



Cyprus: Civilisations of the Eastern Mediterranean 2024

3 OCT – 16 OCT 2024

Code: 22435

Tour Leaders **Dr Christopher Gribbin, David Pearlman**

Physical Ratings 

Join historian Dr Christopher Gribbin and archaeologist David Pearlman to discover the rich history of the Eastern Mediterranean through the archaeology, art and architecture of Cyprus.



Overview

Join [Dr Christopher Gribbin](#), an historian specialising in ancient Greece and Rome, and archaeologist [David Pearlman](#), who has worked on a number of excavations including the Aceramic Neolithic settlement at Kalavassos-Tenta and the Late Bronze Age settlement at Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios, to discover the rich history of the Eastern Mediterranean through the archaeology, art and architecture of Cyprus.

- View Paphos' Tombs of the Kings, a UNESCO World Heritage Site containing well-preserved monumental underground tombs and chambers used during the Hellenistic and Roman periods.
- At Kourion and Paphos view Roman floor mosaics, considered among the finest in the world.
- By 4WD explore the spectacular Akamas Peninsula and enjoy a cruise along its majestic coastline visiting the Baths of Aphrodite and the Blue Lagoon famously known for its crystalline waters.
- View the UNESCO World Heritage listed Aceramic Neolithic site of Khirokitia, comprising the ruins of tightly packed circular houses sited dramatically on the slopes of a hill.
- By 4WD take an off-the-beaten-track route through the abandoned Xeros Potamos valley whose pristine landscape has seen little change over centuries.
- Spend 2 nights in the Troödos Mountains featuring traditional villages and a collection of UNESCO World Heritage-listed Byzantine painted churches and monasteries.
- Explore Bellapais Abbey immortalised by Lawrence Durrell in his famous *Bitter Lemons*.
- Delve into the history of antique trade in the eastern Mediterranean involving such goods as basalt stone hand-mills, wine and olive oil stored in dozens of clay amphorae, and view one of the world's oldest (4th c. BC) ships in Kyrenia's Ancient Shipwreck Museum.
- Explore the impressive Crusader fortress of Kolossi, headquarters of the Knights of St John (Knights Hospitaller) and the remains of their medieval sugar mill.
- Investigate monuments of the medieval Frankish Lusignan Dynasty in the walled city of Famagusta.
- In northern Nicosia view the Büyük Khan, Cyprus' best-preserved Ottoman caravanserai.
- Visits to several archaeological sites accompanied by specialist archaeologists.

Overnight Larnaca (1 night) • Paphos (5 nights) • Kalopanayiotis (2 nights) • Kyrenia (2 nights) • Nicosia (3 nights)

Introduction

Cyprus played a critical role in Mediterranean trade and conflict over three millennia. It is known in antiquity for its rich deposits of copper. The very word 'copper' derives from the Latin expression *Cuprium aes* (metal of Cyprus). It was an important supplier of not only copper, but also timber for shipbuilding as well as grain and sugar. Cyprus has the remains of the oldest trading vessels ever found beneath Mediterranean waters, a 4th-century BC Greek merchant ship now displayed at the Ancient Shipwreck Museum housed inside the Kyrenia Castle. We explore the island's great ancient trading cities like Kourion, Nea Paphos and Salamis, which all prospered from these exports.

Cyprus has, at times, known local princely rule, and, at others, been absorbed into great empires such as the Hellenistic Empire of Alexander the Great, as well as those of Egypt, Assyria, Rome, Byzantium, Venice and the Ottoman Empire; most conquerors have left not only physical marks on the island, but profound cultural and linguistic influences, some of which survive in Cyprus even today. The country has a rich religious, mythic history, with most ancient Greek sources citing Cyprus as the birthplace of Aphrodite (Venus to the Romans). Additionally, there are many connections to biblical figures as well. In fact, during Roman times, Cyprus was the very first land or province to have a Christian ruler: The Roman Governor (or "Proconsul") of Cyprus, Sergius Paulus, was baptised by the Apostle Paul in Paphos in 45 AD, an event that is described in the Bible. Within Cyprus archaeological sites abound. Along with precious Graeco-Roman

sites, in Cyprus' Troödos Mountains we visit Byzantine monasteries with magnificent wall paintings. During the Crusades, Cyprus became the realm of the French Lusignan dynasty. The country has many Crusader castles, modified by Venetians and later by the Ottomans.

The History of Cyprus: Podcast and Youtube lectures

- The History of Cyprus Podcast: <https://cyprusthepodcast.podbean.com/>
- CAARI Cyprus lecture series:
https://www.youtube.com/@CAARICyprus/videos?view=0&sort=dd&shelf_id=0

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7Zt4WEG-1Q>

Leaders



Dr Christopher Gribbin

An Adjunct Lecturer at La Trobe University, Christopher has a Ph.D. in Classics and has taught at Melbourne, Monash and La Trobe universities. He enjoys sharing his passion for the literature and architecture of the ancient world with the general public through formal and creative endeavours.

Christopher has been fascinated by the ancient world since the age of four, when he saw an exhibition of objects from Pompeii. That led (some time later) to a Ph.D. in Classics, looking at the interaction between religion and philosophy in sixth century BC Greece. Christopher has a particular interest in understanding how people make sense of the world, whether through religion, philosophy, story-telling, art or architecture. He is an Adjunct Lecturer at La Trobe University and has previously lectured in Classics at Melbourne and Monash Universities.

In 2002, Christopher set up the University of Melbourne's popular Classics Summer School and ran it for 15 years. In 2018 he began teaching with the Hellenic Museum Summer School (www.hellenic.org.au/summer-school). Christopher's summer schools provide short courses on ancient Greece and Rome for the general public each January. Participants particularly enjoy his relaxed but enthusiastic and thought-provoking style and the summer school have become an annual fixture for many people.

Christopher has also been involved with some less traditional means of bringing the ancient world alive for modern audiences. He was an academic advisor for the Hellenic Museum's *Retrial of Socrates*, which featured prominent barristers arguing about Socrates' guilt before a panel of Supreme Court and County Court judges. He worked on the ABC's award-winning website *Winged Sandals*, which brings ancient myths to life for modern children. A highlight of that for Christopher was developing an interactive recreation of the Delphic oracle. He also runs regular Socratic discussion groups, where people use the techniques of the ancient philosopher Socrates to discuss modern issues. Christopher joined ASA as a tour leader in 2016 and led our program along the Adriatic coast from 2016 to 2019. In 2023 he leads ASA's new tour to Cyprus.



David Pearlman

Born in the USA, David is an archaeologist who holds a BA in Classics and a MA in Archaeology and Soil Science, University of Minnesota. Now based in Cyprus, he has led natural history & archaeological tours for over 30 years.

Born in the United States, David moved to Cyprus in 1977. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Classics (University of Cincinnati) and a Master of Arts in Archaeology and Soil Science (University of Minnesota). Fluent in both English and Greek, David has worked as a field archaeologist in Sicily and Cyprus, and has led archaeological, history and trekking tours for over 30 years.

David was Area Supervisor for the Vasilikos Valley Project excavations of Neolithic and Bronze Age settlement and cemetery sites at Kalavassos. He also worked as a consultant to the Canadian Palaipaphos Survey Project in Kouklia which discovered and mapped well over 100 new sites of all periods. He has also been an Excavator/Area Supervisor on various archaeological projects including the Late Bronze Age site of Agios Dimitrios, Kissonerga-Mosphilia, Peyia-Maa-Paliokastro, Pyla-Kokkinokremmos and the Kato Paphos Hellenistic/Roman Tomb Rescue Excavations.

David has written numerous articles for magazines, newspapers and archaeological publications and contributed to TV documentaries on Cypriot tourism. David joins ASA in 2023 to share his passion and knowledge of Cyprus.

Combine this tour with

The Turquoise Coast: Southern Turkey & Rhodes 2024

16 SEP – 3 OCT 2024

An Adriatic Journey: from Trieste to Dubrovnik 2024

15 SEP – 30 SEP 2024

Parma: History, Gastronomy and Verdi 2024

22 SEP – 2 OCT 2024



Itinerary

This itinerary provides an outline of the proposed daily program. The daily activities described in this itinerary may be rotated and/or modified in order to accommodate changes in museum opening hours, flight schedules etc. The tour includes breakfast daily, lunches and evening meals indicated in the detailed itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch and D=dinner.

Larnaca – 1 night

Day 1: Thursday 3 October, Arrive Larnaca

- Tour commences at 2.30pm in the foyer of the Sun Hall Hotel
- Welcome Meeting
- Orientation Walk visiting the Church of St Lazarus and Larnaca Fort
- Introductory Lecture: *Bronze Age, Greek and Roman Cyprus*
- Welcome Dinner

Meeting Point: The tour commences at 2.30pm in the foyer of the [Sun Hall Hotel](#) in Larnaca.

We commence the tour with a brief welcome meeting followed by a short orientation walk along Larnaca's seafront to view the well-preserved architecture from the British colonial period and the church of St Lazarus, where Lazarus was purportedly buried for the second and last time.

