

CYPRUS EDEN ROUTES

EDEN European
Destinations of
Excellence



EUROPEAN UNION





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1. CYPRUS IN OUR HEARTS

Cyprus is the third largest island of the Mediterranean at the south-eastern corner of the European Union and is situated at the cultural, lingual and historic crossroads between Europe, Asia and Africa. It is an island rich in history and tradition. Its name was established by Homer's time as it is mentioned both in the Iliad and the Odyssey.

Cyprus is also known as the Island of Aphrodite, as according to Greek Mythology, the Goddess Aphrodite (= born of the foam) was born near Venus Rock on the coast of Pafos, hence the adjective Cypris is ascribed to the Goddess.

The history of Cyprus begins with the first appearance of humans on the island about the 10th millennium B.C. while the first Achaeans settled in Cypriot ports in 1400 B.C. The geographical location of Cyprus played an important role in its troubled history as it became a reference point for many civilisations: Phoenicians, Assyrians, Persians, Egyptians, Romans, Byzantines, Crusaders, Franks, Venetians, Ottomans and British, each leaving behind visible signs all over the island. The island is an open museum: Neolithic settlements, ancient Greek and Roman theatres, mosaics, Byzantine and Latin Churches and Monasteries, Venetian walls, Byzantine castles, Ottoman Mosques and colonial buildings.

Cyprus is composed of fertile valleys, vineyards, endless beaches and high mountains, with the Troodos mountain range occupying the best part of the north west of the island. Fragrant pine forests and snowy mountain tops co-exist with the blue waters of the Mediterranean. The climate is Mediterranean with long, hot summers and mild sunny winters with low rainfall that permits touring of the island.

The biggest cities in Cyprus are the capital Lefkosia (Nicosia), Lemesos (Limassol) Larnaka and Pafos, while on the coastline the areas of Agia Napa, Paralimni and Polis Chrysochous have developed into popular tourist destinations. Many regions of Cyprus preserve the traditional way of life to this date, keeping alive their traditions and customs. Cypriot folk art (weaving, embroidery, woodcarving, pottery and silversmithing), Cypriot wines and Cyprus cuisine are famous all over the world. Cypriots are famous for their friendliness while a great privilege for the visitors is the easy communication in English.

2. WHAT IS EDEN-EUROPEAN DESTINATIONS OF EXCELLENCE

EDEN-European Destinations of Excellence is run in the frame of the European Programme COSME, which is co-funded by the European Commission – Tourism Unit. It is an initiative that promotes development models of sustainable tourism across Europe and focuses on annual national competitions that lead to the selection of a tourist ‘destination of excellence’ for each participating country. Through the selection of destinations, EDEN effectively achieves the objective of drawing attention to the values, diversity and common features of European tourist destinations and in parallel enhances the promotion of emerging European destinations, creating a platform for propagating correct practices throughout Europe and promotes networking among the selected destinations.

This European quest for excellence in tourism is developed around an annual theme, selected by the European Commission in association with the national tourism bodies. The main feature of the selected destinations is their commitment to social, cultural and environmental sustainability of tourism.

The Initiative, to which 25 EU countries and other candidate countries participate, aims to award emerging, little-known destinations. The EDEN initiative helps to spread the sustainable practices used in the awarded destinations across the EU and to convert them to poles of attraction for visitors all around the year as well as their use by the relevant authorities as advertising and promotional tools towards the public at large.

3. EDEN-EUROPEAN DESTINATIONS OF EXCELLENCE IN CYPRUS

The EDEN Initiative in Cyprus is managed by the Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CTO). Since 2007, CTO organizes the competition for the selection of the European Destination of Excellence according to the annual theme. The awarded destinations in Cyprus are:

- 2007, Troodos “Best Emerging Rural Destinations”.
- 2008, Agros “Tourism and Local Intangible Heritage”.
- 2009, Vouni (Pano) Panagia “Tourism and Protected Areas”.
- 2010, Kato Pyrgos “Aquatic Tourism”.
- 2011, Kalopanagiotis “Tourism and Regeneration of Physical Sites”.
- 2012, Polis Chrysochous “Accessible Tourism”.
- 2014, Pitsilia “Tourism and Local Gastronomy”.



Cyprus is an ideal destination offering all kinds of tourism, covering the preferences of even the most demanding visitors. Culture, gastronomy, wonderful climate and 4 seasons in full array offer a large spectrum of choices in images and activities.

The suggested tourist routes below, combine unique breath-taking landscapes, sites of cultural interest, historic monuments, many beaches of unique beauty, picturesque villages, rich vegetation, special fauna, gastronomy and everything else that may intrigue the visitor's interest. EDEN tourist routes connect geographically the awarded National Destinations of Excellence EDEN, offering to the visitor the possibility to discover Cyprus of unique natural beauty, of green scenery, of long-standing tradition and tumultuous history.

It is up to you to choose the route that matches your mood! You may combine all of them as long as time permits! The only thing left is to discover yourselves those parts of Cyprus that speak to your heart



USEFUL INFORMATION:

- All awarded national EDEN destinations offer the possibility of accommodation following a reservation.
- For more information about accommodation you can refer to the catalogue of Hotels and Tourist Establishments which is available on CTO's website.
- For accommodation in traditional establishments you may visit the website of the Cyprus Agrotourism Company www.agrotourism.com.cy
- All routes are on asphalt roads.

YOU WILL NEED:

- Informative leaflets/electronic devices. The Cyprus Tourism Organisation offers free tourist maps of Cyprus and of various regions as well as leaflets for special interests such as wine routes, cycling and nature trails. All the above can be found at <http://www.visitcyprus.com>,
- Shoes fit for hiking or even cycling.
- Hat, sunglasses, sunscreen lotion and bathing suit, there is a good chance you will need it.
- Camera to “lock” for ever the beautiful scenery and your experiences.
- Binoculars to observe the fauna.
- Mobile phone, in case of emergency.
- Full tank of petrol in the car.
- Raincoat for winter days.

REFERENCE

EDEN Route 1

-  Picnic site
-  Arch. site / Museum
-  Church/Monastery
-  Path
-  Dam
-  Forest
-  River
-  Awarded Destination





EDEN ROUTE 1



EDEN ROUTE 1 is a mountainous exploration of the beautiful hinterland of Cyprus, crossing the Troodos range among beautiful, picturesque villages and rich vegetation. The starting point is the picturesque region of Pitsilia, that includes several villages of the Districts of Lemesos (Limassol) and Lefkosia (Nicosia), on both the north and south part of the Troodos range.

