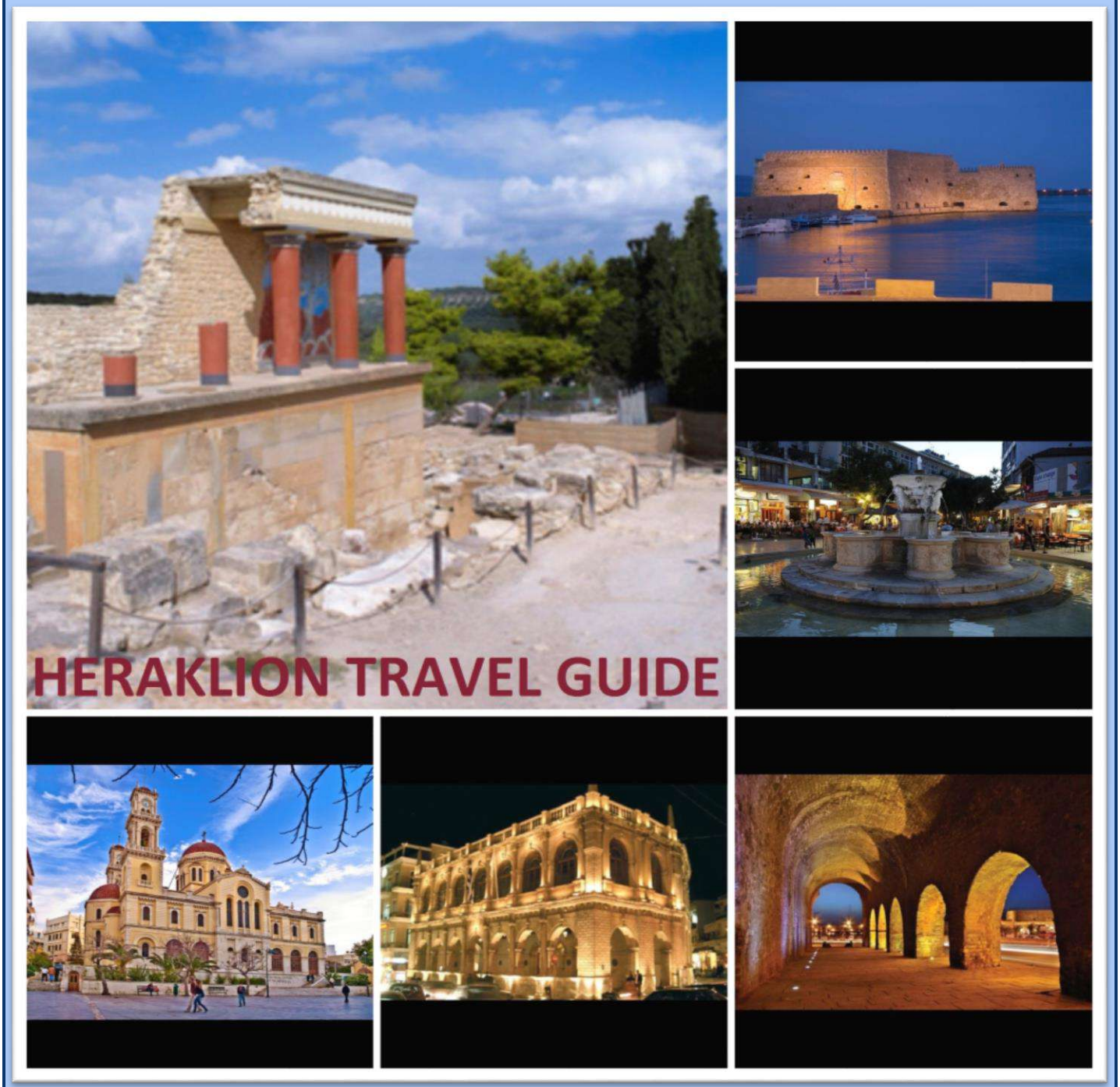
HERAKLION TRAVEL GUIDE



A GLIMPSE INTO THE CITY OF HERAKLION AND THE ISLAND OF CRETE

Heraklion is the biggest city of Crete among **Chania, Rethymnon, Agios Nikolaos, Sitia** and **Ierapetra**. It is the birthplace of the great writer **Nikos Kazantzakis**, of the well-known painter **El Greco** and the respectable musician of traditional music **Nikos Xilouris.** Heraklion is a magnificent, coastal city having its own unique medieval atmosphere and traditional style. In the outskirts of Heraklion city are situated the ruins of the **Knossos palace**, which was in the past one of the four main palaces of the glorious ancient **Minoan civilization**. Heraklion is surrounded by beautiful landscape, which has a variety of natural wonders for the visitor to explore. Indeed, there is much to see, much to do and enjoy in Heraklion and Crete.

