



REASONS TO VISIT NORTH CYPRUS



TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICES

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
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| Lokmacı Crossing Point (Lefkoşa) | Tel: +903922288765 |
| Metehan Crossing Point (Lefkoşa) | Tel: +903922237285 |
| Girne Yacht Harbour | Tel: +903928152145, +903928156079 |
| Baldöken (Girne Municipal Parking) | Tel:---- |
| Gazimağusa (Old Town) | Tel: +903923662864 |
| Akyar Crossing Point (Gazimağusa) | Tel: +903923665703 |
| Yeşilyurt (Lefke) | Tel: +903927278491 |
| Yenierenköy | Tel: +903923744984 |
| Beyarmudu Crossing Point | Tel:..... |
| İskele | Tel: +903923713704-706 |
| İskele (Nature Inf. Center) | Tel:---- |
| Ercan (Airport) | Tel: +903922314003 |

01

The Lala Mustafa Pasha Mosque (St. Nicholas Cathedral) and Monumental Tree

The building which was built in the Lusignan era between 1298-1312 is one of the most flamboyant examples of gothic architecture throughout the whole Mediterranean. The Lusignan Kings were initially crowned as the Kings of Cyprus in Lefkoşa's St. Sophia's Cathedral and then they were crowned in Gazimağusa's St. Nicholas Cathedral as the Kings of Jerusalem. The building was converted into a mosque and opened to worship by the Ottomans in 1571 with the addition of a minaret. The monumental East African Fig Tree (*Ficus Sycomorus*), which is located at the entrance of the cathedral, is the island's oldest tree. The tree was planted when the building of the cathedral began in 1298 and is now 15 meters in height and 5 meters in width.



02

The Great Khan

It is not only Lefkoşa's, but one of the Island's most important Ottoman works of architecture. It was built between 1572-1579 as a two storied, square planned building with Bursa's Koza Khan taken as an example. The Khan consists of a total of 68 rooms, where the rooms on the ground floor were used as shops of commerce and the rooms on the top floor were used as hotel rooms. The building is now used as an entertainment and travelling centre where handcrafts and souvenirs are sold.

03

The Girne Harbour

The horseshoe shaped historical Girne Harbour, which was built at the centre of the city, is most definitely one of the first places to visit in Girne. The colourful fishing boats and yachts anchored at the harbour make the Girne Harbour a favourite attraction for locals as well tourists to visit. Up until recently the harbour was used as a centre of commerce.



04

The Historical Lefkoşa Houses

The walled city of Lefkoşa has a well founded history which leads way back into the Lusignan era. Especially the bay windowed single and double storied houses with their flat arched entrances and wooden eaves which are set up in the narrow streets of both the Arabahmet and the Samanbahce neighbourhoods attract a lot of interest from tourists from all over the world.



05

The Kantara Castle

The Kantara Castle is the easternmost of the castles situated on the Girne Mountains, at a height of 700 meters from sea level; the castle has a strategic advantage, as it overlooks the northern shoreline, the Mesarya Plains and the Karpaz Peninsula. The castle was believed to have been built by the Byzantines, however it was first mentioned in written records, when Richard the Lionheart captured Cyprus in 1191.



06

The Girne Gate

The Girne Gate is one of the three gates built into the fortifications built around Lefkosa in order to protect the city in the Venetian Era, and it is located to the north of the City Walls. It was named 'The Del Proveditore Gate' after the famous Venetian architect Proveditore Francesco Barbaro. The Gate was renovated by the Ottomans in 1821 and a domed room was added on top. The gate currently serves the public as a Tourist Information Office.



07

The Girne Castle and the Shipwreck Museum

The Girne Castle which is one of Cyprus' most astonishing historical buildings stands proudly as Girne's symbol. The almost square planned structure has undergone many changes through the years up until it reached its present view. The ship believed to have been made in 3rd century BC, which is being exhibited at the Castle's Museum is thought to be the oldest commercial ship ever to be recovered from the bottom of the sea.



