



## PAPHOS

### CYPRUS

Cyprus is the third largest island in the Mediterranean Sea. With over 3,500 square miles, only the islands of Sardinia and Sicily are larger. Less than 50 miles to the north is Turkey. Less than 100 miles east is the coast of Syria and Lebanon. To the south and southeast are Egypt and Israel. And to the west are Crete and the Greek isles. The island has been partitioned between the Turks and Greeks since 1974. Turkish Cypriots live in the northern third of the island while Greek Cypriots live in the southern two thirds.

On the west coast of Cyprus is the town of Paphos. The capital of Nicosia, is 60 miles to the northeast. The town and surrounding area began to wake from a long slumber in the early 1970s. Cyprus began to invest in basic infrastructure and tourism and the city and region's prospects improved.

Paphos is often referred to as two cities. Kato Paphos is the old city, built around the harbor. Pano Paphos is the newer city, a bit more inland. Together they have a population close to 50,000. The area has seen the development of a number of beautiful resorts over the past years and tourism is now vital to the economy. The harbor area of town is filled with cafés and restaurants. This is a great place to relax and watch the fishing and recreational boats bobbing in the marina.

Among the highlights of Paphos and the surrounding region are the ancient ruins, some of which date back over 2,000 years. How amazing it is to enter homes filled with stunning mosaics which haven't been seen for over a 1,000 years. This is the land which was filled with the gods and temples of Greek Mythology. Yet right here in this very town a young and fiery disciple from Jerusalem preached of a new faith.

Sit in the theater, the Roman Odeon, or stand upon its stage where poets, singers and actors entertained the citizens of old. The same theater, hidden and lost for a thousand years, serves again as a great venue for singing and music and laughter and the joy which makes for a wonderful community. This may be an ancient land yet this city is not some cold and lifeless relic of the past. Paphos and its people are warm, vibrant, alive and happy to share their town with all who are fortunate enough to have the opportunity to visit.



### HISTORY

The island of Cyprus has been attacked and invaded, occupied and overrun, loaned and borrowed, bought and sold, bequeathed, conquered and divided perhaps more than any other piece of land on earth. As early as 3000 BC the mighty Hittite Empire took control of the island. The Mycenaeans and waves of Greeks began arriving around 1400 BC. By the 8th century BC Phoenicians were building colonies on the island. In the early 700s BC the Assyrians came ashore. They, in turn, were followed by the Persians and Egyptians. Alexander the Great took Cyprus in 333 BC. The Greek Ptolemaic rulers of Egypt acquired the island after Alexander died. Cyprus was appropriated by the Roman Republic in 58 BC. Soon afterwards the Roman general Marc Anthony gave Cyprus to Cleopatra.

In 45 AD the Apostle Paul brought the Christian gospel to Cyprus. When the Roman Empire split 350 years later, Cyprus came under the rule of the Byzantines. In 649 Arabia's Rashidun Caliphate swept across the island. In their wake came the Umayyad Caliphate. Crusaders used Cyprus as a launching pad to Jerusalem and heavenly riches while merchants from the Italian Republics of Genoa and Venice used Cyprus as a base

for African and Asian trade in pursuit of earthly treasure. The Ottoman Empire took Cyprus in 1571 and held it until the British Empire slowly gained control beginning in 1878. Cyprus earned full independence in 1960. In 1974, after years of conflict between Cypriot Greeks and Turks, a coup and efforts to unite Cyprus with Greece, Turkey invaded the island. Today the island remains divided between the (unrecognized) Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and The Republic of Cyprus in the south.

## PAPHOS PLACES OF INTEREST

The **Municipal Baths Beach** is very popular with visitors and locals. This is a great place to relax and swim. The beach has water sports and full facilities. Lifeguards are on duty. Lounges and umbrella are available for rent. Restaurants and cafés are nearby when its time to eat and cool off with a refreshing drink.

The **House of Dionysus** is a restored Roman villa which is believed to have been built in the 2nd century AD. The large house gets its name from the stunning mosaic which portrays Dionysus, the Greek god of wine. There are many rooms in the house, each with its unique decoration.



The **Tombs of the Kings** date to the 4th century BC. The tomb complex, with its graceful Doric columns and frescos, was carved from solid rock. This is the final resting place, not for kings, but rather for prominent citizens of the city.

The **Paphos Odeon** (amphitheater) was built by the Romans in the 2nd century AD. Carved from limestone, the Odeon was restored after its discovery in 1974. The amphitheater holds an audience of 1,200 and after two millennia it still plays host to a variety of performances and festivals.

**St. Solomon's Catacombs** date back over 2,000 years. They were carved into the rock of a hill. Steps descend deep into the cavern. Frescos and icons can be seen. The catacombs were used by early Christians as a place of worship. In the 1200s crusaders on their way to the Holy Land left their carvings (graffiti) on the walls. An interesting tree marks the site.

The **Archaeological Museum** is not large but it has a wonderful collection of pottery, statuary, coins and historic artifacts, some of which date back to the Neolithic Age of 10,000 BC.

The **Byzantine Museum** houses a wonderful collection of relics, woodcarvings, manuscripts, frescoes and ornately decorated bibles. Many of the artifacts date back to the 7th and 8th centuries. The museum is especially proud of its many historic icons, some of which are among the oldest ever found on Cyprus.

The **Paphos Castle** was originally built by the Byzantines to protect the harbor and city. The Lusignans, Venetians and Ottomans each expanded and improved on the original fortification. There is not too



much to see within the castle but the view from atop the wall is great.

