Greece
Crete

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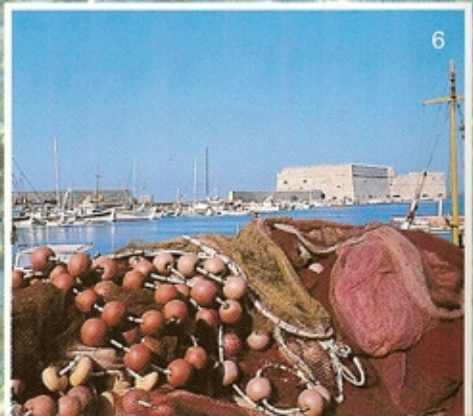
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2. A fresco front the palace of Knossos. 3. Traditional costumes.
4. The Venetian harbour at Hania. 5. Rethimno. 6. Iraklio.

Crete,

land of Daidalos and Ikaros.
Of Minoan vases and famous frescoes.
Shining and starlit, with its black baggy breeches and fringed kerchiefs.
Romantic Crete, with its sea, rocks and gleaming plateaus.
Crete, land of full-bodied wine and pungent raki.
Sleepless Crete, land of endless feasts under star-studded skies.
Crete, scented with wild fennel and fresh basil.
Dizzying Crete, of the warlike dances.
Crete, home of El Greco, Kornaros, Kazantzakis and Prevelakis.
Crete, whose door is always wide open to both East and West.
The dream of Crete, where a person might soar in flight.
Crete, "the island of miracles".

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The island - the largest in Greece (covering an area of 8,261km²) - separates the Aegean from the Libyan Sea and marks the boundary between Europe and Africa. Majestic mountains rise in its centre - the White Mountains, Psiloritis, Dikti - full of legends and history. Its plateaus are split by deep gorges and end up in fertile valleys.

The scenery is constantly changing. In one place harsh and barren, in another wooded and gentle. Its villages smothered in greenery. Olive trees, orange groves, vineyards, early vegetable gardens. Old stone farmhouses, monasteries and villages perched on mountain ridges, castles and chapels forgotten on steep slopes. Shores lined with forbidding rocks, often inaccessible, but also lots of endless sandy or pebbly beaches.

Crete is also renowned for its flora and fauna: Chestnut-tree, oak-tree and cypress forests. Palm tree forests (Vái – Préveli) and cedar forests (Gavdos – Hrysí). Medicinal herbs and aromatic shrubbery (laudanum, dittany, frickly broom, savoury) on the rocky slopes and steep mountain tops. The mountains are also home to the Cretan wild goat, known as kri-kri.

The main cities-ports on Crete – Hania, Rethymno, Iraklio, Agios Nikolaos, Sitia – developed on the north side, which is more benign topographically. Ierapetra is the only port on the south coast, on the shores of the Libyan Sea, facing Africa.

8. Souyia.
9. Avdou, Iraklio.
10. Samaria gorge.
11. The cave of Sfendoni, Zoniana.
12. Preveli.
13. A beach of southern Crete.
14. Matala.
15. Vai.
16. A beach near the city of Hania.

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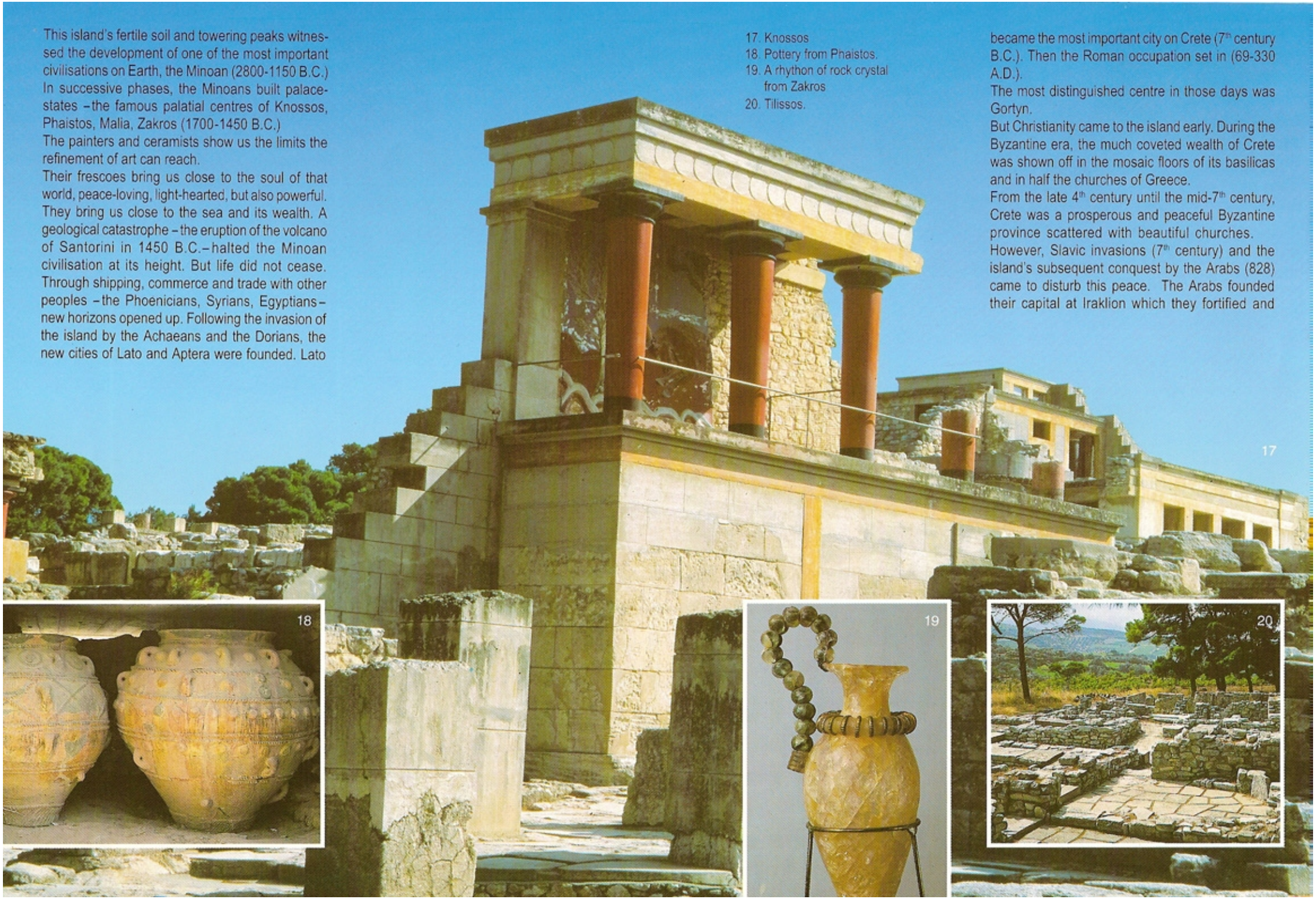
This island's fertile soil and towering peaks witnessed the development of one of the most important civilisations on Earth, the Minoan (2800-1150 B.C.) In successive phases, the Minoans built palace-states – the famous palatial centres of Knossos, Phaistos, Malia, Zakros (1700-1450 B.C.)
The painters and ceramists show us the limits the refinement of art can reach.
Their frescoes bring us close to the soul of that world, peace-loving, light-hearted, but also powerful. They bring us close to the sea and its wealth. A geological catastrophe – the eruption of the volcano of Santorini in 1450 B.C. – halted the Minoan civilisation at its height. But life did not cease. Through shipping, commerce and trade with other peoples – the Phoenicians, Syrians, Egyptians – new horizons opened up. Following the invasion of the island by the Achaeans and the Dorians, the new cities of Lato and Aptera were founded. Lato became the most important city on Crete (7th century B.C.). Then the Roman occupation set in (69-330 A.D.).
The most distinguished centre in those days was Gortyn.
But Christianity came to the island early. During the Byzantine era, the much coveted wealth of Crete was shown off in the mosaic floors of its basilicas and in half the churches of Greece.
From the late 4th century until the mid-7th century, Crete was a prosperous and peaceful Byzantine province scattered with beautiful churches.
However, Slavic invasions (7th century) and the island's subsequent conquest by the Arabs (828) came to disturb this peace. The Arabs founded their capital at Iraklion which they fortified and

