

Crete

As well as the magnificent beaches and warm seas, the size and physical variety of the island invites exploration. Uniquely among Greek islands, Crete's mountainous spine creates a sense of space, a life distinct from sea and sand. Head to the interior and you will find rugged peaks, a fertile countryside peppered with tiny chapels filled with frescoes, and mountain villages where life goes on much as it always has.

Offering huge interest and variety, Crete caters for all tastes and truly encapsulates the very best of Greece on one island.



Kalives

North West Crete

Crete's north western shores unveil a treasure trove of diverse experiences. For a dose of historic charm, take a stroll through the narrow lanes of Chania or Rethymnon's maze-like historic old town, with architecture drawing on influences from both the east and west.

For a relaxed village life, head to Kalives. This north coast community has two lovely sandy beaches and a good selection of authentic tavernas. If you seek a touch more vibrancy, Almirida offers a scenic beach, lively cafes, and dining in tavernas above the waves. And, then there is picturesque Panormos with its traditional vibe, harbour, beachfront and narrow streets hiding some excellent tavernas.

Inland rise the White Mountains, their slopes are carpeted with verdant forests, vibrant wildflowers and hidden gorges. Quaint villages, nestled amongst olive groves, are home to thriving communities. Here you will discover the true soul of Crete – timeless, genuine, and imbued with a warmth that transcends generations.



Almirida

North East Crete

North east Crete calls for wider exploration and is particularly suited to a fly-drive holiday. Start your journey in bustling Heraklion, the modern capital of the island, where the 16th century Koules fortress guards the harbour and the Minoan Palace of Knossos beckons.

From Heraklion venture east to Elounda, an upmarket haven where pebble beaches are lapped by turquoise waters. You can visit Spinalonga island from here, a former leper colony with an intriguing history, and swim over the sunken city of Olous. Nearby, Agios Nikolaos offers a bustling harbour town.

Further east is the working town of Sitia, crowned by a Venetian fort. Untouched by mass tourism, agriculture and fishing still dominate. Relax on the fine sandy beach, savour fresh seafood at harbourside restaurants, and explore remote monasteries and iconic beaches like Vai.

Zaros shows another face of Crete. Nestled in the mountains inland from Heraklion it is a very traditional Cretan village with several fine Byzantine monasteries in the area and excellent walking terrain.



Loutro

South Crete

Crete's south coast has a different feel to the north. Lapped by the waters of the Libyan Sea, there are no large towns here. The east is flatter and largely agricultural. The further west you venture the more rugged the terrain - home to gorges, remote chapels and wild goats.

The spectacular southwest coast embodies the essence of Crete's allure. Wind your way through the mountains to the sparkling Libyan sea. Paleochora, our featured village, sits nestled amidst this stunning scenery. The golden sand beach stretches for a kilometre, inviting refreshing dips in the crystal-clear waters. The village has an abundance of excellent tavernas and dolphin spotting boat trips operate. Inland offers wonderful walking – try Agia Irini gorge as an alternative to popular Samaria.

For those seeking true seclusion, Loutro awaits. This unrealistically picturesque village, with a population of just 100, is accessible only on foot or by boat. Guarded by steep mountains, some dozen waterfront restaurants serve an amazing variety of dishes.



Samaria Gorge

Venture east and discover Plakias, a charming resort village nestled on a crescent bay with a huge beach. Between Plakias and the pretty fishing village of Agia Galini are a number of remote beaches and Preveli Monastery. Ierapetra is the south coast's largest town and a significant Hellenistic city.

Chania

Chania is the main town in the west and has a strong Venetian flavour, particularly around its immense harbour, lined with restaurants. Behind, a maze of narrow lanes and crumbling Venetian facades conceal more restaurants, small shops and atmospheric cafés. Should you wish to stay close to the beach, yet enjoy easy access to the city, Agii Apostoli should suit.

Serenissima Boutique Hotel Chania, Crete

The Serenissima is located within the picturesque alleys of the old Venetian town of Chania and within a few minutes' walk of the old port with its tempting array of cafes, bars and restaurants.

The building is a monument in itself and has been lovingly restored. Arches from the Venetian period are prevalent throughout the building, as is an Ottoman hammam, contributing to the elegant and romantic atmosphere.

The hotel has just 7 rooms and suites, each with its own character and facilities and luxury amenities befitting a hotel of this style and class.

Without doubt, the old town is one of the most beautiful in Greece, blending Venetian, Moorish and Byzantine architecture. This is a beautiful hotel, a fitting tribute to such an atmospheric town and an ideal luxury base.

Board Basis: Bed & Breakfast
Guide price from **£1574 per person***



Casa Veneta Chania, Crete

Casa Veneta is an old 3-storey Venetian house now renovated to house comfortable modern rooms just a minute's walk from Chania's harbourfront.

