

Tour
Information



Walking the Trails of the Mysterious Far East of Crete





Passports

Please ensure your 10 year British Passport is not out of date and is valid for a full three months beyond the duration of your visit. The name on your passport must match the name on your flight ticket/E-ticket otherwise you may be refused boarding at the airport.

Visas

Visas are not required for Greece for citizens of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. For all other passport holders please check the visa requirements with the appropriate embassy.

Greek Consulate: 1A Holland Park, London W11 3TP. Tel: 020 7221 6467



Tickets

Included with this documentation is an e-ticket, which shows the reference number for your flight. EasyJet have now replaced all of their airport check-in desks with EasyJet Baggage Drop desks. **Therefore you must check-in online and print out your boarding passes before travelling.** Checking in online also provides the opportunity for you to pre-book seats, if you wish, at an additional cost.

Online check-in is available from 30 days prior to travel using the reference number provided. Please see your e-ticket for more information or visit;

www.easyjet.com

Please check that the details on your documentation are accurate and that all names are spelt correctly and match the names on your passport. Your flight ticket is non-transferable and

non-refundable. No refund can be given for non-used portions



Baggage Allowance

We advise you to check the baggage allowances carefully as you are likely to be charged the excess if you exceed the weight limit. Maximum weights for single bags apply.

With Easyjet your ticket includes one hold bag of up to 20kg plus **one** cabin bag no bigger than 56 x 45 x 25 cm. Overhead locker space is limited on board the aircraft and on busy flights your cabin bag may have to go in the hold.

Please contact the airline for further information

<http://www.easyjet.com/en/planning/baggage>

Labels

Please use the luggage labels provided. It is useful to have your home address located inside your suitcase should the label go astray.

Departure Tax

UK Flight Taxes are included in the price of your holiday.

Transfers

On arrival at Heraklion Airport please collect your luggage and exit the luggage area. You will find your Tour Manager/guide situated just outside the arrivals building, holding a Travel Editions sign. The journey time to your hotel is approximately two hours.

Special Requests

If you haven't already, please notify Travel Editions of any special requests as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements.



Accommodation

Villea Village, Makriyalos

In the heart of the easy-going and relaxed resort of Makriyalos, the Villea Village Hotel is built in a traditional Greek style around a verdant garden and a large swimming pool. The two-storey buildings are designed in classic Greek style, with whitewashed walls, blue shutters, and climbing bougainvillea adding vibrant splashes of colour. The studio style rooms all include some basic self-catering facilities.

Snacks and drinks in the evening can be enjoyed in the pool bar, and there is an excellent selection of restaurants and tavernas, as well as a few welcoming bars, within easy walking distance of the hotel. The beach is also very close by, literally 2 minutes on foot, from the hotel.

If you plan to swim during your stay you might wish to bring some waterproof beach shoes that will make getting into and out of the sea easier, particularly on sand/shingle/pebble beaches.

For more information visit the hotel website; www.villeavillage.com

Marina Village, Palekastros

Situated amongst pretty gardens, Marina Village offers simple, comfortable rooms arranged in a 'bungalow' style, very in-keeping with this lovely area, just a ten minute walk from the beach. Hotel facilities include a pool (seasonal), snack bar and tennis court. Rooms all have private bathroom with shower, air-conditioning, balcony, safe and wi-fi.

For more information visit the hotel website; <http://www.marinavillage.gr/index.html>

Dining

The standard of food in Greece is excellent and offers a remarkable variety of freshly prepared and very tasty dishes, many of which use locally grown products and locally produced olive oil.

In Greece, and particularly in Crete, the locals nearly always eat 'Mezedes' style. This generally means ordering several dishes, starters and/or main plates, whatever takes your fancy, to put in the middle of the table for all to share. It's a very sociable way to eat and a great way of tasting lots of different dishes! Don't be shy in the amount you order, or if you only find yourselves ordering starters – any combination is acceptable.

When ordering fish in Crete you will find the price on the menu relates to a cost per kilo. Don't be put off by this. You are expected to go into the kitchen, choose the fish you want and then it will be weighed in front of you so you know what you will pay.

The cost of a dinner for two with local wine and local dishes is approximately 35 – 40 Euros, (fresh fish will likely be more expensive).

