

# SPORTS

## SUNSHINE THRILLS

*Chasing the sporting dream in Cyprus*



# Cyprus unravelled

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Chic cosmopolitan towns befriend quaint stone-built villages, striking architectural feats and world-renowned ancient sites vie for attention, towering pine-clad mountains give way to pristine sparkling seas, and rambling vineyards draped over undulating foothills paint the prettiest picture beside fragrant orange groves. This, is Cyprus – a land steeped in historical and cultural splendour and endowed with a verdant natural world, where curiosity is piqued and the senses are astounded, every step of the way.

Revisit the glorious ancient past at Neolithic settlements, marvel at colourful Byzantine art in UNESCO heritage churches, ogle at mighty Roman relics, get lost on foot in beguiling historic city centres, surrender to the soothing sounds of gushing waterfalls, follow wine trails dissecting vine-covered slopes and delight the palate in mouth-watering local style. A real Mediterranean treasure trove which never ceases to amaze the curious and discerning traveller with a passion for the great outdoors, Cyprus offers an all-round invigorating experience, no matter what time of year you descend on its famous golden shores.

- **Sun soaked bliss.** The ultimate year-round destination, Cyprus is blessed with endless blue skies and warm days, even during the autumn and winter months where mild temperatures range between 15°C and 25°C.
- **East meets west.** Ideally located in the Eastern Mediterranean, the island enjoys good flight connectivity across Europe and a wide variety of destinations of historic and cultural significance in the Middle East and North Africa.
- **Multicultural charm.** Boasting a rich and intricate history spanning 11 000 years, Cyprus has been home to countless civilizations over the millennia and offers a true melting pot of cultures and ethnicities.
- **A haven of hospitality.** Everyone can expect a warm welcome here, with Cypriots embracing visitors from every corner of the globe. Traditional hospitality, friendly faces and a high-quality service industry make every stay a truly memorable experience.
- **All things authentic.** A country where a rich cultural heritage, dazzling history and untouched nature all roll into one, there are endless authentic experiences to enjoy in the space of a day on this compact island.
- **Back to basics.** The ultimate getaway for the eco-conscious traveller and avid nature lover, Cyprus is abundant in exceptional flora and fauna in unspoilt countryside, blessed with unpolluted fresh air, and boasts a laid-back lifestyle, giving everyone the chance to get 'back to basics'.
- **Easy living.** On an island where English is widely spoken, all modern amenities and digitally innovative facilities/services cater to the needs of the contemporary traveller, ensuring a relaxing stay.
- **Safety matters.** One of Europe's safest destinations with exceptionally low crime rates, first-class medical facilities also add to the appeal of a carefree Cyprus holiday.
- **A foodie's delight.** Taste buds are teased with deliciously authentic and fresh local flavours set to impress the health-conscious diner, while award-winning local wines add to the gastronomic extravaganza in this mecca of epicurean excellence.



## Rising to the challenge

From the dramatic peaks of the Troodos Massif piercing through open skies 2000 metres above sea level, to the dreamy depths of the deep blue seas where striking shades of vibrant aquamarine and azure dance in endless union, Cyprus forms a picture-perfect backdrop to any day spent outside. The keen adventurer's ultimate playground, each corner of the island offers the possibility of sheer exhilaration – the ideal setting for fun-filled family adventures, adrenaline-fuelled team activities, endurance races and marathons or professional training.

Here, in a land where dramatic scenery and a gentle climate combine, top-tier athletes and sporting enthusiasts can also take advantage of high-grade facilities and first-class services; a winning combination for al fresco action under endless sunlit skies, especially during winter months. From football, cycling, swimming, diving, sailing and beach volley to running, shooting, bowls, golf, tennis, rock climbing, and even, winter skiing, every sportsman – whether amateur or professional – enjoys a world of choice at their fingertips. State-of-the-art training facilities and grounds (including world-class Olympic swimming

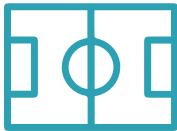
pools, modern stadiums and fully equipped athletic centres) are all situated within a short distance from each other, while modern infrastructure and a reliable communications network, is topped by an impressive choice of accommodation to suit even the most discerning visitor.

