



Tour Information



Golden Age of the Minoans





Travel

Passports

You may need to renew your British Passport if you are travelling to an EU country. **Please ensure your passport is less than 10 years old (even if it has 3 months or more left on it) and has at least 3 months validity remaining from the date of travel.**

For more information, please visit: [passport checker](#).

Visas

If you're a tourist, you do not need a visa for short trips to Greece.

For all other passport holders please check the visa requirements with the appropriate embassy.

For further information, please check here: [travel to the EU](#)

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



Tickets

You will be sent an e-ticket, which shows your flight reference number, with your final departure documents. EasyJet have now replaced all 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 any time prior to travel using the reference number provided.

For more information, please 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.

Your EasyJet ticket includes one hold bag of up to 23kg plus **one cabin bag that can fit under the seat in front of you**, (maximum size 45 x 36 x 20cm, including any handles or wheels).

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

Transfers

On arrival at Heraklion Airport please collect your luggage and proceed to the arrivals hall, where you will find your tour manager holding a Travel Editions sign. The transfer time is approximately 15 minutes.

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.

Border Control

At border control, you may need to show a return or onward ticket, show you have enough money for your stay, use separate lanes from EU, EEA and Swiss citizens when queuing.



Accommodation

Atrion Hotel, Heraklion

This modern, 4* minimal-style hotel is right next to Heraklion's vibrant centre, with its cafés, shopping streets, tavernas and museums but also a short stride from the seashore. Facilities include a lobby bar, restaurant, a courtyard patio and a TV lounge. The comfortable bedrooms have private facilities with bath or shower, a private balcony, air conditioning, TV, mini-bar, hair dryer, telephone and free wifi.

For more information visit the hotel website:

<https://www.atrion.gr/en/hotel>

Miramare Resort and Spa, Agios Nikolaos

An attractive hotel, bungalows and Luxury Villas complex situated in the peaceful location of Gargadoros. Raised from the sea front to offer spectacular views of the town of Agios Nikolaos and Mirabello Bay.

The hotel offers comfortable rooms with balcony, air-conditioning (individually controlled), TV, bathroom with bath/shower, hairdryer, telephone, safe, minibar and wi-fi.

Facilities at the hotel include indoor pool, 3 outdoor pools, open air theatre, fitness room, bar and pool bar, restaurant and snack bar.

For more information visit the hotel website:

<https://www.miramarecrete.gr/>

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. Although you have half board included in the tour there will be the opportunity to eat out at local tavernas during the lunch breaks on the tour days. 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. The cost of a dinner for two with local wine and local dishes is approximately 35 to 40 Euros. 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.

Nearly all tavernas sell their own 'open' wine, known as village wine. It can be something of an acquired taste, but it goes very well with the local food. The Greeks are very proud of their wine and nearly all Cretans make their own. Prices of local 'village' wine are usually around 5 or 6 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 the holiday

Breakfast - Daily.

Dinner – Five dinners.

Taking food into EU countries

Please note, you are not able to take meat, milk or any products containing them into EU countries.



Destination

Crete

Crete is a fascinating destination for a cultural and historic tour with its wealth of sights reflecting both its ancient Minoan culture, dating back some 3,000 years, as well as a more recent history. Combined with the island's fantastic natural scenery; picturesque harbours, fertile regions of fruit trees, silver green olive groves, majestic mountains and superb coastline, this tour ensures a diverse and attractive insight into this fabulous island.

Places of interest included in the tour:

Heraklion

Heraklion, also known as Iraklio, is a port city and the capital of Crete. It is known for the Minoan Palace of Knossos, just outside the city. Guarding the city's Venetian port is the 16th-century Koules fortress. A typical feature of Heraklion is its Venetian and Turkish fountains, scattered all around the city.

Knossos

Five km south of Heraklion lies Knossos, one of the most important archaeological sites in Europe, the legendary centre of the Minoan civilization from 1900 to 1400 BC. The Palace, the largest one in Minoan Crete, witnessed two architectural phases. The Palace was an intricate building complex built around a central court. It was laid out on a surface of 22,000 m² and, apart from the royal apartments, ceremonial quarters, treasure rooms, workshops and storage spaces have been identified.

Heraklion Archaeological Museum

The renowned Heraklion Archaeological Museum hosts the largest collection of Minoan artefacts anywhere in the world. The well-laid out exhibition includes unique works of Cretan art, found in excavations across the island, which, roughly, span 5500 years, from the Neolithic (5000 BC) to the Late Roman period (late fourth century AD). Most objects date to prehistoric times and to the so-called Minoan period, named after the island's mythical king, Minos. They include beautiful pottery, carved stone objects, seal stones, small

sculpted items, metal objects, wall-paintings and frescoes.