We also visit Larnaca Fort which stands at the water's edge and separates the Phinikoudes ("Palm Trees") Promenade from the old Turkish Cypriot quarter. The fort was originally constructed by the Byzantines during the 12th century. The city gained importance during the Medieval Ages after the Genovese occupied Famagusta, the main port of the country, and the need for a new port town emerged. Between the years 1382-1398 the small Byzantine fortification located near the harbour was upgraded to a more substantial castle. Today the castle consists of a complex of buildings remodelled by the Ottomans around 1605. It was here in Larnaca Bay, directly in front of the fort, that the first armada of British ships arrived in

July, 1878 at the behest of Queen Victoria to take over administration of the island from the Ottomans, who had ruled Cyprus since 1571.

We return to the hotel for an introductory lecture on the history of the island of Cyprus before dining at a local fish restaurant located on the seafront. (Overnight Larnaca) D

Paphos – 5 nights

Day 2: Friday 4 October, Larnaca – Kiti – Vouni – Kalavassos – Tenta – Petra tou Romiou – Paphos

- Panayia Angeloktisi Church, Kiti
- Aceramic Neolithic Khoirokitia-Vouni (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Light lunch in the village of Kalavassos
- Aceramic Neolithic Kalavassos-Tenta
- Late Bronze Age Kalavassos-Ayios Dhimitrios (not open to general public)
- Petra tou Romiou (“Rock of the Romios” aka “Aphrodite’s Rock”)

We begin with a visit to the church of Panayia Angeloktisti (“built by the Angels”), constructed in the 11th century over the ruins of an Early Christian basilica. The apse of the original basilica has survived along with one of the finest pieces of Byzantine art on the island: a rare 6th-century golden mosaic depicting the Virgin Mary and Child between the archangels Michael and Gabriel, a conventional Byzantine apse scene known in Greek as the “Platytera”.

Next we visit the unique Aceramic Neolithic site of Khirokitia-Vouni (7000 BC) which comprises the ruins of tightly packed circular houses sited dramatically on the slopes of a hill. Here we encounter archaeological evidence of the beginnings of agriculture in this region and visit reconstructed houses for a glimpse of how Neolithic people lived. One of the most important archaeological sites in the eastern Mediterranean, Khirokitia is one of the earliest examples of collective farming. Inhabitants grew crops, herded sheep and goats, and raised pigs in stone enclosures.

Following a light lunch in the village of Kalavassos (8000-7500 BC) we visit the nearby Aceramic Neolithic settlement of Tenta, which has dates slightly earlier than Khirokitia. It is one of the most significant Neolithic settlements on the island, and is considered one of the most meticulously excavated sites in Cyprus. The excavations, conducted under the direction of the British archaeologist Dr Ian Todd, started in 1977 and concluded in 1984. A unique series of wooden walkways allow us to view the fragile round houses from above and circumnavigate the site from end to end. According to local tradition, the name of the site goes back to 327 AD when St Helen, the mother of Constantine the Great, was shipwrecked on nearby coastal cliffs, whilst she was returning to Constantinople (modern Istanbul) after recovering the Holy Cross in Jerusalem. The locals recount how Helen and her crew waded into the surf to collect shattered ship timbers and pieces of the sails from the wrecked ship, after which they hiked up the river valley until they found a mound-shaped hill, and used the salvaged ship materials to build crude huts and tents (thus the name “Tenta”) for shelter. Together with Khirokitia-Vouni, Kalavassos-Tenta provides early evidence for the establishment of sedentary farming communities on the island. These communities developed an original civilisation: the Aceramic “Khirokitia Culture”. The settlement is surrounded by sturdy stone-built perimeter walls and consists of a compound of buildings with simple circular or double circular ground plans built with sun-dried mudbrick superstructures resting on foundations built of stone. There is scant preserved evidence for the roofs, but the little roof material we have might indicate flat roofs that may have been used for sleeping during warmer months and/or work spaces for processing various agricultural products. In some of the round structures with multiple phases of building, the earliest phase indicates that wooden posts were used. Several structures contain pits cut into the red ochre-stained plaster floors that were used for burial of

the dead. The practise of burying the dead under the floors of houses is a unique feature of the “Khirokitia Culture” to which the site of Tenta belongs. Burials in spots outside and in between houses is also evidenced at Tenta. The interior of the buildings had double rectilinear piers, which supported a partial upper wooden floor, hearths and benches. In one instance, a red ochre wall painting showing what appear to be two human figures in strange (ceremonial?) poses or gestures with upraised hands, was found on the plastered surface of a central pier. It is by far the earliest known wall painting from Cyprus.

From Kalavassos we journey an hour west along the south coast to what are often referred to as “the most photographed rocks in Cyprus”, a natural monument called Petra tou Romiou (‘Rock of the Roman’) also known as ‘Aphrodite’s Rock’, a series of recrystallized limestone boulders forming a prominent feature on the coastline. Attached to the ‘Rock’ are a number of legends. One claims it to be the birthplace of the goddess Aphrodite (Venus). Gaia (Mother Earth) asked her son, Kronos (father of Zeus and god of Time), to castrate his father, Ouranos (Sky). Kronos cut off his father’s testicles with his scythe and threw them into the water, which mingled with the sea foam, producing Aphrodite, whose name in Greek means literally “Given from the Foam”. Aphrodite attracted a large cult following in Paphos, evident from the Sanctuary of Aphrodite in Old Paphos (*Palaipaphos*), modern Kouklia Village. Another legend associates a nearby beach as the site where the Achaeans came ashore on their return from Troy. The present name *Petra tou Romiou* associates the place with the exploits of a hero, Diogenes, whose nickname was “Romios” and was half-Byzantine and half-Arabic, hence his name Diogenes (two-blood). This giant of a man, who originally lived near Nicosia, purportedly fell madly in love with a princess in Paphos, but was spurned by her father. In his wrath over the rejection, he went back to Nicosia and hurled huge chunks of rock from the Pentadaktylos Mountains (the northern mountain range of Cyprus) towards Paphos, but the rocks fell short and are still scattered along the coastline leading to Paphos. That’s the legend. During our visit, however, we will unveil the profound geological significance of these rocks, which are amongst the oldest rocks on the island.

In the late afternoon we continue to Paphos where we will be based for the next 5 nights. (Overnight Paphos)
BLD

Day 3: Saturday 5 October, Paphos

- Tombs of the Kings (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Nea Paphos Archaeological Park (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Archaeological Museum of the Paphos District
- Monastery of Ayios Neophytos
- Lemba Experimental Village

We begin with a visit to the ‘Tombs of the Kings’. These subterranean monumental tombs, dating back to the 4th century BC, are carved from solid rock, and were possibly the burial sites of Paphos’ aristocrats and high officials (not kings) up to the 3rd century AD. Some of the tombs feature Doric columns and frescoed walls. Some imitate the houses of the living. The Paphians often included Rhodian *amphorae* among offerings in a burial. The manufacturing stamps on the handles of these *amphorae* allow experts to date them and therefore material from the same burial.

Next we visit the Nea Paphos Archaeological Park, which contains various excavated parts of the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine city. Among the site’s most significant remains are four large, elaborate Roman villas. The House of Dionysos, the House of Aion, the House of Theseus and the House of Orpheus – all have superb preserved mosaic floors. A highlight is an Orpheus mosaic which depicts Orpheus and the Beasts together in a single panel. It is further distinguished by an inscription naming the person who commissioned the work, a feature not present in any other Roman mosaic in Cyprus. Excavations have also uncovered an

agora, the Asklepieion (*Temple to Asklepios, god of Medicine*) and the Odeon.

Following some free time at leisure in or around the Paphos harbour for lunch, we visit the newly renovated and expanded Paphos District Archaeological Museum which reopened in 2021. The museum displays artefacts that were unearthed in the Paphos region, dating from the Aceramic Neolithic period to 1700 AD. The collection includes several new exhibits focusing on recent finds from prehistoric (Aceramic Neolithic–Chalcolithic) period sites, Iron Age material from burial sites near Palaipaphos, skeletal remains recovered from 31 tombs near the eastern seafront of the ancient city of Nea Pafos and several gravestones with texts in the Cypro-Syllabic script. A new display of Hellenistic-Roman *amphorae* showing various styles mainly from the Dodecanese islands such as Khios, Samos and Rhodes is unique on the island.

We journey to the hills above Paphos to visit the Byzantine Monastery of Ayios Neophytos where we view the cave that St Neophytos excavated in a peaceful corner of this beautiful, dramatic landscape in the 12th century. The hermit's cave, called the 'Enkleistra', is decorated with some of the finest examples of Byzantine wall paintings, dating from the 12th to the 15th centuries. The monastery that developed around the cave now houses an excellent ecclesiastical museum.

