



# Cyprus - Where to stay/what to do

## An amateur Cyprus Visitors' guide by a local enthusiast

VERSION v11 [October 2025]

|  All questions and suggestions welcome at [info@tefkros.com](mailto:info@tefkros.com)

### How to use this guide:

Click on the little triangles to the left of the sections to expand or collapse them

It is recommended that you view the [online version](#) of this guide. The PDF might be outdated.



#### GUIDE LEGEND :



Highly Recommended



Local Gem



Not cheap



Seasonal Only



Beach



Beauty Spot



Fresh Fish



FOR ALL EMERGENCIES, CALL 112

## ▼ 🥰 Welcome & Intro

### Introduction

- 📌 Cyprus is the southernmost and easternmost country of Europe and the EU. Geographically at the edge of the middle east, and culturally in the heart of Europe,
- 🕊️ Cyprus is considered one of Europe's safest counties, with very low crime rates. That said, it is always a good idea to be cautious
- ☀️ Cyprus enjoys over 300 days of beautiful sunshine per year - More any country in Europe.
- 🍷 Birthplace of the Greek goddess of love and beauty, Aphrodite, and the Commandaria wine, which holds the title for the oldest wine label in the world est at least 800BC.
- 🏖️ Home of Europe's clearest waters, ancient history and a many UNESCO world heritage sites, there is something for everyone at any time of the year.
- 🍴 Cyprus cuisine is known for combining Greek with Middle eastern flavors. Famous dishes include Sheftalia, Souvla, an Halloumi Cheese. It is a meat-heavy cuisine but many vegetarian and vegan options exists, especially during fasting periods.
- 🎿 Cyprus is one of the few places in Europe where you can ski in the morning and swim at the afternoon, with famous beaches being located less than 45' away from the seasonal ski resorts.

## ▼ Know before you arrive

### BASICS

-  Greek is the official **language**. Turkish is also an official language spoken mainly in the north.
-  Being a tourism-dependent country and a former UK colony, **English** is spoken by **almost** everyone.
-  We **drive on the left** side of the road
-  **EURO** is the official currency. **Card payments are accepted** almost everywhere by law
  - You can exchange USD, GBP or other currencies but expect a “tourist rate”. It’s best to pay by card and always select “Pay in Euros” and reject the given rate. Let your bank determine the exchange rate - it’s always cheaper
-  Prefer bottled water. It is **not advised to drink tap water in the city** unless indicated or there is a filtered tap. **Tap water in the mountains is perfectly drinkable** and very fresh
-  Cyprus uses **UK-style plug outlets** (3-pin). For EU appliances **you need an adapter**. Good hotels will offer you adapters on request.
-  There is **no Uber** in Cyprus, but **there is BOLT**. Download the app before you arrive

## ALSO GOOD TO KNOW

- 📱 If you have the option to select a **cellular network**, always go with **CYTA VODA**. They have the best coverage and were awarded as **Europe's fastest network**.
- 🌡️ In July and August temperatures commonly exceed **40 degrees centigrade**.
- 🇪🇺 **No need to bring cash**. If you have an international card like Monzo or Revolut you can withdraw cash from the bank ATMs if needed.
  - **SCAM ALERT:** EURONET ATMs are NOT your friend. Always withdraw money from the bank ATMs
- 🐍 Beware of snakes in the hotter months - not so much in the cities
- 😊 Cyprus might be known for its cuisine, but not all restaurants are created equally, especially in the touristy areas. **Google Maps is your friend**. It is always recommended to read google maps **reviews** to know if a place is worth your time and money.

## ▼ 🍴 Food & Drinks

### Eateries

- You will find everything from cheap eateries to mitchellin star restaurants and fine dining options.
- The most popular cuisine is the local one, followed by Greek, Lebanese/Syrian then international options
- The local favourites are called **"Tavernas"**. Those are local, traditional restaurants serving local food and are usually family-ran. It is highly, highly recommended to try them out, but always check Google Maps first. They can be found everywhere, but the best ones are usually at the villages, and the "worst" ones at the resort areas.



I have created a Google Maps list with many good restaurants, coffee shops and bars which I have personally tried and tested and do not hesitate to recommend. Please note that this is not a list of the absolute best restaurants there are, and I'm sure you can find great places that are not on the list. It's just a list with places that I personally enjoy.

Find it here: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/Dnec1sqyVjkjQ2KS9>

## ▼ Food & Dishes

- **Mezze** (or mezes)

A mezze is an eating concept found everywhere in the middle east where the restaurant (usually a Taverna) will bring to you a **number of small and not-so-small plates for the middle of the table to share for a set price**. It is by far the best way to get to try the best of the local cuisine. I hate it when people compare it with "tapas", because tapas are small plates to accompany your drink. **A Mezze is a full-night experience**. It always start with salad and dips, side-dishes, main courses and dessert or fruit. This is a lot of food, and you shall not order extras with a mezze, because everything is included.

An acceptable price for a mezze is between 18-25 euros per person for a meat mezze (2 persons minimum) or 25-35 for a fish mezze.

Some places also do Vegetarian mezze, especially during the fasting seasons

- **Popular local dishes:**

1. 🍖 **Kleftiko** (or "Ofto")

Lamb very slow-cooked in a sealed clay oven with garlic, lemon, and oregano. The meat literally falls apart from the bone. It is traditionally served at special occasions.

2. 🍖 **Souvla**

Large chunks of Pork, Chicken or Lamb (*lamb is the best!*) skewered and grilled over charcoal. Served with potatoes. Eat when piping hot, and apply lemon.