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



3RD GYMNASIUM OF HERAKLION CRETE, GREECE

ERASMUS+ KA2 PROJECT "MY HERITAGE, OUR FUTURE"

SCHOOL YEARS: 2019-2020, 2020-2021



STAVROS GIANNAKOPOULOS

MARIA STEFANI

EIRINI MANOUSAKI VAVOULI

EMMANOUIL CHNARAKIS

KONSTANTINOS DIAMANTAKIS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM



The **Archaeological Museum of Heraklion** is regarded as one of Europe's most important museums. It brings together archaeological findings from all over Crete, covering over 5500 years of our history. The museum houses the most important collection of Minoan antiquities all over the world.

http://odysseus.culture.gr/h/1/eh155.jsp?obj_id=3327
https://images.app.goo.gl/WFqsXu6B83n2Ywnh9

HISTORICAL MUSEUM OF CRETE



Founded in 1953 by the Society of Cretan Historical Studies the **Historical Museum of Crete (H.M.C.)** presents a comprehensive view of Cretan history from early Christian times to the present day. The original goal of those founding the Historical Museum of Crete was to collect and preserve valuable archaeological, ethnographic and historical material deriving from the medieval and modern periods in Cretan history.

https://images.app.goo.gl/tsSYchtiFdBTUNzLA

http://www.historical-museum.gr

LOGGIA TOWN HALL

In the historical center of Heraklion Town, on the square of Saint Titus and along 25th August street, you will find an impressive building of the Venetian times that has survived and functions till today: the **Venetian Loggia**, a typical construction of the Venetian rule, has been renovated and hosts today the Town Hall of Heraklion. The



Loggia that survives today in Heraklion was built in 1620 by the Venetian Morozini, an architect who had also constructed many other public works in the town. The Loggia was a place for the Venetian noblemen to gather and discuss the local economic and social issues. It also worked as a Club, in modern terms. When the Turks conquered Crete, they made the Loggia their administrative center.

https://images.app.goo.gl/V9YiweRuGFg3JhSH7
https://www.greeka.com/crete/heraklion/sightseeing/heraklion-loggia/

BASILICA OF SAINT MARK

The **Basilica of Saint Mark** is one of the most important Venetian monuments in Heraklion. It is directly opposite the Lions Fountain, in Eleftheriou Venizelou Square in the Centre of Heraklion. Today it houses the Municipal Art Gallery and is open to the public almost all day, every day.



The Venetians built a basilica dedicated to their patron saint, St Mark. This was where the official ceremonies of the Venetian administration were held, and where the Venetian nobles were buried.

The Basilica of Saint Mark was plain in section with a covered portico, much like the building we see today. The Society for Cretan Historical Studies restored the building to its original form in 1956. At the southwest corner of the basilica was a tall tower with a large clock facing onto the Lions Square. This bell-tower was a copy of that of St Mark of Venice.

http://www.explorecrete.com/Heraklion/EN11-Heraklion-saint-mark.htmlhttps://images.app.goo.gl/H3TNSNLxounVJkWq6

LIONS SQUARE



Everyone who has grown up in Heraklion knows that the square of the Morosini Fountain is the **Lions Square**. It is one of the busiest parts of Heraklion. It is never quiet, unfolding its various aspects 24 hours a day. This is where travelers who arrive in Heraklion by ferry at dawn come for a bougatsa cream pie, while they wait for the city to wake up. Later, through the course of the day thousands of locals and tourists will cross the square, stare at the fountain, check out the shops, sit at a café, eat something quick, or visit an exhibition in the Basilica of St Mark. Historical sources tell us that during the period of Arab rule, the square was the largest slave market in the Eastern Mediterranean. During the Byzantine period, the Lions Square was the site of the residence of the Byzantine governor of Heraklion. In Venetian times, the Palace of the Venetian Duke of Crete stood in this area.

http://www.explorecrete.com/Heraklion/EN04-Heraklion-lions-square.html
https://images.app.goo.gl/uWRYnKg6dfJUmuzv8

AGIOS TITOS



The Cathedral of **Agios Titos** in Heraklion city is among the most important monuments in Crete. It is found on August 25th street, one of the busiest streets of the town. Around the church, there is a lovely square with small cafes and bars.

