

BREEZE

JANUARY 2019





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Editor's Letter



Inspirational New Year, Inspirational New Travels

There's something incredibly special about the start of a new year; a time for resolutions and renewal, change and transformation. First and foremost, on behalf of the entire Cyprus Airways team, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a wonderful 2019, filled with exciting discoveries!

With new beginnings in mind, the editorial team has been lucky enough to spend a few lazy days off the beaten track, recovering from the busy festive period in peaceful solitude at some of the island's best wellness spas and resorts. Sound like your idea of bliss? If recharging your batteries while taking care of mind, body and spirit is what you're after, pages 14-20 should get you ticking.

Wellbeing aside, no matter where you find yourselves on the island in the thick of winter and the start of spring, you'll witness a landscape blanketed in lush greenery, brimming with wildlife and begging to be discovered by the intrepid explorer. Catch a glimpse of the beauty of Cyprus' winter wonderland (pages 22-23) and discover the magical transformation that spring brings with it (pages 24-29).

It's not like us, however, to take in the splendours of the natural world without stopping off for some divine culinary indulgence. We've dined in restaurants providing a brilliant creative spin on local dishes (pages 30-36), and once the taste buds were satiated, we spent time perusing quaint villages, through cobblestoned alleyways, and into hidden courtyards, all to inspire you to follow our lead. Just turn to page 64 for a taste of Cyprus village life at its best.

Dreaming of a vibrant city break? We've scoured Tel Aviv to find places to rock your world (pages 38-43), and walked the streets of Prague to get to grips with its astonishing beauty (pages 44-50). How about exploring a modern metropolis by the sea? We've located the best room in Thessaloniki to guarantee blissful nights in boutique style (pages 52-53). And if you're still itching for more, we give you the lowdown on why wild and wondrous Beirut simply has to be on your holiday bucket list (pages 58-59).

We hope we've fired up your wanderlust and look forward to welcoming you back on board a Cyprus Airways flight very soon.

Happy travels!

Toe Christodoulides.

Editor

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Welcome to Cyprus Airways

Who we are

Established in 2016 and based at Larnaca International Airport, Cyprus Airways launched operations in June 2017, holding the trademark of the island's national carrier. The relaunch of Cyprus Airways marks a significant milestone, both for the local aviation sector, and for the country as a whole.

Having rebranded its visual identity to signify the beginning of a new era, Cyprus Airways has chosen the olive branch – deeply rooted in the identity of Cyprus – as the airline's symbol, while the iconic moufflon has also been maintained as a core part of the company's identity.

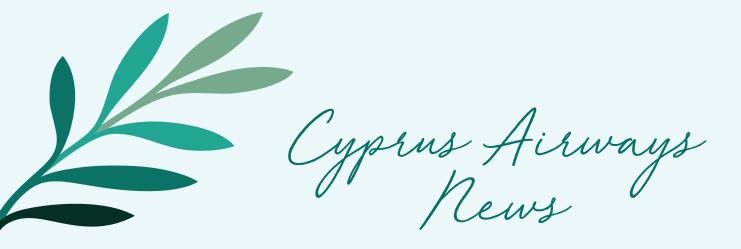
The revival of the national carrier trademark not only expands the island's connectivity, but also re-establishes an

reaffirms Cyprus' strong and positive image abroad. Having built and developed all the necessary infrastructure for a safe and reliable airline, long-term goals include promoting the island as a prime holiday and business destination, while increasing inbound tourism.

Currently flying to eight destinations (namely Athens, Tel Aviv, Beirut, Thessaloniki, Prague, Bratislava, Košice and Zurich), as well as numerous Greek islands in the summer period, the airline is continually broadening the spectrum of destinations, catering to the travel needs of both locals and incoming tourists.







Upgrade to new Amadeus Altéa reservation system

amadeus

Always looking for ways to improve the passenger experience at every step of the journey, Cyprus Airways has upgraded its passenger reservations system to Amadeus Altéa Suite: a next-generation airline IT system enhancing the customer experience by offering a more consistent and personalised customer service to all passengers. The migration to Amadeus Altéa Reservation System also ensures that Cyprus Airways meets passengers' future needs as the airline continues its expansion.



Global network growth with IATA membership

Following a rigorous audit programme that certified Cyprus Airways' compliance with internationally approved aviation safety standards, the airline became a member of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) in October 2018, enabling the company to collaborate with other international member airlines for codeshare and interline agreements, which will provide a seamless travel experience through an extended global network to travellers to and from Cyprus.



Qatar Airways partnership and Blue Air Codeshare

Cyprus Airways' passengers can now enjoy more travel opportunities, owing to a recent partnership with Qatar Airways and a codeshare partnership with Romanian carrier, Blue Air. The Qatar Airways partnership gives Cyprus Airways passengers the chance to continue their journey from Larnaca to Doha and beyond, to more than 150 destinations, across six continents, with Qatar Airways flights. Similarly, Qatar Airways' passengers can now travel from Doha to any Cyprus Airways destination via Larnaca.



Thanks to the Blue Air codeshare agreement, Cyprus Airways' customers can now fly from Larnaca to London Luton, Athens, Thessaloniki and Bucharest. The agreement allows Cyprus Airways to sell tickets under its own flight code between Larnaca and aforementioned Blue Air operated destinations. Similarly, Blue Air will place its flight code on Cyprus Airways flights to Athens, Thessaloniki, Prague, Tel Aviv and Beirut. With the possibility of additional routes to be made available in the future, passengers can look forward to more travel options and optimised flight schedules.



Baggage news!

A new baggage policy will affect customers who select basic fares, effective from 31 March 2019. Under the new improved policy, basic fare ticket holders will be able to check-in their 10kg baggage for a more comfortable journey. All passengers are allowed a small carry-on bag (handbag, laptop or backpack) on board. This new baggage policy will benefit all Cyprus Airways passengers, reducing boarding delays. The flex fare category offers additional services, such as 23kg baggage allowance, seat selection, and more, giving customers the option to customise their travel experience.

Useful information

To book your flight, find out more about Cyprus Airways destinations, or join our newsletter for the company's latest news and offers visit: cyprusairways.com

For any information or support, the Cyprus Airways Call Centre provides a 24/7 service, with a toll-free number for Cyprus: 8000 8111. When calling from abroad tel: +357 24 000053



cyprusairways



cyprusairways





C: Favourite Cyprus Airways destination to spend a weekend?

A: It has to be Prague because of its beautiful architecture. It's great for families and couples, and it's perfect for short breaks throughout the year.

Most enjoyable airport to fly into?

A: Zurich! The scenery is simply stunning over the Alps.

Most memorable flight?

A: My first flight as captain to Trondheim in Norway.

Q: Most exciting thing about life as a captain?

A: Being able to travel the world and see the earth from above.

One country in the world on your 'must-visit' list that you haven't been to yet?

A: Tanzania to visit Mount Kilimanjaro.



Ask the pilot!

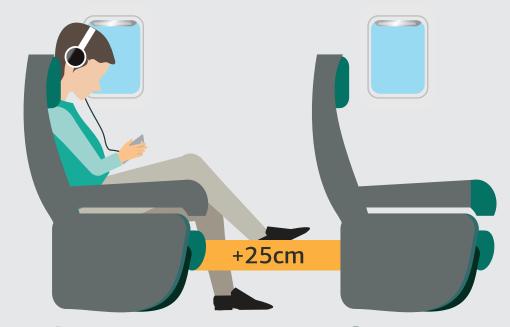
A childhood dream has become reality for Captain Orestis Gavrielides, who once watched his father excitedly dabble with radio-controlled model airplanes, inspiring a decision that, one day, he would sit in a cockpit, flying a real aircraft.

Never abandoning his dream, he began flying while still in high school, first reaching for lofty heights in a commercial aircraft in 2002, following his studies in the UK. Captain Orestis has been soaring through the clouds with Cyprus Airways since its establishment in 2016, embarking on the airline's first commercial flight in June 2017, from the sunny seaside town of Larnaca, to the dazzling historic city of St Petersburg. Here, he lets us in on his favourite destinations and more!





Travel Extras



Stretch out in comfort from just €15

Flight Time	Charge
Less than 3 hours	€15
From 3 hours+	€30

Make yourself comfortable and purchase an extra legroom seat at a small fee! Extra leg room seats can be purchased in advance during booking, online check-in, at the airport or through our call centre on 8000 8111 (from Cyprus), +357 24000053 (from abroad) and during your flight. You may ask a member of our cabin crew for assistance.

Kindly note: Seats are subject to availability and offered on a first come, first served basis.

Do you want to take more baggage?

Charge per additional piece of baggage			
Category	Weight	Dimensions	EUR
Extra bag	up to 23kg	up to 203cm	from €30
Extra bag - larger		from 203cm	from €60
Extra bag - heavier	23kg - 32kg	up to 203cm	from €60
Extra bag - heavier and larger		from 203cm	from €90

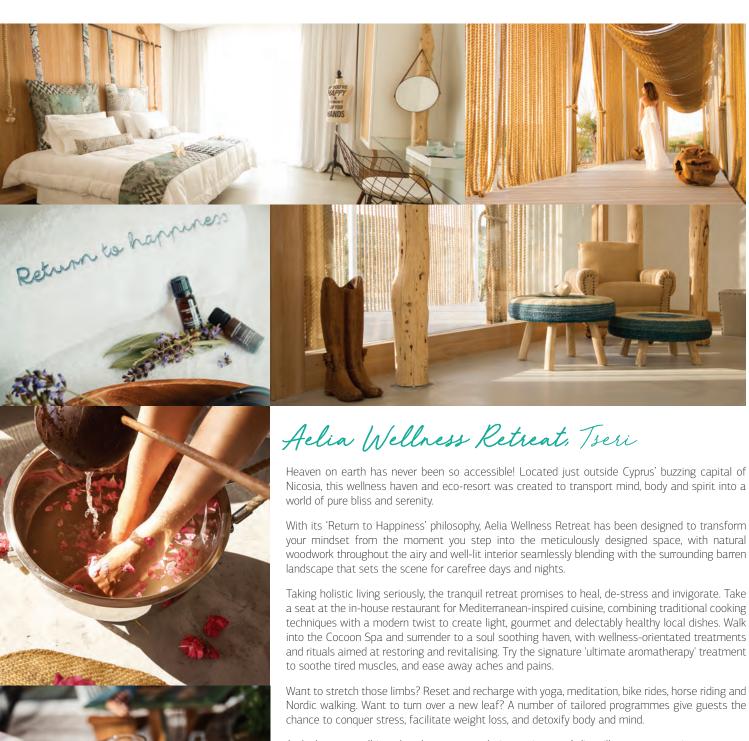
Extra baggage can be purchased on cyprusairways.com during booking process, at the airport or through our call centre on 8000 8111 (from Cyprus), +357 24000053 (from abroad).

