



TOURIST
GUIDEBOOK

CAVE OF PERAMA

ORGANIZATION OF
PERAMA
CAVE







The History of the discovery of Perama Cave



According to the first references since 1956, by the geologist – speleologist and founder of the Greek Speleological Company, Ioannis Petrochilos, the cave had been known by the inhabitants of the region for more than a century. In the decade of '60, at the time of the first explorations, there was oral evidence for the existence of the cave which started before 1900.

In the first decade of the 20th century, in 1907, the bey of the area, Coliasis effenti ordered the shutdown of the entrance of the cave, considering it risky for the following decades it remains unknown or at least no written evidence has been found to indicate that the cave was known to the inhabitants of the area. The changes during the Second World War in 1940, when the need of protection impelled Ioannis Kontogiannis to resort to the “burrow” he remembered and accidentally, after its expansion, to discover the Cave again that worked as a shelter for the inhabitants, at this difficult period. A decade approximately after 1950 a little while after the foundation of the Greek Speleological Company by the couple Petrochilou, the first exploration of the Cave takes place, the first report and a previous topographic surveying of the area (by A. Petrochilou and N. Zervas) up to 200 m. from the entrance of the Cave. Furthermore for the first time a reference is made to the exceptional shapes of adornment by Petrochilos.

The Cave acquires the archive number 167 (nowadays the archives of the Greek Speleological Company consist of about 10.000 recordings). A few months later Mr. Casvikis completes the same assignment at the Cave up to 450 meters, from the entrance, constructs another layout for the explored section and consequently publishes the evidence in the “Epirotic Chronicles” and in the local press. The Cave at that time began to accept the first visits and very soon in the same year the Prefectural Authority works so that the Cave can be visited. At that time the first iron gate is placed and works of tourist arrangements are made. According to the reports in the bulletin of the Speleological Company, by Petrochilos, the placement of the entrance was made from fund raising for this purpose. Furthermore, with the support of Epirotic Club of Athens and a slight support from the ex Prefecture, the first works of conformation for its tourist exploitation took place. The cave guide of that period was the man who had discovered it, Mr. I. Kontogiannis. Since 1956 when its settlement happened up to now Perama Cave remains open and hosts thousands of visitors per year.

The Perama Cave of Ioannina numbers among the most beautiful Caves worldwide that nature created in the bowels of hill Goritsa in a three storey palace 1.500.000 years ago. The “exhibits” presented are from the richest as in other caves 6 – 10 types of stalactite and stalagmite are formed, whilst in the Perama Cave they reach 19. In addition, we meet picturesque lakes with their stone lilies, where stalactite and stalagmite are mirrored in the crystal water.



In the Municipal Community of Perama the visitor, before visiting the Perama Cave which is a nature's miracle, can visit the information and visitors' centre "Anna Petrochilou". The visitors' center is located at the entrance of Perama where there is a free parking space for passenger cars and buses.