The villages of Pitsilia preserve to this day and to a large degree their traditional architecture that bears witness to their long and rich history. Some are built on steep slopes amidst vineyards while others stretch over lush green valleys. The four head villages of the region are Agros, Palaichori, Pelendri and Kyperounta while smaller villages are Louvaras, Kalo Chorio Lemesou, Zoopigi, Potamitissa, Agridia Lemesou, Dymes, Chandria, Agios Pavlos, Platanistasa, Alona, Askas, Fterikoudi, Lazania, Agios Ioannis Pitsilias, Kato Mylos, Lagoudera, Agios Theodoros Pitsilias, Polystypos, Livadia, Saranti, Alithinou and many others, each one with its uniqueness completing the multifaceted aspect of this region's unique beauty.

Pitsilia is considered a blessed place! The natural environment is rich with slopes planted with vines and fruit-bearing trees: almonds, hazels, walnuts, apples, pears, cherries etc. The region is also particularly known for its traditional products such as rosewater, sausages, soutzioukkos (made from must), lountza (smoked pork), many and varied sweets in jars, jams, liqueurs and different kinds of bread. An important position in this gastronomic richness is occupied by the famous wine Commandaria and the authentic Cyprus zivania (made by the distillation of marc, that is the remnants of grapes). The Pitsilia region was awarded as Winning Destination 2014 in the frame of the Programme COSME 2014 European destinations of Excellence EDEN VII with the theme "Tourism and Local Gastronomy".

Begin your tour in the Pitsilia region from the mountainous village of Palaichori, rich in history and culture. Palaichori is made up of two Communities and two local councils, Palaichori Oreinis and Palaichori Morfou, separated by a natural boundary, the stream of Palaichori.







INFORMATION OF HISTORIC INTEREST:

The statue of the Cypriot Mother praises the ethos and the love for the country displayed by the mothers who lost their children during the liberation struggle of 1955-1959.



INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

- The Church of Agios Georgios dating from about 16th -17th Century.
- The Church of Panagia Chrysopantanassa of the 16th Century with frescoes influenced by both western and byzantine styles, especially by the artistic expression of the era of the Paleologi.
- The Church of Metamorfosis tou Sotiros (the Transfiguration of The Saviour) with its wooden-roof, single-aisle style, built in the 16th Century and listed in the World Heritage Monuments of UNESCO.
- The Church of Agios Loucas, at the site of an older wooden-roof church.



INFORMATION FOR NATURE LOVERS:

- Nature trail Agrotipos – Appis, 6.5 km.



From Palaichori you may continue towards Agros which is just 48km from Lemesos (Limassol) via road E110. Its name comes from the Monastery of the Great Agros (agros in Greek is field) that, according to tradition, was built by 40 monks who settled there from Asia Minor at the time of iconoclasm. The Monastery was at the site of the Church of Panagia of Agros of today. The village is rich in history, traditions and natural environment. It is no accident that it is famous for the distillation of rosewater and the cultivation of roses. Agros was proclaimed Winner Destination 2008 in the frame of EDEN initiative as “European Destination of Excellence in Intangible Heritage”.

POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Frangoulides Museum, which is one of the most important representatives of Cypriot artists and the pioneer among Cypriot painters and hagiographers.
- Traditional Mill and Traditional Press, depicting rural life of the villagers in older times.



INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

- The Churches of Agros present particular interest from the point of byzantine architecture: the Churches of Panagia Eleousa and Timios Prodomos dating from the 19th Century, the Church of Agios Gerasimos and the Chapel of Agia Kyriaki 5 km northeast of the village. Of great historic and religious value is the Byzantine small Church – Museum of the Monastery of Megas Agros. The iconostasis, 12th Century icons, old books and other historic artefacts salvaged from the demolition of the Monastery of Megas Agros.



INFORMATION FOR NATURE LOVERS:

There are two (2) Nature Trails that predispose the traveller to explore the mountainous area:

- Linear Trail Agros-Madari, 7 km,
- Circular Trail Agros-Kato Mylos, 6 km.

In addition, Agros offers three (3) parks in specially-designed areas for rest:

- Anastasia Park
- Agios Loukas Park
- Kaouras Park

At a distance of about 10km towards Polystypos Community, one may enjoy the Hazel Forest of Pitsilia, protected by the NATURA 2000 Network.



GASTRONOMY:

Enquire on how rosewater is produced and taste the traditional spoon sweets. Try the traditional soutzioukko and palouze (made from must), smoked and wine delicatessen!

If you so wish, you may continue to the west part of Pitsilia, towards Pelendri. This is a mountainous village at an elevation of 880 m, surrounded by hills just 40 km from Lemesos. It is important to note that Pelendri existed as a settlement from the medieval times, reported by Louis de Mas Latrie as Pelendres or Pelondres which in 1353 served as a feud by Jean de Lusignan, member of the royal family of Cyprus.

A stroll in the centre of the village convinces the traveller that it is one of the most picturesque villages of Cyprus which largely conserves traditional folk architecture in its buildings and safeguards its rich cultural heritage.





POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Freedom Monument
- Propylea
- Heroes Square
- Community Park



INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

Visit the Church of the Holy Cross with its wonderful frescoes of the 14th Century, which is listed in the UNESCO World Heritage List as well as the Church of Panagia Katholiki of the 16th Century.



GASTRONOMY:

Try the traditional delicatessen, tsamarella (dried goat meat), traditional Cyprus meze washed down by traditional zivania (spirit). Unforgettable tastes!

The village of Zoopigi is worth a visit and is located at about 30 minutes from Pelendri. There you can visit the Koumantaria museum as well as local wineries and try Commandaria with local delicacies.

Continuing the tour towards Troodos, visit Kyperounta, one of the highest villages of Cyprus, located at the foot of Madari. Kyperounta is about 43km north of Lemesos and 78km from Lefkosia. The village is famous for its excellent climate and this is why the Colonial British Government established a Sanatorium for breathing diseases. The inhabitants are mainly occupied with farming, cultivating vineyards and wine producing. Kyperounta maintains to this date the traditional folk architecture of Cyprus.



INFORMATION OF HISTORIC INTEREST:

During the Ottoman occupation, the village was split in two neighbourhoods separated by Kouris River. The houses were built in such a way so as to “communicate internally” and their joined rooftops formed a virtual road. This particular architecture helped the villagers to escape in case of attacks and pillage by the Ottoman officials.

POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Museum of Traditional Life and Natural History.
- Struggle Museum.
- Digenis Pine Tree.



INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

- The Church of Agia Marina is of a unique kind as its roof has internal frames supported on wooden pillars on exterior stone walls.
- The Church of Panagia and Chrysosotiros.
- The Chapel of Panagia Theotokos.
- The Church of Agios Arsenios.



