in away, when tagging is so nicely done as this.



In one corner of the square stands this monument. It is one of many monuments of refugees from Asia Minor who came to Crete in 1923. The names are of the towns, which they left in Asia Minor.

The Peace Agreement in July 1923 between Greece and Turkey ([Treaty of Lausanne](#)) resulted in an exchange of Greek and Turkish populations. Nearly 500,000 Turks (ie Turkish-speaking Greeks) was moved from Greece to Turkey, while about 1.5 million Greeks (ie Greek-speaking Christians Turks) were moved from Turkey to Greece.





Here we are in Agiou Fragkiskou street after going out from Mikrasiaton Square through this gate.



One of the narrow streets of the old town.



This dog is in the sun out on the streets. It has its own mattress to lie on.



This place was a restaurant when I was here the last time in 1991. It is evident that it was shut down many years ago.



This sign is left and tells what the restaurant was named. According to [TripAdvisor](#) the restaurant still exist, but it appears that they have moved to the neighbor street.



On March the 18th, we went to a little place called [Ano Vouves](#). I stand beside what I thought was the old tree.



A picture of the same tree.



Then we spotted the oldest tree. It's a little further up the hill. People here say that it is the [oldest olive tree in the world](#), but there is one [olive tree in Azorias](#), which probably is older.



We had to have a picture of me at the "correct" tree also.



The trunk is quite wide.
[Link](#) to a description of the tree on Wikipedia.
[Link](#) to the home page.



There is also an olive oil factory and a [museum](#).



An old weight outside the museum.



On March the 23th, we started on a small island tour. The first stop was at the [Arkadi monastery](#). [Link](#) to the home page.

This is the Venetian church from 1587.

The Arkadi Monastery is best known from the resistance against the Turks in 1866. 964 Greeks, men (254 were armed), women and children, had sought refuge in the monastery. After three days of battle, the Turks began to penetrate the walls. Instead of surrendering, they chose to collect in the gunpowder chamber and blow themselves up. Ca.3000 Turkish and Egyptian fighters were killed during the fighting. This tragedy echoed around the world, but it took another 30 years before Crete became free. Every year on November the 8th, which is the national day of remembrance for this tragedy, hundreds of people gather at the monastery to commemorate the martyrs.

Unesco has characterized Arkadi as a European freedom monument.



This is where the monks lived.

A petrified tree inside the cloister with a bullet in the trunk after the fighting in 1866.



This is inside the monastery church.



From the cloister.



From the cloister.



The back of the church.



This is the remains of gunpowder chamber where the surviving blew themselves up rather than be taken prisoner by the Turks.



On the innermost wall there made this picture.



The church.



The tree.



The entrance, the western gate seen from the inside.



The bullet that is still in the trunk.



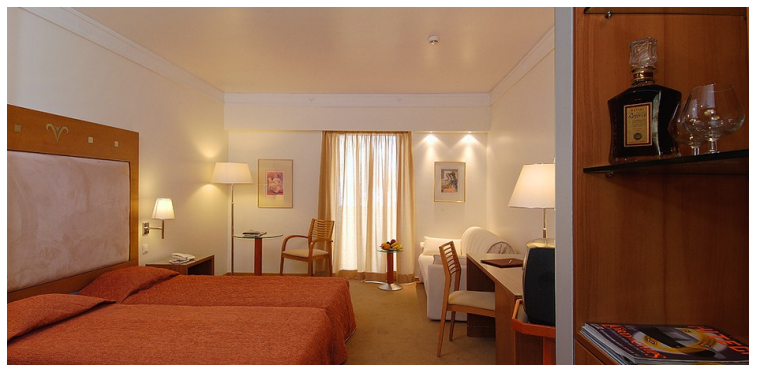
The monastery seen from outside.



This was formerly a windmill for the monastery. Now it's the place where all the bones from the dead in the explosion have been collected.



The hotel in Heraklion, [Atrium Hotel](#).



The room.

We had decided for an overnight in Heraklion before we went on. Then we would have time for a little sightseeing in the city.

Heraklion is Crete's largest city with about 140,000 inhabitants. It was founded by the Saracens in the 800s and it was the Venetian's capital of the island until the capitulation to the Turks in 1669 after a long siege. It had major injuries in 1941.

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The view from the hotel room that is described in the brochure.



The breakfast room.



The view from the hotel room in reality.



This is Heraklion's [loggia](#), or portico. It was a meeting place for the nobility and the government of the city. This is the 4th loggia that was built here.



The Lion Fountain is located at [Lions Square](#). The real name is Eleftheriou Venizelou Square, and it lies in the middle of the old town. [Link](#).



Dedalou Street, the shopping street in Heraklion.