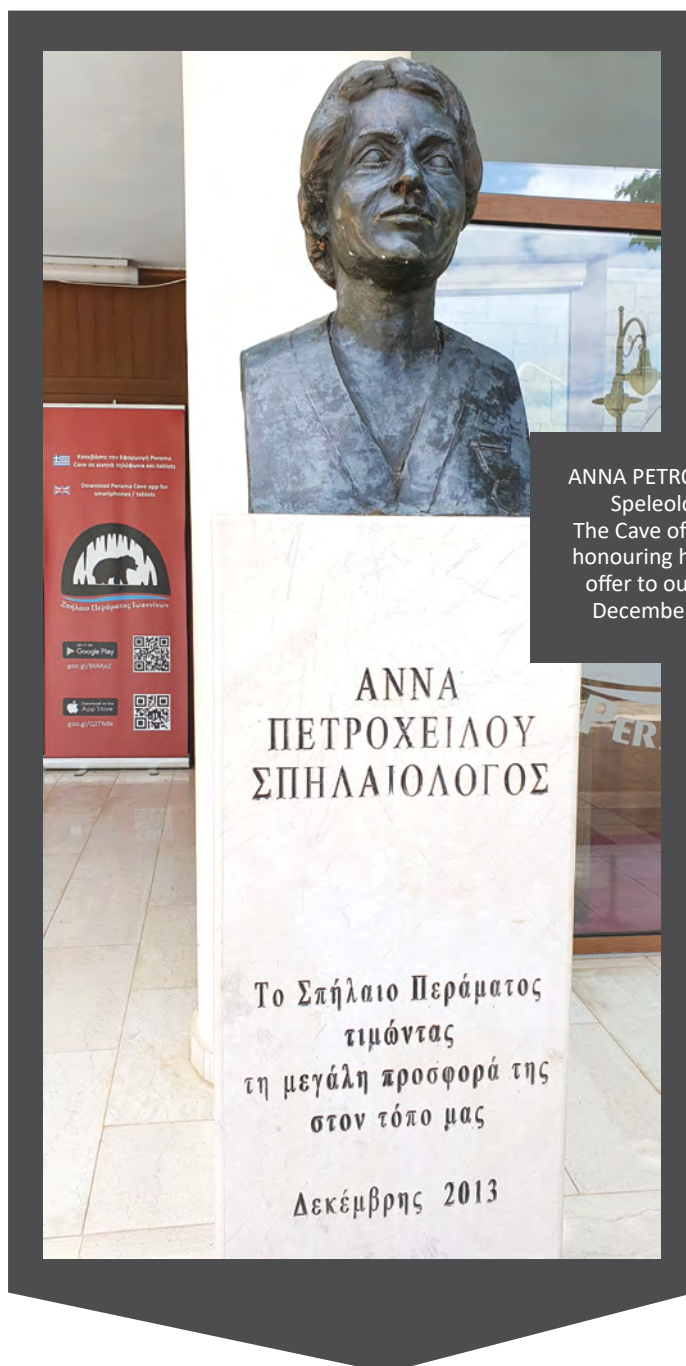
It offers a theatrical hall where projections take place:

a) Of opticoacoustic material with the topic "The World of Caves" which was supervised by the Ephorate of Paleoanthropology and Speleology of the Ministry of Civilization and Tourism.

b) Of threedimensional opticoacoustic material from the Cave (it is watched with the use of special glasses).

An exhibition of rare geological and paleontological findings from Greece and all over the world with exhibits aged from 60.000 B.C. to 240.000.000 years B.C. Minerals – semiprecious stones, types of stalactite and stalagmite, fossilized bones of prehistoric animals, prehistoric sea organisms, tree trunks etc.

The visitors can remain at the premises of the Projection Centre, where a café – refreshment room operates and afterwards by tourist train they can be transferred to the entrance of the Cave. At the exit of the Cave 25 m. higher than the entrance, the visitor has a wonderful view of not only the city of Ioannina but also the legendary Pamvotida Lake, well – known from the historical legend of Lady Frosini and Ali Pasha and through an external picturesque path returns to the entrance of the Cave.



ANNA PETROCHILOU
Speleologist
The Cave of Perama
honouring her great
offer to our place
December 2013



IOANNIS STEF. PETROCHILOS
Geologist – Speleologist – Founder of the
Hellenic Speleological Company
The Community of Perama of Ioannina
gratefully honoring the memorable scientist
and explorer
Set up this statue
8 July 1973



Memorandum

- Tourist Route
- Massive Rocks
- Columns
- Stalagmites
- Rocks
- ✓ Presiptious Cliffs
- ⌋ Sloping ground
- Water