INFORMATION FOR NATURE LOVERS:

- Linear Trail Doxa soi o Theos-Moutti tis Choras, 2km
- Linear Trail Doxa soi o Theos –Pyrofylikio (Fire Lookout) 3,8km
- Circular Trail Teisia tis Madaris, 3km



GASTRONOMY:

Kyperounta produces 33% of the Cyprus production of apples and pears while the model winery of the village has been awarded in many competitions.



The route continues climbing the Troodos range through an astonishing natural forest, rich in fauna and in geological formations as well. Your next stop is Troodos Square at an altitude of 1725 m, one of the main poles of attraction in the area, both in winter and in summer.

The entire complex of the mountainous villages of Troodos was a Winning Destination in 2007, as the Cypriot “Best Emerging Rural Destination” in the EDEN initiative. The visitor can tour by car the wider Troodos area and visit its picturesque villages and resorts.



INFORMATION OF HISTORIC INTEREST:

In the times of British rule (1878-1960), because of the warm climate of the capital Lefkosia (Nicosia), the administration of the colonial government moved to Troodos.



INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

Visit the churches featuring the UNESCO World Heritage List. Churches with wonderful frescoes, some dating from the 11th Century:

- Church of the Cross of Agiasmati in Platanistasa village.
- Church of Agios Nikolaos tis Stegis in Kakopetria village.
- Church of Panagia tou Araka in Lagoudera village.
- Church of Panagia in Moutoullas village.
- Church of Panagia Podithou in Galata village.
- Church of Archangel Michael in Pedoulas village.
- Church of Panagia tis Asinou in Nikitari village.



INFORMATION FOR NATURE LOVERS:

There are four (4) Nature Trails that start near the square:

- Linear Trail Persefoni 3km (Troodos Square – Makria Kontarka)
- Circular Trail Atalanti 14km (Troodos Square – Chromio - Square)
- Circular Trail Artemis 7km (Chionistra)
- Linear Trail Kalidonia 3km (Kryos Potamos – Kalidonia Waterfalls - Platres)

The area offers picnic sites where one can enjoy a meal in the countryside. However, care must be taken to light fires only where permitted and in designated places.

- Prodomos Dam (5km from Troodos Square)
- Kampos tou Livadiou (2km from Troodos Square)
- Armyrolivado (2.5km from Troodos Square)
- Livadi tou Pashia (2.3km from Troodos Square)





INFORMATION FOR SPORTS LOVERS:

- During winter months, four (4) ski slopes become available on Olympus!
- Throughout the year, one may enjoy a calm horse ride on the horses available at the Square.
- In August, a tennis tournament is usually organised at the courts near Dolphin Restaurant.

Troodos area is well-known for its network of bicycle routes. The many non-organised routes cross villages, beautiful landscapes and mountains. There is a specific cyclic route network marked in blue on the road of a total length of 57km. The network exploits public asphalted roads and forestry dirt roads. The cyclic route can be divided in three (3) parts:

- Psilodentro (Platres) – Karvounas, distance 16.2km
- Karvounas – Prodromos, distance 22.7km
- Prodromos – Psilodentro (Platres), distance 18.2km

The Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CTO) offers a free special leaflet for the bicycle network of Troodos.





GASTRONOMY:

For wine-lovers a special route by car is offered titled “Cyprus Wine Routes”. Try local wine at the wineries of the region, where the inhabitants maintain the traditional way of viniculture. We specially recommend tasting the famous Koumandaria in one of the 14 villages of the route with the same name, or a wine of the local variety “xynisteri” (white) or “mavro” (red) in the route “Wine villages”. Don’t forget to ask to try the local Zivania.

The Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CTO) offers a free special leaflet called “Cyprus Wine Routes”.

If you want to spend the night, nearby (at about 9 km) from Troodos Square you can find the village of Platres with many types of accommodation establishments. Platres exists since the reign of the Lusignans (Frankish era 1192-1489 A.D.) and the Venetians (1489-1571 A.D.). The area is rich in natural environment and history and will be an enjoyable stop in your tour.



INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

- The Church of Panagia Faneromeni.
- The Chapel of Panagia Iamatiki (Samatziotissa).
- The Chapel of Agios Nikolaos.
- At a distance of 5km from Platres you may visit the Holy Monastery of Trooditissa.



INFORMATION FOR NATURE LOVERS:

There are three (3) Nature Trails in the area:

- Linear Trail Kalidonia, 3km.
- Circular Trail Pouziari, 9km.
- Linear Trail Myllomeri, 1km.
- A unique spectacle is offered by the waterfalls of Kalidonia and Myllomeri.



GASTRONOMY:

Platres are famous for their traditional food. One must try stafythkia (raisins), epsima (concentrated grape juice), palouze, soutzioukko, kiofterka (traditional sweets).



From Troodos Square you follow E910 road towards Prodromos, Pedoulas, Moutoullas and Kalopanagiotis. At the very beginning of the route, it is suggested to follow the signs for climbing to the top of Olympos, the highest point in the island (1951m) and enjoy the beautiful scenery.

Prodromos village is built on the slope of the mountain at 1380m altitude. It is the highest village in Cyprus. On the top of the mountain is the imposing hotel Berengaria, known as the "hotel of the kings", which today is abandoned but hopefully it may operate again in the future. Prodromos is ideal for rest and refreshment.



INFORMATION OF HISTORIC INTEREST:

It is said that in the time of the Ottomans and even earlier, at the time of the Venetians and Franks, the inhabitants were charged with the task of collecting snow in pits and maintaining it to be sent to the capital Lefkosia and other parts of the island during summer. This fact is recorded by the Russian monk Vassili Barsky who visited the village and the nearby Monastery of Trikoukia in 1735.



INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

The Monastery of Panagia Trikoukia is nearby and several nuns live there. Many Archbishops of Cyprus descend from Prodromos such as Makarios I, Makarios II, Kyrillos II and Sofronios III Finievs.



INFORMATION FOR NATURE LOVERS:

- Linear Path Prodromos – Zoumi, 3km
- Linear Path Prodromos Dam – Stavroulia, 4.5 – 5.5km (choice of two options)
- Prodromos Dam Picnic Area
- “Kampi tou Kalogirou” Picnic Area

The road connection of Prodromos to the nearby villages is done by means of winding roads due to the mountain relief of the area. At a distance of about 3km lies the village of Pedoulas. Rich in history, it dates back to Byzantine times while during the rule of the Franks and the Venetians it was royal property. It is surrounded by pine forests, natural water sources and cherry trees.