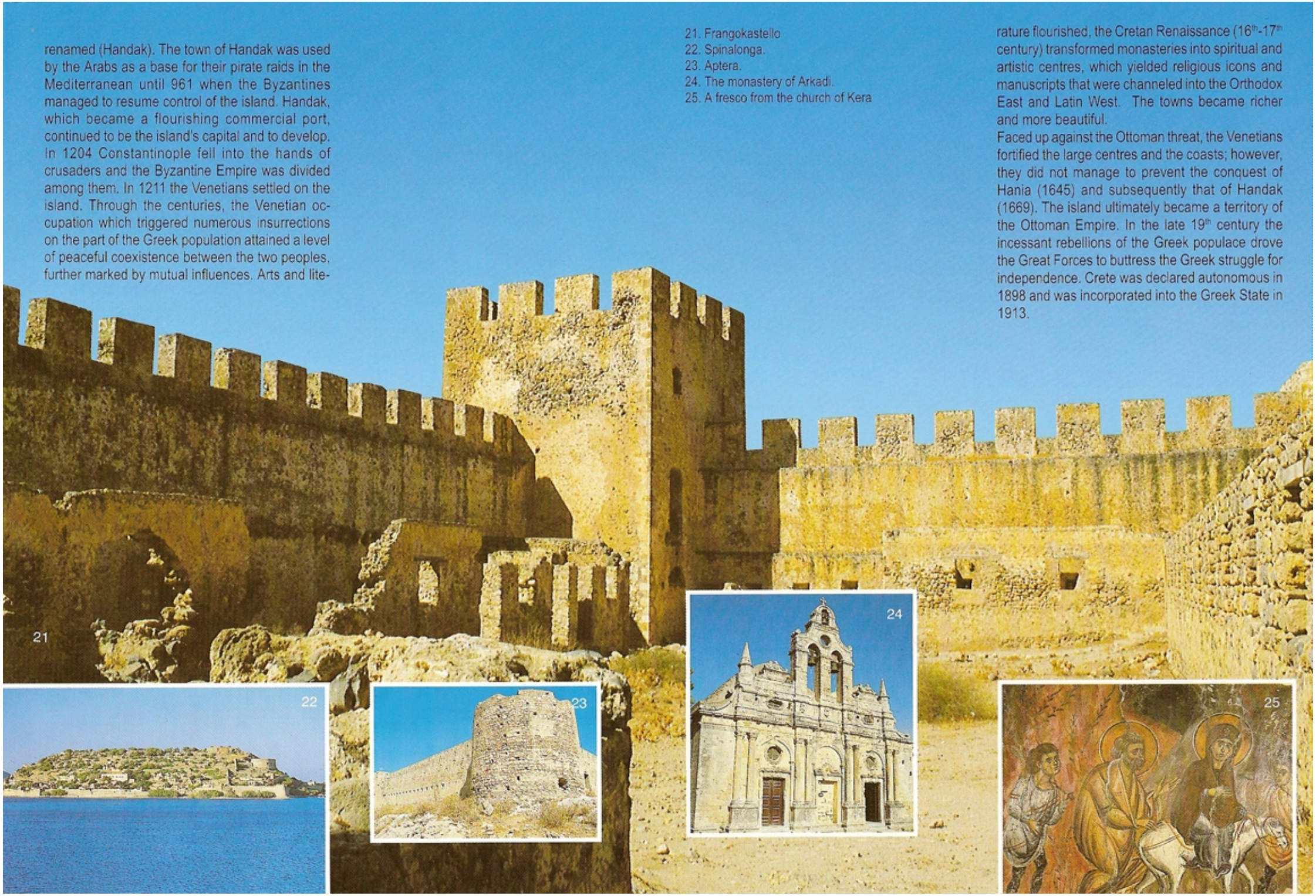
17. Knossos
18. Pottery from Phaistos.
19. A rhython of rock crystal from Zakros
20. Tilissos.



renamed (Handak). The town of Handak was used by the Arabs as a base for their pirate raids in the Mediterranean until 961 when the Byzantines managed to resume control of the island. Handak, which became a flourishing commercial port, continued to be the island's capital and to develop. In 1204 Constantinople fell into the hands of crusaders and the Byzantine Empire was divided among them. In 1211 the Venetians settled on the island. Through the centuries, the Venetian occupation which triggered numerous insurrections on the part of the Greek population attained a level of peaceful coexistence between the two peoples, further marked by mutual influences. Arts and literature flourished, the Cretan Renaissance (16th-17th century) transformed monasteries into spiritual and artistic centres, which yielded religious icons and manuscripts that were channeled into the Orthodox East and Latin West. The towns became richer and more beautiful.

Faced up against the Ottoman threat, the Venetians fortified the large centres and the coasts; however, they did not manage to prevent the conquest of Hania (1645) and subsequently that of Handak (1669). The island ultimately became a territory of the Ottoman Empire. In the late 19th century the incessant rebellions of the Greek populace drove the Great Forces to buttress the Greek struggle for independence. Crete was declared autonomous in 1898 and was incorporated into the Greek State in 1913.