08

The Ancient City of Salamis

The ancient city of Salamis was founded by Tefkros in the Bronze Age located to the north of Gazimağusa. The earliest findings at the ancient city date back to 11th century BC. The Salamis Ancient City was discovered with excavations carried out between 1952-1974 and is one of North Cyprus' most important sites to visit. The ruins of the gymnasium, the baths, the forum and the agora which one can see whilst visiting the ancient city are all from the Roman Period.





10

The Othello Castle

The main entrance to the Othello Castle which was built in the 14th Century by the Lusignans bears the embossment of the St. Mark Lion above it. The Castle became to be known by its current name in the English Colonial era. Part of Shakespeare's famous play took part in one of Cyprus' port towns, and therefore the castle was named after the hero of the play.



09

The Selimiye Mosque (St. Sofia's Cathedral)

The Selimiye Mosque is one of the Cyprus' most important gothic styled buildings. The construction of the building begun in 1208 and was eventually completed and opened to worship in 1326. The Lusignan Kings were crowned in this building. Later on in the Ottoman Era, the Cathedral was converted into a mosque with the addition of two minarets.



11

The Ancient City of Soli

The Ancient City of Soli is located along the coast of Lefke. It was one of the ten Kingdoms on Cyprus, but it was deserted as a result of Arab Raids. There is a theatre as well as one of the first churches known to be built in Cyprus, the Soli Basilica, found within the Ancient City of Soli.



12

The Vouni Palace

The Vouni Palace, which was built in about 500 BC in order to maintain control over the city of Soli, was inhabited by the people of Soli until it was destroyed by a fire in 380 BC when it was deserted. The Palace Complex, which consists of a total of 137 rooms lining three sides of the central courtyard, is located on a high hilltop to the east of the Ancient City of Soli.



13

St. Hilarion Castle

St. Hilarion Castle is one of the three castles set upon the Beşparmak (Five Finger) Mountains and is located towards the west of the mountains at a height of 700 meters from sea level. In the 10th century a monastery and a church were added to the castle, which was named after a saint who migrated from Jerusalem to Cyprus and spent the last years of his life praying there. It is said that, the famous Walt Disney was also inspired by the St. Hilarion Castle and that the location of the renowned cartoon "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs" was based in the this Castle.



14

St. Mamas Church and Monastery

The St. Mamas Monastery is located in Güzelyurt, and the church within the monastery was built by the Byzantines. There are many stories about St. Mamas, but the most common one is that of a Christian Saint who lived in the Güzelyurt area. The Monastery is now being used as a museum.