The original church of Agios Titos was probably built in 961 A.D. by the Byzantine Emperor Nicephorus Phokas, who liberated Crete from the Arabs and made it again part of the Byzantine Empire renovation in 1925.

https://images.app.goo.gl/Se91HonP6CGYXhkeA
https://www.greeka.com/crete/heraklion/sightseeing/heraklion-agios-titos/

AGIOS MINAS

Agios Minas is a Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Heraklion, Greece, serving as the seat of the Archbishop of Crete. It is dedicated to Saint Menas the martyr and wonderworker, who is the patron saint of Heraklion. It was built over the time period of 1862-1895.The construction was interrupted during the Cretan Revolution of 1866 1869. The church has a cruciform architecture with a central dome. The floor plan of the church has external maximum dimensions 43.20 m. length and 29.50 m. width and has a surface area of 1,350. It is the largest cathedral in Crete and one of the largest in Greece. An old and small church dedicated to Agios Minas is located in the proximity of the cathedral.



https://images.app.goo.gl/fn7pzj2XiJJXXDqv9
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Main_Page

KOULES FORTRESS

Koules Fortress was possibly first fortified by the Arabs in the 9th or 10th centuries. By the second Byzantine period, a tower known as *Castellum Comunis* stood on the site. In 1462, the Venetian Senate approved a programme to improve the fortifications of Candia Heraklion. Eventually, the Byzantine tower was demolished in 1523, and the Castello a Mare began to be built instead. The fortress was completed in 1540. In 1630, the fort was armed with 18 cannons on the ground floor, and 25 cannons on the pathway leading to the roof. The Ottomans took the fort in 1669, after the Venetians surrendered the entire city.



NIKOS KAZANTZAKIS TOMB



The tomb of Kazantzakis, who was a great Cretan writer, is located at the highest point of Heraklion, on the Venetian walls of the Martingo Bastion, overlooking the whole city of Heraklion. The tomb is at this point according to the author's wish. The tomb is simple, with a large wooden cross and an inscription the author himself had asked to be written: **"I hope nothing, I fear nothing, I am free."** Visiting the tomb can be combined with a short walk on the Venetian walls overlooking the city of Heraklion.

http://www.wondergreece.gr/v1/el/Perioxes/N_Irakleioy/Politismos/Mnimeia_Aksiotheata/4166-Tafos_Nikoy_Kazantzaki

https://kritimono.gr/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/DSCN2496.jpg

VENETIAN WALLS



Many centuries ago, Heraklion was considered so important to its Venetian occupiers that they built a set of walls strong enough to withstand a siege that lasted a staggering 21 years and cost the lives of many, many fighters on both sides: Venetians and Cretans on one side, and Turks on the other. **Heraklion Venetian walls** are more than four and a half kilometers in length, and everywhere wide and strongly built in a triangular shape, it encompasses what we might call 'Old Heraklion' in a series of straight lines between its original seven 'bastions', or individual forts, and five gates, with the sea as its base.

http://www.explorecrete.com/Heraklion/walk-venetian-walls.html

https://images.app.goo.gl/k9Rv6UHD1m8Zh65f8

KNOSSOS PALACE



The centre of Minoan civilization and capital of **Minoan Crete** is 5km south of Heraklion. **Knossos** flourished for approximately two thousand years. It had large palace buildings and extensive workshop installations. It was the major centre of trade and economy. The Minoan palace is the main site of interest at Knossos, an important city in antiquity, which was inhabited continuously from the Neolithic period until the 5th c. AD. The palace was built on the Kefala hill and had easy access to the sea and the Cretan interior. The building used to have many rooms, floors and stares and was decorated with excellent wall paintings which are famous all over the world (e.g. the prince of Lilies, the blue ladies, the Minoan dolphins) According to tradition, it was the seat of the wise king Minos. The Palace of Knossos is connected with thrilling legends, such as the Labyrinth (a mythical maze) which was located under the palace . That was where the half-man, half-bull Minotaur used to live. It is also connected with the story of Daidalos and his son, Ikaros, the first man to fly. The first excavation of the site was conducted in 1878 by Minos Kalokerinos of Heraklion. This was followed by the long-term excavations 1900-1913 and 1922-1930 of the Englishman Sir Arthur Evans, who uncovered virtually the entire palace.

