**Experience the culinary traditions of Crete**

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Mountains rearing straight up from the sea, gorges, and valleys and yet more glorious mountains. There are few places in the world where high mountains so close to the sea combine with an often perfect climate. Crete's rugged terrain is an adventurer's paradise and in many respects the culmination of the Greek experience. Its natural beauty is equaled only by the richness of its history. The island after all is the birthplace of the first advanced society in European soil.
Our trip starts in the bustling city of Heraklion and after visiting one of the most important archaeological sites of the Mediterranean, Knossos, we'll drive towards the enchanting city of Rethymno, which will be our base for the next two days. Our trip will end in the picturesque city of Chania, probably the most charming of Crete.
This trip combines the sensual pleasures of Crete's sublime cuisine, delicious wine, and Mediterranean sunshine with the physical pleasure of an active holiday walking through some of the most beautiful countryside in the world.

**Trip Highlights**

- Walk in the footsteps of Minoans in the palace of Knossos, Crete's most important archaeological site
- Immerse yourself in the culture and lifestyle of Crete and learn to cook

authentic Cretan dishes
- Drift around the historical city of Chania, one of the longest continuously inhabited city sites in the world
- Explore Imbros, one of the most fascinating gorges in the island

**Map**



## Tour Details

***Days/Nights:*** 8 days / 7 nights
***Single supplement:*** Cost based on request. Availability limited.
***Condition grading:*** Easy Active

**Itinerary**

**Day 1**
**Arrival in Heraklion and welcome dinner**
Heraklion is the fifth largest city of Greece. In order to experience it you have to penetrate the modern façade of the city and you will discover its attractive features. After all, it is the birthplace of El Greco and Nikos Kazantzakis and Heraklion province hosts some of the most fascinating Minoan sites in all of Crete.
Today we will meet at our hotel for an introductory talk and afterwards we will wander the streets and have our first dinner. Our dinner features delicious local ingredients and traditional Cretan dishes. Based on simple techniques, it's the variety of local produce that distinguishes the dishes: mountain herbs and greens, bulbs, unique cheeses, fresh fish, and the famous Cretan oil.

***Overnight in Heraklion in a 4* hotel***
***Dinner included***

**Day 2**
**Archaeological museum, the palace of Knossos and winery visit**
Crete's natural beauty is equaled only by the richness of its history. Once here, grab the opportunity to start your day visiting the Archaeological museum of Heraklion. The museum houses the most important collection of Minoan art in the world. It's a great introduction to our visit in Knossos, Crete's must-see historical attraction, which will follow. The Minoans were ruling big parts of the Aegean from their palace in

Knossos some 4000 years ago, giving the area a great strategic and cultural importance.
From culture to cultivation we will head towards the wine country of Heraklion. Nestled in a picturesque landscape of rolling hills and verdant valleys, more than twenty wineries contribute to the rich winemaking tradition dating back to Minoan times. Our chosen stop is a family estate crafting exceptional wines since 1966, focusing on rare local varieties and single-variety productions. Here, we'll enjoy a guided tour through vineyards, cellar, and vine-museum, followed by the essential pleasure of tasting the local wines!

***Overnight in Heraklion in a 4* hotel***
***Breakfast and lunch included***
***Driving distance:***
Heraklion to Knossos 5 km / 15 min
Knossos to Heraklion 5 km / 15 min

**Day 3**
**Visit Koronekes olive farm and drive to Rethymnon**
Today, grab your hat, sunglasses, sunscreen and comfortable shoes for an easy guided walk in an organic olive field with more than 2 centuries old olive trees. You will see that they are farmed with respect and care to preserve the natural flavors, aromas, and polyphenols.
How does the farming impact these flavors and healthy benefits? What are the challenges we face in organic farming? How and when do we harvest the olives? These are just some of the topics, the Master Miller, will be discussing with you. After lunch in the nearby village of Archanes, we will drive towards the Mediterranean pearl, city of Rethymnon. In the afternoon we will have time to explore the labyrinthine lanes of the historic quarter, which still preserves much of its Venetian and Turkish appearance.

***Overnight in Rethymnon in a boutique hotel***

***Breakfast, lunch and dinner included***
***Driving distance:***
Heraklion to Archanes 16 km / 17 min
Archanes to Rethymnon 91 km / 1 hr 30 min

**Day 4**
**Arkadi Monastery and Ancient Eleftherna hike**
In the morning we will drive towards Arkadi Monastery, the most celebrated of Crete's numerous monasteries which has a fine Venetian church and it is an emblem of the island's struggle for independence. We will continue towards, Ancient Eleftherna, a Dorian built settlement, which lies in the foothills of Psiloritis, the highest mountain of Crete. We start our hike from the ancient Acropolis of the town, and on our way we will pass the remarkable Roman cisterns, which are carved into the hill's west side, the Necropolis and a 3rd century BC ancient bridge. Our hike finishes in the tiny village of Margarites, known for its pottery. Learn about the traditional techniques from a local potter who derives inspiration for his ceramics from Minoan and Byzantine originals.