Vathypetro

Vathypetro lies some five kilometres south of Archanes at the foot of the southern end of Mount Jouktas in Central Crete and was probably on the Minoan route from Knossos to the Messara plain in the south of the island. The site was excavated by S. Marinatos from 1949-53 and again in 1955-6. Since he intended to locate a museum on the site the remains were reconstructed and modified, making it difficult for archaeologists to piece together the original structure of the buildings found here. The Vathypetro complex was constructed around 1580 BC at the beginning of the Late Minoan IA period and badly damaged around 1550 BC, perhaps by an earthquake. The south sector of the building, which includes a wine press, was rebuilt as a farmhouse and industrial centre after the 1550 BC destruction and was finally destroyed around 1470 BC.

Gortyn

The significance of the ancient city of Gortyn is recognised and recorded in its rich mythological and religious tradition. Great gods, like Zeus, Europe and Demeter, but also semi gods, heroes and kings like Minos, Gortys, Rhadamanthys, play a leading role in its myths. Gortyn is also associated with the major figures of Christianity; the Apostles Paul and Titus, and the Holy Ten Martyrs. Gortyn was one of the oldest and strongest cities in Crete during the prehistoric and historic period, the population is believed to have been 300,000 people. Gortys reached its peak during the Roman period when it became the capital of Crete. Gortyn was the first city of Crete to accept Christianity and maintained its glory until 828 A.D. when it was occupied and destroyed by the Saracens. Since then it was never inhabited again.

Phaestos

Phaestos was one of the most important centres of Minoan civilisation, and the most wealthy and powerful city in southern Crete. It was inhabited

from the Neolithic period until the foundation and development of the Minoan palaces in the 15th century B.C. The Minoan city covered a considerable area around the palatial centre. After the destruction of the palace in the 15th century, the city continued to be inhabited in the Mycenaean and Geometric periods, that is, until the 8th century B.C.

Agia Triada

Four kilometres west from Phaistos are the ruins of the Royal Villa, the Small Minoan Palace at Agia Triada. The site is named after the village of Agia Triada that is located next to it and was inhabited until 1897, when the Turks destroyed it. The Minoan name of the site is unknown.

Malia Palace

Alongside Knossos, Zakros and Phaistos; Malia, set beside the sea on the north coast, is one of the 4 excavated Minoan palaces on the island. It is likely that a first palace occupied the site around 1900 BC, but this was subsequently destroyed in 1700 BC. The 2nd palace, erected soon after, was destroyed at the same time as the other palaces on the island, around 1450BC.

Spinalonga

Fortified by the Venetians in the late 16th century this small island rests quietly in the middle of the beautiful bay of Elounda. It was successfully defended against the Turks until 1715, long after the rest of Crete had succumbed. In 1903 the Cretan authorities founded a leper colony here, which was inhabited until 1957. The 17th century fortress is well-preserved as are the ruins of the village, which give a fantastic insight into a past way of life on the island. Our visit here involves a short ride by boat from the port of Elounda to the island.

Agios Nikolaos

Agios Nikolaos is a medium-size town with a small-town feel. You can walk around it easily and can get to know it and feel familiar with the place very quickly.

The town has 'three faces to the sea': The Lake and port, Kitroplatia beach and the Marina. The lake is a folklore-inspiringly deep body of water which is connected to the sea by a narrow inlet. It is surrounded and overlooked by cafes and

restaurants - a busy gathering place for residents and visitors alike.

Many churches can be found scattered within the streets of Agios Nikolaos - including the small church which lends its name to the town.

There is a good choice of shops with original items on offer, from woven fabrics, to cups, mugs and china wear and a miscellany of clothes, house decor and local food products and delicacies.

Agios Nikolaos - apart from being a summer draw for visitors - is, for the most part, open in winter and so remains, winter and summer, very much a local's place amidst the tourism of the town, which gives it a very authentic atmosphere.

There is an archaeological museum in Agios Nikolaos but, due to renovation work, this has not been open for the last 3 years. It may be open when you visit but please check with your Tour Manager or the hotel reception before going to visit.

Gournia

The archaeological site of Gournia sits on the north coast of the Isthmus of Ierapetra in East Crete. Possessing remains of some 50 well-preserved houses, a system of cobbled streets, a central court, a Minoan palace, and cemetery, Gournia gives the visitor the best picture of what a Late Bronze Age (1500 B.C.) town looked like. It's believed Gournia was a regional production centre of bronze tools and weapons, domestic objects, and pottery and stone vases, an active trade emporium with overseas connections to other parts of the Aegean and the near East.

