



Ports & Excursions



Crete (Heraklion), Greece

Archaeological evidence shows that Heraklion probably arose during the 9th century B.C. and was named in tribute to the Greek goddess Rhea, mother of Zeus. And like most Mediterranean cities, Heraklion has a long and turbulent history. Officially founded by the Saracens in the 9th century, the Byzantine Empire invaded in 961 only to lose control to the Crusaders who sold Crete to the Venetians in 1211 for a thousand silver coins.

Heraklion finally flourished under the Venetians. Throughout the city you'll find stunning reminders of their influence: the Loggia, Venetian Walls, and Fountain of Morosini are just a few must-see examples.

But Heraklion is probably best known as the gateway to the breathtaking 4,000 year-old Minoan ruins at Knossos and to the famous windmills stretched across the Lassithi Plateau.

Points of Interest

1 Knossos Palace

Heralded as one of history's most significant finds, Knossos Palace is a marvel of frescoes, graceful columns, and intimate rooms. Home of the mythical Minotaur, the partially restored site remains an architectural wonder.

2 Heraklion

Founded by Arab refugees in 824 A.D., conquered by the Byzantines about 150 years later, it's the Venetians who contributed the stunning monuments, fountains, squares and city walls that you'll encounter on sightseeing tours.

3 Kera Kardiotissa Monastery

Considered Crete's most important Byzantine church, inside you'll find remarkably vivid frescoes from the 14th and 15th centuries. The monastery is equally famous for its Virgin Mary icon, which is believed to have performed miracles.

4 Spinalonga Island

Lying just offshore from the seaside resort of Elounda, Spinalonga Island was once the home of a mighty 16th century Venetian fortress. The now-deserted island served as a leper colony until 1957.

5 Plateau of Lassithi

Rising over 2,700 feet, the plateau offers fertile valleys filled with orange groves, vineyards, and picturesque villages. But it's probably best known for the thousands of charming windmills that dot the lush landscape.

6 Elounda

Once the stopping off point for lepers heading to Spinalonga Island, today, this picturesque seaside resort boasts luxury hotels, quaint tavernas, stunning beaches and breathtaking sea views that stretch across Mirabello Bay.

7 Arolithos Cultural Village

Arolithos may look centuries old but it's actually a recreated Cretan village. Built in 1988, the town boasts art workshops, two houses, a hotel, a restaurant and a tavern, a café and a small church.

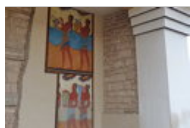
8 Thrapsano Village

Thrapsano is renowned for its pottery and ceramics. This ancient art form has flourished here dating back over 4,000 years and Thrapsano's craftsmen are said to be descendants of Minoan potters.

Special Child Pricing Available!

Children age 12 and younger, savings up to 50%. For actual pricing information, click on tour title or Reserve button.

Sightseeing & City Tours



Best of Crete
HER-100 | Crete (Heraklion), Greece

You will visit: **1** **2** **4** **6** You will see: **M** **W** **7.5** hours from **\$119.95**

Experience the glory of the ancient Minoan civilization on a tour of its treasured attractions. Explore the legendary Knossos Palace, site of the mythical Minotaur. Stop in the charming seaside resort of Elounda for photos of Spinalonga Island, Crete's former leper colony. Then, enjoy lunch and shopping in Aghios Nikolaos.



Most Popular
Knossos
HER-200 | Crete (Heraklion), Greece

You will visit: **1** You will see: **2** **M** **4** hours from **\$49.95**

Experts once believed that Knossos and its civilization were myths - part of the legend of Dædalus and Icarus. Then in 1901, an archaeologist excavated the ruins of Knossos and shed new light on Crete's Bronze Age culture. Explore these ancient ruins and view the restored Throne Room and frescoes.



Plateau of Lassithi & Kera Monastery
HER-210 | Crete (Heraklion), Greece

You will visit: **3** **5** **E** **4** hours from **\$59.95**

Travel through the ancient Plateau of Lassithi, home to ancient legends and thousands of windmills. Visit Kera Kardiotissa Monastery, considered the most important church of the Byzantine era on the island. Then, learn how Cretan traditions and culture are being preserved with a tour of the Lassithos Eco Park.



Knossos & Boutari Winery
HER-305 | Crete (Heraklion), Greece

You will visit: **1** You will see: **M** **W** **3.5** hours from **\$69.95**

Get a taste of Greek history with a tour of the famous Knossos Palace, home of the mythical King Minos and the Minotaur. Then, enjoy a visit to the acclaimed Boutari Winery and learn how this 135-year-old winery is reviving endangered 4,000-year old Greek grapes.

Special Interests



Crete Villages & Folkloric Show
HER-290 | Crete (Heraklion), Greece

You will visit:



4.5
hours

from \$75.95

Immerse yourself in Crete's fascinating culture with a visit to two picturesque villages. Watch craftsmen in their workshops create pottery using age-old techniques in Thrapsano. Stroll through the tree-lined streets of Arolithos, a reconstruction of a traditional Cretan village. Later, enjoy a folkloric performance over a glass of wine.

Exploring on Your Own



Heraklion On Your Own
HER-185 | Crete (Heraklion), Greece

You will visit:



5
hours

from \$19.95

Explore the breathtaking sights and sounds of Heraklion on this create-your-own-adventure tour. Drive into the heart of the city, you'll have time to yourself to discover the many magnificent landmarks, museums, lively cafés and tavernas, colorful shopping districts, and more - all at your own pace.