The Standard rooms have double (queen-size) or twin beds, A/C, WiFi, TV, shower room, tea/coffee-making facilities and a fridge. The Suites are open-plan and split level with the same facilities. They are on three levels linked by wooden stairs, with the shower room downstairs, a living area in the middle (some with

a sofa bed) and a gallery bedroom area above. Suites have a narrow balcony over the small street with a side sea view.

Casa Veneta is in an excellent location from which to explore this historic and atmospheric town. A 15 minute walk to the west brings you to the organised sandy beach of Nea Hora, backed by authentic local fish tavernas.

Board Basis: Room Only
Guide price from **£1133 per person***

Athina Beach Hotel Agii Apostoli, Crete

This modern and friendly little hotel is in a quiet location within a 5 to 10 minute stroll of three lovely sandy beaches, as well as a choice of tavernas and the bus stop for Chania Town.

The hotel has 27 rooms, a mix of open plan studios and apartments with a separate living room on its three floors. The accommodation is spacious with simple modern furnishings and decor. Twin or double bedded, all possess WiFi, A/C, TV, bathroom with bath and/or

shower, light kitchen facilities (rings, fridge, kettle) and a furnished patio or balcony.

The swimming pool is backed by a snack bar serving breakfast, drinks and snacks.

As the area is on the flat it would be a good choice for those with walking difficulties and the hotel has a couple of apartments adapted for disabled use.

Board Basis: Room Only
Guide price from **£1017 per person***



Kalives

Kalives has retained its relaxed village atmosphere and boasts two long sandy beaches, one to either side. Centred around a tree-shaded square, housing a couple of cafés and the handsome church, Kalives has a good choice of authentic local tavernas and small shops.

Kalives Beach Hotel Kalives, Crete

This popular hotel is the only one in Kalives village. It enjoys a lovely location, central (5 mins from the square) yet virtually on the beach, and has a small river running to one side.

The hotel's 2 buildings, separated by a small road leading to the beach, have a total of 100 rooms on the upper floors, served by a lift. All rooms are decorated in an attractive light modern style and have A/C, WiFi, shower room and balcony. There is a lounge and riverside

terrace restaurant (buffet) - live entertainment most evenings during the summer months.

Each building has a pool.

There is an indoor pool, fitness room and local charge for the spa.

The very nice rooms, views, friendly atmosphere and excellent location ensure many guests return every year.

Board Basis: Bed & Breakfast

Guide price from **£1067 per person***



Afrodite Apartments Kalives, Crete

The Afrodite are good value, spacious apartments. They are back from the main road to Kalives, a 10-15 minute walk from the village and 160m from the sandy beach.

There are eight 1-bedroom apartments and two studios, all with A/C (local charge), WiFi, kitchenette, shower room and balcony with countryside views.

The apartments have a large separate living room. Balcony views are sea, side sea, country or pool. Some units can interconnect.

Furnishings throughout Afrodite are traditional and comfortable.

The pool measures 60 sq m and has a children's section.

Board Basis: Self Catering

Guide price from **£871 per person***

Kamares Houses Macheri, Crete

If you wish to find the true essence of Crete then a stay at the exceptional Kamares Houses is a must. Located in the traditional hamlet of Macheri, the surroundings and views are glorious, with rolling green hills leading down to the sea and the White Mountains as an imposing backdrop.

Add accommodation that combines traditional character with comfort, genuine Cretan warmth and hospitality from your hosts Kostas and Roula, and the sights and sounds of the country all around -

the houses are surrounded by flowers, trees and shrubs.

There are five 1- and 2-bedroom apartments converted from the old village houses, plus an independent 2-bedroom house, all sharing a large pool and each with shower room, kitchenette and WiFi. Below is a 2-bedroom villa with private pool.

For beaches Kalives is a 15 minute drive.

Board Basis: Self Catering

Guide price from **£1334 per person***



* Guide prices are based on 2-sharing a lead-in room type for 7 nights in May and include return flights and transfers (car hire included for Kamares Houses). Prices are subject to change and increases in airfares. Please visit our website for our latest prices and important further information on these properties, as well as more accommodation choices.

Almirida & Panormos

Life in the thriving small resort of Almirida revolves around the beach. The village has several café-bars, a bakery and a pair of well stocked mini-markets. Panormos has everything we look for – oodles of laid back charm, two sandy beaches, a photogenic harbour and, above all, a true Greek village atmosphere.

Aeolos Apartments Almirida, Crete

This well-liked accommodation in peaceful country surroundings has glorious views. It is 500m down to the village and beach. There are five 1-bedroom apartments here, each with a small twin bedroom, a spacious living room with a sofa-bed and corner kitchenette and shower room. All apartments have A/C (local charge), WiFi and a front balcony with extensive views.

The ground floor studio, open plan and double-bedded, has the same facilities.