We end the day with a visit to the Lemba Experimental Village. This long-term project from the University of Edinburgh is a reproduction of a Chalcolithic village on Cyprus. First devised and set up in 1982 as a project of archaeological research, it was founded on land adjacent to the excavations carried out by the late Dr Eddie Peltenburg at Lemba (1976-1983). The project has grown considerably and now includes experiments regarding the study of building materials, pyro-technology, pottery firing and prehistoric cooking methods to name but a few. (Overnight Paphos) BD

Day 4: Sunday 6 October, Paphos – Kouklia – Paphos

- Agia Kyriaki Chrysopolitissa (so-called "St Paul's Pillar")
- Sanctuary of Aphrodite at Palaipafos & Archaeological Museum, Kouklia (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Optional 2.5 hour walk (easy to moderate) or afternoon at leisure in Paphos

We depart early this morning for a visit to the Church of Ayia Kyriaki (c. 1500 AD), constructed on the ruins of a 5th-century Early Christian basilica. The original basilica included a circular-shaped baptistry directly in front of its main entrance. Only people who were first baptised into Christianity were allowed to pass into the basilica itself. The entire Early Christian complex was built at the time of the Christianisation of the island and eventually became the first Cathedral of Paphos. The church ruins and adjacent baptistry are covered with a mosaic floor with geometric motifs. The so-called "Saint Paul's Pillar" sits beside Ayia Kyriaki. According to the Acts of Apostles, when Paul arrived to evangelise the area, Roman soldiers tied him to a column and scourged him 39 times. The Roman Governor Sergius Paulus subsequently converted to Christianity and was baptised by the Apostle Paul himself. (Biblical scholars believe the events surrounding the Apostle Paul in Paphos took place in the year 45 AD.) The basilica was abandoned in the middle of the 7th century AD following Arab raids. It finally collapsed during an earthquake in 685 and *spolia* from it were used in later buildings as well as in lime kilns. A much smaller 12th-14th century church, often referred to as the "Gothic Church", had been erected on top of the ruins of the Early Christian basilica. It was eventually destroyed and dismantled when the present church (Ayia Kyriaki) was constructed at the start of the 16th century. Beside the present church are the ruins of a two-storeyed Episcopal Palace.

We then visit the archaeological site of Palaipafos (Kouklia). There are two versions of how Palaipafos was founded. One story tells that Agapenor, the King of Tegea (Peloponnesus), founded the city-kingdom on his way back from the Trojan War. A second legend tells that Kinyras, the local legendary king (12th century

BC), was the founder and first High Priest of The Sanctuary of Aphrodite. We will visit the Sanctuary of Aphrodite and its important museum. This is the most famous of the Ancient Greek Goddess' sanctuaries. Its remains date back to the 12th century BC. It remained a place of worship until the 3rd to 4th centuries AD. The site includes two groups of buildings. The first, the Late Bronze Age shrine of Aphrodite, consists of an open court (*temenos*), surrounded by a monumental wall comprised of enormous (cyclopean) limestone blocks. Its western and part of its south side are preserved along with a hall, which housed a conical *baetyl* (sacred stone) in its centre symbolising the Goddess's power. A *baetyl* also adorned the second group, a Roman shrine, erected c. 100 AD.

Of other Roman remains on the site, only the *triclinium* (dining room) remains of the 'House of Leda' but it has an outstanding mosaic floor (2nd century AD) depicting Leda and the Swan (original in the Kouklia Museum). The Northeast Gate of Palaipafos occupied the *Marchellos* hill high above the city's residential areas. It was one of the city's strongholds. The city's first wall and gate buildings were erected in the early Archaic period (c. 750-700 BC). An imposing building (c. 500 BC) called the Palace of Hadji Abdulla, with narrow corridors, small rooms and heavy walls sits against the city wall's inner face. It was probably a Persian governor's residence.

The Lusignan Manor House (13th c.) was built by the Lusignan kings as a centre of local administration where a royal official controlled the local sugar-cane plantations and refineries. After 1571, the manor became the administrative centre for the Ottoman Kouklia *chiflik*. Its rooms are arranged in four wings around a central open-air court. Parts of its medieval gate tower and east and south wings are incorporated into later Ottoman buildings. Its original Gothic Hall is one of Cyprus' finest surviving Frankish secular monuments. The Ottoman east wing now functions as the local archaeological museum containing a rich variety of archaeological material dating from the Chalcolithic to the Early Christian periods. Virtually all the artefacts on display in this museum were recovered from findspots within an approximately 10 km radius of the Sanctuary site itself. One of the highlights inside the museum is a 5th century BC painted sarcophagus that was recently found by accident when a British couple moved into their new holiday villa and decided to dig a hole for a new swimming pool. The JCB Digger haphazardly collapsed the roof of an unknown chamber tomb from the Classical period and the sarcophagus lay within in almost perfect condition. Subsequent cleaning and conservation activities revealed carved and painted scenes of ancient Greek mythology on all sides of the limestone burial coffin, some of them connected to the Homeric epics, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. This painted sarcophagus is widely considered one of the most impressive archaeological finds in Cyprus from the past 50 years.

Following our visit, we enjoy lunch at a local *taverna* in the Kouklia *plateia* ("village square"). Afterwards, there will be an optional 2.5 hour walk through the historically rich landscape approximately five kilometres outside the walls of ancient Palaipafos. (Note: As this walk is entirely optional, you have the choice to opt out of this walk and alternatively return to Paphos where the afternoon will be at leisure for you to enjoy the facilities of your hotel, or just do your own thing.) The walk, which we grade 'easy to slightly moderate', will take place along well-defined dirt tracks with moderate inclines and some uneven terrain. The sights, sounds and smells of nature will accompany us through the rural countryside as we enjoy the opportunity to encounter exotic migratory birds, endemic vegetation and the ever-popular pungent aroma of freshly deposited goatshit...This light trek features certain off-the-beaten-track sites that are little known and best visited by walking to them:

- a mysterious painted cave with 13th–14th century wall paintings,
- an abandoned 12th century monastic complex with a church dedicated to St Constantinos and St Helen (fragmentary wall paintings survive within),
- a small mound-shaped hill overlooking the fantastic Dhiarizos river valley containing a Chalcolithic necropolis with dozens of rock-cut shaft graves.

(Overnight Paphos) BLD

Day 5: Monday 7 October, Paphos: Full Day Excursion to the Akamas Peninsula by 4WD

- Cruise along the majestic coastline of the Akamas Peninsula
- 4WD drive excursion to the Akamas Peninsula including Lara Bay and Avakas Gorge

This morning we depart Paphos and travel north to Latchi, a delightful fishing harbour, where we board our boat for a 3-hour cruise along the majestic undeveloped north coastline of the Akamas Peninsula. Our cruise takes us past the so-called "Baths of Aphrodite" where a perennial spring system has created a natural pool of water, St George Church, the island of St George and Khamilis Bay more recently christened with the popular touristic name, "Blue Lagoon". The sea floor is fine pale white sand, the water is as blue as you could ever imagine. Bring your bathing suit, because there will be ample time to take a dip; and even if you think you won't swim, you will probably change your mind when you are seduced by the genuinely crystalline waters.

Following lunch at a local fish restaurant, we spend the afternoon exploring the spectacular Akamas Peninsula, one of the island's last remaining wilderness coastlines which is home to abundant flora and fauna including some 600 plant species, 35 of them unique or endemic to Cyprus. There are also myriad bird species (some of them migratory), several types of mammals (including foxes and hedgehogs), species of reptile and many butterflies, such as the native *Glaucopsyche pafos*, aka the "Paphos Blue", a symbol of the region. Our program includes a visit to the white sands of Lara Bay, site of the Lara Turtle Conservation Project (the first such project established anywhere in the Mediterranean region in 1978). The northern bay at Lara specifically has become a safe haven for the endangered Green and Loggerhead sea turtles who lay their eggs between May and late August. Hatchlings emerge from their eggs and nests as late as early to mid-October, so we have a potential chance to see baby turtles. (Note: the precise timing of sea turtle nesting and hatching varies from year to year based on climatic conditions, so there can be no guarantee of what we will or will not see during our visit.) Here we learn about the conservationists work at the research station and hatchery where turtle eggs are looked after in a bid to boost populations.

We end the day with a visit to the Avakas Gorge created from a raging current that flowed over the soft chalky limestone during phases of the Late Pleistocene, creating sheer walls of stone, some exceeding 30 metres in height, and magnificent rock formations. The gorge offers spectacular views and a generous introduction to local flora and fauna, including the endangered *centauria akamantis* – an endemic plant found only in the gorge. (Overnight Paphos) BLD

Day 6: Tuesday 8 October, Paphos – Kourion – Akrotiri – Kolossi – Paphos

- Sanctuary of Apollo Hylates
- Ancient Kourion: Main site incl. mainly Roman-Early Christian buildings & Graeco-Roman Theatre (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Seafood lunch at local taverna
- Akrotiri Environmental Education Centre
- Crusader Fortress of Kolossi & Medieval Sugar Mill excavations

This morning we visit the Sanctuary of Apollo Hylates. During the ancient times, the Sanctuary was one of the most important religious centres in Cyprus, where Apollo was worshipped as 'Hylates', God of the woodlands. Archaeological investigations on the site suggest that the earlier evidence of the worship of Apollo dates back to the 8th century BC and continued until the 4th century AD. The Sanctuary was built in the late Classical or Early Hellenistic period over the ruins of the earlier archaic temple. The majority of the

monuments as they can be seen today belong to the site's 1st-century AD restorations.