21. Frangokastello
22. Spinalonga.
23. Aptera.
24. The monastery of Arkadi.
25. A fresco from the church of Kera



KITHIRA - GITHIO
DIKTINA
AGRIA GRAMVOUSSA
GRAMVOUSSA
PONTIKONISSI
AGNION
KORIKOS
KOLPOS KISSAMOU
KOLPOS HANION
AKROTIRI
Kissamos
HANIA
Souda
Mournies
Nerokouros
APTERA
RAMNOS
Lefka Ori
KENO
Paleohora
Hora Sfakion
RETHIMNO
Perama
Anogia
IDEON ANTRON
Agia Galini
Timbaki
Matala
FAXIMADIA
GAVDOPOULA
GAVDOS
CHARTOGRAPHICA HELLENICA ©

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KEY TO MAP
ROAD NETWORK
ROAD UNDER CONSTRUCTION
DISTANCES IN KILOMETRES
NATIONAL ROAD NUMBER
E75 EUROPEAN ROAD NUMBER
SHIPPING ROUTES
ALTITUDE IN METERS
EUROPEAN HIKING ROUTE
AIRPORT
YACHT SUPPLY STATION
PREHISTORIC SITE
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE
BYZANTINE SITE
MEDIEVAL SITE
MONASTERY
SPA RESORT
CAVE
MOUNTAIN HUT
CAMPING
BEACH FACILITIES
GOLF
Akr. CAPE
PELAGOS SEA
KOLPOS GULF
ORMOS BAY
1: 450 000 SCALE
DIA
IRAKLIO
Nea Alikarnassos
Kato Gouves (Tidiki)
Analipsi
Limenas Hersonissou
Hersonissos
Malia
Tilissos
Knossos
KNOSSOS
Ag. Vlassis
ARHANES
Epano Arhanes
Peza
Thrapsano
DIKTEON ANTRON
Xirokambos
AGIOS NIKOLAOS
Mohlos
KOLPOS MIRAMBELOU
Sitia
Agia Fotia
Exo Mouliana
Maronia
Palekastro
ITANOS
EINIKODASSOS
GRANTES
ROUSSOLAKKOS
PETSOFAS
Zakros
Kato Zakros
Ziros
Agii Deka
Ano Viannos
Kato Kasteliana
PRIANSOS
Mournies
Ierapetra
IERAPETRA
GOURNIA
Dikti
(Lassithiotika)
Lentas
LEVIN
KARSS
HRISSI
STRONGILO
MAKROULO
KOUFONISSI
TRAHILOS
KASSOS KARPATHOS RODOS
PAXIMADA
DRAGONADA
GIANNISADA
ELASSA
Kiriamadi

27

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The island with its clear, warm sea, boundless beaches lined with tamarisks, splendid plateaus and mild starry nights, has more to offer than its gorges, unscaled peaks and climate. Today it continues to be very much alive and to develop, in particular its cities which are changing in appearance from one day to the next, in contrast to the many villages where life goes on in the same rhythm it has for centuries.

There are hundreds of cafés where one can sit in the shade of a spreading plane, oak or mulberry tree and sip a "sweet" or "medium" coffee, or a glass of *tsikoudia* (raki), while playing a game of cards or *tavli* (backgammon).

There are dozens of tavernas and ouzeries serving some tasty *mezé*, a specialty of the area. Yogurt and honey, sweet tarts (*kaltsounia*), pies made of wild greens flavored with fennel, *staka* (butter with flour), rabbit stew, cheese pie from Hora Sfakion, snails, boiled goat. In the city of Hania, at Malaxa, at Vrisses and other villages in the area, in Rethymno, in Iraklio and its villages, in the whole district of Lassithi. Fish, sea urchins, octopus and cuttlefish cooked on charcoal and fried squid to be tasted at seaside tavernas. And everywhere the delectable Cretan wine. Every saint's feast day is celebrated with gusto at dozens of villages all over the island; all Crete throbbing to the sound of the Cretan lyre and the rhythm of the local dances, the *pentozali* and the *sousta*. Meanwhile the housewives are preparing a steamed Cretan pilaf and special holiday fritters (*xerotigana*).

In the shop windows of bustling Iraklio, cosmopolitan Agios Nikolaos, picturesque Rethymno and enchanting Hania, elegant furs, precious jewellery and artistic silverware attract the visitor's attention.

In the shops of lovely Sitia and tranquil Ierapetra and in mountainous Anogia one is impressed by the spread-out *patanies*, traditional local woven fabrics in dazzling colours, and everywhere one sees skillfully crafted ceramics and leather goods. In the "Stivanadika" district of Hania (Skridlof Str.) traditional boots (*stivania*) are still made in the old-fashioned way, because though it may seem strange, even today there are Cretans who still wear their traditional costume. In the marketplace of the same city, as in every other market on the island, every kind of food, fruit and vegetable produced in the fertile valleys and mountain regions is laid out on display. Exotic avocadoes, Belgian endive and bananas, juicy oranges and fragrant melons, succulent figs and tasty prickly pears, delicious grapes, sweet tomatoes, tender cucumbers, fresh-picked wild greens from the hillsides, snails, mouth-watering sardines, tempting lobster, kid from the islet of Gavdos, honey perfumed with thyme and wonderful cheeses - *graviera* (gruyère), *myzithra* (ricotta), fresh white cheese, and soft, luscious *staka*.

The evenings are enchanting spent next to the intoxicating aroma of a jasmine vine in an open-air cinema, seated in the comfortable chairs of a pastry shop, gathered round the table of a fish-taverna right by the sea, strolling in solitude on a remote, deserted beach or, why not, enjoying the rhythms of rock in a club or a bar, or conversing in the spacious lounge of a luxury hotel.

26. Phalassarna.
27. Cretan embroidery.
29. Market of Hania
30. Ierapetra
31. Agios Nikolaos
32, 33. Shopping in Crete

MUSEUMS

District of Hania
Hania (A3)
Archaeological Museum (tel: 28210-90 334)
Housed in the Venetian church of San Francesco. Its exhibits from western Crete and other areas date from the Neolithic to the Roman era, and include idols, statues, inscriptions, weapons, pottery, sealstones, coins, jewellery, etc.
Historical Archives of Crete (tel: 28210-52 606). A rich collection of folklore and material related to the history of the island.
Naval Museum of Crete (tel: 28210-91 875). It is housed in the Venetian Firká fort, situated at the west end of the harbour. Its highly interesting exhibits, which are divided into 13 entities, cover the period from antiquity till the middle of the 20th century.
Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Collection of Hania (tel. 28210-96046). The collection is housed in the Venetian church of San Salvatore and comprises mosaics, tomb stèles, frescoes, icons, ornamental stone carvings, ceramics, miniatures, coins, et al.

District of Rethymno
Rethymno (B5)
Archaeological Museum (tel: 28310-54 668). Housed in the Turkish fort, opposite from the entrance of the Venetian castle near the town.s harbour (Fortezza), it contains interesting archaeological finds from all over the prefecture of Rethymno, as well as a significant coin collection.

