

BLUE INK

TRAVELLERS GUIDE MAGAZINE

‘Sharing
memories,

SUMMER
2018

ISSUE/ΤΕΥΧΟΣ

#3

bluegr
MINOS BEACH
art hotel

bluegr
MINOS PALACE
hotel & suites

bluegr
CANDIA PARK
village

bluegr
LIFE GALLERY
athens

bluegr
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MIRAMARE PARK
suites & villas

G & A
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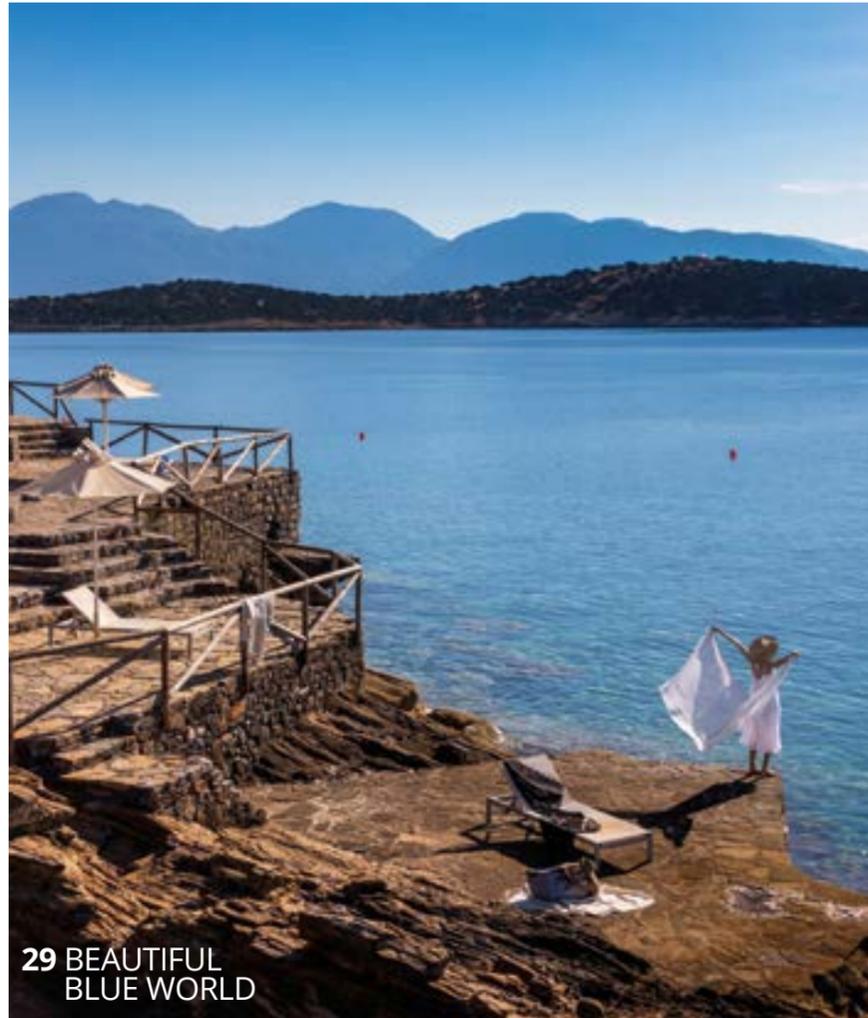
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Delight your Senses!



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BLUE INK

TRAVELLERS GUIDE MAGAZINE

OWNER: bluegr Hotels & Resorts
CEO: Gina Mamidakis

PUBLISHED BY
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www.elseagency.gr

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Responsible against the law Elsa Soimiri
Blue Ink is an annual magazine distributed
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“Be the change you want to see in the world”, Mahatma Gandhi

It was about time to focus on the things that matter most in our lives. In the past, people would say ‘if it’s sustainable, it can’t be luxurious’. But nowadays we believe quite strongly that we’re able to offer our guests natural elegance while minimizing our impact on the planet and enhancing their wellbeing. Sustainable luxury was long considered an oxymoron until recent shifts in the hospitality industry, responding to new trends, took eco-travel from niche to necessary. What began with small efforts to make a difference evolved to include actions that mirror the new ethos of sustainable development. Following this trend, bluegr Hotels & Resorts values pristine environments and wide-open spaces, blending luxury with unique experiences. Considering ourselves a pioneer in “barefoot luxury”, we have joined the collection of new luxury hotels all over the world that prioritize sustainability and simple style without needless bling. We not only take pride in our services, but care for our employees and suppliers, working hard to protect our land.



After all, luxury now equates to experiences rather than possessions and expensive materials.

Reconnecting with friends and family remains the number one motivation for visiting us.

Reawaken your senses.

Indulge in your passions.

Fine tune your own story in Greece!

Gina Mamidakis
Managing Director

just great coffee.



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Indeed.

TRUE ORIGINS

George and Aristeia Mamidakis have had an unquestionable impact on the spheres in which they worked. Their fascinating history and the legacy left never lost the values of Cretan soul. As with all great stories, this one starts with a great character.



01



02



03



04

George Mamidakis was born in the small village of Anoskeli, near the town of Kissamos, in western Crete. He trained as a surveyor and began his professional career in the Topographical Service. During the German occupation, he was a member of the Resistance. His first business venture involved the production of rose oil. A few years later, his intelligent and bold approach opened the door to communication and economic cooperation with Russia in the oil sector. Mamidakis & Co was founded in 1955 and was very active in the field of bunkering (refuelling seagoing vessels). With the creation of 540 gas stations, it distributed petroleum products throughout Greece. Until 1983, it supplied Greece's state refineries with crude oil, using its own tankers. In 1973, Mamidakis Group imported Lada cars into Greece for the first time.

Far-sighted and with a deep love for Crete, the island of his birth, George Mamidakis bought the Minos Beach Hotel at Mirabello Bay in 1974. He later built two other hotel complexes. A multifaceted personality, George stood out for his values, decency, honesty and inexhaustible humor. Aristeia Mamidakis was born in Chania and was the fifth child of the hoteliers Gregory and Maria Chalkiadakis. As a wife, Aristeia Mamidakis was never in the shadow of her husband George, but always by his side. She worked with him closely and continued to work in their companies with the same passion after his death. Strong but at the same time gentle, sweet and demanding, generous and practical, she instilled the values of family, morality and dynamic creativity in her two daughters, who continued developing the Mamidakis businesses. She grew older and enjoyed her six grandchildren.

1. Portrait of Aristeia Mamidakis as a young woman. 2. Aristeia Mamidakis with her daughters, Marilena & Gina. 3. George Mamidakis. 4. Happy moments of the couple George & Aristeia Mamidakis.

hello sailor!

from the Marina of Agios Nikolaos

Located in the center of the traditional Agios Nikolaos town on the eastern-end of the island of Crete, only 64 km away from Heraklion International Airport.

With a total capacity of 255 berths and dry docking facilities for 165 boats, the marina provides all the modern facilities plus Wi-Fi coverage, a business center, on-site laundry and many other conveniences. The town of Agios Nikolaos is right on your doorstep featuring tavernas and restaurants to enjoy the infamous Cretan gastronomy, bars, supermarkets and retail shops. And of course there's eastern Crete, with its archaeological monuments, monasteries, gorges, mountains, beaches, stunning scenery... and that warm Cretan welcome.



AGIOS NIKOLAOS
CRETE



#agiosnikolaoscrete
www.marinaofagiosnikolaos.gr



bluegr Hotels & Resorts

“Holidays are about experiences and people”

We are committed to delight our guests with unique products and services in a personal, friendly and warm environment.

COMPANY PROFILE

bluegr Hotels & Resorts is a private, family-owned hospitality company that was envisioned and founded by its CEO, Gina Mamidakis. The group's aim was to elevate luxury holidays to a new level of enjoyment by introducing an entirely new experience for 4- and 5-star hotels in Greece, founded on the 3 pillars of quality tourism: breath-taking locations, exceptional service and authentic experiences. The bluegr Hotels & Resorts Group features five of the best hotels in Greece: Minos Beach art hotel, Sensimar Minos Palace hotel & suites, and Candia Park village in Crete; Life Gallery athens in the northern suburbs of Athens; and the Sunprime Miramare Park suites & villas in Rhodes, all of which guarantee holidays, filled with leisure and wellness, combining business and pleasure, family fun and romantic getaways.

Our Vision

An Innovative company Aiming for Excellence, Inspiring the Generations to come



Values

- ★ ethics
- ★ integrity
- ★ credibility
- ★ modesty
- ★ social concern
- ★ sense of esthetic
- ★ innovation

10 golden principles

- ★ Leading by example
- ★ Committed to financial health
- ★ Committed to quality
- ★ Committed to our local communities
- ★ Respect the environment
- ★ Respect employees, partners and customers
- ★ Pamper and increase our loyal guests
- ★ Be passionate
- ★ Be innovative
- ★ Be unique



Meet the bluegr people

They say that the difference between success and failure is a great team. The only way to build a company with great success and scale is to inspire such a team. Ours is the best!

Gina Mamidakis
CEO



Nikos Grigorakis
CFO



Kostas Dimitriadis
CSMO



Giorgos Drakiotis
CAO



Vasilis Barbas
CIO



Miranda Kofini
HR Manager



Tanya Hanikian
Purchasing Manager &
CSR Coordinator



Katerina Mamidaki
Marketing &
Communication
Manager



Stratos Patsakis
Minos Beach Art Hotel
Hotel Manager



Michalis Daskalakis
Sensimar Minos Palace,
Hotel Manager



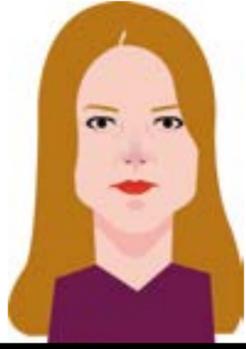
Christos Mittas
Candia Park Village
Hotel Manager



Niki Alexiadou
Life Gallery athens,
Hotel Manager



Angelos Pagkalos
Minos Beach art hotel,
Operations Manager



Sophia Koskina
Accounting
Officer Crete



Nancy Pavlaki
Accounting
Officer Athens

Alone we are smart.
Together we are brilliant.
Steven Anderson/ educator



Ioannis Kalaitzidis
Auditing Officer



Xenia Samartzidi
Reservation Officer



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The G & A Mamidakis Foundation

With an exceptional host of exhibitions featuring diverse forms of artistic expression alongside the “Art Ark”, the G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation’s vision and objectives have been expressed through a range of initiatives concerning arts and culture in all its manifestations



Does the future begin with the past? As Gina Mamidakis puts it “when you live in a place you unavoidably become one with it. It shapes you and you carry it within yourself. It is what inspires you. For us at the G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation, the primary objective is to promote, protect and develop Greece’s culture, because culture is everything. Culture is history and the environment (natural and manmade); it is art, it is hospitality, it is society, it is people. In the final analysis, culture is the way in which you interact with the past, the present and the future.” The G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation takes as its starting point the conviction that evolution is the key to success. It is driven by a love for Greece, culture and beauty, respect for and awareness of the environment, an interest in society as a whole and the desire for ethical business practices, holistic development and the spread of knowledge and skills to future generations. The Foundation thus sees it as its duty to create today the conditions that will help Greece and its people face the future with confidence, openness and viable and attainable dreams.

Make it real

The mission of the G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation is to devise, coordinate, foster and implement programs and actions that are consistent with its vision concerning the arts, people and the environment. Its objective is to highlight Greece’s cultural wealth, to promote and support its human capital in order to release its creative and entrepreneurial potential, to empower society through educational actions and training initiatives, to consolidate and enrich the links between tourism and culture, and to restore and protect the environment. The history of the Foundation began in 1988 at Minos Beach Hotel when Gina Mamidakis organized the very first Art Symposium. She was driven by an idea – pioneering for the time – that tourism should be a holistic cultural experience. In a single day, 32 internationally renowned sculptors, both Greek and foreign, created works inspired by the environment and transformed the hotel’s gardens into

a true open-air museum. The legacy of the next Art Symposiums was the creation of the George and Aristeia Mamidakis Foundation, which Gina Mamidakis named in honor of her parents. Since it was established in 1993, the G & A Mamidakis Foundation has preserved the artworks that were created and displayed them in the bluegr hotels for the enjoyment of guests. The Foundation’s permanent

collection, which is constantly being enriched, boasts dozens of works by leading Greek and foreign artists. Furthermore, in recent years, the G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation actively participates in developments of the modern age and responds creatively to its needs, constructing a mosaic of culture-based activities to benefit individuals, society and the environment.



People

LoveGreece.com - We give a voice to Greek leaders to talk about what they have accomplished and to become role models for the productive, inventive and innovative part of Greece.



LoveGreece.com was born in the middle of the Greek crisis, inspired by the dynamic character and creativity of the Greek spirit. Our goal is to showcase and promote the image of Greece abroad through the faces of charismatic Greeks who signify the outward-looking aspect of the country. LoveGreece.com is supported by Gina Mamidakis, President of the G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation, who remains committed to benefiting Greek society through non-profit actions. The initiative gives voice to successful Greek entrepreneurs, creators and experts to speak on behalf of Greece by presenting its creative and innovative potential. With their ethos and vision, they constitute an impor-

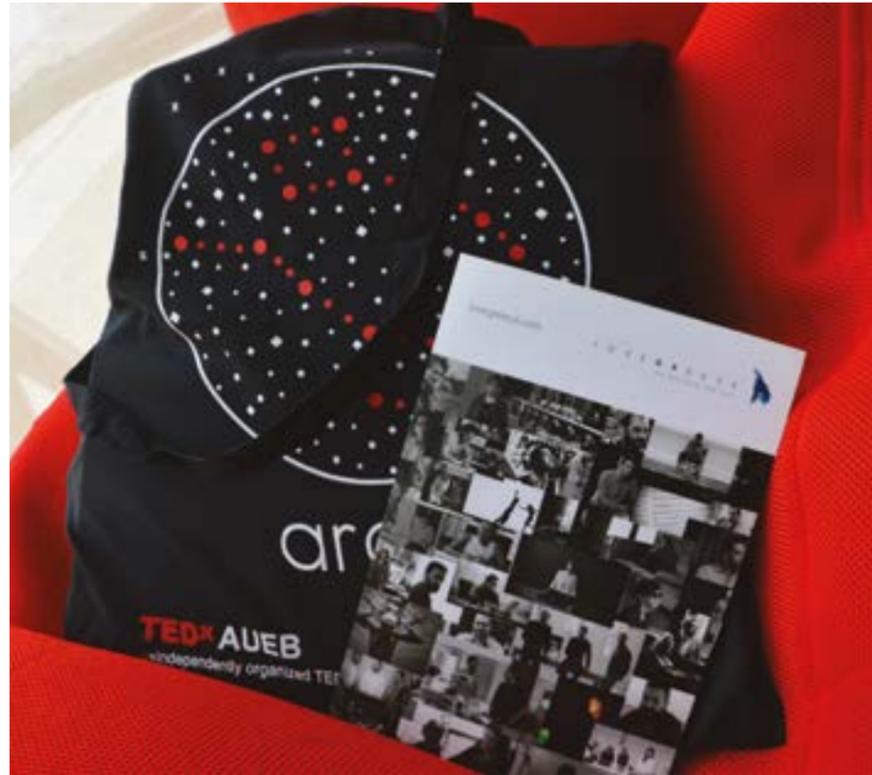



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* 49° 00' 00" - 20° 2' 41.17" N, 20° 14' 23.54" E

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tant chapter for our country that deserves to surface abroad. The work and future projects of promoted members is presented on the website through interviews and short documentaries with English subtitles, always carefully curated by the team of LoveGreece.com, as well as through business forums, exhibitions, conferences, lobbying events, etc. Having attained a noteworthy position on social media, and with its basic motto "We believe, we can", LoveGreece.com promotes the most creative and inventive Greek entrepreneurs, their original and sustainable ideas, and their significant social activity, and has formed strategic alliances with top institutions and organisations, including 100mentors, WhyAthens and the Hellenic Bankers Association to name a few, who support the LoveGreece.com initiative and help spread our message.

