

For tours departing beyond 2009, itineraries may be subject to change. This will be confirmed by the publication of the 2010 brochure (issued in Oct 09).

2009
Tour Dossier

EXPLORE!
ON FOOT

CYPRUS Dossier Ref. LNC

On Foot in Northern Cyprus

Amended 05 Mar 2009. Valid from 01 Mar 2009 to 31 Dec 2009

As our itineraries may be amended from time to time, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers, please ensure you have the most up-to-date copy of this dossier immediately before you travel. You can download the dossier from our website, www.explore.co.uk. Of course we will notify you of any significant changes, but sometimes minor changes may simply be added to the tour dossier.

JOINING TOUR ABROAD

8 days/7 nights Land Only
Kyrenia to Kyrenia

Join Kyrenia (day 1)

End Kyrenia (day 8)

Clients booked on 'Land Only' arrangements should make their own way to the joining point at the hotel in Kyrenia. Please refer to separate 'Joining Instructions' for name and address of hotel and time of rendezvous with tour leader.

GROUP TRAVEL FROM LONDON

8 days/7 nights Tour including
Connecting Group Flights
London-Larnaca-London

Depart from London Heathrow Airport to join tour in Larnaca (day 1 of Land Only itinerary). Transfer to hotel in Kyrenia.

Return from Larnaca (day 8 of Land Only itinerary) and arrive London Heathrow the same day.

Passengers with non-group flights booked through Explore should refer to their individual confirmation invoice for flight details. Transfers to and from the airport are not included unless purchased in addition to the tour package.

SPECIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Among the many highlights featured on this tour, we particularly mention:

- * **KYRENIA** Picturesque harbour town set amidst stunning scenery.
- * **BELLAPAI ABBEY** Famous 12th century Crusader Abbey.
- * **ISLAND FORTRESSES** Visiting the three bastions of St Hilarion, Kantara and Buffavento.
- * **KYRENIA RANGES** Stunning walking amidst Mediterranean scenery.
- * **NICOSIA** Visit to the divided city.

CO₂ Offsets Included

The biggest environmental impact of your holiday with Explore is the CO₂ generated by your flights. As a responsible tour operator, we have included in our tour prices the costs of offsetting CO₂ emissions from all international and domestic flights forming part of the tour. Our chosen offset partner is Climate Care. If you are making independent flight arrangements to join one of our tours, may we urge you to take responsibility for your CO₂ emissions by offsetting through Climate Care, or a similar offsetting scheme.



* **FAMAGUSTA** Once the richest city in the world.

Stunning mountains, rugged coastlines and miles of deserted forest paths make North Cyprus an excellent destination for an activity break. Staying close by the picturesque harbour town of Kyrenia located in the foothills of the Beshparmak Mountains on the Mediterranean coast, we spend the week exploring a landscape dotted with medieval castles and quiet rustic villages. We walk through forests of Mediterranean pine and juniper, across a landscape that is a profusion of wild flowers and herbs. At the crossroads of Mediterranean trade, Cyprus has absorbed many of the great maritime cultures of Europe, Africa and the Middle East. Mycenaeans, Phoenicians and Egyptians were followed by Roman and Byzantine traders, who in their turn were supplanted by the Crusaders, Venetians and Turks. The island is covered with castles, fortresses and abbeys that attest to the continual occupation of the island. Over the coming week we plan to visit some of these monuments to a turbulent and eclectic past. We visit the trio of Byzantine fortresses of St Hilarion, Kantara and Buffavento, as well as the Crusader abbey of Bellapais, made famous by Lawrence Durrell. We also visit the divided city of Nicosia, as well as the coastal town of Famagusta, the inspiration for the setting of Shakespeare's 'Othello'. There are many walking trails around the island, walks on a specific tour may vary.

Earth Matters

- This tour makes extensive use of locally owned services, bringing economic benefits directly to rural communities. As we operate this tour in the quiet months, this is a real help to our suppliers and more enjoyable for you!
- This tour uses local tour leaders which generates employment and gives a unique and personal insight into the local area and culture.
- There is a severe water shortage in North Cyprus. Please try to conserve this precious resource wherever you can by taking short showers, turning off the tap whilst you brush your teeth and shampoo, and not getting towels or bed linen changed each day in hotels where you stay more than one night.
- Plastic bottle waste is becoming an increasing environmental problem. As recycling does not exist in these parts, we recommend you bring your own water filter to reduce waste.
- For further information on responsible travel go to <http://www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/>

Although all walks are included it is of course possible to opt out of any of the walks, and spend the day relaxing.

Walking Grades and Fitness:

Grading is a somewhat difficult topic as much depends on the individuals own perception of his or her abilities. The following is intended as a general guide to our walking grades. This is rated Grade A/B.