We then spend the remainder of the morning visiting the nearby "Main Site" of Kourion, consisting of mostly Roman buildings perched on a hillside with sweeping views of the Mediterranean. Often described as "the most spectacular historical monuments in southern Cyprus", the archaeological remains of Kourion, one of the island's most important city-kingdoms in antiquity, are of the most impressive on the island. Excavations have unearthed many significant finds which can be viewed at the site. The city-kingdom, or 'Polis' in Greek, is perched on the most prominent hill of the area, a natural citadel of sorts, overlooking and controlling the fertile valley of the Cyprus' largest river, the Kouris. According to archaeological finds, evidence suggests that Kourion was associated with the Greek legend of Argos of Peloponnese. The once-flourishing kingdom was eventually destroyed in a severe earthquake in 365 AD. The magnificent Graeco-Roman theatre was built in the 3rd century BC and its use extended into and beyond the 2nd century AD. East of the theatre are the remains of a prominent building, the 'House of Eustolios'. Whilst the villa was modest in size, it was well equipped and richly adorned. Its remains consist of four panels of beautiful 5th-century mosaic floors in the central room and a bathing complex that is located on a higher level north of the building. Along with the House of Eustolios, there are further impressive mosaic floors in the 'House of Achilles' and the 'House of the Gladiators', with the villas named after the scenes depicted on the mosaics. The remains of the Roman Agora, or 'Forum' in Latin, are also visible at the site. This stone-paved open area dates back to the early 3rd century. The Agora is surrounded by porticos with marble columns on both sides, whilst on its northwest side, is an impressive public bath complex and a small temple, the *Nymphaeum*, dedicated to the water nymphs. An early Christian Basilica at the site dates back to the 5th century, with separate baptistry on the external northern side. The Stadium of Kourion lies 1km to the west.

Following a seafood lunch in a local *taverna* we visit the Akrotiri Environmental Education Centre, which sits on the south bank of the sprawling Akrotiri Salt Lake, a stone's throw from the gates of the British RAF Base. The centre contains important displays on diverse environmental issues, and features a new observation deck dedicated to the viewing of migratory Flamingos.

We then continue to the impressive Crusader fortress of Kolossi, headquarters of the Knights of St John (Knights Hospitaller). The fortress stands by the vineyards where the Knights made their famous sweet, port-like wine known as *Commandaria*. We also view the adjacent excavations of a medieval sugar mill. The Venetians introduced the cultivation of sugar cane to Cyprus in the 10th century. Following the capture of the Holy Lands, the Crusaders refined and mechanised the sugar-making process, going in to large scale production. When the Knights were expelled from the Holy Lands in 1293, they moved first to Cyprus (where they had estates) and introduced large scale sugar production. By the 16th century Cyprus was the third largest producer of sugar in the world. Productions ceased around 1610 following competition from the West Indies which used slave labour to produce cheaper sugar. (Overnight Paphos) BLD

Kalopanayiotis – 2 nights

Day 7: Wednesday 9 October, Paphos – Pentalya – Galatarias – Salamiou – Xeros Potamos Valley – Kalopanayiotis

- Full day excursion to the Troödos Mountains by 4WD
- Deserted monastery of Panayia tou Sindi, Pentalya
- Church of Ay Nikolaos Galatarias with 16th-century wall paintings
- Venetian bridges of Xeros Potamos and Dhiazos Valleys
- Coniferous forests of the Troödos Mountains

Today we journey by 4WDs over some of Cyprus' most remote tracks, sometimes through both dry and wet river beds, into the forests of the Troödos Mountains. We drive along sections of the Dhiarizos and Xeros Potamos river valleys. Our first visit today will be to the deserted 16th-century monastery of Panayia tou Sindi. The grand, simple body of the monastery church is topped by an octagonal drum with an interior dome completely concealed from the outside. The church, which sits at the centre of its monastic precinct near Pentalia village on the Xeros Potamos, was restored in the mid-1990s. The restoration project received the prestigious Europa Nostra Award in 1997.

We shall next visit the tiny painted church of Ayios Nikolaos Galatarias, which is graced with magnificent 16th-century wall paintings. These include scenes of the Virgin Praying in the *Orans* position (otherwise known as the '*Platytera*' scene), a unique version of *The Communion of the Apostles*, six officiating prelates in '*polystavria phelonia*', converging in groups of three towards the centre (Cyril, Epiphanius, Khrysostomos, Basilios, Gregorios, Spyridon), *The Three Youths in the Fiery Furnace*, *The Sacrifice of Isaac*, *The Annunciation*, *The Hospitality of Abraham*, as well as images of St Stephen, St Athanasios, the Archangel Michael, St Paul, St Peter, St Nicholas and St Andrew.

We shall enjoy lunch in the village of Salamiou, located in the so-called "Wine District" of the upper Limassol and Paphos vineyard areas, between the Dhiarizos and Xeros Potamos valleys. The region also cultivates olive, almond, citrus and fruit trees including apple, peach, apricot and pear trees.

From Salamiou we continue through Xeros Potamos, an abandoned valley whose pristine landscape has seen little change over centuries, to view two old Venetian bridges. These were built in the 16th century, and mark an ancient land route used to transport smelted copper to port over streams. We enter the so-called 'Limestone/Pillow Lava Contact Zone' to explore fascinating landscape formations and unique settlement patterns, before entering the coniferous forests of the Troödos Massif. (Overnight Kalopanayiotis) BLD

Day 8: Thursday 10 October, Kalopanayiotis: Solea Valley

- Agios Ioannis Lampadistis & Byzantine Museum (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Byzantine Church of Agios Nikolaos tis Stegis (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- The "Old Village" of Kakopetria
- Church of Archangelos Michail, Pedoulas (UNESCO World Heritage Site)

We spend today exploring the diverse history of the Solea Valley. We begin with a visit to the monastery of Agios Ioannis Lampadistis, situated in the central Troödos in the valley of Marathasa on the east bank of the Setrachos River. In 1985, it was inscribed into the UNESCO World Heritage List with nine other painted Byzantine churches of the Troödos range. The 11th-century *katholikon* (monastery church) is dedicated to Saint Herakleidios. The monastery functioned until the beginning of the 19th century. The *katholikon* is a domed cross-in-square structure. In the 12th century the chapel of Agios Ioannis Lampadistis (rebuilt 18th c.) was added to its north, above the Saint's tomb. In the mid-15th century, the two churches were given a common narthex. During the second half of the 15th century a vaulted chapel was added to the north of that of Agios Ioannis. It became known as the 'Latin Chapel' because it was built for the Latins (Catholics). Sometime between the 15th and the 18th century, a pitched timber and tiled roof was built across the whole complex. The wall paintings of the southern church of Agios Herakleidios' apse include fragmentary 11th- and 12th-century scenes. The rest of the church was painted in the 13th and 14th centuries. Murals include some rare images such as the depiction of the Holy Cloth. The narthex paintings are the work of an artist from Constantinople who fled to Cyprus after the fall of that city (1453). They echo the style of the Byzantine capital. The scenes painted on the walls of the Latin Chapel, (c. 1500), are in the 'Italo-Byzantine' style, the most complete set in this style in Cyprus. The *katholikon's* wooden *templon* screen (13th-14th c.),

has imitation coats-of-arms. It is the oldest wooden *templon* (barrier separating the nave from the sacraments at the altar) in Cyprus. The physical remains (i.e. the bones) of Agios Ioannis Lambadistis occupy a precious reliquary. Other monastic buildings include cells, auxiliary rooms and an oil press. One room houses icons from the monastery and other churches in the village of Kalopanayiotis.

We next visit the painted 11th-century UNESCO-designated church of Agios Nikolaos tis Stegis ("St Nicholas of the Roof"). The church is the only surviving Middle Byzantine *katholikon* in Cyprus. It had a typical Byzantine domed cross-in square plan. A narthex was added in the 12th century. It takes its name from the 13th-century wood and tiled pitched roof covering the original nave and narthex. Its interior walls are covered with wall paintings of various painters whose respective works span a period of more than six centuries. In some cases, individual layers of painting can be observed one on top of the other. The figure style in the first phase, 11th century, reflects the influence of Byzantine miniaturists of the Macedonian renaissance. These murals depict scenes from the *Life of Christ*, the *Raising of Lazarus*, the *Dormition of the Virgin*, and some isolated figures. The second phase, 12th century, includes more sophisticated frescoes in the southwest part of the church and the narthex. Most of the church's other frescoes date from the late 13th and 14th centuries. The *Crucifixion* and the *Resurrection*, the *Christ Pantocratoras* in the dome, the prophets on its drum and the evangelists on its four pendentives, as well as life size saints in the nave, all date from the mid 14th century.

In Kakopetria, named 'place of the Bad Rocks' for the presence of boulders and rock outcrops, we enjoy lunch in a local *taverna* and have some time at leisure to explore the winding streets of this picturesque medieval mountain village.