The LoveGreece.com events

Most recently LoveGreece.com launched a new set of interactive knowledge sharing and networking events! Whether you want to share experiences with established leaders in their field or exchange opinions with people who are models of inspiration, or simply want to know about new trends & technologies, each month a LoveGreece.com leader shares know-how and insider tips on issues related to their specialization. From economics, sales and marketing to art, education and social responsibility, LoveGreece.com plants ideas, explores strategies, networks and creates a community of people with common goals and visions. LoveGreece.com's 'Minds Together' is open to all leaders. During the second LoveGreece.com's interactive knowledge sharing & networking event, entitled "Minds Together: What's your story?", held on Friday 25th May at Life Gallery athens, two leaders from LoveGreece.com, an investor and a digital creative director, shared their knowledge and experiences about storytelling. They discussed about how brand stories become success stories, from the original idea and the first steps to the survival guide, funding and digital communication. Stay tuned for the next events and by then go with the motto: "In every generation, a country is changed by a few people who stand for something, don't fear failure and dare to make a difference. Our aim is to find them." Seeking innovation, knowledge and special skills for the new role-models of leadership is a true mind-challenge!



so nice!

www.sonice.gr



Culture

Exploring the relationship between culture and society, a series of exhibitions and interesting events will enrich your art experience.



A tribute to the Greek and international art scene hits the center of G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation. Stay tuned for the institution's cultural highlights.

Contemporary Minoans

Aiming to promote the cultural wealth of Greece, the G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation was the sponsor of the famous cultural event "Contemporary Minoans", held in Crete for the first time and with the participation of important Greek artists who inspire and promote the Minoan civilization internationally. The two-day cultural event was organized within the framework of the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage, aiming to highlight the timeless influence and broad impressions of the Minoan Civilization on modern creativity. The events took place in May, in Knossos and

Heraklion under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Sports, Ministry of Tourism and Greek Tourism Organisation, and was organized by 'Branding Heritage' alongside the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion, the British School of Athens and the Municipality of Crete

blueFest Crete

From 30th June - 2nd July 2018, the G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation organized a 3-day festival of cultural events overlooking the beautiful city of Agios Nikolaos, Crete. The celebration marked the proclamation of 2018 as European Year of Cultural Heritage. The vision for the implementation of blueFest Crete is the revival of a tradition that began 30 years ago with the organization of the 1st Symposium at Minos Beach art hotel, and is in

line with the Foundation's mission to showcase the cultural wealth of the country. This year's event is aimed at offering a breath of culture and entertainment to the residents of Crete and its visitors. The blueFest Crete 2018 program linked the rich cultural heritage of our country with new and traditional forms of artistic expression through a variety of artistic activities such as visual arts, theatre music and cinema. It was our dream that the blueFest Crete would continue through the years as a cultural institution. And we believe that we can succeed in this.

Open Museum

The G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation has created a valuable collection of contemporary art over the years, containing seminal works by leading artists, such as Vlassis Kaniaris, Takis, Nikos

Alexiou, George Lappas, Giorgos Gyparakis, and Rena Papaspyrou. Part of this collection is on display at bluegr Hotels and Resorts, comprising a true open museum that can be accessed by all art lovers, both local and visiting. In addition, the G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation organises regular guided tours by experts in order for visitors, hotel guests and locals alike to explore the artworks in greater depth. In this regard, the collection of the G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation becomes a destination site for art professional and enthusiasts worldwide. It is worth mentioning that the award-winning mobile application Clio Muse, which shares cultural stories for indoor and outdoors tours, welcomed this unique open museum to its network.

Sculpture Park

The majority of the G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation art collection is located at the Minos Beach Art Hotel in Agios Nikolaos, which has been operating as the first art hotel in Greece since 1988. The sculpture park at Minos Beach art hotel presents the



monumental sculptures and art installations which were created during a series of symposia held at the hotel. During these symposia artists, curators and art critics were brought together, working and creating in an exclusive landscape of sand, rocks, greenery and trees, ideal for a modern sculpture park. The installation "Drawing", a spatial intervention in the hotel's garden by Linda Benglis, "Light and Shadow", a yellow painted stone on the sea shore of the hotel by Carlo Ciarli, "Haris", the human figure in rope carrying a wooden pole by Eleni Mylona, "Don Quixote", a redesigned windmill in the hotel's garden by Theodoros [Surname needed here?], "Danger!", a sculpture by Costas Tsoclis, as well as the impressive "Painful Pyramids" by Magdalena Abakanowicz, are just some of the works to be discovered in the gardens of Minos Beach art hotel. The majority of the artworks have been created to exist in the hotel's garden, with the artist taking the location into account when planning and creating the new artwork. These outdoor site-specific artworks are, in many cases, inspired by the existing environment whilst, at the same time, often critically commenting upon it.

Underwater Exhibition

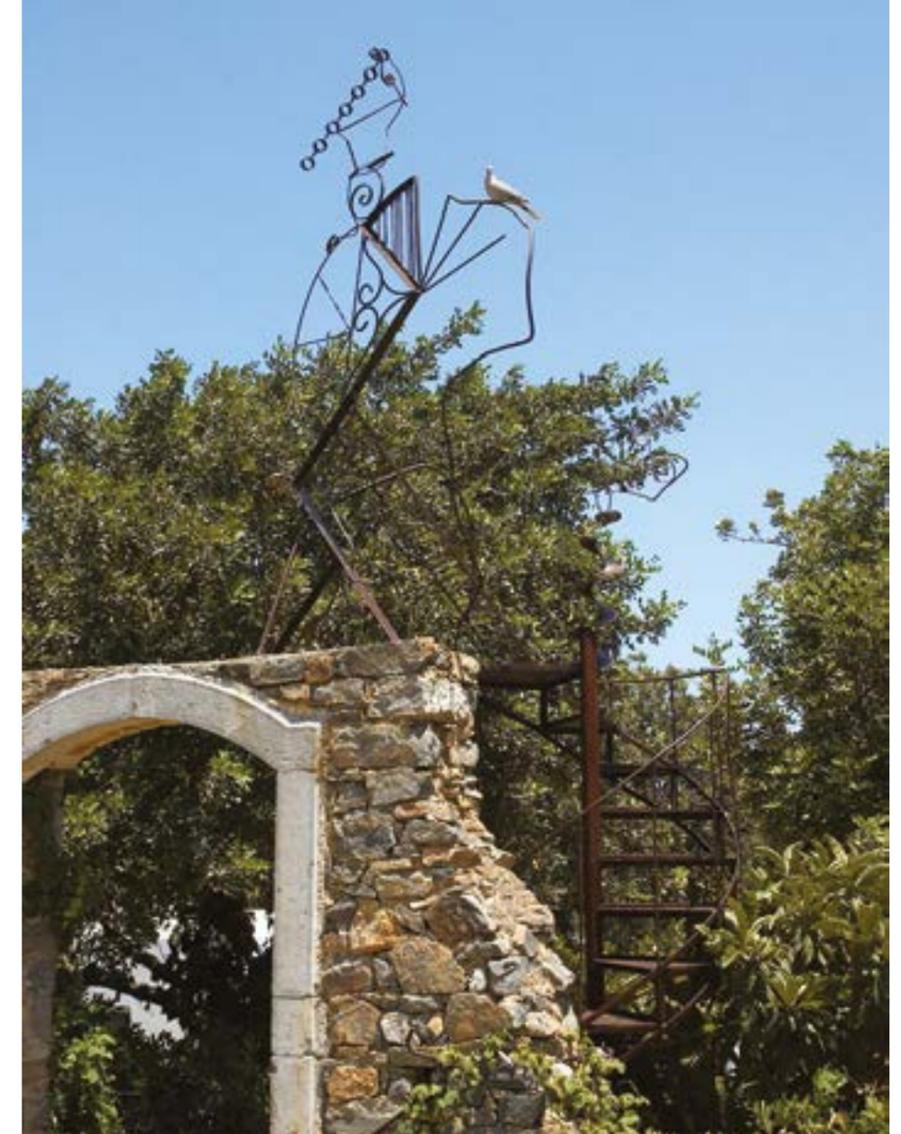
Having at its core the desire to encourage the dialogue between arts, environment and people, the G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation commissions site-specific projects, which focus on the sea shore of Crete and particularly in the area of Agios Nikolaos, where Minos Beach art hotel is situated. The multifaceted art project "Sea to Shore Stories" (2016), created by Kostas Ioannides, consists of the underwater sculptural installation "Lost Ears of Agios Nikolaos", the underwater sound installation "Hanging Gardens" and the video-text animation "Untitled (for the Sea-folk)". Whilst the text-animation welcomes hotel guests upon arrival in the reception area, the underwater installations are to be experienced by visiting swimmers and divers. Ioannides' work reminds us of the fragile and often uncomfortable co-existence between nature and culture, whilst at the same time plays on the idea of the sea as a metaphor for discovery and wonder, revealing unexpected results. The G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation promotes young established artists from Greece, offering

them a forum for creative expression. In 2018 it inaugurated "Art on Blue", a series of site-specific works with Georgia Kotretsos' installation "4 Cents" seen on the rocky surfaces and blue shores of Minos Beach art hotel. Kotretsos' sculptural installation, comprising varnished copper-plated objects resembling trash bags is a monument to the most banal objects of everyday life. The installation touches upon the pressing environmental issues of plastic waste in the environment that affects wildlife habitat and humans. At the same time, the installation considers the sea as a kind of a museum, an immediate institution telling of our recent industrial archeology.



Art Symposia & Art Exhibitions

The concept arose from Gina Mamidakis' love of culture and ensures that the cultural heritage of different countries will travel all over the world through the eyes of visitors. The first International Art Symposium was held in June 1988 at Minos Beach art hotel. During the symposium, artists from Greece, Europe and America created works in the hotel ground and the sculptures that adorned the hotel gardens soon became part of the surrounding natural environment. The sculpture park was further developed during the two subsequent International Art Symposia held in 1990 entitled "A New Mediterranean Cultural Identity" and in 1993 entitled "Art in Politics".



The sculpture park has been further developed by the many works of art which have been created during subsequent thematic exhibitions, such as an exhibition dedicated to the contemporary art of Cyprus in 1996 and an exhibition about the contemporary art of Chile in 1999. In 2007, the exhibition "People and Places in the 1960s" took place, presenting black-and-white photographs taken in and around Agios Nikolaos and the Minos Beach art hotel. Photographs of Cretan landscapes and traditions entitled "Crete in Black and White" have been on permanent display at the Sensimar Minos Palace hotel since 2011.

Art Catalogues & Travel Books

Photographic exhibitions are accompanied by lavishly illustrated catalogues which were free to visitors, hotel guests and art-related

experts. At the same time, two travel books, "The Unknown Crete" and "The Unknown Rhodes" have been published. In addition to these, the G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation launched a series of educational publications. The first book, "A Trip to the Greek Mythology", has been translated into four languages: Greek, English, German and Russian. In this special edition, Cretan mythology holds a special position and, in 2017, the "Summer of Mythology" was organised - an original initiative which since then has taken place in Minos Beach art hotel, Sensimar Minos Palace Hotel and Candia Park village, all in Agios Nikolaos. Through interactive activities, and with the valuable help of experts and audiovisual material, all visitors, no matter their age, were able to discover and indulge in the beauty of the ancient Greek myths.

Environment

Our environmental philosophy is based on the adoption of a new culture, and extends throughout bluegr Hotels & Resorts.



The art side of taste!

Apart from integrating eco-friendly practices in our hotels' overall management, we also strive on a daily basis to enhance environmental awareness amongst our guests and local residents. The organisation of "green" activities and

distribution of information on natural resources conservation are a few of our current practices, with more planned for the future. Such an event was the 'International Conference ECOWEEK Crete 2016' in Agios Nikolaos, an initiative of the G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation in cooperation with the NGO

ECOWEEK, the Municipality of Agios Nikolaos, the Regional Unit of Lasithi (Crete) and bluegr Hotels & Resorts. ECOWEEK Crete 2016 was widely accepted and supported by the local community, and a number of strategic and communication partners have contributed substantially to the success of the event.



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In addition, in 2017 the G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation sponsored the 8th Children's Festival of Agios Nikolaos, entitled "My Name is Hope". With a view to educating generations both young and old about the environment and culture, the foundation participated in the festival, in particular supporting the actions "Protect the Sea" and "Journey to Greek Mythology". "Protect the Sea" was a continuation of the 1st Educational Programme "Save the Planet from Trash", implemented in October 2016 in 4 schools of the Municipality of Agios Nikolaos. A selected team of Planet Agents' now undertook the training of the festival's small guests in order to teach them how to protect the marine ecosystem. The "Journey to Greek Mythology" activities, following the successful training course organised in the summer of 2016 by bluegr Hotels & Resorts, was presented at the 8th Children's Festival of Agios Nikolaos, aiming at the diffusion of Greek culture and the deconstruction of Greek mythology's symbolism in an interactive (co-)speech with parents, teachers and adult guests of the festival. Meanwhile, another 'Planet Agents' environmental mission was successfully completed in Agios Nikolaos. With the support of the G. & A. Mamidakis Foundation, primary school students in the 3rd and the 4th grades and their teachers joined the "Planet Agents" and undertook the protection of the environment from waste. The students chose their agent names and took on action. Transformed into 'Planet Agents', they were given the opportunity to play, have fun and, through daily practices, learn how to protect the environment.

As part of the volunteer environmental activities undertaken by the bluegr Hotels & Resorts Group, the hotels' staff, in collaboration with professional divers, also assist in the cleaning of the sea bed close to the hotels every year. This includes clearing the beach and surrounding areas of trash and debris, as well as planting trees. In celebration of World Environment Day, the Group's hotels hold various events in Athens and Crete: children's art activities at Candia Park village, environmental tours at Sensimar Minos Palace hotel & suites, and a special eco-menu served at the Kool Life bar restaurant of the Life Gallery Athens.



