

THE HELLENIC ODYSSEY

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# The Hellenic Odyssey

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A W A K E N   Y O U R   S E N S E S

**SMALL GROUP TRAVEL TOURS**

**CRETE, GREECE ITINERARY**

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## BEST OF CHANIA TOUR ITINERARY

### DAY 1: Arrival (D)

Arrive in Chania to the warmth and ambience of your centrally located 4-star hotel before sharing welcome drinks with your fellow travellers. Experience Cretan hospitality and the flavours and aromas of local cuisine with an early welcome dinner before heading up to bed so that you are well-rested for the first exciting day of exploring!

### DAY 2: Chania Town with afternoon free time (B, L)

After breakfast we spend the morning exploring Chania town and its historical sites with our tour guide and following a sumptuous lunch at a taverna.

Just south of Chania, in the Varipetro region, is the Holy Monastery of Metamorphosis & Agia Kyriaki where we take a leisurely stroll through the tranquil environment. Upon our return to the hotel, you can relax, enjoy a siesta or go swimming. Beautiful sun-drenched beaches are right on your doorstep. Dinner is at your leisure. Simply ask for a recommendation or discover your own gem of an eatery.

### DAY 3: Balos with afternoon free time (B)

This morning we drive to the Kissamos region to board a ferryboat to Balos Beach – a truly magical spot where you will feel as if you have stepped into a picture postcard. We will spend the entire day here where you can swim, stroll or just soak up the sun. We return to the hotel late afternoon and the rest of the day, including dinner, is at your leisure.

### DAY 4: Kolymvari (B, L, D)

We head off to the Kolymvari region to see the oldest olive tree in Europe, which still bears fruit, at Vouves. After lunch, we take a tour of the olive oil refinery.

Dinner is courtesy of your very own private cooking class. You will be welcomed into a family home in true philotimo style! Here you will immerse yourself in the world of Cretan culinary history, hear about its traditions and the health benefits of the Mediterranean diet, while learning how to cook the Cretan way.

### DAY 5: Rethymno with afternoon free time (B, L)

Today, we are off to Rethymno to visit an old traditional bakery to learn the art of filo making. Here we will watch the famous spectacle of Yiorgos Hatziparaskos (one of the last traditional filo masters in all of Greece) roll handmade superfine pastry in his workshop. Yiorgos has spent his entire working life in the same Old Town bakery, from beginning as a 25-year-old apprentice in 1946, to running his own business here since 1958. Sample some of the best baklava and kataifi ('angel hair' pastry) you will ever try.

We explore Rethymno town and its historical sites with our tour guide followed by lunch. We return to the hotel late afternoon and the rest of the day, including dinner, is at your leisure.

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### DAY 6: Winery, dinner & dancing (B, D)

This is a day for you! Enjoy a late breakfast and explore, shop, swim, or if you prefer, we can customise a day out for you based on your interests. In the afternoon we head to Dourakis Winery where Mr Dourakis, the winemaker himself, will share with us his winemaking stories and you will also be given a guided tour of the wine cellar.

Then it's off to the olive farm, a small estate with an organic olive grove, vegetable patch and herb garden, for our cooking session and our garden-to-plate dinner. This night will not only be delicious, but also fun and memorable! You will experience the diverse musical culture of Crete and, if you're feeling energetic, take part in some traditional Cretan dancing.

### DAY 7: Food tour and countryside visit with afternoon free time (B, L)

For those who would like to explore Chania independently, let us know what interests you most and we will point you in the right direction. Today is also your last chance to shop, pack and get organised.

Alternatively, you can join the food tour that includes a visit to the local agora (market) and farmers markets, which are filled with the best local seasonal fruit and vegetables as well as dairy produce, honey and nuts.

This tour takes in the locals' favourite places in the main town, including a pastry shop that makes a light, crunchy sweet or savoury filled breakfast pastry called bougatsa fresh daily. The shop opened in 1924 and is currently run by the fourth generation of owners and uses a cheese found nowhere else in Greece!

We will also visit the famous Kronos Patisserie and sample a variety of sweets, including loukoumades. Kronos was established in 1951 and is renowned for this traditional deep-fried honey donut. Its recipe has remained unchanged since the shop first opened.

There will be time to shop, or if you need a rest break, relax with a frappé by the water.

Later, we venture into the Cretan countryside and a drive through the mountains for a visit to Theriso. We explore the countryside on foot, followed by a traditional lunch in a nearby village. We return to the hotel late afternoon and the rest of your day, including dinner, is at your leisure.

### DAY 8: Departure (B)

Enjoy a hearty breakfast before bidding farewell to your new friends and heading home, or on to your next adventure.