The pool measures 80 sq m and has a children's section.

The Aeolos combines quiet rural surroundings and super views with good standards and tavernas/beach not far away.

Board Basis: Self Catering
Guide price from **£996 per person***



Almirida Beach Hotel Almirida, Crete

This popular hotel offers an excellent standard of comfort. It is just back from the beach and two minutes' walk from the seaside restaurants.

It has 66 twin/double rooms served by a lift. All rooms have A/C, WiFi, bath or shower and balcony with sea/side sea views.

There are also spacious Junior Suites and Family Rooms.

There is a restaurant, pool with children's pool and sun terrace with pool-bar.

Guests are welcome to use the facilities of the sister-hotel (Almirida Residence) next door which include a roof-top a la carte restaurant, fitness room and a mini-spa with treatment rooms (paid locally).

We have worked with the Almirida Beach for many years and see many repeat guests.

Board Basis: Bed & Breakfast
Guide price from **£1057 per person***

Panormo Beach Hotel Panormos, Crete

This typically 'small and friendly' 3-star village hotel enjoys an excellent location in pretty Panormos. A minute's walk away is Limni Beach. Three minutes in the other direction brings you to the heart of Panormos and the tavernas above the harbour and central beach.

The hotel has 43 rooms on its three floors. Rooms are simply furnished and possess a bath and/or shower, A/C, TV, WiFi, mini-fridge and balcony with village or partial sea views.

The small swimming pool has attractive garden surrounds and is served by a seasonal pool snack bar.

Although the hotel is a little dated in parts, we consider this is compensated for by the friendly staff, good value pricing and convenient location in this prettiest of Cretan seaside villages.

Board Basis: Bed & Breakfast
Guide price from **£1164 per person***



Paleochora

A winding drive through the mountains is the only way into Paleochora, where there are plenty of restaurants and cafés above the sea or in the main street. Paleochora's main beach is of fine golden sand and stretches for nearly a kilometre – it affords superb swimming. Inland offers wonderful walking opportunities.

Libyan Princess Hotel Paleochora, Crete

Taking its name from the Libyan Sea that laps the shores of south west Crete, Paleo's highest category hotel is a 2-3 minute walk to the pebble beach and centre and 7 minutes from the big sandy beach.

The hotel has a modern design and rooms possess A/C, mini-bar, tea/coffee-making facilities, TV, WiFi and a bath or walk-in shower. Balcony views are over the village to the mountains behind or over the pool.

The pool measures 120 sq m and has an adjacent bar. The hotel also offers a fitness room, jacuzzi and sauna free of charge and massage treatments (local charge), as well as several interesting cultural excursions

Because Paleo is on the flat and the hotel has ramps, some disabled rooms and a lift, a stay here is a good choice for those with mobility problems.

Board Basis: Bed & Breakfast
Guide price from **£1432 per person***



On The Rocks Hotel Paleochora, Crete

This smart hotel is indeed almost on the rocks above the sea south of Paleo's jetty, and looks east to the ruggedly beautiful coastline here.

There are 16 rooms of contemporary design. All have twin/double bed, A/C, WiFi, bath or shower and balcony with exquisite sea views.

There are a couple of double bedded Suites (25 sq m) with a separate living room with sofa bed for 1 adult or 2 small children. The penthouse suite (80 sq m) sleeps up

to 6 in 2 bedrooms - a double and a twin - plus living room with 2 sofa beds and kitchen, dishwasher and washing machine. A balcony to the front has spectacular views.

There is a lounge and café-bar.

Seafront restaurants are a minute's walk away, and the big sandy beach 5 minutes.

Board Basis: Bed & Breakfast
Guide price from **£1085 per person***

Relax Hotel Paleochora, Crete

The family owned Relax Hotel is a very welcome addition to our hotels in Paleochora. The Triskaki family started with the construction of a few rooms in 1980. Today a second building had been added and a 19 metre swimming pool including a children's section.

The hotel offers a very wide variety of room and apartment types to suit all tastes and requirements. Furnishings are contemporary and the rooms are light and welcoming.

Breakfast is homemade and wholesome with locally sourced ingredients. There is a small gym and a small spa in the process of being added.

A very friendly, professionally run hotel in one of our favourite villages in Crete.

Board Basis: Bed & Breakfast
Guide price from **£1380 per person***



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Paleochora & Loutro

Paleochora combines well with Loutro by ferry along Crete's rugged south-west coastline. Unrealistically pretty and quite tiny, you can only reach Loutro on foot or by boat – there are no roads and no cars! Guarded by steep mountains, some dozen waterfront restaurants serve an amazing variety of dishes.

Manos Studios Paleochora, Crete

Manos Studios are in an excellent location in Paleochora, quietly tucked away from the road yet just 100 metres from the centre of the magnificent sandy beach.