In the instance that extra baggage is purchased at the airport, there will be a higher charge. For more detailed information regarding extra baggage charges, please visit our website.









your mindset from the moment you step into the meticulously designed space, with natural woodwork throughout the airy and well-lit interior seamlessly blending with the surrounding barren

Taking holistic living seriously, the tranquil retreat promises to heal, de-stress and invigorate. Take a seat at the in-house restaurant for Mediterranean-inspired cuisine, combining traditional cooking techniques with a modern twist to create light, gourmet and delectably healthy local dishes. Walk into the Cocoon Spa and surrender to a soul soothing haven, with wellness-orientated treatments and rituals aimed at restoring and revitalising. Try the signature 'ultimate aromatherapy' treatment

Want to stretch those limbs? Reset and recharge with yoga, meditation, bike rides, horse riding and Nordic walking. Want to turn over a new leaf? A number of tailored programmes give guests the

And when you call it a day, the accommodation options at Aelia will transport you into your own quiet and sumptuously indulgent world, complete with detailed woodwork and natural elegance. Step out onto your private patio and take in the aromas of local herbs, as green and airy surrounds calm the senses.

Aelia Wellness Retreat, 150 Grigoriou Afxentiou, Tseri, Nicosia. Tel: +357 22 015590 www.aeliawellness.com.cy





AYIA NAPA PROTARAS CYPRUS

The ultimate resorts

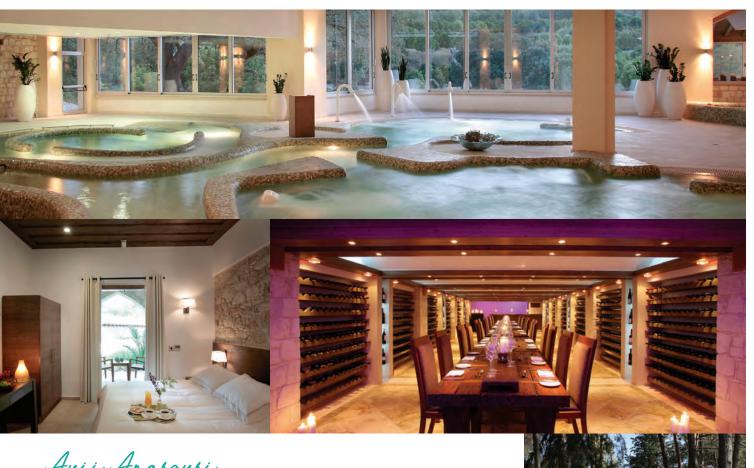




- •Konnos Beach, Makronissos Beach & Fig Tree Bay AMONG THE 25 BEST BEACHES IN EUROPE
- •Fig Tree Bay 13TH OUT OF 25 BEST BEACHES WORLDWIDE

TRAVELERS' CHOICE 2018 of tripadvisor





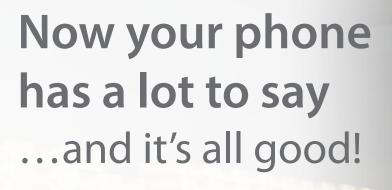
Ayii Anargyri Natural Healing Spa Resort, Milion

Another west coast gem, this natural spa resort cocooned by the lush Paphos forest, is a place geared towards 'making dreams come true'. And people flock to this haven of serenity from far and wide to relax and rejuvenate in the health-giving, mineral-rich waters which flow in the area.

Ayii Anargyri Natural Healing Spa Resort uses natural spring water, which is channelled into three treatment pools; kinesiotherapy, rheumatology and phlebology. Various medical treatments are complemented by a wide range of wellness therapies to suit every desire, whether you wish to relax those muscles with a deep massage, fancy a sulphur mud bath therapy or want a good old facial to make you glow. Yoga is also available, with special packages for private sessions, or sessions for two.

As for the accommodation itself, you can choose from garden suites, bungalows or classic rooms, with a lovely central swimming pool where you can simply kick back and relax. The hotel restaurant gives you the chance to tuck into traditional Cypriot fare, with dishes that are garden fresh, nutritious and flavoursome. And when you get itchy feet? The surrounding nature is begging to explored, with the island's stunning Akamas peninsula just a short drive away.

Ayii Anargyri Natural Healing Spa Resort, Miliou village, Paphos. Tel: +357 26 814003 www.aasparesort.com



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Winter Wonderland

Once the thick of winter sets in, Cyprus takes on a whole new persona, as powdery white snow blankets the island's highest peaks, while the foothills of the towering Troodos mountains reach down to touch inland plains covered in lush greenery. What was once dry land in the sweltering summer months becomes a rich and verdant playground in the winter, as trekkers and avid photographers explore the enchanting wilderness.

That's not to underestimate the magical winter appeal of the country's famous coastline, as colder sea waters vivaciously caress deserted, but often sun-kissed, windswept shores. We take you on an enchanting journey around some of the island's most beautiful wintry spots, shared on Instagram by both travellers and local explorers.











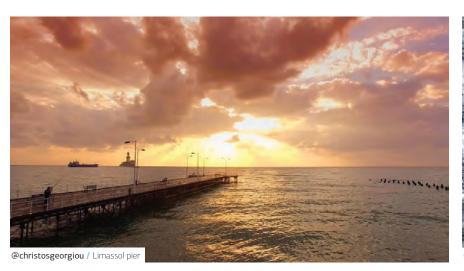








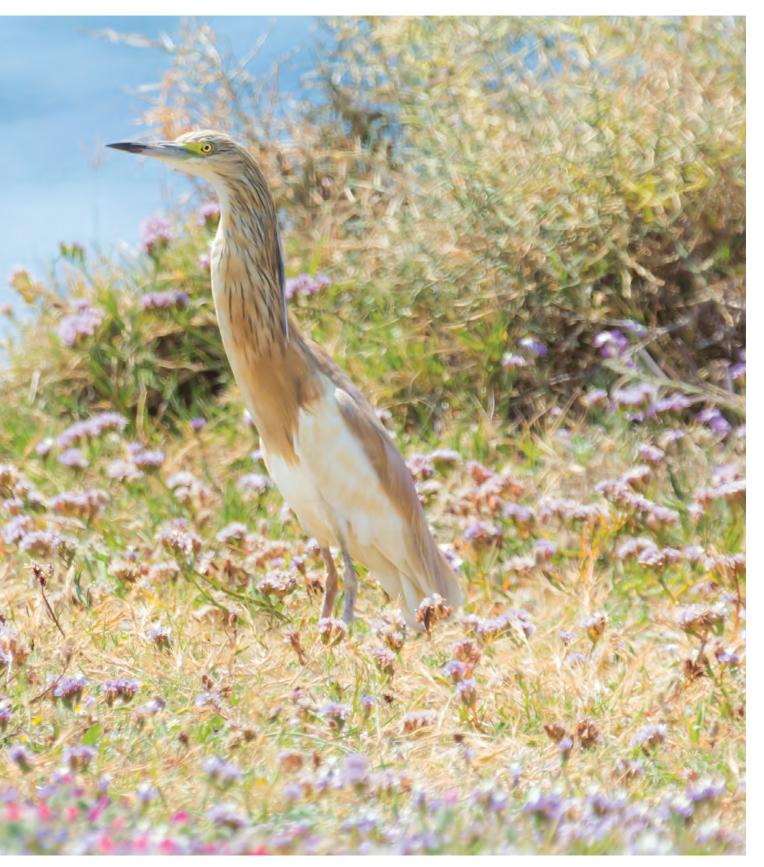






A Spring in your Step













Best foot forward

Unbeknownst to sun, sea and sand seeking tourists, Cyprus has a wealth of off-the-beaten-track adventures to embark upon either on foot, or on two wheels. For a taste of Cyprus at its most wild and undeveloped, walk the Akamas Peninsula on the west of the island, where routes such as the 'Adonis' or 'Aphrodite' trails provide opportunities to catch a glimpse of rare red tulips or wild orchids, and enjoy unmatched views down to the coast.

Easily one of the most unique and impressive trails in the Troodos district is the circuitous 'Teisia tis Madaris' walk, which takes in spectacular views and remarkable geological phenomena. Shaped like giant, vertical, clifflike rocks, these rocks were formed through the movement of tectonic plates and millions of years worth of erosion. Circling the top of Mount Olympus, 'Artemis' trail is another easy hike through a majestic black pine forest. Look out for rare species of flora, 500-year-old trees, fascinating rock formations and incredible views in all directions.

In need of a seaside escape? The 'Aphrodite' trail within the Cape Greco National Park is an alluringly peaceful oasis, away from the hustle and bustle of nearby Ayia Napa, where walkers can encounter indigenous juniper, wild thyme, and an abundance of the iconic yellow flowers which have become synonymous with Cyprus spring.





It's a twitcher's life

Cyprus' location on the cusp of three continents, makes it an important migratory pitstop for a plethora of bird species travelling across the globe to breeding grounds and wintering destinations in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Africa. This makes the island a real treasure trove for twitchers looking to cross new species off their tick list. And the spring and autumn periods in Cyprus are easily the richest and most diverse in terms of bird life.