INFORMATION OF HISTORIC INTEREST:

- Byzantine Museum showcasing icons and holy relics (13th-20th Century).
- Folk Museum presenting the course of social and economic development of the community.



INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

There are many churches worth a visit in Pedoulas. However you should not miss a visit to the Church of Archangel Michael (1472) that is included in the List of World Heritage Monuments of UNESCO. The frescoes are uniquely beautiful and the iconostasis of the Church bears written decoration dating from the 15th Century.

The EDEN Route 1 terminates at the village of Kalopanagiotis. Kalopanagiotis is famous for its traditional architecture and the renovation of most of its buildings, a fact contributing to its award as “European Tourism Destination of Excellence in Regenerations of Physical Sites” in the framework of the EDEN Initiative.

Walk through the paved alleys of the village and admire the traditional architecture of its buildings. The department of Antiquities has declared a number of the houses as old monuments. Tour the nature, enjoy the lush natural environment. Setrahos river creates a magic scenery, nature comes to life and imagination gallops to faraway times.

POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Byzantine Museum exhibiting ecclesiastic treasures of priceless value
- Venetian Bridge
- Kykkos Water Mill



INFORMATION OF HISTORIC INTEREST:

As there are many sulphurous water sources, during pro-Christian times there was a spa in the area. The healing properties of these sources were famous in the past, making the village a place of rest at the times of the Romans, the Byzantines and the Franks.



INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

The most important monument of the village is the church complex of Agios Ioannis Lampadistis which is included in the UNESCO List of Monuments of World Heritage



INFORMATION FOR NATURE LOVERS:

- Circular Path Neromylos Kykkou, 2km.



CULTURAL EVENTS AND FESTIVALS ON **EDEN** ROUTE 1

- Apple Festival in Kyperounta
- Cherry Festival in Pedoulas
- Hazel Feast in Platanistasa
- Hazel Festival in Polystypos
- Zivania Festivals in Pelendri and Alona
- Peach Festival in Kato Mylos
- Rose Feast in Agros

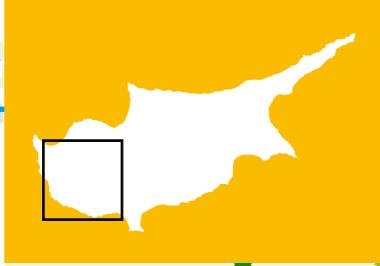
It is worth noting that the entire route is within the geographic area of the Troodos Geopark which is included in UNESCO Global Geoparks because of its particular geological heritage that constitutes Troodos a point of reference of geology globally. Imagine that during your tour you ascend to the core of the earth. All the layers of the Oceanic Crust at your feet!



REFERENCE

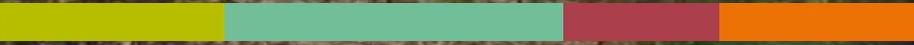
EDEN Route 2

-  Picnic site
-  Arch. site / Museum
-  Church/Monastery
-  Path
-  Dam
-  Forest
-  River
-  Awarded Destination





EDEN ROUTE 2



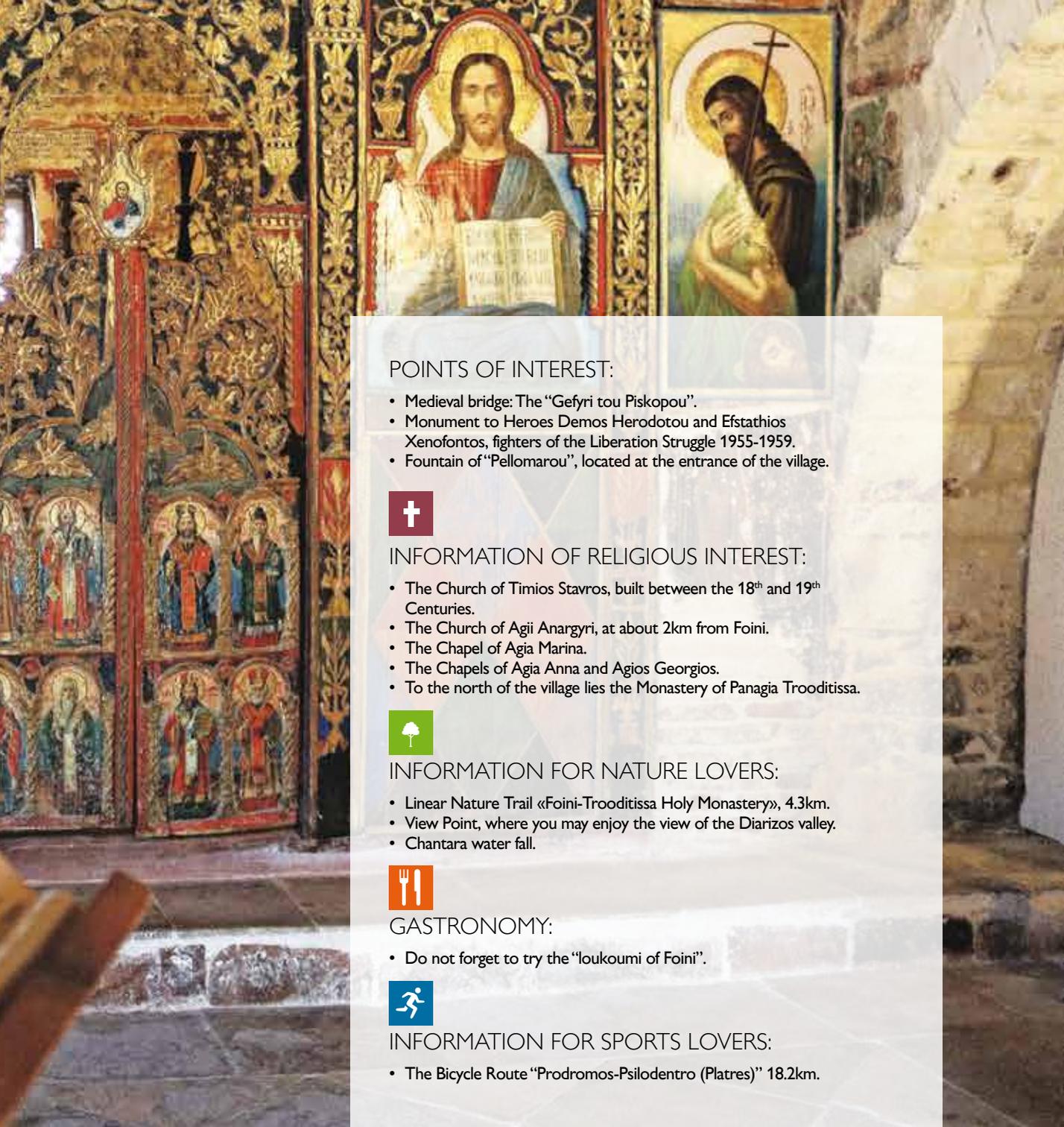


EDEN ROUTE 2 combines the tranquillity of Cypriot countryside with the history of wine. Diarizos valley constitutes route 3 in “Cyprus Wine Routes”, passing from 14 semi-mountainous villages that produce 18 different varieties of wine –making grapes with the local “mavro”, the familiar red variety, being the most important one. For more information visit the website of the Cyprus Tourism Organisation (<http://www.visitcyprus.com>) to procure the electronic version of “Cyprus Wine Routes”.