District of Iraklio
Iraklio (B7)
Archaeological Museum (tel: 2810-226 092, 2810-226 470). One of the most important museums in Greece. Here are assembled almost all the finds from the Minoan era. Pottery, stone carvings, sealstones, statuettes, gold, metalwork, the marvelous frescoes from the royal and little palaces and villas of the wealthy, and finally, the unique painted limestone sarcophagus from Agia Trias.
Historical Museum (tel: 2810-283 219). Exhibits from the Byzantine, Venetian and Turkish periods and historical documents of more recent Cretan history. Also a rich collection of folk art consisting of local costumes, textiles, wood carvings and embroidery, as well as a representation of a typical Cretan house.
"Cretaquarium" (tel: 2810-337 888) Located at Gournes near Iraklio, the aquarium is the largest of the Mediterranean. It has approx. 4,000 species of fish and sea organisms, all exclusively from the Mediterranean, while the exhibits occupy one square km.
Museum of the Battle of Greece and National Resistance (tel: 2810-346 554). Located behind the Archaeological Museum, it houses Cretan relics from the period 1941-45.
Natural History Museum (tel: 2810-393 276). It houses exhibits from the island.s natural environment (reconstructions of biotopes, collections of various plants and animals, fossils, rocks, minerals, et al.), reconstruction of a Minoan farm house and daily life of the Minoans, as well as exhibits of anthropological material.
Museum of Holy Icons and Relics of Saint Catherine (tel: 2810-288 825). Housed in the lovely church of the same name (16th cent.) it comprises a significant collection of portable icons by the Cretan School, rare frescoes, as well as handwritten Gospels from the 16th century.
Archaeological Collection of Archanes (C7, C8, tel: 2810-752 712): Contains finds from the Malia palace, the Fourni cemetery, and the sanctuary at Anemospilia dating from the Minoan era.
Nikos Kazantzakis Museum (in Myrtia near Iraklio, C8, tel: 2810-742 451). Dedicated to the great Greek writer (of, amongst others, the famous book .The life and times of Alexis Zorbas.), it is located in his birthplace and comprises, among other things, manuscripts, photo.s, costumes from theatrical plays he wrote.

District of Lassithi
Agios Nikolaos (C10)
Archaeological Museum. (tel: 28410 24 943) It contains finds from excavations in eastern Crete.
Ierapetra (D10)
Archaeological Collection. (tel: 28420 28 721) Contains marble statues and inscriptions from the Greek-Roman era.
Sitia (C11)
Archaeological Museum.(tel: 28430 23 917) Contains finds from Sitia, Zakros, Petra and Paleokastro from the Minoan era.
Archaeological Collection of Neapoli (C9): It comprises finds from the Minoan era, as well as a significant coin collection.

ANTIQUITIES

District of Hania
Aptera (B3). One of the most important cities of ancient (7th century B.C.) western Crete. Aptera was built on a site 15 km from Hania, south of Souda bay, near the village of Megala Horafia which has a view of the whole plain of Hania. The city walls still standing today are reminiscent of the Cyclopean walls of Tiryns and Mycenae. One can also see the remains of a small 1st-century-B.C. temple of Demeter, a Roman theatre and the enormous vaulted cisterns of the Roman period - according to one source they were used for grain storage - preserved in excellent condition.
Phalassarna (Falassarna) (A1). This town, the port of Polyrrhenia, lay to the west of it, at the base of the extreme northwest peninsula of the district of Hania. The ruins - remains of Cyclopean walls, tombs, house foundations, sculptures carved out of the rocks, most notably a throne - are found near the village of Koutri.
Polyrrhenia (Polirinia) (B1). The ruined walls and acropolis of Polyrrhenia lie 49 km west of Hania, near Selli or Paleokastro. Polyrrhenia, an important ancient western Cretan city, was founded with the help of the Achaeans, who succeeded the Minoans as overlords of the island. At Kria Vrissi, near Kissamos (Kastelli), are the remains of a Roman aqueduct.

District of Rethymno
Armeni (B5). A Post-Minoan cemetery with tombs carved out in the rocks has been unearthed.
Axos (B6). Finds from a big ancient city.
Eléftherna (B5, B6): Situated 30 km. southeast of Rethymno, this town was founded in the 9th century B.C. and inhabited up to the Byzantine era. In its heyday it was quite a thriving city. Its main centres are logated on Pyrgí and Nisí hills. Recent excavations have uncovered parts of a fortified tower dating from the Hellenistic era, an ancient bridge, cisterns carved out in the rocks, an ancient cemetery, et al.
Zominthos (C6). A Minoan settlement has been discovered at the Nida plateau, 20 km from Anogia.

District of Iraklio
At **Agia Trias** (D6), 2.5-3 km west of Phaistos, were found the ruins of a royal villa, which most probably was the summer palace of the Phaistos rulers. Certain of the more important pieces on exhibit in the Iraklio Archaeological Museum .the larnax, the Harvester vase, and the impeccably painted frescoes. come from the site.
Amnissos (B8). 7.5 km east of Iraklio, the Minoan port of Knossos. It was here that archaeologists found the Villa of the Frescoes of Amnissos, also called the Villa of the Lilies.
Archanes (Arhanes) (C7), 15km south of Iraklio. Excavations in the village brought to light a well-preserved building that must have been a summer palace.
On the hill of Fourni (1km NW of Archanes) there are vaulted tombs dating from between 2500-1250 B.C.
At **Anemospilia**, Archanes, in the foothills of the Holy Mountain of Yiouchta, a Minoan sanctuary was discovered, sacred not only to Archanes but to Knossos as well.
Gortyn (Gortis) (C7), 46 km south of Iraklio. A city that flourished particularly during the Roman era. Gortyn was the capital of the Roman province of Crete and Cyrenaica. It had its origins in the Minoan era, as testified by the ruins of a 16th-century-B.C. farmhouse, which has been excavated. The most distinctive monuments are the Praitorium (2nd c. A.D.), residence of the Roman governor of the province; the Nymphaion (2nd c. A.D.), where the Nymphs were worshipped; the temple of Pythian Apollo; the sanctuary of the Egyptian divinities; and the Odeon, where the famous inscription with the laws of Gortyn was found. Plato spoke of these laws, which were written in a Doric dialect and date from the 6th century B.C., with admiration.
Kato Simi, Vianos (D9). Sanctuary of Hermes and Aphrodite dating from the Greek-Roman era.
Knossos (B8). 5 km east of Iraklio. Inhabited since the Neolithic era. The first palace of Knossos was built around 1900 B.C. Two hundred years later it was destroyed by an earthquake and rebuilt, becoming grander and more luxurious. The final catastrophe occurred about 1500-1400 B.C., according to one theory due to the eruption of the volcano on Santorini. Despite this blow, people continued to live there for another fifty years, until a fire swept through the city circa 1400 B.C. The Minoan palaces were not only the residence of the ruling house, they were also administrative and religious centres for the whole region. The ruins of the capital of the Minoan kingdom include the palace of Minos, the homes of the officials and priests who surrounded him (Little Palace, Caravanserai, House of the Frescoes, etc.), the homes of ordinary people and the cemetery. The palace was a labyrinthine complex built around a central court. This multistoried construction covered an area of 22,000 m2 and, in addition to the royal quarters, also contained places of worship, treasuries. workshops and storerooms.
Komos (D6). The Minoan port of Phaistos.
Levina (Lendas) (D7). Excavations brought to light a sanctuary of Asclepios and Minoan vaulted tombs.
Lyttos (C8). Archaeological investigations uncovered finds from a big city of the Greek-Roman era.
Malia (C9), 34 km east of Iraklio and 3 km beyond the summer resort of the same name. Excavations have brought to light a palace similar to the ones at Knossos and Phaistos (also built around 1900 B.C. and abandoned about 1450 B.C.). At **Hrissolakos** (Pit of Gold), archaeologists also unearthed the districts surrounding the Minoan palace and cemetery. The palace covered an area of about 9,000 m2. Many of the objects now on display in Iraklio.s Archaeological Museum were found at Malia.
Phaistos (Festos) (D6), 63 km southwest of Iraklio and about 78 km southeast of Rethymno, was the second most important palace-city of Minoan Crete. The residence of the mythical Radamanthes, the palace was also the nucleus of a settlement inhabited since the Neolithic age. The architectural layout is identical to that of Knossos. Here too the rooms are arranged around a court. On the other hand, in contrast to Knossos, the frescoes decorating the walls were relatively scanty, the unpainted floors and walls covered with a lining of pure white gypsum. The area covered by this palace was 9,000 m2.