15

Hız Ömer Tekke

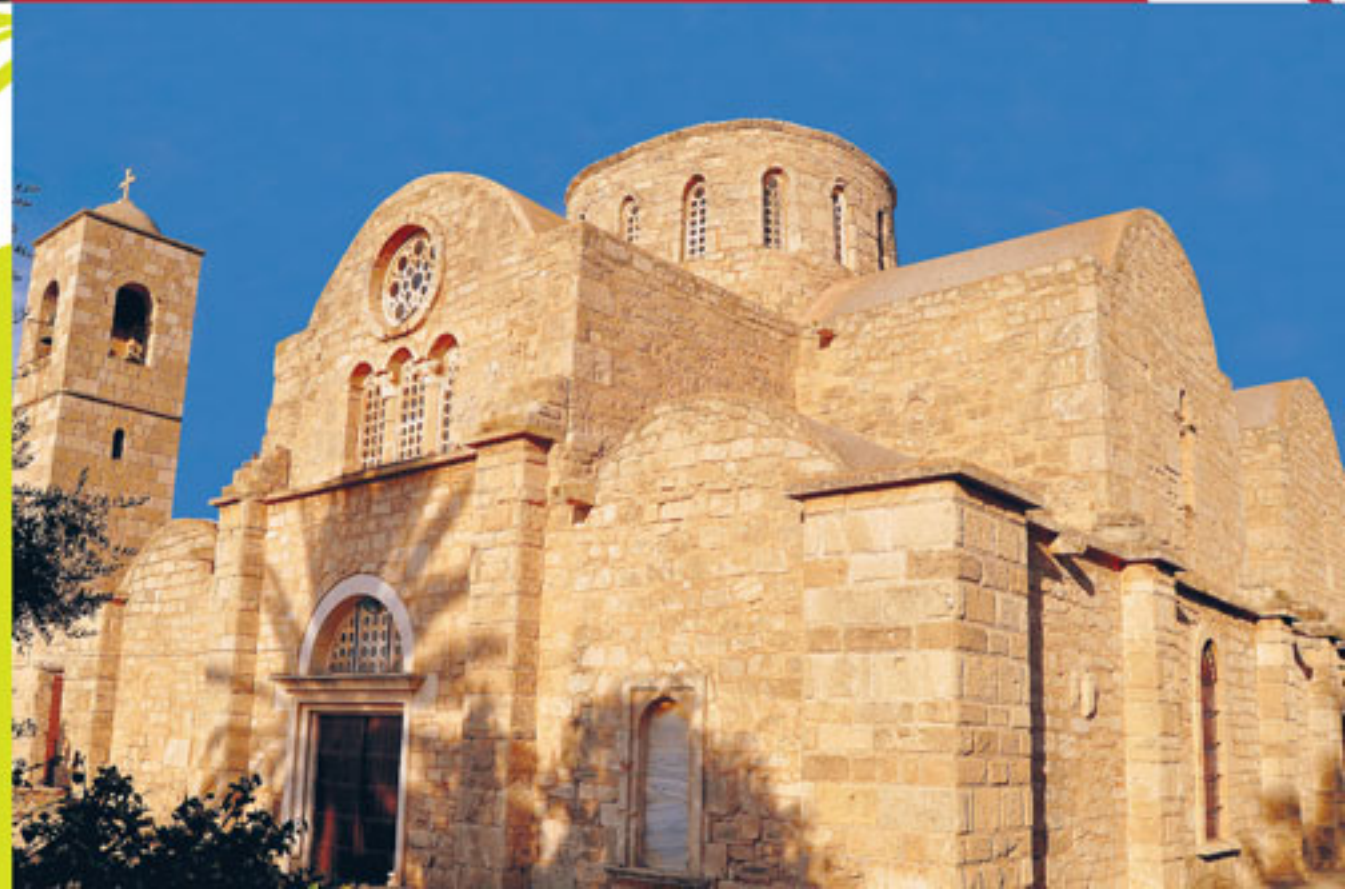
The Hız Ömer Tekke, dating back to the Arab Raids which took place between the 7th and 10th centuries, is one of the most important votive places for Muslims to visit in Cyprus. The Tekke is located approximately 4 km to the east of Girne.



16

St. Barnabas Monastery and Icon Museum

St. Barnabas Monastery was built in the memory of St. Barnabas, who was the son of a Jewish family from Salamis. After going to Jerusalem to study, he converted to Christianity and returned to Cyprus preaching Christianity all over the island together with St. Paul. The Monastery consists of a church, courtyard, monastery rooms and the chapel in which St. Barnabas' tomb lies. The Monastery is being currently used as a museum.



17

Derviş Pasha Mansion

The owner, of the two storied classical Ottoman Mansion, which was built in the 19th century, was Dervish Pasha, who was also the publisher of the 'Zaman' Newspaper which was one of the first Turkish newspapers printed in Cyprus. The mansion is located in the well preserved neighbourhood of Arabahmet within the walled city of Lefkoşa. The mansion was opened to the public in 1988 as the Ethnographic Museum.



18

Bufavento Castle

The Bufavento Castle sits astride the Beşparmak (Five Finger) Mountains towards the east of Girne and it is the highest of the three castles, with St. Hilarion Castle to the west and Kantara Castle to the east. It was named 'Bufavento', because the mount that it was built on is very windy and Bufavento literally means "defier of winds" in Latin. Looking towards the south from the castle, you will be met with the beautiful panoramic view of Lefkoşa.