Nearly all tavernas sell their own 'open' wine, known as village wine. It is something of an acquired taste but it goes well with the local food. The Greeks are very proud of their wine and nearly all Cretans make their own. The white is usually always very drinkable but the red varies quite a lot. If you are unsure you can always ask if you can try the wine before you agree to it. Prices of local 'village' wine are usually between 3 and 5 euros per half litre.

Local drinks are ouzo, raki, metaxa and, of course, Greek wine. Raki is the local firewater! This is distilled from the residue of the grapes after making wine. You will probably find you come across this whether you want to or not, as it is very often served, complimentary, at the end of a meal.

Meals included in your holiday

Breakfast is provided daily at the hotels and the 5 included lunches will be a combination of picnics and lunches taken at village tavernas. One dinner is also included.



Destination

Crete

Crete is a fascinating destination for a cultural and historic tour with its wealth of sights reflecting its ancient Minoan culture that dates back some 3,000 years, but it is also an island with a fantastic nature and some wonderful and diverse scenery; picturesque harbours, fertile regions of fruit trees, silver green olive groves, majestic mountains and superb coastlines; and these are just some of what you will encounter during this holiday.

Makriyalos

Makriyalos is a small seaside resort on Crete's southeast coast. This village resort is one of the quieter tourist destinations in Crete, and has one of the best beaches in the south east of the island. The region behind Makriyalos is mountainous and hilly with small valleys and gorges stretching down to the coast, including the Pefki Gorge, which you will visit during the tour. There are several simple and traditional mountain villages dotted within these hills, each with their own individual identity, some of which you will discover during your days out.

Palekastro

Palekastro, a small village and Minoan historic site, is located at the most eastern part of Crete. The region was one of the most important commercial centres of the Minoan culture in Eastern Crete, and remains of this can still be seen in and around Palekastro, especially at the site of Roussolakkos – a township dating back to 2000BC which was the second largest Minoan township after Knossos.

Pefki and Dafni

Just behind Makriyalos many traditional villages dot the hillsides, Dafni and Pefki are two of these. Today's walk will provide some excellent views to the coast but also an insight into the traditional villages of the region that still manage to survive today. After lunch in the village of Pefki the walk continues to Makriyalos via the Pefki Gorge. Pefki is a relatively small gorge, approximately 7kms long with some impressive rock formations and a rich vegetation.

Ano and Kato Zakros

Kato (lower) Zakros lies on the very far eastern coast of Crete at the bottom of 'Dead's' Gorge. It is believed to have been one of the four main administrative centres of the Minoans and the remains of the Minoan palace of Zakros are located here. Its protected harbour and strategic location made it an important commercial hub for trade to the east. Above Kato Zakros is the village of Ano or Upper Zakros, which is where 'Dead's' Gorge begins. The gorge has large rock caves built within its walls and is known as 'Dead's' Gorge because remnants found within the caves suggested they were used as burial chambers for the Minoans.

Pervolakia Gorge

The Pervolakia Gorge begins next to the Kapsa Monastery and ends at the isolated, traditional settlement of Pervolakia. It has a beautifully desolate, wild and dry landscape. As the gorge is not the easiest to traverse our walk takes us above the gorge so we can enjoy views into the gorge from paths that follow alongside the gorge.

Etia

Etia is a deserted village, which has the remains of a Venetian villa, built at the end of the 15th century, and a beautiful ancient church.

Voila

Voila has the remains of a medieval village, spread across a hillside. There are carved inscriptions, two ornamental Turkish fountains and the 15th century double nave church of Agios Georgios.

Toplou

The Monastery of Toplou stands alone amidst a barren rocky landscape. It has an extravagant history dating back to before the 14th Century. A few monks remain at the monastery today and utilise the land around the monastery for grazing sheep and goats.

Vai

Vai is situated on the north coast, east of Sitia, and is famous for its palm trees and a Bounty advert

that was filmed here some years ago! Vai is approached via a wild and barren and unforgiving landscape so it is unusual to suddenly come upon this small palm forest. It is thought Arab pirates came here in their ships, ate the dates they had brought with them and threw the stones on the ground. From these dates around 6,000 palm trees grew, of which around 4000 are still growing today.