Awards & Achievements	
	TUI Top Quality Awards 2016-2017-2018
	Sensimar Minos Palace & Candia Park village
	TripAdvisor all bluegr Hotels
	Holidaycheck all bluegr Hotels
	TUI Umwelt Champion 2016 Sensimar Minos Palace
	Travelife Gold award Sensimar Minos Palace
	Kuoni Apollo Customers choice Candia Park village
	Thomas Cook Quality award Minos Beach art hotel
	World Luxury Hotel Award 2015 Life Gallery athens as Luxury Business Hotel
	We do local Certification standard
	EFQM Certification Committed to Excellence - 2 Stars



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Italian Restaurant





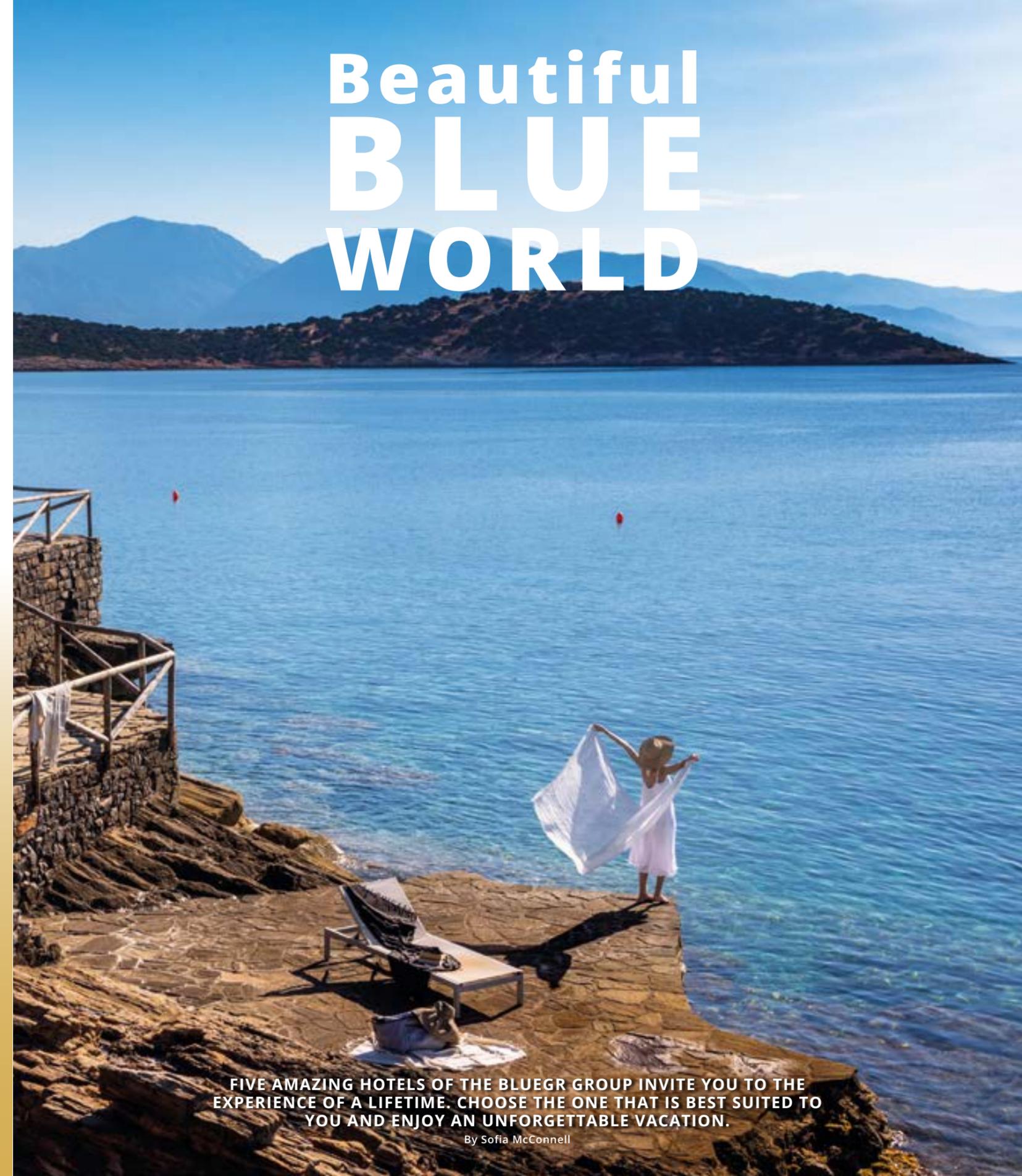
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Beautiful BLUE WORLD



FIVE AMAZING HOTELS OF THE BLUEGR GROUP INVITE YOU TO THE EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME. CHOOSE THE ONE THAT IS BEST SUITED TO YOU AND ENJOY AN UNFORGETTABLE VACATION.

By Sofia McConnell

The “little Venice”

With its prime location right on the water's edge, on the peaceful outskirts of the town of Agios Nikolaos, the exclusive Minos Beach art hotel is a true Cretan institution, exemplifying the highest standards of luxury hospitality.

A member of the bluegr hotels group and Small Luxury Hotels of the World, this is a 5 star property that truly embraces the very essence of Greek summer living. Perfect for couples seeking a superior hospitality experience on the stunning eastern end of Crete, the infant-friendly Minos Beach art hotel offers everything needed for the perfect, luxury escape.

With vast aromatic gardens showcasing a number of modern artworks, traditional Cretan architecture with minimalist boho-chic interiors, a private ‘Little Venice’ on the waterfront, a diverse array of dining options including a historic, award-winning restaurant, and lavish accommodation options to suit every taste, guests are sure to succumb to the hotel's multitude of pleasures.

Whether taking a stroll through the verdant gardens, relaxing in the sea-view lounge bar, enjoying the hotel's extensive modern art collection or savouring a fantastic dinner at one of its restaurants, days spent at the Minos Beach art hotel are a dream come true.

Take an early morning dive into the cooling waters of the hotel pool or sparkling blue sea before enjoying an indulgent Greek breakfast, then head to the beach for a variety of exciting water sports or visit the Ananea Wellness by Aegeo Spa for a luxurious massage or beauty treatment. Whatever you decide, life at Minos Beach art hotel is truly a work of art.

For business travellers, Minos Beach art hotel offers state-of-the-art audiovisual equipment and associated services in its spacious meeting room, ensuring perfectly orchestrated corporate events besides the glittering Mirabello Bay. Meanwhile, the hotel also offers one of the most incredible, seafront wedding venues on the island of Crete, resulting in an unforgettable experience to remember for years to come.





Days spent at the
Minos Beach art
hotel, are to put it
simply perfect!



From sea view rooms and suites to waterfront bungalows and luxury villas, all guests have the opportunity to sit back, relax and enjoy sweeping views over Mirabello Bay from their spacious private verandas or balconies. Unwind in a Jacuzzi or dive into your own private pool whilst enjoying the very best of luxury beachfront living combined with the highest levels of hospitality service. Boasting one of the best restaurants in Crete, Minos Beach art hotel takes gastronomy to a whole new level of excellence, where every sip and mouthful is to be savoured. Start your day on the privacy of your private terrace or head to the Bacchus main restaurant for a delicious Greek breakfast, complete with fresh juices and iced coffees. As the day unfolds, fresh fish, seafood and local culinary favourites made with Cretan olive oil are served in style at the seafront Terpsis restaurant, the picture perfect spot for lunch on a warm summer day. Escape the midday sun for drinks and finger food at the Ibisus pool bar or beachfront Pure Lounge Bar, and come evening, a romantic dinner at the multiple award-winning La Bouillabaisse Mediterranean restaurant, a member of Chaine des Rotisseurs, is the perfect way to end the day. Renowned since the 1970s, La Bouillabaisse promises to delight lovers of fine dining and excellent wine, in an unforgettable meal under the stars that is sure to linger in the memory long after the holiday has ended.





With a beautiful location which makes the most of the endless summer sea and sky, Minos Beach art hotel provides a unique experience, with the exquisite waters of the Mediterranean sea making the stresses and strains of the winter months seem like a distant memory.



So, whether you're looking for the ultimate beachfront getaway filled with relaxation and wellness, an adventurous holiday combining water sports and environmental activities, or simply want to experience the finer side of life, Minos Beach art hotel is guaranteed to provide cherished summer vacations that will be difficult to forget.

Guests have the opportunity to sit back, relax and luxuriate in accommodations with panoramic views over the Mirabello Gulf from their spacious veranda or terrace.



Unrivalled Romance



Guests of the Sensimar Minos Palace are invited to embark on a journey filled with relaxation and tranquility.

Situated in a spectacular seafront location near the picturesque towns of Agios Nikolaos and Elounda on the island of Crete, the 5 star Sensimar Minos Palace 360° sea view resort has come to be known as one of the island's best hotels. As a member of the private, family-owned bluegr Hotels & Resorts, the Sensimar Minos Palace has one objective: not only to meet but to surpass the needs and desires of even the most discerning guests.

Completely attuned with the surrounding sea and natural landscape, this multi-award winning, adults-only hotel resembles an island within an island, where guests are invited to embark on a journey filled with relaxation and tranquility in luxurious surroundings.

With 148 extraordinary sea view rooms, bungalows and suites overlooking the glittering waters of Mirabello Bay, each accommodation option showcases a calming, earthy colour palette, minimal modern design details, an advanced level of comfort, and a wealth of deluxe amenities, allowing guests to indulge in the pleasures of luxury living and breathe in the serenity of their surroundings whilst unwinding on sun-kissed balconies or terraces.



Each accommodation option showcases a calming, earthy colour palette, allowing to indulge in the pleasures of luxury living.

Offering a premium hospitality experience set in a picturesque island setting, days spent at the Sensimar Minos Palace are truly idyllic, whether you're looking to celebrate a special anniversary or dream honeymoon on Crete, or if you're simply seeking that ultimate summer vacation. And for guests seeking more active holidays, stay trim and fit at the hotel's deluxe fitness centre, enjoy exciting water sports adventures and diving in Mirabello Bay or embrace nature with a series of innovative environmental activities, all under the warm Cretan sun.

Start the morning with a sumptuous breakfast buffet complete with hot and cold dishes, iced coffees and fresh orange juice, perfect for fuelling the day ahead. For early birds, morning yoga classes are available, whilst adventure lovers can enjoy an invigorating game of tennis or head to the sea for a variety of water sports and diving activities. Want to relax in the sun? Lounge beside the hotel's stunning mock-infinity pool, the most beautiful dark-bottomed pool in Greece, complete with ample sun loungers and Bali-beds. Alternatively, a long, languid swim in the azure Mediterranean Sea is absolute perfection especially when followed by a soothing treatment at the Ananea Wellness by Aegeo Spa, where stress-relieving massages and luxury therapeutic techniques are combined with natural products such as Cretan olive oil, seaweed, Aloe Vera and aromatic oils.

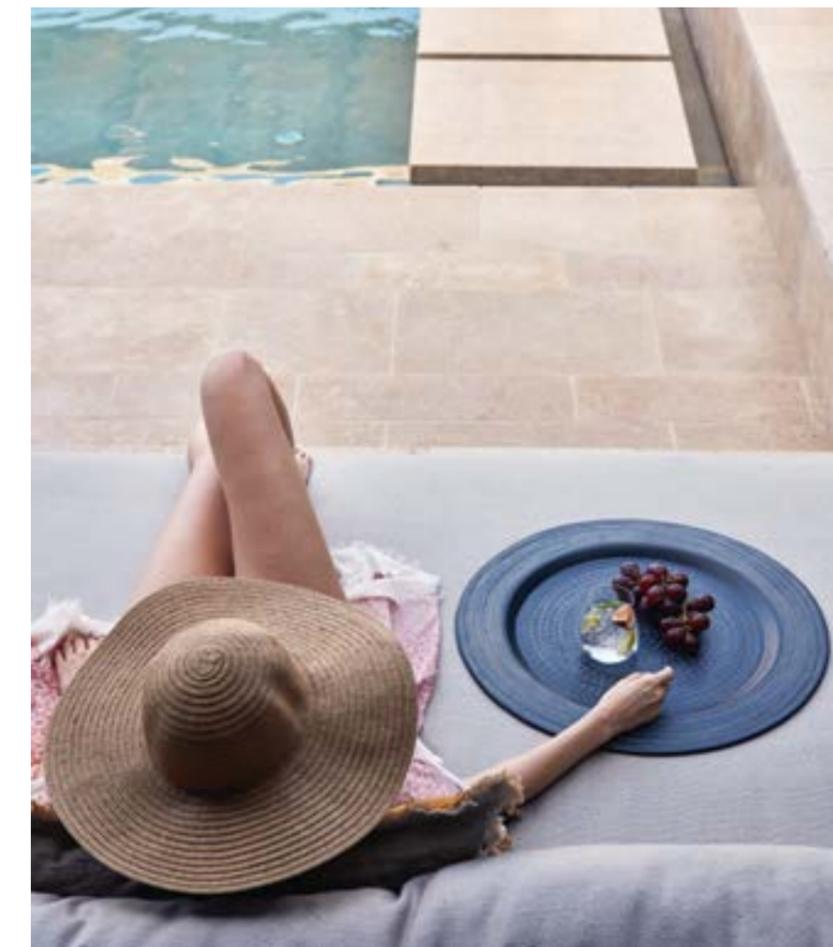




A beautiful culinary journey awaits guests at the Sensimar Minos Palace, filled with the flavours of Crete and the wider Mediterranean. The Amalthea main restaurant, with its idyllic setting overlooking Mirabello Bay, serves breakfast in the sun whilst, come evening, a mouthwatering variety of buffet and a la carte dishes are served for dinner. Meanwhile, at the Kulinarium Inblu Tavern, perfect alfresco dining awaits at both lunch and dinner, with the perfect seafront location guaranteeing an unrivalled culinary experience. Enjoy open-air dining throughout the day with expansive views over the never-ending sea until, as the sun sets, the soft evening light beckons for romantic dinners for two under a blanket of stars.

Seek some midday shade at the beachfront Island Bar, where exotic cocktails and refreshing drinks are served to the soft background sound of whispering waves. Alternatively, the Bacchus Lounge Bar serves refreshments and drinks throughout the day and comes alive at night as the perfect location for a relaxed nightcap under the stars.

Dreamy and luxurious, and with the expert staff of the Sensimar Minos Palace on hand at all times to take care of everything and anything, guests are free to relish every beautiful moment of their summer vacation on the magical island of Crete.



The authentic Cretan village



Designed to resemble an authentic Cretan village complete with a quaint central square and traditional 'Kafenion', Candia Park village offers a truly incomparable summer experience. Families and couples alike are invited to revitalise their senses and indulge in the ultimate luxury vacation filled with fun and recreation for all ages, including exceptional services, unique amenities and outstanding cuisine. Dedicated to creating unique experiences, Candia Park village prides itself on ensuring guests enjoy a vacation filled with quality family time, resulting in unforgettable summers overflowing with laughter and memories.

Artfully combining the legendary hospitality that Crete is known for around the world with luxury island living, Candia Park village, a member of bluegr hotels group is a haven of peace and tranquility where both body and soul are soothed under the warm Greek sun.

Guests will enjoy experiencing the traditional, slower-paced Cretan lifestyle, whether taking a stroll through the resort's fragrant gardens, diving into the refreshing waters of the hotel swimming pools, paddling in the sparkling blue seas of the private beach, lazing in the warm, bubbling Jacuzzi with its panoramic views of the Mirabello Bay or being pampered at the Ananea Wellness by Aegeo Spa.



Situated between the picturesque towns of Elounda and Agios Nikolaos, Candia Park village's 222 apartments and suites have undergone a series of renovations, the most recent overseen by architects Vassilis Rodatos and Alexis Tobazis, ensuring they provide a flawless, contemporary hospitality experience. With beautifully appointed interiors complete with all modern fixtures and fittings and ample outdoor spaces, every accommodation option provides the perfect backdrop for a serene summer, making the most of the beauty of Crete. Offering a wide range of child-friendly facilities and family activities, Candia Park Village is the perfect choice for families seeking to make the very most of their vacation. The calm, neighbourhood-style resort

provides a safe environment for children and a relaxing atmosphere for adults whilst a great range of recreational activities such as basketball, tennis, volleyball, windsurfing, scuba diving and sailing provide a sense of fun, recreation and, above all, adventure. Children aged 4-12 will enjoy spending their day at the Mini Blues kid's club, where a special programme of educational games, theatre productions, arts and crafts, face-painting and treasure hunts are sure to keep them entertained. Parents who wish to have some alone time can take advantage of Candia Park village's exceptional babysitting services and enjoy an evening under the Cretan stars secure in the knowledge that their little ones are safe in the hands of specialised staff.



True to its green philosophy, the Candia Park village offers the blue bicycles for a romantic ride.