3. **Sheftalia**

Sausage-like parcels of ground pork/lamb with onion, parsley, and spices, wrapped in caul fat and grilled. Ultra juicy and aromatic. Enjoy in a pita, apply lemon and/or Tzatziki

4. 🧀 **Halloumi Cheese**

One of the most loved varieties of cheese in the world, originated in Cyprus and it is now a product of protected origin. It legally be called halloumi only if it's made here. Can be eaten grilled in a pita with tomato, or "raw" with watermelon for the perfect summer dinner.

5. **Koupepia**

Similar to "Dolma". Stuffed vine leaves with minced meat or rice or even soya, with tomato, cinnamon and mint.

6. **Tava** (Afelia)

A rustic stew of lamb, rice, onion, cumin, and lemon baked in the oven. An all-time winter favourite.

#### 7. **Spanakopitta**

Spinach pie with filo pastry, usually with feta, onion, and herbs

#### 8. **Makaronia tou Fournou**

Similar to Greek Pastitsio but with differences.

Oven-baked layered pasta with béchamel and minced pork (or beef), baked like a lasagna.

The Cypriot version uses dry mint and often halloumi on top, not parmesan.

#### 9. **Kolokouthkia me ta afka** (Zucchini with Eggs)

Almost always served with the mezze.

Sautéed zucchini with scrambled or poached eggs.

### ▼ **Dinks**

- **Wine**

Cyprus is a criminally underrated wine-producing region with some of the oldest wines in history

#### 1. **Coumandaria**

Cyprus is a proud producer of "**Commandaria**" - the world's oldest named wine still in production, dating back to **at least 800BC**. It is a naturally sweet, dessert wine similar to "Port" wine of Portugal. It is strong, although it doesn't feel like it. Enjoy after dinner or alone. Never with food.

#### 2. **Xynisteri (White)**

The crisp, indigenous counterpoint to global whites

Light body, citruses, sometimes herbal.

#### 3. **Maratheftiko (Red)**

Rare, bold, and pure-Cypriot

Indigenous red variety, only recently revived. Medium-to-full bodied, black cherry, spice, violets, firm tannins, often age-worthy



If you are a wine lover (I am sadly no expert) you might find joy by taking a road-trip to one of the numerous wineries located at Troodos mountains. They all offer wine tours and tasting sessions. Some are very modern and can make for day-long experiences. Most famous ones are "Vassiliades" and "Marathassa Wines". You might need to book in advance.

- **Beer**

1. 🍷 **KEO** (Limassol)

The country's most famous beer. Brewed since 1951 and almost synonymous with the island

2. **LEON** (Nicosia)

First brewed in 1937, vanished for a while, revived in the early 2000s with a new recipe using only local yeast. Maltier and richer than KEO

3. **Carlsberg** - *HANG ON HANG ON A MINUTE!*

Unlike most global beer brands, Carlsberg in Cyprus **is not imported**—it's brewed domestically under license just outside Nicosia and it is considered a local beer. It does not taste like Carlsberg of Copenhagen. It is a softer, milder version.

Cyprus was actually the first country outside Denmark to brew Carlsberg under license (since 1969). That's more than just trivia—it's part of local industrial heritage.

4. **Sandy Weiss**

A local weiss beer full of flavour. It's a relatively new brand gaining popularity - *It's actually my personal favourite*

- **Coffee**

There is a lot of coffee culture in Cyprus and it is definitely on the rise. Most cafes will stay open until 23:00 and are packed with people throughout the day.

Coffee is usually enjoyed cold (iced) throughout the year. Some popular coffees include:

1. 🍷 **Freddo Espresso**

Machine-espresso poured over ice and shaken in the foamer. Enjoy with or without sugar but never with milk - *Every Cypriot's beloved breakfast*

## 2. Freddo Capuccino

Just like freddo espresso but with foamed milk on top

## 3. Frappe

Perhaps the finest Greek invention of the 21st century. Instant coffee shaken in the foamer. How can something this simple feel so good?

## 4. Cyprus Coffee (Kypriakos)

Essentially Greek coffee or Turkish coffee. Different from Arabic coffee as it does not contain cardamom. Very finely ground (powder-like) arabica beans, brewed in a copper long-handled pot, which is traditionally half-buried in hot sand. Nowadays is heated on the gas stove. Served in a small cup with or without sugar, but never with milk. Do not drink the dense sludge at the bottom

*Did you know that at the olden days people claimed to "read" your future from the sediments of this coffee?*

### HINT

I have a Google Maps list of "Trusted eateries" all over the island. Feel free to request it from me

## ▼ Transportation

**Hiring a car is the best way around the island.** In fact, unless if you only plan to stay in the heart of the tourist resorts (Ayia Napa, Pafos or central Limassol), getting a car is your only way around since public transport outside resort towns is not great to say the least. except perhaps for some intercity bus routes.

Like most former British colonies, Cyprus drives on the **left-side of the road**.

There is a good highway network between all cities. The average travel time between cities is 45 minutes.

It is normal to feel intimidated if you have never driven on the left before. However, driving in Cyprus is relatively easy and you should feel comfortable within 30 minutes of driving.



**TIP:** Uber does not operate in Cyprus but **BOLT** does. You can use bolt to get around the cities and it is usually cheaper than calling a taxi

## Intercity Bus

The **Intercity Buses** provide cheap city-to-city connections between the 5 cities of the island. [You can find their schedule here.](#) Buy your ticket from the bus driver using

cash only

## Airport Transport

### To and from **Larnaca International Airport (LCA)**

- Direct connection to and from **Nicosia**: [Kapnos Airport Shuttle](#)
- Direct connection to and from **Ayia Napa & Protaras**: [Kapnos Airport Shuttle](#) OR the **Intercity bus** from [Finnikoudes Bus Stop](#)
- Direct connection to and from **Limassol**: [Limassol Airport Express](#) OR the **Intercity bus** from [Finnikoudes Bus Stop](#)
- Connection to and from **Pafos**: You need to change bus in Limassol. Check the schedule of [Intercity Buses](#) There is also an infrequent bus service between the airports of Larnaca and Pafos operated by [Kapnos Airport Shuttle](#).