Meanwhile, the EDEN ROUTE 2 can well be the continuation of EDEN ROUTE 1. Start your tour at Foini, one of the most picturesque villages, built in a lush green environment at the foot of Troodos. Foini was proclaimed second destination in “European Destinations of Excellence - EDEN 2010 Tourism and Regenerations of Physical Sites”. It is famous for its grand and special pottery tradition, the traditional local wooden chairs and the crafting of the traditional Vourka tou Voskou (Shepherd’s backpack).

Walk the alleys, admire the traditional houses built of brick and stone and head to the square. There is the Pilavakion Museum of Folk Art housed in a 16th Century building. The Museum contains representative ceramic creations of Foini, tools and farming implements as well as older everyday objects used by our ancestors.





POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Medieval bridge: The “Gefyri tou Piskopou”.
- Monument to Heroes Demos Herodotou and Efstathios Xenofontos, fighters of the Liberation Struggle 1955-1959.
- Fountain of “Pellomarou”, located at the entrance of the village.



INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

- The Church of Timios Stavros, built between the 18th and 19th Centuries.
- The Church of Agii Anargyri, at about 2km from Foini.
- The Chapel of Agia Marina.
- The Chapels of Agia Anna and Agios Georgios.
- To the north of the village lies the Monastery of Panagia Trooditissa.



INFORMATION FOR NATURE LOVERS:

- Linear Nature Trail «Foini-Trooditissa Holy Monastery», 4.3km.
- View Point, where you may enjoy the view of the Diarizos valley.
- Chantara water fall.



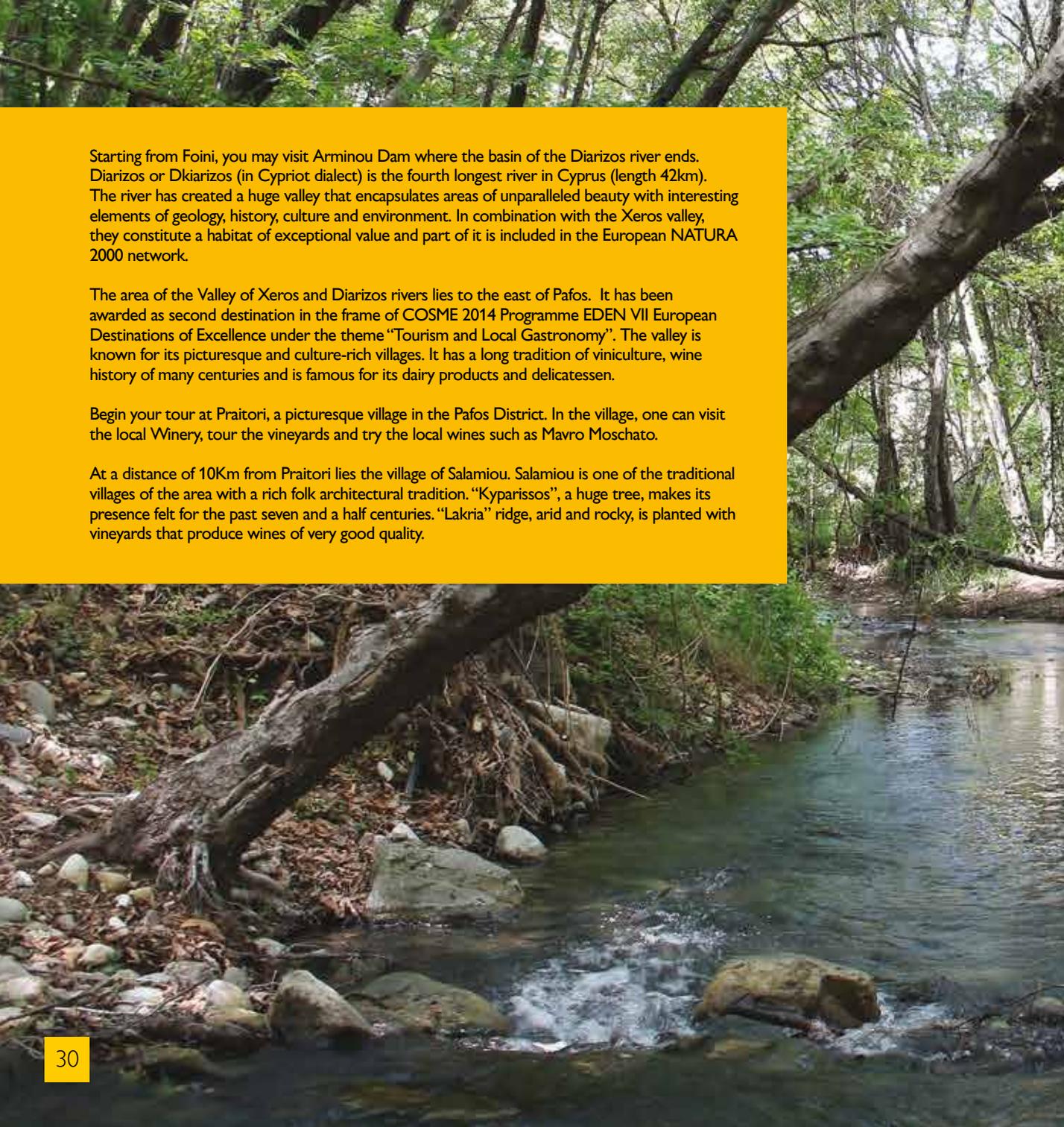
GASTRONOMY:

- Do not forget to try the “loukoumi of Foini”.



INFORMATION FOR SPORTS LOVERS:

- The Bicycle Route “Prodromos-Psilodentro (Platres)” 18.2km.



Starting from Foini, you may visit Arminou Dam where the basin of the Diarizos river ends. Diarizos or Dkiarizos (in Cypriot dialect) is the fourth longest river in Cyprus (length 42km). The river has created a huge valley that encapsulates areas of unparalleled beauty with interesting elements of geology, history, culture and environment. In combination with the Xeros valley, they constitute a habitat of exceptional value and part of it is included in the European NATURA 2000 network.