19

The Mevlevi Tekke

The Mevlevi Tekke is situated at the south of the Girne Gate in Lefkoşa, it is one most important and historical buildings in Cyprus. It is believed that the Mevlevi sect came to Cyprus with the Ottoman Conquest. The Mevlevi Tekke, where the tombs of 16 prominent Mevlevi's are laid to rest, is currently being used as a museum.



20

The Bellapais Abbey and Lawrence Durrell

The Medieval Bellapais Abbey is located at the foot of the Beşparmak (Five Finger) Mountains to the east of Girne where it fascinates visiting tourists from all over the world with its unique gothic styled architecture and astonishing scenery. The world famous English author Lawrence Durrell, who wrote his book the "Bitter Lemons" whilst living in Bellapais Village between 1953-1956, constantly mentioned his admiration for the abbey. The house in which he lived in next to the abbey, also attracts many visitors.



21

Golden Beach

The wonderful Golden Beach is one of the Mediterranean Sea's virgin beaches; it stretches 2 km along the Karpaz Peninsula with its clear blue water and golden sandy shoreline. All along Golden Beach you will have the captivating opportunity of walking bare footed for kilometres and refreshing yourself by taking a dive in to the cool blue waters.



22



The Beşparmak (Five Finger) Peak

The Beşparmak Mountains stretch 160 kilometres in length, running parallel to Cyprus' northern coastline. The name 'Beşparmaklar' comes from the five finger-like projections of the mountain towards Girne's east. There are many legends about the Beşparmak Mountains. The most common one tells the story of two young men who fought a deadly duel over a girl they had both fallen in love with. The virtuous young man who won the duel by killing the selfish young man and throwing him into the nearby swamp also drowned in the swamp as a result of the injuries he had sustained. Reaching out for his loved one as he drowned, only his hand up to his wrist remained outside the swamp, it turned into stone as time passed on and eventually became today's 'Beşparmak Peak'.



