



Cyprus

Spiritual and Cultural Journeys



CHRISTIANITY'S HISTORICAL CROSSROAD

Journeys of Faith

AN INTRODUCTION TO A SPIRITUAL WORLD

Cyprus, that "ethereal and blessed land" that stands apart, serene and sacred with an irresistible fascination, is a paradise full of natural beauty, history, memories and culture. A most surprising feature is its density of monuments of religious devotion. It is an island of distinctive aura and charm, where the whole spectrum of Christianity's historical and cultural development can be seen, from inception to the present day. beauty, where according to Greek myth the goddess Aphrodite was born - was chosen as the first place to receive the great

message of the new faith on the advent of Christianity. Cyprus became the gateway through which the message of the Gospels spread throughout the length and breadth of the Ecumene. The first mission of the apostles Paul and Barnabas (the latter of Cypriot descent) occurred here in accordance with the will and wish of God: "...being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus" (Acts 12, 4).

This divine 'choice' – at the same time an ornament and endowment for the country – is expressed through the many monuments

dedicated to prayer and devotion, but also through the plethora of holy men connected with the saintly island, thus endowing it with the expression "Cyprus the island of saints". It is no coincidence that Cyprus - the island of saints".

The Office of the pilgrimage tours of the Church of Cyprus (office@churchofcyprus.org.cy, tel. 35722554600, fax. 35722346254) opens its doors to welcome the pilgrims and share with them the holy gifts of an entire religious world.

▲ Situated on a steep hill, Stavrovouni Monastery offers a panorama of the surrounding countryside.



◀ (From left to right)
 Multi coloured glass, Saints Barnabas and Hilarion church, Peristerona.
 Wall icon, Panagia (Virgin Mary) Chrysaliniotissa church, Lefkosia.
 Church service at Metochi tou Kykkou, Lefkosia.
 The bellfry of St Savvas church, Lefkosia.
 Byzantine icons.
 Panagia (Virgin Mary) Chrysopolitissa church, Pafos.



AP P H Priceless Heritage

COUNTLESS IMPORTANT
ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONUMENTS,
MARKING THE DAWN OF THE
CHRISTIAN ERA

...ONE OF THE FIRST LANDS TO EMBRACE THE HOLY GOSPEL...



Christianity spread and took root throughout the lands of the Mediterranean sea very rapidly. According to the texts of the New Testament, the Cypriots were one of the first to embrace Christianity and preach it beyond the boundaries of Palestine. Equally, they were the first to accept the truth of the Gospels outside the Holy Land, when the first apostolic mission

was undertaken in 45 A.D., during which the Apostles Paul, Barnabas and Mark – the latter two of Cypriot descent – arrived in Salamis and preached the message of the Nazarene, “crossing the island to the edge of Pafos” (Acts, 13.6).

In Pafos they baptised the Roman Pro-Consul Sergius Paulus, the first ranking official of the Roman Empire to embrace Christianity.

Naturally, of great significance to the Church of Cyprus is the ratification of its autocephaly through the 7th canon of the 3rd Ecumenical Council in Ephesus in 431 A.D.

This unique heritage is not only unequivocally demonstrated by the numerous early Christian monuments, but also by the presence of many Bishops of Cyprus in the first as well as the subsequent Ecumenical Councils.

▲ Morning sun rays entering the Church of Panagia (St Mary) Hortakiotissa.

▼ Internal view of the dome of Agia Paraskevi, Geroskipou.

► St Lazarus church interior, Larnaka.

◀ Frescoes in the Panagia (St Mary) tou Araka church at Lagoudera.

Church of Timios Stavros (Holy Cross) at Pelendri.

