

EUROPE · BEACHES · HISTORY · DIVING · FOOD · WINE · HIKING



Cyprus

Look beyond the resort strips and Cyprus offers Roman mosaics at Paphos, frescoed Byzantine chapels in the Troodos pine forests and a capital divided by a UN buffer zone since 1974. Long, hot summers, left-hand driving and UK-style plugs make it easy for British visitors, and crossing to the Turkish Cypriot north is routine.

i Before you go, read the UK government's travel advice for Cyprus and entry requirements (visas, passport validity). Last updated by FCDO 14 August 2026.

CAPITAL Nicosia	CURRENCY Euro (EUR) £1 ≈ €1.19	LANGUAGE Greek, Turkish English	BEST TIME Apr–Jun, Sep–Oct
DAILY BUDGET £50–£220 ££ Moderate	PLUGS Type G 230V · UK plugs fit	FLIGHT FROM LONDON 4h 35m direct ~£140–£420 return	TIME ZONE UTC+2 standard time

Cyprus has been split since 1974 between the Greek Cypriot south, governed by the EU-member Republic of Cyprus, and the Turkish Cypriot north, recognised only by Turkey, with a UN-patrolled Green Line between them. Britain left its mark too: two sovereign base areas, left-hand driving and three-pin plugs. Most visitors base themselves on the south coast — Paphos for the mosaics and the Akamas peninsula, Limassol for Kourion and the Troodos villages, Larnaca or Ayia Napa for beaches — then spend a day in Nicosia, crossing on foot to the north's Ottoman quarter and on to Kyrenia or Famagusta.

It is an easy island to travel, though not a cheap one: resort prices sit close to Western European levels, while mountain tavernas and long village meze lunches offer better value. July and August are fiercely hot, often above 35°C inland, so many visitors prefer spring wildflowers or the still-warm sea of October and early November. English is widely spoken. People are often surprised by how quiet the hill villages are less than an hour from the coast, and that you can ski on Mount Olympus after a snowy winter.

Top 5 highlights

- 1

HISTORY

Kato Paphos Archaeological Park

Some of the eastern Mediterranean's finest Roman floor mosaics survive in the villas of Dionysos, Theseus and Aion, part of a UNESCO site that also includes an odeon, a Byzantine fort and the nearby Tombs of the Kings.
- 2

SACRED SITE

Troodos painted churches

Ten UNESCO-listed Byzantine churches hide in the pine-clad Troodos, their plain barn-like roofs concealing floor-to-ceiling frescoes. Combine them with Kykkos Monastery and walks around Mount Olympus, the island's highest point at 1,952 metres.

3

HISTORY

Kourion

A Greco-Roman city on a clifftop above Episkopi Bay, with a restored theatre that still hosts summer performances, mosaic-floored villas and the Sanctuary of Apollo Hylates a short drive west.

4

NATURE

Akamas Peninsula

Cyprus's wildest corner: undeveloped coast, the Avakas Gorge, turtle-nesting beaches at Lara and boat trips from Latchi to the Blue Lagoon. Walk the Aphrodite trail early in the day to avoid the heat.

5

HISTORY

St Hilarion Castle and Kyrenia

In the north, a fairy-tale medieval castle sprawls across crags above Kyrenia, whose horseshoe harbour is guarded by a Venetian fort housing a museum with a merchant ship wrecked around 2,300 years ago.

Biggest cities

LARGEST CITY

Nicosia

≈ 255,000 people

The world's last divided capital: walk the Venetian walls, Ledra Street and the Cyprus Museum, then cross the Green Line on foot to the north's Büyük Han caravanserai.

2ND LARGEST CITY

Limassol

≈ 198,000 people

A port city with a revamped marina, a medieval castle and a long seafront promenade; the best base for Kourion, the wine villages and the Troodos.

3RD LARGEST CITY

Larnaca

≈ 90,000 people

Home to the main airport, a palm-lined seafront and the Church of Saint Lazarus; divers come for the Zenobia ferry wreck just offshore.

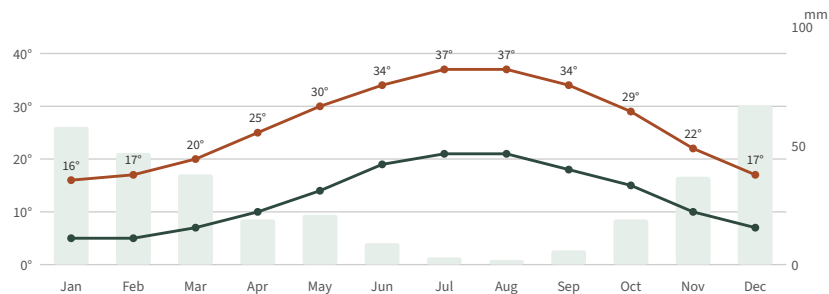
Ranked by urban-area population where available. Figures are rounded estimates, and sources define city limits differently, so rankings of similar-sized cities can vary.