Grade A walks (Easy): tend to be short day walks and rambles at low altitudes which are suitable for people of all ages. They can be enjoyed by anyone who leads a reasonably active life and no special preparation is required. Many of the walks in this category are optional.

Grade B walks (Moderate): will usually involve some longer walks (4-6 hours/day) at low altitudes (below 3000m). Some previous hill walking experience would be beneficial but these walks should be within the capabilities of those who lead a normal active life.

LAND ONLY ITINERARY

Be Prepared: While our intention is to adhere to the day-to-day route printed below, a degree of flexibility is built into the itinerary. There may be some minor deviation to the basic trail route, depending on season, weather and trail conditions.

Accommodation and Included Meals: please find the key to our accommodation ratings overleaf, and note that included meals are indicated in the itinerary below and are shown on the day they are provided (B = breakfast, L = lunch, D = dinner).

Bellapais Monastery Village Hotel

We will be staying at the Bellapais Monastery Village Hotel, located in the foothills of the Beshparmak range close to Bellapais village. The hotel is located in an area of outstanding natural beauty around 3 kilometres from Kyrenia, and enjoys wonderful views down to the town and coast. The hotel has two swimming pools (one outdoor, one indoor) and a well equipped fitness centre and purpose built sundeck – ideal for a late afternoon drink. In the evening you may choose to head into Kyrenia town to eat in the restaurants that cluster around the harbour (the hotel operates a minibus service 3 times daily to Kyrenia and this will be augmented by Explore's own transport), visit Bellapais village or enjoy the hotel's own restaurant.

To book please call 0844 499 0901 • www.explore.co.uk

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Day 1. Arrive Larnaca and transfer to hotel in Kyrenia

Arriving at Larnaca we transfer by charter bus to our hotel just outside the picturesque town of Kyrenia. An ideal base for our week's stay, Kyrenia is a lovely eclectic mix of Venetian facades, mosques and minarets and a Crusader castle, which dominates one end of the old harbour; a setting further enhanced by the dramatic backdrop of the Besparmak Mountains. **7 nights hotel H++.**

Day 2. Kyrenia, Bellapais and Nicosia

After a morning briefing we set off for nearby Kyrenia to visit the splendid castle and harbour. We then drive to the village of Bellapais made famous by Lawrence Durrell in his book 'Bitter Lemons'. Much of the village still retains the easy charm of those Durrell days, but the main attraction is the Crusader abbey after which the village is named. Originally founded by Augustinian canons fleeing Palestine in 1200, the abbey went into decline after it was plundered by the Genoese in the 14th century. The monks of the abbey earned a reputation for scandal that was certainly not in keeping with their pious vows, keeping concubines on site and refusing to accept any but their own children as novices! Indeed the village that grew up around the abbey is reputed to be peopled by the descendants of those very monks. After visiting the abbey and the famous 'Tree of Idleness', we have our first walk to the village of Ozankoy for a picnic lunch, following the original crusader footpath. This afternoon we'll make a trip down to Nicosia, the last divided capital city in the world, straddling both sides of the Green Line that partitions the city. The northern part is very much Turkish in influence, dotted with Gothic and Ottoman monuments, including the 13th century Selimiye Mosque, which is reputed to be one of the finest examples of Gothic architecture in the country. We will spend some time visiting the old centre of the city before returning to our hotel. **(Included meals: B, L).**

Day 3. Visit St Hilarion Castle; walk to Karaman; then onto Ilgaz

This morning we take a short bus transfer to St Hilarion Castle. Set in the Kyrenia hills to the southwest, the castle is the best preserved of the three fortresses built by the Byzantines and Crusaders and sits on a dramatic hilltop overlooking Kyrenia. The castle is steeped in legend and intrigue and has been a military objective throughout the centuries; it was one of the last castles taken by the Crusaders in 1191 and during the 13th and 14th centuries it proved a major obstacle to both Frederick II and the Genoese. Local legend has it that the castle contains a secret room, room 101, which leads into an enchanted garden filled with treasure. The story also goes that the fortress was used by Walt Disney as the model for Snow White's castle. After visiting the castle we descend towards the villages of Karaman and Ilgaz en route back towards Kyrenia. **(Included meals: B, L).**

Day 4. Transfer to Kantara Castle; walking in the area

We head east today as we drive along the coast to Kantara Castle, the easternmost and the lowest of the three bastions, located in the foothills of the Kyrenia ranges. As with St Hilarion, the castle saw its fair share of conflict during the crusades and the conflicts with