***Overnight in Rethymnon in a boutique hotel***
***Breakfast and lunch included***
***Hiking distance:*** 6 km / ***Hiking Duration:*** 3 hr
***Elevation gain & loss:*** 223 m & 308 m
***Driving distance:***
Rethymnon to Ancient Eleftherna 30 km / 45 min
Margarites to Rethymnon 30 km / 40 min

**Day 5**
**Cooking class and drive to Chania**
Today we will drive toward the quaint village of Vamos for a cooking class which takes place in an old olive press dating from 1846 with Venetian arches and large millstones in the centre. This unique setting will enliven your "journey" into the aromas and tastes of traditional

Cretan Cuisine.  Of course, we will eat what we have cooked!
Early in the afternoon we will drive to Chania, Crete's most beautiful town. It's perfect setting with the White Mountains as background, lively harbor, historical remains, busy market, and nearby beaches make it the ideal spot. The winding old streets conceal charming boutique hotels and some of the island's best dining options.

***Overnight in Chania in a boutique hotel***
***Breakfast, lunch and dinner included***
***Driving distance:***
Rethymnon to Vamos 30 km / 45 min
Vamos to Chania 30 km / 45 min

**Day 6**
**Hike Imbros gorge**
Today we will head towards Imbros gorge at the south side of the island, driving by the rugged interior, which is largely untouched by mass tourism. A dreamy mosaic of sleepy villages and fertile valleys, dotted with Byzantine churches.
The pine tree-lined Imbros gorge was part of the route that linked the city of Chania with the Chora Sfakion village. Here, you'll set off on your three-hour hike, following footpaths through wildflower meadows. Keep watch for Crete's 'kri-kri' wild goats as you go. And reach for your camera at the most spectacular section, where everything narrows into a 2-meter passageway twisting steep, 300-foot walls.

***Overnight in Chania in a boutique hotel***
***Breakfast and lunch included***
***Hiking distance:*** 6,8 km */* ***Hiking Duration:*** 3 hr
***Elevation gain & loss:*** 10 m & 580 m
***Driving distance:***
Chania to Entrance of the gorge 53 km / 1 hr
Exit of the gorge to Chania 66 km / 1 hr 20 min

**Day 7**

**Swim at Balos and farewell dinner**

Today we will hop on a 4WD and drive towards Balos lagoon, one of Chania's most prized gems which cannot be missed. It is an exotic sandy beach of turquoise waters with a unique geomorphological shape located on the northwest side of the prefecture. Renowned for its untamed natural beauty, it stands proudly among the most beautiful beaches in the country. Take some time to relax and soak it all in before saying goodbye to this coastal paradise.

In the evening, you'll be free to delve deeper into the Venetian city, exploring its enchanting streets and the numerous local designer shops. Later, we'll reunite for our farewell dinner, a perfect culmination of our time together!

***Overnight in Chania in a boutique hotel***

***Breakfast, picnic lunch and dinner included***

***Hiking distance:*** 2,4 km / ***Hiking Duration:*** 2 hr

***Elevation gain & loss:*** 160 m & 160 m

***Driving distance:***

Chania to Balos 50 km / 1 hr 30 min

Balos to Chania 50 km / 1 hr 30 min

**Day 8**

**Say farewell to Greece**

Breakfast is at your leisure at the hotel and following that, your Tripin Adventures trip in Greece concludes. Transfer independently from our accommodations in Chania to one of the international airports of the island for return flights home or continue your explorations of this marvelous region of Greece.

***Breakfast included***

**What's included**

***Price includes:***

All accommodations as listed (or similar) based on double occupancy
Hotel taxes and service charges
All transportation during the trip
All activities mentioned in the program
Entrance fees for the Archaeological site of Knossos and the Archaeological museum of Heraklion
Tourist guide for the Archaeological site of Knossos and the Archaeological museum of Heraklion
Services of a guide throughout the tour
Transport and handling of one reasonably sized suitcase and one carry-on per person

***Included meals:*** Breakfast, lunches and dinners as indicated in the itinerary

***Not Included:***

Domestic and/or international air fare
Medical expenses
Travel or emergency evacuation insurance
Gratuities for leader/guide or driver
Alcoholic beverages and meals other than outlined in itinerary
Visas if needed
Transfer to and from the airport/port
Other items of a personal nature
Anything not mentioned in above program

**Itinerary Changes**

We are constantly updating our unique itineraries based on new information and experiences available. The walks, accommodations, and visits listed may be adjusted. The itineraries presented are subject to modification and change by Tripin Adventures. We reserve the right,

without penalty, to make changes in the published itinerary whenever, in our judgment, conditions warrant, or if we deem it necessary for the comfort, convenience, or safety of participants.

