

GROUP TOUR PROGRAMME

Crete Highlights

Knossos · Heraklion · Lassithi · Spinalonga · Phaistos · Matala · Rethymnon · Chania

DURATION	GROUP SIZE	REGION	BEST SEASON	TOUR THEME
8 Days · 7 Nights	**10+ Pax**	**Crete**	**Apr–Oct**	**Minoan & Venetian**

The whole of Crete in one week, with only one hotel change. Crete Highlights gives your group three nights near Heraklion for Knossos, the Lassithi Plateau and the island fortress of Spinalonga, then four nights in Venetian Rethymnon for the south coast, Arkadi, the potters of Margarites and Chania. Minoan palaces, Byzantine frescoes, Venetian harbours and two swimming stops – a balanced first programme for Crete that sells all season. BenLeToni Tours has handled groups across Greece since 1992 – this programme is tailored for travel agencies and tour operators.

Made for your planning

Every day has a notes field, and the planning sheet on the last page collects what we need for a tailored proposal. Type into this PDF on screen or print it and write on it – then send it back to us.

Tour Route



Included In Our Offer

INCLUDED IN YOUR PROGRAMME

- ✓ 7 nights accommodation – 3 near Heraklion (Hersonissos), 4 in Rethymnon – in 3- and 4-star hotels (5-star on request)
- ✓ Breakfast and dinner daily
- ✓ Private air-conditioned coach throughout the full itinerary
- ✓ Licensed guide for the entire programme
- ✓ All entrance fees to the sites and museums listed in the itinerary
- ✓ Airport transfers on arrival and departure days
- ✓ 24/7 local support contact during your group's stay in Greece
- ✓ Boat Plaka – Spinalonga – Plaka

NOT INCLUDED

- International flights
- Travel insurance
- Personal expenses and gratuities
- Single room supplements (available on request)
- Optional excursions not listed in the itinerary
- Climate resilience fee, payable locally at the hotels

Full Programme

YOUR NOTES

1

Arrival in Heraklion — Hersonissos

Arrival at Heraklion airport, where your BenLeToni guide meets the group. Transfer to the hotel in Hersonissos (about 30 minutes) and welcome drink with the guide. Overnight Hersonissos.

2

Knossos — Heraklion

Guided tour of the Palace of Knossos, the centre of Minoan Crete and the setting of the myth of the Labyrinth. Then the Heraklion Archaeological Museum with the original frescoes and finds. Free time in the old town of Heraklion, with its Venetian walls and Morosini Fountain. Overnight Hersonissos.

3

Lassithi Plateau — Kritsa — Spinalonga

Drive up through mountain villages to the Lassithi Plateau, with its farmland and old windmills. At Kritsa, the church of Panagia Kera and its Byzantine frescoes. Boat from Plaka to Spinalonga, the Venetian island fortress, then time for a swim in a sheltered bay before returning by boat. Overnight Hersonissos.

4

Gortys — Phaistos — Matala — Rethymnon

Check out and cross to the south. Ancient Gortys and the Gortyn Law Code, the oldest written law code in Europe. The Minoan palace of Phaistos on its hill above the Messara plain. Lunch break in Matala, below the cliff caves and beside the beach. Continue to Rethymnon – your base for the next four nights. Overnight Rethymnon.

5

Arkadi Monastery — Margarites — Rethymnon

Arkadi Monastery, the symbol of the Cretan uprising of 1866. Continue to Margarites, a village of potters, where the group sees how traditional Cretan ceramics are made and can talk with the craftsmen. Afternoon walk through Rethymnon's old town, where Venetian and Ottoman buildings stand side by side. Overnight Rethymnon.

6

Frangokastello — Preveli — Plakias

The south coast. Frangokastello, the Venetian castle on the shore of the Libyan Sea. Preveli Monastery, high above the sea and known for its role in the Second World War. End of the day on the long beach of Plakias, with time to swim. Overnight Rethymnon.

7

Akrotiri — Agia Triada — Chania

The Akrotiri peninsula and the monastery of Agia Triada Tzagarolon with its gardens and Venetian façade. Continue to Chania: the Venetian harbour and lighthouse, the waterfront mosque and the lanes of the old town, with free time for lunch and shopping. Overnight Rethymnon.

YOUR NOTES

8

Departure

Transfer from Rethymnon to Heraklion airport (about 1 hour 15 minutes) for departure.

Useful Information

Best time to travel

April to October. Spring brings wild flowers and green hills; June to September is the swimming season. The two swimming stops (Spinalonga, Plakias) can be replaced by sightseeing for groups travelling outside summer.

Hotel category

Two bases, one hotel change. The programme uses a mix of 3- and 4-star hotels in Hersonissos and Rethymnon, selected for location and group handling. 5-star hotels are available on request.

Customisation

The programme can be extended to 10 days with the Samaria Gorge walk, or combined with Santorini by ferry. Arrival in Chania and departure from Heraklion is also possible. For a slower, more in-depth Crete, see our 12-day Crete in Depth programme.

Walking difficulty

Easy to moderate. The archaeological sites are on uneven ground with steps, and Phaistos and Spinalonga involve short climbs. Comfortable closed-toe shoes are recommended.

Group size

Minimum group size for this programme is 10 passengers. Coaches and guides are planned around the size of your group.

Dress code

Modest dress is required at Panagia Kera, Arkadi, Preveli and Agia Triada – covered shoulders and knees for all visitors. We advise all groups of this requirement in advance.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference from the 12-day Crete in Depth programme?

Crete Highlights covers the classic sites of the island in eight days, with one hotel change. Crete in Depth adds the Samaria Gorge walk, the far east of Crete with Zakros and the Minoan town of Gournia, and two free days.

Is there time to swim?

Yes. Day 3 includes a swimming stop near Spinalonga and Day 6 ends on the beach of Plakias. Outside summer, these stops are replaced by more sightseeing.

Which airport should our group fly into?

Heraklion for arrival and departure fits the standard programme. Arrival in Chania works too – tell us your flight options and we will adapt the first and last day.

Do we need licensed guides at the archaeological sites?

Yes. Licensed guides are required at the major archaeological sites in Greece. BenLeToni Tours arranges all guides as part of the programme – multilingual guides are available in German, English, French, Italian, Spanish, Dutch and Japanese.

Can the programme be customised?

Yes. Duration, hotel category, pace and included sites can all be adapted, and we can add a cooking class, a winery visit or a day on Santorini. Contact us with your requirements.

YOUR NOTES

Planning sheet

Fill in what you already know and send this page to contact@benletoni-tours.gr. We reply with a tailored proposal within 48 hours.

AGENCY / TOUR OPERATOR

CONTACT PERSON

EMAIL

PHONE

GROUP NAME / CLIENT

TRAVEL DATES

NUMBER OF GUESTS

ROOMS: DOUBLE / TWIN / SINGLE

ARRIVAL FLIGHT

DEPARTURE FLIGHT

GUIDE LANGUAGE

HOTEL CATEGORY

☐ 3-star ☐ 4-star ☐ 5-star

CHANGES TO THE PROGRAMME

SPECIAL REQUESTS (DIET, MOBILITY, CELEBRATIONS)

We look forward to welcoming your group to Greece.

CONTACT
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