

# Cyprus

## Travel Planner



# KOPIASTE!

## Welcome to Cyprus

Dear Traveler:

There is a myriad of islands in the Mediterranean, but only one does Aphrodite, the ancient Greek goddess of love, call home, and that's Cyprus. Whatever your pace or special interest, Cyprus is uniquely poised to welcome you. Our beaches are not only beautiful, they are certified as among the cleanest in Europe. And, just a short drive from the crystal clear waters of our coast are the pine-clad Troodos Mountains, where wild mouflons roam and cedars grow, and gem-like churches and monasteries are replete with unmatched Byzantine frescoes and icons.

Cyprus is a haven for archaeology lovers. From Neolithic settlements more than 11,000 years old, to spectacular Greco-Roman ruins, such as the ancient theatre of Kourion, to Medieval fortresses such as Kolossi, the list of treasures is boundless, and it includes the mysterious Tombs of the Kings...and villas with mosaic floors that are colorful, extensive and well-preserved.

Although Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean, it is surprisingly compact and easy to explore. In between rugged mountain peaks and the shimmering coast you'll traverse untrammelled landscape and rolling hills with vineyards.

Linger in idyllic villages where the rhythm slows down and there's always time for another coffee. All across Cyprus, you'll have the opportunity to experience a distinctive cuisine composed of meze, small plates of everything from flame-grilled, delicately spiced meats to fresh vegetables and amazing cheeses, such as the famous halloumi (the savory sheep's cheese that grills).

With its rich past as anchor, Cyprus is also a thriving modern nation with a service economy second to none in the whole region, and the Cypriot people, worldly and warm, are only too happy to share it with you. Which means among other things, an attractive range of accommodation, luxurious hotels with both local flavour and the highest international standards, quality tourist villas, agrotourism options and more.

~ Deputy Ministry of Tourism

## "...you are welcome in Cyprus"

~ William Shakespeare, "Othello"







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# CYPRUS

THE ISLAND OF APHRODITE AWAITS...

She was not the most powerful of the gods, but if art and archaeology are any guide, Aphrodite was undeniably the most beautiful of them all – so it is no wonder that once she emerged from the waves on the western shores of Cyprus in ancient times, she never left. Her mythical spirit still pervades the island, from the classical, unspoiled landscapes of olive trees and citrus groves to the welcoming smiles of the Cypriot people. Exotic but approachable, they are proud of an island that has been witness to the arc of history, from Antiquity to the European Union (of which the Republic of Cyprus is a member), and are always happy to share this vast cultural richness with travelers.

Cyprus, at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, has always been linked culturally to ancient Greece but in fact has been known as a human settlement for some 11,000 years – before any known or named empire. But those would come: from Achaean Greeks to Romans, to Byzantines, to Francs to Venetians to Ottomans and others, few powers in history have failed to be seduced by Aphrodite's uncomplicated but earnest charms. If the island's copper mines made it a place to covet throughout much of antiquity – indeed, Cyprus gives its name to copper – its very location has for centuries served as a fulcrum for empires on the move.

And that location today is irresistible for travelers on the go, too. It's easy to fly to from just about anywhere, for one. And in no other place can so many visible traces of the past be seen and savored in such a compact, dynamic space. The turbulence of yesterday is today's unparalleled tapestry of archaeological sites, fascinating and impeccably curated museums and more. All this in a resolutely modern republic with one of the highest standards of living in Europe.

## Explore a Rich, Multilayered Past

On an island with such a long history, simply walking around can be a memorable and historically enriching experience. In the capital of Lefkosia (Nicosia), you can touch the stones of the formidable walls the Venetians built which still encircle the city. In Pafos, there is St. Paul's Pillar, and pre-dating that, the incomparable mosaics of the Houses of Aion and Dionysos so many other fascinating vestiges of the past reside here, in fact, the whole ancient city has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Also not to be missed is the Greco-Roman theatre of Kourion, the nearby Temple of Apollo Hylates (Apollo of the Woods), Petra tou Romiou (Aphrodite's Rock) and much more.







### Natural Splendors

The incredibly stunning Akamas Peninsula has been a nature lover's paradise ever since the days when Aphrodite made it her home, and, following her interludes with Adonis, bathed in the mineral spring that still bears her name. Visitors can see her legendary baths and then take a ramble through gorges, where, as in ancient times, goats comprise the only traffic.

For those wishing to take tranquility and hiking trails to the next level, there are the Troodos Mountains, where the lofty peaks clad in tall pine trees and majestic cedars provide a striking contrast to the splendors of the coast – never more than an hour or so away by car.

### A World-Famous Port and a Coast that Calls

Lemesos, (Limassol), is Cyprus' biggest port and boasts some of the most exciting nightlife. Numerous four- and five-star resorts line the beach front and everything from elegant yachts and cruise ships to fishing boats fill the new marina and the harbour.

You can hit the beach going all out in Agia Napa, one of the Mediterranean's liveliest resorts, or savour the tranquility of nearby Nissi Beach. Cypriot beaches are famously clean (quite a few of them have been awarded the Blue Flag certification), and many offer facilities for windsurfing, parasailing, scuba diving, and more.

For a change of pace, head inland from the coast and you'll discover villages of whitewashed stone untouched by the sweep of time: Lefkara,

famous for its lace; Lania, an artists' colony; and splendid Omodos, with its sleepy, sunny central square and plethora of small artisans' workshops.

### A Destination for All Travelers

Today, Cyprus seamlessly blends ancient history with a modern infrastructure and a contemporary cosmopolitan lifestyle. From the moment you arrive at Larnaka's sparkling new international airport, you will feel the stress evaporating and relaxation settling in. Which isn't all that surprising, considering that even Aphrodite couldn't bring herself to leave here.

Come and discover the quiet treasures of Cyprus, where antiquity is alive at every turn. Wander about in comfort and awe, and if you should ever have any questions, the locals will happily share their knowledge and show you the way. "Kopiaste!" is how they say "Come join us!" here, and it's done in all sincerity.

*"[A] confluence of different destinies [have] touched and illumined the history of one small island in the eastern basin of the [Mediterranean], giving it significance and depth of focus."*

*~ Lawrence Durrell, "Bitter Lemons"*

*That's the sun-kissed spirit of Cyprus.*



# CYPRUS

## THROUGH THE AGES...

Cyprus is an island at the crossroads of many civilisations, from Neolithic settlements to the ancient Greek and Roman periods and many more: Byzantine, Frankish, Venetian, to name a few. To properly examine them all, one would need to spend many lifetimes doing so. But sun-kissed and compact, Cyprus can be explored in a much shorter time than that, with plenty of opportunities for many stops along the way beaches, vineyards, monasteries, museums and tavernas, all waiting to be discovered. One look at the blue swirl around Petra tou Romiou, or Aphrodite's rock, and you'll get a sense of why Cyprus has attracted so many throughout the millennia. Neolithic ruins in Cyprus give new meaning to the word "timeless" in places like Choirokoitia, a UNESCO World Heritage site, where stone ruins of ancient human settlements date back 11,000 years. Copper was found on the island in 3900 BC, a discovery that would change the course of commercial and cultural history in the ancient world. But it also attracted the attention of dominant regional empires throughout history. In the geographic orbit of ancient Greece, it's no surprise that Greek merchants and settlers (Mycenaeans and Achaens) would establish Cypriot city-kingdoms, from 1650 BC – 1050 BC.



### 11000-3900 BC: Neolithic Age

The oldest settlements found on the island date from this period. Stone vessels and later, pottery was used.

### 3900-2500 BC: Chalcolithic Age

Chalcolithic settlements and evidence of a fertility cult have been found in Western Cyprus. Copper discovered.

### 2500-1600 BC: Early and Middle Bronze Age

Beginning in about 2400 BC, prospectors from Anatolia explored the island for copper. These newcomers settled at the foothills of Troodos Mountains which was a copper rich area. In the early Bronze Age the use of metal became more widespread in Cyprus. Cyprus began to export copper.

### 1600-1050 BC: Bronze Age

Cyprus was known as "Alasia" during this great trading period with its neighbours, partly because of its exploitation of copper. After 1400 BC, the first of many waves of Greek merchants and settlers (Mycenaeans and Achaecans) reached the island, spreading the Greek language, religion and customs. They gradually took control and established the first city-kingdoms.

### 1050-750 BC: Geometric Period

The Hellenisation of Cyprus was complete, with ten city-kingdoms. The cult of Aphrodite flourished in a period of great prosperity.



### 750-480 BC: Archaic and Classical Period

An era of prosperity and conquest. Cypriot kingdoms became tributary to Assyria, Egypt and Persia. But King Evagoras (411-374) unified the island, making it an important centre of the Greek world.

### 333-325 BC:

Alexander the Great takes Cyprus as part of his empire.

### 310-30 BC: Hellenistic Period

Alexander's generals fought for succession, and Cyprus eventually came under the Hellenistic state of the Ptolemies of Egypt, belonging from then on to the Greek Alexandrine world. Pafos became the capital.

### 30 BC-330 AD: Roman Period

Cyprus became part of the Roman Empire. But Saints Paul and Barnabas converted the Roman proconsul to Christianity, and he became the first Christian ruler in the world. In 313 freedom of worship was granted, and Cypriot bishops attended the Council of Nicea in 325. The period was marked by earthquakes which resulted in the rebuilding of cities.

### 330-1191 AD: Byzantine Period

After the division of the Roman Empire, Cyprus became part of Byzantium, with Christianity becoming the official religion.



Empress Helena visited the island and founded Stavrovouni Monastery. The period again saw earthquakes and rebuilding, including large Basilicas. In 488, after the discovery of St. Barnabas' tomb, the Church of Cyprus was granted full autonomy by Emperor Zeno.

### 1192-1489: Frankish (Lusignan) Period

The Catholic Church officially replaced the Greek Orthodox Church, but the latter managed to survive.

The city of Ammochostos became one of the richest cities in the world during this period, which ended when the last queen Caterina Cornaro ceded Cyprus to Venice in 1489.

### 1489-1571: Venetian Period

The last queen of Cyprus, Caterina Cornaro, wife of King James the II, ceded the island to Venice in 1489. This resulted in the definitive ousting of the Genoans from the island and the prevalence of Venetian rule. Venice's main aim was to secure a firm hold of Cyprus that would allow the uninterrupted movement and supply of Venetian ships in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The Venetians fortified the island against the Ottomans, building formidable walls around Lefkosa and Ammochostos, where the defenses were considered works of art in military architecture. Towards the end of the Venetian rule, Larnaka became the most important port of Cyprus, from where salt was exported.



One of these was Kourion, where today you can wander and explore well-preserved ancient ruins. Fast forward in antiquity to 333 BC and Alexander the Great swept through: by 325 BC the Hellenistic Period had commenced, with the Ptolemies of Egypt in control. Pafos was their capital, and today the necropolis known as the Tombs of the Kings bears witness to this stage of the island's rich past. During the Roman period (30 BC-330AD) the name of Cyprus became synonymous with the Latin equivalent name of copper (cuprum).

After the division of the Roman Empire, Cyprus came under the eastern Roman Empire, known as Byzantium, with Constantinople as its capital. The Frankish, or Lusignan period followed, and in 1489, the Venetian era held sway. The fortifications in Lefkosa (Nicosia) are of solid Venetian construction. Ottoman and British traces are still visible in places throughout the island, too. As you explore Cyprus, the mosaic of various civilisations comes into sharper focus, because so much of world history began right here and continues every day.



*"Here the beauty of some pleasant hill invites the wandering mariners to take their ease among its flowery verdure, where the zephyrs continually come and go, filling the island and the encompassing sea..."*

~ Leonardo da Vinci, 1452-1519 AD

**1571-1878: Ottoman Period**

The period of Ottoman rule in Cyprus began with the fall of Ammochostos (Famagusta) in 1571. The Latins were expelled from the island and a Muslim community was established in Cyprus for the first time. Privileges were given to the Orthodox church of Cyprus from the beginning of the Ottoman rule, giving it not just religious authority but also political authority. Cyprus went through hard times during the Ottoman rule.

**1878-1960: British Period**

In 1878 Britain assumed administration of the island, subsequently annexing it in 1914, after the Ottomans entered the First World War on Germany's side. In 1923 under the Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey relinquished all rights to Cyprus, and in 1925 Cyprus became a Crown Colony. During the Second World War, Cypriot volunteers served in the British forces. Hopes for self-determination by the Cypriot people however, were denied by the British, who considered the island strategically vital. A national liberation struggle began in 1955 against Colonial rule and for the union of Cyprus with Greece, which lasted until 1959. The Zurich-London Agreements led to the establishment of the independent Republic of Cyprus. On December 13, 1959 Archbishop Makarios III was elected first President of the Republic and Dr. Fazil Kutchuk first Vice President.