The spring migration season starts in early February and runs all the way through into May, with keen watchers likely to see Hirundines, Isabelline and Northern Wheatears, Great Spotted Cuckoo, Hoopoe, Pallid Harriers, Wryneck, Larks, Pipits, Wagtails, Black-eared Wheatear, Sylvia Warblers (including Ruppell's and Subalpine), Cretzshmar's and Ortolan Buntings, Egrets, Herons, Waders, Rollers, Bee-eaters, Olivaceous Warblers, Shrikes, Golden Orioles and Black-headed Bunting. Bird watching hot-spots for the spring season include the stunning Akamas Peninsula, the Paphos headland, Asprokremmos Dam, the Paphos Plain and Paphos Forest, Evretou Dam, Diarizos Valley, the Akrotiri Marshes and Salt Lake, the Larnaca Salt Lake, Oroklini Marsh, Cape Greco, Paralimni Lake, Akhna Dam and the Troodos Mountains.

Dining al fresco

Spring in Cyprus is the perfect time to get outdoors and spend full days roaming the verdant, blossoming countryside while the weather is still fresh. So pack up some delicious goodies and head out to some of the island's gorgeous picnic areas to enjoy a spot of dining under the clear blue Mediterranean sky. For a remote picnic adventure with a wilderness twist, drive deep into the Paphos Forest to 'Stavros tis Psokas Picnic Site', with its back-drop of scented pine trees, convenient wooden tables, benches, fire-pits and nearby hiking trails.

Combining your picnic with a scenic stroll is also an option at 'Xyliatos Picnic Site', which, as well as being an idyllic spot – with covered barbeque areas and seating arrangements – is also the beginning of a dramatic 4.5km nature trail around the adjacent Xyliatos dam. Take in awe-inspiring sea views at coastal spots such as 'Ayii Anargyri Picnic Site' in Cape Greco National Forest Park, and for visitors travelling to Cyprus around March 11 this year, get a taste of the local tradition by packing a healthy meat-free picnic into the car and driving out to eat al fresco with family and friends on Green Monday, marking the first day of Greek Orthodox Lent





Park rambles

No season regales the Cyprus countryside with as much bountiful flower and plant life as spring. So get out and soak up these green and blossoming months at the island's beautiful parks and gardens, before the burning summer sun turns the land a ubiquitous toasty yellow.

The Troodos Botanical Garden is a veritable museum of endemic plants and herbs, with spectacular views out over the mountains, and where education and conservation go hand-in-hand thanks to the efforts of the forestry department.

Visitors can also learn about the island's biodiversity at Eleouthkia Park (eleouthkia.com.cy) in Paphos – a sprawling 20,000m² oasis, over 55,000 plant and flower species grow across 10 themed gardens. For a fragrant adventure of herbal discovery, head to CyHerbia Botanical Park and Labyrinth (cyherbia.com) in Avgorou village, with its nine organic herb gardens, unique hedge maze and lavender meditation labyrinth.

Fancy a spot of urban park life? Visit Nicosia's Athalassa Park – a green escape from the concrete jungle of the city. And for a park experience where fauna takes precedence over flora, head to the Camel Park (www. camel-park.com) on the south coast in the Larnaca district of Mazotos – a fun day out for the whole family.

Time to party

Spring is a season of celebration in Cyprus, as the island welcomes the arrival of warmer weather and the multitude of local, rural and cultural festivities that it brings with it. The festival season really kicks-off with the eagerly awaited Limassol Carnival, celebrating all things hedonistic. Considered one of the most impressive carnivals in the world, Limassol Carnival is a two-week long street-party, culminating on March 10 this year with a vibrant parade through the city. Don't forget to dress up!

February is also the time of the annual Blossoming Almond Trees Festival, which sees the quaint little village of Limnatis near Limassol, covered in a blanket of soft, delicately fragrant pink almond blossom. Nowhere in Cyprus do so many almond trees grow in one place and in celebration of their local crop, the Community Council organises traditional music, dancing, and a plethora of local almond-based delicacies to try. Exact dates have yet to be confirmed, but visitors can call the council for information on +357 25 432922.

Visitors arriving in May can enjoy the Agros Rose Festival in the Troodos region of Pitsilia and the Anthestiria Flower Festival in Paphos.







Peiragmena, Lympia

From the outside, Peiragmena looks much like any other pretty village restaurant in Cyprus; a renovated old stone building blending into the unassuming village of Lympia. But anyone who has placed knife and fork together within these four walls will be well aware that the gastronomic delights that land on the dinner table have a rather different tale to tell, one where divine experimentation and superb modern adaptations take centre stage.

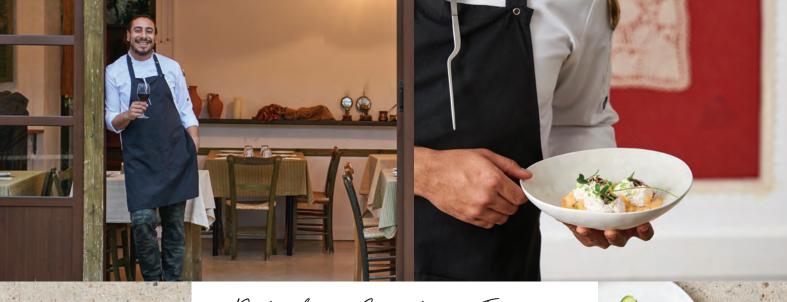
Located a short drive from both Larnaca and Nicosia, the name 'Peiragmena' (pronounced pee-rag-men-a) means 'tweaked', and the owners are adamant about dishing up Cyprus and Mediterranean inspired treats to surprise your taste buds in the most alternative fashion. What's more, the menu changes each season, with emphasis placed on fresh high-quality produce, mostly locally sourced.

The two creative minds running the show, Yiannis Katchis and Vasilis Koutouroushis, explain that Peiragmena is all about offering something out of the ordinary, "hence our 'dare to taste the difference' slogan," explains Yiannis. And they are resolute about their restaurant not being called a 'tavern'. "We never wanted to serve anything traditional!" the restauranteur exclaims as he guides us around the cozy space, built in the 1800s and once housing a dairy farm, luring people from near and far who would pop by to collect local halloumi.

A few of their biggest hits making a regular appearance on the changing seasonal menu include the chicken and duck liver pâté with wild berry compote, served with long-fermented ciabatta bread, the fried duck ravioli and the citrus marinated chicken.

While their 2019 winter and spring menu was yet to be finalised at the time of print, last winter's favourites included slow roasted pumpkin soup with spiced bitter chocolate, beetroot and chickpea croquettes, rabbit meat loaf with bitter orange sauce, and stewed beef with Commandaria sauce, made with Cyprus' famous dessert wine. There are always veggie alternatives on offer, while each season features a different dessert to satiate the sweet tooth, inspired by the time of year.





Patrikon Creative Tavern, Tersefanon

When three young siblings in the relatively unknown village of Tersefanou set about converting the garden of their family home into a restaurant a few years back, no one could have possibly imagined that, one day, the tiny establishment in the quiet undulating countryside outside Larmaca would become one of the most talked about and revered restaurants on the island. What's their secret? Not just about a passion for good food, Kiriakos, Evanthia and Stavros Fokou also possess steadfast resolve to shake up the norm and turn Cypriot tradition on its head.

Take a look around Patrikon (literally translating to family home) and you'll immediately witness all things traditional and quirky fusing in perfect unison. Tables are dressed in the so-called 'karpasitika' traditional Cyprus cloth, intricate family lace decorates sideboards, and restored old village mosaic tiles adorn the walls. And it's not just the décor that brings rare local finds into focus.

"The ingredients we like to use at Patrikon are often scarce and forgotten, like wild greens and unusual herbs. Old traditional recipes are brought to life with our own vision," Kiriakos lets on. "We wanted to preserve Cypriot cuisine, promote it, and give it our own touch."

The menu changes every season, and each time you visit, you'll get to indulge in about 15 set dishes made with local seasonal produce. Some of the most popular dishes include trahana (fermented mixture of grain and yoghurt) balls with tomato marmalade, calamari with caramelised 'pastourma' (spicy village sausage) on a 'louvana' (yellow split pea) base, and slow-cooked lamb with carob sauce, juniper berries and red wine vinegar.

"Patrikon and the focus on tweaked 'Cyprus cuisine' and exploration of local produce came about from a love for our country, the authenticity you find in local recipes and the freshness of the ingredients," emphasises Kiriakos. "We really believe in the evolvement of Cyprus cuisine and wish to play with it, redefining what it's all about."

Hardly surprising that some of their dishes bring back childhood memories for the talented trio, especially the rusks served with herring cream, cucumber jelly with mint, caramelised quail egg and pickled celery. Other dishes totally reinvent well-known Cypriot tastes, exemplified by the Cyprus olive paste with coriander seeds, tomatoes, cucumber and wild roots. You'll no doubt want to have your camera or phones at hand, as each dish is about as Instagram-worthy as it gets!





Dionysus Mansion, Limassol

An old stone house of rather a different kind. Dionysos is a handsome city mansion, a grand old home renovated to trendy perfection in the centre of the seaside town of Limassol. A place where 'fun and gourmet' fuse in fabulous unison, Dionysos Mansion is known for blending Cypriot and Greek cuisines, offering fine gastronomy in ambient style, where swings replace chairs and funky drop down pendant lighting sets the scene for the most delectable dining experience.

The brainchild of the two owners, Yiannis Antoniades (also well-known owner of Guaba Beach Bar) and George Zacharoglou, the restaurant was born out of a shared passion for food and ambiance. "We always love to try local cuisines whenever we travel. So we created a restaurant (not a tavern) serving mainly Cypriot and Greek cuisines with a modern twist," says George. "We try to use local ingredients whenever possible, supporting the local market and the local community."

