



## **Groups & Special Interests Newsletter Issue 6: Winter 2010**

Dear Partners,

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

Winter is upon us bringing with it much needed rain that has turned the island green again, even so the weather is still incredibly mild with average daytime temperatures of 20°C making this the perfect time of year for sporting activities and leisure pursuits.

In this edition we will look at the island's increasing popularity for sports training and learn about up-coming sporting events as well as a special feature on traditional food and drink and an insight into the exciting possibilities of a sailing event or private yacht charter.

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

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## Sport & Leisure

### Feature: Life on the ocean wave



Cyprus' island status has seen generations of sea-farers born on these shores and of course today the country's coastline and crystal clear Mediterranean waters are the key attraction for thousands of visitors each year. For those not just content to view the sea from the comfort of the beach or to enjoy a quick dip, the island's waters hold a host of possibilities from diving, deep sea fishing, windsurfing, kite-surfing and of course sailing.

There is something about the sound of the wind in the sails of a beautiful yacht that lifts the spirit and it's no wonder that so many visitors to Cyprus choose to head to the high seas and opt for some kind of boating experience during their stay.

Our subsidiary company Interyachting was founded by an Olympic sailor and is now the leading yachting company on the island offering a whole range of sailing experiences from leisure cruises, corporate hospitality, private charters, weddings, fishing, sailing courses and bareboat charters with a fleet of vessels including sailing yachts and catamarans, wooden schooners and high-octane power boats.



The possibilities for events are endless; whether you want to reward hard working staff or impress clients with a luxurious night time cruise along the coast complete with gourmet candle-lit dinner and silver service or boost team spirit by combining a relaxing day or night time cruise with beach Olympics or an environmental project on shore.

One of the joys of life on the ocean wave is having a go and even novice sailors can learn the ropes as they help the crew to hoist the sails or try their hands at knot tying on one of our sailing catamarans. For those who dream of joining the yachting fraternity a RYA sailing course is the perfect introduction and we can also arrange private charters for several days with the assistance of an experienced skipper and a well-stocked galley to keep them going! For the qualified sailor a bareboat charter around the island's coast is an ideal way to explore and for the adrenalin junkies an exciting ride in a powerboat is the ultimate in fast-paced fun.



So, whether it's pampered luxury, total relaxation, fast and furious adventure or simply a whole lot of fun that your group is after, the waters of Cyprus have plenty of treats in store!

## Feature: Sports Training



Cyprus has become well-established as a sports training destination offering a great combination of excellent training facilities, mild and temperate weather during the winter period coupled with competitive accommodation rates for sports teams during the low season. Funding is also available from the Cyprus Tourism Organisation to support the organisation of certain sports training programmes.

Some of the most popular disciplines include football, swimming, shooting and athletics with professional teams travelling from Northern and Central Europe to train for championships, world and Olympic events. There are a range of facilities including Olympic swimming pools, tennis courts, athletic centres and football pitches across the island owned by hotels, local municipalities and other organisations and many hotels have years of experience in accommodating sports group offering comprehensive packages that include training sessions, healthy food, accommodation and extra-curricular activities.



The latest development is the **Allegra Sport Hotel** in Nicosia, offering stylish accommodation together with top training facilities. Incorporated within the GSP Athletics and Soccer Stadium complex on the outskirts of the capital the Allegra offers an athletics area (track & field), soccer pitches, fitness centre, physiotherapy rooms, conference and meeting facilities and high level accommodation and dining facilities.

## Upcoming Events

### Limassol International Marathon GSO: 28<sup>th</sup> February

In its 3<sup>rd</sup> year the Limassol Marathon has earned AIMS and IAAF accreditation; the race is a 42km flat run along the sea front coastal road in Limassol. The event is divided into a full marathon, half marathon, 10km health race, kids fun run, 2km race, 10km Charity walk and 2km charity walk. Organizers



expect this years' race to be a truly international event and are also looking forward to the support of the citizens of this coastal town who are expected to come out in force to cheer the competitors on.