23

Migrating and Endemic Bird Species

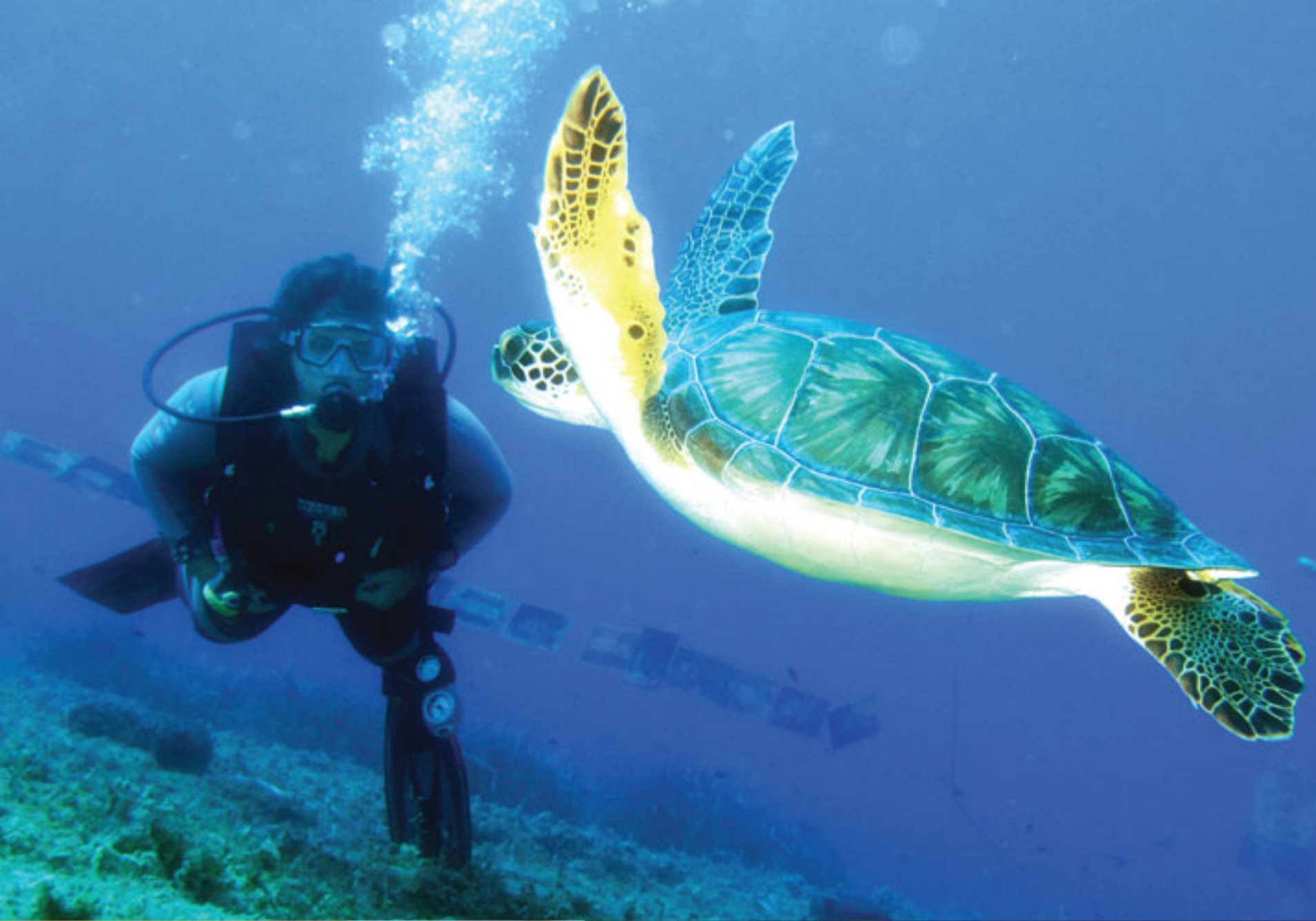
Due to Cyprus' location, it is a site on the route of birds migrating between Europe and Africa. In addition to this, the island also plays host to endemic bird species such as the Cyprus Wheatear and the Cyprus Warbler. Both of these species have evolved through the years adapting to the environment and weather conditions of Cyprus, thus differentiating from similar species.



24

Sea Turtles

The Island of Cyprus has been visited for hundreds of millions of years by Loggerhead sea turtles (*Caretta caretta*) and Green Turtles. These astonishing creatures visit Cyprus' shores every year in order to nest along the golden sands of 'Alagadi (Turtle) Beach' on the northern coastline and 'Golden Beach' and 'Ronnas Beach' in the Karpaz Peninsula of Northern Cyprus.



25

Endemic Plants

With approximately 1900 different plants housed in its natural environment, the Island of Cyprus fascinates all visitors. Almost 1600 of these species are commonly seen all around Northern Cyprus. Of the 120 different plants that are unique to the island, the 'Brossica Hilarionis', 'Dianthus Cyprius' and 'Silene Fraudatrix' are a few of the 19 endemic species which are distinctly found in their natural habitats only in Northern Cyprus. Whereas the 'Tulipa Cypria' and the Cyprus Bee Orchid are a couple of the most commonly found species of the 40 endemic plants throughout the island.



26 Cyprus Donkeys

The Cyprus donkey is one of the many animals that are indigenous to the island and they have attracted a lot of attention as the symbol of the island. Generally roaming around in groups, they have managed to create a wild habitat for themselves in the nature of the Karpaz Peninsula. It is highly likely to see the donkeys in their natural habitats especially around the village of 'Dipkarpaz' and Cape 'Zafer' in the Karpaz Peninsula.



27

Monumental Trees

It is believed that, some of the almost 2000 monumental olive trees in the Güzelyurt-Kalkanlı area that are currently under protection, are around a thousand years old. Scientists acknowledge that these trees are evidence that Cyprus was the source in spreading the olive tree all around the Mediterranean.