While the menu changes every six months according to the season, a few of the most popular signature dishes which regularly feature on the menu include the stuffed ravioli with "Grevena" region porcini mushrooms, graviera cheese sauce and truffle oil, as well as the 'Lachanodolas' made risotto with beef mince ragout and velouté cream of white cabbage.

That's not to forget the always-popular Neoklis farm grilled halloumi cheese with green asparagus and fresh mint leaves. "The halloumi is homemade just for us in Pissouri village, and it's one of the best you'll try!"

Neoklis farm, owned by Yiannis and his father, also provides the meat for Dionysus Mansion's famed slow-cooked Pissouri farm lamb leg dish, marinated with orange and rosemary, and served with 'Kolokasi' (taro) purée from Sotira village. The grilled lamb chops, served with rice cream, flavoured with saffron, cous cous, tabbouleh and yogurt, are also a big hit, as are the farm snails, cooked with virgin olive oil with rosemary and red wine vinegar.



Meat lovers will relish the pork belly glazed with chili and sweet Commandaria wine, as well as their fire-grilled pork chop smoked with grape syrup sauce. For a sumptuous vegetarian dish, go for their 'kritharoto'; risotto made with the traditional Cypriot 'kritharaki' (orzo), mushrooms and truffle sauce, while fish lovers can devour the grilled octopus with 'tarama' (made from fish roe) and sauce vierge. "I'm a firm believer in fresh ingredients," concludes Panayiotis. "And if the ingredients are exquisite, you will have exquisite results. Simple as that!"

/ Peiragmena

15 Theodorou Mavrosavva Street, Lympia

Tel: +357 22 524333

/ Patrikon Creative Tavern

22 Dionysios Solomou Avenue, Tersefanou

Tel: +357 24 424831

/ Dionysus Mansion

5, 16th June Street, Limassol

Tel: +357 25 222210

/ Katoi









Tel Aviv is easily one of the coolest cities in the Middle East. Seamlessly merging its deep-rooted cultural heritage, with an undeniably modern international flair which permeates every corner, street, alley and boulevard, this hive of innovation and creativity pulsates with an intoxicating energy that is hard not to fall in love with.

Visitors to the 'White City' will find a cosmopolitan meltingpot of diversity, bursting at the seams with awe-inspiring architecture, hip bars and cool cafés, experimental eateries, thought-provoking street art, quirky boutiques, and fascinating museums and historical sites, all just waiting to be discovered.

Sightseeing splendours

To get a really immersive feel of the unique history and rich culture of Tel Aviv, start on the **Independence Trail** (www.independencetrail. co.il) – an initiative launched in May 2018, which guides visitors around the city's most important historical locations, telling the story of Israel's independence along the way. Next, take in the fascinating sights and sounds at one of the city's many markets, such as the **Nahalat Binyamin Crafts Fair** (www.nachlat-binyamin.com), where over 200 artists display their work every Tuesday and Friday. Once you've had your fill of arts and crafts, absorb the beautiful and well-preserved architecture of the **Nahalat Binyamin** area, as you stroll to nearby **Carmel Market** (principally located down Carmel Street), for an authentic taste of the hustle and bustle of local life.

Architecture buffs can get their fill of emblematic Bauhaus buildings in the central **Lev Hair** district, with many of its structures having earned UNESCO World Heritage status. The **Neve Tzedek** neighbourhood is also a great place for architectural marvelling, boasting uniquely magnificent buildings such as **The Suzanne Dellal Centre for Dance and Theatre** (www.suzannedellal.org.il), with its stunning piazza and lush gardens.

A huge part of Tel Aviv city life is the long 14km stretch of beach, which runs the length of the city and provides an urban getaway for locals and visitors alike. On the northern end of the shoreline is **Metzitzim Beach**, where beautiful people recline on sun-loungers and sip cocktails, while the southern end offers a much more laid-back atmosphere at **Alma Beach**. Watching the sun set over the Mediterranean is a must.



/ The Suzanne Dellal Centre for Dance and Theatre



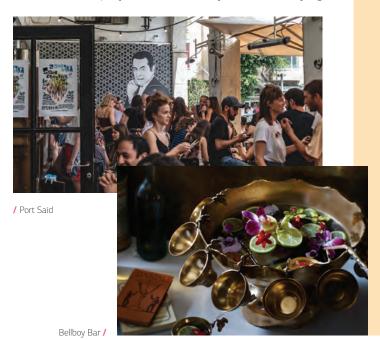
Art gazing

Tel Aviv is a living, breathing art gallery, and visitors won't need to look far to find creative depictions of the city's artistic spirit. Head down to the hip Florentin district or Nahalat Binyamin, where side streets and alleyways are adorned with mind-blowing graffiti that adds a touch of colourful, underground magic to the public spaces.

The best street art in the area can be explored and discovered on dedicated graffiti tours by **Be Tel Aviv Tours** (www.betelavivtours.com), giving visitors an in-depth insight into why the city is currently being heralded as the rising star of the international street art scene. For a more conventional art experience, don't miss the Tel Aviv Museum of Art (www.tamuseum.org.il), the largest museum of its kind in Israel, and home to an impressive collection of work by some of the world's greats including Cezanne, Chagall, Dali, Monet, Rodin, Picasso, Klimt and Kadinsky. The building's architecture is a work of art in its own right, so if you don't make it inside, pass by the exterior to marvel at the progressive Bauhaus design.

Contemporary art lovers can enjoy plenty of options in a city that is having its moment in the art world spotlight. The hottest space in town is currently **Sommer Contemporary Art Gallery** (www.sommergallery. com) on Rothschild; but don't let the historic building fool you, inside those walls lies some of the very best of contemporary Israeli work from home and abroad.

Always progressive and avant-garde, Tel Aviv also has a couple of unusual galleries that, from the outside, might look more like restaurants or bars, but scratch beneath the surface, and you'll find they also act as platforms for some of the brightest emerging talents. **Beit Kandinof** (14 Hatzorfim) in Old Jaffa is as artsy as they come, with fabulous cocktails and tasty bites, served alongside rotating exhibitions, private art studios and art classes all under one roof. Another hybrid gallery/bar gem tucked away in the midst of all the hustle and bustle of Old Jaffa is **Cuckoo's Nest** (3 No'am Street) – an antique shop by day, which transforms into a quirky little bar with weekly art exhibitions by night





/ Tel Aviv Museum of Art © Amit Geron



Florentin / © Guy Yechiely

Delectable drinking

Start your day with a steaming cup of joe at one of the local favourites such as **Cafe Puaa** (www.rol.co.il/sites/eng/puaa) in Jaffa Flea Market, or **Cafelix** (cafelix.co.il) – an artisan small batch roaster, where local caffeine addicts get their daily fix of handcrafted, sustainable coffee. Moving from wake-up-call brews, to wind-down drinks of the stiffer variety, Tel Aviv's bar scene is second to none, with a huge selection of cool and quirky haunts for when the sun sets and the night owls come out to play.

The Prince (18 Nahalat Binyamin) is a hip, arty rooftop joint, with mismatched furniture and book-lined walls adding to the retro, vintage atmosphere. And for a slick and sexy cocktail experience, make **Bellboy** Bar (www.bellboybar.com) your first port of call, where beautiful drinks are lovingly concocted by expert mixologists. See if you can find **Butler**, the secret 'sister' bar, hidden away behind Bellboy. Widely regarded as one of the coolest spots in the city, the now-iconic Port Said (5 Har Sinai) is a vibrant, busy and often somewhat chaotic bar located opposite the city's largest synagogue.

Another effortlessly cool hot spot, popular amongst the hipster crowd, is **Beit Romano** (9 Jaffa Road) in the heart Florentin. This multi-floor building with an open courtyard, houses the headquarters of eclectic local Teder radio station, a funky restaurant and a bar, with a sound system to kill. Finally, soak in the magic of Tel Aviv from the lofty heights of **Suramare** (www.suramare.co.il). Located on the 10th floor of an otherwise mundane office block, this is a great spot to enjoy the sunset.

Divine dining

Tel Aviv is a foodie haven of epicurean delights, tantalising even the most discerning of taste buds. Vegetarians and vegans have a huge variety of options, but for those looking for a really friendly neighbourhood vibe, head to **Bucke** (www.bucke-cafe.com) on Ahad Ha'Am Street. Popular amongst the hipster crowd, Bucke offers delicious healthy, veggie dishes with local flare. Try the Shakshoukas eggs – lauded as the best in town by locals in the know.

Fancy fresh seafood right on the beachfront, with views out over the Med? Head to **Manta Ray** (mantaray.co.il), where Middle Eastern cuisine is given a creative twist. Or for a more romantic and atmospheric seafood experience, try **Oasis** (oasistlv.co.il), a seasonal restaurant with an ever-changing and highly experimental menu. Run by one of Tel Aviv's most famous chefs, Eyal Shani, **North Abraxas** (40 Lilienblum) is a lively representation of the city's uniquely vivacious vibe. Effortlessly stylish, yet at the same time simple and fun, this upscale eatery serves up a creative menu of down-to-earth dishes in a beautiful setting. Try the fish in tomato sauce or coal roasted beetroot. Diners are spoilt for choice at **Ramesses** (ramessesjaffa.com), which stretches the length of Jaffa's Greek Market with a row of connected restaurants, each offering up diverse menus, united by colourful graffiti murals.