Frederick II and the Genoese. Indeed Richard the Lionheart won a famous victory here when he defeated the self-proclaimed king of the island, Isaac Komnenos, after the latter's ill-judged slight against Richard's fiancée. After visiting the castle we will pick up our trail through the variety of landscapes of the Kirpasa Peninsula, upon which the castle stands. Finishing up at Kaplica beach with time for a swim before we transfer back to Kyrenia by chartered bus. **(Included meals: B, L).**

Day 5. Full day excursion to Famagusta

This day is left free for personal exploration. Once one of the richest cities and most important trading ports in the world, Famagusta has been an eyewitness to the history of the last 2,500 years. The once, so called, "City of 365 churches", ravaged by severe wars and earthquakes, still contains beautiful examples of medieval and gothic architecture. Its majesty had apparently had an influence on the artistic muse of a certain William Shakespeare, who is purported to have used it as the setting for Othello. Indeed the Venetian Citadel, overlooking the harbour, is popularly known as "Othello's Tower". There is an option this afternoon to visit the ancient site of Salamis, a few miles to the north, and the most important ancient city on the island; the site is strewn with Mycenaean, Roman and Byzantine artifacts. Alternatively you may prefer to relax and spend your free time on one of the local beaches. **(Included meals: B).**

Day 6. Visit Buffavento Castle; then walk onto Taskent

Transferring by bus again this morning, we head for the highest of the Kyrenia strongholds, the ruined fortress of Buffavento. The name means "buffeted by the wind" and a walk up to the top of the highest tower will likely give you some indication as to why. From here on a good day you can see half the island, with views of the Troodos Mountains, Famagusta and Nicosia stretching out beneath you. Taking some time to explore the area around the castle we then head west, towards the town of Taskent. We follow a fairly steep path up to a forest track over the mountains before reaching the valley for a picnic lunch. Continuing downhill we admire stunning views of the coastline and Bellapais village. Those who wish to stay for sightseeing or refreshments may do so, otherwise we continue walking to the hotel. **(Included meals: B, L).**

Day 7. Forest walk to Armenian Monastery & Herbarium

Besparmak is known locally as "The Five Fingered Mountain" and its chiselled peak is very much in evidence as we drive to Alevkayasi this morning. Legend has it that the mountain was formed when the Byzantine hero, Dhiyenis Akritas, leapt across the sea from Anatolia, leaving his handprint forever etched into the landscape as he landed. Following a forest trail this morning we head for the Armenian monastery of Sourp Magar. Originally founded in the 11th century as a Coptic monastery, it was used as a summer resort by the Armenian Church and was an important site of pilgrimage for Armenians travelling to and from the Holy Land. Unfortunately the monastery felt the full wrath of the invading Turkish forces in 1974 and now sits abandoned and derelict amidst a dense forest on the northern slopes of the

Kyrenia Mountains. A short distance from the monastery the track leads to the forestry station at Alevkaya, where we visit the Herbarium. Founded by the British botanist, Dr Deryck Viney, the small Herbarium will be of principle interest to those interested in botany as it contains over 1000 preserved specimens of endemic plants. This is an excellent way of identifying flowers and plants we have seen on our rambles. Cyprus has some 30 species of orchid, for which it is justifiably famous, but it is also abundant with cyclamen, anemones and oleander. **(Included meals: B, L).**

Day 8. Tour ends Kyrenia

(Included meals: B).

PERSONAL EXPENSES

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Foreign Exchange

Local Currency: Turkish Lira.

Recommended Currency for Exchange:

GBP/Euro and USD are all easily changeable.

Where to Exchange: Money exchange houses are generally better than banks.

ATM Availability: Most tourist centres will have some ATM availability.

Credit Card Acceptance: Larger hotels, restaurants and some shops.

Travellers Cheques: Cash will certainly get you a better exchange rate, although some exchange houses will also cash Travellers Cheques, but for a slightly lower rate.

Up-to-date information re: global exchange rates can be obtained at <https://www.currency-express.com/explore/>

Meal Plan

Local Food and Drink: 7 breakfasts and 5 lunches are included on this trip; please be prepared to pay for all other meals. Approximate meal costs are given below:

	UK	Cyprus
Coffee/tea	£1.20	£2.00
Soft drink	0.80	1.00
Bottle of Beer	2.50	2.00
Bottle water	0.80	0.50
2 Course Meal*	10.00	8.00
3 Course Meal**	18.00	12.00
Bottle wine	10.00	10.00

*Cheap local fare in a small cafe or restaurant.

**Typical food in a simple, reasonably comfortable mid-range restaurant.

Tipping

Tour Leader: At your discretion you might also consider tipping your tour leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Other Sightseeing

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants.

KYRENIA Sunset boat cruise £15.

Booking a Single Room

All of our tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. On this particular tour we are pleased to be able to offer customers the option of pre-booking a guaranteed single room for each night of the tour.

