



Groups & Special Interests Newsletter Issue 5: Autumn 2009

Dear Partners,

Welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter especially created for organisers of groups and special interest tours.

Autumn is on the way bringing with it cooler weather and opening up a range of possibilities for groups and special interest travel. As the evenings draw in and the cold weather arrives in the rest of Europe this is the perfect time of year to explore Cyprus or even re-discover some of its forgotten treasures.

In this edition we will be looking at planned developments for the island as well as re-introducing you to one of Cyprus' most beautiful villages.

We hope you find our newsletter both enjoyable and informative and look forward to receiving your comments and feedback.

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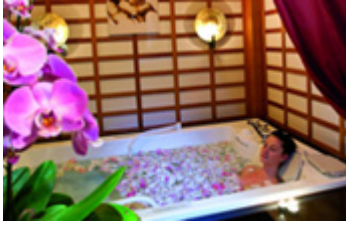
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Amathus Beach Hotel Spa



The Amathus Beach Hotel in Limassol, one of the resorts' longest established and best-loved hotels closed in December 2008 for a €15 million refurbishment and Spa extension. The hotel re-opened in May with a fresh stylish contemporary look in the lobby, restaurants and guest rooms.



The extended Amathus Spa & Wellness Centre offers 1,500m² of opulent pampering space around a theme of the four elements; air, earth, fire and water. The "wet treatment areas" are based on the 5 continents offering treatments and therapies inspired by Europe, America, Australia, Africa and Asia. Access to the treatment rooms is via floating boardwalks and decks surrounded by reflective pools and the spa design makes use of marble, wood, leather, glass and stainless steel. A new gym featuring state of the art equipment affords a stunning view over the pool and beach by means of a glass wall and at the centre of the gym an "Indian Body and Mind Temple" offers yoga, Tai Chi and other classes



In addition to the fantastic new spa, the renovation works also included an upgrading of the hotels flexible meeting space the Athenaeum Rooms with features such as movable soundproof partitions. Next to the conference centre lobby a new business centre has also been created providing guests with all the office facilities they could wish for in a stylish high-tech setting. An ideal location for combining business and relaxation.

The Library Hotel Wellness Retreat, Kalavassos



A very special boutique hotel opened its doors in June this year in the village of Kalavassos. The beautifully restored 19th century residence just off the village square consists of just 11 uniquely styled suites named after 19th century writers, poets and thinkers. The hotel claims to be "a home of well being and catharsis of body, soul and spirit" a theme which is echoed throughout. The public areas

include a small lobby in the style of the entrance hall of a country house and an immensely cosy library lounge with an open fireplace and a collection of books on a range of subjects with an emphasis on history, philosophy, culture and civilization.



The suites, built around the central courtyard bear the names of such illustrious thinkers as Oscar Wilde, Arthur Rimbaud, Friedrich Nietzsche and Edgar Allan Poe. Each suite is individually styled and furnished, featuring parquet or mosaic floors, luxurious marble bathrooms and unique lighting. Combining traditional charm with the latest amenities such as Digital and LCD flat screen TV, air-

conditioning and floor heating; the Oscar Wilde Suite also features an open fire place and living room area.



The Potamonde Wellness Baths offer a range of treatments including the signature Mud Steam Baths and Herbal Baths as well as massages, scrubs, wraps and facials, outdoor treatments are also available. The wellness theme is echoed in the Mito's Restaurant which offers a Mediterranean-inspired menu that takes in the latest culinary trends making use of local produce and organic ingredients.

An absolute oasis of tranquillity set in a charming Cypriot village.

Features

Lefkara Re-discovered: Not just a pretty lace!



The Larnaca- district village of Lefkara was for many years a fixed point on the tourist trail; famous for its lace and silver work the village's history goes back to the Frankish and Venetian periods. But like many villages in the Mediterranean Lefkara suffered both from over-development and the resulting demolition of traditional buildings and also from the migration of the local people to urban centres and further afield.

Since February this year, Lefkara has been part of a project by Rehabimed, an organisation that deals with the rehabilitation of traditional Mediterranean architecture. The project aims to restore the village to its former glory within a framework of sustainable development.



But the ambitious plans of the local council do not stop here, they aim to put Lefkara firmly back on the map for visitors from Cyprus and abroad. Efforts are being made to improve not only aesthetics such as street lighting and signage but to develop the infrastructure for sustainable tourism even to the point of re-educating the local people to better understand the needs of tourists today.

Even now, the village has plenty to offer the visitor boasting picturesque cobbled streets, historical buildings, a beautifully restored

cultural centre and museum and an astounding number of ancient churches and chapels, not to mention the beautiful surrounding countryside. There is also a state-of-the-art sports centre offering excellent training facilities for athletes. Future plans include the construction of a conference centre ideally located as it is between the major cities of Limassol, Larnaca and Nicosia.