28

Karpaz Peninsula

The Karpaz Peninsula, with its historical and natural beauty, is the most unspoiled area in Cyprus. Karpaz plays host to North Cyprus' only National Park as well as many ancient cities, monasteries and the traces of various civilizations.



29



Baf Chewing Gum

Cyprus' traditional Baf Chewing Gum is a natural gum, harvested from the trunk of *Pistacia terebinthus*, the terebinth tree. The gum is amber in colour and is very tough. The gum sticks are wrapped in thin paper packages. Even though lately the gum has lost popularity, it is still a favourite amongst locals and tourists.



30



Hellim

Hellim is a traditional Cyprus cheese made generally from sheep or goat milk. This delicious white cheese can be consumed at breakfast, grilled on a barbecue or fried in a pan. A traditional pastry is also made with hellim and grated hellim mixed with dried mint is also used as a garnish on top of macaroni.

31



Traditional Fırın Kebap

Cyprus' traditional 'Fırın Kebap' is also known as 'Thieves Kebap' and is made from chunks of lamb's meat or young goat's meat being cooked together with potatoes in traditional jar shaped ovens. 'Fırın Kebap' is one of Cypriot cuisine's most important dishes and it is served with strained yoghurt, onions, cracked wheat pilaf and seasonal salad.



32

Cyprus Ekmek Kadayıfı

This traditional bread pudding is made from two layers of bread filled with a mixture of soft nor cheese, crushed almonds and cinnamon. It is then cooked on low heat as syrup is slowly poured over it. 'Ekmek Kadayıfı' which is one of Cypriot cuisine's most esteemed deserts is then allowed to cool in the refrigerator and served cold.



33

The Cyprus Patatote and Kolokas

The Cyprus Patatote is one of the renowned potatoes in the whole of Europe and especially in the UK. The Cyprus potato which flourishes in our islands climate and soil, adds rich tastes to meals as well as maintaining its taste and shape under all cooking circumstances. 'Kolokas' or colocasia, on the other hand is a patatote like vegetable, grown especially in the Karpaz and Yeşilirmak regions. With its large leaves the plant enjoys lots of water. It is another favourite meal in the Cypriot Cuisine when cooked with either chicken or lamb. The baby kolokas sprouts are called 'bullez' and these can also be deep fried with potatoes.

34

Pirohu

Pirohu is another traditional Cypriot pastry dish loved by both locals and tourists alike. It is made of a mixture of Cypriot nor cheese and dried mint stuffed into small pastry sacks which are then boiled and served with grated hellim sprinkled on top.



35

Traditional Seles, Sestas and Baskets

'Seles (flat wicker baskets) and 'Sestas (wicker trays) are kitchen utensils made from woven wheat straw which are either naturally coloured or dyed. The stronger wicker baskets are more generally made from woven bamboo canes and tree stems and are used for carrying harvested fruits. These products were more commonly used in the past, however nowadays they are locally used as decorations and are very popular as souvenirs for tourists.

36

Pastry Dishes and Pies

Pastry dishes hold a very important place in Cypriot Cuisine, as it has been influenced by many different cultures through the years. The most important pastry delicacies can be listed as; 'Tatar böreği', 'pirohu', 'nor böreği' (whey cheese pie), 'kiyma böreği' (minced meat pie), 'ispanak böreği' (spinach pie), 'kabak böreği' (pumpkin pie), 'mantar böreği' (mushroom pie), 'zeytinli' (olive bread), 'hellimli' (hellim cheese bread), 'bidda' bread, 'çörek' (rounded sweet bread), 'tahınlı' (tahini bread) and 'pilavuna' (a salty-sweet bun filled with mixed cheese)



37

Mezes

Another important savoury in the Cypriot Cuisine is the mezes. Mezes are a mixed variety of cold and hot dishes generally served as appetizers prior to a meal. 'Humus', 'cacik', 'tahin', pickled caper and celery, 'samarella' (cured sheep with salt and oregano), fried 'hellim', 'çakistes' (cracked green olives marinated in olive oil, lemon, garlic and coriander seeds), tongue, brain and 'pastırma' (spicy sausages).