**DO NOT GET SCAMMED.** A fixed ride from Larnaca airport to Nicosia or Ayia Napa should cost no more than 60 euros during the day and 75 euros at night. Always ask the price before entering a taxi or **demand** (don't request) **a taxi meter**. They are not broken. They never are. If the Taxi driver does not **negotiate** a reasonable price beforehand or refuses to use the taxi meter DO NOT GET IN THE TAXI, or be prepared to pay lots.

### To and from **Paphos International Airport (PFO)**

- Direct connection to and from **Nicosia**: [Kapnos Airport Shuttle](#)
- Direct connection to and from **Limassol**: [Limassol Airport Express](#)
- Connection to and from **Larnaca**: You need to change bus in Limassol. Check the schedule of [Intercity Buses](#) There is also an infrequent bus service between the airports of Larnaca and Pafos operated by [Kapnos Airport Shuttle](#).
- Connection to and from **Ayia Napa/Protaras**: Use the Intercity bus and change in either Limassol or Larnaca

## ▼ Beaches and swimming

From late April and up until early November the weather is warm enough for swimming. At all public beaches you can hire sunbeds and umbrellas for the fixed price of EUR7.50 and the price usually includes WiFi access. In most beaches

payment is cash only though in the touristy resorts of Ayia Napa and Protaras card payments are now accepted too.



Did you know that Cyprus has the cleanest water quality in Europe and the highest percentage of blue flag beaches than any other country on the continent?

## **Famagusta region [South-East]**

The beaches of Famagusta region (Ayia Napa, Cavo Greco and Protaras) are the most famous and are known for their crystal clear waters and golden sands. If you are visiting in the summer season I really recommend dedicating at least a full-day to enjoy the Famagusta region beaches no matter in what city you are based at.

### **Fig Tree Bay** - Protaras, Famagusta

Our most famous beach, the clearest waters of Cyprus that are accessible by normal car. Watersports available.

### **Nissi beach** - Ayia Napa, Famagusta

Most famous beach amongst tourists, very instagrammable. You have definitely seen pictures of this one. Water is very clear here too and the sand is golden-white. Can get **very** crowded in mid-summer. The water is slightly colder here than in Fig Tree bay. Watersports available. There is a number of beach bars on the beach.

### **Konnos Bay** - Cavo Greco, Famagusta

A small, secluded bay, and a preferred beach for the locals. Lots of greenery around the small bay. Watersports available. There is only one bar/restaurant on the water. Parking is challenging

### **Sunrise Beach** - Protaras, Famagusta

A large stretch of smooth golden sand and clear shallow waters. A classic favourite. [Location here](#)

### **Makronissos Beach** - Ayia Napa, Famagusta

Directly translates from Greek to "Long Island", due to the small rocky peninsula towards the west of the beach which is also a free-access archaeological area.

Golden-white sand and crystal clear water. Smaller than Nissi and Sunrise beach. A favourite amongst families.

### **Ayia Napa Sea Caves** - Ayia Napa, Famagusta

It's a 4 minute detour from the main Ayia Napa to Protaras road. A highly instagrammable spot of natural beauty that I recommend to visit on your day trip to the region. You can't go swimming here but you'll take amazing pictures especially in the late afternoon. [Pictures here](#)

### **Vyzakia Beach** - Protaras, Famagusta

Small, secluded sandy bay with facilities, loved by locals and youngsters. Usually quiet but can get very busy in August.

If you're visiting Famagusta region for a day trip, you really don't have to visit all of them. Just pick one to spend your day and maybe check out another one on your way back. You can't really do wrong with any of them

## **Pafos Region [West]**

### **Blue Lagoon cruise** - Akamas Peninsula, Pafos

Most famous beach in Pafos region. Unfortunately this is not accessible by a normal car. You have to rent a 4x4, buggy or quad bike (it's a fun experience but needs planning) or **take a boat cruise** from Latchi harbour. They all include food and drinks/wine and it's a lovely way to spend half a day. There are usually three departures a day plus a sunset cruise.

Check availability and book in advance here <https://www.cyprusminicruises.com/>

### **Coral Bay Beach** - Peyia, Pafos

Large, sandy, public beach with water sport facilities. Only a 15' drive from central Pafos. Clear and shallow waters and plenty of parking. Depending on the wind, there might be waves.

**⚠ WARNING:** Do not confuse this beach with the big nearby bay (Potima bay) by the "Sea you" bar. Do not swim there, there are big signs warning you not to do so.

### **Baths of Aphrodite beach or Yiannakis Beach** - Latchi, Pafos

Lesser known amongst tourists but one of my all time favourites. Large, quiet beach, deep, clear waters and **no sticky sand**, just small smooth pebble stones. There is a bar/restaurant on the beach named "best beach". Also equipped with sunbeds and umbrellas. Skip the main beaches in Latchi region and go here instead. [Location here](#)

### **Cocobloco Beach Bar** - Pomos, Pafos

If you have many days and a rental car and decide to take the long road trip to the north coast of Pafos, you will discover a tiny secluded bay with a popular beach. The bay is angled towards the inland and you can swim overlooking the mountains and

forests rather than the open water. Also check out the nearby "Dragon cave". The beach bar is only open in the Summer season.

### **Venus Bleu Beach** - Chlorakas, Pafos

Sandy beach with umbrellas and facilities, not far from the center.