In the nearby village of Pedoulas we visit the church of Archangelos Michail decorated with wall paintings in 1474 by a local artist named Minas. The gable-roofed building includes brightly coloured scenes which were restored in 1980 and reflect a move towards the naturalism of the post-Byzantine revival. The wall paintings include depictions of Archangel Michael, the *Sacrifice of Abraham*, the *Virgin and Christ*, and a beautiful baptism scene where an unclothed Christ exits the River Jordan with fish swimming at his feet. There is also a wooden *templon* screen dating from the same period which features a painted coat-of-arms of the medieval Kingdom of Cyprus, considered one of the best-preserved examples of its kind in Cyprus. (Overnight Kalopanayiotis) BLD

Kyrenia – 2 nights

Day 9: Friday 11 October, Kalopanayiotis – Bellapais – Kyrenia

- Byzantine Church of Panagia tis Asinou (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
- Bellapais Abbey
- Home of Lawrence Durrell, Bellapais (exterior only)

Today we cross the "Green Line" to enter into Northern "Occupied" Cyprus. Before this we visit a third UNESCO listed painted church. The church of Panagia tis Asinou (1099), was once the *katholikon* of the Monastery of Phorbion, which gives the church its alternative name, Panagia Phorbiotissa. It consists of two parts, the vaulted single-aisled nave and the later 12th-century narthex. The narthex has two semi-circular apses, a type influenced by Constantinople. From the 12th century a steep-pitched timber tiled roof was built over the church. No traces of the rest of the monastic buildings survive. The wall paintings covering the church's interior, some of the finest to be found on the island, vary in date. The earliest group (1105/6) in the apse and on the west wall, follows the Komnenian style of Constantinople, the artist's birthplace. This constitutes one of the most important examples of Byzantine art of this period. The Byzantine Emperor Alexios Komnenos I (1081-1118) had made Cyprus his most important military base in the north-eastern

Mediterranean. In the 14th century the apse conch (half dome) collapsed and was rebuilt and redecorated. External buttresses were added and a little later, flying buttresses were constructed at the east end of the north wall. The narthex was decorated with mural paintings soon after its erection during the second half of the 12th century, and in 1332/3 it was redecorated in the French style with images of many donors. The church also has some 17th-century murals.

In the afternoon we visit the abbey and village of Bellapais, home for some years of Lawrence Durrell, who wrote about life in Cyprus between 1953 and 1956 in his book, *Bitter Lemons*. He mentions passing the time drinking coffee under the 'Tree of Idleness' in the village. Because traditional Cypriot culture has men sitting all day on chairs at their local café doing absolutely nothing, whilst their wives are at home or in the fields working the daily chores, cleaning and cooking, etc., Durrell speculated that the men of the village, seen daily sitting at the Bellapais coffeeshop under the shade of a large tree, had fallen victim to a spell cast upon them by that tree, a spell that caused them to remain idle and unproductive for the rest of their lives. In Bellapais today, there are two coffeeshops, one opposite from the other, each with a tree in the courtyard. Both coffeeshops claim to be the one referred to in Durrell's book.

The Bellapais Abbey, ruins of an Augustinian monastery, was built in the 13th century. The site may have been the early residence of the Bishops of Kyrenia, as well as a place of refuge from Arab raids in the 7th and 8th centuries. Aimery de Lusignan founded the monastery around 1200 for the Canons Regular of the Holy Sepulchre, who had fled Jerusalem after its fall to Saladin in 1187. They called the monastery Abbaye de la Paix ("Abbey of Peace") from which the corrupted version of the name, Bellapais, evolved when the Venetians replaced the French as rulers of the island. The main building as it can be seen today was built during the rule of King Hugh III (1267-1284). The cloisters and the refectory were added during the rule of King Hugh IV (1324-1359). Following the Ottoman conquest of Kyrenia in 1571, the Ottomans expelled the Premonstratensians and gave the abbey to the Greek Orthodox Church of Cyprus, which they appointed as the only legal Christian church on Cyprus. The Church of Cyprus neglected the Abbey, which fell into disrepair. The 13th-century church is still in fine condition, and remains much as it was in 1976, when the last of the stoic Orthodox faithful had to leave. After exploring the village, we drive on to the historic town of Kyrenia, located on the north coast. (Overnight Kyrenia) BL

Day 10: Saturday 12 October, Kyrenia

- St Hilarion Castle
- Kyrenia Castle overlooking the idyllic harbour of Kyrenia
- Kyrenia Shipwreck Museum containing the wreck of a 4th-century BC Greek Merchant Ship (reconstructed with original ship's timbers salvaged from the seafloor during underwater excavations in the early 1970s)
- Walking tour of Kyrenia Old Town
- Afternoon at leisure

This morning we drive out of Kyrenia to view Saint Hilarion Castle, situated on a high outcrop of the Pentadaktylos mountain range. The Castle is situated in an ideal spot overlooking the natural land route or "mountain pass" between Nicosia and the North Coast. Even from the lower reaches of the Castle complex, visitors can enjoy spectacular views over the town of Kyrenia and the surrounding coastline. On exceptionally clear days, one can actually view with the naked eye the Taurus Mts on the south coast of the Turkish mainland, some 90-odd kilometres to the north. It is the best-preserved of the three former strongholds in the Kyrenia mountains, and for those fans of Hollywood trivia, it's interesting to note that Walt Disney used the ground plan from this castle to draw up the prototype of the castle that appears in his early animated film, "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs". The castle is named after an obscure saint from Palestine who fled to Cyprus after the Arab conquest of the Holy Land and created a hermitage where the

castle would later stand. From the 11th century, the Byzantines began the fortifications as a defence against Arab pirates raiding the coast. The Lusignans upgraded some sections as a summer residence. Much of the castle was dismantled by the Venetians in the 15th century.

At the eastern end of Kyrenia's old harbour stands a 16th-century Venetian castle, built on the remains of a Crusader fortification. During an early phase of the Castle's history, Richard the Lionheart had cause to visit this castle in 1191/2. It has a 12th-century chapel with reused late Roman capitals. Since the 1930s, the castle was used by the Cyprus Antiquities Department as the Kyrenia District Archaeological Museum, and today it houses the landmark Kyrenia Shipwreck Museum, whose main exhibit is a 4th-century BC Greek merchant ship, one of the oldest vessels ever recovered, with its cargo of millstones and wine *amphorae* from Kos, Samos and Rhodes. Its 14-metre hull, made predominantly of original ancient wooden planks cut from Calabrian Pine trees (*Pinus brutia*), in some cases sheathed in lead, is preserved in a specially controlled environment, together with its *amphorae*. Roughly 55-60% of the actual ancient ship has been reconstructed using the original wooden planks salvaged from the seafloor during underwater excavations, and later treated with special preservative chemicals inside a large bathtub. This landmark underwater excavation project was carried out at the very end of the 1960s – the early 1970s by Dr Michael Katsev from the University of Pennsylvania.

We shall then enjoy a walking tour of the Old Town of Kyrenia. Modest remnants of Kyrenia's long history are speckled throughout the lanes. Two of the major monuments are the Ottoman-era Aga Cafer Pasa Mosque and the dilapidated remains of 16th-century Chysopolitissa Church. There are also ancient Graeco-Roman tombs on the road leading to Archangelos Michael Church. During the Lusignan era, the town was protected by fortifications which were dismantled over the years and reused for other building works. The Round Tower on Ziya Rizki Caddesi next to one of the entrance ways into the neighbourhood is one of the few still-standing pieces of original masonry. At the eastern edge of the Old Town is St Andrew's Anglican Church, built in 1913 and still serving Kyrenia's large community of resident British ex-pats, who live in and around town today. They are ever present in the cafes, pubs and kebab houses that surround the main square and narrow streets.

The afternoon will be at leisure for you to explore the old cobblestoned town and dine at one of its many harbourside restaurants. (Overnight Kyrenia) B

Nicosia, Cyprus - 3 nights

Day 11: Sunday 13 October, Kyrenia – Salamis – Famagusta – Nicosia

- Ancient Salamis Archaeological Site
- Famagusta: St Nicholas Cathedral, Venetian Palace remnants & city walls

Today we drive from Kyrenia to the ancient city-kingdom of Salamis. This extensive site was founded, according to legend, by ancient Greek hero, the archer Teucer, who fought beside his giant brother, Ajax, in the Trojan War. Greek mythology records Teucer trying to return to his ancestral homeland, the Greek island of Salamis, at the end of the war, but Poseidon, God of the Sea who favoured the Trojans, caused rough seas and strong winds to scatter the Greek fleet in various directions. Teucer and his ships were blown off course, finally landing on the fine sandy shores of eastern Cyprus, where he founded the city-kingdom of "Salamina" or Salamis, named after his home island in the sea opposite Athens. The newly established port city of Salamis grew in importance around 1200 BC. At this time, the inhabitants of nearby Enkomi, whose harbour was silting up, developed Salamis as a major harbour for the export of Cyprus' famous copper. By the 8th century BC Salamis was the most important commercial centre on the island, and by the 6th century BC its wealth was enriching its Persian Imperial overlords. After the death of

Alexander the Great, who had taken the island from the Persians in 333 BC, Cyprus was integrated into the realm of the Egyptian Ptolemies (295 BC). The site today has a number of important remains, including a theatre and gymnasium.