Your Guide

The walks are organised and led by Jonathan Peat. Jonathan has been leading walks in Crete, and other places, for many years and, as you will no doubt witness during the tour, can rightly be likened to a mountain goat (not his looks but his agility)! He is half English and half Greek (with a touch of French thrown in as he married a French girl!) and speaks both (all three) languages fluently.

The starting time each day will be advised by Jonathan and will depend on the length of the route and heat etc. The walks will be anything between 6 and 12 kms each day. The pace will be relaxed with plenty of time to stop and admire the views, to take a photo or to enjoy refreshments along the way. The rest of the time is your own to enjoy as you wish.

Jonathan will do his best to make you feel at home during your stay and also do his utmost to ensure you get the most from your stay. Being passionate about the island he will gladly impart information along the way about the traditions and local way of life of the fiercely proud people of this special island.

Practical Information

We recommend you bring the following items:

- 1 light waterproof jacket
- 1 good size day sack
- 1 pair of light trousers (for prickly undergrowth)
- 1 water bottle (although you can buy water cheaply locally)
- Personal first aid kit
- Sun hat
- Sun cream
- Insect repellent
- 1 fleece or warm layer for cold in altitude or chilly evenings
- T-shirts/layers so you can adjust to changing early/late season weather conditions
- A walking stick or ski sticks can be very useful for Cretan terrain

Although none of the walking paths are particularly difficult you will encounter uneven and sometimes rocky terrain so it is essential to have comfortable, well-fitting and protective footwear. It is advisable that boots are ankle high to provide good ankle support. Vibram soles tend to have better grip. It is always advisable to break in your boots before your holiday. Try two pairs of socks, one thin pair close to the skin, and a thicker outer sock.

Bring a foot care kit, especially useful is moleskin and second skin, compeed is also very good for blisters



The Basics

Climate – The weather in Greece at this time of year is likely to be pleasant, but evenings can be quite cool and there is the chance of the odd shower. Our best advice is to come prepared. Layers are useful as is a light rain jacket.

Time – GMT +3 hours (Summer time Apr-Oct); GMT + 2 (Standard time Nov-Mar). In reality this means, summer or winter, Greece is 2 hours ahead of the UK

Language – Greek

Religion – Greek Orthodox

Currency – Euro. €1 = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of €2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents.

Banks – Cashpoints compatible with international banking networks are located in all towns and cities, as well as airports and other spots. Those banks that still exchange foreign currencies into local money will always charge a transaction fee, so withdrawing money from an ATM usually represents the most logical means of obtaining euros other than bringing euros with you from the UK.

Banks in Crete are open Monday to Friday 8am – 2pm. ATM machines are available in Makriyalos and can be accessed on foot from your accommodation. You can use a UK debit card, using the same pin number you use in the UK, to withdrawn cash. The instructions are in English. Just look for signs on ATM's for Delta or Cirrus.

Credit cards – Crete is very much a cash society so credit cards are not widely accepted, however more places are accepting these nowadays but it is best to check first in restaurants and shops that they accept credit cards, if you wish to pay by card. Varying amounts of commission can be charged for credit card payments and you may like to check these with your credit card supplier before you travel.

Electricity – 220 volt, two-pin continental plug.

Drinking water – Tap water is safe to drink although you should check at the hotel if the bathroom water is safe to drink as it could be tank water rather than mains water. Bottled water is

readily available to buy in all of the local shops and very reasonable priced.

Shopping - There are plenty of mini-markets in Makriyalos and Paleokastro for any basic supplies you might need. The mini-markets are open from early in the morning until late in the evening. Cretan olive oil, olives and local honey are all excellent produce if you are interested in taking a little bit of Crete home with you. There are also excellent herbs and mountain tea. You may see people advertising honey on the side of the road or in Kafenions when you are out and about, this will usually be their own home produce and is often the best and most pure you can buy.

English newspapers – These can usually be found in various outlets in the town.

Stamps - In most places you can purchase stamps at the same time you purchase postcards. This is much easier than trying to find a post office!

Plumbing - Unless there is information to the contrary please do not put toilet paper down the toilet. As you may know this is common practice in Greece due to the narrowness of the waste pipes. Please dispose of the paper in the bins provided, which will be regularly emptied by the hotel.