## **Beaches and swimming in other districts and cities**

Most of the beautiful beaches are located in Famagusta and Pafos districts. Larnaca and Limassol are not famous for their beaches, especially the ones near the city centers. However, if you already did everything and you fancy checking out other areas, some of them are:

### **Kourion Beach**, Limassol [West]

Next to the ancient archeological sight of the Kourion theater and the sanctuary of Apollo.

Limassol's largest and most beautiful public beach, next to high cliffs. Beautiful scenery especially during sunset. Shallow and clean waters, waves likely. [Google maps location here](#)

### **Mackenzie Beach and strip**, Larnaca [South]

Long beach with very shallow waters and many restaurants and bars. Water quality is good but not comparable to the famous beaches. It's also the heart of Larnaca's nightlife during summer. Located right next to the airport with planes flying very low over the water, it's an ideal spot for plane spotters or a coffee before your flight. [Google maps location here](#)

### **Melanda Beach**, Limassol [West]

Hidden and quiet bay at a wonderful location with a nice seafood restaurant on the beach.

[Google maps location](#)

## ▼ **Guides by Region**

### ▼ **Nicosia (city only)**

Capital and largest city, but perhaps the one with the least attractions for foreign tourists. You can visit for an evening and go for a walk at the old town. See the Venetian walls, the moat, see the no-man's land and the green dividing line (UN buffer zone) at the world's last divided capital. which passes right through the center of the old town and see how time has stopped there. If you are unfamiliar with the situation, you can google [cyprus buffer zone](#) or no man's land. It will be a unique sight, if you're into this.



**TIP:** At summer months, evening (5pm and after) is the best time to visit, as it is the most suitable time to walk. Not recommended for the hot hours of the day at summer. In other seasons it's fine all day

 **Public transport** exists but might not always be the most reliable option, especially because the schedules are not integrated into Google Maps. You need to use the "Pame App". [Link to their website](#)

Then you can have dinner and a drink at the small [outdoor taverns or bars](#) at the old town. Other than that and the museums, there really isn't anything else to do in Nicosia *in the summer*, about 2-6 hours in an evening here should be adequate.

#### **What to do here**

- Go see the Venetian walls
- Go for a stroll in the old city
- See no-man's land and how time has stopped in the heart of Europe's last divided capital 🏰
- Have authentic dinner or a drink at the heart of the old city
- Check out the new Eleftherias Square designed by the world-famous architect Zaha Hadid, which took over 10 years to build
- Visit one of the numerous museums such as the Cyprus Museum, the Byzantine Museum, the museum of national struggle, the Cypriot motorcycle museum or the Fairytale museum

## **Recommendations**



### Attractions, Museums & Places of interest

- 🏰 The venetian walls and the moat path
- 🏰 The Ledra observatory (Shacolas Tower Museum)
- Ledra Street and Eleftheria Square lower level (obvisouly)
- Faneromeni square with the arcades and coffee shops
- Modern shopping district between Makariou and Stasikratous streets
- The Cyprus Museum
- Fairytale Museum
- Cyprus Classic Motorcycle Museum
- 🏰 A. G. Leventis Gallery
- Picturesque streets at the east of the old town (*around Pentadaktylou and Ektoros street*)
- The linear park path with the Eucalyptus starting from the Supreme court until the Presidential Palace



### Recommended Restaurants

- 🏰🍷 Piatsa Gourounaki or Piatsa Gourounaki Express (Greek)
- 🍷 Zanettos Tavern (Cypriot mezze)
- Valtou Rigani (Greek/Cypriot)
- 🍷 Topika Meze bar (Modern Cypriot, 0km concept) - *need to book*
- 🏰 Εστιατόριο Μπέμπα (Μρεμπα) - *need to book*
- 🍷 Crosta Nostra (Italian/Sicilian)
- 🍷🏰🐟 Pyxida (Best fresh fish in town)
- Biga Pizza
- 🍷🏰 Vintage wine bar and bistro - *need to book*
- DOT Restaurant (brunch, small bites and healthy dishes)
- Moondog's Bar and Gill (huge collection of beers, great burgers, showing all the football games)
- The Burger Shop
- 🍷 Madama Restaurant

### **Recommended Bars**

- 🍷 Korniza Baroque: *Beautiful, cosy bar in an old house with covered terrace*
- 🍺 Brewfellas: *A beer lover's paradise. Micro-pub with unique beer menu which changes every week*
- ☀️ The Old Powerhouse: *Contemporary bar with large, beautiful garden. Also serves food*
- ☀️ Taratsa by High&Wet: *Summer rooftop bar at the top of an old building with fun cocktails and rather youthful crowd*
- 🍷 Pieto: *Lovely, cosy little bar and coffee located in an arcade on Ledra Street*
- 🐦 Swimming Birds: *Small bar with outdoor seating overlooking the new town hall and the archaeological site*
- 🍷 New Division: *Large, busy bar with a diverse international crowd staying open till late*
- 🍷 Patio: *Large venue with funky decoration and a stage for events, also serves food - need to book*
- 🏋️ The Gym Concept

### **Coffee, Bakeries and Brunch**

- 🍞 Zorbas: *Largest bakery, food, and coffee chain on the island. Hundreds of shops, open 24/7*
- ☕ Coffee Berry: *Large, inexpensive coffee chain with the best coffee (in the writer's opinion)*
- 🍷🍞 Yiayia Victoria: *Authentic, traditional cafe with many pastries at the end of Ledra Street right next to the checkpoint*
- 🍷 NOM: *Busy brunch place at the modern part of the city*
- 🍷 Smoothie Factory: *Dozens if not hundreds of fresh smoothie options + brunch*
- 🍷 DOT: *Healthy restaurant also serving brunch*
- 🍷 Crust & Dough: *Posh independent bakery with instagrammable pastries + coffee*
- 🍷 NOMAD: *Contemporary coffeeshop and pastries*
- 🍷 Silver Pot: *Brunch*