We then drive to Famagusta, a city which has developed a distinctly Levantine air since it was taken and occupied by Turkey in 1974. It is now well known for its jewellery, copper work and pottery. Founded around 274 BC on the site of an earlier Egyptian settlement, Arsinoe, Famagusta remained a small fishing village until it emerged as a port when Salamis, Cyprus' former capital, was destroyed. By 1300 Famagusta had become one of the chief emporia of the Eastern Mediterranean, with wealthy merchants and well-endowed churches. It prospered under the Lusignan dynasty who fortified it and built St Nicholas' Cathedral (now a mosque with a towering minaret). It retains its ramparts and a castle overlooking its harbour. After 1400 Genoese and Venetian merchants settled here and it eventually became part of the great Venetian trading empire. In 1571, it fell to the Ottomans, who ruled here until 1878. We shall visit the old town with its beautiful Venetian Gothic palaces, the Nestorian Church of St George, and the citadel, now called 'Othello's Tower'. We shall also visit the Lala Mustafa Pasa Camii, once the Latin Cathedral of St Nicholas, the finest example of Gothic architecture on the island and throughout the Middle East. It was built between 1298 and 1326 by the very same architect who constructed the Cathedral of Reims, in France. After visiting Famagusta, we drive west across the flat Mesaoria, Cyprus' central plain, to reach our hotel in Nicosia. (Overnight Nicosia) B

Day 12: Monday 14 October, Nicosia

- Introductory walking tour of Nicosia: Venetian Walls, Old Archbishop's Palace, Cathedral of St John the Theologian & Famagusta Gate
- Byzantine Museum (*subject to renovation works being completed in 2024*)
- Büyük Han
- Selimiye Mosque & Bedestan (Church of St Nicholas) – exterior only as closed for renovations

This morning we explore Nicosia's old city, viewing its Venetian walls, Archbishop's Palace, Cathedral of St John the Theologian (probably the latest dated painted church in Cyprus: 17th-18th Centuries) and the impressive Famagusta Gate. Within the Archbishop's Palace Complex we visit the Byzantine Museum which is home to a number of rare icons from 5th–19th century.

We then cross the 'Green Line' to explore grand monuments of Cyprus' Ottoman past. We begin with a visit to the Büyük Khan (Great Inn/Caravanserai), built in 1572 by the first Ottoman governor of Cyprus, Muzaffer Pasha. One of the very first building projects undertaken by the new Ottoman rulers of Cyprus, its architecture is similar to numerous Anatolian *khans*, with a courtyard surrounded by two floors of rooms. The lower rooms were used as shops, storage rooms and offices. The upper floor rooms served as lodging, each fitted with a fireplace with an octagonal chimney. In the middle of the courtyard a domed octagonal miniature mosque rests on eight columns with a fountain for ablutions beneath it. The British used the *khan* as the Nicosia Central Prison. It was then used as a builders' yard. Recently restored, it is now a lively place with shops selling handicrafts, galleries and excellent restaurants serving local Turkish specialties. There will be time at leisure for lunch; you may wish to dine at the *khan's* Sedirhan Restaurant or wander around the nearby streets to try a local Doner Kebab.

In the afternoon we visit other key sites including the Selimiye Mosque, the Turkish-Cypriot community's main mosque, where the great festivals of Bayram are conducted. It was formerly the spectacular (Latin) Cathedral of St Sophia (1209-1228) with magnificent external stone carvings, built over the ruins of a previous building. Stylistically, St Sophia resembles medieval French cathedrals. When it was converted to a mosque in 1571, it was re-orientated towards Mecca. The Egyptian granite columns of the interior are

Roman, probably stolen and transported to Nicosia from the ancient Salamis site, and may well come from an earlier Byzantine building.

Within Selimiye quarter also lies the Bedestan which dates from the 6th century when it was built as a small Byzantine Chapel. Between the 12th and 16th centuries it was expanded by the Lusignans and later by the Venetians. Dedicated to St Nicholas, it became the Greek Orthodox Cathedral in the 16th century. Under the Ottomans it was converted to a grain store and covered market. Today the local tourism authorities have turned it into a venue for Whirling Dervish shows, with dancers imported from the Turkish mainland. (Overnight Nicosia) B

Day 13: Tuesday 15 October, Nicosia

- Cyprus Museum
- Afternoon at leisure: Option to visit the Leventis Municipal Museum of Nicosia or the House of the Dragoman of Cyprus Hadjigeorgakis Kornessios
- Farewell Dinner

The Cyprus Museum is the principal collection of ancient art and artefacts on the island. It is Cyprus' oldest and most important archaeological museum, and charts the development of Cyprus' civilisation and material culture from the very earliest phase of the Neolithic to the Early Byzantine period (7th century). The museum's collections are comprised of finds from extensive excavations from all over the island that have helped the development of Cyprus' archaeology, as well as its research into the cultural heritage of the Mediterranean. The collections consist of pottery, jewellery, stone sculpture, terra-cotta figures and figurines, coins, copper objects, and other artefacts, all exhibited in chronological order in the various museum galleries. Pieces typical of ancient Cypriot culture – and of particularly important artistic, archaeological and historical value – include an important collection of cruciform figurines made from the unique blue-green stone called picrolite from the Chalcolithic period, Early Bronze Age pottery from Vouni necropolis on the North Coast, Late Bronze Age golden jewellery from Enkomi, and the iconic 1st-century BC statue of Aphrodite of Soli. The museum building itself is also historic. Work on it commenced in 1908 and it was completed in 1924, when Cyprus was still a British colony. The museum building was originally dedicated to the memory of Queen Victoria and a stone plaque with dedicatory text stands over the entrance.

The afternoon is free for you to further explore Nicosia. You may wish to visit the Leventis Municipal Museum which partly focuses on the history of Nicosia, and also displays an extensive collection of Cypriot works including archaeological artefacts, costumes, photographs, medieval pottery, maps and engravings, jewels, and furniture.

Hadjigeorgakis Kornessios was a *dragoman*, the official interpreter for the *Divan* (Council) of the Sultan for thirty years from 1779. This title, which was one of the most prestigious titles given to the local Christians by the Ottoman authorities, enabled him to accumulate huge wealth and power. Built towards the end of the eighteenth century, his two-storey stone mansion, is considered the most important example of Cypriot urban architecture in the last century of Ottoman occupation (1779-1878). You may wish to tour the interior of this mansion which includes an official reception room (*onda*) featuring exceptional carved wooden, gilded and painted decoration.

We end today with a farewell evening meal at a local restaurant. (Overnight Nicosia) BD

[Transfer to Larnaca Airport](#)

Day 14: Wednesday 16 October, Nicosia – Larnaca Airport (Tour Ends)

- Morning at leisure with option to visit the A.G. Leventis Gallery
- Mosque of Hala Sultan Tekke
- Tour ends at 3pm, Larnaca Airport

This morning is at leisure. You may wish to visit the A.G. Leventis Gallery which houses over 800 paintings from Cypriot, Greek and European artists. The eclectic private collection of artworks that Anastasios G. Leventis assembled from the 1950s known as 'The Paris Collection', includes works by Canaletto, François Boucher, Sisley, Pissarro, Fragonard, Corot, Boudin, Renoir, Monet, Signac and Chagall.

At 1pm we transfer from Nicosia to the Larnaca airport where our tour officially ends at approximately 3pm. En route to the airport we make a brief visit to Hala Sultan Tekke on the Salt Lake. This mosque was built next to the tomb of Umm Haram, the aunt of the Prophet Mohammad. (Some historical sources refer to her as Mohammad's wet nurse, instead of the aunt.) According to local legend, Umm Haram died near this spot in 639AD when she was riding on a donkey near the shore of the Larnaca Salt Lake: a snake emerged from the grasses, startling the donkey, and the poor lady was thrown off and landed hard, tragically breaking her neck. The Hala Sultan Tekke is today considered by many Muslims to be the fourth most important site in Islam after Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem. B

Accommodation

Accommodation is in 4-and 5-star hotels, in twin-share rooms with en suite bathroom. Each hotel is centrally located within the cities that we visit, and has been chosen as the best available. Rooms for single occupancy may be requested – and are subject to availability and payment of the Single Supplement.

- Larnaca (1 night): 4-star Sun Hall Hotel – located in the heart of the town overlooking Phinikoudes promenade and just 50m from the beach. www.sunhallhotel.com.cy
- Paphos (5 nights): 4-star Alexander the Great Beach Hotel – featuring a seafront location and within a 10-minute walk from Paphos Harbour. kanikahotels.com
- Kalopanayiotis (2 nights): 4-star Casale Panayiotis Traditional Village Hotel & Spa – nestled in the Marathasa Valley on the slopes of Troodos Mountains, this complex of traditional houses combine modern luxuries with traditional style. www.casalepanayiotis.com
- Kyrenia (2 nights): 5-star Arkin Colony – built in the Colonial and Ottoman styles, the hotel is located in the historic centre, 400m from the Shipwreck Museum. www.thecolonycyprus.com
- Nicosia (3 nights): 4-star Map Boutique Hotel – opened in late 2019, this new modern hotel is located 700m from the Byzantine Museum and 850m from the Cyprus Museum. www.maphotel.com.cy

Note: *hotels are subject to change, in which case a hotel of similar standard will be provided.*

Single Supplement

Payment of this supplement will ensure accommodation in a single-occupancy room throughout the tour. In most hotels, this will be a double/twin room for single occupancy. The number of rooms available for single occupancy is extremely limited. People wishing to take this supplement are therefore advised to book well in advance.