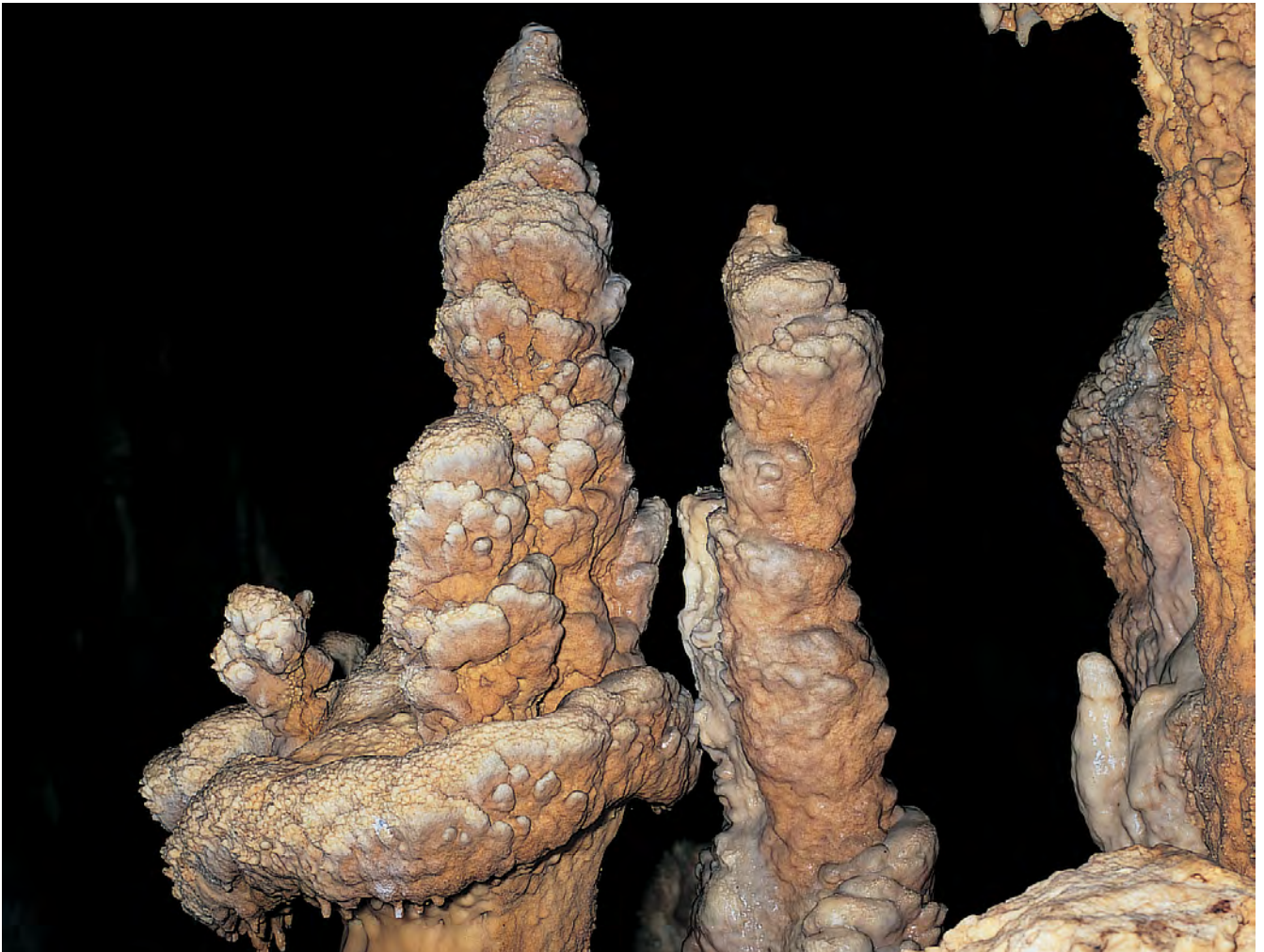
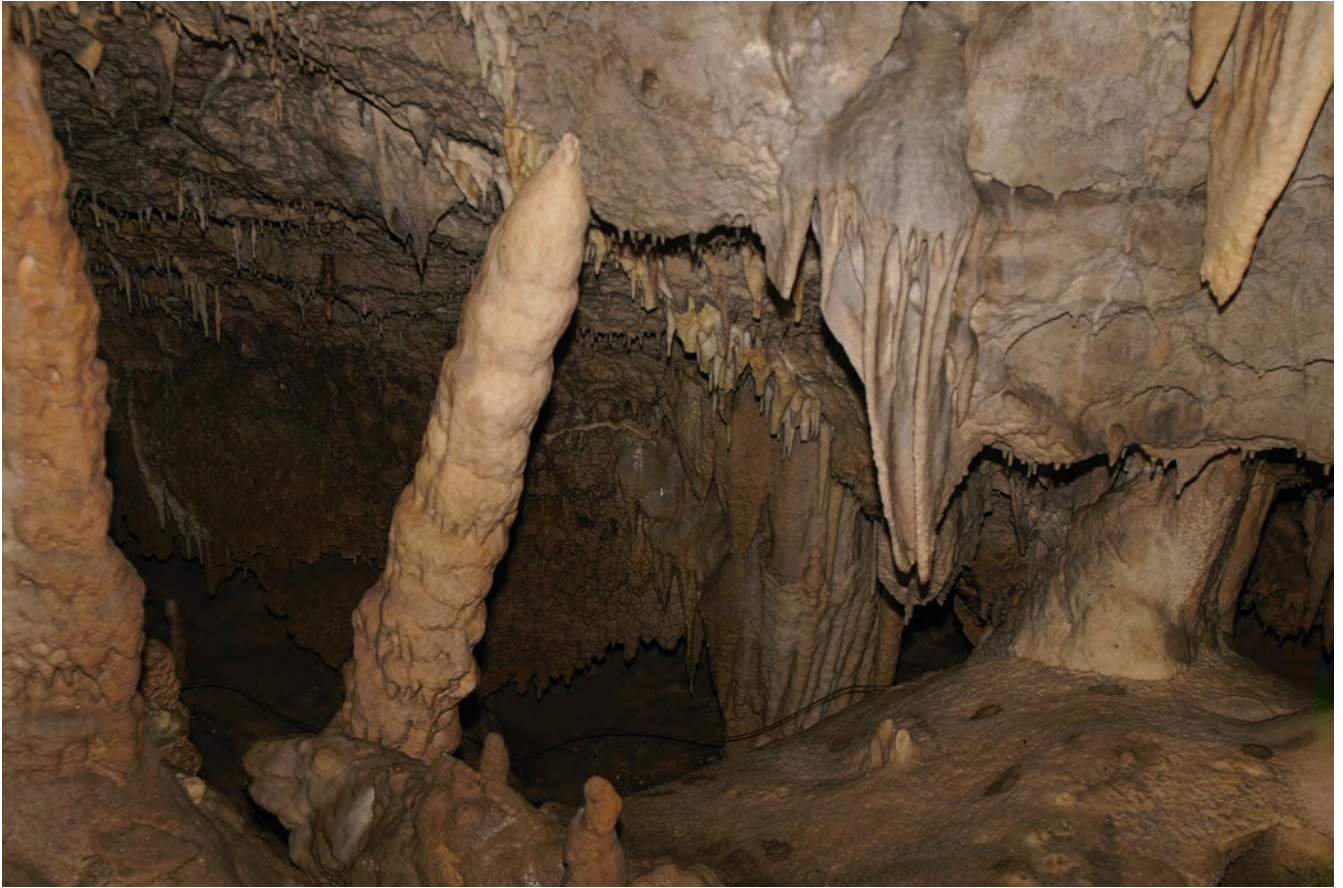
1. Entrance
2. Picturasque Grove
3. Palace Corridor
4. Royal Palaces
5. Chapel
6. Virgin Forest
7. Persephone's palace
8. Pluto's palace
9. Glysinian's (Wisteria) palace
10. Dead city
11. New city
12. Lake with water lilies
13. Teeth of a cave – dwellin bear
14. Altar
15. Celestial dome
16. Artificial Exit