https://images.app.goo.gl/QU3JvMqAZvK6VUE66

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knossos

PHAISTOS PALACE



Phaistos was one of the most important centres of Minoan civilization, and the most wealthy and powerful city in southern Crete. It was inhabited from the Neolithic period until the foundation and development of the Minoan palaces in the 15th century B.C. The Minoan city covered a considerable area around the palatial centre. After the destruction of the palace in the 15th century, the city continued to be inhabited in the Mycenaean and Geometric periods, that is, until the 8th century B.C. According to mythology, Phaistos was the seat of king Radamanthis, brother of king Minos. It was also the city that gave birth to the great wise man and soothsayer Epimenidis, one of the seven wise men of

the ancient world. The city participated in the Trojan war and later became one of the most important cities-states of the Dorian period. Phaistos had two ports, Matala and Kommos. The archaeological site of Phaistos is located 62 km south of Iraklion in the fertile plain of Messara, on Agios Ioannis hill, at an altitude of 100 m from sea level. You can access Phaistos from Iraklion taking the road to Moires- Timbaki, a road of fairly good condition with panoramic views to the Messara plain.

The most important monuments of the site are: The Palaces (old and new). They are built of ashlar blocks and spread on different terraces.

https://images.app.goo.gl/z9H1UiXddiypAJrb7

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phaistos

GORTIS



The archaeological site of **Gortis** is located 45km south of Heraklion. The town covered a large area along the river Mitropolianos with vast olive groves. The area was inhabited till 3000BC, while during the Minoan era it evolved as one of the largest cities of Crete. Indeed, in the 3rd century BC it surpassed Phaestus and managed to possess Phaestus harbor, Matala, while retaining its port in Levina . The town reached its peak during the Roman Empire, when the Romans moved the capital of Crete and Cyrenaica (today's Libya) in Gortys. The city was finally destroyed by the Arabs in 828A.D. The city of Gortys is one of the most important archaeological sites in Greece. The first archaeological works in Gortys started in 1884 by the archaeologists Federico Halbher and Stefanos Xanthoudides, after they discovered the Great Inscription of Gortys. In 1898 excavations started, which continue till today.

https://images.app.goo.gl/vsQSqPMRV6ZBNDTx5

https://www.cretanbeaches.com/en/history-of-crete/archaeological-sites-in-crete/classical-and-greco-roman-era/ancient-gortyn

CRETA AQUARIUM

The magnificent **Creta Aquarium** in Heraklion Crete is located in Gouves, just a few kilometers from Heraklion Town and the beach of Kokkini Hani. This is the largest aquarium in the Mediterranean sea. The Cretan Sea has always been known for the huge diversity of marine life and the beautiful rock formation. Crete Aquarium depicts marine life with upgraded and impressive presentations of natural landscapes, offering visitors a chance to see rare sea-living creatures. In the aquarium, there are more than 100 different areas for 2,500 of the Mediterranean and tropic sea creatures and species. It has large halls equipped with the latest audio-visual systems for exhibitions, speeches, and conferences.



Alongside the educational aspect, Crete Aquarium offers important insight into the marine ecosystem and the extensive range of creatures. It is open daily throughout the year.

https://images.app.goo.gl/LMQH

https://www.cretaquarium.gr/?gclid=Cj0KCQiA0NfvBRCVARIsAO4930mFFzSjzz-NuxRVNLTV4cVoi491v2HlVc7GZRNWBb6yVj67FIHXQQIaAq1LEALw_wcB