## Beyond Paphos

**Yeroskipou** is a small village just a few miles east of Paphos. Along with a number of archaeological sites in the area visitors will find the Byzantine church of Ayia Paraskevi. This is one of only two Byzantine churches left standing on Cyprus. The town is also home to the famous candy known as "Yeroskipos loukoumia" (more about the candy in a moment).

**Curium** is an ancient city about 30 miles east of Paphos. Today visitors have the opportunity to see the 2,000 seat Greco-Roman theater which dates to the 2nd century BC. The House of Eustolios dates to the 400 AD and is renowned for its beautiful mosaic floors and baths. The Sanctuary of Apollo has wonderful Corinthian columns and is a reminder of a glorious age now long past. Destroyed by earthquakes in the 4th century AD, the remains of the city were not discovered until the late 1800s.

**Nicosia** is the capital city of Cyprus, located in the center of the island about 60 miles northeast of Paphos. The Cathedral of St. John is the seat of the Archbishop of the Orthodox Church. The city has numerous sites of historic interest including the Venetian Walls, the Archaeological Museum and the old quarter



## SHORE EXCURSIONS

To make the most of your visit to Paphos and surrounding areas we suggest you take one of our organized Shore Excursions. For information concerning tour content and pricing, consult your Shore Excursion Order Form or contact the Shore Excursion Desk. When going ashore, be advised to take only necessary items and secure any valuables onboard.

## LOCAL CUSTOMS

**Attire:** Unless you are at the beach conservative clothing is recommended. Shorts and tank tops are not appropriate.

**Bargaining:** Except for the open markets, prices are usually fixed.

**Tipping:** A service charge is often added to restaurant bills. If the charge is not added then a tip of 10-15% is appropriate. A 10% tip for a taxi is standard.

## LOCAL CUISINE AND DRINK SPECIALTIES

The traditional cuisine of Cyprus has been influenced by the island's location. The weather in the western Mediterranean is generally mild and conducive to growing a number of crops while the sea provides a bountiful harvest. Another influence on the island's cuisine can be attributed to homesick foreign soldiers. Not wishing to over simplify, but throughout the past few thousand years a lot of foreign troops from a lot of foreign armies have come ashore on Cyprus. So, start with a Mediterranean Greek base, mix in some Turkish, stir in some Syr-

ian, combine a bit of Italian, fold in French, blend in a smidge of English and there you have it ... the traditional cuisine of Cyprus. Some favorites include: Olives (black or green) marinated in a mixture of oil, lemon and garlic and herbs. Tahini is a sesame paste used for dipping). Halloumi Cheese is made from goat and sheep milk which can be served grilled. Octapodi Krasato is fresh octopus which has been cooked in a red wine sauce. Souflakia is cubes of pork or lamb which have been roasted over hot coals. The meat is often stuffed into fresh pita bread, covered with roasted onions and drizzled with yoghurt. Salata Horiatiki means peasant or village salad. It is served with almost every meal. It is a simple combination of garden fresh cucumbers, tomatoes, onions, peppers, feta cheese and olive oil.

One last item must be mentioned when referring to good things to eat in Cyprus. A few years ago a number of serious minded men (none of whom were Cypriot, we presume) were very carefully studying the evidence before them. Their reputation and that of their esteemed company depended upon the accuracy of their final judgment. A certain Cypriot mayor, Tasos Kouzoupos, together with the entire population of the town of Geroskipou, were waiting for official word. Over a year and a half earlier some highly skilled and extremely dedicated men from Geroskipou had mixed a batch of sugar, honey, corn starch, assorted nuts and fruit juice and cooked it till it was done. On June 20, 2006 an e-mail was received by Mayor Kouzoupos. It was official and all of Geroskipou and most of Cyprus rejoiced. Weighing in at 2.50267 tons, the candy makers of Geroskipou had created the largest "loukoumi" in history. The e-mail was signed "Congratulations, Guinness Book of World of Records".

Archeologists have uncovered evidence of wine being produced on Cyprus as far back as 7,000 years ago. Throughout history the quality of Cypriot wine has fluctuated from one extreme to the other. During three centuries of Ottoman rule (beginning in 1571) the religious traditions of Islam combined with the imposition of very heavy taxes reduced Cypriot wine production to little more than that used for personal consumption. Local growers resorted to hiding their wine in order to avoid the Sultan's tax collectors. They need not have gone to the trouble. According to a respected English writer in the late 1800s; "The wine of Cyprus is unfit for the English palate". Since the British takeover of Cyprus in 1878 the quality of wine produced on the island has continued to improve. By the 1960s virtually half the wine produced on Cyprus was being consumed and enjoyed, where else, but in England.

## SHOPPING FACILITIES

The Paphos Market is located in the heart of Old Town. Shoppers can find a wide variety of famously beautiful hand-made Lefkaritika lace, handcrafted silver, leather goods, ceramics and souvenirs.

## CURRENCY

The unit of currency on Cyprus is the Euro. All Euro notes are legal tender in member states. ATMs are plentiful and major

credit cards are widely accepted.

## TRANSPORTATION

Taxis are generally available near the Pier. Some of the drivers may speak English. It is advisable to negotiate a fare prior to departing.

## USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

Greek is an official language on Cyprus along with Turkish. A large percentage of the population on Cyprus speaks English.

The Greek translation used here is spelled phonetically.

*English - Greek*

Hello - Yia sou

How are you? - Ti kanis

I'm fine - Ime kala

Please - Parakalo

Thank you - Efharisto

Yes - Ne

No - Ohi

Good-bye - Yia sou