Ioannis & Anna
Petrochilou

Map of the Cave







Perama Cave

In Ioannina, the stunning Epirotic capital with the millennium story and in 4 kilometers distance from the Municipal Community of Perama lies one of the rarest Caves in the world and member of the International Show Caves Association (I.S.C.A.), Perama Cave of Ioannina.

Perama Cave of Ioannina is the first cave tourist attraction in Greece but also the one that remains first in the impressions, the size and its rarity. Within the cave fossilized bones and teeth of the cave – dwellin bear (*Ursus spelaeus*) were found for the first time in Greece (1956).



Description of the interior of the cave

Perama cave occupies an area of 14.820 sq. m. according to the recording and evidence of the couple Ioannis and Anna Pet-rochilou. Its length is 420 m. in straight horizontal development, whereas the overall length of the corridors in the Cave is 1.100 m.

Despite its significant horizontal development, the cave shows only 35 metres altimetric difference from the lowest to its high-est spot, which is located at the exit of the cave.

From the first speleological reports the cave is divided into three sections, which present various morphology and accord-ing to I. Petrochilos, different way of birth. The explorer con-siders the speleogenesis guided by the cracks of the rock and specifies the region with various geometry of cracks and corre-spondingly with a different morphology of the cave. Thus the first region near the entrance quotes that is characterized from “lake galleries”, the second from “chambers” and the third from “true galleries”. Even the general NW – SE to NS direction of de-velopment of the cave depends on this structure.

It consists of 19 huge chambers in comparison to other Caves of which the largest has 10 chambers.

In 2019 a complete replacement of internal lighting took place with led lights whose lighting gives a new dimension to the internal adornment of the cave.

Perama Cave provides two modern generators which in case of blackout are activated automatically so that no tour guide is disrupted.

















Natural Environment

The basin consists of humid habitats offers the lakeside vegetation, meadows, thickets and agricultural – residential zone.

The types of vegetation that you can encounter in the basin are: reeds, pine trees, willows, poplars, hop hornbeams, kermes, junipers, oaks, austrian pines, gavri, pyrus spinosa, maples.

There are also vital types of flora which are characterized as rare such as *Eleocharis mitracapra steudel*, *Cicutavirosa L.* and *Azolla filiculoides lam.* You can also meet wild pansies, valerianas, primroses, centauriums, campanulas, carnations, silene, sedo astragalus, geraniums etc.

At the area of the basin twenty (20) species of mammals have been recorded such as: the fox, the wolf, the badger, the marten, the weasel, the hedgehog, the hare, the squirrel etc.

A remarkable number of birds that exceeds one hundred and thirty (130) species has been recorded in the basin such as the snake eagle, the Egyptian vulture, the hawk, the falcon, the cormorant, the stork, the ferruginous duck, the Kestrel, the coot, the tree sparrow, the great crested grebe, the wid-geon etc.

The lake of Ioannina or Pamvotida as well as the mountain Mitsikeli, have joined the network of protected areas Natura (2000).







Fossils

Caves constitute natural archives of past information, useful not only to the archaeologists but also to the paleontologists, as in their interior ideal conditions of fossilization exist. However, fossils do not exist in all caves, on the contrary their discovery is rare and for that reason it is of great importance. Perama cave is crucial for the Greek country as fossils of the extinct cave – dwellin bear have been found (*Ursus spelaeus*).

Anna Petrochilou reports that in the cave of Perama “a tooth of a cave – dwellin bear” was found for the first time in Greece. The finding of fossils was reported in 1957 by I. Petrochilos at the International Convention I.N.Q.U.A. in Madrid. Later, in 1979, fossils of Perama Cave were studied by the Professors of the University of Athens N. Simeonidis and G. Theodorou. In the material of the study of the above bones of the metacranian skeleton, falling teeth in part of upper jawbone are included. The material is very much typical of the determination of the cave – dwellin in bear according to the morphological and metric characteristics. These fossils belong to the period of Ano Plistokenou when this animal lived and expanded.