Mochlos

Mochlos is a modern island in the Gulf of Mirabello in eastern Crete, and the archaeological site of an ancient Minoan settlement. There is evidence that Mochlos was not an island in Minoan times but was attached to the mainland and acted as an eastern harbour. Mochlos was first excavated by Richard Seager in 1908, when a prepalatial cemetery was found. At that time, tombs, pithos burials and pit graves were uncovered, as well as two large tombs at the western tip of the island. In the 1970s, Jeffrey Soles documented the tombs and cemetery uncovered by Seager. The cemetery was in use from Early Minoan I to Middle Minoan IA.

Zakros

The Palace of Zakros, the most isolated of all the Minoan Palaces, is located on the east coast of Crete, south of Palekastro. Its position shelters it from the dangerously strong north winds that pass Cape Sidero on the northeast tip of Crete. It was the last of the major palaces to be discovered and is smaller than Knossos, Malia and Phaistos. The original excavations were begun by D.G. Howarth of the British School of Archaeology at Athens, and 12 houses in the town surrounding the Palace, whose existence remained unknown, were unearthed before the excavation was abandoned. Nikolaos Platon resumed the excavation in 1961 and was able to unearth a palace which had not been looted at the time of its destruction. The excavations have continued until the present day. The excavation represents one of the most important for Minoan archaeology since the Second World War, and the lateness of its discovery allowed it to be excavated using more modern and more scientific methods than those adopted in the excavation of the other Palaces some 60 years earlier.

Tour Lecturer

Dr Rita Roussos Phd

Rita studied ancient Greek and Latin at the University of California, Berkeley, and completed her Phd in History of Art at the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London. She has excavated in Greece and taught at the American University of Athens.

Tour Manager

Your Tour Manager will be on hand throughout the tour to ensure that everything operates according to plan. If you have any problems or questions, please see him/her immediately – it is often possible to resolve complaints or problems very quickly on the spot, and ensure you get the most out of your holiday.

Grading

This tour has been graded as **Moderate**: Walking between sites, lots of standing for viewing.



The Basics

Climate – The weather in Greece at this time of year is likely to be pleasant, but evenings can be 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 and small umbrella.

Time – GMT +3 hours (Summer time Apr-Oct); GMT + 2 (Standard time Nov-Mar). 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 available in most towns, 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. 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. Banks are open Monday to Friday 8am – 2pm.

Credit cards – Greece has always been very much a cash society, which meant credit cards were not widely accepted, however, today these are now accepted just about everywhere, but we do recommend carry some euros with you, just in case. 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. Hotels always accept credit cards.

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 reasonably priced.

Shopping - Mini-markets are usually open from early in the morning until late in the evening seven days a week. 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. You may see people advertising honey on the side of the road or in Kafentions when you are out and about, this will usually be their own produce and is often the best and most pure you can buy. Shopping hours: Monday, Wednesday and Saturday 0900-1430; Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 0900-1430 and 1730-2030.

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 – The guarantee of free mobile phone roaming throughout the EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway has ended. Check with your phone operator to find out about any roaming charges that might be applied after 1st January 2021. A new law means that you are protected from getting mobile data charges above £45 without you knowing. Once you reach £45, you need to opt in to spend more so that you can continue using the internet while you are abroad. Your phone operator will tell how you can do this.

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 awards with a tip. Tour Managers, Representatives, Guides and Drivers appreciate a tip at the end of their involvement with the tour. We believe in allowing you to tip according to your level of satisfaction with their services.

Walking shoes – as you are visiting archaeological sites that can be rocky underfoot, we recommend that you take good shoes which have good gripping soles such as trainers or walking shoes.



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 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 must travel) and there is also a charge to visit a Doctor.

Keep any receipts for insurance claims.



Hospital

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 will, generally, speak some 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

To be covered under your Travel Insurance Policy, if you become ill, it is essential that you contact a local doctor and also telephone the emergency number of your insurance company. 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 medical attention.

Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC)

Before you travel, make sure you've got a valid UK Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) or travel insurance with health cover.

You may not have access to free emergency medical treatment and could be charged for your healthcare if you do not have an EHIC or GHIC when visiting an EU country, or travel insurance with full healthcare cover when visiting Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein. If you have an EHIC it will still be valid while it remains in date. Your European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) will be valid if you're travelling to an EU country.

We strongly recommend that you take out an appropriate travel insurance policy when you travel abroad.

For further information about the GHIC please visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/>



Emergencies

Should an emergency arise, please call our offices on:

00 44 20 7251 0045 (Mon-Fri 0900-1700)

Outside the above hours please telephone our emergency staff on:

00 44 7952 237156 or 00 44 7841 023807

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 dialling code 0030.

If you find that you need 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
Tel: +30 2810 224012

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 and follow the automated instructions.

Travel Editions Group Ltd
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Email: tours@traveleditions.co.uk www.traveleditions.co.uk

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