Telephones/mobiles – You should be able to use your mobile phone in Greece, depending on your operator and contract. If you are calling the UK from a mobile in Greece, you will need to prefix the number with the international dialing code 0044.

Tipping –To keep our tours affordable, we do not increase the tour price by adding in tips. However, in the tourism industry, there is a certain level of expectation that, when receiving a good service, one does award with a tip. Tour Managers, Representatives, Guides and Drivers appreciate a tip at the end of their involvement with the tour, but this is entirely at your discretion. We believe in allowing you to tip according to your level of satisfaction with their services.



Health

General Health Advice

We suggest you take a good supply of your own individual medicines with you and always keep some in your hand luggage in case you get delayed or your luggage goes astray. General-purpose supplies for blisters, bites, stings, or scratches, and your usual medication for headaches, or stomach upsets are always recommended. Oral re-hydration sachets are excellent for topping up salt and glucose levels.

Visit the NHS Fit for Travel website for more generally information specific to the country you are visiting – www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk

Doctor/Dentist/Chemist

Please talk to your tour manager if you are feeling unwell and they will organise for you to see a Doctor if necessary. There is normally a charge of about 60 Euros for calling out a doctor (or more, depending on the distance the doctor has to travel) and there is also a charge to visit a Doctor.

Keep any receipts for insurance claims.



Hospital

The nearest hospital is in Chania. Your tour manager/hotel reception will assist if you need to visit a hospital during your stay.

Keep any receipts for insurance claims.

Inoculations

No compulsory vaccinations are required for travel in Greece.

Pharmacies

Pharmacies throughout Greece are generally well-stocked and have knowledgeable staff who, more often than not, will speak good English. Pharmacists will often be able to give advice and medicine for minor ailments. Pharmacies are open Monday to Friday but not on Saturdays.



Insurance

European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

It is essential to carry an EHIC card with you as this will assist you if you are admitted to a hospital in Greece.

The EHIC replaced the old E111 in 2006. Valid in all EEA countries, the card lets you get state healthcare at a reduced cost or sometimes for free. It will cover you for treatment that is needed to allow you to continue your stay until your planned return. It also covers the treatment of pre-existing medical conditions.

Please note that the EHIC **is not** an alternative to travel insurance. It will not cover any private medical healthcare or costs such as being flown back to the UK, or lost or stolen property. Therefore, it is important to have both an EHIC and a valid private travel insurance policy. It is also important to note that each country's healthcare system is slightly different, so the EHIC might not cover everything that would be generally free on the NHS.

For more information about the EHIC please visit:

<https://www.ehic.org.uk>

Travel Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out an appropriate travel insurance policy when you travel abroad. If you require medical assistance whilst abroad it is essential that you contact the emergency number of your insurance company to advise them of the situation. You will **NOT** be covered for any claim unless this procedure is carried out. Your insurance company will then decide on the best course of action whilst in resort.

Please note as this tour is very much dictated by the hands of nature, it is possible some of the walks and sites mentioned may change. If appropriate, these decisions will be taken at the discretion of the guide during the tour.



Emergencies

Should an emergency arise, please call our offices on:

00 44 20 7251 0045

Outside office hours (Mon-Fri 0900-1700), telephone our emergency staff on:

00 44 20 7431 8201 or

00 44 7899 796542 or

00 44 7831 133079 or

00 44 1235 850720

PLEASE USE THESE NUMBERS ONLY IN THE EVENT OF A GENUINE EMERGENCY.

If you are calling a Greek number from a UK mobile you should prefix the number with the Greek international dialing code 0030.

If you find that you are in need of consular assistance during your holiday:

British Vice Consulate Crete

Candia Tower

17 Thalita Street, Ag. Dimitrios Square

71 202 Heraklion

Crete Greece

Email: crete@fco.gov.uk

Open to the public - by appointment only

Tuesday to Thursday, 9am to 1pm

Please note that an appointment is not necessary for emergency cases requiring consular assistance.

Telephone enquiries - Monday to Friday, 8am to 3pm

In an emergency outside these hours please call the British Embassy Athens switchboard number: +30 210 7272600.

Travel Editions

3 Youngs Buildings, London, EC1V 9BD

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Email: info@traveleditions.co.uk www.traveleditions.co.uk

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