The cave – dwellin bear is one the largest bears that lived on earth with weight that can reach half a tone, with height more than 2.5 m. in erect position, huge crane with blurry forehead and generally healthy skeleton. This bear is a typical animal of Ano Plistokenou Period (10.000 – 100.000 years) for the site of Europe and Greece. In this period the conditions were diverse with the appearance of successive ice periods. For these animals caves were often places of living, hibernation, children’s birth and therefore almost always the remains are located among the fossils that exist in them. In some circumstances, indeed, fossils only from the cave – dwellin bear, as it happens in Perama Cave of Ioannina. A new excavation – paleontological research in the Cave followed in 1992 – 1993, whose results were announced in 1994 in the 5fth International Convention (Athens - Crete) with the topic “Development, Evolution and Enviroment of Caves” and were published in the Report of the Greek Speleological Company. This study by the professors P. Pavlakis, A. Fistani, N. Simeonidis gave new evidence for the paleontology of Perama Cave. It specified above the cave – dwellin bear the presence of the fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) and the goat (*Capra ibex*).





Geographical Elements of the Area

The plain area of the Ioannina's basin where the hill of Perama Cave lies stretches out around the Pamvotida Lake and it is surrounded by successive mountains and highlands. Its higher spots are located on the northwest side with the mountain Mitsikeli prevailing (alt. 1811 m.), whereas the shorter ones develop on the east and south side. In the middle, that lies among the south slopes of Mitsikeli, the town's hills and Kastritsa's hill, the lake of Ioannina is formed.

The lake communicated earlier via a natural ditch with Lapsista's lake, on the northwest side of the basin which was drained during the decade of '50 so that the meadow of Lapsista could be created.

Many limestone hills form a special landscape which is connected with historical places such as Kastritsa, Bizani, Perama Cave and Gardiki's Castle. Geologically the area belongs to the Ionian zone with the limestones dominating. You can find a few zones of flischi occasionally.

The climate of the area is that of mild Mediterranean type with lots of rain, frequent fogs and dry summer.

At the mountainous parts of the region the climate becomes harsher with several snowfalls in the winter.



History of the Area

The first indications of human presence in the basin are dated back in the Middle Paleolithic Era, as the stone tools, which were found in the excavations that took place in Kastritsa's Cave, confirmed. At the foot of Gardiki Hill, near Rodotopi, the ruins of the church of Arios Zeus, which was built at the end of the 4th century BC, were saved.

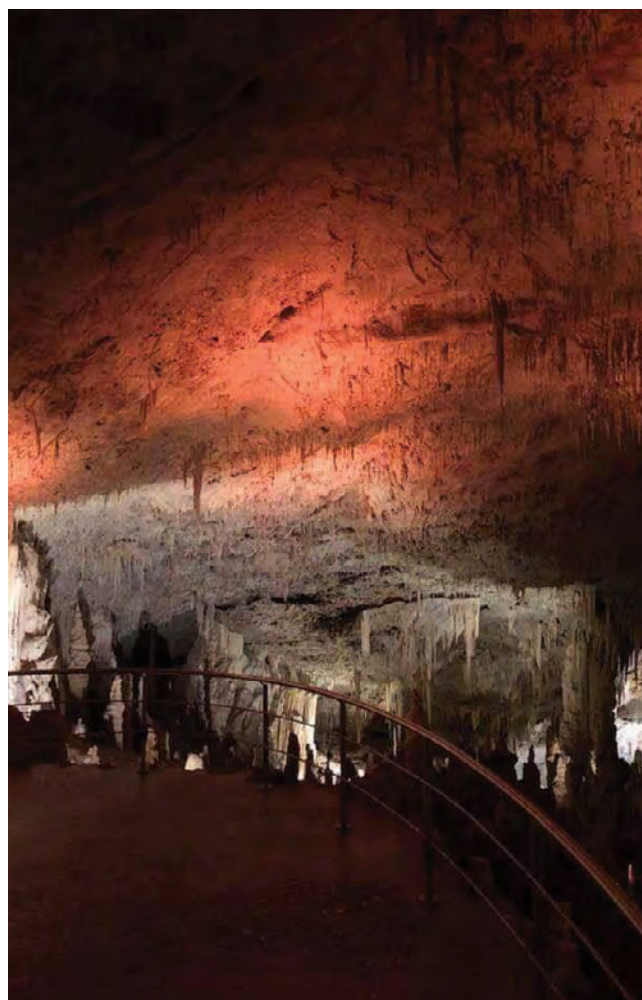
Thus Pyrros unites the epirotic genders and expands the geographical borders of Epirus.