EXPLORE ACCOMMODATION RATINGS : An important feature of many Explore tours is the wide range of accommodation used, and since the beginning our philosophy has been to select accommodation to suit the itinerary - not the other way round.

To help gauge the comfort level on your chosen tour, we have graded the accommodation standards at all night-stops using the rating guide below. Please keep in mind however that standards can vary from one trip to the next, and occasionally we may need to change a night-stop without advance warning.

Hotels / lodges / guesthouses - or similar

H++ : Comfortable hotels, lodges or guesthouses with twin or single rooms and en suite facilities.

With air-conditioning/heating where appropriate and with reliable hot and cold water. Generally good levels of service and often with added amenities such as restaurant, bar, gardens or swimming pool.

To book please call 0844 499 0901 • www.explore.co.uk

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PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Seasonal Climate

Cyprus has an intense Mediterranean climate with long dry summers from mid-May to mid-October and normally mild winters from December-February. Summer is a season of high temperatures and long sunny days tempered in the mountains by refreshing breezes. It has an ideal climate for walking. Rain falls rarely in the summer with only the occasional mid-day shower in the mountains. The winter season sees some rain though sunny days are common. During this time there is snow on the mountains which can last through till as late as April on the higher slopes.

Additional information and climate charts can be accessed at <http://www.explore.co.uk/weather>. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up-to-date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page.

Visa Requirements

Entry visas for Northern Cyprus are NOT required by EU, CAN, NZ AUS and US citizens. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

Vaccinations & Protection

Nothing compulsory. Tetanus recommended. **Special Note:** Vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider.

Electric Supply and Plugs

For comprehensive information regarding voltages and plug types in use in the countries visited, follow the relevant link at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Traveladvice/>

Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory for all bookings. You must take your policy document with you on tour, as your tour leader will ask to see this at the start of the trip. Your documentation must state in writing that you are the named policyholder and that the cover is valid for your period of travel. Your policy document must also indicate that you have medical expenses and emergency repatriation cover and a 24-hour contact telephone number for your Insurance Company must be shown on your documentation in case of emergency.

If you are unable to provide all this information at the start of the trip you will not be allowed to join the trip. If you have purchased Explore Insurance you should carry the Master Certificate leaflet with you, which outlines the conditions of the policy together with a copy of your Confirmation Invoice, which is your proof of purchase of insurance. Explore Worldwide are an Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Limited, who is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services authority.

Know Before You Go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination including safety and security, local laws and customs, entry requirements and health. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Traveladvice>

RAMADAN

21st August – 19th September 2009

Please note that Ramadan is a month of fasting observed by Muslims throughout the world, during which time the followers of Islam should not eat or drink between sunrise and sunset. There may be some limitations to services and disruptions to schedules during Ramadan, but generally our tours still operate effectively during this period and food is available to non-Muslims throughout the day in most countries.

PACKING FOR YOUR TRIP

A complete list of clothing and personal gear is contained in Explore's '**General Information Booklet**', available only after a booking has been accepted. Here we make a few specific recommendations with regard to your tour.

Luggage: One main piece of baggage and daysac. Total allowance: **44lbs/20kgs**.

Clothing: Pack essentially for '**All Tours**' plus '**Hot Conditions**'. Clothing should be lightweight. However, a sweater or fleece is also advisable for the evenings, as temperatures drop sharply. A raincoat is advisable for early spring as sporadic rain showers can be common at this time.

Footwear: Well broken in walking boots, plus sandals or trainers for relaxing.

Equipment: Personal water bottle, trekking pole, insect repellent, sunscreen, lip salve, torch and you may wish to bring binoculars.

Trek Kit Bag: For an exclusively designed Explore Trek Bag, follow the relevant link at www.nomadtravel.co.uk/explore

Personal First Aid Kit: For an exclusively designed Explore Medical Kit, visit www.nomadtravel.co.uk/explore

Need help on clothing or equipment?

Then we suggest you contact Nomad Travel, our equipment partner, who specialise in kitting people out for adventurous travel. You receive a special 10% discount in-store or online. Visit one of their stores, phone 0845 260 0044, or visit their website www.nomadtravel.co.uk/explore for further information.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Area: 3,335 sq. km (1,287 sq. ml).

Population: 75,000.

Language: Turkish and some English.

Religion: Sunni Muslim.

Local Time: GMT+2.

Electric Supply & Plugs: 220-240V British style three pin plugs.

Recharging Batteries: Is possible in hotel.

Recommended Maps: Tourist maps available locally.

Recommended Books: The Infidel Sea Oliver Burch, Bitter Lemons Lawrence Durrell, Journey into Cyprus Colin Thubron.

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