Tilissos (B7). 14 km southwest of Iraklio lie the ruins of one of the oldest Minoan cities of central Crete, including three large buildings, residences of the local lords.
Vathipetro (C7). 19 km south of Iraklio is where the ruins of a large Minoan mansion, a country estate belonging to a local nobleman, were discovered. The ruins include a winepress,
olive press, weaving rooms and most likely a potter.s kiln.

District of Lassithi
Dreros (Driros) (C9-10), 16 km northwest of Agios Nikolaos. The archaeological site of this ancient Greek city comprises two acropolises with an Archaic agora between them. South of the agora is a temple from the Geometric period, the Delphinion, dedicated to Apollo, as well as a large cistern dug between the late 3rd and early 2nd century B.C.
Gournia (C10). 19 km southeast of Agios Nikolaos, 15 km north of Ierapetra, the best preserved of the Minoan settlements, and one of the most noteworthy archaeological sites in Crete. It appears to date from 1550-1450 B.C. The ruins of the town include small houses and a small palace on top of a hill; even the narrow streets and connecting stairways have survived amidst the foundations of the houses.
Itanos (Erimoupoli) (C12). Finds from a big Greek-Roman city and remains of Venetian and Ottoman buildings.
Kato Zakros (C12), 117 km southeast of Agios Nikolaos is the site of a luxurious Minoan palace, the fourth in significance on the island, which produced a number of important finds, now in the Iraklio Archaeological Museum. This palace, which covered 6,500m2 and contained royal apartments, storerooms and various workshops was destroyed, together with the nearby city, around 1450 B.C. by a violent earthquake, most probably the one that caused a whole section of the island of Santorini to sink into the sea.
Zakros was a major Minoan naval base, which established trading connections with Egypt and Asia Minor. Till now four Minoan farmhouses, two mountaintop sanctuaries, a cemetery and cave tombs have been excavated.
At **Koufonissi** (D11-12), an islet to the south of the district, are the remains of a Greek-Roman city.
Lato (C10), 15 km west of Agios Nikolaos, Lato is spread out on the slopes of two acropolises. Founded in the 7th century B.C., it was one of the most powerful cities in Crete in its heyday. The ruins include the city walls, houses and shops from different periods built on terraces.
Makrigialos (D11). Finds from villas from the Minoan and Greek-Roman eras.
Mirtos (D9). Remains of Minoan settlements.
Palekastro (C12), 20 km east of Sitia, at Roussolakos, has some remains of a port settlement.
Psira (C10). Islet to the north of the district with ruins of a Minoan settlement.

VENETIAN BUILDINGS

Hania
Of the Venetian city of Hania one neighbourhood remains within the old town, while of the fortifications (early 13th century), the bastions, moat and ruins of the walls surrounding the city have survived.
Other monuments from that era are the **Loggia** (once a gentlemen.s social club), the **Hiones** (shipyards) (16th century), the breakwater of the Venetian harbour and the churches of **San Francesco** (housing the Archaeological Museum), **San Rocco**, and **the Saviour** (tou Sotiros), as well as the **Mosque of the Janissaries**, the oldest on Crete.

District of Hania
Southwest of **Kissamos (Kastelli)**, 42 km west of Hania, near the village of **Kalathenes** (B2), is the Villa Rotonda, most probably the country estate of some Venetian feudal lord, dating from the period between 1500-1600.
At Gramvoussa (A1), a remote islet in the northwest part of the district, are the remains of a Venetian fort. Getting to the islet is difficult, and can only be done by caique from Kissamos, weather permitting, departing early in the morning during the summer.
At **Paleohora** (C2), washed by the waves of the Libyan Sea, 73 km south of Hania, the ruins of Castel Selino rise up from the shore. This fortress was built in 1279 by Duke Marino Gradenigo, governor of Crete.
Frangokastello (C4), about 11 km east of Hora Sfakion (Sfakia), is the site of the old .Castel Franco. (Frankish Castle), built by the Venetians in 1371 as a defense against pirates and Cretan rebels. In 1866 the Turks carried out significant repairs.

Rethymno
The **Great Gate**, one of the old city gates from the Venetian fortifications of 1540-1570.
The **Loggia**, mid-16th century, was a social club where the lords and noblemen used to meet and relax.
The **Rimondi Fountain**, north of Petihaki Square, built in 1626.
The impressive **Fortezza** fortress (on Palékastro hill), north of the Venetian harbour, offers a wonderful view of the town and the sea. It was built in the 16th century and within its walls you can still see warehouses, houses and military barracks, as well as a small mosque.
The façades of Venetian houses, mostly in the old town, as well as the «**Great Gate**» or **Porta Guora** (on Four Martyrs Square, where a church by the same name stands), the only entrance gate of the old Venetian town which still exists.
The churches of **Saint Francis** and **Our Lady of the Angels**, the latter also known as «Small Virgin». The **Nerantzé Mosque** and the **Kará Mousá Mosque**.

Iraklio
The old fortifications at Handak, reinforced by the Venetians in 1462, are still in good condition today. Of the fortress.s seven bastions, the one called **Martinengo** - where the simple tomb of Kazantzakis is located - has survived and offers a view over the entire city.
Two of the four entrance gates to the city, **Hania Gate** and **New Gate**, still stand on the south side. **Koulés** is the name of the imposing fortress at the entrance to the Venetian harbour. It was constructed between 1523 and 1540.
The **Bendenaki**, the breakwater running from the Venetian harbour to the bay of Dermatá or Koum-Kapi. The vaulted arsenals, the shipyards where the Venetian galleons were built.
The **Morosini** fountain on Venizelou square (1628), **Delimarco** (1666) and **Bembo** (1588) fountains on the north side of Kornaros Square.
The **Palazzo Ducale**, the residence of the Duke of Crete and the **Loggia** (reconstructed), the nobles. social club (1627).
The Basilica of **San Marco** (13th c.), today an exhibition hall, and the Orthodox church of **Agios Titos** (1446).

District of Lassithi
Spinalonga (B10-C10). Rock isle at the entrance to Elunda Bay, twelve km from Agios Nikolaos, the site of the ruins of a fortified castle built by the Venetians in the 16th centuryto prevent enemy ships from entering the harbour.
Sitia (C11), 70 km east of Iraklio. At the western end of the town **Kazarma Castle** still stands. This was originally built during the Byzantine era and was later given its present form by the Venetians.
Ierapetra (D10), 36 km southeast of Agios Nikolaos. On the far western side of the town, near the sea, lie the ruins of a fortress erected in the early years of the Venetian rule and radically rebuilt in 1626 by Francesco Morosini the elder when he was Governor of Crete.