### **Recommended Hotels**

-  MAP Boutique Hotel: *A stone's throw away from the main square - Beautiful modern hotel in the heart of town.*
- Gate 22: *Boutique hotel in a historic building on the main square overlooking the moat, recently renovated.*
- Centrum Hotel: *Honest, 3 star hotel with character at the heart of Eleftheria Square*
- Hilton Nicosia: *Big chain hotel, a outside the historic city center*

## ▼ **Limassol (city and region)**

The nicest and most developed city on the island. It's large and more expensive than the rest. 45' from Paphos and Larnaca, an hour away from Nicosia and Famagusta region, and less than an hour from the Troodos mountains.

Keep in mind this is not a resort but a cosmopolitan (again, by Cyprus standards) metropolitan city. There's a modern walkable waterfront, a marina with many bars big mall, the castle area and the old town and it's filled with nice restaurants, posh bars and decent nightlife both in the city and at the waterfront. You won't get bored here, but it is not everyone's cup of tea.

The beaches at the waterfront (with a few exception) are not that good, give them a pass, Limassol city is not a place for swimming, it's incomparable with Ayia Napa, but drive 20' away from the city and the scenery changes dramatically.

### **What to do in the city**

- Walk the waterfront, the marina, the castle an the entirety of the old city
- Sooo many restaurants, bars and clubs

### **Notable places of interest**

#### **City of Limassol**

- The marina
- The old port
- The waterfront (aka Molos in Greek)
- Ancient ruins of Amathus
- Castle area
- Saripolou street & the agora
- Guaba Beach bar - *depending on your age ;)*
- La Isla beach bar
- Columbia beach bar

### **Limassol region**

- 🏖️ Kourion Beach and the ancient theater
- Kolossi Castle
- Sanctuary of Apollo
- Ancient city of Amathus
- Cape Aspro Trail (see full list of trails and hikes at the end)
- 🏔️ Troodos Mountains
- Omodos village
- Platres Village and resort
- The wine routes roadtrips
- 🗼 Tzilefos Bridge

## ▼ **Larnaca (city and region)**

Small city, home to the island's principal airport. Has nice walkable waterfront. Perhaps this is Cyprus' most underrated and quiet city. If you are here only for 2-3 days, it's probably not worth it getting out of your way to visit Larnaca city.

Built on the ruins of ancient Kition, Larnaca ranks amongst the 20 oldest consistently inhabited settlements in the world.

### **🏰 Finnikoudes Waterfront**

Heart of the town, busiest road with most hotels, restaurants, beach sports etc

### **🏰 Piale Pasia Street Waterfront**

Continuation of Finnikoudes street. Modern waterfront with independent restaurants and ice cream shops

### **🏖️ Mackenzie Beach and strip**

Long beach with very shallow waters and many restaurants and bars. Water quality is good but not comparable to the famous beaches. It's also the heart of Larnaca's nightlife during summer. Located right next to the airport with planes flying very low over the water, it's an ideal spot for plane spotters or a coffee before your flight. [Google maps location here](#)

### **🗼 Larnaca Salt Lake**

Ideally located between the Mackenzie beach and the airport, this is an amazing spot for photos during sunset time. If the lake has water, it forms a magical reflective mirror. During spring and later spring months you can find many

flamingo birds here, stopping on their migration journey. Nearby you might find the Hala Sultan Tekke, a very famous sight for the world of Islam. There are many parking spots around the lake as well as picnic site on its south-west point.

[Google maps location here](#)

### **The Church and Catacombs of Saint Lazarus**

Beautiful old stone church and principal point of interest in the heart of Larnaca. Beautiful architecture. You can visit the catacombs during business hours.

### **Lefkara Village**

One of the most beautiful villages, with white-stone houses, cute squares and shops selling products from silver and lace.

### **Stavrovouni Monastery**

There is a superb view at the parking area which is at the top of the hill. Access to the actual monastery is time-restricted and accessible by men only. Even when closed, there are stunning views from the parking lot and the numerous viewpoints on the way. Shorts not allowed. The parking area is accessible for everyone and open until sunset.



#### **Recommended Restaurants**

-  Elia backyard
-  Noesis
-   Voreas Tavern - *need to book*
- Stou Roushia
- Chrysanthis Cafe
- Larnaka Agora (market with many stalls)
-  Alasia Cafe - *ask for Koupa!*

## ▼ **Ayia Napa/Protaras (resorts & Famagusta region)**

You probably already know this one. Here you can find our most famous sandy beaches like [Nissi Beach](#), [Figtree bay](#) and [Konnos bay](#) which are an absolute must visit. Of course you also know about nightlife here which is very comparable to Magaluf, Zante etc. I don't know if that's your cup of tea (it certainly isn't mine anymore). In late spring, it won't be as busy as it gets in the summer but there will be people. This is one of the few regions with usable public transport, but only within the town and the touristy areas with bus routes 101 and 102 running almost 24/7.