**1960: The Republic of Cyprus**

Cyprus became an independent Republic in 1960, and a member of the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Commonwealth and the Non-Aligned Movement. Britain, however, retained two sovereign bases. In 1964, UN peacekeeping forces arrive in Cyprus, following intercommunal clashes. In July 1974, Turkish forces invaded and occupied the northern third of the island (37%), where they remain to this day. Despite the many continuing humanitarian, social, and economic consequences, Cyprus still is today a modern society with a robust and healthy economy. In May 2004, the Republic of Cyprus became a full member of the European Union, adding its own uniqueness to the mosaic and serving as the European Union's lighthouse in the Eastern Mediterranean. The island and the Cypriot people stand as a beacon for closer co-operation, understanding, and dialogue with the countries and people in its immediate neighborhood and wider region. Strategically located, Cyprus continues to have a rich historical maritime tradition. Today, its merchant fleet is the third largest in the European Union and the tenth largest worldwide. On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2008, Cyprus introduced the euro as its official currency, replacing the Cyprus pound. Cyprus is home to many international companies that use the island as a springboard to the surrounding regions and further afield.





# LEFKOSIA

Discover venetian fortifications,

ancient doors and cheerful tavernas in this capital city

With its distinction as the only divided capital in the world, Lefkosia (Nicosia) is steeped in history and culture, with a charming old city surrounded by massive Venetian walls, and the island's largest concentration of museums, art galleries and religious and historical monuments, that all tell wonderful stories of the island through the ages. The imposing Famagusta Gate still stands today, proudly encircling the thousand-year-old city. Through the Gate lies the old city with a section called Laiki Geitonia, an old section which has been lovingly restored. Wander your way through narrow stone streets where crimson flowers cascade from window pots and the aroma of traditional baking wafts through open doorways. Explore jewellery and handicraft shops, dine in charming tavernas, marvel at churches centuries old.

Those engrossed in history and art will make their way directly to the Cyprus Museum, which holds the island's priceless treasures from the first stirrings of the Neolithic Age through the Roman period. At the Byzantine Museum, encounter a dazzling collection of icons from the Mediterranean's Golden Age. The State Collection of Contemporary Art and other private galleries take a newer perspective, focusing on Cyprus' modern artists, some of whom have gained note on the international market.

Come full circle in time and visit the Cyprus Handicraft Centre workshops, where traditional arts are practiced today much the same way they were in ages past. Relax and enjoy a splendid Cypriot meal accompanied by a refreshing drink.

A city always on the go, the many layers of Lefkosia's various attractions and features make it the island's capital in every sense.





## LEFKOSIA (NICOSIA) IN BRIEF: Places of Interest

### The Cyprus Museum (Archaeological)

Mouseiou 1. Collection of Cypriot antiquities and treasures from the Neolithic Age to the Early Byzantine period.

### Byzantine Museum and Art Galleries

Archbishop Makarios III Foundation Cultural Centre, Plateia Arch, Kyprianou. Largest collection of icons on the island, covering from the 9<sup>th</sup>- to the 18<sup>th</sup>-centuries. The Art Galleries contain oil paintings, maps and lithographs.

The Leventis Municipal Museum of Nicosia Ippokratous 17, near Laiki Geitonia. The historical museum of Lefkosia revives life in the capital from ancient times to present.

### Ethnological Museum – The House of Hadjigeorgakis Kornosios

Patriarchou Gregorion 20. The most important 18<sup>th</sup>-century building in Lefkosia. Once the residence of the Dragoman Hadjigeorgakis Kornosios.

### Famagusta Gate

Leoforos Athinon. The Venetian walls which encircle the old city possess eleven heart-shaped bastions. The city has three gates. One of them, Porta Giuliana called Famagusta Gate is now the Lefkosia Municipal Cultural Centre.

### National Struggle Museum

Plateia Arch, Kyprianou. Documents, photographs and other memorabilia of the 1955-1959 National Liberation Struggle.

### Agios Ioannis Cathedral

Plateia Arc, Kyprianou. Built by Archbishop Nikiforos in 1662, the wall paintings depict bible scenes and the discovery of the tomb of St. Barnabas.

### State Gallery of Contemporary Art

Leoforos Stasinou and Kritis. Representative collection of paintings and sculptures by 20<sup>th</sup>-century Cypriot artists.

### Chrysaliniotissa Church

Within walking distance of the Archbishopric. Considered the oldest Byzantine church in Lefkosia, it is dedicated to "Our Lady of the Golden Flax." Believed to have been built in 1450 by Queen Helena Paleologos.

### Ethnographic Museum of Cyprus

(Plateia Archiepiskopou Kyprianou within the old Archbishopric). Wide collection of Cypriot Folk Art of the 19<sup>th</sup>- and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century, including wood carved objects,



tapestry, embroidery, pottery, national costumes and hand-woven materials.

### Omeriye Baths

Tyllirias Square 8. The baths were built in the 16<sup>th</sup>-century by Lala Mustafa as a gift to the city and it has now been restored and used as public baths.

### Cyprus Handicraft Centre

Leoforos Athalassas 186. The centre aims to promote and enrich traditional folk art and craft skills. It has workshops and a showroom/shop in its premises.

### The Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre

Apostolou Varnava 19. Housed in an old power station, one of the finest examples of industrial architecture in Cyprus. The centre's aim is to promote contemporary creativity at its highest level.

### Ledra Museum Observatory

Ledra Street, Shakolas Building. The observatory on the 11<sup>th</sup> floor of the Shakolas tower building provides a panoramic view of the whole town of Lefkosia. Visitors can admire unobstructed all round views of the city and its landmarks.

### Museum on the History of Cypriot Coinage

Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation 86-90 Faneromenis Str., The museum collection traces the history of Cypriot coinage from the 6<sup>th</sup>-century BC to the present.

### Centre of Visual Arts and Research

285 Ermou Str., The Centre of Visual Arts and Research (CVAR), houses a collection of more than 1000 artworks created by foreign artists who have visited Cyprus during the 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, as well as a collection of costumes presenting the evolution of the local Cypriot dress.

### Loukia & Michalakis Zampellas Art Museum

27 Arch. Makarios III Avenue, Kaimakli, The museum houses the permanent collection of Zampelas family.

A pioneer museum in its field, this museum exhibits great modern and contemporary art of Cypriots and Greek artists. Furthermore, it organises temporary exhibitions of artists from Cyprus and abroad.

### Leventis Art Gallery

Anastasiou Leventi str. Built in the heart of Lefkosia, the Leventis Art Gallery houses more than 800 paintings and works of art, which constitute part of the most important collections of the Leventis Foundation.

## LEFKOSIA (Nicosia) AREA

### Politiko-Tamassos Royal Tombs

Politiko village, 17 km southwest of Lefkosia. Tamassos was a rich city-kingdom in ancient Cyprus renowned for its copper mines. Excavations have brought to light the relics of Aphrodite Astarte.

### Agios Irakleidos Convent

Politiko village, 0.5 km from the Royal Tombs. The monastery, founded in 400 AD, was destroyed and rebuilt several times until Archbishop Chrysanthos renovated it in 1773. The relics of the saints are kept in a silver gilt case.

### Machairas Monastery

40 km south of Lefkosia through Deftera and Pera villages. Founded by two monks in 1148, when an icon of the Virgin Mary was found in a nearby cave, the monastery is set deep in the heart of Machairas Mountains.

### Fikardou Rural Museum

Housed in the House of Katsiniorou, in Fikardou village, Fikardou Museum is 1.5 km east of Gourri village (Machairas Lefkosia Road via Klirou). The village has been declared an ancient monument by the Department of Antiquities to preserve the remarkable woodwork and folk architecture of the 16<sup>th</sup>- and 18<sup>th</sup>-century houses. Some of the houses received the Europa Nostra Award in 1987.

### Local Museum of Ancient Idalion

The local museum of Idalion was founded in 2007 with the aim to promote the rich finds of the region of Idalion and later to function as a visitor's centre for the archaeological site in which it is located. The exhibits of the museum represent all the chronological phases of the history of Idalion and come from both the old and the more recent excavations in the area of the ancient city.

*"The island has in its midst a fair city called Lefkosia, which is the capital of the kingdom, well walled, with its fine gates, which are three, to wit the gate of Paffo, of Famagusta and Citrina. That of Famagusta, is the most beautiful, and in my judgment the city of Barcelona has none to match it."*

*~ P. Joan Lopez, 1770*



# LEMESOS

Cyprus' major port is also home

to world-class resorts and historical treasures

The city of celebrations since ancient times, Lemesos (Limassol) continues its status as the festive centre of the island to this day and is vibrant and lively, yet also provides all the elements for a relaxing beach break, or an unhurried expedition of historical discovery.

From the wedding of Richard the Lionheart and the feasts in honour of ancient deities, to today's carnival celebrations and Wine Festival, Lemesos has always attracted visitors in their flocks for its exciting events and social revelling.

And every night people in restaurants, cafés and nightclubs celebrate events momentous and trivial, from a soccer win to a sudden romance to yet another stunning sunset at day's end. Wander round the narrow streets of the old town radiating out from the fishing harbour and the exclusive modern marina where both residents and visitors alike can enjoy sea views at one of the many waterfront establishments.

Explore Lemesos Castle, which contains the Cyprus Medieval Museum, or Folk Art Museum, which is housed in an old mansion. Walk on ten kilometres of beautiful beaches, deservedly known as the Cypriot Riviera. Stroll along the sea promenade or visit the Municipal Gardens. On the coastal road to the east, just after the luxurious hotels, you will find Amathous, one of the ancient city kingdoms of Cyprus, see the ruins and walk through the ancient Agora admiring the remnants of a time past.

At 14 km west of Lemesos lies Kolossi Castle, a medieval fortress whose walls contain not only an imposing tower and surrounding living quarters, but also a medieval sugar factory. Just 19 km west of town, visit the ancient city Kingdom of Kourion one of the most spectacular archaeological sites on the island, where you can take in a play or concert at the ancient Greco-Roman theatre, overlooking the blue Mediterranean. And a bit further on, explore a treasure trove of Greek and Roman sites, such as the Sanctuary of Apollo Hylates. As its rural areas stretch upwards to the mountains, some of the island's main winemaking villages can be found, giving the Lemesos region its unique link with the age-old tradition of viticulture.

For a voyage of cultural discovery and celebration, combined with sand, sea and mountains, Lemesos offers an experience not to be missed.





**LEMESOS (LIMASSOL) IN BRIEF:**  
Places of Interest

**Cyprus Medieval Museum Lemesos Medieval Castle**

Near the old port. Built in the 14<sup>th</sup>-century on the site of an earlier Byzantine castle. According to tradition, Richard the Lionheart married Berengaria of Navarre and crowned her Queen of England here in 1191.

**Lemesos District Archaeological Museum**  
Vyronos 5, near the Public Gardens. A rich collection of antiquities from the Neolithic age to the Roman period, originating from excavations at archaeological sites of the Lemesos region.

**Lemesos Municipal Art Gallery**  
The art gallery houses a representative collection of paintings of well-known contemporary Cypriot artists.

**Municipal Folk Art Museum**  
Agiou Andreou 253. A beautiful collection of Cyprus Folk Art of the 19<sup>th</sup>- and early 20<sup>th</sup>-century is exhibited in a restored old house.

**The Old Carob Mill**  
Vasilissis St. (behind Lemesos Medieval Castle). The Carob Mill was built in 1900 at a time when carobs were a major export of Cyprus. The machinery used in processing the carobs is preserved and displayed in a renovated building, blending the authentic atmosphere of the past with the sophisticated high-tech look of the present.

**Agia Napa Church**  
The Church was built at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century and is dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

**Sculpture Park**  
Sixteen sculptures made by local and foreign artists are exhibited in the park, the products of sculpture symposiums held from 1999-2001.

**Amathous Archaeological Site**  
11 km east of Lemesos town centre, you will find one of the ancient city-kingsdoms of Cyprus where, according to mythology, Theseus left the pregnant Ariadne after his battle with the Minotaur. The remains date from the Archaic, Roman and Christian periods.



**LEMESOS (Limassol) AREA**

**Kolossi Castle**

14 km west of Lemesos on the road to Pafos. A fine example of military architecture, originally constructed in the 13<sup>th</sup>-century and subsequently rebuilt in its present form in the middle of the 15<sup>th</sup>-century. It served as the Grand Commandery of the Knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, and later the Knights Templar.

**Kourion Museum**  
14 km west of Lemesos, 4 km before Kourion site at Episkopi village. Collection of finds from nearby archaeological sites, exhibited in a beautiful old house.