Our studios have the usual simple kitchen facilities shower room, A/C (payable locally) and balcony or terrace - most have views to the mountains which encircle the village.

Ground floor units are twin bedded and have the traditional simple pine furnishings and decor. Top floor

studios are decorated to a high modern standard throughout - reflected in the pricing

The beach is a minute's walk; tavernas, cafes and a small shop are within 2-3 minutes. The village centre with its many restaurants is an 8 minute walk.

A very convenient base!

Board Basis: Self Catering

Guide price from **£957 per person***



Paleochora restaurant

Filoxenia Apartments Paleochora, Crete

These apartments are quietly located 70 metres from the wonderful sandy beach.

Studios are on the ground and first floor and are double bedded with a small kitchenette area, A/C (payable locally), WiFi, shower room and balcony/terrace, some with mountain views.

Apartments on the second floor have a bathroom (hip bath and shower), separate bedroom and living room with 2 sofa beds. Balconies have partial sea, mountain

and village views. Beach cafes and restaurants are nearby and the village centre and harbour are a 10 minute walk.

Board Basis: Self Catering

Guide price from **£958 per person***

Porto Loutro Hotel Loutro, Crete

You really could not stay any closer to the sea than this! Porto Loutro is directly on the beach just 5 metres from the sparkling turquoise sea.

The hotel has traditional blue and white decor and comprises 18 rooms. All possess A/C, WiFi, fridge, shower room and a balcony with sea views to the front or side. There is a small bar on the first floor where you can take breakfast or enjoy a drink on the terrace above the sea.

The four double studios on the ground floor possess a basic

kitchenette, a shower room and a small living area to the front. They share a large common sun terrace just above the beach. A fifth studio is set slightly behind.

Transfers are by taxi plus a 20 minute water taxi to Loutro. Early booking is essential.

Board Basis: Bed & Breakfast

Guide price from **£1194 per person***



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Explore Crete Fly Drive

Using smaller family-run hotels on a bed and breakfast basis, our first fly-drive was featured in 1975 - the magic remains. Choose between a 10 or 14 night itinerary. Feel free to extend, to shorten and alter the number of nights in each place - total flexibility!

Heraklion

The Venetian port city and eastern capital, dominated by the 16th-century Koules fortress. Visit the famous Minoan civilization's Palace of Knossos nearby and Archaeological Museum. Relax and people watch in the squares and swim at nearby beaches.

Elounda

Well known small resort with pebble beaches, relaxed upmarket atmosphere and 5 star hotels. Visit Spinalonga island (ex-leper colony) and swim over the sunken city of Olous. Close to bustling Aghios Nikolaos with its pretty fishing harbour.



Zaros



Rethymnon



Sitia

Sitia

A traditional port town, still little touched by tourism, topped by a Venetian fort. A good town beach and harbour of cafes and restaurants. A base for exploring northeastern Crete, its hidden beaches and rugged coastline.

Ierapetra

An important city in Hellenistic times, set on the beach of Ierapetra Bay in southeastern Crete. Swim from nearby excellent, long sandy beaches and sail across to uninhabited Chrissi Island. A good touring base.

Zaros

Nestled in the mountains inland from Heraklion and famous for its spring water, an attractive, unspoilt village with several fine Byzantine monasteries. Excellent walking centre (Rouvas Gorge), Votomos Lake and farm-raised trout.

Rethymnon

A well preserved 16th century Venetian old town with picturesque fishing boat harbour and long

sandy beach on the island's north coast. Explore the town and citadel, people watch in the many cafes and tavernas.

Plakias

Small resort village set on a crescent bay with a fine sandy beach on the south coast and Libyan sea. A not-too-busy resort surrounded by mountains with beachfront cafes and tavernas. Villages to visit and walks to be hiked.

Aghia Galini

A pretty fishing village on the south east coast in the Rethymnon region, Galini still retains an authentic charm combining mountains and sea. Discover nearby beaches by car or boat and simply relax.

Chania

For many the most beautiful city in Greece, with its 14th century exquisite Venetian harbour, narrow streets and waterfront restaurants. Explore Crete's wild west and fabulous Balos, Falasarna and Elafonissi beaches.

Itineraries

Eastern Crete

- Heraklion (1)
- Elounda (3)
- Sitia (3)
- Ierapetra (1)
- Zaros (2)

Guide price from
£1576 per person*

Western Crete

- Rethymnon (2)
- Heraklion (1)
- Zaros (1)
- Plakias or Aghia Galini (3)
- Chania (3)

Guide price from
£1475 per person*

Full Crete

- Rethymnon (2)
- Heraklion (1)
- Elounda (2)
- Sitia (2)
- Ierapetra (1)
- Zaros (1)
- Plakias or Aghia Galini (2)
- Chania (3)

Guide price from
£1839 per person*



Samaria Gorge