CHURCHES AND MONASTERIES

In 65 A.D., Titus, disciple of St Paul, founded the first Christian community in Gortyn.
In the 16th century the Cretan School of Painting, closely allied with Byzantine tradition, produced numerous painters of icons, both famous and unknown.
Crete is scattered with the ruins of countless frescoed churches dating from 961, when the Byzantines recaptured Crete from the Saracens, to 1204, when the island fell into the hands of the Venetians.

In Hania
The chapel of the **Moneyless Saints** (Agii Anargyri) with old Byzantine frescoes.
The Russo-Byzantine church of **Agia Magdalini** in the Halepa quarter.

In the District of Hania
At **Akrotiri** (A3), northeast of the city (16.5 km), the Monastery of **Agia Triada** (Tzangarol), with a fine gate and church, built in 1632.
Near Agia Triada, the Monastery of **Our Lady of the Angels** or Gouvernetou, founded in 1548, has a Renaissance-style church whose impressive façade is decorated with Venetian sculptures.
The **Gonia Monastery** (A2), (24 km west of Hania), near the village of Kolimbari. Also called the Hodigitria (Madonna as Guide), it has a lovely view and buildings dating from 1662. At Kato Episkopi (B2), a village about 10 km south of Kolimbari, the **Rotonda of the Archangel Michael** with interesting mosaic floors and important frescoes by Byzantine artists of the 10th century.
At the village of Alikianos (B3), (13 km southwest of Hania), the Byzantine church of **St George** with frescoes dating from 1430.
At the village of Souyia (C2), on the south coast of the district, there are some exquisite mosaics from an early Christian 6th-century basilica preserved in the village.s modern church.

In the District of Rethymno
The Monastery of **Arkadi** (Moni Arkadi, B5), (23 km southeast of Rethymno), built in 16th century in a wonderful natural setting, is one of the most beautiful monasteries of Crete. It played an important part in the island.s recent history. Within the compound is the monastery.s museum, housing rare religious and historical heirlooms.
The Monastery of **Preveli** (C5) (36 km south of Rethymno). A historic monastery well worth visiting with a small museum and beautiful view of the Libyan Sea (Liviko Pelagos). It consists of two separate entities.

In Iraklio
The cathedral of Agios Minas and the smaller church of Agios Minas beside it. The church of **St Catherine** (Agia Ekaterini, 16th century), containing icons by Michail Damaskinos, the most important representative of the Cretan School.
In the District of Iraklio
At Skotini, about 1 km northwest of Fodele (B7), the little church of the **Presentation of the Virgin** (Issodia tis Theotokou) built on the site of an older church of the 11th or 12th century.
About 56 km southwest of Iraklio the Monastery of **Vrondissi** (C6) with a fountain carved in relief (15th c.) at the entrance to the garden and a panoramic view.

Farther southwest, near the village of Vorizia (C6, 52 km from Iraklio), the abandoned monastery of **Varsamoneri**. Here one can see the church of Agios Phanourios whose 15th-century frescoes are of great artistic and scientific value, a unique monument of the Cretan School.
At Gortyn (Gortis, C7) the three-apsed basilica (6th century) dedicated to St Titus, one of the most important monuments of Christianity in Crete.
Near Krassi, west of Agios Nikolaos, the Monastery of **Kardiotissa** (C9), with its church consecrated to the Virgin of Kera.
In the District of Lassithi
Some 9 km west of Agios Nikolaos before the village of Kritsa (C9), the church of **Our Lady of Kera**, filled with frescoes from the 14th or 15th century and judged to be the finest in Crete.
East of Sitia (18 km), the **Monastery of Toplou** or **Panayia (Virgin) Akrotiriani** (C12), dating from the 15th century. The monastery contains an inscription from the 2nd century B.C. and a famous 18th-century icon by Ioannis Kornaros. South of Sitia (4 km), the **Monastery of Kapsa** (D11).

CAVES

The Greek Speleological Society has recorded over 3,000 caves on Crete. Astounding examples of nature.s talent for interior decoration, many of them are also of great scientific value, having archaeological, paleontological and historical interest.
Man used caves as places of worship and as dwellings from the Paleolithic era onwards.
The Minoans began the custom of worshipping their gods in small palatial or house shrines, in sacred caves and in shrines built on mountain peaks and the tops of hills. A few of these caves are the following:
The cave of Sfendoni at Zoniana (B6). This is Crete.s richest cave in terms of natural decoration. It lies in the District of Rethymno, 13 km west of Anogia and 1 km from the village of Zoniana at an altitude of 800 m.
The Diktaian Cave (Dikteon Andron) (C9). The legendary birthplace of Zeus, this cave can be reached from the outskirts of the village of Psihro (52 km west of Agios Nikolaos), where there is a path ascending to it. Significant archaeological finds indicate that the cave was long a place of cult worship. One can reach the cave on foot or by mule or donkey, which can be rented from the locals. The descent into the fascinating cave demands some caution. Stalactites of various shapes adorn the lower cave.
The Idaian Cave (Ideon Andron) (C6). 20 km south of Anogia on the Nidas plateau on Mount Psiloritis, lies this sacred cave where according to mythology Rhea hid the baby Zeus from the murderous Kronos. Cult objects have been found here, along with statues and bronze shields and other finds now on display in the Iraklio Archaeological Museum.
The Cave of Eileithyia (Ilithiia) (B8). This cave was used for cult rituals from the Neolithic era up to the 5th century B.C. Lying 1 km south of Amnissos, it was devoted to Eileithyia, the goddess of childbirth. Archaeological investigations here uncovered idols of women in the act of giving birth, nursing or praying, figures of animals, Neolithic shells and tools. Votive objects found here are exhibited in the Archaeological Museum in Iraklio.
The cave of Ag. Paraskevi (B8), near the village of Skotinos, 22 km from Iraklio. This very interesting cave was used for cult worship both in antiquity and during the Christian era.
The Kamares Cave (C6). Northeast of the village of Kamares (57 km south of Iraklio) lies the cave of Kamares, established during the Minoan period as a sacred spot, possibly dedicated to the worship of the goddess Eileithyia. The wonderful Kamares vases, on display in the Archaeological Museum of Iraklio, were found here. Visiting the cave entails a 4-hour walk from the village.
The Gerani Cave of Rethymno (B4). 6 km from Rethymno, this is a cave of prehistoric and archaeological interest. Finds from this cave may be seen in the Rethymno Archaeological Museum.
The Melidoni Cave (B6). 3 km from the village of Melidoni (26 km east of Rethymno), this was used for cult worship during the Neolithic, Minoan and Archaic periods. It is adorned by impressive stalactites and stalagmites, while at its entrance a small chapel has been built, dedicated to the Annunciation.