**Kourion Archaeological Site**  
19 km west of Lemesos on the road to Pafos. An important ancient city-kingdom and one of the most spectacular archaeological sites on the island. The magnificent Greco-Roman theatre was originally built in the 2<sup>nd</sup>-century BC and is now used for musical and theatrical shows. The house of Eustolios became a public recreation centre during the early Christian period. The early Christian basilica dates to the 5<sup>th</sup>-century. The house of Achilles and the House of the Gladiators have beautiful mosaic floors, and the Nymphaeum is an elegant Roman structure. The stadium dates back to the 2<sup>nd</sup>-century AD.

**Sanctuary of Apollo Hylates**  
3 km west of Kourion, on the road to Pafos. The Sanctuary of Apollo Hylates is recorded in historical sources as one of the most important sanctuaries on the island. Strabo wrote about a

ridge past Kourion from where those who touched the Sacred Altar of Apollo were flung into the sea. Many inscribed testimonies, which have been found on the spot and in the city, confirm the historical sources. Apollo Hylates, God of Woodland, was the protector of the city of Kourion. The cult of Apollo was celebrated here from the 8<sup>th</sup>-century BC to the 4<sup>th</sup>-century AD. Excavations have also revealed other structures of this important sanctuary such as the bath complex, the pilgrim halls, the palaistra and a holy precinct.

**Kouris Valley**  
Kouris Valley, about 20 minutes from Lemesos, has a number of important Byzantine monuments such as the 12<sup>th</sup> century church of the Monastery of Panagia tis Amasgou, the church of Timios Stavros at Kouka village and the church of Archangelos at Monagri.

**Agios Nikolaos ton Gatou Convent (St. Nicholas of the Cats)**  
On Cape Gata near Lemesos. This is possibly the oldest monastery in Cyprus. The monastery chapel dates to the 14<sup>th</sup>-century, it was abandoned in the 16<sup>th</sup>-century and was reinstated by Orthodox nuns in the early 1980's. According to tradition, the monastery was founded by St. Helena, mother of Emperor Constantine the Great, who left a piece from the Holy Cross there. When Cyprus experienced a severe drought, the area became infested by snakes. Constantine the Great sent a commander to Cyprus called Kalokeros, who released thousands of cats to the Cape, in order to exterminate the snakes. The monastery today is home to hundreds of cats.

**Akrotiri Environmental Education and Information Centre**  
Situated at Akrotiri village, the centre has an exhibition room, library, projection room and observation kiosk. It offers educational programs for schools on the history and habitat of the region. Visitors can view exhibits related to the protected Akrotiri peninsula, the geological formation of the region and can admire the view of the nearby salt lake.

*"Cyprus was to become mine by adoption- therefore he must try to see it through my eyes. At once it became fertile, full of goddesses and mineral springs; ancient castles and monasteries; fruit and grain and verdant grasslands; priests and gypsies and brigands...."*  
~ Lawrence Durrell, "Bitter Lemons"



# LARNAKA

Stroll the famous seaside

promenade of this gateway city and home to Saint Lazarus

Most travelers first see Cyprus at Larnaka, the country's second largest port and home of the main international airport. No welcome could be sunnier: at Larnaka, deep blue seas meet sandy beaches under incomparably brilliant skies.

Here yachts and sailing vessels from around the globe bob and glint, and along the harbour perimeter is a palm-lined promenade.

From shopping trips to Larnaka's international-caliber boutiques, to inviting cafes that offer shady resting spots and sweeping sea views. The promenade winds its way to Larnaka Medieval Museum, housed in a 17th-century fort.

Make your way north from the fort, toward the centre of the city, and you will come to one of Larnaka's and the island's most cherished sites

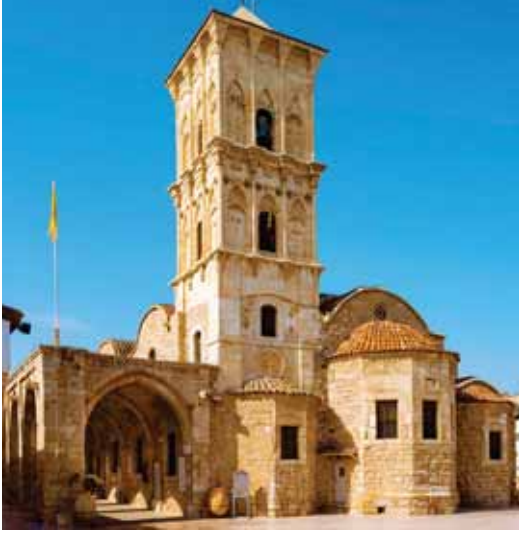
– the church of Saint Lazarus. After his resurrection from the dead by Jesus, Lazarus elected to live out his "second" life as Bishop of Kition. He was reputedly buried in a crypt under the main altar and his tomb can be seen today.

Originally called Kition in the days of the Old Testament, Larnaka reached a heyday as a commercial centre in the 1700's, when the consulates were established here.

One of the oldest, continually-inhabited cities in the world, Larnaka abounds with sights. Nearby is an 18<sup>th</sup>-century aqueduct, and two wonderful museums – the Larnaka District Archaeological Museum and the Pierides Foundation Museum. Both contain exceptional examples of the island's art and civilisation.

Heading out from Larnaka toward Lemesos, stop by the enchanting village of Lefkara. Doubtless you, like Leonardo Da Vinci five centuries before you, will be seduced by Lefkara's exquisite handmade lace.





## LARNAKA IN BRIEF: Places of Interest

**Larnaka District Archaeological Museum**  
Plateia Kalogreon. Collection of finds from the Larnaka area dating from the Neolithic Age to the Roman period.

**Pierides Foundation Archaeological Museum**  
Zenon Kitieos 4. Remarkable private exhibition of Cypriot antiquities, originally collected by Demetrios Pieridis (1811-1895) and further enriched by members of his family.

**Larnaka Medieval Museum – Larnaka Fort**  
Larnaka sea front. Built in 1625, it was used as a prison during the first years of British rule. It houses the District Medieval Museum. The fort is also used as the Larnaka Municipal Cultural Centre during the summer.

**Agios Lazaros Church (Saint Lazarus)**  
Plateia Agiou Lazarou. Saint Lazarus is the patron Saint of Larnaka. After his resurrection by Christ, he lived here for another 30 years. He was ordained Bishop of Kition by Saints Barnabas and Paul in the 9<sup>th</sup>-century the church was faithfully restored in the 17<sup>th</sup>-century, and the iconostasi is an excellent example of baroque woodcarving.

**Kition Archaeological Site**  
Approximately 500 m northeast of the Archaeological Museum. One of the most important ancient city-kingdoms, with architectural remains dating back to the 13<sup>th</sup>-century BC, as well as cyclopean walls made of giant blocks of stone and a complex of five temples, dating back to 1200 BC of the Mycenaean Greeks.

**The Kebir (Buyuk) Mosque**  
Leoforos Athinon, opposite Larnaka Fort. The Kebir (Buyuk) mosque is probably the first Ottoman mosque in Cyprus. It was originally a catholic church dedicated to St. Catherine in the 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> century, before being turned into a mosque.

## LARNAKA AREA

**Kamares Aqueduct**  
Kamares area on the Larnaka-Lemesos road. A beautiful 18<sup>th</sup>-century aqueduct which was in use until 1930.



**Hala Sultan Tekke – Salt Lake**  
5 km west of Larnaka on the road to Kiti, passing the Larnaka Airport. Built in 1816 over the tomb of Umm Haram, who was believed to be the sister of the Prophet Mohammed's foster mother or a follower from Medina to Cyprus. The mosque is an important place of Muslim pilgrimage after the shrines of Mecca, Medina and Al Aqsha in Jerusalem.

**Salt Lake**  
Larnaka salt lake is one of the most important habitats in Europe for water fowl. Scores of flamingos, wild ducks and other water or shore fowl find refuge here in winter on their migratory journeys. Archaeological finds show that the salt lake area and that of the nearby mosque have been inhabited since the Neolithic age. A nature trail has been created along the banks of the lake connecting the area with the Aphrodite Cultural Route.

**Aggeloktisti Church**  
Kiti village, 7 km west of Larnaka. Aggeloktisti means "Built by the Angels." This 11<sup>th</sup>-century Byzantine church was erected over the ruins of an early Christian basilica. The original apse survived together with one of the finest pieces of Byzantine art, a rare 6<sup>th</sup>-century mosaic of the Virgin Mary and Child between two Archangels, which rivals the Ravenna Mosaics.

*"To Larnaka through an extraordinary landscape reminding one of Plato's God geometrizing; low hills, almost perfect cones with leveled tops suggesting the Euclidean objects found in art studios. Wind erosion? But the panel of geometrical mounds seems handmade. And the valleys tapestried with fat-tailed sheep, plots of verdure, and here there a camel train and palm tree. A strange mixture of flavors, the Bible, Anatolia and Greece."*

*~ Lawrence Durrell, "Bitter Lemons"*

**Chapelle Royale**  
Pyrga village, 35 km south of Lefkosia, 32 km from Larnaka. Built by the Lusignan King James in 1421, it contains a wall painting of the king with his wife, Charlotte de Bourbon.

**Stavrovouni Monastery**  
9 km off the Lefkosia-Lemesos Road, 40 km from Larnaka. Perched on a rocky peak, Stavrovouni means Mountain of the Cross. According to tradition, it was founded in the 4<sup>th</sup>-century by St. Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, who left a fragment of the Holy Cross at the monastery. Women are not allowed in the monastery, men may visit it daily. There is an impressive ceremony and celebration on September 14<sup>th</sup>, the day of the raising of the Holy Cross. The Monastery of Agia Varvara (St. Barbara) at the foot of Stavrovouni Hill, is easily accessible. The monks here have a high reputation for icon painting.

**Choirokoitia Neolithic Settlement**  
48 km south of Lefkosia, off the Lefkosia-Lemesos road and 32 km from Larnaka. Neolithic settlement dated to 7000 BC. Excavations have brought to light one of the most important Neolithic settlements in the world with a defense wall, circular houses, tombs and many stone utensils.

**Kalavassos-Tenta**  
40 km from Larnaka, 2.5 km off the Lefkosia-Lemesos Road. Tenta, one of the most important Neolithic settlements in Cyprus, lies near the village of Kalavassos.

**Lefkara**  
8 km from Skarinou, off the Lefkosia-Lemesos Road, 40 km from Larnaka. A picturesque village, famous for its local lace known as 'Lefkaritika' and for its silversmithing. There you will find the beautiful house of Patsalos and the Lace and Silverware Museum of Lefkara. The church of Archangelos Michail in Kato Lefkara is of the single-aisled domed type and it has wall paintings of the late 12<sup>th</sup>-century. At Pano Lefkara there is the Church of the Holy Cross with beautiful 18<sup>th</sup>-century and 13<sup>th</sup>-century artifacts. Lefkara lace or Lefkaritika were added in 2009 on the UNESCO Representative List of the intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

**Agios Minas Convent**  
Near Lefkara. This 15<sup>th</sup>-century convent with a church at the centre of the cloisters, is home to a relatively small number of nuns, who besides performing their religious rites, also practice icon painting.



# PAFOS

Old traditions and customs

still kept alive in the town of Aphrodite

Enter another world, where idols and temples, graves and goddesses make up the fabric of everyday life. Pafos is where Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love and beauty, is said to have risen from the waves that crash on its shores. Petra tou Romiou or Aphrodite's Rock, is a massive stone that marks the spot where she emerged from the sea. Her birthplace was a place of pilgrimage for the entire Hellenic world. Past Polis and Latsi, the baths of Aphrodite provided the ancients with a dramatic setting for outdoor bathing.

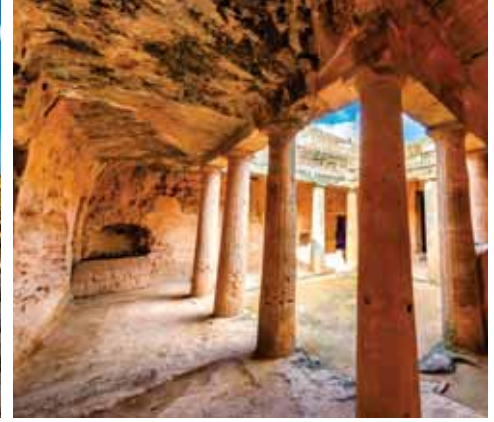
Aphrodite's presence seems to have drawn other divinities and notable mortals as well. Excavations have unearthed the spectacular 3<sup>rd</sup>- to 5<sup>th</sup>-century mosaics at the Houses of Dionysos, Orpheus and Aion, and the villa of Theseus – buried for many centuries and yet remarkably intact. Their grace of line and subtlety of color will surely inspire elevated feelings in those who see them. Also in this region is the Odeon, a stone built small theatre, still used as it was in ancient times for outdoor concerts.