There is more to this region than beaches and nightlife this such as amazing taverns in the surrounding villages and the CyHerbia park. it's also very touristic and by staying here for 6 nights you won't get a sense of real Cyprus and you might also get bored. It's an absolute must to visit, because of the beaches but Cyprus has so much more to offer than that

There are also a number of natural landmarks and a some trails

### **What to do here**

- Chill at the beach
- Walk at the Ayia napa harbor (don't eat there it's so expensive)
- Clubbing ☀️
- Take a boat tour from the harbor ☀️
- Ayia Napa sea caves 🍷
- Cavo Greco national park and trails
- 🍷🍷 Visit Liopetri River and eat fresh fish with the locals (what the tourist guide won't tell you)
- The Cliff Bar, Grecian Park hotel (might need to book, only open at night I think)

### **Beaches**

*Check out the beaches section*



### **Recommended Restaurants**

- 🐟 DiCapilla
- 🍷🍷🐟 Spartiatiss- *need to book*
- 🍷🍷 Ttappis tavern
- 🍷 Costaris Tavern
- 🍷🍷 Old Simos
- Los Bandidos Mexican Restaurant
- Roof Burger Bar

## ▼ Paphos (city and region)

Where my heart belongs. I would love to recommend you to stay here. It's both a resort and a city that despite its rapid development, has managed to stay authentic. The surroundings are truly magnificent, but you need a car. This city is smaller, quieter and it has a more relaxed, holiday vibe. The scenery is quite different as well. There are decent beaches here but you have to do a bit of driving, and you can do many roadtrips here. It is also close to the Akamas Peninsula national park where you can find some of the best hikes, rent a quad bike and see other natural landmarks.

Paphos also hosts the islands second airport. Mostly serving the UK and other mainland Europe destinations with seasonal charter flights.



**TIP:** If you do decide to stay here, look for places in Kato Paphos, Peyia (resort), or anywhere near the waterfront.

### What to do in the city and the region

- 🏰 Walk during sunset at the Kato Paphos harbor and see the castle. (Don't eat there, it's too expensive)
- Visit the Tombs of the Kings a UNESCO world heritage
- 🏰 Visit the archeological site of Nea Paphos, a UNESCO world heritage site, with the stunning mosaics,
- Watch the waves at Sea You beach bar - *do not swim here*
- 🏰🍷🍹 Watch the sunset by the shipwreck at Oniro by the sea bar
- 🐟🍷 Have fresh fish at St George
- Hire quad bikes, buggies or an organised safari and spend the day in the Akamas National Park (*normal car doesn't go there*)
- 🏰🍷🌞 Have our national BBQ dish for with the best view at this family ran place. (*Another secret you won't find on the guides*) - *need to book*
- 😄 Stop at the Rock of Aphrodite just off the highway from Limassol - Water there is cold
- Many hikes and roadtrips. See section at the end
- Local street bars at the old town and agora area
- Drive from Peyia to Kathikas village through the vineyards , or continue on to Polis/Latchi - the way back is spectacular at sunset. Link here
- 🏰 Take a boat trip from Latchi to the blue lagoon - *need to book in advance*
- Adonis baths - I haven't been but I've been told it's nice. Might need to book
- Take the scenic roadtrip from Polis to the village of Kato Pyrgos, the most remote village in Cyprus, but only if you have time
- Pafos Zoo (formerly birds and animal park) - if that's your thing



### Recommended Restaurants

- 🏰 Agora Tavern
- 🏰 7 St George's
- 🏰🌞🍷 Vivklari Peyia
- Kyparissos
- 🏰 To Petradaki
- 🐟🍷 Agios Georgios Pegeia

## ▼ Troodos Mountains (region)

Less than an hour away from Limassol. Only accessible by car. Welcome to the Troodos range, the island's largest and highest mountain range, where any road you take will be nice and the views are stunning. Home to our national forests and hundreds of beautiful villages with unique architecture, family restaurants and beauty spots, many of them not on the map and even unknown to the locals. See the section at the end for hiking trails. The main square (Troodos Square) is at 1750m and the Mt Olympus summit at 1950m. You can drive all the way to the summit with any car.

Some of the most popular villages include Platres 🏡, Kakopetria 🏡, Omodos 🏡, Lefkara, Lofou and so many more. Take your time to explore them. If you visit in December, many of these villages go full-on with the Christmas Spirit and turn into Christmas Villages, with the most notable seasonal markets found in Kalopanayiotis, Lefkara and the abandoned village of Phikardou, a UNESCO world heritage site. For the full program of festive activities (and there are a lot) you can google "Cyprus Christmas Villages"

Other sights on the mountains are the [Tzielefos Bridge](#), [Caledonia Waterfalls](#) and the **Kykkos Monastery** and nearby [Throni](#) are popular mountain roadtrips. Also check out the [Madari Fire lookout station](#) peak at 1600m which is accessible by car (there is also a trail) - *This trail is too hot and tiring in the summer*

Almost any route you take to the mountains it's scenic. If you're driving there from Pafos it's cool if you take the road that passes by [this point of interest](#) and also stop at [this medieval bridge](#). But really, any route you take is nice in its own way. Take your time, ignore the GPS, and drive to wherever your heart takes you. It is very possible that you discover something that even I haven't seen - feel free to email your experience to me!

## ▼ The North of Cyprus (region)

**i** If this is your first time on the island of Cyprus, **it is a good idea to familiarize yourself with the de-facto political situation before you arrive.** In the simplest, non-biased words, the northern half of the island is illegally occupied by Turkish troops since 1974 and it is not effectively controlled by the government of the Republic of Cyprus. - *a related page on the history of Cyprus in 5 minutes is coming soon!*

If you wish to cross, you may **only do so from the checkpoints** on the UN buffer zone (no-mans land), and visit the northern side.

They use the Turkish Lira, as currency, Euro might or might not be accepted.

If you have a rental car, you may or may not need to pay additional car insurance. Some car rental companies include this in the rental contract and others don't let you cross at all - *you need to check beforehand*.

Please note that if you decide to visit, **international (non-EU) roaming charges for your mobile phone apply** as you will be connecting to Turkish Networks. Some smartphones will automatically change time to one hour ahead when connected to a Turkish network. This is a mistake, if that happens, ignore it. There is no time difference between the two sides.