### **Cycling Race "Cyprus Sunshine Cup 4": 21<sup>st</sup> February**

Organized by the Cyprus Cycling Federation at Voroklini Village in the Famagusta District

### **34<sup>th</sup> Troodos International FIS Races 2010: 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> March**

Organized by the Cyprus Ski Federation at Dias Slope in the Troodos Mountains

### **Shooting-Cyprus Grand Prix: 22<sup>nd</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> March**

An international shooting event organized by the Cyprus Shooting Federation for the disciplines of Trap, Skeet and Double Trap

Cycling- Tour of Cyprus 2010: 25<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> March

## **Culture**

### **Feature: Eat, drink & be merry!**



Food and the sharing of meals with family and friends is an integral part of Cypriot life; it is also an essential part of any visit to the island. Cypriot cuisine is a fine example of the healthy Mediterranean diet, blending the flavours and East and West and bursting with fresh local produce.

As we head towards the feasts of carnival before the fifty days of fasting leading up to Easter what

better time to re-discover the delights of Cyprus cuisine. We have put together a series of very special activities built around a theme of food and drink; taking your guests into the mountain villages where they can experience at first hand the rituals of preparation and eating that are an essential part of daily life.

As the saying goes the proof of the pudding is in the eating and what better way to get to know the local delicacies than with the help of the local people. Depending on the time of year, your group could pick their own fruit from the citrus groves and enjoy freshly squeezed juices in the shade of the orange trees, learn how olives are picked and pressed, take part in the grape harvest and sample the local vintages or even try their hands at preparing some typical local dishes such as *Kleftiko*, farm bread or *loukoumades*.



### **Vouni Wine Centre**

An exciting new project for 2010 is the wine centre in Vouni; built with the help of European Union funding in the village of Vouni at the heart of the Limassol wine region. In a traditional stone-built building the centre is an excellent starting point for learning about the history



and tradition of wine making on the island. A highly-knowledgeable local expert will lead a lively and fascinating private seminar and your group will then have the chance to sample some local vintages. The centre also boasts an impressive outdoor terrace with beautiful views over the village and surrounding countryside, a perfect setting for an exclusive catered event in the evening.

## Upcoming Events



### **Limassol Carnival 4-14<sup>th</sup> February**

Its carnival time again! Ten days of fun and feasting before the fifty days of sober Lenten fasts. The Limassol carnival is the most popular on the island and the fun begins on 4<sup>th</sup> February with the Entrance of King Carnival, other key events include the Children's Carnival Parade on 7<sup>th</sup> February, the Serenader's Parade on 13<sup>th</sup> February and the Grand Carnival Parade of chariots on 14<sup>th</sup> February- an eagerly awaited annual occasion in the coastal city.

### **Musical Saturdays: 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> February, 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> March**

A series of cultural events with traditional songs and dances, classical and contemporary music and activities organized by the Cyprus Tourism Organisation and Nicosia Municipality on Ledra Street in the old town of Nicosia

### **Green Monday: 15<sup>th</sup> February**

The first day of Lent marking the beginning of fifty days of fasting where families traditionally enjoy vegetarian picnics in the countryside. Events and activities take place in all towns and villages including Cape Greko in Ayia Napa, Tekke Grove in Larnaca and Faros Beach in Kato Paphos.

### **10<sup>th</sup> Platform of Contemporary Dance: 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> March**

Cyprus' greatest contemporary dance event provides a unique opportunity for the public to get to know the latest works from Cypriot choreographers and dancers. The event takes place at the Rialto Theatre in Limassol and is organized with the cooperation of the Cultural Services Department.

### **Saint Lazarus Religious Procession: 27<sup>th</sup> March**

A special mass held in memory of St Lazarus, the patron saint and first bishop of Larnaca followed by an impressive procession of the saints' icon from St Lazarus Church along the sea front promenade