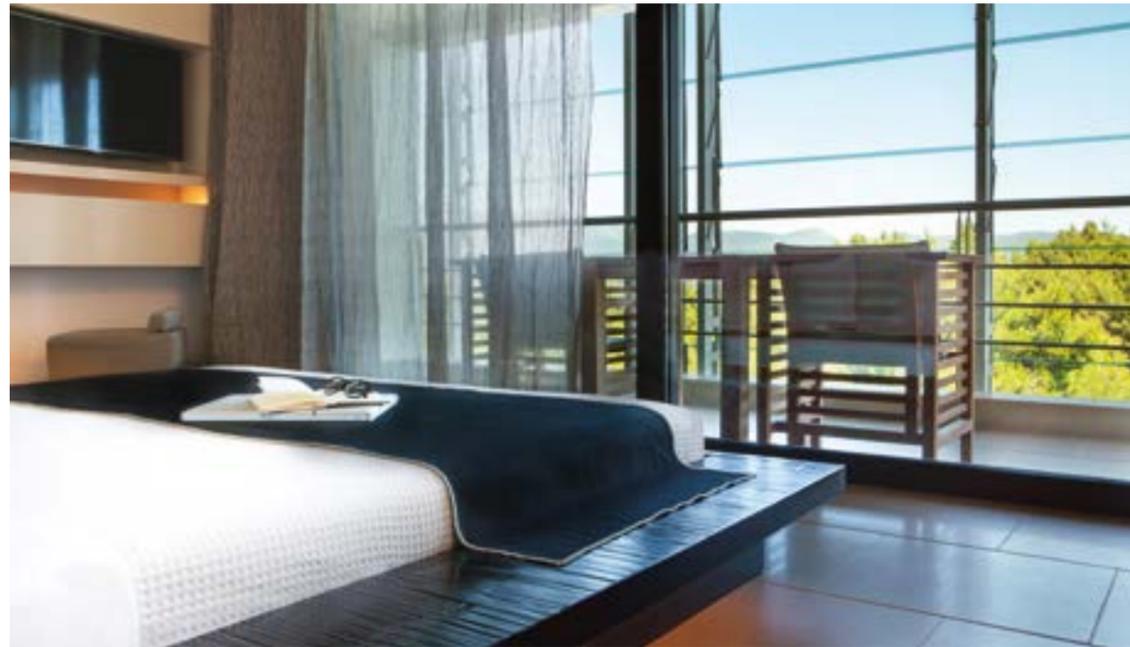
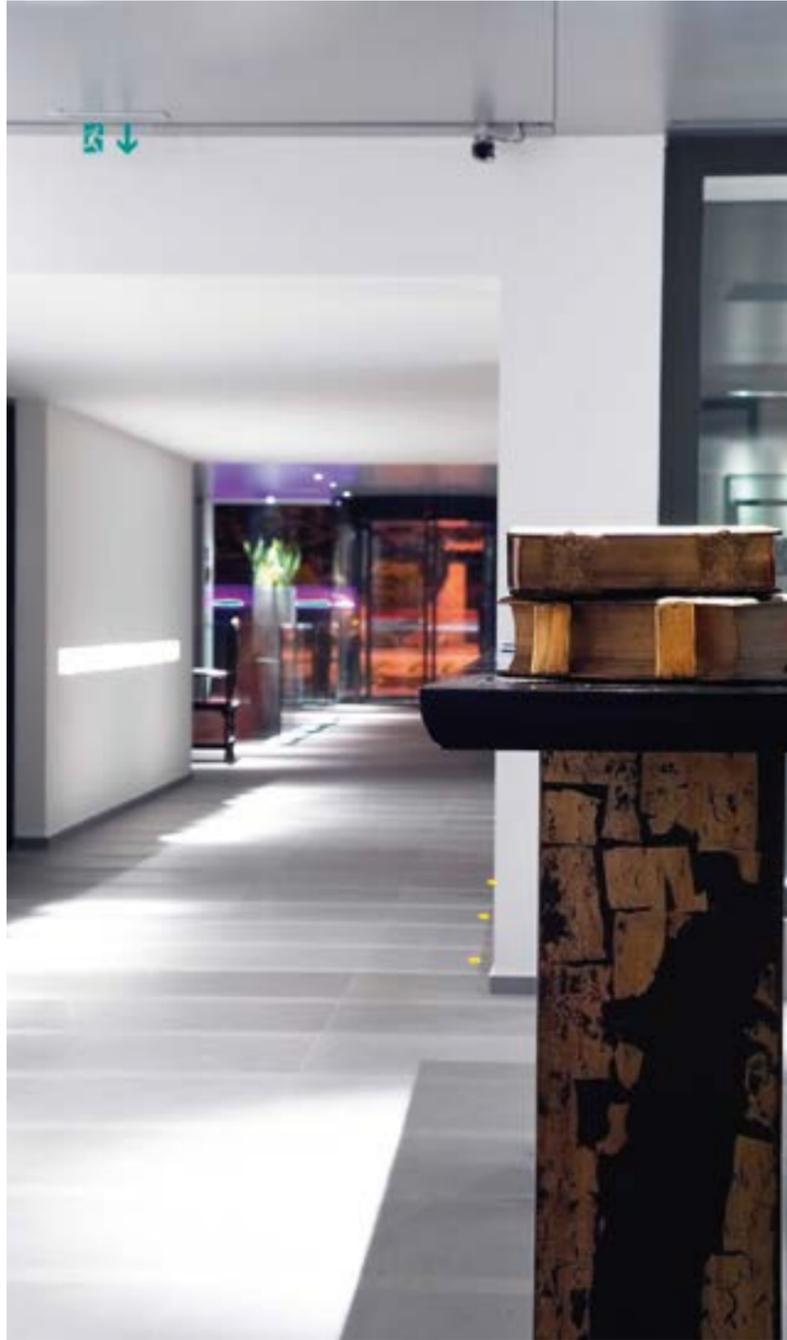


Foodies will not be disappointed, as Candia Park village endeavours to take its esteemed guests of all ages on a spectacular culinary journey spanning traditional Cretan cuisine to international fine dining. Families and couples can treat their taste buds to a series of gustatory revelations at the Agapi (meaning 'love' in Greek) main restaurant where Cretan and international cuisine take centre stage along with a number of themed nights throughout the week. At the Fili (meaning 'kiss') Taverna, diners can enjoy casual seafront dining with an emphasis on fresh fish and seafood alongside Cretan specialities and an abundance of children's options. The traditional 'Kafenion' or coffee house is perfect for a taste of the local way of life, where guests can try a chilled ouzo, Greek coffee and selection of Greek mezze dishes. Meanwhile, the Eros main bar is the perfect place to sit back, relax and enjoy a refreshing cocktail or iced coffee in the company of family and friends. So whether you're seeking a fun-filled family vacation, filled to the brim with exciting activities and water sports adventures, or simply want to unwind in the sublime tranquility of the Cretan sun and sea, Candia Park village exemplifies luxury recreation and authentic Greek hospitality, offering unsurpassed levels of indulgence for all ages.

LIFE GALLERY ATHENS

Chic urban style in the calm embrace of nature

Providing a luxury 5 star hospitality experience, Life Gallery Athens brilliantly combines chic urban style with peace and quiet in a naturally resplendent setting. Situated in the quiet northern suburbs of Athens, in the leafy, green neighbourhood of Ekali, this luxury design hotel is a private urban sanctuary designed to provide a serene escape from the city's palpable energy. Stunning in every sense, the property - located amongst lush, perfumed gardens - is replete with elegant minimalist design, ethnic elements, glass surfaces, unique lighting systems and luxury branded furniture.



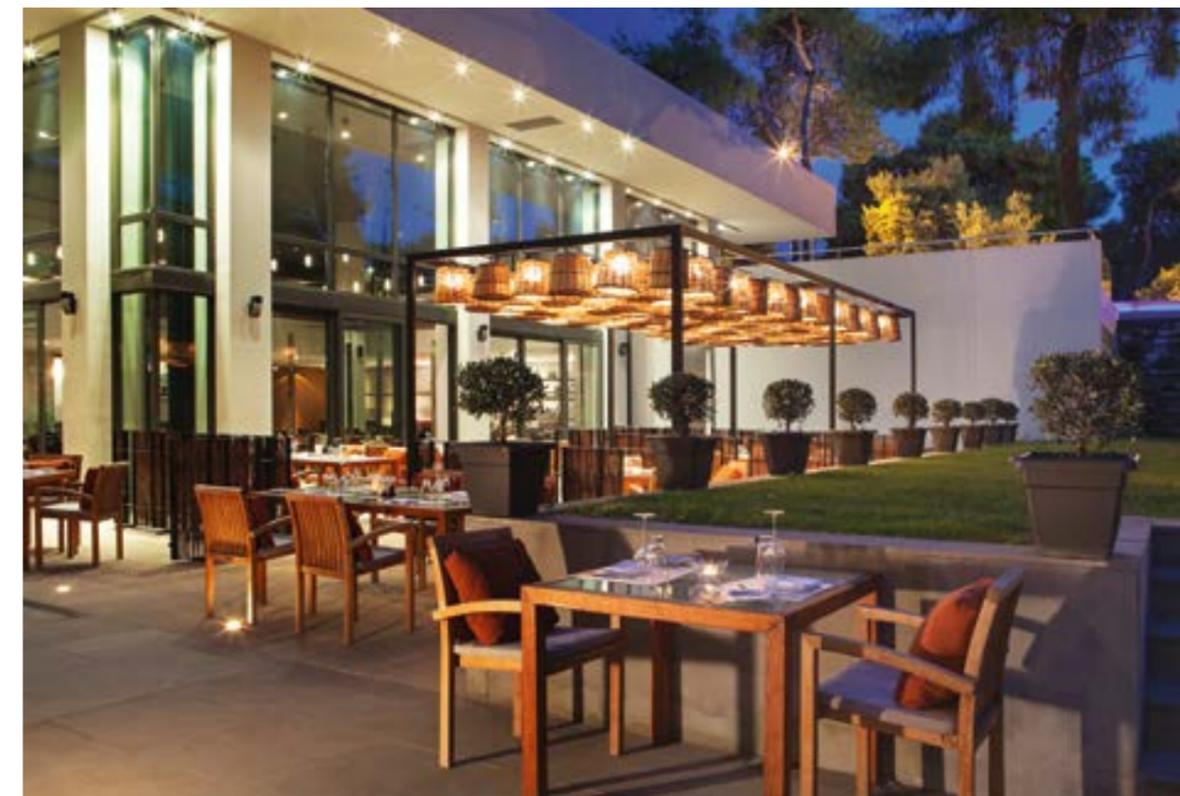
The atmosphere of the whole hotel is in perfect harmony with its exquisite modern architectural form, artfully juxtaposed against the beautiful mature pine trees that surround it. Offering exceptional levels of service alongside a wealth of luxury facilities and amenities, this remarkable member of the bluegr hotels has rightfully come to be known as one of the best boutique offerings in Athens.

Whether in Athens for business or pleasure, the refined hospitality and wellness experiences offered at Life Gallery athens are sure to redefine the standards of the most discerning guests. With its elegantly appointed accommodation options offering a lavish selection of contemporary facilities and deluxe amenities, guests can sit back, relax and experience another side to the bustling capital city.

An exceptional venue for unforgettable social events, receptions and informal celebrations.

Guests can combine business with leisure in an environment that harmoniously coexists with nature.

After settling into the room of your choice, a variety of carefully curated experiences showcasing a new side to Athens living await; that being the northern suburbs, which with their cooler weather, beautiful neighbourhoods and green spaces, offer a very different experience to the bustle and excitement of downtown Athens, albeit just a 30 minute drive away. Life Gallery athens also serves as an exceptional venue for hosting unforgettable social events, from weddings and baptisms to receptions and informal celebrations. Whatever the occasion, Life Gallery athens' dedicated staff are on hand to help and advise, ensuring a special and memorable event every time. Similarly, Life Gallery athens' elegant and stylish function rooms are perfect for a range of business purposes including board meetings and conferences, and include all the equipment needed for a modern corporate event. Furthermore, business clients will be glad of the opportunity to combine work and leisure in a hotel environment that harmoniously coexists with nature, lending out-of-office events a relaxed, urban-chic atmosphere. The undeniable jewel in Life Gallery athens' already overflowing treasure chest has got to be the hotel's iconic, glass-sided swimming pool. Diving into its turquoise waters surrounded by such natural beauty makes for a unique and memorable experience - one that is both invigorating yet peaceful. Spend an afternoon capturing that ultimate Instagram-worthy mermaid shot, or make yourself comfortable on a shady, poolside sun bed with a good book and an icy cocktail in hand. Meanwhile, the Anenea Wellness by Orloff Experts Spa opens a new path into the idyllic realms of relaxation and rejuvenation. Guests can revitalise their senses in the spa's state-of-the-art wet area, Jacuzzi and sauna, relax in the hammam and soothe their body, mind and soul with a relaxing massage or rejuvenating treatment using products from Valmont, Cinq Mondes and other top beauty brands. Twice celebrated as one of the best restaurants in Greek creative cuisine, with a toques d'or awarded in 2013, the Kool Life Restaurant and Bar at Life Gallery athens offers exceptional service in an elegant environment, complete with exquisite decorative details. Whether a romantic dinner for two or a long awaited get together with old friends over Sunday brunch, the Kool Life Restaurant and Bar provides a dining experience bursting with fresh flavours and creative gastronomic touches. Ideal at anytime of the day for a coffee, cocktail or glass of chilled white wine, the Kool Life Bar also hosts a number of intriguing artworks from the Mamidakis family collection in what is a unique selection of pieces by Greek and international artists. So, from business to pleasure, Life Gallery athens warmly invites guests to experience a new era of luxury hospitality in the most elegant and unique boutique hotel to be found in the northern suburbs of Athens.



SUNPRIME MIRAMARE PARK
SUITES & VILLAS

Where the sun meets the sky

Playing homage to the concept of luxury leisure in its purest form, the Sunprime Miramare Park suites & villas in Ixia, Rhodes, is immediately enchanting. Stand upon the sun-kissed deck of the dazzling hotel swimming pool and gaze in awe at its crystal clear waters, blending almost seamlessly with the never-ending blue of the sky and sea beyond.

With its community environment, direct beachfront location, fragrant gardens and atmosphere of peaceful serenity, the 5 star Sunprime Miramare Park suites & villas will immediately capture your imagination. Every form, colour and scent emits an aura of spiritual tranquility, resulting in a perfectly conceived beachfront wonderland, especially reserved for adults only.

This 5 star sea view resort takes rest and relaxation to new heights, with guests invited to unwind by the pool and savour the stunning sea view, where the sole wish of the dedicated staff at the Supreme Miramare is to make you feel welcome and relaxed, providing the perfect home-away-from-home experience.

Located a mere 30 minutes drive from Rhodes' international airport, guests immediately become attuned to the chilled-out vibe found throughout the hotel complex with its elegant surroundings, fabulous dining options and beautiful accommodation. The 175 bungalows and suites consist of light, airy spaces nestled in various one and two storey buildings dotted around the hotel grounds. In-room facilities include separate double or twin bedrooms, comfortable living areas, kitchenettes with microwaves and mini-fridges, hairdryers, satellite television, irons and ironing boards, safes, air conditioning, bathrobes and slippers, modern bathrooms and sunny terraces.





A unique five star seaside park, right on the famed Ixia beach.