/ Manta Ray © Avi Ganor

Bucke /



Heavenly sleeps

Tel Aviv's diverse neighbourhoods and bustling streets will have you exploring until you can't walk another step. And when that happens, the city's wealth of unique accommodation options deliver essential creature comforts with a healthy dash of contemporary creativity. For a taste of the cosmopolitan culture that characterises the city, bed down at **Fabric Hotel** (m.atlas.co.il/fabric-hotel-tel-aviv) on vibrant Nahalat Benyamin Street, where a trendy industrial vibe is offset by colourful murals, and a hip all-day artisanal café-cum-cocktail bar serves guests and locals on the ground floor. For the high-end traveller, **Drisco Hotel** (www.thedrisco.com) on Auerbach Street exudes a heady mix of iconic history and contemporary luxury, without relinquishing its original Ottoman

grandeur, while **The Vera Hotel** (theverahotel.com) on Lilienblum Street epitomises everything that is cool about Tel Aviv. Housed in a long-abandoned maternity hospital, this new kid on the block is shaking up the hospitality scene, with its local boutique design vibe. Check out the rooftop sundeck for great views of the city below. Vintage-charm combines with urban chic at **Lily & Bloom** (lilyandbloom.com), just off buzzing Rothschild Street – a stylish little enclave and an oasis of calm, right in the heart of the action. Budget travellers can forget everything they thought they knew about hostels at **The Old Jaffa Hostel** (www.telaviv-hostel.com), an affordable option conveniently located in the heart of the flea market, in a charming old building where no two rooms are the same.



AAA

Shopping therapy

In keeping with Tel Aviv's rich cultural diversity and cool modern edge, the plethora of shopping options available reflect both the city's strong creative streak and the compellingly complementary, deep-rooted element of tradition. For starters, shopaholics absolutely cannot miss the Jaffa Flea Market (Olei Zion Street). Operating for over 100 years, the winding alleyways, covered walkways and outdoor verandas, have been revived by an injection of youthful energy in the shape of cool boutiques, pop-up bars, laid back cafés, vintage treasure troves and colourful street stalls.

While perusing the multitude of shops in the flea market, look out for Saga (www.sagatlv.com) - a collective space, where local designers and artists sell their work. Fashion-forward shoppers should check out ATA (atawear.co.il) - a sustainable local brand that has recently reopened and rebranded, with a modernised approach to functional yet stylish 'worker's attire'. For a highend shopping experience, head to **Shabazi Street**, the main thoroughfare of the historic Neve Tzedek neighbourhood, lined with designer fashion ateliers, jewellery shops and boutiques selling artisan macarons.



Jaffa Flea Market / © Guy Yechiely /





/ ATA





You've Got to Visit Prague

The epitome of fairy tale charm, Prague is European eyecandy at it's very best. Dazzling spires pierce through the skies, chocolate-box houses beg to be photographed, the world's largest medieval hilltop-castle beckons, and majestic bridges cross the lazy Vltava River, accentuating architectural splendour, combining the grace of Art Nouveau with astounding gothic intricacy and the outlandish exuberance of the baroque.

But dig beneath the perfectly pretty exterior and you'll soon discover that the Bohemian capital of the Czech Republic isn't just about dashing good looks. Hip jazz bars lining the cobblestone streets tell tales of heady indulgences and fresh new sounds, curious markets spill onto city streets and fantastical – or downright bizarre – art beckons around every corner. And when you want to make an out of town discovery? Hop on the train to historic Česky Krùmlov for an overnight stay to remember.

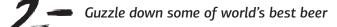


Walk across bridges to make your heart skip

A smorgasbord of stunning architecture, it's not just the grand towers that command attention in Prague. If you're after the real quintessential Prague experience, nothing beats a walk down the Saint Charles Bridge. Named after King Charles IV, the bridge is a 15th century marvel connecting the two banks of the Vltava River, leading to the mighty UNESCO World Heritage Site of Prague Castle. And no matter what direction you look, baroque statues of saints stare right back at you.

The Art Nouveau Čechův Bridge is another marvellous site to see, with its distinctive green design, grand columns, and bronze sculptures. The Legion Bridge will delight lovers of neo-baroque and Art Nouveau, while the Palacký Bridge is an impressive example of Caisson engineering. For a taste of something more contemporary, the Troja Bridge – a bowstring arched construction should be right up your street.





Prague is widely regarded as the world's beer capital and the Czechs have been famous for producing some mighty fine brews ever since the creation of the world-renowned Pilsner Urquell in 1842. Add to that globally popular beers such as Staropramen, Budvar and Urquell, and you've got an exceptionally revered list.

While nothing beats kicking back in a traditional pub or garden where pivo flows like water, if you really want to get to grips with the new Czech brewing scene 'revolution', look for hole-in-the wall beer shops and funky microbreweries-cum-bars, where endless craft beers are piled high on well-stocked, floor-to-ceiling shelves. If you're keen on sipping new flavours and varieties, head out on an alternative Prague beer tour like 'Bohemian Alternative Bar Tours' (bohemianalternativebartours.com).



Spot weird and wonderful sculptures

There aren't many places in the world where sculptures of famous personalities hang from the skies, and you certainly won't get the chance to see Sigmund Freud dangling mid-air anywhere else! Famed for bizarre sculptures – including the characteristic 'Man Hanging Out' in Prague old town (Husova Street) – the rebel artist, David Černý has certainly left his mark on the city in a rather unusual way. His giant space babies are also a site to see, crawling

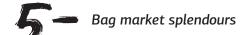
up the Zizkov TV tower, a hundred metres above Prague and hanging out in Kampa Park.

But it's not just Černý who makes heads turn in the capital. Make your way to the historic Jewish quarter, and keep your eyes peeled for Jaroslav Rona's surrealistic sculpture of Kafka on the shoulders of a giant with an empty suit, commissioned by the city's Franz Kafka Society in 2003.



Head out on quaint escapes

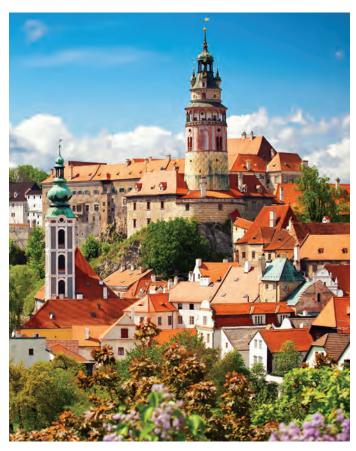
City explorations are all well and good, but when you yearn for time-out, there are few places better to take a breather than the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Česky Krůmlov. Approximately three hours from Prague by train, this old town – dominated by its 13th century castle – is well worth an overnight stay. Hands down one of the prettiest towns in the whole of Europe, some liken Česky Krůmlov to a miniature version of Prague, albeit much quieter, despite the number of tourists that descend upon the area to take in its beauty. When your feet tire, kick back at one of the scenic riverside bars. Want somewhere closer to the city? Stop off at the Gothic Kutna Hora, a medieval silver mining town steeped in intricate history, just an hour from Prague.



Love quirky finds? How about weird and wonderful antiques? You're bound to get hold of some prize goodies in Prague. You can't miss the traditional Havel's Market (Havelska Street) in the city centre, stocked with crafts, ceramics, wooden toys and a whole host of souvenirs.

For more unusual finds, head to Prague Flea Market (www.blesitrhy. cz) where locals rummage through second hand clothes, jewellery, old pictures and other off-the-wall artefacts. How about a market where you can also devour foodie delights? The Prague Market, known as Pražská tržnice (306/13Bubenské nábřeží), offers a great taste of local life, and has plenty of Czech and Asian restaurants to curb the hunger pangs while you browse.







Climb marvellous towers

Prague is known as the 'City of a Hundred Spires' for good reason and visitors can climb any hill to take in a skyline punctuated by towers. Experience the beauty of the city by looking down on all the activity from atop one of the towers themselves, as a magnificent patchwork of red-tiled roofs and bridges unfold before you. Head to the Baroque Clementium complex, home to one of the world's most beautiful libraries, and take in the views from the Clementium Astronomical Tower, which rises over 60 metres into the skies.

The Saint Charles Old Town Bridge Tower (regarded as one of the most impressive examples of Gothic engineering in the world) is also a must-see and a popular spot come sunset, while the central Petrin Lookout Tower, which rises from Petrin Hill, provides fantastic views of the entire city. The Old Town Hall Tower is another popular spot, with a striking clock where the 12 apostles make an appearance every hour between 9am and 11pm. Cameras at the ready!



Bedazzled by art & culture

There's just something about bohemian art that holds a stunning appeal. First up on the itinerary should be the grand and imposing National Museum (www.nm.cz/en), with some 14 million items on display whisking you back through the centuries. The Kafka Museum (www.kafkamuseum.cz), also tops the list, dedicated to the most famous of all Czech writers, who was born and raised in Prague. Behold yet another David Černý sculpture outside the building, before heading indoors to spot old letters, photos and manuscripts, along with the writer's personal belongings.

Love all things modern? You'll be stunned at the DOX Centre for Contemporary Art (www.dox.cz/en), with its award-winning exterior - a brilliantly reconstructed old factory - and an equally impressive interior, brimming with modern art and alternating exhibitions by contemporary international and Czech artists, bringing together a whole range of mixed media and cool disciplines.





Modern coffee shops are all well and good, but how about pulling up a seat and tucking into your apple strudel or marlenka (honey cake) in a gem of a place once frequented by the likes of Einstein and Kafka? Head to the Café Louvre (22 Narodni Street) and you'll be reliving the glory days in one of Prague's grand cafés dating back to 1902, with pastel colours and décor whisking you back in time. The Grand Orient Café (www.grandcafeorient.cz/en) is another spot elegantly restored to its former glory - the only Cubist café in the world, located in the House of the Black Madonna and designed by Czech architect. Josef Gočár.

Want to sip on your coffee under the light of sparkling Art Nouveau chandeliers? Head to the Kavárna Obecní dům on the ground floor of the Municipal House (www.kavarnaod.cz), which first opened its doors in 1912, and enjoy some of the most unique coffee specialities in town in one of the grandest spots imaginable.



Stroll through dreamy parks

With a whopping 200 parks in Prague, you won't need to walk far before stepping into lush green territory. Live it up in Letná Park in the spring and summer months, where live music and various artistic activities breathe new life into this handsome haven, best known as a local meeting spot for, what else, beer! Prefer a glass of wine? The Havlíčkovy sady pavilion stocks vino made in the park's vineyard. Fancy a cycling adventure? The vast Stromovka is lined with bike paths! Or how about stunning

views? Vysehrad Park offers a city panorama with a touch of real oldeworlde charm.