A gateway between Europe and the Middle East, with good flight connectivity around the world, Cyprus has also been recognised as an ideal training destination by National Olympic Committees, European football teams, seasoned medallists and endurance athletes. Internationally renowned annual sporting events including marathons, swimming grand prix and triathlons also lure thousands of athletes and spectators to the island, while incentive schemes add to the all-round appeal, providing hospitality to foreign sports teams, clubs and associations for their training and preparation, as well as financial aid for the organisation of sports events. And when it's time to re-fuel and re-charge, appetites are satiated with healthy cuisine, while rest is assured in a safe and hospitable environment – the ideal setting for recuperation in truly laid-back and quintessentially Mediterranean fashion.

SPORTS

# FOOTBALL

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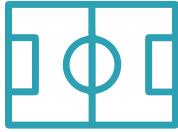
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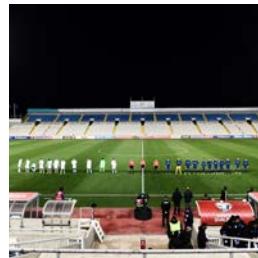
## SPORTS



# FOOTBALL:

## Game on

Famed for its beautiful weather and mild temperatures in the autumn, winter and spring months, Cyprus is ideal for pre-season training between November and April, attracting top-flight football teams who arrive to play on football pitches of the highest standard as they prepare for the season ahead. Given the close proximity to central and eastern European countries, great flight connectivity, and the allure of training under sun-drenched skies, well known teams such as CSKA Moscow, Udinese, Rapid Vienna, Ajax Youth Academy and many more (as well as women's national squads from around Europe) have arrived to sharpen their skills on Cypriot fields.





The island boasts over 100 football facilities – including top tier national stadiums, grass fields, athletic facilities and training resources – all within close proximity, while the country's modern infrastructure ensures a smooth stay that runs like clockwork, enhanced by helpful professional staff assisting with transport and equipment.

Friendly matches are also popular on the island, with support and the provision of referees for training offered by the Cyprus Football Association. The ideal setting for all kinds of football tournaments, any visit to the island can be combined with the perfect stay in competitively priced high-quality hotels, giving players and their families the chance to indulge in the ultimate time out.

SPORTS

# CYCLING

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## SPORTS

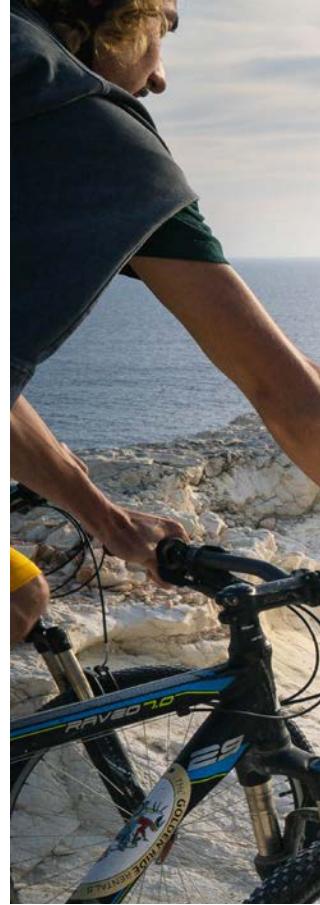


# CYCLING:

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## Wheels in motion

Speed your way along flat stretches of undeveloped coastline or take heed of the gentle crunch of your tires while traversing Cyprus' rocky and rugged interior. With over 70 well mapped cycling routes weaving their way through varied rural and urban areas, and the additional appeal of an excellent road network with little traffic, the island is a firm favourite for professional and recreational bikers alike. The perfect escape for intrepid travellers who choose to delight in the glories of road cycling or mountain biking – from cross country to downhill – rapid changes in terrain and blissful conditions set the scene for the most inspiring vacation on the saddle any time of the year.