LYCHNOSTATIS MUSEUM



Lychnostatis museum of traditional art and products has its origins in a private collection formed over a period of thirty years by Yiorgos Markakis. The buildings themselves are some of the main exhibits. Built thoroughly with the prevalent raw materials (stone-wood-clay), under the creative architectural improvising of the founder, they possess an aesthetic quality unique in the area. The collections are broad in scope, from agricultural implements to embroideries and from herbs to rhymes. All exhibits are left to speak for themselves, and visitors are allowed occasionally to touch objects and encouraged to smell and taste the various plants, fruits and products of the museum. Compatible to this both emotional and hospitable atmosphere, is the museum's policy to welcome with a free admission all visitors who come for a second visit. Audio-guided tours are available in English, French and Russian (also tours are available in Deutsch and Dutch, on request) to provide accurate information to the large number of tourists who visit the museum. The museum holds regular activities, such as Greek dancing performances, theater shows and concerts, grape-feasts, wine-tasting, Cretan cooking workshops and several others.

https://www.lychnostatis.gr/index.php?page=the-museum&hl=en_US

https://images.app.goo.gl/HXgBLZjpGEj2vJgw6

HERSONISSOS



Hersonissos is one of the most popular tourist resorts in Crete, located 28km east of Heraklion. Here you will find whatever you desire. During the day you can enjoy nice beaches or water parks, drink your coffee in the seaside road, visit the local archaeological sites, stroll in the villages of Ano Hersonissos, Piskopiano and Koutouloufari, trek in the gorges of Avdou valley, visit the cool Lassithi Plateau and much more. Similarly, during the night the choices for entertainment are too many,

with the nightclubs of the coastal road gathering most people. Hersonissos in summer is crowded by young tourists, coming from all altitudes and longitudes of the earth to enjoy their vacation.

https://www.cretanbeaches.com/en/cities-and-towns-in-crete/hersonissos-townhttps://images.app.goo.gl/LsMaaynwBDceUDBK9

CAFES AND RESTAURANTS



If you want to go to a café you can try Lions square, Eleftherias square and 25th of August pedestrian street, which are full of nice cafeterias. You should also try the traditional - pastry filled with excellent cream- in **Kirkor and Philosofies.** Both cafes are in Lions square. Also, you could visit **Outopia café** at Chandakos street to try their delicious chocolate drinks.



If you want to drink ouzo and raki, taste traditional seafood or try the delicious dolmadakia, souvlaki, moussaka and pastitsio then you have to visit the restaurants by the sea, such as **Ippokambos, Paralia, Ligo krasi ligo Thalassa, Ta Kalytera** or the traditional restaurants of Cretan cusine **Peskesi, Ladokolla, Merastri, Parasties and Erganos**. And of course it's a "must" to taste the fantastic, delicious "pita giros", that you can find in many restaurants (souvlatzidika) in the center of Heraklion, such as Politia or Barba Thymios.

SHOPPING



If you want to buy souvenirs, you can go to **Daedalou pedestrian Street** or 1866 street, which is a traditional market, where you can buy traditional products, such as raki, olive oil, honey, spices and herbs, ceramics, handmade traditional bags, sandals. There are also traditional cafes, where you can relax. If you like buying modern clothes or shoes you can go to **Dikaiosinis pedestrian street.**

ENTERTAINMENT



For those who want to entertain themselves with traditional Cretan music, the music restaurants Idiomelon and Paleino are the ideal places to go.

BEACHES AROUND HERAKLION

There are so many beautiful beaches around Heraklion to visit: **Amoudara, Karteros, Amnissos, Tobrouk, Agia Pelagia and Matala.**



Ammoudara is just a few kilometers away from the center of Heraklion, full of hotels, cafeterias and restaurants. Karteros and Amnisos are sandy beaches not far away from Heraklion. And of course you shouldn't miss Agia Pelagia, a picturesque village by the sea, just 25 kilometres away from Heraklion. There you can enjoy the crystal clear and always calm waters, do sea sports, taste fresh seafood at tavernas or just enjoy the sun.

Matala bay is situated in the south of Crete.

Legend says that the Greek god Zeus kidnapped Europa and swam ashore to the coast of Matala. The Minoans used Matala as their harbor while the Romans turned it into the port stop for Gortyna. Later in the 1960's groups of hippies used to stay at the cliff-side caves of Matala. Today it is a famous tourist destination. Matala is also famous for its annual Beach Festival, a music festival, which is held every June and thousands of people all over Greece come to watch it.



https://images.app.goo.gl/LrqWVnbzYsdHCLws7