Tour Map



Tour Price & Inclusions

AUD \$9280.00 Land Content Only – Early-Bird Special: Book before 30 September 2023

AUD \$9480.00 Land Content Only

AUD \$1150.00 Single Supplement

Tour Price (Land Content Only) includes:

- Accommodation in twin-share rooms with en suite bathroom in 4- and 5-star hotels
- Lunches and evening meals indicated in the tour itinerary where: B=breakfast, L=lunch & D=dinner
- Bottled water 2 x 500ml per day for excursions
- Drinks at welcome and farewell meals. Other meals include bottled water only
- Departure airport transfer to Larnaca Airport according to the time as outlined in the tour itinerary.
- Transportation by air-conditioned coach, and 4WD on Day 5 & Day 7
- Porterage of one piece of luggage per person at hotels (not at airports).
- Lecture and site-visit program
- Tour handbook
- National guide
- Entrance fees
- Tips for the coach driver, national guides and restaurants for included meals

Tour Price (Land Content Only) does not include:

- Airfare: Australia-Larnaca, Larnaca-Australia
- Personal spending money
- Arrival airport transfer in Larnaca
- Luggage in excess of 20kg (44lbs)
- Travel insurance
- Visas (if applicable)



Physical Endurance & Practical Information

Physical Ratings 

The number of flags is a guide to the degree of difficulty of ASA tours relative to each other (not to those of other tour companies). It is neither absolute nor literal. One flag is given to the least taxing tours, seven to the most. Flags are allocated, above all, according to the amount of walking and standing each tour involves. Nevertheless, all ASA tours require that participants have a good degree of fitness enabling 2-3 hours walking or 1-1.5 hours standing still on any given site visit or excursion. Many sites are accessed by climbing slopes or steps and have uneven terrain.

This 14-day Cultural Tour of Cyprus involves:

- A moderate amount of walking at archaeological sites, many of which are extensive and unsheltered.
- Visiting sites where you will encounter steps, cobbled streets, rocky and uneven ground, slopes and steep walks.
- Extensive coach travel, sometimes on winding mountain roads; road conditions are variable.
- Two excursions by 4WD, and a half-day cruise along the coastline of the Akamas Peninsula.
- 4-and 5-star hotels with four hotel changes.
- You must be able to carry your own hand luggage. Hotel portage includes 1 piece of luggage per person.

It is important to remember that ASA programs are group tours, and slow walkers affect everyone in the group. As the group must move at the speed of the slowest member, the amount of time spent at a site may be reduced if group members cannot maintain a moderate walking pace. ASA tours should not present any problem for active people who can manage day-to-day walking and stair-climbing. However, if you have any doubts about your ability to manage on a program, please ask your ASA travel consultant whether this is a suitable tour for you.

Please note: it is a condition of travel that all participants agree to accept ASA's directions in relation to their suitability to participate in activities undertaken on the tour, and that ASA retains the sole discretion to direct a tour participant to refrain from a particular activity on part of the tour. For further information please refer to the ASA Reservation Application Form.

Prior to departure, tour members will receive practical notes which include information on visa requirements, health, photography, weather, clothing and what to pack, custom regulations, bank hours, currency regulations, electrical appliances and food. The Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade website has advice for travellers: www.smartraveller.gov.au

Booking Conditions

ASA RESERVATION APPLICATION FORM

Please complete the ASA RESERVATION APPLICATION and send it to Australians Studying Abroad together with your non-refundable deposit of AUD \$1000.00 per person payable to Australians Studying Abroad.

Covid-19 Vaccination Certificate

Commencing from November 2021 it will be a condition of travel that all group leaders and ASA travellers are fully vaccinated against Covid-19. All participants must send ASA a copy of their vaccination certificate at the time of submitting their Reservation Application Form. For information on how to obtain either a Covid-19 digital certificate or a certificate in PDF format please view the [Australian Government Services Australia "What types of proof there are"](#) web page.



Reservation Application

TOUR NAME _____
TOUR DATES _____

Please complete **one application, per person in block letters and sign**. Parental signature is required for participants under 18 years of age. Please mail this form with the appropriate deposit to: **P.O. Box 8285, ARMADALE, VICTORIA, 3143**. On receipt of this Reservation Application and deposit, ASA will process your booking and if approved, send you a tour confirmation.

Applicant Details (as in passport)

TITLE Mr Mrs Ms Miss Dr Other _____
FIRST NAME _____ Preferred FIRST NAME _____
MIDDLE NAME _____ SURNAME _____
POSTAL ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ COUNTRY _____ POSTCODE _____
TEL. (AH) () _____ TEL. (BH) () _____ Mobile Tel: _____
EMAIL address _____
Date of birth ____ / ____ / _____ GENDER Male Female

Passport Number _____ Expiry date ____ / ____ / ____ Nationality _____
 Colour copy of my current valid passport enclosed I'm renewing my passport ASA has a colour copy of my current passport

Covid Certificate A copy of my current international certificate enclosed

Travel Plans

I plan to leave Australia before the tour commences. Planned departure date ____ / ____ / ____
 I will be arranging my airfare independently and taking the Land Content Only option.

Tour Accommodation (rooming preferences)

I/we would like: a twin-bedded room a double-bedded room a room for sole occupancy
I am travelling: on my own with a friend/family member Travel Companion _____

Meals

I do not have any specific dietary requests

Please **X** the box if you **CAN NOT** eat any of the following:

fish poultry red meat dairy products

eggs pork nuts

Other _____

Allergies: Refer to the Medical Information

Correspondence

Your preferred method of correspondence Postal Mail Email Address _____

Emergency Contact Details

Note: this person **MUST** be available by telephone and be present in Australia for the duration of your tour with ASA

Name _____ Relationship to Traveller _____

Address _____

TEL. (AH) () _____ TEL. (BH) () _____ Mobile Tel: _____

EMAIL address _____

The purpose of seeking this information is to assist ASA to determine, where necessary, whether ASA is able to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate your specific needs and whether your health and safety (or that of your fellow travellers) is likely to be compromised given your choice of tour. It will also assist you and ASA if you fall ill or have an accident whilst travelling.

- ASA reserves the right to decline your Reservation Application if this Medical Information section is not completed properly and may reject or cancel your reservation, or terminate your participation on any tour, if ASA subsequently learns that you have failed to make full and proper disclosure.
- ASA is committed to protecting the privacy of your personal information. ASA's privacy policy is available for viewing at www.asatours.com.au
- If ASA has any concerns about the information you have provided, it will contact you to request clarification before considering your Application.
- ASA requires you to consider carefully your limitations in light of ASA's Physical Endurance Star Rating System in ASA's Brochure and Itinerary when choosing your tour.
- If you are not likely to satisfy ASA's Participation Criteria (see below), ASA, in its sole discretion, may reject your Reservation Application.
- It is a condition of your tour that you agree to accept the directions of ASA's Tour Leaders in relation to your suitability to participate in activities planned on tour.
- ASA reserves the right to cancel your participation on a tour if your behaviour is in ASA's opinion causing undue distress or damage to any person or their property.
- If your participation is discontinued during a tour, ASA will assist by arranging your onward travel (if required) at your own cost, but you will not be refunded for forfeited parts of the tour.
- ASA tour groups are not accompanied by a medical practitioner. ASA recommends that you see your doctor for advice about your specific needs while overseas. You may also wish to contact a travel and vaccination clinic for advice. www.traveldoctor.com.au tel: 1300 658 444; www.travelvax.com.au tel: 1300 360 164.
- Travel insurers require you to declare all existing medical conditions.
- Please carry a complete list of medications with you during the ASA tour. Include **generic names** of each medication (consult your local pharmacy for information).

Please mark **X** in the YES or NO box to every question below and provide details where necessary:

Participation Criteria

To participate in an ASA tour, you must be reasonably fit, in good health and able to participate in all activities without assistance from Tour Leaders or other tour members. **You must also be fully vaccinated against Covid-19.** If you require assistance, a fit and able travel companion must undertake to accompany and assist you with all tasks for the duration of the whole tour. The responsibility of the Tour Leader is to ensure that the larger group enjoys a relaxing and informative journey, and he or she cannot be relied upon to provide ongoing individual assistance to any one guest.

- | | YES | NO |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Can you walk and stand unassisted for at least 2-3 hours a day in hot, humid conditions? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 2. Can you walk unassisted on and over uneven surfaces? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 3. Can you climb at least 3 flights of stairs and/or walk up and down steep slopes unassisted? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 4. Can you walk at a steady pace and no less than 1km every 15 - 20 minutes unassisted? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 5. Can you organise, manage and carry your own luggage? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 6. Can you follow and remember tour instructions and meet punctually at designated times and places? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 7. Can you administer your own medication? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| 8. You do NOT have impaired vision or hearing which may impact your capacity to participate on this tour? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Mobility and Fitness

As many of ASA's international sites do not provide access to wheelchairs or similar mobility aids, we regret that ASA tours are not suitable for people who require the use of a walking frame, wheeled walker, wheelchair or motorised scooter.