If beautifully landscaped gardens leave you wide eyed, then be sure to step into the Vtba Garden. Opposite St Nicholas Church, the garden's numerous terraces, with their geometrically shaped hedges, are every gardener's dream. Famous works by Czech sculptor, Matthias Braun, and painter, Vaclav Vavrinec Reiner, further add to the charm.

Enjoy music to your ears

No matter what your musical style, there are plenty of hot spots around town to keep you on your toes. And if jazz and blues make your spine tingle, head to the Reduta Jazz Club (redutajazzclub.cz), Europe's oldest jazz joint and undoubtedly one the most famous in the city, with international and local performances to write home about, and a real suave classic interior to boot. Wind through the maze of the old town and step down into another jazzy gem of a place; a dimly lit cellar by the name of Blues Sklep, translating to Blues Basement (10 Liliová).

If you want to groove the night away in a seriously cool Art Deco building, Palác Akropolis (www.palacakropolis.cz) is the place to be. A bright multicoloured façade will lure you indoors into a space housing a club, bar and theatre. For real alternative vibes, the industrial MeetFactory (www.meetfactory.cz) is the real deal – an art gallery and theatre by day, transforming into a wild music venue by night.







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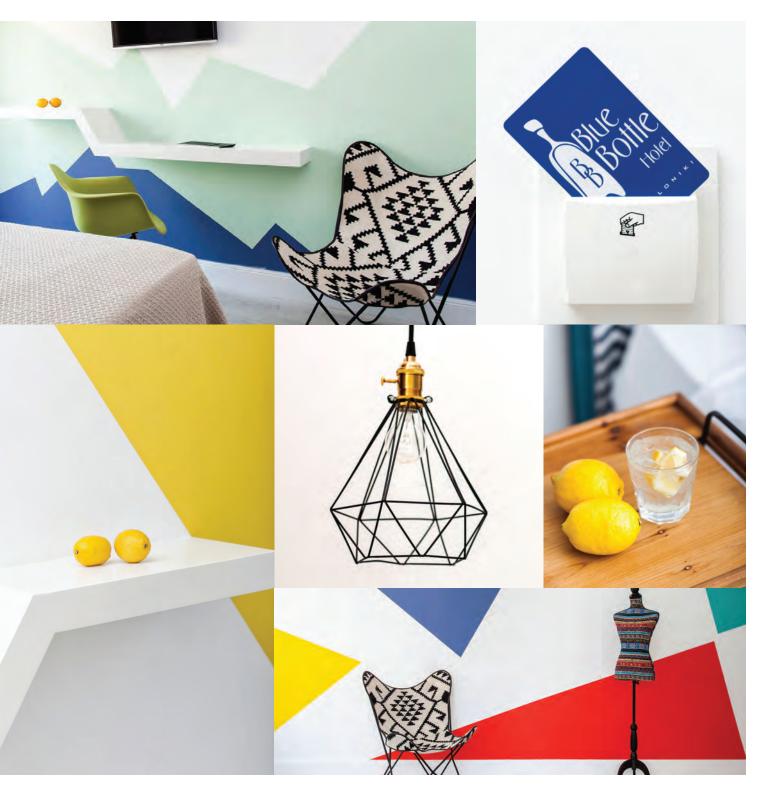
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Shaping Cyprus' Design Scene

Having unveiled their most recent work, the 'Worship Container' installation at Larnaca's inaugural Biennale, ΦΧΨ Heritage Design - comprised of curator Yianna Tsolaki, alongside designers Constantinos Economides and Marios Charalambous exemplify the talent and international reach of Cyprus' blossoming design scene as they attract world-renown.

Designers of every discipline are akin to modern-day magicians. For them, the possibilities to reinvent, meld and transform - particularly in an era of rapidly-evolving tech tools – are limitless. And when they meet kindred spirits whose gifts include conceiving and weaving the story around the objects created, a kind of perfect alchemy takes over.

So it proved for $\Phi X \Psi$ Heritage Design, a Cypriot design team formed by curator Yianna Tsolaki, and, respectively, industrial and interior designers Constantinos Economides and Marios Charalambous. ΦΧΨ's latest work is the stunning 'Worship Container' installation, among the 114 proposals chosen to be showcased at Larnaca's inaugural Biennale in the autumn of 2018 – the island's first art biennial – and picked from over 300 projects submitted by design teams from 37 countries.

"Our proposal focused on the topography of five monumental religious buildings in Larnaca, enabling the audience to experience a visual connection between man and his spiritual heritage," says Tsolaki. The sanctuaries that inspired the work are Larnaca's Orthodox, Apostolic and Catholic churches of Saint Lazarus, Sourp Stephanos, Saint Mary of Graces and Saint Joseph's, as well as the Hala Sultan Tekke mosque.

Constructed out of medium density board, steel tubes and Corian, ΦΧΨ's 'Workship Container' has echoes of a ship, as if its clean lines were poised to slice through the waves while 'bearing' an interfaith 'cargo' - in keeping with the Biennale's 'Container-Content' theme. "But creating a 'ship' wasn't the immediate intention at the start of the project - the entire creative process suggested and eventually led to the ship form, somehow carrying and 'containing' the blend of Cyprus' religious traditions." elaborates Economides.

Responsible for the narrative of 'Workshop Container', curator Tsolaki (veteran agent and product manager to an array of international





designers via her Cherry Concepts and Spaces brand) was also showcased Economides and Charalambous' work at Hamburg's PAPENHUDER 57 Gallery. She had also called upon the two young Cypriot creatives in 2014 and 2015, to produce specific items with a Cyprus context under the Glue Nicosia project – an initiative bidding to 'glue' back the world's last divided capital by re-engaging with its beauty via design.

"The diverse identity of Nicosia, both as a divided city with a buffer zone running through it, but also, as a culturally and historically rich city makes it fascinating for all involved," Tsolaki has said of Glue Nicosia. Under her curation, three concepts emerged through which Economides and Charalambous were to express themselves: The Green Line Lamp & Table, The DOTing series and the Peep Line series.

Under the DOTing line – linking an excessive fondness or love of craftsmanship to the dynamic simplicity of a circle – a mirror designed by Economides was nominated in 2018 for a prestigious German Design award in the Excellent Product Design category. Charalambous created companion hangers and a lamp under the same line.

The Green Line and Peep Line series, meanwhile, display the more obviously local slant of the trio's Glue Nicosia collaboration. These include objects

such as Economides' 'Nicosia Map Bowl', with the cylindrical container's lid depicting the namesake city's occupied northern topography as blank, and Charalambous' 'Peephole Wall Lamp', riffing on the gaps or cracks in the derelict buildings along the city's buffer zone, through which passers-by glimpse the no man's land beyond.

From national history to the personal: Economides and Charalambous additionally collaborated while they were both members of Draw Collective, formed in 2012, whose core also included interior designer Marina Sofroniou and graphic designer Omiros Panayides. As part of Draw Collective, Economides, Charalambous and Sofroniou were commissioned by the Cyprus Theatre Organisation, THOC, to create a bar installation that won a 2018 German Design prize in the Retail Architecture category.

"We loved its simplicity, and the fact that, when you see it from different perspectives... it visually shifts and changes," Charalambous had said of the installation. The 7m-long oakwood bar features identical wooden slats, with their narrower sides painted a light blue – a style element repeated 95 times and rotated 360° along the façade, so that the narrower sides disappear when viewed at 90° and 270°.

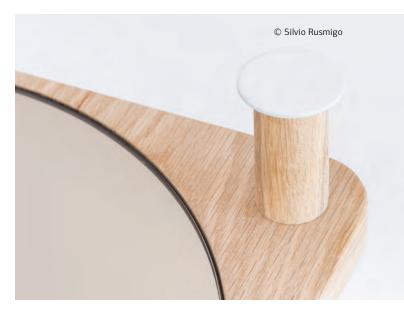




Draw Collective's multi-disciplinary 'WECY Souvenir Project' had also been well-received, debuting at the December 2013 Pop-Up Festival, a cultural response to the desolation of Nicosia's once-vibrant Makarios Avenue. "We wanted to redesign traditional Cypriot souvenirs – to show Cypriots we could move beyond the kitsch. Each item had a new story behind it, a new concept, a new identity," Charalambous had said.

Today, having begun a new chapter with Tsolaki, the ΦΧΨ team are equally focused on updating the aesthetic perspective of aspects of Cypriot heritage. And thanks to the innovative work that they and their compatriot creatives are bringing to local and international audiences, the island's design scene is coming into its own.

While it may take longer for the influence of celebrity Cypriot designer, Michael Anastassiades, to trickle down, and evolving consumer tastes to take effect, perhaps the ultimate key to the island's design appreciation lies in in its earliest beginnings. "We may not have the design tradition of places like Italy, the UK and Scandinavia," argues Economides, "but remember that we DID have designs in the everyday objects of our ancient past. "Reinventing these could be part of Cyprus' design future."





Why go?

East meets West in dazzling fashion, as mosques befriend cathedrals and modern architecture strikes up an intriguing love affair with tottering old buildings. It's chaotic but vibrant, irresistibly wild at heart, and simultaneously shrouded in an almost palpable veil of extravagance and glamour.

Wounded throughout history, its troubled past has been washed away by a remarkable spirit that outrightly rejects the meaning of surrender. Beirut is the city of reinvention, the city you can literally feel pulsate as you transverse its traffic-riddled streets that defy rules and regulations. Hosting some of the best parties in the world, this is where you'll dance like you've never danced before, drink like there's no tomorrow, puff away at those shishas at any minute of any day, and dive right into the ritual of devouring food as if it's the last supper (or last bowl of hummus) you'll ever see!

And it's hardly surprising that Lebanon's capital city was once revered as 'the Paris of the East', with picture-perfect French colonial buildings in the Beirut Souks providing the ultimate elegant playground for meticulously dressed, well-heeled fashionistas who gracefully strut their sky-high stilettos through its streets; each clutching a more extravagant designer handbag than the next.