The Sunprime Miramare Park suites & villas is proud to offer guests a spectacular outdoor infinity pool, with ample sun loungers, parasols and pool/beach towels. The main restaurant serves an array of Greek and international dishes to be enjoyed inside or on the terrace, whilst the pool bar offers snacks and refreshments throughout the day. Two bars, tennis courts, an outdoor and indoor gym, fitness classes, free Wi-Fi, 24 hour reception and wonderful spa offering a wide range of massage and beauty treatments complete the Sunprime Miramare experience. Rhodes, commonly known as the 'Island of the Sun', is the largest in the Dodecanese, famed for its beaches and natural beauty as well as the warm hospitality of the local residents. Just a short drive from the Sunprime Miramare is the UNESCO protected medieval old town, with its cobblestone alleys, Grand Master's Palace, Ottoman bathhouses and mosques, and important Archaeological Museum highlighting the island's rich history and culture. The Sunprime Miramare Park suites & villas is an ideal resort for children, who will instantly fall in love with the resort's hidden treasures, and long days spent playing on the beach. The hotel's central location in the village of Ixia allows guests to truly experience and enjoy the wonders of the island, before returning to their home-base to be royally pampered!



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**LIVE
THE BLUE
EXPERIENCE**

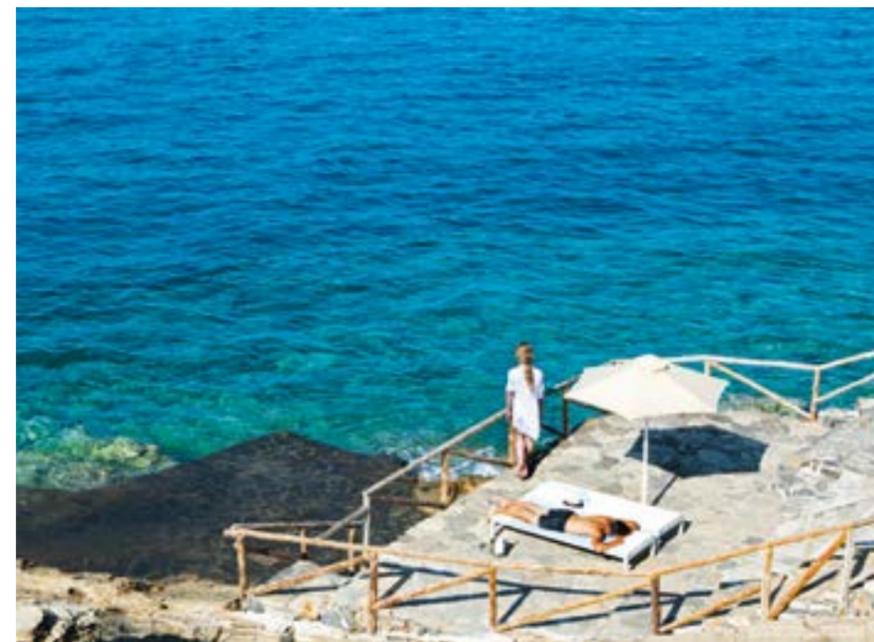




Dive in pleasure

The Mirabello Bay in Aghios Nikolaos, Crete, opens out before you!

The true meaning of the bluegr experience lies in the exquisite blue waters embracing the Group's hotels. The dive in pleasure can last for ever – as a memory, as an image. What greater privilege is there than relaxing in such a blessed land? Staying by the sea at the Minos Beach art hotel, the Sensimar Minos Palace and the Candia Park village in Crete is driven by the energy of water. Life in this holiday microcosm revolves around a series of sea activities revitalizing body and soul after the winter weariness and



stress. Lovely sunloungers, strategically placed along the shore, await for you to indulge in their comfort. That's the starting point; the rest depends on each visitor's individual desires.

A dive in individual desires
At the Minos Beach art hotel, all those ready to enjoy nature's precious gift can take part in diving lessons in the calm sea, exploring ancient underwater ruins, shipwrecks, rocky cliffs, caves and shoals under the watchful eye of the certified Pelagos Dive Center which operates within the hotel. Sports for fans of windsurfing, water-skiing and sailing are available here, as well as trips with small boats around the bay or daily cruises to Spinalonga and Mohlos. Those opting for Sensimar Minos Palace hotel & suites can also enjoy diving and water sports in the seclusion dictated by the protocol of this romantic hideaway. Imagine a romantic dive just for two or an exciting ride on the waves

BLUE EXPERIENCE



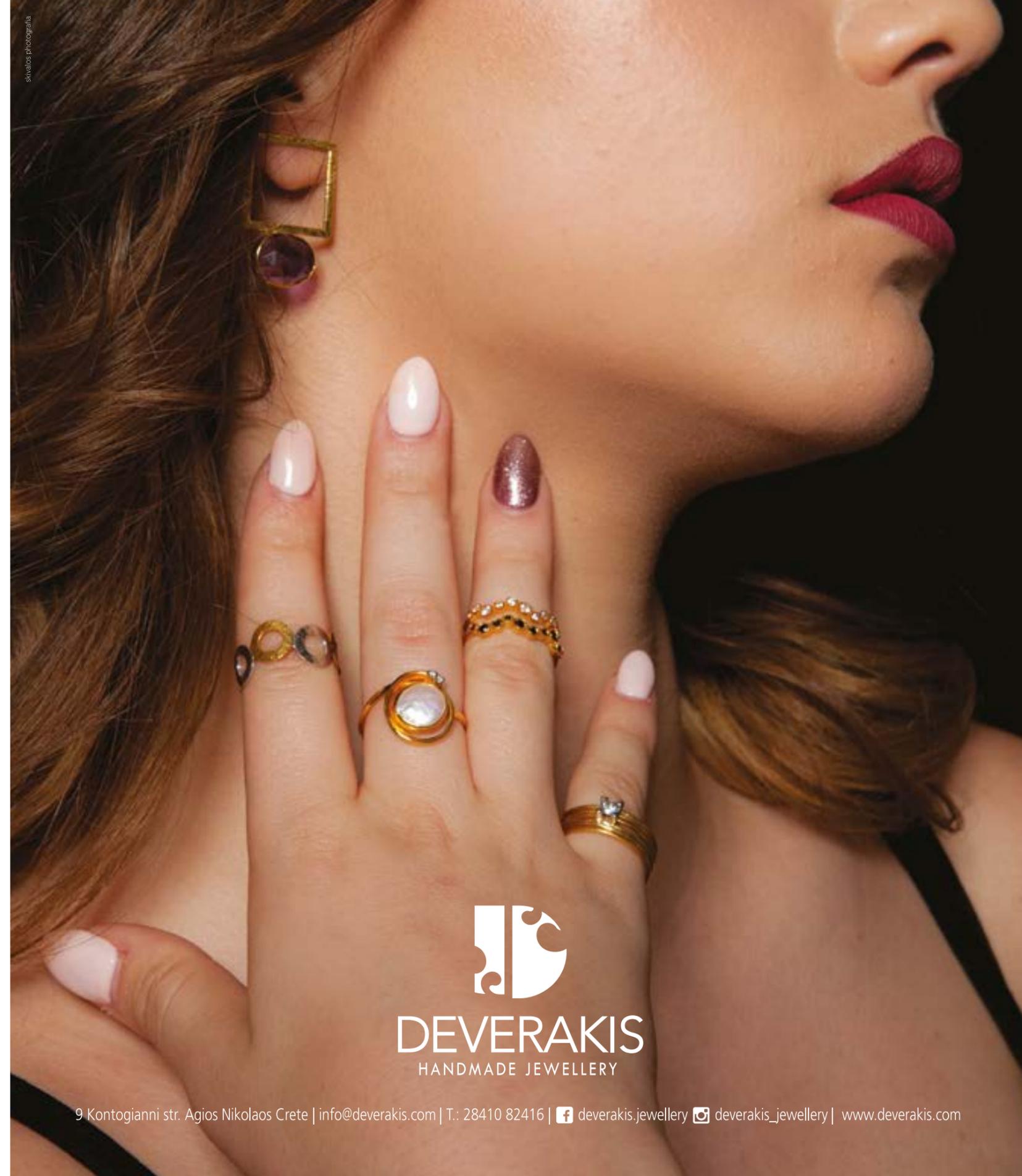
Enjoy the ultimate relaxation at Minos Beach art hotel, bask in the sun on the dazzling private beach of Minos Palace hotel & suites or enjoy thrilling water sports adventures at the Candia Park village in Agios Nikolaos.



with your surfboards. And the best of it is, you don't have to worry about organizational details: By the time you have finished breakfast and put on your new bathing suit, all practicalities will have been taken care of by the helpful staff of the Mediterranean View Diving center of Candia Park village that is there to give you the chance to relax in the deep blue.

Endless hours of play

Have you arrived in Crete with your kids? Then they have the unique opportunity of discovering the excitement of vacationing in a privileged place by the sea. At the Candia Park village, an oasis of recreation for families with children just 50 minutes from the Heraclion airport, all rooms have fully equipped porches and impressive sea views. The challenge is there for everyone: Who will be the first to dive in the clear blue waters? And, most importantly, who will be the first to surf and learn to balance over the waves? Fun at the beach has only just begun – and it will go on for many hours, until the sun goes down and energy has run out. Sea adventures, diving and sailing are available here as well for all to enjoy. The organised Candia Ski Club and the Mediterranean View Diving Center of this family resort offer a unique opportunity for children to improve their diving and water-skiing technique. The crystal-clear waters are ideal for kids, and children's parties are often organized on the beach for young guests who find it hard to leave the cool embrace of the bewitching sea.



salvatores fotografica



DEVERAKIS
HANDMADE JEWELLERY



Family matters

The ideal facilities to meet the needs and fulfill the dreams of modern families turn the Candia Park village into a home away from home, while the Minos Beach art hotel at Aghios Nikolaos can be a personal paradise for young couples with babies.

Crete is an ideal destination for families with kids, and the Candia Park village in Aghios Nikolaos has been created not just to welcome children's laughter and lively souls eager to know everything but to embrace its guests like family. After all, you are in Crete, the land of hospitality, sincere talk, treats and the warm Greek heart. Reminiscent of an authentic Cretan village with its picturesque neighborhood, the clock in the center of the square that will ring out the beginning of the games, and colorful gardens, the Candia Park village lives in the children's rhythm. Accommodation makes a really great first impression: Family rooms are quite spacious, enough so to accommodate both parents and children, offering views over the sea and

extensive gardens. Three pools spreading over two levels and 2,000 square meters include two sea and freshwater pools, a jacuzzi and a children's pool. Two fully organized beaches await both children and grownups to enjoy their preferred water sports under the watchful eye of trained professionals. Four food spots – and not only – can satisfy every child's needs for... refueling! In the "Agapi" restaurant, in the main square by the pool, the little ones will get the chance to try both Greek and international dishes. They can also enjoy Cretan delicacies in the open-air tavern "Fil" and taste fresh seafood, as well as the all-time-favorite sandwiches and snacks. In the "Plori" pool bar, children will be refreshed after hours of play with a freshly pressed juice from local oranges. The Candia Park village is not just kid-friendly; it has recreated the authentic Cretan way of

BLUE EXPERIENCE

life and introduces children to it. The Mini Blues club, for children aged 4-12, is a true paradise: a children's program with theme days; educational games; theater rehearsals and costumes; face painting; arts and crafts; and treasure hunting won't let them get bored even for an instant. From the donkey they will load with fruits and vegetables to sea-conquering pirates, games will last till sunset. And then – who knows? A magician might produce a treasure out of his sleeve, or a children's party might be organized on the beach... True to its green philosophy, the Candia Park village

organizes a series of environmental activities for children and adults every summer. From the blue bicycles and getting to know the Cretan nature and local life to lessons of Greek mythology and picking vegetables from the plot, members of the Mini Blues club will strengthen their bond with nature.

Baby bloom!

The nearby Minos Beach art hotel is another baby-friendly destination. As couples arrive with their young babies, they can take advantage of the hotel's specialized services

to be able to relax for a few hours each day. Their every need will be met: from babysitting, so that they can enjoy a few hours alone at the beach or a carefree dinner, to highchairs in the restaurant, cribs in rooms, and special lunches for children of all ages. And of course the Sunprime Miramare Park suites & villas at the amazing beach of Ixia, Rhodes, is the ideal destination for children. They will love the island of hidden treasures and, in addition to endless play at the sea, use the hotel as a starting point to explore the sights of the island of the Knights.

Young guests are entertained at the mini club, engage in some fun and enjoyable family activities or play with other kids experiencing the most memorable holidays in Greece.



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In an enchanting environment guests of Minos Beach art hotel are welcome to capture the essence of the Cretan cuisine and the Mediterranean gastronomy. From scrumptious breakfast choices at Bacchus restaurant, to traditional Cretan meals at Terpsis in view of the azure of the sea delightful choices from the lavish buffet of the Ambrosia a la carte or candlelight dinners under the open sky at the hotel's elegant La Bouillabaisse restaurant, member of Chaine des Rotisseurs, the 5 star hotel offers a fine dining experience to all of its guests. Wine lovers will certainly enjoy here their dinner, situated on the water's edge. La Bouillabaisse has been renowned since the '70 for its several Toques d'Or awards between 2003 and 2009. But the gourmet experience never stops... Enveloped by the crystal blue sea and the beautiful gardens, Sensimar Minos Palace resort ensures a delightful culinary journey to the depths of the Mediterranean at some of the best restaurants in Crete. From the Amalthea restaurant in Crete overlooking the Mirabello Bay with its scrumptious Greek food

and international dishes to the Kulinarium Inblu Tavern offering alfresco lunch choices on the most idyllic seafront location, the atmospheric Island bar with the exotic cocktails and delicious drinks, the reviving ambiance of hotel's beach bar in Crete and the hotel's main bar, Bachus bar in Crete with its nautical yet contemporary decor, Minos Palace guarantees an unrivalled culinary experience with some of the most exceptional dinner and bar choices. Join the special F&B theme nights of Amalthea where diners can enjoy the flavors and aromas of the world. Thanks to its deep Cretan tradition, the bluegr culinary experience uncovers the secrets of the local cuisine. In the authentic environment of the Candia Park village guests are welcome to relish some of the most mouth-watering Cretan products, sea food specialties, Greek wines blended with international cuisine choices. The intriguing flavors, the exceptional service, the unique amenities and panoramic view to the sea make dining with the family an enjoyable and satisfying experience to share with your beloved ones. Throughout the day guests are invited to delight in a haven of serenity with coffee breaks

at the traditional Kafeneion in Crete in the central square and exotic cocktails from the pool bar to cool off after a swim or a plunge in the outdoor jacuzzi. The hotel's main restaurant Agapi organizes a series of thematic nights and Cretan evenings with live music and dancing luring guests to the authentic Cretan way of living. From fresh fish and seafood specialties to exquisite Cretan dishes, a la carte menu choices, mouth-watering pizza, sandwiches, salads and snacks, the Agapi Tavern ensures an incredible meal for all tastes and preferences. Last but not least, Fili tavern is the ultimate choice for those wishing to experience a truly authentic dining experience or enjoy a casual lunch. Back in the north suburbs of Athens, Life Gallery athens offers the most elegant environs among intriguing pieces of art. The awarded Kool Life Restaurant is a true culinary journey of intriguing flavors and aromas, fresh ingredients and gourmet twists. Awarded with the toques d' or, the exquisite restaurant has rightfully earned its place amidst the best Athenian restaurants due to its exceptional service and delectable choices of fine Greek and Mediterranean delicacies.



Inspired Dining

Superb menus based on the finest ingredients are artfully transformed into highlights of total bliss



In an enchanting environment guests are welcome to capture the essence of the Cretan cuisine and the Mediterranean gastronomy.



A gift to your body

If your deepest wish is to balance body and mind, the bluegr philosophy completes the puzzle of harmony at the Ananea Wellness Spas by Aegeo Spas in Crete and the Orloff Experts in Athens.



Having obtained highly prestigious awards in the field of wellness for best services and innovative spa techniques, the Ananea Wellness Spas by Aegeo Spas at the Minos Beach art hotel, the Sensimar Minos Palace hotel & suites and the Candia Park village in Agios Nikolaos, Crete, offer select choices of spa packages including body and skin care treatments.