It is possible that your travel insurance does not provide any coverage for the non-government controlled areas - you need to double check.

No country other than Turkey has any embassy\* in the self-declared state. In the unlikely event of police **arrest, detention** or any other trouble, the Republic of Cyprus and your country's embassy in Cyprus will be unable to provide any help or assistance.

*\* Russia has a consulate in the north, but no embassy*

The only checkpoint you can cross on foot is the Ledras Street checkpoint at the heart of Nicosia, and Ledra Palace Hotel, also at the city center. All other checkpoints may only be crossed by car.

Now that we have the basics covered, **some beautiful attractions in the north** include:

- 🏰 The castles on the Keryneia Range mountains (Pentadaktylos), such as Kantara, St Hilarion and Buffavento
- 🏰 The ghost town of Famagusta/Varosha
- 🏰 The monastery of Apostolos Andreas at the far north-east of the island (Karpasia Peninsula) and the incredible roadtrip there, which is like traveling back in time. This is also the easternmost point in Europe.
- The stunning abbey of Bellapais (Keryneia region)
- The archeological site of Salamis (Salamina) in Famagusta Region.
- The archeological site of Soloi (Morphou region)

## ▼ Hiking Trails

For all hikes make sure you have **plenty of water with you**. For all trails (maybe except the ones at high altitude) you might want to avoid the hottest hours between

12:00-16:00 during the summer months, but that depends on the weather on the specific day. Please ask me for any questions and trail info you might want .

Here are some of the most popular and accessible hiking trails and locations around the island. For all trails, **make sure you always have plenty of water with you**, and I cannot stress this enough.



There are hiking groups that regularly go organized hikes on weekends. All of them are very tourist-friendly. No sign up is needed. The largest one is Cyprus Hikers, you can join their facebook group and check out for events/

The following sections are expandable. Click on the triangle to reveal more information. The "D" rating refers to the difficulty rating on a scale of 1-3, where 1 is the easiest and 3 is the hardest

▼ 🏰 Artemis Trail, Troodos [7.5km / D1]

The highest trail in Cyprus at 1850m. It is a circular 7km walk that is completely flat and takes you around the highest peak of Mt Olympus. This is my personal favorite and the views are absolutely stunning.



▼ Atalante Trail, Troodos [14km D2]

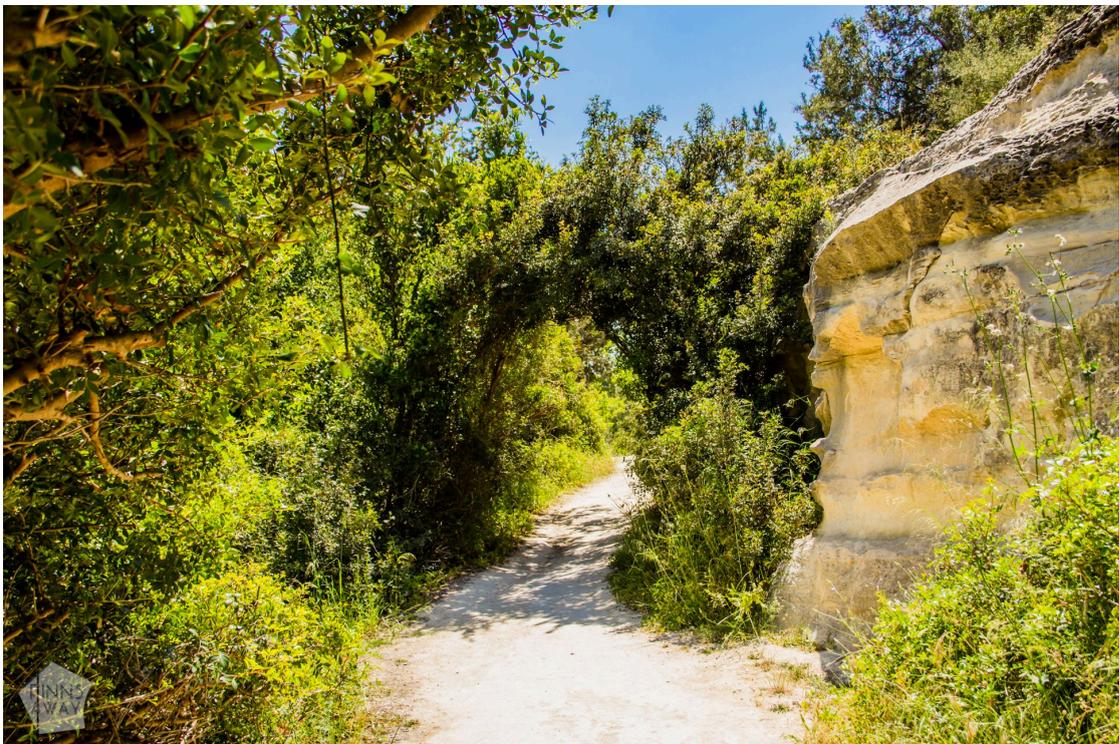
Very popular circular trail origination from Troodos square. Similar to artemis but longer, at a lower altitude. Mostly flat