Wander the streets of Saifi Village in the heart of downtown Beirut and visit the design studios that beckon the trendsetters, while hipsters grab

their favourite artisanal coffee. A little further afield, the hilly Ashrafieh is every explorer's paradise, with tree lined streets home to traditional French and Ottoman residential properties that sit beside shops, offices, lunch bars and more. Itching for more history? Witness it come to life at the National Museum of Beirut (Museum Street), housing one of the most extensive archaeological collections in the Middle East.

Must visit

You haven't experienced Lebanon if you haven't devoured the phenomenal food. And on Wednesdays and Saturdays, there's no better place to be than the Souk El Tayeb (www.soukeltayeb.com), the country's first open air farmer's market. Hosting around 100 small producers from around the country, you can tuck into fresh produce, while purchasing handmade crafts; be it pottery, straw baskets or lush soaps – you name it, you'll find it.

Don't leave without

Taking a seaside stroll in the Corniche – a coastal promenade lined with palm trees and packed with locals from all walks of life, from friendly fishermen to feisty families and sleek urbanites pulling up in their flashy sports cars.



Take a selfie @

One of the many colourful painted stairways in the artsy Mar Mikhael district. Pose for a photo before putting your best foot forward to explore this hip and happening neighbourhood forming an extension of Gemmayzeh and its offbeat charm. Speckled with historic buildings and hole-in the-wall shops, it's the trendy bars, chic cafés, impressive lounges and fashionable restaurants that are all the rage today.



Cyprus Airways flies to Beirut up to three times per week







Lefkara: Lace, silver & folk tales

Ask a local about the best of the island's villages, and Lefkara is sure to top the list. An easy drive from Nicosia, Larnaca and Limassol, this quaint village makes for the perfect road trip if you don't want to veer too far from the city, but are still itching to discover more about the island's past.

Lefkara is best explored on foot; discover old architecture in the cobbled alleys, engage with friendly locals who'll welcome you into their shops, and kick back at traditional taverns for a homemade taste of Cyprus.

With dazzling lace embroidery adorning practically every inch of the village – from building exteriors to coffee shops and countryside hotels – it's little wonder that local folk are so proud of their produce. The so called

'lefkaritika' are included on UNESCO's Intangible World Heritage List, but intricate lace is not the only reason that locals grin from ear to ear. Their silversmithing skills are also the best on the island!

Want more history and culture? Make a beeline for the Folklore Museum (House of Patsalos, Tel: +357 24 342326), where you'll discover more of the island's splendours.

Must-try: 'Ttavas' is the ultimate Cypriot dish originating from Lefkara. Satiate those taste buds with rice, potatoes, vegetables and lamb, slow-cooked in a casserole, and infused with cumin.



Lofow: Glorious wine land

Nestled in the towering foothills of the Troodos mountains outside Limassol, Lofou is one of the most captivating stonebuilit villages on the island. And it's also one of the island's prime winegrowing villages: the nearby hills are blanketed in rambling vines, while winegrowing traditions and customs are still intertwined in local life.

Have your cameras at the ready when you walk through the village, with its elevated location – rising almost 800 metres above sea level – providing stunning views. Head to the Neoclassical old village school to take it all in, and you'll be left breathless. Stop off at the olive mill (www.lofou.org/en/olives-len) to catch a glimpse of how the prized oil was made in bygone

days, while the Folk-Art museum provides insight into village life in centuries past. When hunger hits, try Kamares Tavern (Tel: +357 25 470719) for sumptuous meze in a traditional, stone-wall setting.

End your day with a cup of soothing herbal tea at the quintessentially Cypriot 'Xenis o Poyiatzis' (Xenis the Painter) coffee shop-cum-herb shop located on Lofou's main cobbled street, right opposite Kamares Tavern.

Top tip: While exploring, see if you can spot a vibrant street art mural portraying one of the village's locals.



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Omodos: A taste of local produce

Another bucolic winegrowing village, Omodos is a popular rural destination, but don't let the crowds put you off. Renowned for its traditional Cypriot produce of 'zivania' (a strong alcoholic spirit made from a mixture of grape pomace and local dry wines), 'arkatena koulourka' (bread rusks) and 'kiofterka' (jelly-like sweets made from grape juice), Omodos offers visitors a real taste of local village life. The good news is that sellers on the main street often offer bites to taste before buying.

The cobbled lanes of Omodos are also filled with traditional embroidery: the 'pipilla'. Women of the village take great pride in their craft and it still largely remains the pride and joy of every Cypriot household in the district.

Savour local Cypriot delicacies at Stou Kir Yiannis' tavern (15 Linou Street, Tel: 70 000100) or head down to Katoi (www.omodosevents.com) for a real twist on tradition. Wine enthusiasts will love visiting the medieval winepress, a 500-year-old wine-making machine at Ktima Gerolemo (ktimagerolemo.com).

Must-see: The Holy Cross Monastery in the village centre. One of the oldest and most famous in Cyprus, it houses what is believed to be Holy rope and wood that Jesus was crucified on, brought to Cyprus by Saint Helen.



Lania: Hidden artist's paradise

Don't let the quiet façade fool you, Lania hides countless treasures and is often celebrated as one of most picturesque villages on the island.

While the village homes are humble in appearance, foreigners and locals alike have colourfully transformed Lania with lush vegetation and wall mosaics. With relocated creatives having opened up art studios in this secluded spot of the Limassol winegrowing district, you can pop into studios and get hold of local art to take back home.

Peruse the area and you'll come across the Old Olive Press, the Shoemaker's Museum and the Commandaria Storage Museum. As a grape-cultivating village, the Old Wine Press also beckons, providing a glimpse of local wine

production methods. And while you're traversing the village centre, stand back to admire the 800-year-old oak tree.

Be sure to trace Lania's history through a permanent black and white photography exhibition which adorns the village walls. And if you happen to visit Lania in May, you'll love the 'Lanes and Courtyards of Lania' festival (Tel: +357 25 432333 for exact dates closer to the time), where the friendly women of the village open their stunning courtyards to visitors.

Best eat: Tuck into simple yet tasty Cypriot cuisine at Platanos tavern (Tel: +357 25 434273), just as you enter the village. You can't miss it!

Fikardow: Deep into times past

You won't need long to walk through the tiny village of Fikardou; a few hours may be enough to discover all the nooks and crannies. But each and every corner is worth it, with this tiny place deep in the Pitsilia countryside having won the Europa Nostra Award for cultural heritage in 1987 and declared an ancient monument.

Practically abandoned, just a handful of inhabitants remain in the village today, only re-attracting visitors after a hit Cypriot TV series was filmed in the area, showcasing the old, red-tiled-rooves which characterise the village homes that cradle the rickety cobbled lanes.

Yiannakos Tavern (Tel: +357 22 633311) welcomes visitors upon arrival, known for its local food and quirky decor. Look out for the dried, carved butternut squash hung on its walls, which you'll also spot around the village's gardens.

Two houses have been turned into the Local Rural Museum (Tel: +357 22 634731) which beckons curious visitors. The House of Katsinioros – which was named after its last owner – is a two-storey stone-built manor house with a steep-pitched wooden roof and many 16th century architectural features, showcasing old tools, agricultural mechanisms and more, while the second, that of Achilleas Dimitri, gives visitors a glimpse of a weaver's workshop and scholar's guest house.

Best sleep: For some great countryside shut eye, spend the night at the Magic Hour – Traditional House (listed on Airbnb) and experience how locals used to live in this cosy and quirky stone-built place.



Kakopetria: Up to higher heights

One of the most visited villages on the island, the Solea Valley village of Kakopetria lures explorers making their way up to Mount Olympus all year round, famed for its cool climate in the summer, and cosy charm in the winter.

In the heart of Kakopetria, you'll quickly be drawn to the central burbling River Klarios, and if you're looking to get those legs moving, venture out on a short 1km hike on the Vateri Nature Trail along the river, engulfed by tall sycamore trees. Feeling thirsty? Fill your bottles with mountain water from the fountain at the end of the trail.

Recharge your batteries with a sip of Cypriot coffee at Serenity (Tel: +357 22 922602) in the old part of the village with traditional old stone and wood houses, then head on to explore the church of Ayios Nikolaos tis Stegis, one of the ten painted churches of the Troodos region, that enjoys UNESCO's World Heritage status. Its simple 11th century stone façade stands in complete antithesis to the embellished interior, with rich murals paying heritage to the island's vibrant Byzantine past.

Must-try: Be sure to tuck into the delicious spoon sweets (bite sized fruit and vegetables preserved in syrup) sold by the women of the village outside their doors.











Ktima Christoudia, Kato Drys

Set atop a sunlit hill between the ancient villages of Kato Drys and Vavla, Ktima Christoudia captures the very essence of the Mediterranean way of life. Here, the winery's owners were themselves married: the first chapter in an ongoing love story which has since seen many a happy couple tie the knot. Open all year round, this uniquely beautiful venue consists of a spacious hall which holds up to 100 guests, while 300 can be accommodated in a summer ceremony on the flowered lawns. Catering is on-site, and the charming owners work closely with event planners to provide all the elements of a perfect day.

Tel: +357 99 034828 / ktimachristoudia.com



Ktima Dafermou, Lefkara

Steeped in history, Lefkara is the birthplace of the world-renowned Cypriot lace. But it's also – thanks to the surrounding vineyards – the home of one of the island's most spectacular boutique wineries. Known as Ktima Dafermou, the winery is divinely located. With sweeping views down the valley, and premises which join old world craft and modern aesthetics, the site delivers a richly romantic setting for your wedding. Surrounded by ivy-swathed walks and lush gardens, the outdoor venue can host 550 guests and is open from April to mid-October, while the winery itself – complete with high-vaulted ceilings and minimalist architecture – accommodates 350, and is open year-round.