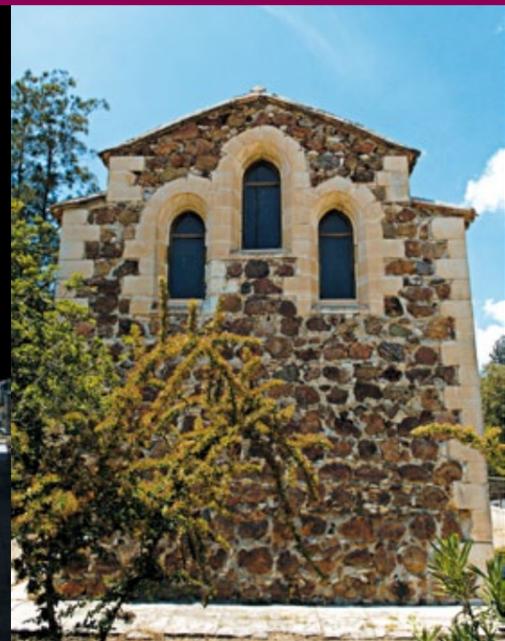


Creation Through Faith

BYZANTINE ART AND CYPRIOT MONUMENTS OF UNESCO



WITNESSING THE TRAILS OF A GLORIOUS HERITAGE



Cyprus, burdened with memories of its turbulent past and with its monuments standing as witnesses to a great historical journey, forms a significant centre for the study of Byzantine painting and art. This is mainly attributed to the important number of monuments preserved, to their quality as well as to the degree of preservation of this wealth.

An important group of churches of great archaeological, architectural and artistic

value, with superb wall paintings dating from the 11th to the 17th centuries are concentrated in the Troodos mountain range. This concentration in such a small geographical area is perhaps a unique case worldwide. In recognition of their value, UNESCO has declared ten of these churches as monuments belonging to the World Cultural Heritage, such as the churches of Agios Nikolaos tis Stegis in Kakopetria, Panagia of Asinou and Panagia of Arakas in Lagoudera.

- ▲▲▲ Church of Panagia (Virgin Mary) of Asinou.
- ▲▲ Church of Saints Barnabas and Hilarion at Peristerona.
- ▲ Church of Panagia (Virgin Mary) of Arakas at Lagoudera.
- ◀◀◀ Church of Metamorfosis tou Sotiros (Transformation of Christ) at Palaichori.
- ◀◀ St Lazarus Church, Larnaka.
- ◀ Historical medieval chapel at Pyrga.



The Quest For Tranquility

GUARDIANS OF FAITH,
HISTORY AND TRADITION

- ▶ Monastery of St Irakleidios.
- ▶ Monastery of Agia Napa.
- ◀ The historic Kykkos Monastery.
- ▲ Monastery of Panagia Trooditissa.



- ▲ Monastery of Panagia tou Machaira.
- ▶ Monastery of Panagia Chrysorrogiatissa.
- ▶ Monastery of Agios Neofytos.



...SPIRITUAL SOLACE, UNDER THE VEIL OF NATURAL SURROUNDINGS...

The Byzantine Empire and Orthodoxy were the two pivots that indelibly marked the development of Cyprus. A plethora of monasteries was founded with the contribution and sponsorship of the devout Emperors of Constantinople: the Monastery of Kykkos, the largest on the island, with its icon of the Virgin Mary whose painting was traditionally attributed to Luke the Evangelist, Machairas Monastery and the Hermitage of Saint Neofytos, painted by the hand of Theodoros

Apsevdis, are the most important monuments of the island, captivating and moving the visitor.

In most monasteries, the visitor/worshipper will enjoy the colours and scents of nature and discover new and unique spiritual pleasures. The visitor can share the passions and faith of the Cypriot people and experience intense spiritual emotions; and appreciate contemporary reality through an acquaintance with tradition.

Multi-cultural Cyprus

In other parts of Cyprus the visitor may come across buildings and religious monuments of different faiths and creeds. Muslim mosques, orthodox temples and churches of other creeds co-exist peacefully, thus demonstrating the unique and rich history and traditions of this country, one that is expressed vividly through the monuments on the island.



▲ Catholic church of Terra Santa, Larnaka.