When to go to Cyprus

Best time: **Apr–Jun, Sep–Oct.**

**Average climate in Nicosia**

— High °C
 — Low °C
 ■ Rain (mm)



Festivals & events

Feb–Mar	Limassol Carnival Ten days of fancy dress, satirical floats and parties before Orthodox Lent, ending in a grand costumed parade through Limassol's streets.
Apr–May	Orthodox Easter The year's biggest celebration: candlelit midnight services, bonfires, red-dyed eggs and flaounes cheese pastries, followed by souvla feasts on Easter Sunday.
May–Jun	Kataklysmos The Festival of the Flood, held at Orthodox Pentecost, brings water fights, boat races, music and food stalls to the seafronts, especially in Larnaca.

How much does Cyprus cost?

SHOESTRING £50 per person / day ≈ €59.52 hostels, street food, buses	MID-RANGE £100 per person / day ≈ €119 3-star hotels, restaurants, some taxis	COMFORTABLE £220 per person / day ≈ €262 4-star+, guided trips, private transfers
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Estimates per person per day, excluding flights. Prices vary by season and city.

Food to try

Souvla Large chunks of pork or lamb slow-roasted on long skewers over charcoal, the centrepiece of Sunday family gatherings and village feasts.	Halloumi The island's squeaky sheep's and goat's milk cheese, best grilled until golden, or eaten fresh with watermelon in summer.	Meze A parade of twenty or more small plates, from dips and salads to sheftalia sausages and kleftiko, served in waves at tavernas.
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Getting around

There is no railway, so most visitors hire a car; driving is on the left and hire cars carry red number plates. Intercity buses link Nicosia, Limassol, Larnaca, Paphos and Ayia Napa cheaply, and shuttle buses serve both airports, but rural buses are sparse. Taxis are easy to find in towns. Check whether your hire-car insurance covers the north; usually you must buy separate cover at the crossing.

Practical information

PLUGS & VOLTAGE  G 230V — UK plugs fit	EMERGENCY NUMBERS Telephone: 112 (ambulance, fire, police) Source: FCDO “Getting help”
DIALLING CODE +357	TIME ZONE UTC+2 (standard time)

TAP WATER

Generally safe to drink

DRIVING

On the left

TIPPING

Some restaurants add a 10% service charge; if not, leave around 10% for good service and round up taxi fares.

ETIQUETTE

Cover shoulders and knees in churches and monasteries, where dress codes can be strict. Be tactful about the island's division, and never photograph soldiers or military posts along the Green Line.

MAIN AIRPORTS

Larnaca International Airport (LCA), Larnaca; Paphos International Airport (PFO), Paphos

Visas & entry for Cyprus

Shown for a British passport.

No visa needed

You can travel without a visa to Cyprus for up to 90 days. This applies if you travel: as a tourist; to visit family or friends; to attend business meetings, cultural or sports events; for short-term studies or training.

At Cyprus border control, you may also need to:

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations



See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Tetanus

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Bat Lyssavirus

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

No yellow fever certificate is required to enter.

MALARIA

No malaria risk

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Cyprus

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Wed 28 Oct 2026

Ohi Day

Fri 25 Dec 2026

Christmas Day

Sat 26 Dec 2026

Day After Christmas

Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Wed 6 Jan 2027	Epiphany
Mon 15 Mar 2027	Green Monday
Thu 25 Mar 2027	Greek Independence Day
Thu 1 Apr 2027	Cyprus National Day
Fri 30 Apr 2027	Good Friday
Sat 1 May 2027	Labour Day
Sun 2 May 2027	Easter Sunday
Mon 3 May 2027	Easter Monday
Mon 21 Jun 2027	Pentecost Monday
Sun 15 Aug 2027	Dormition of the Mother of God
Fri 1 Oct 2027	Cyprus Independence Day

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Useful phrases in Greek

ENGLISH	GREEK	SAY IT
Hello	Γεια σας	<i>YAH-sas</i>
Thank you	Ευχαριστώ	<i>ef-kha-ree-STOH</i>
Please	Παρακαλώ	<i>pa-ra-ka-LOH</i>
Excuse me	Συγγνώμη	<i>seegh-NOH-mee</i>
How much is this?	Πόσο κάνει αυτό;	<i>POH-soh KAH-nee af-TOH</i>

Know before you go

- To visit the north, take your passport to a crossing such as Ledra Street in Nicosia. The north uses the Turkish lira, though euros are often accepted.
- In July and August sightsee early or late; inland temperatures often top 35°C, and exposed sites such as Kourion and the Paphos mosaics have little shade.
- The sea stays warm into November, so late autumn is a good-value beach option once school holidays end and hotel prices drop.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.