An attractive training destination for well-known teams such as the Belgian National Team, the British Olympic Association and the Netherlands Olympic Committee, Cyprus has also lured international champions and Olympic Gold Medallists including Jaroslav Kulhavy, Sabine Spitz, Thomas Frischknecht and many more, competing, training and testing their endurance on challenging terrain. World class champions and amateur riders from around the world also descend on the island each year to partake in the thrilling Cyprus Sunshine Epic, one of the most challenging mountain bike races on the UCI Calendar, while the world famous L'Etape Cyprus by Tour de France and Cyprus Gran Fondo attract many road cycling athletes, amateurs and teams to ride in the sunshine.

Cyclingcyprus.info (the island's official cycling information website) lists numerous bike centres conveniently located across the country offering bike rentals, services, route information and assistance. The website also presents the island's various cycling routes with descriptions, maps, altitude diagrams, and downloadable routes in GPX format. Information on hotels friendly to cyclists is also provided, whether you are visiting the island for vacation, for a specific event or for targeted training.

SPORTS

# SWIMMING

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## SPORTS



# SWIMMING:

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## Making strides

An island cocooned by crystal-clear calm Mediterranean waters that consistently rank among the cleanest in Europe is nothing short of a swimmer's paradise, with its sweeping soft sand coastline interspersed by rocky outcrops and secret pebbled coves. Beyond the shimmering seas, avid water-lovers and professional swimmers can take advantage of stunning 25m and 50m open air Olympic sized swimming pools of 8-10 lanes, heated when necessary in the cooler months. Complete with one metre diving boards, three metre springboards and ten metre platforms, supplementary equipment, underwater viewing and filming windows are also available. In total, the island is home to five Olympic-sized swimming pools, with two in Pafos and the rest in Lemesos, Larnaka and Lefkosia respectively.





The ideal location for training in idyllic conditions, Cyprus has welcomed major teams from across Europe to prepare for top events in its swimming pools, from the British and Swedish Olympic swimming teams, to the Dutch, Finish and Austrian national squads. All professional swimming pools on the island are conveniently located close to first-class hotel facilities, with easy access to major airports, making transfers and travel incredibly easy, and allowing for the organisation of hassle free well-coordinated training camps. The island's key sites and major attractions are also within easy reach for moments of enjoyable downtime, while those who opt to train in one of the island's major seaside towns can make the most of refreshing dips in the sea.

Open water swimming camps are also organised in Cyprus, suitable for professionals and amateurs, while fun events including the Cyprus International Swimming Marathon, the Cyprus Swim Series, Nicosia International Swimming Gran Prix and the International Limassol Swim Meet attract swimmers from around the world.

# TRIATHLON

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## SPORTS



# TRIATHLON:

## Full speed ahead

Skim the waves of the clear blue, pedal through cycling trails off the beaten track, reach new heights in a sun-kissed mountain terrain speckled with wildflowers and alive with the intoxicating scent of herbs, and sprint alongside the glistening waters of the Med. The outdoors is the place to be in Cyprus and avid sports lovers can improve their performance and indulge in all their sporting dreams in the most varied fashion. But training in all-year round warm weather conditions isn't just about exciting escapades in nature.





Olympic-sized swimming pools and state of the art running tracks near handy facilities and accommodation add to the appeal of the island for any avid sportsman who seeks an adrenaline rush abroad in the autumn/winter and spring months.

In more recent years, fitness enthusiasts and athletes have been flocking to the island's golden shores from near and far for exhilarating triathlons, indulging in their beloved sport in the most favourable island conditions. The Ayia Napa Triathlon is a particularly popular annual event, attracting beginners and pro-athletes to swim, bike and run in one of Cyprus' most popular coastal resorts revered for its translucent turquoise seas.

The Ocean Lava Pafos is another swim-bike-run event adding to the annual adrenaline-fuelled fun, which sees triathletes test their endurance against the brilliant backdrop of a UNESCO World Heritage seaside town.