▲ The mosque of Um Haram or Tekkesi Hala Sultan, an especially noteworthy and important Muslim place of worship connected with the prophet Mohammed himself, by Larnaka's Salt Lake.



Priceless Heirlooms & Treasures

THE ISLAND IS FULL OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES OF PARTICULAR PRESTIGE AND CHARM

Cyprus is full of archaeological sites of particular prestige and charm. The culture and faith of its people is indelibly marked on each monument and work of art.

The archaeologist's spade has revealed the foundations of over ninety early Christian basilicas – with three, five and seven aisles, adorned with vivid mosaic floors, marble inlays, reliefs dressed with marble and marble sculptures.

Equally important examples of this civilisation and of the Byzantine

art of the 6th century A.D. are the mural mosaics, such as those found in the church of the Virgin Angeloktistis ('built by angels') in Kiti village. The visitor may see the ecclesiastical treasures of Cyprus through the priceless collections of works of Byzantine art on display in various Byzantine museums and sacristies, such as the Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation in Lefkosia, the Museum of Kykkos Monastery the Byzantine Museum of Pafos and the icon Museum in the monastery of Saint John Lampadistis.



▲ Old icon from Saints Barnabas and Hilarion church, Peristerona.

▲ Hand painted arch at Panagia Iamatiki.

...EXTENSIVE COLLECTIONS OF BYZANTINE ART...



▲ St Irakleidios skull, kept at his monastery.



▲ Religious artefact displayed at a museum.



▲ Silver artefact incorporating actual wood from the Holy Cross.

▲ A fine specimen of Byzantine art, dating from the 6th century: The famous mosaic in the church of Panagia Angeloktisti at Kiti.

► Byzantine hagiography is an occupation for many monks all over the island.



◀ Virgin Mary and Christ fresco at Saints Barnabas and Hilarion church, Peristerona.

► Priceless ecclesiastical collections at the Kykkos Monastery Museum.



Long Standing Traditions

A NEVER ENDING CELEBRATION



...LISTENING TO BYZANTINE PSALMS AND MELODIES...

▲ "Kalos Logos," a nocturnal late service on Good Saturday, during the Holy Week.



▶ Baptism at an orthodox church.

In Cyprus the visitor has the opportunity to attend a plethora of traditional events, celebrations and fairs that take place in villages and towns the length and breadth of the island, throughout the year. Celebrations and fairs that co-exist with the sounds of Byzantine religious melodies and the rhythms of traditional music.

Holy Week and Easter, the 'Good Word' as it is called here, are all celebrated on the island

with overwhelming solemnity. The celebration of the Holy Spirit, or 'Kataclismos' as it is called, held only in Cyprus; that of Epiphany, with the blessing of the waters in the coastal areas in January, or even the various local festivals and fairs organised in the villages in the autumn and summer months - all bear witness to steadfast traditions and the strong link between art and religious worship.

▼ Sacred utensils.

▼ Good Friday procession.

▶ Candles and oliveoil lights in the sanctuary of Panagia Hortakiotissa church.



A Paradise to be Experienced

SAVOUR AND SEE!

This island, with its clean, warm sea, endless beaches and star-lit nights, not only has a historic past and maintains an unspoiled nature but also offers luxurious hotel complexes with full facilities, within easy reach to most destinations, so that visitors can enjoy a most comfortable stay; it is also a gastronomic and wine connoisseur heaven, able to satisfy all demands with countless tavernas, restaurants, bars and cafes.

Above all, however, the visitor will be mesmer-

ised by the Island's people and will forever treasure fond memories of Cypriot hospitality.



▲ Mediterranean specialities.



▲ Traditional breadmaking.

► Dining room at Machairas Monastery.



...GRAIN, WINE AND OLIVE OIL...

Route planner



In the footsteps of Apostles Paul and Barnabas

Follow the path of Apostles Paul and Barnabas and it will lead you through a gripping maze of history and culture. A history linked with the preaching of Christianity on the island, which from there opened out to the entire world.