1. Do you suffer from any medical conditions that may compromise your mobility and/or fitness to participate on this program? YES NO
 If yes, please specify

If yes, how will you manage this on tour?

Allergies and/or Food Intolerances

ASA will make reasonable endeavours to organise meals to suit you, provided that you give ASA adequate notice of your specific dietary requirements or allergies. You may be required to research dietary alternatives, as not all destinations may be able to offer suitable food substitutes.

1. Do you have any food allergies or intolerances? YES NO
 If yes, please specify

2. Have you ever had an anaphylactic reaction to anything? YES NO
 If yes, please specify

Do you carry an epipen? YES NO

3. Do you have any other allergies or reactions to anything, including medical drugs? YES NO
 If yes, please specify

Existing Medical Conditions

You alone are responsible for managing any existing medical conditions, your medication and any medical equipment that you may need when on your tour. Please plan for contingencies and take extra medication, dietary supplements and/or fully charged batteries for medical equipment if your health and safety depends on these. You should take into consideration that power sources at some destinations may be unavailable, inadequate, inconvenient or unreliable.

1. Have you any significant medical conditions that may impact your capacity to complete this tour? YES NO
 If yes, please specify

If yes, how will you manage this on tour?

2. Do you require some form of powered medical aid, such as a CPAP machine? YES NO

These machines may not be operable on certain international flights, modes of transport, in remote or other areas with inadequate or unreliable power sources without a fully charged independent long life battery or batteries.

Diabetics: You may be travelling and sightseeing for many hours at a time. Insulin dependent diabetics must carry extra supplies of insulin (as this medication cannot be obtained in some destinations), regulators, applicators, storage and refrigeration equipment, as well as any necessary supplements. Accommodation may not provide refrigerators in rooms.

3. Are you diabetic? YES NO

Are you insulin dependent? YES NO

4. Do you suffer from travel sickness? YES NO
 Remember to use an appropriate medication while on tour.

Declaration

I declare that: I have read and understood the ASA Tour Itinerary, Reservation Application and Booking Conditions. I am aware of ASA's terms as relating to refunds, cancellations, responsibility and liability. I understand that ASA relies upon this declaration when considering this Application. I accept the inherent dangers, risks and uncertainties in travel and those beyond ASA's control and understand they may occur before or during any tour. I have made full and complete disclosure and have not knowingly withheld any medical information about myself from ASA. I have completed this Reservation Application honestly and accurately. I warrant that I am able to participate independently in all activities described by ASA in the itinerary without assistance from any person.

I will advise ASA in writing if any aspect of my fitness and or health conditions change materially at any time before my departure date. I understand and accept that the itinerary, accommodation and lecturers scheduled for this tour may change.

I agree and consent that ASA may give my personal information in this Reservation Application to tour service providers and relevant authorities as required by law, but only for the purpose of making bookings with and engaging services associated with the tour. I understand that if I do not consent to the use of my personal information for this purpose, ASA will decline my Reservation Application.

In consideration of ASA's acceptance of my Reservation Application, I irrevocably release and indemnify ASA from all claims that I, or any other party, may have against ASA its employees, invitees, agents and contractors, however arising in respect of any loss, damage, injury, death or expense incurred in the course of booking, preparing for, travelling to, on and from or cancelling any tour.

I release and indemnify ASA with respect to:

1. Every general risk to which I or my personal belongings may be exposed in the course of preparing for, travelling to, on or from any ASA tour;
2. Every special risk, in particular medical risks, to which I may be exposed in the course of preparing for, travelling to, on or from any ASA tour arising from, including, but not limited to:
 - a. intermittent power cycles and/or the temporary or permanent loss of power (beware CPAP or any other medical machine users);
 - b. dietary, food or other allergies (ASA cannot guarantee that traces of items to which you are allergic are not present in food or drink you are served, medication you are administered or other substances with which you may come into contact);
 - c. any event or situation that may compromise the administration of necessary medication or my health, safety and wellbeing generally; and
 - d. any event or happening beyond ASA's control
3. All claims arising as a result of my or ASA's cancellation or termination of any tour, part of a tour or of my continued participation on a tour for any reason (subject to ASA's refund conditions below).

Limitation of Liability

ASA is not a carrier, event or tourist attraction host, accommodation or dining service provider. All bookings made and tickets or coupons issued by ASA for transport, event, accommodation, dining and the like are issued as an agent for various service providers and are subject to the terms and conditions and limitations of liability imposed by each service provider. ASA is not responsible for their products, services, terms and conditions. If a service provider cancels or does not deliver the product or service for which you have contracted, and does not give a refund, your remedy lies with the service provider, not ASA.

ASA will not be liable for any claim (e.g. sickness, injury, death, damage or loss) arising from any change, delay, detention, breakdown, border closures, cancellation, failure, accident, act, omission or negligence of any tour service provider or authority however caused (contingencies). You must take out such travel insurance as is available against such contingencies.

ASA's liability in respect of any tour cancelled or changed will be limited to the partial refund of amounts you have paid, less an administration fee of \$500 and other costs and charges of third party service providers. No compensation will be payable to you by ASA where ASA cancels or changes a tour, or any part of a tour.

ASA reserves the sole discretion to cancel any tour or to modify itineraries in any way it considers appropriate and in the best interests of health, safety and wellbeing of tour participants. Tour costs may be revised, subject to unexpected price increases or exchange rate fluctuations.

Booking Conditions

DEPOSITS

A non-refundable deposit of \$1000.00 AUD per person is required to reserve a place on an ASA tour.

CANCELLATION FEES

If you cancel your booking the following charges apply:

More than 75 days before departure: your initial deposit of \$1000.00 is non-refundable.**

75-31 days prior 50% of total amount due

30-0 days prior 100% of total amount due

**\$500.00 of this amount (ie 50% of your deposit) may be credited to another ASA tour departing within 12 months of the original tour you booked. We regret, in this case early-bird discounts will not apply.

We take the day on which you cancel as being that on which we receive written confirmation of cancellation.

UNUSED PORTIONS OF THE TOUR

We regret that refunds will not be given for any unused portions or services of the tour, such as meals, entry fees, accommodation, flights or transfers.

WILL THE TOUR PRICE OR ITINERARY CHANGE?

If the number of participants on a tour is significantly less than budgeted, or if there is a significant change in exchange rates ASA reserves the right to amend the advertised price. We shall, however, do all in our power to maintain the published price. Occasionally circumstances beyond the control of ASA make it necessary to change airline, hotel or to make amendments to itineraries. We will inform you of any changes in due course.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

ASA requires all participants to obtain comprehensive travel insurance. A copy of your travel insurance certificate and the **reverse charge** emergency contact phone number must be received by ASA no later than 75 days prior to the commencement of the tour.

FINAL PAYMENT

The balance of the tour price will be due 75 days prior to the tour commencement date.

PLEASE READ THE ABOVE CAREFULLY, PRINT AND SIGN BELOW

I accept the conditions on this booking form I have read the information about the physical requirements of the tour in the detailed itinerary and confirm that I am able to meet these requirements

Applicant's Signature

Print Full Name

Dated

Tour / Course Name

Name of Traveller 1 _____

Name of Traveller 2 _____

I have enclosed a payment to the value of \$ _____ (including CC or bank fee if applicable) for this tour

The above amount is payable for:

- Intention to Travel Tour Deposit
 Balance of Payment Upgrade from Intention to Travel to a Deposit
 Travel Insurance Other (eg. Airfares, Accommodation) _____

International Payments

Welcome to our international travellers! If you are making a payment and do not have an Australian bank account/credit card, we can only accept payment as follows:

- via credit card with the applicable fee - the credit card company/bank will set the exchange rate
- via bank transfer; please give your surname and tour code (eg. Smith 21705) as a reference and ask your bank to allow for all charges.

Bank cheques or personal cheques will not be accepted.

By Cheque (accept Australian cheques only)

Please make cheques payable to *Australians Studying Abroad*

Direct Deposit or Internet Banking

You will need to:

1. Provide your bank with ASA's bank details (see below) and the amount you wish to transfer OR make a direct deposit through any ANZ branch
2. Include any fees levied by the banks
3. Provide a reference number (Mobile or last name recommended).
4. Complete section below, including confirmation no. (given when transaction completed).

Australians Studying Abroad bank details

Bank ANZ
Branch 420 St Kilda Road, Melbourne Vic
Swift Code ANZBAU3M
BSB 013-423
Account No 3472-32759

Bank confirmation No. _____

Reference used: Mobile or last name recommended

Date Money Transferred _____

Credit Card Payment

Credit card fees apply: Mastercard, Visa & American Express 2%

Please debit my: Mastercard Visa American Express

I authorise ASA to debit my credit card for the amount due plus the applicable fee as above

Credit Card Number _____

Expiry Date _____ Security Code (CVC) _____

Bank the Card is linked to (eg. NAB or ANZ) _____

Cardholders Name _____

Cardholders Billing Address _____

Postcode _____

State _____ Country _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Cardholders Signature _____