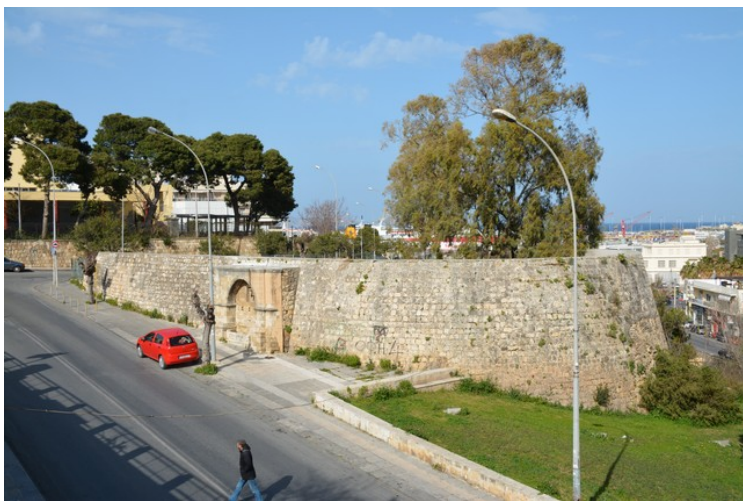


A couple of pictures from [Eleftherias Square](#), which is the main square of the city.



Here are remnants walls around Heraklion. A statue of [Eleftherios Venizelos](#), which has been called "the maker of modern Greece", is standing up on the wall.

Here he is.



More remnants of the wall.



Down by the harbor we went into this street to get down to the Venetian harbor. We did not come through, so we had to go the same way as we had come in.



This is labyrinth street.



In a roundabout at the harbor stands this dolphin statue.



Here we see [the Venetian harbor](#) with the fortress in the inlet. The fortress is called [Koules](#). It was probably begun in the 900s by the Arabs.

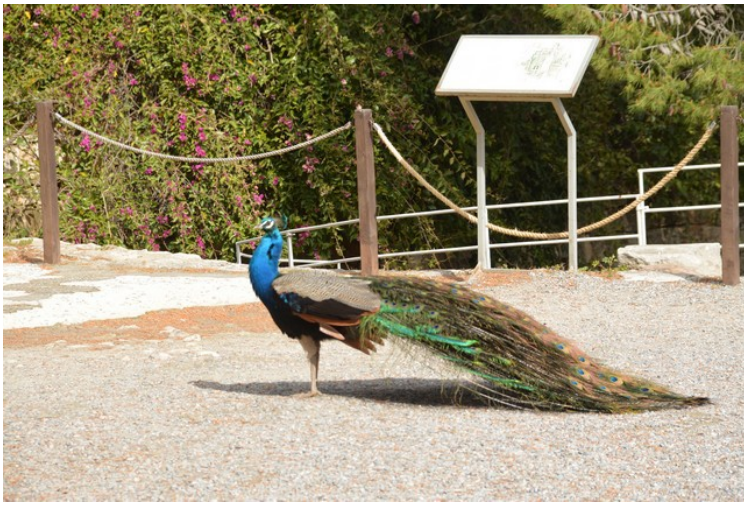


On the 24th we went to Knossos, which is located about 5 km south of Heraklion. Here we are inside the [the western entrance](#).

Links: [Link 1](#) [Link 2](#) [Link 3](#)



The first thing we noticed here was 3 such round pits called [kouloures](#). There is no one today who knows what they were used to. Perhaps it was recesses where they threw waste?



At the entrance there were several beautiful peacocks.



Here we have better views of the west facade.



This is the [southern propyleum](#), the southern entrance to the palace. This is partly reconstructed as Evans thought it could have been.

It was the English archaeologist [Arthur John Evans](#) who accounted for the excavations of Knossos. There is a statue of him at the entrance.



Just around the corner there are a couple of [fresco paintings](#).

The colors are as sharp as when they were painted 4,000 years ago. The Minoans painted with vegetable dyes directly on damp plaster. This meant that the dye penetrated into the plaster and created lasting colors.





Bull horns which was a Minoan symbol.



More reconstructed pillars.



The king priest.



The king's apartments.



Down here is the throne room.



Looking into the [throne room](#). This was a sacred area. It is believed that the throne room was used as a council hall and courtroom of King Minos and the clergy.



Columns in one end of the throne room.



Thick walls.



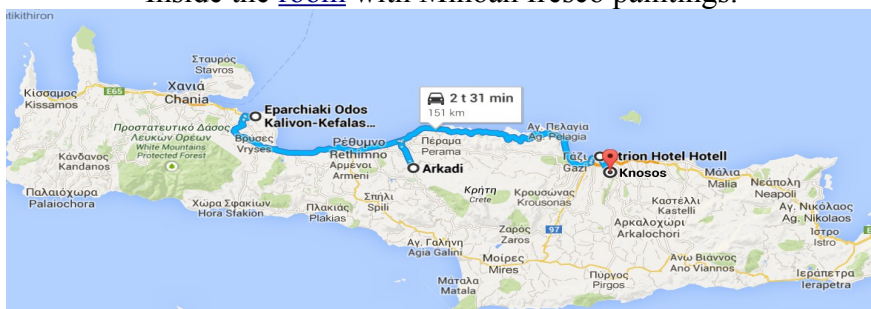
The northern entrance with columns.



These containers were used for storing various items.



Inside the room with Minoan fresco paintings.



This is the stretch we have run so far.