▲ Panagia Angeloktisti, Kiti.

Multi-cultural Cyprus

- Larnaka: Church of Saint Lazarus
- Dromolaxia: Mosque of Um Haram or Tekke Hala Sultan
- Kiti: Church of the Virgin Mary Angeloktistis
- Kivisili: Church of the Virgin Mary
- Klavdia: Church/mosque of Saint Catherine
- Pyrga: Gothic Church of the Virgin Stazousa
- Pyrga: Royal Chapel
- Stavrovouni Monastery



▲ Agios Kassianos church.

Lefkosia. The old town

- St John's Cathedral
- Arch. Makarios III Byzantine Museum
- Church of Panagia Chrysaliniotissa
- Church of Agios Kassianos
- Church of Panagia Faneromeni
- Church of Holy Cross of Missirikou
- Church of Agios Antonios
- Church of Archangel Michael Tripiotis



Worship of the Holy Cross

The arrival of St Helen in Cyprus is an important moment demonstrating the respect and devotion shown to the Holy Cross. She anchored off Cyprus on her return from the Holy Land, built Stavrovouni Monastery and endowed it with part of the Holy Cross, the rivets and nails with which Christ was nailed to the cross and a fragment from the cross of the honourable thief. A piece of the Holy Rope, with which they bound the hands of Jesus as they led Him to the Cross, was also left there.



▲ Stavrovouni Monastery.

- Stavrovouni Monastery
- Tochni
- Lefkara
- Pelendri
- Kouka
- Omodos
- Anogyra
- Tsada



▲ Agios Nikolaos Stegis church.

Monuments of UNESCO Solea region

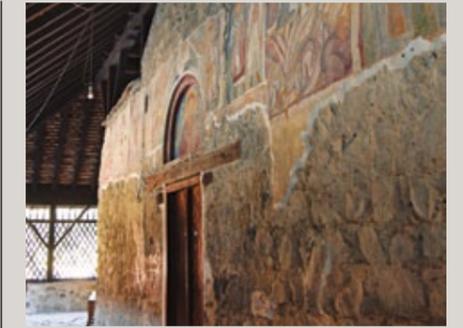
- Nikitari: Church of Panagia tis Asinou (Virgin of Asinou)
- Galata: Church of Panagia tis Podithou (Virgin of Podithou)
- Kakopetria: Church of Agios Nikolaos tis Stegis (Saint Nicholas of the Roof)



▲ Agios Ioannis Lampadistis Museum.

Monuments of UNESCO Marathasa region

- Kalopanagiotis: Monastery of Agios Ioannis Lampadistis (St. John Lampadistis)
- Moutoulas: Church of the Virgin Mary
- Pedoulas: Church of Archangelos Michael (Archangel Michael)



▲ Panagia tou Araka Monastery.

Monuments of UNESCO Pitsilia region

- Lagoudera: Monastery of Panagias tou Araka (the Virgin of Araka)
- Platanistasa: Holy Cross of Agiasmati
- Pelendri: Church of the Holy Cross
- Palaichori: Church of the Transfiguration of the Saviour



Monachisme and ascetism

- Orounda: Monastery of Saint Nicholas
- Kalopanagiotis: Monastery of Saint John Lampadistis
- Monastery of the Virgin Mary of Kykkos
- Prodromos: Virgin Trikoukia
- Prodromos: Monastery of the Virgin Trooditissa)

◀ Kykkos Monastery.



Byzantine art in Cyprus West

- Peristerona: Church of Saints Barnabas and Hilarion
- Kalopanagiotis: Monastery of Saint John Lampadistis
- Monastery of the Virgin Mary of Kykkos
- Panagia
- Tala
- Empa
- Kato Pafos
- Geroskipou



Byzantine art in Cyprus: East

- Lefkosia
- Pera Chorio: Church of the Blessed Apostles
- Kellia: Church of Saint Anthony
- Larnaka: Church of Saint Lazarus
- Sotira
- Paralimni
- Agia Napa



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