Archaeological discoveries in the Pafos region are continuous, putting many pieces together for those tracing various civilisational origins in Cyprus. For a glimpse of the artifacts and masterworks found in the area, visit the District Archaeological Museum.

Later periods of history have also left their traces. The Tombs of the Kings, in Kato Pafos, is a monumental honeycomb structure carved into sheer rock, whose vaults held the tombs of Ptolemy period nobles. Nearby, the stone pillar where St. Paul, according to tradition, was bound and flogged for preaching Christianity, still stands tall. The Chrysorrogiatissa Monastery was founded in the 12<sup>th</sup> century AD and is dedicated to "Our Lady of the Golden Pomegranate". The neighbouring monastery of Agios Neofytos contains some of the world's finest Byzantine frescoes and icons as well as an interesting Byzantine museum.

Enjoy a cool drink, a steaming Cypriot coffee, or a meal of just-caught seafood in one of the tavernas that dot the scenic Harbour side in the town of Pafos. Hotels for every taste and budget can be found in town and the surrounding area. Use them as your home base for discovering this rich region.





## PAFOS IN BRIEF: Places of Interest

**Pafos District**  
**Archaeological Museum**  
Griva Digeni 43. An attractive collection of Cypriot antiquities – Neolithic Age to 1700 AD.

**Ethnographical Museum**  
Exo Vrysis 1. From the Neolithic age to the present day.

**Agia Solomoni Church**  
Kato Pafos, Leoforos Agiou Pavlou. Originally a Christian catacomb retaining 12<sup>th</sup>-century frescoes. A sacred tree is believed to cure the sick.

### KATO PAFOS ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK

Kato Pafos, near the harbour. Kato Pafos archaeological Park includes sites and monuments from its foundation in the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. to the Middle Ages, while most remains date to the Roman period. The marvellous mosaic floors of four Roman villas form the impressive epicentre of the finds. The complex includes other important monuments, such as the Asklepieion, the Odeon, the Agora, the "Saranta Kolones" (Forty Columns) Fortress, the "Limeniotissa" Ruins of early Christian Basilica and the "Tombs of the Kings".

### Pafos Mosaics

House of Dionysos, House of Theseus, House of Aeon, House of Orpheus. The mosaic floors of these Houses, date from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD. The first house was discovered accidentally by a farmer in 1962. The villas belonged to noblemen and the mosaics are considered among the finest in the Eastern Mediterranean. They depict scenes from Greek mythology and are considered masterpieces of mosaic art. Some of the mosaics at the House of Dionysos depict the god of wine, while that of Theseus depicts the classical Greek mythology hero brandishing his club at the Minotaur.

### Tombs of the Kings

Kato Pafos. These 4<sup>th</sup>-century BC underground tombs are carved out of solid rock, some decorated with Doric pillars. Their magnificence gives the locality its name.

### Pafos Odeon

Kato Pafos. A 2<sup>nd</sup>-century Odeon. Used in the summer for music and theatre shows. Nearby the remains of the ancient city walls and the Roman Agora frame the site.

### Saranta Kolones

Kato Pafos, near the harbour. Built by the Lusignans in the 13<sup>th</sup>-century on the site of a previous Byzantine castle. It was later destroyed by an earthquake in 1222.

### Pafos Medieval Fort

Kato Pafos harbour. A Byzantine fort.



rebuilt by the Lusignans, dismantled by the Venetians in 1570 and rebuilt during the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

### Panagia Chrysopolitissa

Church/St. Paul's Pillar Kato Pafos. Built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century over the ruins of the largest early-Byzantine basilica on the island. See St. Paul's Pillar, where according to tradition St. Paul was flogged, before the Roman Governor Sergius Paulus was converted to Christianity.

### Pafos Municipal Art Gallery

Gladstonos 7. The gallery exhibits works of art by local artists.

## PAFOS AREA

### Geroskipou Folk Art Museum

Geroskipou village, 3 km east of Pafos. Named after the sacred garden of Aphrodite. Folk arts and crafts are exhibited in the beautiful "House of Hadjismith".

### Byzantine Museum

Geroskipou square. Icons from the 7<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### Agia Paraskevi Church

Geroskipou village, 3 km east of Pafos. Byzantine church. A basilica surmounted by five domes forming a cross, with beautiful 15<sup>th</sup> century murals.

### Sanctuary of Aphrodite Palaipafos Museum

Kouklia village, 14 km east of Pafos, off the Lemesos-Pafos Road. Palaipaphos, (Old Paphos), was a celebrated pilgrimage centre of the ancient Greek world. Here stood the Sanctuary of Aphrodite, which dates back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century BC.

### Petra Tou Romiou (Aphrodite's Rock)

Birthplace of Aphrodite. 25 km east of Pafos. Legend dictates that the goddess of love and beauty rose from the waves in this strikingly beautiful spot. The Greek name is Petra tou Romiou or "The Rock of the Greek".

### Lempa Archaeological Site

5 km from Pafos. At Lempa, village excavations

have brought to light an important settlement of the Chalcolithic period. Near the site replicas of two houses have been constructed.

### Pegeia Village

Agios Georgios Basilica and the fountains of Pegeia. Pegeia village, 19 km northwest of Pafos. 4.5 km from the village are the ruins of two early Christian basilicas with mosaic floors. Pegeia Village is famous for its fountains in the stone-paved village square.

### Agios Neofytos Monastery

9 km north of Pafos. Founded at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup>-century by the Cypriot hermit and writer Neofytos. The "Egkleistra," an enclosure carved into of the mountain, contains some of the finest Byzantine frescoes dating from the 12<sup>th</sup>- to the 15<sup>th</sup>-century. In the monastery's church there is an interesting ecclesiastical museum.

### Chrysorrogiatissa Monastery

40 km northeast of Pafos. The monastery, originally founded in the 12<sup>th</sup>-century AD, is dedicated to "Our Lady of the Golden Pomegranate". It dates back to 1770 and has a collection of important icons and treasures.

### Pano Panagia Village

On the west of Troodos 1.5 km from Chrysorrogiatissa Monastery. The birthplace of Archbishop Makarios III, first President of Cyprus. The house where he was born has been converted into a museum.

### Polis

37 km north of Pafos. Polis tis Chrysochou lies where there once stood the ancient city-kingdom of Marion. Its beautiful climate, crystal clear beaches and breathtaking scenery have made the area an attractive popular resort.

### Polis Archaeological Museum Marion / Arsinoe

The museum consists of an interesting collection of antiquities discovered in the region where once stood the ancient city-kingdom of Marion- Arsinoe. The Museum is a stop on the Aphrodite Cultural route.

### Baths of Aphrodite

Akamas Peninsula, near Polis, 48 km north of Pafos. They say that the Goddess Aphrodite took her beauty baths in a pool formed by a natural grotto, shaded by a fig tree, which can still be visited. It is here that she met her beloved Adonis for the first time. Nature trails that run through Akamas reveal incomparable views of unspoiled land.

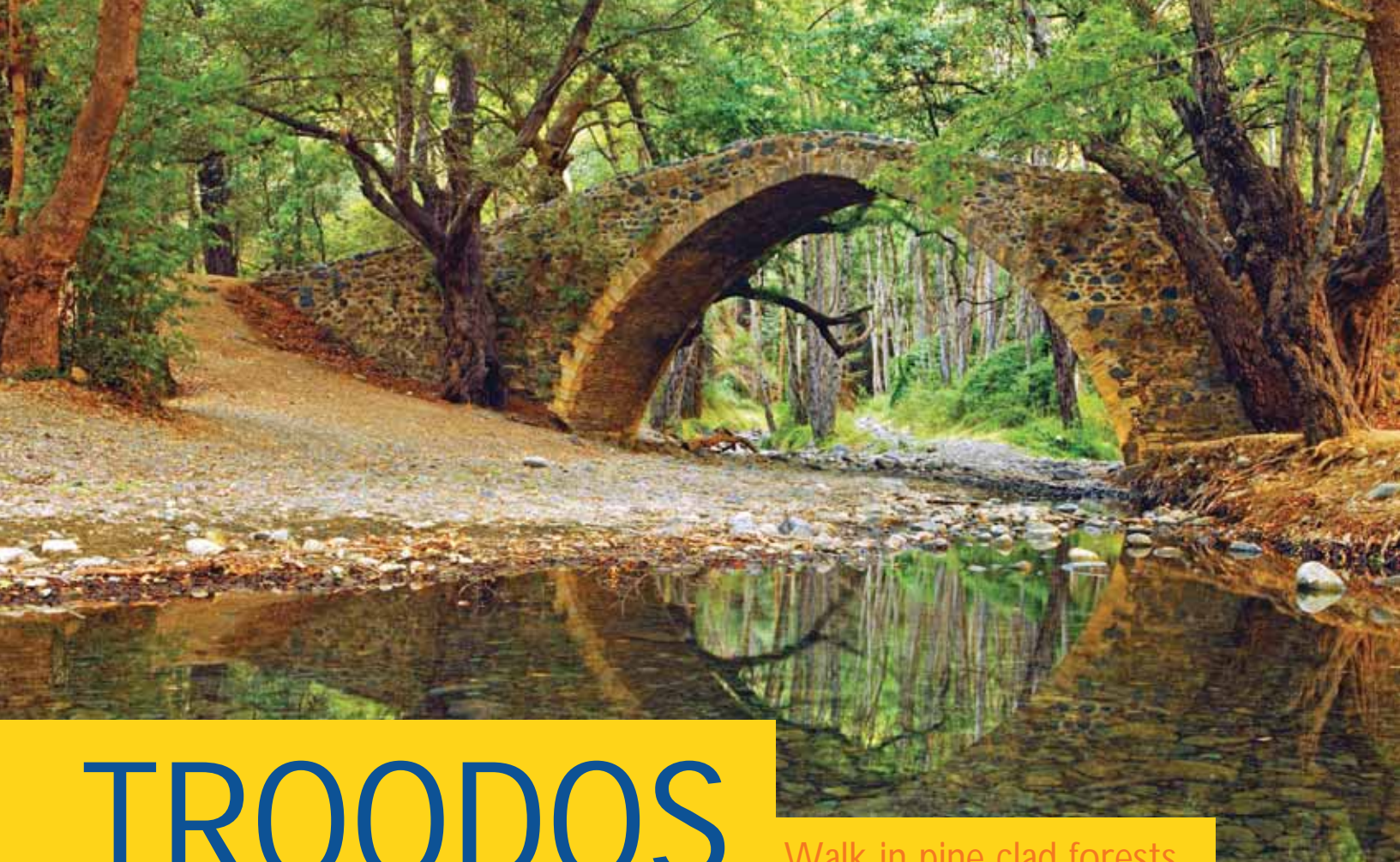
### Museum of Mycenaean Colonisation of Cyprus

Maa-Paleokastro Coral Bay area.

*"The dawns and sunsets in Cyprus are unforgettable-better even than those of Rhodes which I always believed were unique in their slow Tibetan magnificence.*

*~ Lawrence Durrell, "Bitter Lemons"*





# TROODOS

Walk in pine clad forests

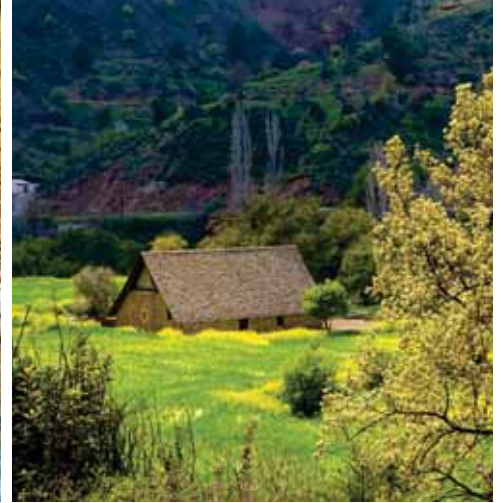
and explore Byzantine churches and picturesque villages

The thick cedar, pine forests and sun-soaked slopes of the Troodos region offer an unexpected contrast to the Mediterranean coast, less than an hour away. Halfway between the busy towns of Lefkosia and Lemesos, halfway between sea and sky, rising to 1,952 meters (6,400 feet), Troodos is a counterpoint to the rest of the island.

Connecting the mountain resorts of Troodos, Kakopetria, Platres and Agros are trails that hold delights for mountain bikers, hikers, bird watchers and botanists alike. Signs mark the presence of flora and fauna unique to Cyprus. Glimpses of the blue sea beyond peek through the lace-like canopy of cedar trees. Close enough to touch, are herds of grazing mouflons or agrino – the mountain sheep endemic to Cyprus -that pass by leisurely. The clear mountain air is fragrant with aromatic plants and shrubs and of course the sent of pine trees that are found all around you. It is a natural reserve in the heart of the country that promises that this wild beauty will remain forever.