Lefkara Lace

Of course Lefkara's most famous export is its exquisite hand-made lace known as *lefkaritiko* which is set to be included in UNESCO'S list of Intangible Cultural Heritage. The tradition of lace-making goes back centuries and as the story goes during the Venetian period, no less a personage than Leonardo da Vinci visited Lefkara and commissioned an altar cloth incorporating a unique design which he donated to Milan Cathedral. The women of the village continue to make their beautiful lace work to this day, and to ensure that this precious tradition is passed on to future generations plans are underway to include lace making classes for local children and even to establish a special school to ensure that the art of lace making continues into the future.



Transformation Planned for Limassol

Limassol city centre is due to undergo a massive transformation next year that upgrades the road system and overhauls the city in general.

In combination with the planned marina project which will transform the old port area, the area around the medieval castle will form a natural connection from the sea front to the rest of the town according to a Limassol councillor. The upgrade aims to harmoniously combine all of the town's characteristic elements of history, culture and architecture with tourism and daily life. The project is due to start with the castle and main commercial area in early 2010; plans have also been laid to complete the work in



stages in order to inconvenience both locals and visitors as little as possible.

The project aims to reduce traffic congestion and improve services with the construction of 4 new squares and the pedestrianization of surrounding streets; also on the cards is the creation of a multi-functional seaside park at the site of the current sea reclamation area. Pavements will be widened to encourage walking, more bicycle lanes will be created

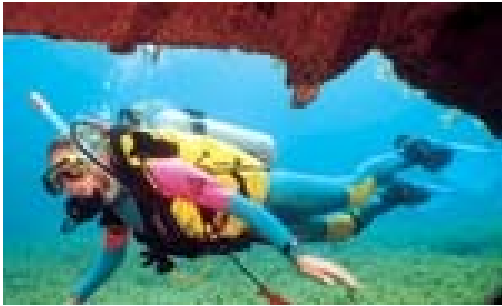
and the public transport system is also due to be upgraded. The total cost of the project is estimated at €44 million with 80% of the total cost being supported by the EU Structural fund.

Source: Cyprus Mail 2009

Sport & Leisure

Feature: Diving in Cyprus

Although Cyprus might not be among the world's best known diving destinations, the waters around the island have plenty to offer divers of all levels whether complete beginners who just want a taste of the mysteries of the deep or experienced divers seeking the thrill of wreck diving. There are 260 different species of fish and no less than 103 dive sites around the island with the coast of Paphos in particular offering numerous diving and snorkelling sites. There are also several diving centres around the island offering highly qualified PADI and BSAC instructors.



Just off the coast of Larnaca is one of the world's top ten dive sites; the Zenobia wreck. Considered the number one dive site in Europe, the Zenobia, or the big Z as divers call it was a Swedish ro-ro ferry loaded with trucks and trailers that sank off the coast of Larnaca on its maiden voyage in 1980 after a ballast tank flooded. The 197 metre-long wreck lies at a depth of 42 metres and has become a must-see for divers as the vessel went down in tact still carrying its cargo of 104 lorries.



The island also offers divers a wonderful array of sea caves, roman artefacts and a range of marine life; with water temperatures ranging from 25°C in the summer to 15°C in the winter and almost year-round sunshine, Cyprus offers one of the longest diving seasons in the Mediterranean. With no dangerous tides or currents and crystal clear waters, Cyprus is the ideal place for discovering the magic world under the sea.

Upcoming Sports & Leisure Events

Troodos Rally Middle East Rally Championship: 9th- 11th October

Organised by the Cyprus Automobile Association (www.caa.com.cy)

4th Cyprus Autumn Historic Car Rally: 17th-18th October

Organised by the Friends of Historic & Old Cars in Cyprus

Aphrodite Cup 2009 Fencing Satellite World Cup: 20th-22nd November

World class B category event which is being including in the World Fencing Federation's yearly calendar and awards world cup ranking points. The satellite world cup circuit consists of 11 events and the participants are submitted by the national federation of each respective country. The event will be held in the University of



Cyprus sports hall in Nicosia.

Cyprus International 4-day Challenge Marathon: 26th-29th November 2009

A 4-day staged running event with a combined distance slightly over Marathon length, it includes mountain running, trail running, cross country running a trail half marathon and a 10km City run over a period of 4 days. The event takes place in the Paphos area with some of the races being run through the Akamas Nature Reserve boasting some of Cyprus' best scenery.

Upcoming Cultural Events

Cyprus Mountains Traditional Festival: October

The theme of the festival taking place throughout October in the communities of Kyperounta, Dymes and Amiantos is the apple- is cultivation and products. The festival includes cultural demonstrations and performances of traditional dance and music, guided tours, food and drink, arts and crafts and events.

Cyprus Mountains Traditional Festival Religious Routes: November

The villages of Platanistasa, Palaichori and Lagoudera join forces for this cultural festival around a theme of Religious Routes. The festival incorporates cultural demonstrations and performances with guided tours at world cultural heritage religious monuments, an orthodox mass, traditional dance and music and other events.



Opera “Die Entführung aus dem Serail”: December

A major operatic event taking place at the Rialto Theatre in Limassol and featuring performances by one of Europe's leading opera houses.