The area of the Valley of Xeros and Diarizos rivers lies to the east of Pafos. It has been awarded as second destination in the frame of COSME 2014 Programme EDEN VII European Destinations of Excellence under the theme "Tourism and Local Gastronomy". The valley is known for its picturesque and culture-rich villages. It has a long tradition of viticulture, wine history of many centuries and is famous for its dairy products and delicatessen.

Begin your tour at Praitori, a picturesque village in the Pafos District. In the village, one can visit the local Winery, tour the vineyards and try the local wines such as Mavro Moschato.

At a distance of 10Km from Praitori lies the village of Salamiou. Salamiou is one of the traditional villages of the area with a rich folk architectural tradition. "Kyparissos", a huge tree, makes its presence felt for the past seven and a half centuries. "Lakria" ridge, arid and rocky, is planted with vineyards that produce wines of very good quality.



INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

- The Church of Agia Varvara.
- The Monastery of Panagia Salamiotissa that exists since the beginning of the 16th Century.
- At a distance of about 5 minutes, one may visit the Monastery of Agios Georgios in the village of Mesana, that was built in the 15th Century and admire the old frescoes in its interior as well as the gothic style Church of Agios Tychikos.



INFORMATION FOR NATURE LOVERS:

- Environmental Education Centre where one may be informed on the fauna and flora of the area.
- Linear Path of Nature Study “Moutti tis Salamious”.
- “Kyparissos” Picnic area.



GASTRONOMY:

- Visit the Salamiou local winery and taste the delicious local wine.
- According to European Legislation, the Local Wines of Pafos are considered as of Protected Designation of Origin.

Turn southwest towards Pentalia and specifically to the Monastery of Panagia tou Sinti that dominates the bank of Xeros river. The exact date of the establishment of the Monastery remains unknown, however documents prove its existence in Venetian times. The restoration of the Monastery was completed in 1997, in which year it was awarded the Europa Nostra European cultural heritage award.

From there you may visit Amargeti, a uniquely beautiful village with significant archaeological findings, which belongs to the Ampelohoria (wine villages). Amargeti was a fief during the times of the Franks and the Venetians while sculptures and inscriptions on statue bases of the Hellenistic and Roman periods have also been found. Before leaving Amargeti do not forget to visit the stone bridge “Gefyri tou Routhouniou” at the location Zimpounieris, the “Vota tou Piterou” at the east of the village and the ruins of the church of Agios Agathonikos, declared as ancient monument by the Department of the Antiquities.

Around Xeros river you will come across many small picturesque villages, each with its own merits and in older times they were full of life. Even today the inhabitants offer generously their memorable hospitality.

POINTS OF INTEREST:

- In Choletria, the women still use the “Voufa” or loom.
- In Anarita the location names have been saved from generation to generation and are inspired by the Saints and the people, the traits of the soil and from everyday life stories.
- Visit the watermill of flourmill in Nikokleia.
- In Stavrokonnou notice the intact, long-standing architecture of the buildings with the characteristic “makrynarka” (very long rectangular room in the main part of the house).



INFORMATION OF HISTORIC INTEREST:

- Copper Age settlements were found in the village of Souskiou.
- Excavations confirmed that Koukklia, the kingdom of Palaipaphos, were settled at the Mycenaean era.
- Tradition narrates that Choletria was previously located at Agia Irini (near the village). However, as it was on a hill and visible from the sea it became an easy target to the Saracens and other invaders. The inhabitants were obliged to relocate to the banks of Xeros for protection from raids.
- The village of Nikokleia was named after Nikoklis, the last King of the ancient kingdom of Palaipaphos who had his palace at that location.





INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

- The Church of Agios Demetrios in Nikokleia was built in the 18th Century.



INFORMATION FOR NATURE LOVERS:

- Enjoy the rich fauna and flora as you tour the two rivers.
- The valleys of Xeros and Diarizos have a huge bird watching interest as they host flocks of migratory birds. The rare and protected species of vulture (*Gyps fulvus*) resides in the area.
- Admire the rare rock formations of Mamonia complex, a special and tectonically composition of igneous and sedimentary rocks.
- The rock of Hasanboulia is found after the village of Kidasi. These are oversized rocks that leave a narrow passage between them. Their name comes from three fugitives who had their lair there at the end of the 19th Century.



GASTRONOMY:

- Try the traditional halloumi and zivania .



INFORMATION FOR SPORTS LOVERS:

- You may exercise the adventurous sport of rock climbing on the famous rock of the Hasanboulia.

Continuing north from Amargeti to Galataria and then to Statos-Agios Fotios, you will cross a green and idyllic landscape. A powerful feature of Statos-Agios Fotios is that its streets are lined with walnut trees. The villagers are farmers or cultivate vineyards. The area is famous for its tasty local products.



INFORMATION OF HISTORIC INTEREST:

- It is said that the villages Statos and Agios Fotios were only 2km apart. Due to heavy rainfall and landslides between 1966 -1969 it was decided to unite them at the present location.



INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

- The Church of Agios Nikolaos in Galataria dates from the first half of the 16th Century.
- The Chapel of Sotiras Christos is in the centre of Statos-Agios Fotios.
- The Chapel of Agios Georgios, Agios Fotios and Aniketos are in the old village of Agios Fotios
- The Chapel of Agios Zenovios and Agia Zenovia is in the old village of Statos (Built in 1840),
- The Chapel of Agia Varvara,
- The Monastery of Agia Moni (Monastery of the Priests or Agia Marina), is one of the most ancient monasteries in Cyprus.



GASTRONOMY:

Visit the small local wineries which are included in the Cyprus Wine Routes. You will discover some of the finest wines of local variety Mavro that benefits from the relatively high altitude and the mild climate, producing pleasant red and rosé wines.

- Try the traditional zivania, white or red dry wine.
- Statos is famous for producing traditional trahanas.
- Taste fresh soutzioukko (made from grape must), palouze and kiofteri (traditional sweet), sweetened fruits.





At a distance of 3.5km from Statos-Agios Fotios, in a beautiful location with a spectacular view in the forest, lies the Holy Monastery of Chrysorrogiatissa. The Monastery was established in 1152 A.D. by the monk Ignatios who found in the location Moulia of Pafos the miraculous icon of Panagia that was presumably painted by Luke the Evangelist. Ignatios carried the icon to the mountain and built the monastery which he dedicated to Panagia Chrysorrogiatissa. However, the buildings one sees today date from 1770.



INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

- The Monastery possesses an important collection of icons and treasures.
- The icon of Christ and Panagia is lined with gold and silver and was presumably painted by Luke the Evangelist.
- Visit the Byzantine Museum and Gallery of the Monastery.



GASTRONOMY:

The old winery of the Monastery produces from its own vineyards some of the best vintage wines of Cyprus.

CULTURAL EVENTS AND FESTIVALS ON **EDEN ROUTE 2**

- Statos-Agios Fotios Agricultural Festival
- Palouze Festival Salamiou
- Annual Marathon Run to honour runner Stelios Kyriakides in Statos-Agios Fotios village

REFERENCE

EDEN Route 3

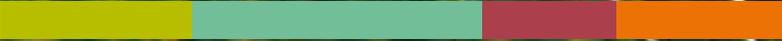
-  Picnic site
-  Arch. site / Museum
-  Church/Monastery
-  Path
-  Dam
-  Forest
-  River
-  Awarded Destination





EDEN ROUTE 3





EDEN ROUTE 3 is one of the most beautiful routes you may enjoy in Cyprus, as part of it is in an uninhabited section of the Pafos Forest. Pafos Forest is a Special Protection Area since 2005 and hunting is totally prohibited making it an ideal refuge for the wild fauna of the island. Here one may meet the Cyprus mouflon (*Ovis gmelini ophion*), a rare species of a wild endemic sheep.

NOTE: It is advised not to move in the Pafos forest at night. Especially during the winter months, due to the weather conditions, part of the route in the forest may become rough due to rocks falling on the road.

Begin your tour from the picturesque village of Pano Panagia which is located just 2km from the Chrysorogiatissa Holy Monastery (Terminal Point of Tourist Route EDEN 2).

Vouni (Pano) Panagias has been awarded in 2009 with the EDEN European Destinations of Excellence in the theme "Tourism and Protected Areas". The Village is dedicated to the Holy Virgin (Panagia) while its lush natural environment was an important factor in the inclusion of the area in the List of NATURA 2000 as Special Protection Area and a Special Area of Conservation.





POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Visit the house where Archbishop Makarios III, first President of the Republic of Cyprus was born which operates as a Museum.
- In the Folk Art Museum one may see exhibits and personal items of the villagers of the area dating from the 19th Century.



INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

- Holy Church of Panagia Eleousa (14th Century)
- Holy Church of Saint George
- Chapel of St George Emnon (Just 10km from the village in Emnon forest)
- Small Church of Prophet Elias
- Chapel of Archangel Michael



INFORMATION FOR NATURE LOVERS:

- Circular Path “Vouni” 9,8 km where you can enjoy a unique view of the Panagia village, the Akamas Peninsula, the Pafos Forest and the Troodos Range.
- “Asprogia – Kannaviou” Dam, in a location rich in natural environment and an exquisite view.



GASTRONOMY:

Follow Route 2 of the Wine Routes “Vouni Panagias – Ampelites”, that offers a remarkable wine-tasting experience with unique tastes of some of the best wines of Cyprus.

Continue your way to the “Stavros tis Psokas” Forest Station, an area situated at an elevation of about 900m and 28km away from the village of Panagia. At the Forest Station there is a picnic area, coffeeshop/restaurant, guest house and an enclosure where you can see the mouflon. One may stay overnight at the guest house subject to prior reservation. For information one may call the Stavros tis Psokas Forest station tel. 26991860 / 26991858 or the Forestry Department Head Office in Nicosia, tel. 22805529.



INFORMATION FOR NATURE LOVERS:

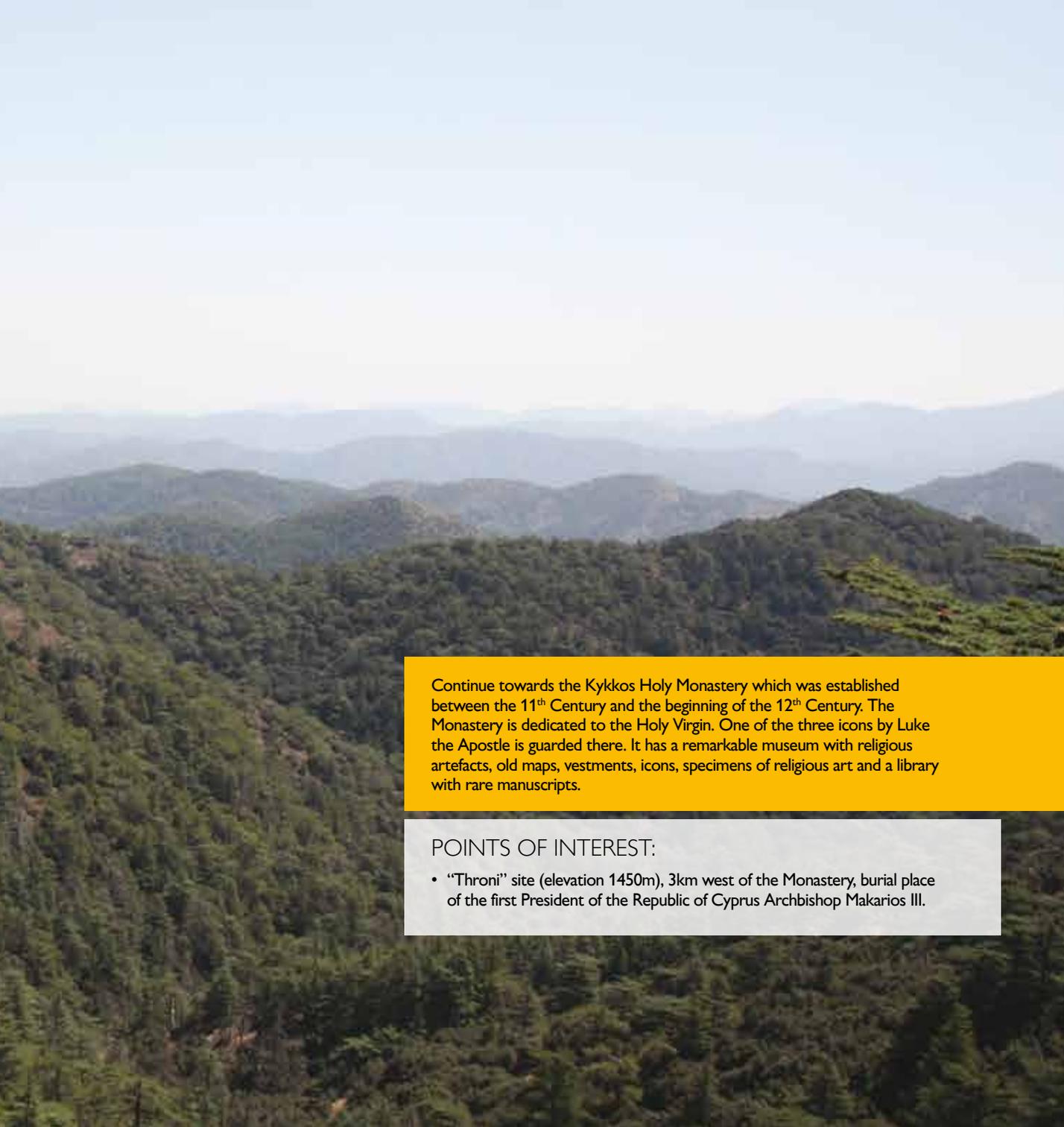
- Two (2) Nature Trails: the circular path “Horteri” 5km and the circular path “Moutti tou Stavrou” 2.5km.