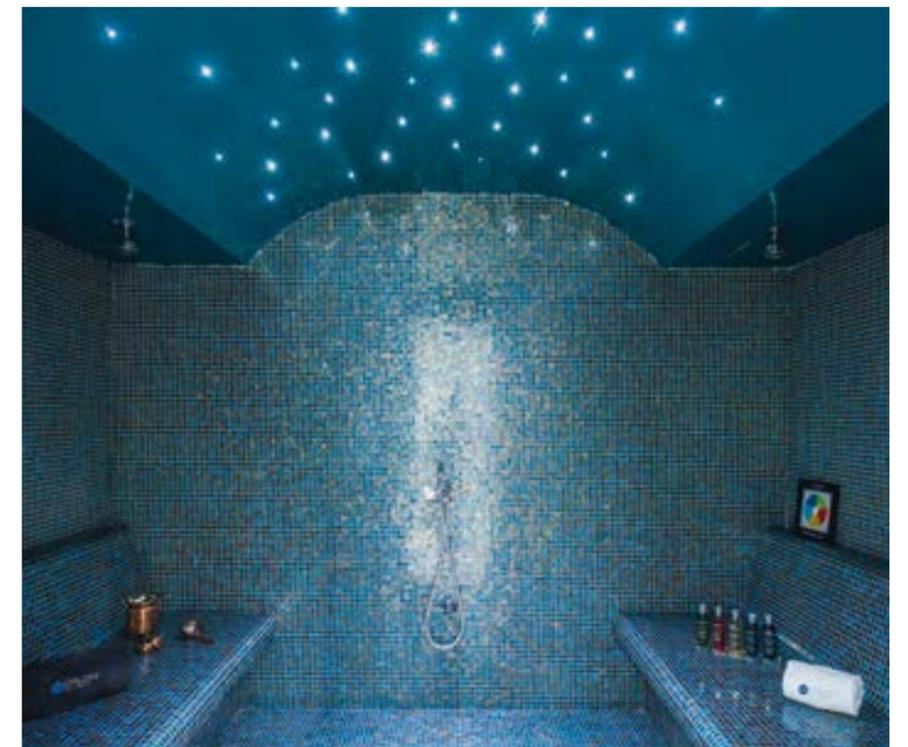
Yoga time
You have chosen the ideal destination to combine body and mind wellness, with yoga and meditation in the lovely garden surroundings or private porches overlooking the sea. Letting the energy of a magical place such as Crete course through their bodies, visitors – both women and men – can let go of stress and the winter tensions through everyday practice.

Indulge yourselves
Another trend that is now on the rise abroad but has been a part of the bluegr Hotels & Resorts philosophy for some time is the combination of Zen and adrenaline. At the Sensimar



Minos Palace hotel & suites, couples can round off their day in the steam bath or sauna or cleanse their skin with detox treatments based on Cretan olive oil and herbs after paying a visit to the gym. The visitor can enjoy the same spirit of revitalization with hot stones or deep tissue massage at the open-air Ananea Wellness Spa, which is set up by the pool of the Candia Park village.

Athens retreat
In the natural glamour of the Life Gallery athens, the Ananea Wellness by Orloff Experts offers the serenity of an impressive spa with a comprehensive Jacuzzi system, steam bath, sauna and shower path. North African wellness practices in the steam bath with the impressive mosaics create the ultimate eastern ritual for cleansing both body and mind. Then it's time for the excellent Valmont and Cinq Mondes treatments in especially designed rooms where heated mattresses and authentic sounds of nature are in perfect harmony with the outside environment, dominated by dense, green pines.





Walking down the aisle

White dreams come true! Nuptials here are absolutely unique!



It is part of the enjoyment to know right from the start that everything will be as it should, and with the bohemian freshness the sea bestows upon a wedding. At the Minos Beach art hotel, as well as the Sensimar Minos Palace hotel & suites in Aghios Nikolaos, Crete, professional wedding planners take care of all the details for a perfect ceremony, whether youthful and modern or more classic and romantic. The seaside scenery among the aromatic gardens or the interior design of the two hotel complexes creates the perfect atmosphere of celebration, in combination with the decoration and the preparation of food and the wedding reception. For the fans of urban landscapes, the Life Gallery athens in Ekali welcomes in its exquisite poolside garden and its easily accessible interior spaces the guests. Inside the hotel, the decoration exudes that aura of simple luxury associated with the magic of authentic choices. From the compositions in the large vases adorning the area to the art de la table and party lighting – all is imbued by finesse and true elegance. After all, clichés have no place in the bluegr philosophy. In the Minos Beach art hotel in Aghios Nikolaos, the matrimony can take place underwater at the beach or be a plain civil ceremony, a touching renewal of vows or a traditional Cretan feast with lively dancing and plenty of high spirits.



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Crete, newlyweds can choose among special honeymoon packages and find out about offers that can be combined with activities exclusively for two: from a symbolic gesture of good luck like planting an olive tree so that the marriage will have strong roots to water sports and inland trips.

In an upgraded suburb at the north of Athens, newlyweds that have chosen the metropolis for their wedding can live equally romantic moments on their honeymoon at the Life Gallery athens, moments filled with the coolness of Athenian summer nights and the scent of pines surrounding the hotel.



Success stories

Combine business with pleasure in the northern suburbs of Athens. Life Gallery athens is the perfect choice of venue whether you are planning a professional conference, business event, or a series of business meetings.



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Set in the upscale town of Ekali, the Life Gallery athens design boutique hotel attracts a great number of business travelers. The modern architecture, the minimalist design, the glass surfaces and art decoration details create a feeling of refinement and sophistication raising the standards of hospitality and unprecedented luxury. Life Gallery athens features three conference rooms with state of the art audio visual equipment, high-end facilities and modern amenities that are sure to convert every business meeting and conference session into

successful and memorable meeting event. Regarded as one of the best Athens business hotels, it ensures that every business runs smoothly and efficiently. Travelers wishing to plan a successful business conference in Athens are welcome to arrange their stay at one of the hotel's cozy studios, enjoy creative Mediterranean dishes at Life Gallery's restaurant, make use of the hotel's exceptional business facilities and amenities, immerse in the tranquility of the spa and turn their business trip into a leisure trip to remember at a truly upscale business hotel in Athens.



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A modern take on **seafood**

The bluegr chefs of **La Bouillabaisse** restaurant of Minos Beach art hotel and **Agapi** restaurant of Candia Park villages recommend seafood blending fresh greek ingredients with Mediterranean allure.



Scallops - La Bouillabaisse restaurant, Minos Beach art hotel

Serves four

12 fresh scallops

Celeriac Cream:

- > 600 g peeled celeriac
- > 50 g of butter
- > 300 g of cream
- > Salt
- > Nutmeg

Passion fruit dressing:

- > 10 g of mandarin juice
- > 50 g of passion fruit puree
- > 40 g of lemon juice
- > 100 g of olive oil
- > 5 g of fleur de sel
- > 20 g of Muscovado sugar

For the red cabbage:

- > 300 g finely chopped red cabbage
- > 70 g soya sauce
- > 70 g of vinegar for sushi

Dry for 18 hours in the food dehydrator

"Snow" from charcoal infused oil:

- > 200 g of sunflower oil
- > 500 g of coal
- > 200 g of Maltosec

Preparation :

Open all the scallops, take out the flesh and clean it.
Then wash the flesh and place on a towel to dry

To make the celeriac cream

Clean the celeriac, cut into small cubes and sauté in butter on a low heat until softened. Add the salt, nutmeg and cream, continue to cook on a low heat until almost all the cream has been absorbed. Beat in the mixer, and then strain through a fine mesh.

To make the dressing, put all the materials in the Thermomix and beat at setting number six for 3 minutes.

To make the red cabbage

Marinate the finely chopped cabbage in the soy sauce and vinegar for 1 h and then place it on wax-paper and put in the dehydrator at 53 degrees for 18 hours

To make the "snow" from charcoal infused oil

Light the charcoal and when it is thoroughly burnt douse it with Kirsch

Then add the oil, cover and leave it in a warm place for three weeks. Then, drain through a cloth and keep the oil.

Mix the Maltosec with the oil until it turns into a powder.

Cook the scallops at a high heat for about 1 minute on each side

CHEF'S RECOMMENDED



Sun-dried octopus with amaranth greens and feta cheese – Agapi restaurant, Candia Park village

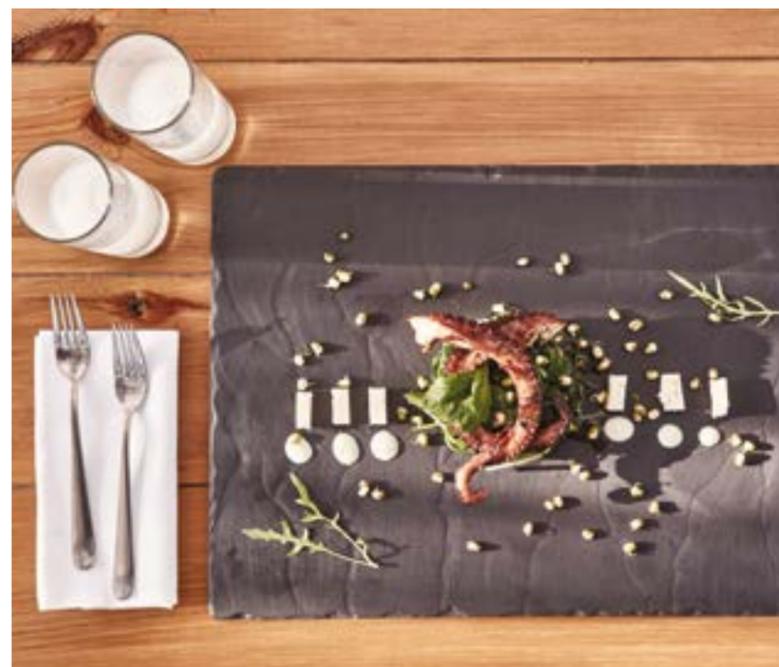
- > 800 g octopus
- > 1 kg amaranth greens (greek vlita)
- > 100 g feta cheese
- > 4 tablespoons olive oil
- > 1 fresh onion
- > 2 garlic cloves sliced
- > 2 medium tomatoes diced in small cubes
- > Salt & pepper

Preparation

When the octopus is well sun dried, cut the eight tentacles and place them on the grill. Heat olive oil over low heat and cook onion and garlic until they become soft but not browned in order to start building flavors. Once they are softened and translucent, add the amaranth greens and the tomatoes, salt and pepper. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer for 10 minutes.

Serving tip

The amaranth greens make a nice base for this dish, finished with octopus. Drizzle with olive oil and fresh lemon juice



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DISCOVER THE DESTINATION

Crete off the beaten path

Travellers of Crete have always been surprised by the wild Mediterranean landscape made up of stunning blue waters and golden beaches. More of these, mountains and gorges, villages and ancient city remains, valleys and plains, olive groves and gardens create a landscape diverse and stunning.

By Despoina Sampson, Photo:Shutterstock





Left: One of the many small lakes in the majestic Ha gorge that exits in the plain of Ierapetra.
Right: The palm forest of Preveli at the mouth of the Kourtaliótiko gorge.



“...on Crete everything is myth, legend and history: the mountains, the grottoes, the gorges, the trees, the stones and even the scent of the shrubs in bloom”

**Awake your Senses
Discover the Unkonown Crete
Eastern Crete -Book One
G.&A. Mamidakis Foundation**

Magical itineraries to tropical beaches; villages that captivate with the power of simplicity; stark gorges and enchanting wild nature; monuments reminding you that it all began here in the Minoan times; and irresistible tastes you dream about all winter long – all that is Crete is here. Choices smelling like thyme and holding the energy of a local raki treat.

Surprising beaches

They say in Crete you can find beaches so exotic that you don't need to travel anywhere else in the world. Part of the Natura 2000 Network, **Gramvousa**, the island of pirates, and the Balos lagoon at the northwest of the Chania Prefecture carry you away to the Caribbean with their golden sand, shallow sapphire waters and millions of tiny pink shells. You can access the area by road up to a point, then walk – don't forget to take all necessary measures to protect yourselves from the sun. But you can also reach paradise by boat from Kissamos. At Gramvousa you can take the barren paths to the top of the hill in order to visit the castle and enjoy the amazing views over Kythira and Mount Taygetus. The boat will then take you to **Balos**, where you will go ashore with smaller boats. At the southwest of the same prefecture, the idyllic scenery continues on to **Elafonisi**. You can easily get here by car to take in the beauty of the turquoise waters and fine white sand, pinkish from the seashells. For other fans of Crete, paradise lies at **Gavdos**, Europe's southernmost point. This is a triangular, 30-square-km island, 32 nautical miles from Paliohora and 22 from Hora Sfakion, with pearly beaches and cedars reaching all the way to

the seaside. The beaches of Sarakiniko and Aghiannis beckon from sunrise to sunset; the interior, wildly beautiful part of the island and the harder-to-reach beaches are equally attractive.

Northeast of Chania, near Akrotiri, the beach of **Stefanos**, close to the Seitan Limania area, has many devoted fans. Three parallel, oblong bays form beaches sheltered by the waves, the northernmost one with deep blue waters, pebbles, sand and marble rocks towering to the left and right. The area is accessed by car, with a small hike down from the parking spot.

In the adjacent Rethymno Prefecture, the **Aghios Pavlos** beach is a favorite for many. To the west of the Melissa promontory and south of Triopetra, the wild, unusual scenery of the Aghios Pavlos Dunes has been voted as the best beach in Rethymno. The land caves, the alluring seabed and the water temperature which stays always above 15°C make this an ideal place for swimming almost throughout the year. If you do find yourselves here, make sure not to miss the sunset over the Thronos Mountain. Reaching the Heraclion Prefecture, those who want to complete the tour of famous beaches drop by **Matala**, at the edge of the **Messara** valley and Asterousia, to visit the rocky caves where hippies hung out in the 1970s. Enjoy the 300-meter-long beach with its fine pebbles and deep, crystal-clear waters – as long as you don't mind the strong westerlies that raise enormous waves. Leaving the area and heading towards Elounda, Crete's Côte d'Azur, it is worth taking notice of a small island called **Kolokytha** and especially the beach of Aghios Loukas or Kolokytha, which has amazing waters and plenty of shade from the olive trees. And there's plenty more beaches in Crete: The 81 uninhabited islets

with their cedar-line beaches attract many visitors in the summer months. South of Ierapetra, the islet of **Chrysi** or **Gaidouronisi** has plenty of seashells on its northern shores, teal waters and golden sand, making you forget you're on Greek soil.

In southeast Crete, near Ierapetra in the Lasithi Prefecture, **Myrtos**, with its dark sand and crystal-clear waters is favored by many because it is sheltered from the strong northerly winds that blow in the area. Others prefer the beach of **Aghia Fotia** or **Makrygialos**; whatever the case, visitors can enjoy crystal-line waters in most beaches around Ierapetra. In the Lasithi Prefecture, **Vai** with its thousands of palm trees is strikingly similar to the Caribbean. East of Sitia, this 2000-year-old colony of palm trees spreads over 62 acres and is the largest natural palm forest in Europe, with indigenous Cretan palms known since the Minoan era. It is worth noting that a commercial for a chocolate-coconut snack that was filmed here made the area hugely famous. However, following the devastating invasion of campers in the '70s and '80s, these date-producing palms are now protected by fencing. The exotic beach with the fine white sand and few pebbles is a major attraction, while the marvelous scenery is complemented by the islets across the bay.