Along the way, each village will be glad to offer you a local specialty, whether that be a mountain goat cheese, fresh cherries, or rosewater. And of course, because you are still in Cyprus, history and culture are never far away. Ten of Troodos' remarkable painted Byzantine churches have been listed on UNESCO's prestigious World Cultural Heritage List. The famous Kykko and Machairas Monasteries are well worth a visit for their icons, paintings and inspiring architecture.





## TROODOS IN BRIEF: Places of Interest

### Troodos Square Environmental Information Centre

Troodos Visitor Centre is situated 200m west of Troodos square (Plateia). It is the first of its kind in Cyprus and provides information about the Troodos National Park.

### Troodos Geopark

The Troodos Geopark Visitor Centre is located in the old Asbestos mine (Amiantos mine), an area with enormous historical value which now hosts an extraordinary botanical garden with information about the flora of the area, a seed bank of endemic species and also a plethora of evidence for the past mining activity and the community which once flourished there.

### Cyprus Railways Museum

The Cyprus Railways Museum is housed in the old Railway station near Evrychou village, in the Troodos mountains. Original documents, drawings, photos and various objects related to the Cyprus railways are exhibited in the Museum Rooms.

### Platres Resort

Platres village is the largest and most stylish mountain resort of Lemesos district, a popular place for excursions and a refuge from the intense summer heat.

### UNESCO BYZANTINE CHURCHES

#### Stavros tou Agiasmati

Platanistasa village, 15 km from Agros, 30 km off the Lefkosia-Astromeritis Road. A 15<sup>th</sup> century church, lying about 3 km outside this charming old village, retaining the most complete cycles of mural paintings of the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century in Cyprus.

#### Panagia tou Araka,

Lagoudera village is 15 km from Agros or off the Kakopetria-Troodos-Lemesos Road (Karvounas crossroad). The 12<sup>th</sup> century church situated just outside the village has fine frescoes. Together with Asinou Church and that of Agios Nikolaos tis Stegis, it is considered to be one of the most important Byzantine churches on the island.

#### Agios Nikolaos tis Stegis

Kakopetria village. The church of Agios Nikolaos tis Stegis stands about 5 km to the north of the village. It is completely painted with murals dating from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup>



century and is considered one of the most interesting Byzantine churches on the island.

#### Timios Stavros

Pelendri village 3 km below Kato Amiantos, off the Karvouna-Lemesos Road, 32 km from Lemesos. Once the property of Jean De Lusignan, son of the Lusignan King of Cyprus, Hugo IV. There are two interesting churches: the 14<sup>th</sup> century church of Timiou Stavrou (The Holy Cross), with beautiful wall paintings, and the church of Panagia Katholiki in the centre of the village.

#### Asinou Church

5 km from Nikitari village, off the main Lefkosia Troodos road, around 20 km north of Kakopetria. An early 12<sup>th</sup> century church dedicated to the Virgin Mary with frescoes of the 12<sup>th</sup> century and later periods, considered to be among the finest examples of Byzantine mural painting on the island.

#### Agios Ioannis Lampadistis Church

Kalopanagiotis village. The village is famous for its sulphur springs and the church of Agios Ioannis Lampadistis, with excellent frescoes of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is a complex of two churches and a chapel. One of the biggest religious fairs in the valley is held here on St. John's day, on October 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### Panagia tou Moutoulla.

Less than a kilometre further up is Moutoullas village, with its tiny 13<sup>th</sup> century chapel of Panagia tou Moutoulla, an early example of the steep-pitched wooden roof type with frescoes dating to 1280. Visitors can obtain the key from the adjacent house. The traditional craft of wooden carved basins has been preserved in Moutoullas.

#### Archangelos Michail, Pedoulas village

The painted church of Archangelos Michail in the lower part of the village dates back to 1474.

#### Panagia Podithou, Galata village

The church of Panagia Podithou once belonged to a monastery. It was erected in 1502, and its paintings are of the Italo-Byzantine style.

#### The Church of the Transfiguration of the Saviour (Metamorfosis tou Sotiros)

The church is an early 16<sup>th</sup> century chapel on the hill overlooking the village. Its interior is completely painted with one of the most accomplished series of murals of the post-Byzantine period.

#### Kykko Monastery and Museum

20 km west of Pedoulas village. The most famous and richest monastery in Cyprus. Founded in 1100 and dedicated to the Virgin Mary, it possesses one of the three surviving icons ascribed to St. Luke. The Museum is an integral part of the monastery and houses a priceless collection of icons, manuscripts and Cypriot antiquities. The monastery and museum are open daily.

#### Omodos Village

11 km southwest of Platres. A wine-producing village, once the property of Sir John De Brie, Prince of Galilee, with the Monastery of Stavros, "Holy Cross," standing by the stone-paved square.

#### Foini Village

The village is found 44 kilometres northwest of the city of Limassol. Famous for its pottery and its loukoumi sweet. Visitors can see the Pilavakeion private pottery collection. The state forests of Troodos and Pafos take up a large part of its administrative domain.

#### Koilani Village

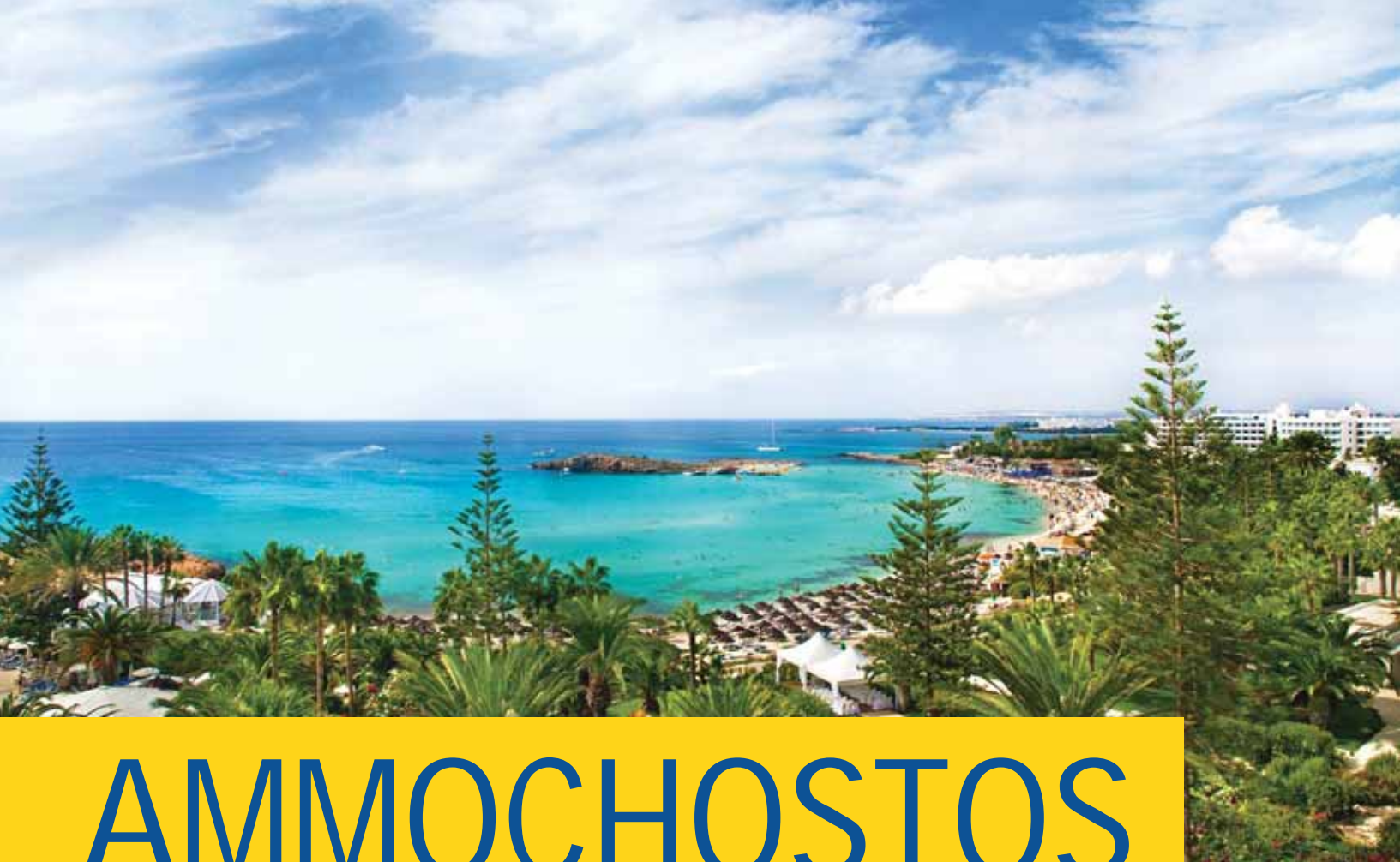
1.5 km southwest of Pera Pedi, off the Lemesos Troodos Road. An attractive wine producing village with the single aisle vaulted church of Agia Mavri, typical of the 12<sup>th</sup>-century.

#### Agros Village

Agros is in the heart of the Pitsilia region situated in a beautiful valley with a dry climate and cool springs. The village is also known for its traditional products such as aromatic rosewater, 'hiromeri' (smoked ham), 'loukanika' (spicy smoked sausages) and 'lountza' (smoked fillet of pork).

*The nightingales won't let you sleep in Platres,  
Tearful bird, on sea-kissed Cyprus  
consecrated to remind me of my country,  
I moored along with this fable,  
if it's true that it is a fable,  
if it's true that mortals will not again take up  
the old deceit of the gods;  
if it's true*

*~from Helen, by George Seferts,  
Nobel prize poet*



# AMMOCHOSTOS

The southeast coast: enjoy the azure waters and sandy beaches of this region

With its superb gold sandy beaches and multi-star hotels, the Ammochostos (Famagusta) region draws discerning sun-seekers from all over the globe. But this part of the island remains the agricultural heart of Cyprus, where traditional windmills stand with modern aqueducts to irrigate the fertile red soil.

Agia Napa, once a small fishing village, is as lively a resort as any in the Mediterranean. But the historic sites such as a 16<sup>th</sup> century Venetian monastery, lend character to a town that's best known for its colorful shops, tavernas and nightclubs. Another focal point is the crescent harbour, crowded with bright fishing boats. The day's catch is tonight's dinner at the popular restaurants nearby.

Life in this southeastern corner of Cyprus revolves around the sea, with water sports of all kinds readily available – from scuba diving to water-skiing and paragliding.

Explore the rugged coast toward Cape Gkreko, with its string of calm sandy coves, and stay for the indescribably beautiful sunset. Or head north, toward the basket-making community of Liopetri, stopping at Sotira to take in the pretty village churches that date from the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries.

East to Protaras, more glorious beaches spread out under the sun, while just inland the white-washed town of Paralimni boasts open air tavernas known for their succulent grilled fish. Only a few miles from the most contemporary of resort scenes, you'll feel eons away.





## AMMOCHOSTOS REGION IN BRIEF: (PROTARAS – AGIA NAPA) Places of Interest

### Agia Napa

Originally a fishing village, it is now a major tourist resort. It boasts quite a few interesting sites to visit, archaeological, medieval as well as more modern.

#### 1. Agia Napa Monastery

This imposing medieval monastery, dedicated to "Our Lady of the Forests", stands in the middle of Agia Napa surrounded by a high wall enclosure. Its 16th century church is partially underground, carved into the rock. An ancient sycamore tree, believed to be over 600 years old, grows in front of the south gate.

#### 2. "Thalassa" Agia Napa Municipal Museum

The "Thalassa" Municipal Museum's main purpose is to present to the audience the impact and the significance of the sea upon the history of the island. The exhibits of the museum cover a chronological span, from paleontological to historical periods until present times.

3. The Agia Napa Aqueduct was originally a Roman structure, with Frankish alterations. Its main purpose was to deliver water from various water sources to the local monastery.

#### 4. Makronisos Archaeological Site

The Makronisos archaeological site is a Hellenistic and Roman Period cemetery, which consists of 19 underground tombs.

### Agia Napa Sculpture Park

Park of Mediterranean Plants, Cacti and Succulents Located at the crossroads of Cape Gkreko and Kryou Nerou Avenue, the sculpture park and its adjoining cacti park offer a beautiful setting for a stroll with stunning, panoramic views. The sculpture park consists of a large collection of works by over 180 artists from around the world.

### Paralimni

Since the Turkish military occupation of Ammochostos in 1974, this small town has become the temporary administrative centre of the district. The twin-aisled vaulted church dedicated to the Virgin Mary (Panagia), is decorated with unusual 18th century porcelain plates. The church, parts of which belong to the 13th century, houses a small ecclesiastical museum.



