

**Vai** is located 94km east of Agios Nikolaos and 24km east of **Sitia**, on the eastern coast of **Crete**. It

is the most famous beach in eastern

### **Crete**

, as its main feature is the large palm grove with the

### **Cretan Date Palm (**

***Phoenix theophrasti***

)

. Its name derives from the word

**vai**,

meaning palm in

### **Greek**

.

### **The palm grove is the largest in Europe**

with approximately 5000 trees, while there are smaller colonies in other parts of Crete and in the Canary Islands. According to the legend, the trees have grown from discarded date stones thrown into the sea by

### **Saracen pirates.**

However, the palm grove is 2000 years old and the pirates are more recent. Thus this hypothesis has changed and the

### **Saracens**

have been replaced with

### **Phoenicians,**

that governed the

### **Mediterranean Sea**

20 centuries ago.

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The beach has **whitish sand** and **flat turquoise waters**. In a few places, there are slippery smooth rocks, while on the opposite there are small islets that beautify the landscape. The beach is slightly organized (whatever the protection scheme allows) with umbrellas, showers, water sports, canteens and a tavern. The closest rooms to let are located outside the protected area (15'-25' walk). If you want to stay isolated, there is a lovely sandy beach 5 minutes north of **Vai**, while another option is the idyllic

### **Psili Ammos**

in the south.

Source: <http://www.cretanbeaches.com>