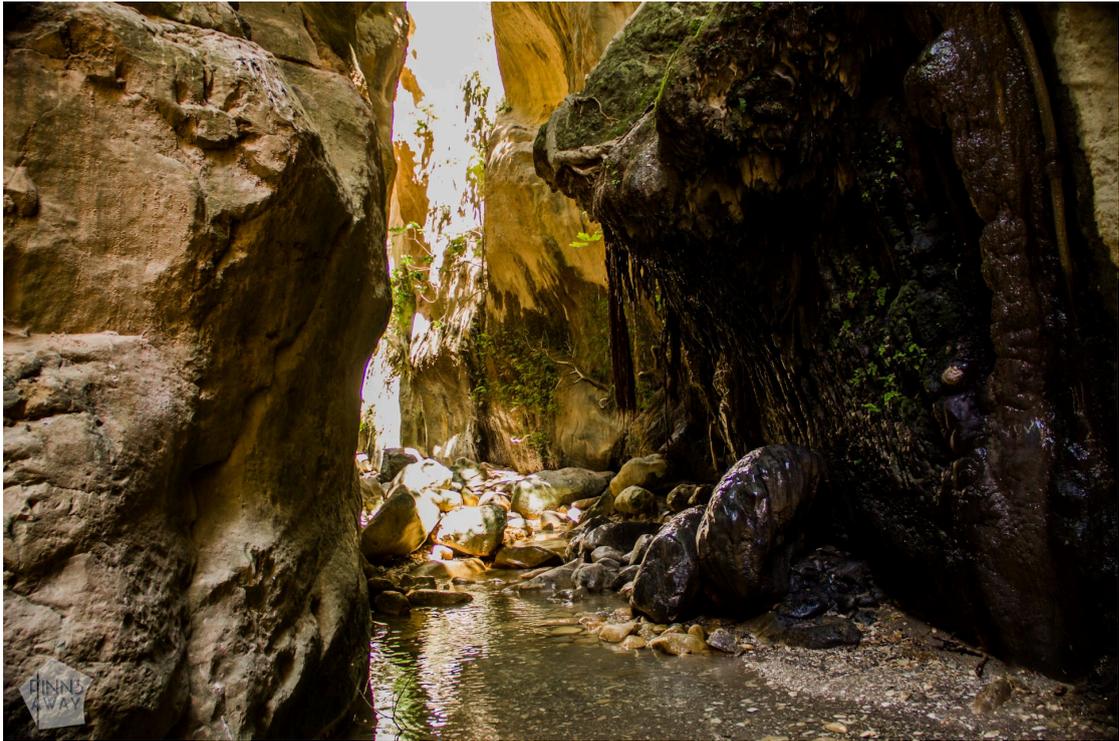
▼ Persephone Trail [D1+]

Details coming soon

▼ 🏰 Avakas Gorge Trail, Akamas, Paphos [D2]

This one is unique. It's at the very start of the Akamas national park and the parking place it is accessible by normal car if you drive slowly. It's about 1.5 hours each way. You're walking in a stream at the bottom of a gorge. There is shade as well. It is quite popular. You can perfectly combine this one with the BBQ restaurant. Just let the photos do justice





▼ Caledonia Waterfalls trail, Platres, Troodos [D2]

Popular linear trail. There is some uphill. Takes you through the forest by a small stream to the Caledonia Waterfall

▼ 🏆 Cavo Aspro Trail, Pissouri, Limassol [D2+]

The one with the high white cliffs you have seen on my story. Less busy than the other three. 4km each way with some uphill/easy climb at the beginning





▼ Tishia tis Madaris, Troodos [D2]

Not the easiest but stunning views. Linear trail at high altitude but there it not much shade. It might be hot for you

UPDATE: Not recommended for this time of the year

▼ Baths of Aphrodite and Aphrodite Trail and Adonis Trail, Akamas, Paphos [D2+]

Very, very popular route. More like a walk than a hike which takes you to the popular baths of Aphrodite spot , but you can easily extend it to a full hike by following this amazing trail (video here) in the Akamas peninsula, to places not accessible by any means of transport.

▼ Kritou Terra Waterfalls [D1]

This isn't known by the tourists yet. It's a 25' walk each way which takes you to the hidden waterfalls of Kritou Terra and it's common to stand underneath them if not cold. The drive there is scenic too.

▼ Cavo Greco Trail, Ayia Napa [D1]

There is a small costal trail in the Gavo Greco national park which starts from [here](#). It's quite an easy one and you can make it as long or short as you want. There are nice views all along, but I suggest to spend more time at the beach when in Ayia Napa

▼ Genesis trail [D2]

Details coming soon

| We barely scratched surface with those trails. Find them all [here](#)

▼  **Tips & Tricks**

- Cypriots **dine late**. Dinner time is usually from 19:30 and onwards
- **Timing in Cyprus is "relaxed"**. It is common and acceptable to be slightly late, like in most Mediterranean countries. But if you have to catch a transfer, a boat or likewise, you need to be on time.
- Taxis in Cyprus can be very expensive. It's best to either negotiate the price before the ride or demand a taxi meter especially in the resort areas. All taxis have working taxi meters regardless of what they say. Card payments might or might not be available though
- **Tipping** is optional. If you received great service somewhere, you may tip 5-10% if desired
- **Wear sunscreen**. It's much easier to get burnt than you think, and once you start feeling it its already too late. Anything with SPF less than 30 is essentially useless
- Lighting up a fire at any area is strictly forbidden and punishable. **If you see smoke or fire immediately call 112 or 1407**

**I wish you an amazing visit to the island of Cyprus** 

For any further information I will be super happy to answer any of your questions at [info@tefkros.com](mailto:info@tefkros.com)

**Disclaimer**

*\* I (the author of this article) have no affiliation with any government bodies and have taken absolutely no commision or sponsorships whatsoever from any of the places, businesses and/or restaurants mentioned above. This is just a side-project created at leisure time for fun and only fun. I cannot and will not be held responsible in any way for*

*anything that might or might not occur as a result of the recommendations of this document*

Distribution of this guide is encouraged and welcome.

---

© Constantinos Loizou - [tefkros.com](https://tefkros.com) 2025