### Deryneia Village

The village has three interesting churches, dating from the 15th and 17th centuries. From this village you can look at the "ghost city" of Ammochostos, now under occupation by the Turkish forces.

### Sotira Village

Here you'll find the partly ruined church of Agios Marnas, which was built in the 12th century and rebuilt during the 16th century. Most of the surviving frescoes date from back then. About 15 km to the west is the church of Agios Georgios, an early Christian basilica.

### Frenaros Village

The village of Frenaros has its own small Byzantine churches. Two of them, Agios Andronikos and Archangelos Michail, date back to the 12th century. The church of Agia Marina has some interesting frescoes painted by different artists.

### Liopetri Village

Here is a 16th century church dedicated to the Virgin Mary and the 15th century church of Agios Andronikos, with an octagonal dome and murals. Liopetri still carries on the traditional craft of basket-making.

### Potamos Liopetriou

A picturesque fishing refuge. Nearby are remains of a Venetian watch-tower. The French poet Arthur Rimbaud worked in this area in the 1880's.

### Avgorou Village

Avgorou has many Byzantine and post Byzantine churches. The main church is dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul. Inside the church are two double-sided 17th century icons. Other churches include the chapel of Agios Georgios and the church of Agios Georgios Terachiotis.

#### 1. Ecclesiastical Museum

Avgorou Village. An old chapel has been turned into a museum to house a small but important collection of ecclesiastical artifacts and icons, such as a 15th century icon of Christ.

#### 2. Ethnographic Museum

The Avgorou Ethnographic Museum is situated in an old two-story house. Its exhibits depict the way of life in the area of bygone generations.

### Xylofagou Village

The village church of Agios Georgios was built and decorated in the late 15th century. A new iconostasis was built in 1770 and later on the church was turned into a monastery. The Annunciation and the Nativity are amongst the church's most important wall paintings.

### Cape Gkreko National Park

It is believed that a temple dedicated to Aphrodite once existed in the area. Cape Gkreko National Park is an area of unique natural beauty, where one can admire magnificent cliff formations. The local nature trail links the area with the Aphrodite Cultural Route.

*"...In Cyprus I stumbled upon many more such echoes from forgotten moments of history with which to illuminate the present. Invaders like Haroun al Rashid, Alexander, Coeur de Lion; Women like Catherine Cornaro and Helena Paleologus...the confluence of different destinies which touched and illuminated the history of one small island in the Eastern basin of the Levant, giving it significance and depth of focus."*

*~ Lawrence Durrell, "Bitter Lemons"*

# CYPRUS ITINERARIES

Visiting the island as a destination unto itself...  
or as an exciting add-on-trip



Whether you have a week or more in Cyprus or just a few days, any number of itineraries are possible. The island's history is rich and multilayered but its size is relatively compact, making it easy to explore. You can craft a route, based purely on geographic variety. For example, from Larnaka in the east, to Pafos in the west, by way of Lefkosia, the capital, in the centre, making time to explore the Troodos Mountains along the way (three to five days). Or keep things purely coastal, from the beaches of Agia Napa to Pafos and the rugged Akamas Peninsula beyond, by way of Lemesos, with a stop in ancient Kourion and perhaps even in the Troodos' vineyard-covered foothills en route (four to seven days). Or follow thematic routes, nature (hiking and nature trails), antiquity, beaches, in the footsteps of Aphrodite and more. In these crossroads of civilisations, all roads lead to discovery.

## Sample Itinerary:

### DAY 1 – LEFKOSIA

In the morning visit the Cyprus Handicraft Centre, followed by a visit to the Cyprus Archaeological Museum, Byzantine Museum, Art Galleries and St. John's Cathedral. Lunch at Laiki Geitonia, a restored old neighborhood with cafes, tavernas, souvenir shops and galleries. In the afternoon visit the Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios Ethnological Museum and the Leventis Municipal Museum of Nicosia.

### DAY 2 – LEMESOS

In the morning visit Kolossi Castle built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the important city-kingdom of Kourion and the Sanctuary of Apollo Ylatis. In the afternoon visit the Lemesos Medieval Castle and the ancient site of Amathus.

### DAY 3 – PAFOS

On the outskirts of Pafos visit "Petra tou Romiou" - Aphrodite's birthplace. In the town of Pafos visit the Tombs of the Kings and the Pafos Archaeological Park with the mosaics at the House of Aion, Dionysos and Theseus. Lunch at Pafos Harbour followed by a visit to Pafos Castle and St. Paul's Pillar. The whole of ancient city of Pafos is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

### DAY 4 – PAFOS

In the morning visit Agios Neophytos Monastery and Agios Georgios in Pegeia to see the sea caves. Continue to Latsi village to enjoy some fresh fish for lunch at one of the seaside restaurants. In the afternoon visit the Baths of Aphrodite and take one of the nature trails at Akamas Peninsula.

### DAY 5 – LARNAKA

In the morning visit Saint Lazarus Church, Pierides Museum and the ancient Kingdom city of Kition. Lunch at the Palm Tree Promenade. In the afternoon visit Choirokitia Neolithic Settlement a UNESCO World Heritage Site and Lefkara village famous for its lace-making.

### DAY 6 – TROODOS MOUNTAINS

Visit Kykko Monastery, one of the richest monasteries on the island and the ecclesiastical museum. Lunch in the village of Pedoulas followed by a visit to one of the ten UNESCO Byzantine churches, Archangel Michail. In the afternoon visit another important UNESCO Byzantine church, Agios Nikolaos tis Stegis in Kakopetria village, followed by a walk in the old part of the village.

### DAY 7 – AMMOCHOSTOS AREA

Visit "Thalassa" Municipal Museum of the Sea and Agia Napa Monastery. Spend your afternoon swimming in the crystal clear waters of Agia Napa and Paralimni. In the afternoon you can explore one of the hiking trails of Cape Gkrekos.

## OTHER OPTIONS:

**Omodos village:** The Monastery of Stavros contains old icons, excellent wood carving and other ecclesiastical objects of interest, as well as a small National Struggle Museum.

**Fikardou village, in the Lefkosia district:**

The whole village has been declared an ancient monument in order to preserve the 18<sup>th</sup> century houses and has received the Europa Nostra award.





# CYPRUS' CULTURAL ROUTES



The best way to explore Cyprus is by car. An excellent road network links the cities making distances short and easy. Here are some thematic routes to help you discover the island.

## Following the footsteps of history

Cyprus is an island nation steeped in myth and legend, with a living legacy of history, culture, and tradition that's uniquely Mediterranean. It values the past but lives very much in the present, and as you explore its mix of ancient and contemporary this will come readily into view. From charming Larnaka, where most visitors arrive, to the inland capital city of Lefkosia, to the stunning beaches in the environs of Lemesos, Pafos and Ammochostos, to the cedar and pine forests of Troodos, each region offers travelers a uniquely rewarding experience. The cultural routes described below offer a suggestion of journeys across Cyprus. You can also refer to the day-by-day itinerary on page 20 for recommendations on touring the entire island in seven days.

### Antiquity Route

Imagine life in the Stone Age by visiting the ancient settlements of Tenta and Choirokoitia with its quaint reconstructed round huts. Wander through the remains of the ancient city kingdom of Kition, once a rich seaport and major copper trading centre. Admire the spectacular views from the cliff tops of Amathous and Kourion, the two ancient city kingdoms that flank the modern town of Lemesos. Amathous was where the world's largest stone vase was found, now displayed in the Louvre Museum. The splendid Greco-Roman theatre at Kourion is still used for cultural performances today. Visit the world heritage sites of the sanctuary of Aphrodite at Kouklia, the Tombs of the Kings and the exquisite Pafos Mosaics.

### Eastern Route

Take in the eastern corner of the island starting from Agia Napa with its white sandy beaches or Protaras with its windmills. Drive through the agricultural area of the Kokkinochoria (Red Soil villages), through the city of Larnaka with its palm-lined seafront. Continue on through Meneou to Kiti, making sure you visit the beautiful Byzantine church of Aggeloktisti, as well as the museum of Mazotos and the camel park. Admire the panoramic view from the peak at Stavrovouni with its monastery and tour through the picturesque hillside villages, particularly Lefkara, known for its lace and silverware.

### Nature Route

With a favourable climate all year round, the great outdoors of the island are easily accessible, and offer a myriad of opportunities to take a journey through nature, history and culture, thanks to the numerous sign posted paths and nature trails. A many designated walking trails have been created to highlight the beautiful landscapes and strong Mediterranean character of the island. By walking them, you can see a treasure trove of varied fauna and flora, as well as the remnants of the island's mining heritage and other interesting monuments.

### Byzantine Route

See the famous painted churches of Cyprus, ten Byzantine churches are on UNESCO's World Heritage List, with their remarkable wooden pitched roofs, icons and frescoes. Scattered throughout the Troodos mountain areas of Marathassa, Solea and Pitsillia, they are often situated in beautiful settings among the trees and are bound to impress you.

### Aphrodite Route

Follow in the footsteps of Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty and protectress of Cyprus. The route centres on the archaeological sites dedicated to the ancient cult of Aphrodite and includes Palaipafos (Kouklia), Amathous and Kition. These are linked to other sites and museums with artifacts related to the goddess. Wander through layers of history, culture and mythology as you learn all about her birth, mythology, character, the rituals connected with her cult, as well as the plants and seashells associated with her.

### Western Route

Tour the unspoilt western part of Cyprus. The short route will take you through the area around Polis with its traditional architecture, along a long stretch of beach to the villages of Pomos with its pretty fishing shelter and Pachyammos with an important pilgrimage church, returning through the mountains via Stavros tis Psokas, where you can see mouflons, via Lysos and Peristerona with its Byzantine museum. The longer trip takes the scenic route back to Pafos through cedar valley, Kykko Monastery, Platres and then down through the Diarizos valley.



# CYPRUS

## AND THE SPECIAL-INTEREST TRAVELER

At the crossroads of ancient civilisations, Cyprus is famous for its archaeological sites and storied history. But there's even more to Cyprus than cultural treasures: its natural landscapes and sunny climate provide an ideal setting for nature trails, adventure sports, golf, cycling, bird-watching and more. Set in the azure waters of the eastern Mediterranean, Aphrodite's island is ready to welcome you no matter why you choose to travel here – outdoor activities but also memorable weddings and unforgettable honeymoons, conferences or conventions in state-of-the-art facilities and more.

### Archaeology

Cyprus is an endless source of fascination for archaeology enthusiasts. The island is studded with ancient Greek and Roman ruins, as well as sites that date back to the Neolithic Age. The Bronze Age, Roman period, and Byzantine periods are particularly well-represented.

One of the island's most iconic archaeological sites is Kourion, on a hilltop setting west of Lemesos. It was founded by Achaean colonists from Argos in the Greek Peloponnese in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries BC and would become one of the most important of the ancient city kingdoms of Cyprus. In the scenic west of Cyprus, the ancient city of Pafos carries the designation of a UNESCO World Heritage Site, on the strength of the Sanctuary of Aphrodite at Kouklia (Palaipafos) and Nea Pafos. An important area in terms of both Aphrodite worship in ancient times and the spread of early Christianity, Pafos is also home to remarkably well-preserved Roman mosaics which can be viewed at the House of Dionysos, the Villa of Theseus and the Basilica of Panagia Chrysopolitissa.

### Family Activities

Whether a grown-up kid or just a kid Cyprus has all those 'ingredients' that comprise a beautiful and exciting fairytale or an adventurous and fascinating time-capsule ride through 11,000 years of history and civilisation! Step into a medieval castle and learn about the royal wedding that took place there hundreds of years ago! Walk into the world of a Neolithic settlement and learn how people lived during the Stone Age! Hike in the woods and find hidden waterfalls!

Feeling brave? Feeling Adventurous? Want to try something new? Try the steep hair-raising water slides in one of the water parks! Or the speed zip-line in the forest adventure park! Or go-karting! Want to take an extraordinary

“.....the true meaning of Cypriot hospitality which is wrapped up in a single word - 'Kopiaste' which roughly speaking means 'sit down with us and share'. Impossible to pass a café, to exchange a greeting with anyone eating or drinking without having the word fired at one as if from the mouth of a gun.”

~ Lawrence Durell,  
“Bitter Lemons”







ride? Try a donkey or a camel ride! Love animals? Visit a zoo! Feeling sporty? Try golfing or mini-golfing or bowling! Just a little toddler? Have fun with mum and dad in a playground! Whichever the age come and join the fun in Cyprus!