**SPORTS**

# **RUNNING**

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www.cyprus.gov.cy

## SPORTS



# RUNNING:

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## Going the distance

Practicing the sport that you love or training for a big event takes on a magical appeal in Cyprus, laced with an incredible network of trails calling out to all running enthusiasts. The short distances between country and coast add to the exciting experience, whether taking on an uphill challenge, running a good bend, or enjoying a downhill sprint.

And around every corner, the island's multi-layered past jumps to life, as myths and legends entice the curious at heart in a landscape dressed in a fine patchwork of vivid green and golden-brown hues.





Cyprus has also become a popular hot-spot for international marathons, with local and international runners perfecting their stride turnover in the most thrilling events across beautiful parts of the country. The mythical birthplace of the Ancient Greek Goddess of love and beauty sets the perfect scene for the annual Pafos marathon, while Cyprus' most hip and happening cosmopolitan seaside hub plays host to the well-known Limassol Marathon which lures thousands of athletes and excited spectators every year.

All things contemporary perfectly fuse with historic city tales in the island's capital during the Nicosia Marathon, while the Larnaka Marathon gets hearts racing by palm fringed promenades. Not just about serious sport, organisers are keen on giving international athletes and spectators alike the chance to enjoy vibrant outdoor cultural entertainment and plenty of Mediterranean-inspired fun, post-race.

No matter if you are a short or long-distance runner, a road runner or a trail runner. Cyprus island can please all kinds of runners. Visit the link below for the major running events that are taking place in Cyprus.

<https://www.visitcyprus.com/index.php/en/discovercyprus/sports-training/running>

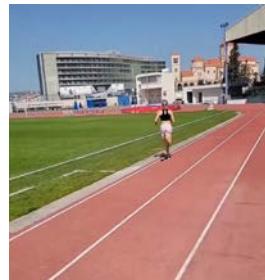
# TRACK & FIELD:

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## Leaps & bounds

A desirable destination for international athletes looking to train in a warm hospitable environment, Cyprus is home to fully equipped outdoor athletic facilities, providing the ideal training ground for national teams and individual sportsmen keen on serious pre-season training in the balmy climes of the Mediterranean.





Cyprus has welcomed members of British, Belgian and German athletic federations who have chosen the island for their track and field training, as well as many internationally acclaimed athletes from around Europe. All major towns on the island boast modern sports complexes with specifications and technical features to suit all needs - including extensive grounds and meeting rooms - with a wide range of technical equipment available.

Athletes in need of rest, recuperation and medical care can also benefit from their visit to Cyprus, whether they choose to undergo treatment for a sports-related injury at one of the island's progressive medical centres, need targeted professional physiotherapy, or simply wish to kick back and rejuvenate body and mind after an intense period of training. To this aid, healing spas and wellness centres offer sports massage and a wide range of alternative treatments and therapies to soothe and lift the spirits.

# SHOOTING:

## Eye on the target



Cyprus is incredibly proud of its international shooting champions, most notably Olympic finalist and European skeet shooting champion, Georgios Achilleos, and has placed great focus on giving some of the world's greatest sportsmen the ideal facilities to train and practice their skill behind the trigger.





Now renowned for its facilities of exceptionally high standard, the island boasts two Olympic shooting ranges which have hosted world class events, one in Lefkosia and one in the Larnaka district, as well as an international shooting range in Lemesos, and smaller ranges in Paralimni and Pafos, each with excellent facilities for professionals and keen amateurs. Open for trap, skeet and double trap, sporting και compak sporting training around the year, safety is paramount at all ranges – guns and ammunition are safely stored – while refreshments and food curb hunger pangs at the house restaurants and cafeterias.

The Cyprus Shooting Sport Federation is highly active, and organises national and international competitions, attracting professionals to the island to compete in prestigious events such as The Cyprus Grand Prix Trap-Skeet, the ISSF World Cup Shotgun and Cyprus Grand Prix Compak-Sporting. The Cyprus Shooting Sport Federation is affiliated with the International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF), the European Shooting Confederation (ESC), the Federation Internationale de Tir Aux Armes Sportives de Chasse (FITASC) and the Commonwealth Shooting Federation (CSF).