Tel: +357 7000 8373 / www.dafermouwinery.com



Hadjiantonas Winery, Parekklisia

Landscaped gardens and peaceful olive groves encircle this striking white stone winery in the charming village of Parekklisia. Known island-wide for its extensive wine cellar and exquisite vintages, the award-winning Hadjiantonas Winery is also a popular choice of wedding venue, emphasising personal service and a rich attention to detail in its bid to delight the intended. An ideal 'I do' location which can accommodate up to 1000 guests, the venue is available from April to October depending on the weather, with specialist event organisers standing by to cater to your every wedding whim.

Tel: +357 25 991199 / hadjiantonas.com.cy/weddings



The Cupule, Ayia Napa

Poised on a hilltop, and bordered on three sides by the Mediterranean, The Cupule is an exquisite, purpose-built wedding venue operating between the months of April and October. Despite its proximity to the major party towns, the site is serenity itself: overlooking the glassclear waters of Cape Greco, the premises fall into a designated area of natural beauty; a quiet countryside haven crossed with nature trails and dotted with viewpoints. With its breathtaking views and comprehensive wedding services, this open-air venue can host up to 1000 guests for cocktails and caters to everything from large-scale banquets (seating 450) to intimate gatherings.

Tel: +357 99 437770 / www.thecupule.com



Elias Beach Hotel pier, Limassol

Stretching along the coast for 10km, Limassol is a sea town through and through. And you can't get any closer to wedding atop the waves than at the Elias Beach Hotel. A formal banqueting hall for an elegant indoor setting and a professional wedding team overseeing every detail ensure your wedding will be an event to remember. But it's the Sunset Pier that's lends the real romance to your occasion: here, you can hold both your ceremony and reception, and follow up with a sumptuous sit-down dinner for up to 300 guests at the Blue Paradise... making for a Mediterranean memory to last a lifetime.

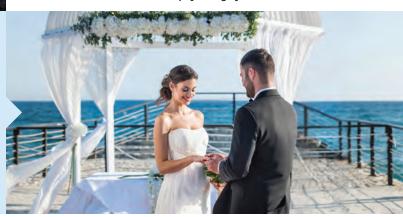
Tel: +357 25 636000 / www.kanikahotels.com/elias-beach-hotel-limassol



Paphos Mediaeval Castle

For that everlasting commitment, what better location than a place which has stood the test of time? Wrapped in history, the Paphos Mediaeval Castle was originally constructed by the Lusignan dynasty in the 13th century; for a love that will last, there's simply no better spot! While weddings no longer take place within the castle, the gloriously timeworn stone fort makes for a magnificent backdrop to your civil ceremony, and harbourside restaurants such as Poseidonas and Moorings offer a range of catering and reception services. Watch the sun set over the waves as you celebrate your new beginning!

Tel: +357 26 822270 / www.pafos.org.cv







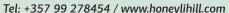
Lexeko Estate, Lythrodontas

An enchanted garden ringed by silvered olive trees, the Lexeko Estate in the village of Lythrodontas is a specialised wedding venue designed to cater to your every need. The thousand-acre estate has been meticulously remodelled to provide fantastic facilities, including a rustic lounge area, manicured lawns, and a tranquil lake – complete with swans! Swathes of white linen, strings of fairy lights, and crystal chandeliers make this the perfect setting for your country chic wedding. The all-year-round venue can cater to over 1000 guests, delivering everything from fine dining to the perfect backdrop for your wedding photos.

Tel: +357 94 268826 / lexekoestate.com

HoneyLi Hill, Melini

Set in the wooded foothills of the Troodos mountains in the beautiful village of Melini (on the borders of both Larnaca and Limassol districts), HoneyLi Hill is about as dreamy as it gets when the sun goes down over the undulating countryside. Say 'I do' from spectacular heights before sitting down for a sumptuous al fresco dinner in an outdoor space accommodating 300 guests and an indoor space seating 180. Newlyweds can even cosy up for the night in style in a special suite on the grounds, while the managers of the venue can help with wedding coordination, decoration and dining. And when your feet tire, a mini bus is at hand for transportation within the lush grounds. If you do, per chance, want a religious wedding, there's also a gorgeous on-site chapel.





Minthis Resort, Paphos

Cocooned by the greenery of Tsada, deep in the Paphos countryside, this magical choice for a destination wedding sees couples indulge in Champagne toasts surrounded by rolling hills. Add to that the endless green of a magnificent golf course, surrounded by vineyards and orchards where almond and walnut trees abound, and you're set for a day and night to remember. Whether you're after a lavish affair or something simple, Minthis Resort offers top- grade service and an array of ceremony options; exchange your vows on a grassy lawn overlooking the 18-hole championship golf course, or say 'I do' in the historic courtyard of the Byzantine monastery, for a ceremony dappled in Mediterranean sunlight. Sit down for dinner on the lawn (accommodating 180) under the moonlight, or head indoors for a chic candlelit affair in the modern and luxurious clubhouse which seats 160.

Tel: +357 26 842222 / www.minthisresort.com

Handy Hints!

We've answered the where. But what about the rest? Here are a few tips to help you prepare for your perfect destination wedding.

Who?

Wedding planners abound on the island of love! But choosing the right one can be a challenge. If you don't have a personal recommendation to hand, ask your hotel who they work with, or check out www.myguidecyprus.com/weddings/wedding-planners.

11/hat?

Marriages in Cyprus are internationally recognised and legally binding. Paperwork includes passports, birth certificates, and a Certificate of Freedom to Marry (for a full list of documentation, visit the Civil Registry section of www.moi.gov.cy). Bear in mind you should be staying in Cyprus for a minimum of three working days prior to the wedding.

When?

Book in advance. A long way in advance! There are a finite number of official locations to choose from, and no weddings are held at the weekend (though, according to the CTO, municipalities can choose to waive both these factors). Add to that the laidback Mediterranean approach to life, and your best bet is often hiring a wedding planner to smooth your path to wedded bliss. Check out www.bookyourweddingday. com to instantly book your wedding day online!

How?

As stipulated by the CTO, the only officials who can officially marry you are local dignitaries (think mayors, registrars, and the like). You need to be in close contact with the relevant municipality for much of your planning process, booking the right person to perform the marriage at the same time as checking the legality of your chosen spot.

Useful contact numbers

Weddings in Nicosia Tel: +357 22 797238

Email: civilmarriages@nicosiamunicipality.org.cy

Weddings in Paphos

Tel: +357 26 822353 / +357 26 833350 Email: civil.marriages@pafos.org.cy

Weddings in Ayia Napa

Tel: +357 23 816300

Email: weddings@agianapa.org.cy

Weddings in Limassol

Tel: +357 25 884 345 / +357 25 884354 Email: civilweddings@limassolmunicipal.com.cy Weddings in Larnaca Tel: +357 24 816564

Email: civilmarriage@larnaka.com Or for the Aradippou Municipality

Email: municipality@aradippou.org.cy





Bags of Style

Any jetsetter will tell you that the right travel bag can make or break a trip. We scoured the market to find the ultimate carry-on travel bags and the perfect arm candy to take your travels to new, more stylish heights, as you embark on your 2019 adventures. From trendy holdalls, to sleek suitcases that glide along with you every step of the way, never has cabin luggage been so appealing!

Collapsible styleParavel Stowaway

It's little wonder that Paravel's 'Stowaway' has become a cult accessory, with its ingenious twist on a classic suitcase. Totally collapsible, the bag can be tucked inside your bigger suitcase, and then used as a carry-on for the extra bits and pieces you collect on your travels! Made from the label's signature waterproof canvas and tan leather, it's playfully adorned with an 'Out of Office' motif. It also features a removable shoulder strap, Italian leather top handle and two-way lockable zipper.

The ultimate splurgeBellagio Carry-On Spinner Trunk

If you can't bear the thought of travelling to foreign lands without numerous outfit combos, but don't want to check in your luggage, then you'll no doubt be looking for something light, with plenty of space on the inside. And voilà, the Ballagio Carry-On Spinner Trunk offers a flawless combination of style and function. Now made with enlarged Hinomoto wheels, improved handle comfort and a matching interior lining for a seamless appearance, it's every traveller's dream. We love the interior pockets – perfect for storing those little accessories!

A manly affair Herschel Novel Duffel

Who said that men's travel bags can't be practical and stylish at the same time? Board the plane with a Herschel Novel Duffel and you'll be cooler than ever; ideal for a fun weekend getaway and offering plenty of storage, it even includes a convenient shoe compartment. The bag is available in a whole range of colours and patterns. We particularly love the geometric print on this one!

Flying fun Eastpak Tranverz S

You'll have a fun-filled holiday anywhere you go with this Hawaiian-inspired, leafy print, carry-on suitcase. Not keen on the pattern? There are loads more prints and colours to choose from in the Eastpak 'Tranverz S' range. The easy wheel system and telescopic handle guarantee hassle free travels, while you can adjust the bag to more or less volume, depending on what you pack, using the handy compression straps. Did we mention that it's also water-resistant and comes with a ten-year warranty?

Staying connected Away Carry-On

Both incredibly practical and stylish, this sleek carry-on could prove life changing – not only is it made out of an unbreakable polycarbonate shell, it also comes with an ejectable battery, compliant with all airline policies, that charges your phone while you're on the go (or on the fly)! It also has a built-in compression system to make the contents of your bag more compact and has two USB ports tucked under the pull handle. The bag is available in a whole range of cool colours and you can swirl your luggage around all you like with the 360° Hinomoto wheels.





/ Paravel Stowaway





Our Destinations at a Glance

/ January - September 2019





Athens, GreeceUp to seven times per week



Tel Aviv, Israel Up to 11 times per week



Beirut, Lebanon Up to 12 times per week



Prague, Czech Republic Twice a week





Thessaloniki, Greece Up to four times per week







Greek Islands (Heraklion, Rhodes, Skiathos) Twice a week





Zurich, Switzerland Twice a week





Bratislava, Slovakia Twice a week





Košice, Slovakia Once a week