### Weddings and Honeymoons

With destination weddings continuing to grow in popularity, Cyprus has become one of the most popular places in the Mediterranean to say "I do." Visitors can choose from a wide variety of locales to exchange their vows – from majestic seaside ceremonies to sunset at a chapel, and from resort hotels, to small byzantine churches.

Cyprus is also one of the most romantic destinations for honeymoons – and with 300 days of sunshine each year, perfect weather is practically guaranteed. Here you can travel the countryside and discover the unique historic, cultural, and natural attractions, or do nothing more than luxuriate at one of the island's fine seaside resorts.

### Conferences and Incentives

Cyprus is a popular meetings and convention destination. Many major hotels have conference facilities. The Cyprus International Conference Centre in Lefkosia, one of the largest and best-equipped venues in the Eastern Mediterranean, was designed for large-scale meetings and conventions. Meeting planners need to spend only a day in Cyprus to realise what a perfect place it is for an incentive trip.

### Sports and Adventure

With its variety of terrain and excellent climate, Cyprus is a dream location for adventure sports including, mountain biking, mountain climbing and water sports. A haven for cyclists, you can explore everywhere from the pine clad earth tracks in the heart of the Troodos mountains to the rocky grounds of the verdant Akamas Peninsula. You can swim, cycle, walk and explore this very beautiful area of the island undisturbed.

The clear waters of the Mediterranean also make Cyprus the ideal place for water sports including sailing, windsurfing, kiteboarding, snorkeling, swimming, and scuba diving.

Hikers will find that the island's best trails are in the mountain regions, primarily in the Troodos Mountains and the Akamas Peninsula, where the most enjoyable island hikes lead through nature reserves.

### Golf

Cyprus offers perfect weather for golf for much of the year and several 18-hole courses, which all provide golf club rentals. There are four (4) courses in Cyprus (some with 18 holes others with 9) The Aphrodite Hills Golf Club, PGA Natural, Elea Golf Course in Secret valley and Minthis Golf Club are just a few examples of what Cyprus has to offer. These courses offer varying degrees of difficulty for every golfer's ability. For more info go to: <https://www.cgf.org.cy/> and [www.visitcyprus.com](http://www.visitcyprus.com).







# FOOD OF CYPRUS

When you taste the food in Cyprus, you're part of the delicious sweep of history that counts Greek, Turkish, Levantine and other savory influences in its varied gastronomy. Its most distinctive feature is the meze, a collection of many small plates of artfully prepared food, from koupepia (stuffed grape leaves) to Moussaka, Village Salad and much more. In some restaurants and tavernas, you can choose to order seafood meze or meat meze, and can opt to start your meal with a selection of mezes followed by a main course of meat or fish.

## True Mediterranean Cuisine

The local cuisine in Cyprus is based on classic elements of the Mediterranean diet, which includes fresh fruits and vegetables, olive oil, and often seafood. Vegetarian meze abound: from elies tsakistes, (cracked green olives with coriander seeds, lemon and crushed garlic), to kolokotes (small pastries stuffed with red pumpkin, raisins and cracked wheat pilaf) and a myriad of other plates of simply cooked fresh vegetables like moungra (pickled cauliflower), pickled beets and roast potatoes. Seafood includes sea bass, sea bream, red mullet and many more. Heartier appetites will be satiated by the likes of fresh moussaka, stifado (a rich beef and onion stew), and ofto kleftiko, a Cypriot specialty foil-wrapped lamb baked with Mediterranean herbs in a sealed oven.

Halloumi is the signature cheese and everyday delicacy of Cyprus. This is a firm cheese made from the milk of thyme-fed sheep, often served grilled (the cheese doesn't melt). Gaining in popularity abroad, it's regularly served in Cypriot restaurants. Delicious on its own, it's often paired with the likes of grilled vegetables or fresh-cut watermelon slices.

Cyprus is famous for its grapes, and the best local desserts are fruit or almonds in grape juice served with Cypriot coffee. But it's hard to resist a plate of baklava or piping hot loukoumades (mini-doughnuts drenched in honey syrup).

## Dining Out

The predominant type of eatery is the small, inexpensive bar; the most popular serving local cuisine. Whether in larger towns or small villages, Greek-style tavernas guarantee an evening with a great Cypriot atmosphere, often featuring folk performances and music. Pride in local cuisine runs strong here, meaning that even at popular resorts you'll have the opportunity to sample authentic cuisine.

There is also a wide variety of cafés and snack bars serving Cypriot specialties and gyros (doner kebab), as well as popular fare from sandwiches to pizza. Dinner, the most

celebrated meal of the day, is usually eaten after 20:00. In addition to the traditional tavernas one can also find all types of international cuisine here.

## Nightlife and Entertainment

For many, dining out in Cyprus is an eventful experience that can encompass many hours savouring fine foods and drinks, but there are additional nightlife options for those with the energy after a meal. Many hotels have Cypriot musicians who entertain diners nightly or stage folk evenings with traditional music and dancing where guests can join in a local Greek dance. It's easier than you might think! Resorts with clubs, bars, and pubs are the most popular places to enjoy a lively night out, but more local options abound. Most hotels also sell tickets to concerts, dance shows, and other cultural performances. Larger towns have theatres offering both classical performances and modern plays, often in beautiful historic settings.







# WINE OF CYPRUS

The island has a long-standing tradition in winemaking that dates back to Ancient Greek, Roman and Egyptian times, as evidenced by archaeological finds of old wine jugs at the Lemesos (Limassol) villages of Pyrgos and Erimi that are believed to be over 6.000 years old. The grape varieties of the island are some of the oldest in the world, with the sweet dessert wine of “Commandaria” remaining the oldest named wine still in production.

## Wine Routes

There are seven wine routes on the island and these are Laona-Akamas, Vouni Panagias-Ampelitis, Diarizos Valley, Commandaria, Larnaka-Nicosia and the Wine Villages of Lemesos (collectively known as ‘krasochoria’ meaning ‘wine villages’). They all produce both red and white wines.

The two main local grape varieties are those of Mavro (black) and Xynisteri (white). Xynisteri is the most widespread white grape variety and produces pale, light wines with a low alcohol content (11-11.5% volume). Mavro (red) is large and juicy, producing dull colour wines with a light taste. When Mavro and Xynisteri are blended together they make Commandaria, and they are also used together in the production of the national spirit, Zivania.

Other local grape varieties include the ancient Maratheftiko and Ofthalmo (red), whilst foreign grape varieties are also grown on the island, including Chardonnay, Muscat of Alexandria, Palomino, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon (white), and Alicante Bouschet, Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon, Cinsaut, Grenache Noir, Mataro and Shiraz (red).

## Commandaria

Cyprus can proudly lay claim to the world’s oldest wine still in production - that of the delicious sweet dessert wine Commandaria. Thought to date back to 800 BC, references to the consumption of a wine named ‘Cypriot Nama’ is believed to have been Commandaria before it was given its current name during the crusades in the 12th century. It was thought that the wine had therapeutic qualities and it was widely used as a tonic.

Richard the Lionheart celebrated his capture of Cyprus and his marriage to Berengaria in Lemesos (Limassol) with Commandaria, declaring it “the wine of kings

and the king of wines”. In 1192 he sold the island to the Knights of St. John and the Knight Templars, who then sold it to Guy de Lusignan, but kept their headquarters at Kolossi. Commandaria was mainly produced in Kolossi – which was their administrative centre called ‘La Grande Commanderie’ - and it was here that the wine found its name. The dried grapes are pressed, with the run-off collected and fermented in tanks or huge earthenware jars - much like those used in bygone times.

No visit to the island is complete without picking up a bottle to take home, not just as a drink, but also as a sweet piece of the island’s history!

## Zivania

With an alcohol content of 40-99%, it is no surprise that the island’s national drink “Zivania” is also referred to as ‘firewater’! The strong drink dates back to the 14th century when the island was under Venetian rule and is still made in the same traditional way today.





## THE FOLLOWING ARE PUBLIC HOLIDAYS IN CYPRUS:

January 1	New Year's Day
January 6	Epiphany Day
February/March	Green Monday (50 days before Greek Orthodox Easter)
March 25	Greek National Day
April 1	Cypriot National Day
April	Good Friday (Friday before Greek Orthodox Easter)
April	Easter Monday (Monday after Greek Orthodox Easter)
May 1	Labor Day
May/June	Pentecost-Kataklysmos (Festival of the Flood)
August 15	Assumption
October 1	Cyprus Independence Day
October 28	Greek National Day (Ochi Day)
December 24	Christmas Eve
December 25	Christmas Day
December 26	Boxing Day

## A Country of Festivals, Folklore and Celebration

Rich layers of history have promoted both religious and folkloric traditions that still resonate today. Cyprus offers a wide variety of cultural events for visitors to experience from national holiday celebrations, to smaller festivals that take place in villages and towns throughout the island all year round.

For those who want to immerse themselves in a truly unique Mediterranean culture, multifaceted Cyprus has a wealth of options, from opera performances in a medieval castle to concerts at an ancient Greco-Roman theatres.

The traditional religious festivals in Cyprus coincide with those celebrated in Europe. On New Year's Day, Cypriots typically exchange presents and eat the traditional New Year cake known as Vasilopita. Epiphany takes place at seaside towns with a swimming competition where the winner recovers the crucifix hurled into the water in order to sanctify the waters. During Holy Week, an effigy of Judas is burned and icons are covered with a pall. In May, the Anthestiria flower festival heralds the arrival of spring, while September brings the annual arts festival in Nicosia (Lefkosia).

Lemesos is home to many Carnival festivities which take place in February/March, with its grand parade and masquerade parties; The Ancient Greek Drama Festival in summer, which attracts musical, dance, and theatre groups from all over the world and the Wine Festival in September

Pafos, is home to the Pafos Aphrodite Festival in late August/early September. That's when opera lovers from all over the globe converge at the Medieval Castle Square for world-class performances. Music lovers will also enjoy the International Pharos Chamber Music Festival each May/June in Kouklia.







# CYPRUS' ACCOMMODATION

## WHERE TO STAY IN CYPRUS

The variety of accommodation in Cyprus is extensive and of international high standards and uniquely Cypriot. That means whether you choose a hotel for business, leisure or a mix of the two, and regardless of price range, you can expect quality lodgings and nothing less than the warmest welcome, as befits one of Europe's most celebrated island holiday destinations. Whether traveling as a couple, with small children, alone or with friends, you will be made to feel worry-free and at home wherever you go.

Many hotels are, naturally, on the coast, from Agia Napa in the east to Polis in the west. Beyond stylish lobbies, airy rooms and sumptuous suites, the most luxurious of these have extensive facilities and advantages, beginning with easy beach access and beautiful swimming pools but also encompassing gourmet (but informal!) restaurants, health clubs, gyms, tennis courts and world-renowned health spas. Even moderately-priced hotels generally include the famously generous Cyprus buffet breakfast in the room rate. You can check hotels' websites or inquire when making reservations.

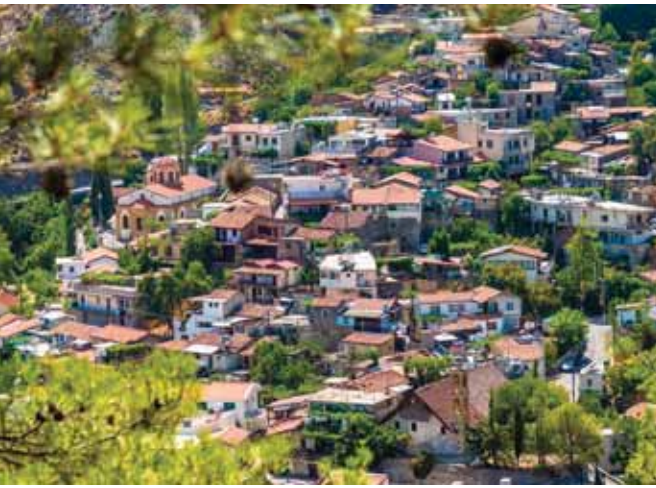
From five-star resorts to small, simple family-run establishments, you'll find it all here. You may make your selection from large hotels, hotel apartments, tourist villages, and tourist villas as well as campgrounds, traditional homes, guest houses.

If you are looking for a different type of vacation, perhaps one in which you stay off the beaten path and experience Cyprus much like a native resident would, Cyprus offers an Agrotourism Program where you can stay in restored traditional houses in one of the island's many picturesque villages. For additional information on the Agrotourism Program, visit [www.agrotourism.com.cy](http://www.agrotourism.com.cy) or send an email to [info@agrotourism.com.cy](mailto:info@agrotourism.com.cy)



# USEFUL INFORMATION

## GOOD THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO



### About Cyprus

Located at the heart of the Eastern Mediterranean, Cyprus has a landmass of 9,251 square kilometres.

Population: 864,200 (end 2017).