In the first Byzantine years, the region of Ioannina belongs to the Roman province of Old Epirus (Epirus Vetus).

A great part of the area was destroyed by barbaric invasions. In 1020 A.C. Ioannina is referred in a script of Vasileios II Bulgaroktonos. In 1430 Ioannina is under the Ottoman Administration. In 1611, the Tirkis bishop Dionysos, known as Dionysios Skylosophos was the leader of one of the first revolutionary movements of the modern Greek History. During, the period of Ali Pasha's Administration Ioannina experienced great prosperity in the trade, in the craftsmanship, in arts and letters.

Ioannina will be liberated in February 1913 from the Ottoman conquerors.











Perama of Ioannina (The area around the Cave)

Built on the banks of Pamvotida Lake Perama has to demonstrate the prominent Perama Cave (one of the finest in the world).

On the northwest side of the hill of the cave iron knives, handles and shells of the 4th century B.C. were found.

The church of Saint Charalampos which was frescoed in 1769 by Athanasios Kapesovitis is also remarkable.

The architecture of the church presents several peculiarities such as two aisles and a huge pier in the middle of the narthex which supports the wooden ceiling.

The church of Saint Nikolaos which was built in the 16th century is significant as well.

Perama is the seat of the Municipal Community of Perama of the Municipality of Ioannina. It offers accommodation, restaurants, cafeterias, stores and silversmith laboratories.

The information visitors centre “Anna Petrochilou”, the train, the elaborate cobblestone alleys and the magnificent cave give Perama special prestige which in combination with the hospitality of people classify it as an important tourist destination of Greece.

Around Perama and in close distance the Torturous (Martyriko) village of Ligiades lies at an altitude of 940m.

The torturous village which was completely destroyed in October 1943 by the German occupying troops with 82 victims (from months of birth to 82 years old). The will of the survived inhabitants was strong and the village was rebuilt and nowadays it is considered the balcony of Ioannina with the alluring view. At the entrance of the village there is the church of Saint George which was established in 1681 by the scholar Vissarion Makris.

Later on it was damaged and in its place the current church was built in 1899.





Perama Cave Of Ioannina

Perama Cave of Ioannina
Cash – desk Phone: +30 26510 81521
Services Phone: +30 26510 81650
Email: info@spilaio-perama.gr

Opening hours

Daily, Weekends & Public Holidays
From 09:00 am to 17:00 p.m.

The guided tour by the tour guides of the Cave starts in approximately 25 min. time delay from the ticket issue.

The visitors information is made throughout a loudspeaker installation.
The guided tour lasts about 45 minutes.

Ticket prices as below:

Single 7.00€

Organized groups (clubs, Centre of Open Protection of Elderly people) 5.50€

Pupil – Student ticket 3.50€

The tour guides of the Cave will welcome you at the entrance and take care of your impeccable information in this amazing exhibition of nature's sculpture.