**Terrain**

This trip level is Easy active and is suitable for most people that are in fairly good physical condition. The itinerary includes walking tours in cities and villages, and two days with hikes of 2-3 hours.
Although the paths are quite well-kept the terrain often tends to be very stony and rocky, during the gorge-walking. You will mostly be walking on footpaths, mountain trails and on some tarmac roads.

**Condition Grading**

Easy active
Trips designated “Easy Active” are perfect for first-timers, or travelers looking for a mild physical challenge. A typical day will consist of 1-3 hours of activity.

**Starting point and getting there**

**Starting point is**: Heraklion
**Getting There & Away:** Crete biggest airport is about 5km east of the city center. There are many flights that connect Heraklion airport with Athens. Moreover there are many direct flights from various cities in Europe. Heraklion ferry port is located 500m east of the city center and is connected with major ports in Greece including Piraeus (Athens port), Mykonos and Santorini**.**
**Getting around:** We can arrange for a transfer from the airport or the port to your hotel. If you want to come by yourself there is a bus line connecting the airport to the center of the town and there is also the option of the taxi. From the port you could take a taxi to your hotel or

even walk for about 25 minutes.

**Food**

Simple, nutritious and flavorsome, the food is one of the pleasures of travel through Greece. Rustic Greek Cuisine reflects the history and bounty of its diverse regions and relies in the fresh, seasonal home-grown produce and generally simple, unfussy cooking that brings out the rich flavors of the Mediterranean.
Greece's relaxed and hospitable dinning culture makes it easy to get into the local spirit. Greeks love to eat out and share impossibly big meals family style. Given the long summers and mild winters, alfresco dining is central to the dining experience. Service could be slow by Western standards, but why being in rush either way.
As a rule our groups tend to eat together to enable you to taste a larger variety of dishes and enjoy each other's company. There's no obligation to do this though. Wherever possible we will cater for dietary needs for any included meals, but there may be times when those with special requirements may need to provide their own. Note that alcohol and soda are not included.

**Weather**

Spring, summer and fall in Greece are sunny and warm. The daytime temperatures average 25-30 C though temperatures in the 35s are possible in the summer months. Nighttime temperatures cool off slightly to 20° C. Rain showers are rare in the islands, but it's often breezy and rainy on the coast.

**Gear Checklist**

Greece has a temperate climate. Base your clothing on the "layering system", if it is hot you can "peel off" layers quickly, if it is cooler and

windy you can quickly “dress up”. The lighter you travel, the easier you travel. Use your best judgement and pack as lightly as possible. You will appreciate light luggage towards the end of your trip
Please consider taking along the following items on your trip.

Official Papers

- ✓ Valid passport
- ✓ Airline tickets

Luggage

- ✓ Duffel bag or rolling luggage
- ✓ Daypack to carry camera, water bottle and snacks etc.
- ✓ Luggage locks and tags

Outerwear

- ✓ Midweight polar fleece sweater
- ✓ Rain jacket and rain pants, or poncho

Clothing

- ✓ Hiking shorts
- ✓ Casual clothing made of light-weight fabrics
- ✓ T-shirts
- ✓ Long-sleeve shirt
- ✓ Hiking pants, loose and easy to move in
- ✓ Underwear
- ✓ Swimsuit

Clothing Accessories

- ✓ Sun hat or baseball cap

Footwear

- ✓ Lightweight and supportive hiking boots, broken-in with good ankle support
- ✓ Beach sandals
- ✓ Casual, comfortable shoes for evening

Accesories

- ✓ Sunscreen and lip protection
- ✓ Sunglasses and retainer strap
- ✓ Beach towel

Optional Accessories

- ✓ Security pouch or money belt
- ✓ Trekking poles or walking staff
- ✓ Camera, memory and batteries
- ✓ Reading and writing materials
- ✓ Watch with alarm or travel alarm
- ✓ Travel pillow
- ✓ Motion sickness remedies
- ✓ Personal first-aid kit
- ✓ Insect repellent (low risk)
- ✓ Electric adapter plug/converter

This is not a fixed list, but more of a guideline, so feel free to add and remove items as you see fit.

**Currency & Banking**

Greece has adopted the Euro as its currency. The easiest way to obtain local cash is from an ATM. Greek ATMs accept cards bearing the Cirrus, EC, Euro card, Visa and Plus symbols. If you take cash, US or Canadian Dollars can be easily exchanged at banks. Most major credit cards, Visa, MasterCard and American Express are accepted.
It is advisable to have some Euros with you upon arrival to be used for a taxi if necessary.
You may want to check the website www.xe.com for current exchange rates.

**Passports**

You must have a passport valid for at least 6 months beyond the conclusion of your trip. Please make sure that you have blank pages in

your passport for your visa (if required), entry and exit stamps (one for each). Please make a copy to take with you in the event yours is lost or stolen and keep it separate from your actual passport.

**Visas**

Currently a Greek Tourist Visa is not required for citizens of Canada, United States, Britain and Australia. If you hold another passport, please check online http://visacentral.com/visas.php