The island is demographically diverse, with 76.1% of the population Greek Cypriots, 10.2% Turkish Cypriots and 13.7% foreign residents.

The largest towns are Lefkosia the capital city (Nicosia), with a population of 330,000. Lemesos (Limassol) with 239,800, Larnaka with 145,300 and Pafos with 90,200.

### Government

Cyprus, an independent sovereign Republic, has a presidential system of democratic government. Free elections are held every five years for the election of a President and Members of Parliament.

### Languages

Greek is the main language, but English is also spoken by almost everyone. French is sometimes used in hotels and other establishments.

### Before You Leave

You must have a valid passport, the appropriate visa documentation and an internationally recognised driver's licence. You will not need to worry about getting any vaccinations prior to arrival.

### Clothing and Activities

General information and suggestions on what to wear and do, according to the season.

**April-May:** Days are pleasantly warm, but temperatures may fall a bit at night. Medium-weight and summer apparel. Light woollies or long sleeved cotton for the evenings. Excellent season for those who prefer to enjoy nature, as the countryside is green and many flowers are in bloom.

**June-July-August:** Warmest months of summer. Very light weight summer clothing. Ideal for swimming and all beach/water activities.

**September-October:** Warm days, cool October evenings. Light weight apparel for the day and medium weight for the evenings in October. Swimming and water sports are still at their best.

**November:** Pleasantly warm days. Medium-weight

apparel. Light woollies. Ideal weather for autumn travel. Lunches in the open-air still a delight. Sunbathing and even swimming can still be enjoyed, as well as most outdoor sports.

**December-January:** Winter time for Cypriots... Autumn for our foreign visitors!

It may rain occasionally, yet the promise of glorious sunshine is always there. Winter clothing – not heavy coats though! Outdoor activities and excursions can be enjoyed regularly throughout the year.

**February:** The possibility of exceptionally warm days. Almond trees in bloom, occasional rain and mild day time temperatures are the harbingers of spring. It can be cold however, in the evenings. Winter apparel. Conditions are ideal for snow skiing on Troodos Mountains.

**March:** Moderating weather with plenty of sunshine and with nature at its best. Winter apparel with medium-weight wear. Most outdoor activities can be enjoyed and March is an excellent period for long country walks.

### Banking Hours, Currency and Credit Cards

Commercial banks in Cyprus offer a wide range of banking services, in euro as well as in foreign currencies, and have correspondents in most major cities around the world. They are also full members of the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT). Commercial banking is fully compliant with EU banking law.

Currency exchange services and Automated Teller Machines are available at Larnaka and Pafos International Airports.

There are Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) outside most branches of all Banks in all towns and in the main tourist resorts of Agia Napa and Paralimni.

The currency is the Euro (€).

All major credit cards are accepted at most places.

### Electricity

230 volts, a.c. 50 Hz. Sockets are usually 13 amp, square - pin.

### Emergencies

In case of emergency, immediate response is given by the following telephone numbers, where English is spoken:

- Ambulance: 112

- Fire Service: 112

- Police: 112

- Night Pharmacies: 11892

- NARCOTICS Emergency Service: Information Centre for drugs and poisoning: 90901401

### Marinas and Yacht Harbours

**Limassol Marina:** Limassol Marina is situated in the bay of Lemesos and it is just a stroll away from the heart of Lemesos city. The position of the Marina is 34 deg.40 min –North – 33 deg. 02 min. 4 East. It is 130 nautical miles from Beirut (Lebanon), 205 n.m. from Port Said (Egypt), 255 n.m. from Rhodes island (Greece) and 285 n.m from Suez gateway (Egypt).

Limassol Marina is a Port of Entry to the Republic of Cyprus and provides customs and immigration clearance. It is accessible 24/7 in all weather conditions. The marina has berthing facilities for 650 yachts of various sizes. Berths range from 8 m to 115 m. Draft ranges from 3,5 to 9 m.

At the premises of Limassol Marina there are 40 shops, 14 restaurants, bars and cafes, a cultural centre, spa and fitness club and parking space for 750 cars.

Tel: +357 25 020 020  
Email: info@limassolmarina.com

### Larnaka Marina:

Larnaka Marina is situated in the bay of Larnaka and lies 110 nautical miles from Lebanon and Syria, 230 n.m. from Port Said, and 250 n.m. from Greece. The position of the Marina is 34 deg., 55 min. North – 33 deg., 38 min East. The Marina is an official Port of Entry, and has berthing facilities for 400 yachts of various sizes. Yachts coming to or leaving Cyprus, can clear Customs and Immigration formalities within the Marina. Tel: +357 24 653110  
Email: ctolar@cytanet.com.cy

### St. Raphael Marina

The St. Raphael Marina presents itself as a beautiful border to the St. Raphael hotel premises. Located at longitude 33 deg. 11 min. – latitude 34 deg. 42 min. is a very special feature of the Resort, ideal for motor and sailing yacht enthusiasts. Total of 237 berths accommodate boats up to 30 m Length Overall (L.O.A.) and 4 m draught. Yachts are





berthed stem to 3 concrete piers with all facilities including connected fresh water, electricity, telephone and TV.

Tel: + 357 25 834 255  
E-mail: marina@raphael.com.cy

### Shopping

Locally produced items, which are popular to visitors, include leather goods, curtains and tablecloths, ceramics, copperware, handmade silverware and jewellery, baskets, and the famous traditional handmade Lefkaritika lace. These can be purchased from the many souvenir and other shops found throughout the island as well as the Cyprus Handicraft Centres in Lefkosia, Lemesos, Larnaka and Pafos.

Cyprus wines and spirits, which have been famous for centuries, are also high on visitors' shopping lists, and can be purchased from supermarkets or grocery shops. Shoes, shirts, imported textiles, spectacles and watches are good value for money.

In most of the tourist areas, both souvenir shops and supermarkets remain open until late in the evenings and all day on Sunday.

Shop opening hours vary depending on their type and location and whether they are located in urban, tourist or rural areas. Generally, shops will open between 09:00 - 20:00 on Monday - Saturday, but this can vary an hour or two either way, depending on the type of shop and the area it is located in. On Sunday, opening times are later, typically around 11:00, and closing times vary from 14:00 - 19:00, again depending on the type of outlet and its area.

Some shops still have a half-day closing on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, and close on Sunday, although in most of the tourist areas of Cyprus, both shops and supermarkets stay open till late at night, and are also open on Sundays.

During the period June 15th - August 31st there is an optional three-hour afternoon break/rest from 14:00 - 17:00 (siesta).

Special shopping hours apply for Christmas and Easter with shops permitted to stay open later during the run-up to the events, but must be closed by 18:00 on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, and by 18:00 on Good Friday.

### Sunrise and Sunset Times

Sunrise and Sunset times are given for the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month with the hours and minutes at 5 minutes approximation.

Month	Sunrise	Sunset
January	6:55	17:00
February	6:35	17:30
March	6:00	17:55
April	6:15	19:20
May	5:45	19:45
June	5:30	20:00
July	5:45	20:00
August	6:05	19:35
September	6:30	18:55
October	6:50	18:15
November	6:20	16:45
December	6:45	16:35

(April to October: Summer Time)

### Tipping

Tipping is at the discretion of the customer and it is a gesture which is appreciated by hotel and catering establishment employees. Taxi-drivers, porters, hairdressers etc, always appreciate a small tip.

### Transportation

**Bus & Shuttle Service:** There is bus and shuttle service from Larnaka International Airport to all major towns.

**Car Rental:** Major self-drive car rental firms have offices in all towns, as well as at the Larnaka and Pafos International Airports - drive cars are easily recognized by their red plates.

Useful information when you hire a car:

The insurance is only valid within the area under the control of the Republic of Cyprus.

Rates vary according to the category of the car, days of rent, period of the year and extras. Insurance is charged extra.

Unlimited mileage.

The car can be delivered and collected at the airports by prior arrangement.

The car is usually delivered to the customer with a full tank paid for by the customer. If the car is returned with full tank the customer receives a refund, unless stated otherwise in the contract.

Drivers under 25 years of age holding a driving license for less than 3 years at the time of rental, must inform the car rental company so that under - age insurance coverage is provided.

In case of damages, the customer is responsible for a certain amount depending on the category of car.

**Driving License:** Visitors in Cyprus can drive using a valid International driving license, or their National driving license, provided it is valid for the class of vehicle they wish to drive.

European driving licenses are recognized officially by the law 94 (1)/0. Driving licenses issued by Norway, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Australia, Switzerland, Zimbabwe, United States of America, Japan, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, and Russia must be replaced after a period of six months. Non-European citizens and citizens who come from any country other than the previously mentioned countries are allowed to drive holding their Nations Driving License for a period of about 30 days (this period is not strictly restricted). If they are holders of an international driving license they are allowed to drive provided their license is valid.

**Taxi Service:** Intercity Service taxis connect all major towns in Cyprus and run approximately every half hour. Passengers share 4-7 seats.



# CYPRUS WEATHER

		January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
Average Day Temperature		17	18	19	23	28	31	33	33	30	27	22	19
Average Night Temperature		7	7	8	13	17	19	22	22	20	17	13	10
Average Hours of Sunshine per Day		6	7	8	9	11	13	12	11	10	9	7	6
Average Sea Temperature		17	17	18	20	21	25	27	28	27	25	24	21
Average Number of Rainy Days		9	7	6	5	2	0	0	0	1	3	5	7

# ACCESSIBLE CYPRUS

## INFORMATION FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL ACCESS NEEDS.

A number of facilities are available to visitors with special access needs who wish to visit Cyprus. Some hotel establishments provide a range of facilities to meet special needs and requirements. Since facilities vary from hotel to hotel, it is recommended to contact the hotels directly in order to ascertain that they have the right facilities for a particular disability. Hotels offering facilities for the disabled can be found at the Deputy Ministry of Tourism website [www.visitcyprus.com](http://www.visitcyprus.com)

Both Larnaka and Pafos international airports are accessible to visitors with all kinds of access needs. Facilities include accessible washrooms, charging stations for electric wheelchairs at departure gates, ramps to allow a person on a wheelchair to enter or exit the buses and additional assistive services, meeting European Regulation 1107/2006 concerning the rights of disabled travellers.

In 2007, the Cyprus Parliament approved and introduced the use of the European Blue Badge for parking at designated places for the disabled, available all over the island, both in public roads and public

parking areas. The authority responsible for issuing the Blue Badge is the Department for Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, part of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance. It can be contacted at +357 22 406 406 email: [info@dsid.mlsi.gov.cy](mailto:info@dsid.mlsi.gov.cy)

Most Cyprus' towns are fairly accessible with a wheelchair but much work is yet to be carried out to improve infrastructure. A person using a wheelchair is advised to be accompanied for assistance in inaccessible areas.

Transportation around the island can be arranged if prior notice is given to the transport companies. Special buses are also available with low gradient ramps, safety belts and a/c and so are special taxis that may carry a wheelchair user. Updated information can be obtained from the Deputy Ministry of Tourism information offices.

Car rental agencies providing automatic cars are found at the airports of Larnaka and Pafos. Disabled visitors are advised to contact car rental agencies for special arrangements prior to their arrival. Parking spaces marked for disabled drivers are found

on most of Cyprus central roads and squares, at the airports, ports and marinas, at public buildings, at most of the seafront and other tourist resorts, at many tourist establishments and shopping centres etc.

### USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

#### Cyprus Paraplegics Association (OPAK)

Tel.: +357 22 49 64 94,

Fax: +357 22 42 35 40

[www.opak.org.cy](http://www.opak.org.cy)

email: [opak@cytanet.com.cy](mailto:opak@cytanet.com.cy)

#### The Pancyprian Organisation for Disabled Persons

Tel.: +357 22 42 63 01

Fax: +357 22 31 32 50

e-mail: [organofdisabled@cytanet.com.cy](mailto:organofdisabled@cytanet.com.cy)

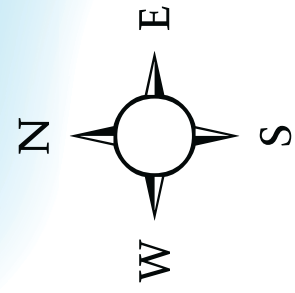
**Emergency Telephone Number (Ambulance, Fire & Rescue, Police) 112**





# CYPRUS

THE ISLAND OF APHRODITE AWAITS...



- LEGEND**
- City/Village
  - ★ Antiquity
  - ⦿ Monastery
  - ⦿ Castle
  - ⦿ Byzantine Church
  - ⦿ Tourist Information
  - Area under Turkish occupation since 1974

# Cyprus

Travel Planner



DEPUTY MINISTRY OF TOURISM

[www.visitcyprus.com](http://www.visitcyprus.com)

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