

North Cyprus – Castles, Abbeys and Ancient Sites

Tour Code NC

24 - 31 October 2022

A relaxing seven night tour based at a comfortable hotel in located on the foothills of the Kyrenia Mountain range just below the beautiful village of Bellapais with daily excursions around the island to marvel at the range and wealth of architectural and scenic beauty. Controlled throughout history by the various superpowers of the time, we visit Greek and Roman antiquity, Byzantine churches, medieval abbeys and monasteries and Crusader Castles set dramatically into the hills. We explore the less developed region along the Karpas peninsula; the most beautiful stretch of the island's dramatic coast while Kyrenia itself has a picturesque tranquil harbour.



Views from St Hilarion Castle, near Kyrenia
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ITINERARY

Day 1 Fly to Larnaca or Ercan

Departure from UK regional airports to Larnaca or Ercan. Private transfer to a lovely boutique hotel for seven nights, located on the foothills of the Kyrenia Mountain range just below the beautiful village of Bellapais. Included dinner at the hotel (D)

Day 2 Visit St Hilarion Castle and Bellapais Abbey

We drive into the mountains to the 13th century castle of St Hilarion, the most complete of the region's Crusader castles and with dramatic views to Kyrenia and across the coastal plain. We drive down to Kyrenia and its picturesque harbour for a break for lunch. In the late afternoon we drive to Bellapais Abbey, a magnificent Gothic building in the village where Lawrence Durrell wrote "Bitter Lemons" (B)

Day 3 Visit Nicosia

Today we drive inland to Lefkosa (Nicosia) with its fascinating collection of Crusader Gothic and Turkish Ottoman monuments set within the old Venetian fortifications. The finest is the former St Sophia Cathedral, now Selimiye Camii mosque, with its superbly carved porch and sculptured windows. We also include visits to the beautifully restored Buyuk Khan or Great Inn, built in 1572 and the largest on the island, and the Dervish Pasha Mansion that now houses an interesting museum. Dinner at a local restaurant (B,D)

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Day 4 Visit Soli and Vouni

We head west to the citrus groves and market gardens of Guzelyurt to visit the icons in the Church of St Mamas. We continue to see the remains of the 5th century BC palace at Vouni, wonderfully located with views of the sea and Troodos Mountains to the south. Nearby are the ruins of Soli, a Greco-Roman city, famous for its 5th century mosaic floored basilica (B)

Day 5 Visit Famagusta and Salamis

We visit the interesting and varied architectural wonders found within the old Venetian walled city of Famagusta, notably the Othello's Tower and the former St Nicholas Cathedral, now Mustapha Pasha mosque, before continuing to the impressive and extensive remains of the ancient Greek site of Salamis. The day concludes with a visit to St Barnabas Monastery with its impressive collection of icons. Dinner at a local restaurant (B,D)

Day 6 Visit Kantara Castle and Karpas peninsula

An early morning start for Kantara Castle, located at the beginning of the Karpas and with stunning views to the sea and along the peninsula. We continue along the 'pan-handle' to Dipkarpaz and the site of a 5th century ruined basilica at Ayios Philon,. We have lunch overlooking a rocky bay, once a Roman harbour, before returning to Bellapais (B,L)

Day 7 At leisure in Kyrenia

We have a day to enjoy at our own leisure, perhaps a complimentary shuttle into Kyrenia and take a stroll and have a relaxing lunch in the harbour, or join Patrick for a walk to nearby Bellapais village and in the surrounding foothills. A farewell dinner has been arranged at a smart Kyrenian restaurant this evening (B,D)

Day 8 Fly to UK

After a leisurely breakfast we transfer to Larnaca airport for our flight to the UK (B)

Cost £1695.00 per person in a twin room (excludes international flights)

£99.00 single supplement charge



Price includes –

- ▶ Escorted by *Patrick Syder FRGS*
- ▶ Accompanied throughout by a local guide
- ▶ All transportation – A/C Minibus + Driver
- ▶ Full sightseeing programme including entrance fees
- ▶ Comfortable hotel located in the foothills of the Kyrenia Mountain range just below the beautiful village of Bellapais for seven nights with breakfast daily
- ▶ Complimentary airport transfers
- ▶ Four dinners and one lunch in traditional local restaurants
- ▶ Group size strictly from 6 to 10 passengers

Not included – travel insurance, some meals, drinks, driver and guide gratuities, international flight