# DIVING:

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## Taking the plunge



Sandy shores and crystal-clear seas may captivate the senses, but there is far more to Cyprus than what first meets the eye. Curious travellers keen to scratch beneath the surface, will discover a whole new paradise set to astound any professional diver and delight the keen adventurer.





Renowned for its calm warm waters between 16°C-27 °C, favourable year-round weather conditions, diverse Mediterranean marine life and fantastic underwater visibility, Cyprus attracts keen scuba divers and free divers of all levels – from beginners to international divemasters – and enjoys one of the longest diving seasons in the region. Top-class diving centres and schools across the island adhere to international guidelines and regulations as members of the Cyprus Federation of Underwater Activities, while catering to all diving enthusiasts. As such, they offer a variety of international diving courses and certifications, including PADI, NAUI, SSI, CMAS, AIDA and more, while providing quality diving equipment under the guidance of fully-qualified instructors.

Over 55 top-ranking dive sites add to the appeal of the island, with tranquil waters endowed with spectacular underwater caves and tunnels, paths adorned with ancient amphora, natural and artificial coral reefs, and a variety of mesmerising wrecks adding to the mysteries of the deep. The sunken wreck of Zenobia off the coast of Larnaka is a real spectacle of the seas, rated as one of the world's top dive sites, while submerged sites of archaeological significance such as the Mazotos Shipwreck (dating to the late classical period) attracts those with a fascination for the past. Stunning new artificial reefs and dive sites add to the underwater appeal, while international scuba diving teams and free-diving athletes can make the most of the island's seas for both training and competitions.

# The sky's the limit

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Choose Cyprus for your sporting adventure, and a world of exciting leisure possibilities await, whether indulging your wanderlust on a solo escape or enjoying an extended stay with friends and family. Beaches of every kind beckon, from rocky, wild and windswept to sandy and serene, backed by sleepy seaside towns providing an ideal escape. Here, active types can enjoy every watersport imaginable by sun-kissed shores or escape from the norm with a languorous sailing trip around the island's coast.

Further inland, the tranquil countryside sets an altogether different scene, where quiet undulating lands invite travellers to enjoy leisurely hikes and walks through rich landscapes scattered with remnants of a bygone era. Cobblestone streets cradled by terra-cotta roofed houses adorned with tumbling bougainvillea seduce the curious visitor in remote villages, as elderly inhabitants wave to greet passers-by. Off-the-beaten track museums and cute cultural centres add to the intrigue of yesteryear; the perfect introduction to Cyprus' intricate history and culture. And there is nowhere more tempting than the island's rural taverns or family-run eateries, where tables are laden with fresh delicacies made to perfection by local folk, who have mastered recipes lovingly handed down from generation to generation.

All this, with a blossoming new creative gastronomy gaining momentum, as passionate chefs reinvent classic tastes with a contemporary twist. Fine eateries set to thrill selective gastronomes flourish alongside boutique wineries leaving their mark on the international wine scene while offering a taste of the island's finest (and often awarded) full-bodied reds, crisp whites and fruity roses. With a colourful winemaking history dating almost 6000 years, new achievements draw on past glories, and no trip to Cyprus is complete without a taste of the deliciously sweet world famous Commandaria, celebrated as the oldest wine in the world still in production. Travellers can even get better acquainted with the island's hidden tales by partaking in themed itineraries that provide deeper insight into the country's history, culture and gastronomy.

When all is said and done, rest comes easy in countryside hotels and renovated village homes providing the most authentic local experience in rustic style. For the holistically minded, wellness retreats tucked away in serene surroundings offer the ultimate getaway, a world away from reality. No matter what your style or personal preference, the sky truly is the limit in Cyprus!

# DESTINATION LABELS

Our destination labels have been created to make sure you get the most out of your stay at our beautiful Mediterranean island! Go through our list of quality-assured activities and find the one that matches your own unique taste. All you have to do, is look for the accreditation labels along your chosen route and enjoy a quality experience at your own pace!



[www.heartlandoflegends.com](http://www.heartlandoflegends.com)





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