NATURAL LANDMARKS

Gavalohori (B4). Traditional settlement situated about 26 km. southeast of Hania, surrounded by olive and oak trees. A Historical and Folklore Museum operates there. It is housed in a building which is characteristic of the local traditional architecture. A part of the building was constructed during the Venetian period, whereas the second floor was added during the Turkish period. Among the exhibits one can see furniture, hand-woven and silk fabrics, embroideries, stone and wood carvings, samples of iconography and pottery, weapons, coins, etc.
In the village square there is an office of the Women.s Agricultural Co-operative of Gavalohori where one can either get information about the area or buy products made by the locals.
The **Samaria Gorge** (B3-C3). 43 km south of the city of Hania, this is the longest gorge in Europe, measuring some 18 kilometres and renowned for its awesome beauty. In 1962 it was declared a National Park.
At some points the passage is just 3 metres wide and at times the steep sides rise to a height of 600 metres. The gorge is cut by a stream which flows between the highest peak of the White Mountains and Mt Volikas.
Hiking down the gorge is permitted from May until late September, and weather permitting until late October.
At the entrance to the gorge, at Xiloskalo, there is a tourist pavilion with a view of majestic Mt Gygilo (alt. 2,083m). On leaving the gorge one encounters the village of **Agia Roumeli** (C3) where one can take a launch to Hora Sfakion and catch a bus back to Hania. Another option is to continue from Hora Sfakion to Souyia (close to which you will find the verdant **Saint Irini Gorge**) or Paleóhora (from where caiques leave for the islands Elafonisi (C1) and Gavdos).
The road from Hania to the entrance of the gorge traverses picturesque lowland and mountain villages. At the village of Omalos on the Omalos mountain range one will find rooms for rent and a number of tavernas.
Hora Sfakion (C3). 74 km south of Hania, an unusual village built in a rocky, barren area, difficult to reach whether by sea or overland. To get there one crosses the Askyphos mountains and the **Nimbros gorge**.
Gavdos (D3). An islet 24 nautical miles south of Sfakia (Hora Sfakion). There are scheduled boats from Sfakia and Paleohora to this virgin isle (the southernmost spot of Europe) with its spotless beaches and cedar trees all year long (weather permitting). The island boasts some tavernas and a few rooms to let.
The **Therisso Gorge** (B3). An impressive gorge, 6 km long, running between Hania and the village of Therisso in the foothills of the White Mountains, 16 km south of Hania.
Lake Kournas (B4), 48 km east of Hania. A picturesque lake, the only one on the island. The mountains surrounding it are reflected in its calm waters. There are several tavernas in the area.
Argiroupoli (C4), 27 km southwest of Rethymno. A village nestled among greenery, built on a knoll not far away from springs feeding some enormous cisterns and setting watermills in motion. Next to the springs are quite a few tavernas where you can have lunch or dinner under huge plane trees.
Spili (C5), 28 km southeast of Rethymno. A wooded village with stone houses and cobbled lanes. In its small square overhung by plane-trees there are 25 water spouts, sculpted in the shape of lion.s heads, whose water comes directly from Psiloritis mountain.
Anogia (C6). A mountain village, 53 km southeast of Rethymno, famous for its woven cloth and one of the best known villages of Crete.
The **Kourtaliotiko Gorge** (C5). A gorge of wild beauty which starts close to the village of Koxaré. The Kourtaliotis river runs through it and discharges into the sea at the Fínika (Palm) Beach (near Préveli Monastery), one of the most impressive landscapes of Crete.
Fodele (B7), 29 km west of Iraklio, the birthplace of the famous painter El Greco (Domenicos Theotokopoulos) in 1545 and for this reason there is a museum with copies of his works and a reconstruction of his atelier. A picturesque village hidden in a verdant valley studded with orange groves and plane trees.
Mátala (D6). A beautiful beach with the famous rock caves, which were used as carved tombs in the post-Minoan era and became particularly popular during the 1960-70 period.
The **Lassithi Plateau** (C9), 22 km east of Iraklio the road passes through the wooded villages of the plateau (alt. 900m, area about 25,000m2) punctuated by some 7000 colourful windmills that water the market gardens and apple and pear orchards in this lush region.
Vái Beach (C12) is located 26 km. northeast of Sitía and is famous for its clear waters and the neighbouring amazing palm forest.
Hrissi (D10). An islet lying exactly opposite Ierapetra, 9 n. mi. away, reachable by small excursion boats. It too boasts lovely beaches and cedar trees.

USEFUL INFORMATION

General Information
Greece upholds international hygienic regulations, as defined by the statutes of the United Nations and the World Health Organisation.
Electric current in Greece is AC 220 V.
Banks are open every day except Saturday, Sunday and official holidays.
Hours: Mon.-Thurs.08.00-14.00, Fri, 08.00-13.30hrs.
For further information contact the GNTO Information Offices or the Town Hall information bureaus in each location.
Official holidays . not including the changeable holidays of Clean (Lent) Monday, Easter Monday and Whitmonday - are as follows:

Jan	March	May	Aug	Oct	Dec
1,6	25	1	15	28	25, 26

How to get to the island
a) By air
Crete has airports near the towns of Hania, Iraklio and Sitia. It is linked by air to Athens as well as to the larger towns and major tourist destinations of Greece. The airports of Iraklio and Hania are also served by direct charter flights from abroad.
Information:
International Athens Airport «El. Venizelos», tel: 210 353.0000
International Iraklio Airport «Nikos Kazantzakis», tel: 2810 397.800
International Hania Airport, tel: 28210 83.800
Sitia Airport, tel: 28430 24.424

Olympic Airlines (O.A.), tel: 210 926.6666,
www.olympicairlines.com
Aegean Airlines, tel: 801 11 20000, www.aegeanairlines.gr

b) By ship
From the port of Piraeus passenger ships leave daily for the ports of Hania, Rethymno, Iraklio and Agios Nikolaos. The journey lasts from 4.5 up to 12 hours, depending on the type of vessel, the destination and the route followed. Crete is also linked to the south of the Peloponnese (Gythio, Neapoli) and Kythera and Antikythera islands by boats leaving from the harbour of Kissamos (Kastelli); with the Cyclades leaving from Iraklio and Agios Nikolaos; with the Dodecanese leaving from Agios Nikolaos and Sitia; as well as with the North Sporades (Skiathos) and Thessaloniki leaving from Iraklio.