Next stop is the Cedar Valley. Do not hesitate to leave your car on the stone road and walk to enjoy one of the most beautiful and rare ecosystems of Cyprus. The area is included in the European NATURA 2000 network and is considered as one of the most important habitats of Cyprus.



INFORMATION FOR NATURE LOVERS:

- The height of the cedars (endemic species *Cedrus brevifolia*) reaches up to 35m and they are found in clusters in the Pafos Forest at an elevation of 900-1,400m.
- Climb to the top of Tripylos (1.452m) in the Cedar Valley where one can enjoy the exquisite beauty of nature, among cedars and pines. At the top there is a Fire Watch Station.



Continue towards the Kykkos Holy Monastery which was established between the 11th Century and the beginning of the 12th Century. The Monastery is dedicated to the Holy Virgin. One of the three icons by Luke the Apostle is guarded there. It has a remarkable museum with religious artefacts, old maps, vestments, icons, specimens of religious art and a library with rare manuscripts.

POINTS OF INTEREST:

- “Throni” site (elevation 1450m), 3km west of the Monastery, burial place of the first President of the Republic of Cyprus Archbishop Makarios III.

The EDEN ROUTE 3 continues towards the coastal village of Kato Pyrgos or Pyrgos Tillirias. The village is on the north coastline of Cyprus, at the west corner of Morfou Bay and is an awarded EDEN Destination for “Aquatic Tourism” from the EDEN-European Destinations of Excellence Initiative, in 2010.



INFORMATION OF HISTORIC INTEREST:

- The village gets its name from “Troulli” a small building on a seaside hill that looks like a tower: “Troulli” was a look out in Venetian times (1489-1571 B.C.).
- Recent archaeological excavations brought to light a series of medieval findings (parts of a medieval building, tombs, movable artefacts, ceramics and metal objects coins).
- At the location “Koilada-Palialona” tombs have been discovered that date back to the Hellenistic period and were used until the roman times or even later.



INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

- The Chapel of Panagia Galoktisti whose name according to the old inhabitants of the village comes from the fact that it was built with milk (milk in Greek is gala). Its frescoes date back to 12^o-14^o Century.
- The Church of Agia Irini.
- The Church of Agii Constantinos and Eleni.
- The Chapel of Agios Stylianos.
- The Chapel of Prophet Elias, built on the ruins of an older medieval temple.



INFORMATION FOR NATURE LOVERS:

- In the village square there is a centennial oak tree planted in 1898, with height 20m and circumference 425cm.



GASTRONOMY:

- Kato Pyrgos is famous for its figs, both fresh and dried.
- Try fresh fish, fish meze directly from the fisherman's nets.



INFORMATION FOR SEA LOVERS:

- The best known beaches of Kato Pyrgos are: “Omega”, “Apothikes” and “Kryoneri”.

Head west to Polis Chrysochous or Polis, a seaside resort awarded the European Destinations of Excellence award in 2013 in the theme of “Accessible Tourism”. Many buildings in Polis have been renovated, maintaining their local architectural style while the traditional square is lined with many shops selling items of folk art as well as traditional coffeeshops offering traditional delicacies.

POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Polis is built on the site where in antiquity Marion, one of Cyprus’s city-states was located. In the Hellenistic –Roman period Marion was renamed Arsinoe.



INFORMATION OF HISTORIC INTEREST:

- Archaeological Museum of Marion-Arsinoe where artefacts from the ancient city of Marion older than 3000 years up to the medieval period are on display.
- Byzantine Museum of Arsinoe in Peristerona 9km south of Polis.
- Museum of Rural Life in Steni 5km south of Polis.



INFORMATION OF RELIGIOUS INTEREST:

- The Church of Agios Andronikos (16th Century) with frescoes date from the Venetian times (1489-1570).
- The Church of Agia Kyriaki (18th Century).



INFORMATION FOR NATURE LOVERS:

- Park of Volunteer Doctors of Cyprus, covering an area of about 2400 square metres mainly planted with pine and turpentine trees.
- Location “Loutra tis Afroditis”, an area of unparalleled natural beauty where according to tradition the mythical goddess of love and beauty Aphrodite took her bath in the natural cavern. Aphrodite met there with her lover, Adonis, when he stopped hunting to have a drink. The minute Adonis drank the water he fell in love with the goddess of love.
- Three (3) Circular Nature Trails: “Afroditi”, “Adonis” and Smigies, each of length 7.5km.
- Akamas Peninsula, an area at the west tip of Cyprus, covering an area of about 230sq.km, rich in flora, fauna and geological formations. The peninsula is considered of unique natural beauty, immune from the effects of development and hosts a plethora of endemic species. It is an uninhabited area with no asphalt roads and for this the visitors are advised not to travel at night and to choose 4x4 vehicles, especially in winter time as due to weather conditions the peninsula may become inaccessible. An important feature of the area are its secluded beaches, used by the loggerhead turtles (*Caretta caretta*) and the green turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) that come to lay their eggs. Lara and Toxeftra areas used by turtles for reproduction are protected areas.





GASTRONOMY:

- Fresh fish, fish meze and other delicacies at the picturesque harbour of Latsi or Lakki at a distance of 4.4km. It is worth mentioning that the old stone warehouses were converted into picturesque small taverns.



INFORMATION FOR SEA LOVERS:

- The Latsi Municipal Beach is equipped with a pioneering system in the sea for persons with moving disabilities and is awarded with the international ecolabel “Blue Flag”.
- There is a seaside organised camping on the beach awarded with the “Blue Flag”.
- Organised mini cruises are offered at the Latsi harbour; allowing the reach of beaches in the Akamas peninsula that are non-accessible by land.





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