38

Şeftali Kebab

The tasty 'şeftali kebab' is an authentic Cypriot sausage made from a mixture of ground goat or sheep meat, finely chopped onions, parsley and various herbs which are then wrapped into the caul fat. The delicious final product is then cooked on the charcoal or grilled until they turn golden brown.

39

Babutsa (Prickly Pears)

The prickly pear or 'Babutsa', as it is more commonly known amongst Cypriot locals, is the fruit of a cactus plant which grows wildly in natural circumstances all over Cyprus. This tasty Mediterranean fruit is commonly found on the market and it is generally found and harvested from the area of Serdarlı Village.





40

Lefkara Lace Embroidery

There are many historical examples showing the qualities of Cypriot handicrafts such as the belief that Alexander the Great's sword was made in Cyprus and that Leonardo Da Vinci admired Cypriot embroidery. Lefkara Lace embroidery is named after the village it originated from and dates back to the 14th century. Even though it was produced for personal needs in the past, it is now produced as a commercial product for tourists as a souvenir.

41

Molehiya

'Molehiya' is a traditional Cypriot dish that is made from either fresh or dried leaves of the 'molehiya' plant. Although the dish originates from the Arabs, it has eventually become a delicious national dish.



42

Zivaniya

'Zivaniya' is a traditional Cypriot beverage, which is distilled from pomace (or marcs), the residue of grapes that are pressed during the winemaking process (including the stems and seeds). The mixture is then distilled to produce Zivaniya. The colorless and strong alcoholic drink has a light aroma of raisins and is characterized by its typical taste.

It is advised that you drink it cold and sip by sip.



43

Ceviz Macunu

'Ceviz macunu' (Green walnuts in syrup) are one of the most popular Turkish Cypriot delicacies. The fresh walnuts are kept in fresh water for a week and then almonds and cloves are placed in the middle which is carved out. The sweets are then boiled and sugar is added. The sweet is generally served after Turkish coffee.





44

The Coffee Culture

Social relationships and family ties play an important part in the Turkish Cypriot community. The culture of serving coffee enhances social ties in the Turkish Cypriot culture and generally Turkish coffee is a preference for any local household family. Another common social activity for women in the Turkish Cypriot community is fortune telling from the coffee residue left in the cups.



45

Golf

Due to its mild climate, Cyprus is a suitable site for the sport of golf to be played all year round. Top quality facilities which have recently been built increase the attraction to the sport on the island.



46

Yachting

Yachts setting sail from the Girne and Gazimağusa Harbours offer various tempting voyages in the clear warm Mediterranean waters that surround our beautiful island. The well endowed marine culture naturally becomes a way of life with Cyprus being an island.



47

Trekking

Cyprus' unique and mild climate provides the possibility for trekking all throughout the year. Whilst trekking along the many paths prepared along the Beşparmak (Five Finger) Mountains you will enjoy the beautiful scenery and nature as well as stumbling upon historical treasures such as St. Hilarion Castle which pop out of the natural environment as if they spring out of story books.

48

Paragliding

For those who seek an adrenalin rush, paragliding is another sporting attraction available to those who visit Northern Cyprus between April and October. It is also the perfect chance to take some great photographs of the fascinating scenery with a birds-eye view.



49

Casinos

For those who would like to try their luck under the dazzling array of lights, North Cyprus has the finest of top quality casinos legally operating live, just as in countries such as USA, Germany, China and Australia.



50

Diving

The warm and crystal clear waters surrounding Northern Cyprus offer the perfect opportunity for divers from all over the world to discover the fascinating marine life. Owing to the fact that, the water temperature in November is about 20°C the diving season lasts from April up until December.



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