Traditional villages that make an impression

Archanes is a model village on the island. Well-preserved and with a distinct ambiance, it is considered one of the loveliest in Europe, with its vineyards, flower-filled gardens and old restored houses. The folk art and archaeological museums, the sculpture workshop and the museum of Cre-



Stavros Beach at Chania, on the northern tip of Akrotiri.
Left: Traditional ceramic dishes.



Majestic colors, pink sand and green-blue waters at the Elafonisi Beach in Chania.
Right: Salad with fresh cretan figs.



The Samaria gorge is not just an easy stroll. The path is 16km long and although it is in good condition, it is quite stony and also steep at times.
Top: The Samaria gorge is considered one of the most scenic national parks in Europe.

DISCOVER THE DESTINATION



The palm beach of Vai features the largest natural palm forest in Europe.

tan history and tradition tell the story of the village. In upland Heraklion, **Houdetsi** stands out for its stately homes and grand feasts accompanied by the sound of the Cretan lyre. In Zaros, at the foot of Mount Psiloritis (Ida), vegetable plots and estates speak of those lucky enough to live in a place blessed with plenty of water. In the **Ano and Kato Asites**, the monastery of Aghios Georgios Gorgolainis stands out with its age-old plane tree and cypress. At the village kafeneio (coffee shop) raki treats are accompanied by stories about local sights, mainly the abandoned settlement of Nisi. In **Vamos**, which is reminiscent of Tuscany, the impressive apokoroniotika houses stand out among olive groves and orange orchards. You are in the Chania Prefecture, and Sfakia invite you to find out that people's lives could be different. The proud **Hora Sfakion**, surrounded by the steep slopes of **Lefka Ori** (White Mountains), can boast that it has never surrendered to any conqueror. **Anogia**, also perched on Psiloritis in the Rethymno Prefecture, stands out for its colors and scents. In the same prefecture, pottery lovers head towards Margarites, a cool village at the north base of Psiloritis, blessed with a view over the fertile

valley down below. The mountainous inland doesn't stop here: the traditional **Axos**, in the same Rethymno area, attracts visitors who discover the many Byzantine churches or simply the local grocery stores/coffee shops that introduce the traveler to local life. In southeast Crete, the semi-mountainous **Pefki** stands out 7 km north of Makrys Gialos. Life is serene in the narrow alleys. Housed in the building of the elementary school, the folk museum reminds you how everyday life without electricity once was – with looms, spinning machines, wine presses, earthenware jars and innumerable tools.

Breath-taking gorges

They split the earth in half and amaze with their natural beauty: The **Arvi Gorge**, along with that of **Ha**, is a small miracle in itself. Located in Heraklion Prefecture, near Keratokambos, it requires canyoning equipment to cross, since it forms a cascade. About mid-route, the 85-meter-high waterfall called **Kapnistis** (the Smoker) sprays water as thinly as smoke! At the end of the gorge, the fertile valley of Arvi with its famous banana

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The fortress on Spinalonga island.
Bottom: The iconic Balos beach near Kissamos.



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Vai beach.
 Bottom: The Cretan lyra is the most popular surviving form of the medieval Byzantine lyra, an ancestor of most European bowed instruments.



groves rewards those who undertake its crossing. Southeast of Sitia, **the gorge of Nekron** (the Dead) or Zakros includes a lovely route lined with caves and ending at Kato Zakros with its magnificent waters. Another interesting gorge is that of **Trypiti** in Heraklion, named after the church of Panaghia Trypiti which is built in one of its caves. Part of the route to Trypiti goes through Asterousia Mountains, Crete's Far West. Finally, the **Samaria Gorge**, one of the best known on the island, attracts most visitors who want to reach the Libyan Sea while enjoying the rich flora and fauna.

The sights that complete the puzzle

The Venetian fortress of **Fortezza** in Rethymno; ancient **Falasarna** and its port; the ancient city of **Lissos** in southwest Crete; the **Kazarma** fortress in Sitia; Dikteo Andro and **Ideo Andro**, vying for the title of birthplace of Zeus in mythology; **Spinalonga**, with the amazing story of the leprosarium televised by the Cretan filmmaker Thodoris Papadoulakis in the series *The Island*, based on the novel by the English author Victoria Hislop; the Minoan city of **Kommos**, a port at Phaestos; **Zominthos**, another Minoan city on the uplands; and **Gortyna**, Crete's capital during the Roman era – all are occasions for discoveries beyond the popular Minoan palaces at Knossos, Phaestos, Malia and Zakros.



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Cretans at heart

Significant people who hold the island in their soul - something which still guides them on their path through life today. It is no coincidence that all three are distinguished for their creativity and their close relationship with Crete.

By Despoina Sampson

Giorgos Koumendakis, Artistic Director of the Greek National Orchestra

Giorgos Koumendakis is one of the best known of the new generation of Greek composers, and was born in Rethymno in 1959. His music is characterised by its wide variety of musical styles and a constant search for new directions. In addition to his many works of orchestral music and chamber music, much of his artistic career has been devoted to composing music for the performing arts (theater, cinema, dance, opera, installations). His works have been featured in major concert halls all over the world and his music has been conducted by Martin Brabbins, Gaetano Colajanni, Olivier Cuendet, Christopher Warren-Green, Gunther Souller, Gunther Schuller, Nikos Tsouchlos, Alexandros Myrat and Theodore Antoniou. In 2015 Giorgos Koumendakis became the Artistic Programme Manager for the Alternative Stage of the Greek National Opera at the Stavros Niarchos Foundation for Culture. Since February 4, 2017,

he has been the Artistic Director of the Greek National Opera.

What characteristics make Cretans stand out as different, even today?

Their love for their outstanding homeland. For those of us who live outside Crete, our thoughts are often flooded with nostalgia. We are certain that this is the most beautiful place in the world, this small, welcoming strip of land, stuck there in the centre of the earth, radiating culture, politeness and beauty.

What influence has Crete had on your personality - who you are and what you have chosen to do with your life?

I grew up in Rethymno, the city of letters, in an environment where the arts were respected, and which prompted me to express myself freely through the music. It was a poetic place, full of life and generosity. I was empowered by tradition, I was inspired by nature and I took strong memories with me, and they are still the source of inspiration and escape from

"Cretan festivals carry the Cretan soul all on their own. Without any "make-overs", they are still holding up against modern European culture."



constraints in all my works. But what I struggled a lot against was the conceited promotion of «self» which is characteristic of our race. I chose dialogue and critical thinking, taking more sophisticated paths, which helped me to redefine my musical personality and to bring it closer to a global musical language that is not trapped in the microcosm of localism.

Where in Crete do you personally identify with complete relaxation?

Southern Rethymno, especially Kotsifos gorge.

Tell us what is your favourite beach on the island, maybe one that visitors do not know about.

Kedrodasos in southern Chania - a place I got to know when it was deserted and that I have never gone back to so that it can remain in my memory as the perfect seaside landscape.

What is the first thing you want to try immediately you arrive home?

My mother's home-cooked avronies (a wild Cretan green plant)

Can you finish this phrase for us: For me Crete isn't Crete without...

Its gorges which look like the Cretan people, the music and the Cretan dialect.

Tell us about a trip you have taken, either by car or on foot, that would enchant any traveller.

Arkadi, ancient Eleftherna and Margarites. You can't believe that there is so much beauty gathered together in a few kilometers.

Tell us where is the best place to take a deep breath and enjoy the view.

On the Fortezza in Rethymno, looking at the sea in the north and listening to the waves coming from Renaissance times and breaking in my ears.

Tell us your favourite place to take photographs. Describe the shot to us:

A high, dangerous bridge. And a deep drop down below. On the left an inaccessible, wild landscape. On the right a small stone village in the middle of nowhere. A few goats are grazing next to the village chapel. Two shepherds, few words and the lightest breeze I have ever felt, in Aradena, in Sfakia.

What do you think is unique about Crete?

Cretan festivals. They carry the Cretan soul all on their own. Without any "make-overs", in an authentic way, they are still holding up against modern European culture.

ORIGIN



“The infinite changes in the landscape are unique. You are standing in a wild landscape at the foothills of Mount Psiloritis and just a few kilometers away there is an exotic beach, a green plateau, a luxury resort, a traditional village and a modern city ”

Alexandra Theochari, creator of the brand Klotho

Drawing inspiration from the traditional art of weaving in Crete, Klotho's founder and designer creates clothes, handbags and other items that combine Cretan tradition and technique with motifs and colours that keep up with modern trends and lifestyles. Her company is named after the first of the three Fates who, according to Greek mythology, spun the thread of human life. And, somewhat similarly, she herself has spun her own fate. Although she is from Thessaloniki, when she found herself in Crete after her studies she soon became integrated into the local community and loved the island's culture and traditional arts. Guided by her own personal experience, her passion and her studies in Art History, she dreamt up her own Klotho, a brand that gives life back to traditional wooden looms by combining them with clean, geometric lines and minimalist influences deeply rooted in the simplicity of classical Greece.

What characteristics make Cretans stand out as different, even today?

One characteristic that definitely distinguishes them is hospitality. Cretans will take you into their houses and make you feel that you are part of their families. They will not let you go away if they have not given you something they have made themselves- wine, raki, fruit from their garden ...

What influence has Crete had on your personality - who you are and what you have chosen to do with your life?

Crete is my homeland by choice. I have made great friendships here, I have created my family here, I love the way of life and the people, I appreciate the island's traditions and arts that the Cretans know so well and keep alive. I dedicated myself to one of these arts and decided to keep it alive and, if I can, to help it evolve.

Where in Crete do you personally identify with complete relaxation?

I often seek and find complete relaxation in Gavdos, the small island south of Chania where everything goes slower, far away from the anxiety and stressful rhythms of everyday life.

Tell us what is your favourite beach in the island, maybe one that visitors do not know about.

Aspes Beach is one of the most beautiful and least well-known beaches on the island, as it is

at the foot of the Asterousia Mountains and you can only get to it by sea. It is a magical place with green waters, black sand, rocky formations and caves.

What is the first thing you want to try immediately you arrive home?

I don't have to think twice about that one - sfakiani pies and calitsounia pies (both kinds of Cretan cheese pies) with honey and cinnamon.

Can you finish this phrase for us: For me Crete isn't Crete without...

Listening to the lyre, local dances, festivals in the villages in the summer, good wine and, of course, its proud and spontaneous people.

Tell us about a trip you have taken, either by car or on foot, that would enchant any traveller.

The Kourtaliotis gorge is a wonderfully charming trip, however you do it. After going between giant rocks that literally hang over your head for a few miles, through a wild landscape with caves, churches and narrow passes, you see the Cretan Sea, calm and blue, waiting for you.

Tell us where is the best place to take a deep breath and enjoy the view.

The view from my balcony! I am lucky because the first thing I see when I open the window in the morning is the sea. I take a deep revitalising breath – and my day starts positively!

Tell us your favourite place to take photographs. Describe the shot to us:

At the moment we are looking for the right place to photograph the 2019 collection. I can imagine a place that will capture the many faces of Crete. We want to have the calm of the sea, the ruggedness of the mountain and the cosmopolitan lifestyle.

What do you think is unique about Crete?

Crete is a blessed place. What I find unique are the infinite changes in the landscape. You are standing in a wild landscape at the foothills of Mount Psiloritis (Mount Ida) and just a few kilometers away there is an exotic beach, a green plateau, a luxury resort, a traditional village and a modern city It is somewhere you will never be bored of!!!

By Despoina Sampson

Best of Crete

12 things not to miss

By Despoina Sampson

1. A guided tour around the **Knossos archaeological site.** Surviving monument complexes date back to the neopalatial age (1700-1450 BC), such as the second palace and several other building complexes. In addition to the Minoan palace complex, the visitor can also see private homes with rich interior murals, as well as public buildings and religious centers. A private pillared house with wonderful mosaic floors survives from the Roman age.

2. A tour around the Minoan antiquities in the **Heraclion Archaeological Museum** in the center of the city. This is the most important collection of its kind in the world, and the

recently renovated museum has big exhibit areas, an audiovisual room, and labs.

3. As long as tradition rules, a visit to the **Folklore Museum of Agios Nikolaos** is a must. This museum was established in 1985 by the Cultural Association of Eastern Crete and is housed on the ground floor of the Port Authority building, one of the oldest buildings in town, which is located by the lake. You could admire so many displays of traditional Cretan handicrafts, unique to the region such as textiles, woven goods and embroidery of intricate detail and imaginative designs. A model of a traditional Cretan house, equipped with

household goods and cooking implements has also been set up. Books, manuscripts, old photographs, paintings, weapons, coins, multi-colored woven rugs and examples of traditional Cretan costumes complete the interesting collection. These items have been donated to the Folklore Museum in recognition of the valuable role it plays in the preservation and display of the rich traditional heritage of everyday life in Crete. This visit will help you to become familiar with the sort of work and activities the people of this area had in the old days. Folklore Museum of Agios Nikolaos, 2, Kondylaki Street (opposite the bridge,

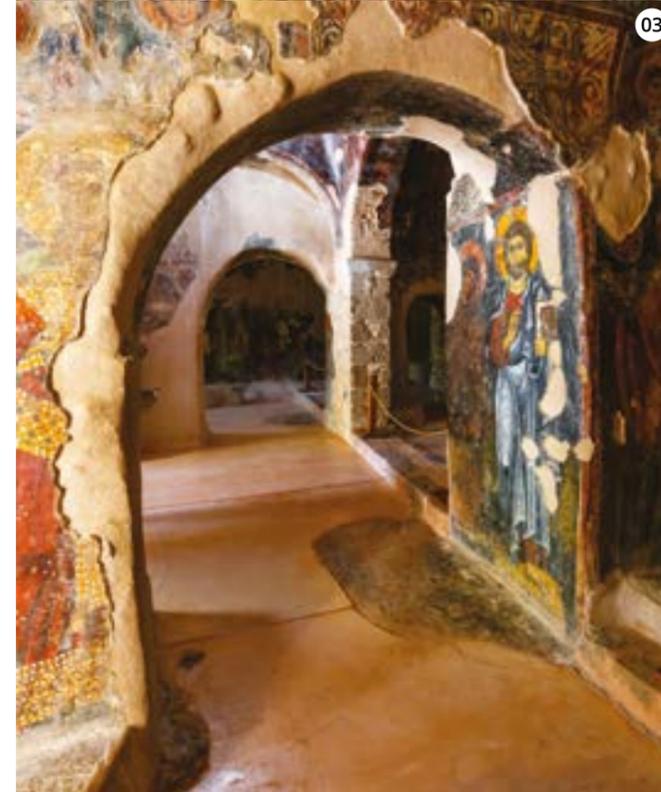


Photo: Shutterstock



overlooking the lake) Open 10:00-14:00 but erratically (T +30 28410 25093 to check). Closed on Monday.

4. A visit at **Kritsa** in the Lasithi Prefecture, one of Crete's oldest villages, built amphitheatrically on the foot of Mount Kastellos at an altitude of 365 m. Kritsa was made famous by Jules Dassin's filming of *Celui qui doit mourir* (He who must die), which was based on the book *Christ Recrucified* by Nikos Kazantzakis. Most of the movie's scenes were filmed at Kritsa in 1957; the movie received an OCIC Award - Special Mention at the Cannes Film Festival and was nominated for a BAFTA Film Award for Best Film from any Source.

5. Climbing up to the **Martinego Bastion**, in the south section of the Venetian walls in the city of Heraklion, in order to see the famous inscription "I hope for nothing. I fear nothing. I am free" on the tomb of the great Greek writer Nikos Kazantzakis.