Information:
Piraeus Port Authority: tel: 1440 . **Hania harbour** (Souda Port Authority): tel: 28210 89.240 . **Rethymno Port Authority**: tel: 28310 22.276 . **Iraklio Port Authority**: tel: 2810 244.912 . **Agios Nikolaos Port Authority**: tel: 28410 22.312 . **Sitia Port Authority**: 28430 22.310 . **Kissamos Port Authority** (Kastelli): tel: 28220 22.024

Getting around the island
a) By bus
Crete has an extensive network of good roads and regularly scheduled buses.
b) By rented car
Rent-a-car offices exist in almost every corner of the island. The principal ones have branches at the airports.
c) By organised tour
Travel agents abound, many of which operate organised 1-day, 2-day, etc. tours to the sights in each district and of the island as a whole.
There are tours for example to:
District of Hania: Akrotiri, Agia Triada Monastery, Gonia Monastery, Kastelli, the Samaria Gorge, Agia Roumeli, Sfakia, Paleohora.
District of Rethymno: Arkadi Monastery, Axos, Anogia.
District of Iraklio: Knossos, Gortyn, Phaistos, Agia Trias, Matala, Fodele, Tilissos, Malia.
District of Lassithi: Gournia, Agios Nikolaos, the plain of Lassithi, Kritsa, Sitia, Vai, Zakros.
Many of the tour agencies organise special Cretan evenings in various villages: these include local dances and music played on traditional instruments.
They also offer one-day cruises to Santorini and tours which include mountaineering, hiking and mountain cycling.
d) By yacht
The table shows the average wind velocities (knots) and directions from April to October:

MONTHS	CRETAN SEA		
	Area of Hania	Area of Iraklio	Area of Sitia
April	S.W. 5.0	N.W. 6.6	N.W. 6.6
May	N.N.W. 4.4	N.W. 4.4	N.W. 5.0
June	N.N.W. 4.4	N.W. 6.2	N.W. 7.0
July	N.N.W. 4.4	N.W. 8.2	N.W. 8.6
Aug.	N. 4.1	N.W. 7.4	N.W. 8.2
Sept.	N. 4.1	N.W. 6.6	N.W. 6.6
Oct.	N. 3.8	N.W. 5.8	N.W. 5.0

Ports of entry and departure at Hania and Iraklio
Port Authority of Hania, Tel: 28210 98 888, 28210 52 777
Port Authority of Iraklio, Tel: 2810 244 912
These ports have harbour, customs and health officials, as well as a passport and foreign exchange control service. Fuel, water and provisions can be obtained here, and transit logs must be stamped upon entry and departure. There are yacht repair and maintenance workshops at Iraklio and Hania. There are also offices chartering yachts.

Shopping
Crete's rich tradition in hand-woven fabrics, embroideries, wood-carvings and jewellery makes shopping a real temptation to the visitor. Examples, old and new, are to be found in the marketplace of the large cities and also in the villages, where you may have the chance to see these ageold crafts being practised.

Cultural Events
In Hania, in August, cultural events in Firká castle and the agrotourism fair .Agrarian August.. In Rethymno, a major carnival and during the summer cultural events within the framework of the .Renaissance Festival. (in the Fortezza castle). In Iraklio, a festival by the same name (during the summer), with significant musical and theatrical events which are held in the N. Kazantzakis garden theatre and the Koulés castle. In Agios Nikolaos, the .Lató. cultural events, in Sitia events within the framework of the .Kornaria. festival, and from 15 till 20 August the .Sultanina Feast.. In Ierápetra the .Kýrvia. are held. Moreover, in the towns and many villages of Crete folkloric and religious feasts are held all around the year, which are of particular interest and have a colour of their own.

Sports
The variety and extent of Crete.s coastline make it possible for bathers to enjoy an infinite number of different places to swim, all of them lapped by warm, crystal clear water.
On the north coast, west of Hania, one beach in particular stands out; it stretches from the town to just outside Kolimbari. On the west coast of the district, one has the sandy beach of Falassarna and, farther south, Elafonissi (the road is asphalted as far as the opposite beach).
Other beaches are: Stavros at Akrotiri, Almirida east of Souda and the long sandy coast from Georgioupolis all the way to Rethymno, Panormos, Bali, Agia Pelagia.
The coast from Agios Nikolaos to Plaka, the beach at Sitia and the eastern beach with the famous palm grove at Vai, and Kato Zakros.
On the south side of the island are the fine beaches of: Souyia, Paleohora, Loutro and Frangokastello in the district of Hania, and Plakia, Preveli (dirt road up to a point, then steps down to the sea), and Agia Galini in the district of Rethymno. There are superb beaches at Matala, Kali Limenes and Lendas (dirt road) in the district of Iraklio, and Mirtos, Ierapetra and Agia Fotia in the district of Lassithi.
The bigger resort areas and the Naval School of the Hania Yacht Club have equipment for water skiing.
One can play tennis at the Hania and Iraklio tennis clubs.
The Iraklio Yacht Club organises sea sport programs such as .MINOACUP. and operates sailing schools.
Besides sailing, Crete is ideal for windsurfing.
Recently on the island one can also do sports such as hang gliding, parachute and paragliding.
The Iraklio and Hania Aeroclubs offer lessons for this kind of sports.
The mountainous part of Crete, in combination with the virgin environment and the rare flora and fauna, is a challenge for nature lovers to go mountain climbing, hiking and cycling.
European footpath E4, after crossing mainland Greece, .arrives. at Kastelli (Hania prefecture) and from there crosses the entire island of Crete up to Zakros (at the eastern end of the island). This offers a unique experience, as it enables you to get acquainted on foot with unknown aspects of Cretan nature, as it passes by old footpaths, settlements, monasteries and mountains.
The Greek Mountaineering Association operates refuges in the White Mountains (at Kallergi and Volika, Tel: 28210 33199) and Psiloritis (Prino and Assites).

Upon your arrival in Greece
If you wish to obtain information concerning your stay and travel, you may contact the staff of the Information Service of the Greek National Tourism Organisation - G.N.T.O. (EOT as per its Greek initials).

Enjoy the magnificent Greek landscape and protect it from the danger of fire

G.N.T.O. OFFICES IN:
ATHENS
G.N.T.O. Head Office: 7, Tsoha Str.
Tel : 210 870 7000
Web site: www.gnto.gr, E-mail: info@gnto.gr
www.visitgreece.gr
G.N.T.O. Athens Information Service
26A, Amalias str. - Sintagma,
Tel: 210 3310. 392, Fax: 210 3310.640
7, Tsoha Str. Tel: 210 870 7181 E-mail: info@gnto.gr
"El. Venizelos" Athens International Airport (Spata)
Tel: 210 3530 445-6-7-8

CRETE
Iraklio:16, Papa Alexandrou 5th Str., Postal Code: 71 202
Tel: 2810 246 106 Fax: 2810 246 105,
E-mail: dtkritis@otenet.gr
Hania: 40, Kriari Str., Pantheon Building,
Postal Code: 73 135, Tel: 28210 92 943, Fax: 28210 92 624
Rethymno: El. Venizelou, Labyrinth building,
Postal Code: 74 100 , Tel: 28310 29 148, Fax: 28310 56 350

Information is subject to change

Useful telephone numbers				
	Hania 28210	**Rethimno 28310**	**Iraklio 2810**	**Ag. Nikolaos 28410**
Hospital	22.000	87.100	368.000 392.111	66.000
G.N.T.O. or Town Hall	92.943 92.000 36.155	29.148 -	246.106-38 -	22 357 24 165
Port Authority	89.240 (Souda)	22.276 55 .150	244.956 244.912	22.312
Road Assistance Fax:	10400 96.611 97.177	10400 54.554	10400 210.581	10400 24.274
Greek Mountaineering Assoc.	(p.m.) 44.647	(p.m.) 57.766	227.609	-
Tourist Police	25.931	28.156 53.450	289.614 283.190	26.900 91.408

FLY OLYMPIC AIRLINES

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