6. Pay a visit at the **archaeological site of Zakros**. Of all the Minoan palatial towns, Zakros minoan city and palace was the one situated

further to the east. It was built on the south-eastern coastal area of the province of Sitia, 45 km from the town of Sitia and 115 km from Agios Nikolaos, on the shore of a well protected bay, at the outlet of a small valley. Having a rather poor hinterland, Zakros managed to accumulate wealth nonetheless. Its success was due to the trade it conducted with Egypt and the Asian coast, and also owing to the manufacture it developed, using raw materials (ivory, gold etc) imported from the East by Minoan tradesmen. An opinion expressed in the past, according to which works of art and other items of exquisite Minoan handicraft were fabricated exclusively in Knossos and then shipped abroad from the port of Zakros cannot be supported today; indeed, many of these products were most likely manufactured by artists from Zakros. The most important of these finds can be seen today in the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion, while others are at display in the Archaeological Museum of Sitia. Kato Zakros, Sitia, Lasithi

7. A romantic stroll around **Lake Kournas**, the

only freshwater lake on the island, 4 km from Georgioupoli in the Chania Prefecture.

8. Walking around the old city of **Rethymno**, which is surrounded by the 16th-century Venetian fortress complex of Fortezza, the Venetian port, the Rimondi Fountain, the mosques, the Turkish bath and the picturesque alleys.

9. The house where Domenikos Theotokopoulos (El Greco) grew up and the museum dedicated to his work in **Fodele**, Rethymno Prefecture.

10. A drink at the **Venetian harbor in Chania**, one of the most beautiful cities in Greece, where you can relax after the exploration marathon around the fascinating interior, feeling the pulse of the modern city.

11. Stocking up on marjoram, dittany and ironwort, perfect for wintertime teas, at the **Chania Municipal Market**.

12. A pilgrimage at the **monastery of Aghios Ioannis Kapsas**, perched on a rocky cliff over the sea east of Makrygialos, in the Lasithi Prefecture. Dependent on the monastery of Toplos near Sitia, it attracts many devout Christians.



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Best of Rhodes

12 things not to miss

By Despoina Sampson



02

1. Rare fish and corals at the **Rhodes Aquarium**, at the northernmost part of the island (Niohori area). The main building – a listed structure – blends local architecture with art deco. From 1937 until 1945, under Italian rule, it was recognised as the ‘Reale Istituto di Ricerche Biologiche di Rodi’. After the unification of the Dodecanese Islands with Greece, it was renamed ‘Hellenic Hydro biological Institute’ and continued operating under the supervision of the Academy of Athens. Today, the Hydro biological Station of Rhodes operates as a Museum and Aquarium and is also used as a research centre. The Aquarium belongs to the National Centre of Marine Research. The aim of the Hydro biological Station of Rhodes is the preservation and display of embalmed and living creatures of the Mediterranean sea.

In the aquarium the visitors (200.000 per year) can admire specimens of entozoan, molluscs (gastropods and cephalopods), species of the crab family, echinoderms, many fish families, as well as sea turtles. In the Museum are also displayed exhibits such as various kinds of



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sharks and other fish, sea turtles, toothed whales, (Odontoceti) and Mediterranean monk seals. Thanks to the research facilities of the Hydro biological Station of Rhodes and the National Centre of Marine Research, the Station runs research programmes, covering every aspect of oceanography in the area of the Dodecanese. It thus functions as a model research unit in the Mediterranean. (T +3 0 22410 27308)

2. A walk around the **medieval city of Rhodes**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site combining the Western European style of the Late Gothic period with Renaissance sculpture. Cross the stone bridges connecting the present with the past and wander around the narrow alleys. Touch the heavy iron doors, gaze up at the Gothic churches and Renaissance sculptures, and take a deep breath in the very same spots where the Knights of St John of Jerusalem once walked. The 4-km-long wall encloses a mesmerizing past, revealing a fascinating way of life. Follow the Street of the Knights past squares and ramparts until you reach the Palace of the Grand Masters, with its 80 halls at the northwest side of the castle. Discover the Burgo to the south and, finally, get out into the light of Socratous Street, with the open-air market that dates back to those times...

3. A refreshing visit to the world’s oldest park at **Rodini**, a small valley with oleanders, lily ponds, planes and other trees providing ample shade.

Keep a lookout for the peacocks that live here! A small paradise just 3 km from the city center.

4. A pilgrimage to the sculpted wooden iconostasis at **the monastery of Panaghia Tsabika**, to the east of the island. The old monastery of Tsambika is built on the top of a hill with stunning view to the sea and the surrounding area, while the new monastery, which works today, is found on the road that connects Archangelos to Rhodes Town. It is not known when the old monastery was founded, but we know that it was reconstructed in 1770 by a monk. This monastery was built according to the Dodecanesian architecture with hollow roof tiles. The floor of the temple and the yard are covered with pebbles and shells. Some icons date from the 19th century, while the iconostasis is even older. The name of the monastery comes from the word tsamba, which means spark in the local dialect. In fact, tradition says that a local shepherd found an icon of Virgin Mary on top of the cliff, where the old monastery was later built, following a vigil light. The icon of Panaghia Tsambika is considered miracle-working, particularly for the childless women, which is why many women offer to the icon of Panaghia child dolls. This monastery is considered a protector

of the island and in fact many locals are named Tsambikos for men and Tsambika for women.

5. **Windsurfing at Prasonisi**, at the southernmost part of the island. It is definitely worth making the 40-km trip from Lindos to visit the two exotic beaches created by a strip of sand that cuts the Carpathian Sea in half. In order to reach Prasonisi you will have to cover most of the southern part of the island. Right after passing the village of Katavia, there is a turn to the left and after a few kilometers, from the top of a hill, you will get your first glimpse of this exotic paradise! Have in mind that during July and August surfers, accompanied with sports and catering facilities, flood the area.

6. A cold beer at **Lindos Square**, where Pink Floyd stayed and chatted till late in the shadow of the ancient acropolis, which was dedicated to the goddess Athena. Leave your car outside the village and climb high up to enjoy the view, which is reminiscent of a Cycladic Hora. Below, the quiet bay of Apostolos Pavlos awaits to offer relaxation to the tired visitor.

7. A visit to the **Archaeological Museum** which is located in the Old Town of Rhodes. It is housed in the Medieval building of the Hospital of the Knights, in the Palace of the Grand Master. The

construction of this building began in 1440 by Grand Master de Lastic and it was completed in 1948 by Grand Master d’Aubusson. The building was renovated in the early 20th century by the Italians, as was the whole Medieval Town of Rhodes. Today this museum contains findings from excavations all over the island and some small islets of Dodecanese. Don’t forget to see the whole collection of vases, figurines, small objects and tomb groups that from were found in Ancient Ialysos and Ancient Kameiros and date from the Geometric till the Roman times as well as the mosaic floors from the Hellenistic times and funerary slabs of the Knights.

8. A hike on the mountain path starting at **Aghios Isidoros**, a village still living in the ‘60s, to the top of Attavyros Mountain (1,215 m).

9. Selfies at the exquisite **Springs of Kallithea**. Since the ancient times, the mineral springs were famous for its therapeutic powers. They could treat various diseases and conditions and people from the surrounding islands, the coasts of Asia Minor and other Mediterranean countries would come to Rhodes to get healed with baths in these springs. In 1912, the Italian governors of Rhodes ordered a systematic study of these waters by distinguished



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Photo: Shutterstock



06

hydrologists and doctors. In December 1928, the first buildings were constructed above the thermal springs, that were considered royal grounds in order to guarantee the perfection of the work. This project was assigned to the architect Pietro Lombardi, and was finished only few months later. The facilities were inaugurated by the Italians in 1929 and attracted a large number of patients and scientists from the entire world. The Spa was constructed in Moorish style and included pebble stone mosaics, Rotonda Hall, a terrace,

impressive patio and stairs at the entrance. The wonderful gardens have palm trees, pine trees, flowers and many other plants.

10. Looking for the Panaxia quadripunctaria butterfly, which can be seen in the **Valley of the Butterflies** from mid-June to mid-September. (Tel.: 22410 82822)

11. A visit to **the Kamiros archaeological site**, where you can see remains of houses and public buildings, the ancient Agora, the Doric temple, the Hellenistic Mosque, the ruins of the aqueduct and remnants of the

temple of Athena.

12. Shopping at traditional wood-fired ovens, distilleries-wineries, and cooperative farmers' markets with **local products** such as honey, melekounia (a confection made from sesame and caramelized syrup), semolina halva, fried pouggia (phyllo pastry with a syrupy nut filling), preserves, creamy mouhalepi pudding, takakia (syrupy pastry rolls with ground nuts), sweet crepe-like katimeria, tsouvras (tomato soup), and local herbs such as glyfoni (mint), sapsyho (marjoram), chamomile, and sage.



03



Ammoudi club is situated at the coastal line of Agios Nikolaos,

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Best of Athens

12 things not to miss

By Despoina Sampson

1. A walk along the pedestrianized **Dionysiou Areopagitou Street**. This is one of the most attractive parts of the city, like a living, open-air museum. Get off the subway at the pedestrianized Makrygianni Street exit and start walking upwards between Acropolis and the Parthenon on one side and magnificent stately homes and public buildings of the 19th and 20th centuries on the other in this privileged Athenian neighborhood. Don't forget to visit the **Acropolis Museum** and the **Odeon of Herodes Atticus**, and keep walking up the street which, from a point onwards, is named Apostolou Pavlou.

2. The magic of watching a movie in an open-air theater in special corners of the city: archaeological sites, parks, squares, beaches – but also in some of the loveliest Athenian museums that are turned into summer cinemas with free entrance. Throughout the summer, grab a seat in the parks and courtyards of Athenian museums, in theatres and beaches, and enjoy on the big screen renditions of literary works for cinema of “Remains of the Day” and “Fight Club” to “The Long Day Closes” and “Lord of the Flies”. (Athens Open Air Film Festival, 4/6-29/8, www.aoaff.gr)

3. A visit to **Lake Vouliagmeni** at the heart of the Athenian Riviera. Set against a

magnificent backdrop – a true treasure of Attica – this rare geological phenomenon wins over the visitor right from the start. These brackish waters, constantly renewed by the sea as well as underground mineral springs at a depth of 50 m to 100 m, are rich in minerals and salts and, in combination with the high water temperatures, promote overall wellness. This is the perfect setting for an evening cocktail by the illuminated rock in a natural landscape of rare acoustics. (<http://www.limnivouliagmenis.gr/>)

4. A walk around the **Stavros Niarchos Park** at the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center. If you visit with your children, this is an ideal place for carefree play. The alleys leading to the park's interior are lined with tall pines; at the center, the Great Lawn is the perfect venue for concerts, festivals and movies. Discover the Mediterranean Garden with Greek endemic plants such as cistus, sage, thyme, oregano, lavender, and rosemary. The top of the hill offers a panoramic view of the sea to the west and the Acropolis to the east, as well as the Park and the Agora between the National Library and the National Opera. (<https://www.snfcc.org/?lang=el>)

5. A top-quality espresso in one of the first shops to become part of the “third coffee

wave”. At number 7 of the sophisticated Emmanouil Benaki Street, **taf** offers consumers the option of choosing their own taste profile and learning more about their favorite beverage.

6. Climbing on Athens's highest point, the top of **Mount Lycabettus**, which offers truly spectacular panoramic views. Gaze around the city and spot all iconic buildings, the Parthenon, and nearby islands Aegina and Salamina.

7. A guided tour by excellent professionals in the **National Archaeological Museum of Athens**. It is worth investing in the knowledge of a special guide to show you around the rooms with the most prominent exhibits. This season you could admire the sculpted figures, the colourful vases, the ornate jewels and the samples of ancient cosmetics at the “Countless Faces of Beauty” exhibition. A beautiful journey from the Neolithic period to late antiquity, with 340 objects and products of experimental archaeology. <http://www.namuseum.gr/>

8. A light snack in the gardens and atriums of the city's museums. In addition to the atrium of the National Archaeological Museum of Athens, you can relax in the café of the Numismatic Museum (<http://www.enma.gr/ht/index.htm>), the Museum of Cycladic Art (<https://www.cycladic.gr/>) or the café-bistro Ilissia at the

Photos: Shutterstock, Stavros Niarchos Park ©SNFCC, Yiorgis Yerolymbos, National Opera-Carmen ©Stefanos



Byzantine & Christian Museum. (<http://www.byzantinemuseum.gr/el/>) Museum of Cycladic Art. Don't forget to visit the Museum of Cycladic Art for the rich tour of ancient Greek art. This central Athenian museum has yet another ace up its sleeve for these days: George Condo's first major solo museum exhibition in Greece. He is considered one of the most interesting artists of his generation - along with Basquiat, Haring and Koons. At the exhibition “George Condo at Cycladic”, we will see paintings, sculptures and drawings covering a 40-year artistic journey that explore the human figure and the many facets of the self hidden within.

9. An event of the Athens & Epidaurus Festival

at the **Odeon of Herodes Atticus**, on the southwestern slope of the Athenian Acropolis. Carmen in the shadow of the Acropolis, a National Opera production, directed by British Artistic Director Stephen Langridge of the Gothenburg Opera with Anita Rachvelishvili in the role of Carmen and Pavel Černoch and Dimitris Paksoglou playing Don José is a must. <http://greekfestival.gr/gr/venues/view/odeo-irodou-attikou>.

10. An afternoon stroll with your children around **Plaka** just before sunset. The atmosphere of an old neighborhood, plenty of monuments, a view to the Acropolis, very few cars, traditional cafés and souvenir shops,

small museums and classified buildings make up the most charming walk. Avoid the really hot early afternoon hours.

11. One of the bike rides offered by the City of Athens Technopolis with one of the 10 public bicycles provided by the pilot **AthensBikes sharing service** in Athens. Discover the city and its major sights with an air of green supremacy. (<http://athens.easybike.gr/el/>)

12. Shopping at one of the most sophisticated suburbs of Athens, **Kifissia**. In collaboration with several businesses in the region, Life Gallery athens gives its privileged guests the opportunity to do their shopping from a list of selected stores.



04



12



05



07



01

“Five Star All the way”

“Un petit coin de paradis”

“Ya su Minos Beach! Thank you for an amazing stay!”

“Ein echter Traum!”

“Wieder da, wieder grandiose, ein absoluter Traum!”

“Little gem of a place”!

for Minos Beach art hotel



"I give it a 6 out of 5 star review!"

*"Schitterend hotel
op een schitterende plaats"*

"Beautiful hotel in a beautiful setting."

*"Romantic luxury
resort in spectacular location"*

"An oasis of bliss"

"Honeymoon Haven"

for Sensimar Mino's Palace

“Perfect Family holiday”

*“Candia Park Village
-райский уголок на Крите.”*

“Der perfekte Mix”

“Absolute Heaven”

“We enjoyed every minute”

“Un paradiso vista mare”

for Candia Park village





“Great Experience”

“Flawless Business training seminar”

“Lovely and relaxing stay”

“Luxury home in Athens”

“Hospitality Greek style”

“Eccellente in tutto”

For Life Gallery athens

LOCATION



GAVALAS WINERY CRETE

Our story begins in 1906, when my great-grandfather Emmanouil Gavalas planted our first vineyards. In 2001, our vineyards became part of the organic farming movement as we believe that organic products protect the environment from being polluted by pesticides and this, in turn, protects consumers. In 2004 we opened a new state-of-the-art winery in our vineyards. The varieties we grow in our vineyards today are Vidano, Vilana, Malvazia, Spinus Muscat, Kotsifali, Mandilari, Sauvignon Blanc, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon. All the stages in the wine-making process, from growing to bottling, take place in our state of the art vertically integrated unit. The facilities at our winery can be visited by anyone who is interested in learning about the stages of production phases and in tasting all of our different varieties.

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