

EXPLORE!

TRIP NOTES



On Foot in Northern Cyprus (LNC 2017)



TRIPDURATION
8
DAYS



Tour Style: Classic
Accommodation
Grade: Standard

Tour Type: Centre Based
Trek Grade: Easy to Moderate

Trip Code: LNC

Trip Highlights - On Foot in Northern Cyprus

- ✓ Kyrenia - Visit this picturesque harbour town. Wander around its backstreets and enjoy fresh North Cyprus cuisine at one of the waterfront restaurants
- ✓ Bellapais - Explore the famous twelfth century Crusader abbey and enjoy our week's accommodation close to this pretty village setting, once home to Lawrence Durrell
- ✓ Crusader castles - Visit Hilarion Castle. Trek along quiet mountain paths to the imposing Buffavento and Kantara Castles
- ✓ Stunning scenery - Walk through lush countryside and quaint villages, with views of an impressive coastline
- ✓ Local food - Enjoy the fresh Mediterranean flavours of mezes and other local dishes

Trip Essentials

Accommodation: 7 nights Standard Hotel
Included Meals: 7 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 0 dinners
Start Point: Join trip: Bellapais near Kyrenia
End Point: Trip ends: Bellapais near Kyrenia
Maximum Altitude on Trek (m): 820
Transport: Bus
Countries: North Cyprus

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On Foot In Northern Cyprus

Explore one of the most unspoilt regions of the Mediterranean on this walking trip through North Cyprus' beautiful Besparmak Mountains. We follow quiet, flower-rich mountain trails, leading to imposing Crusader castles, with stunning cobalt-sea backdrops. In Kyrenia, we explore the picturesque harbour front and narrow cobbled backstreets. Every evening we return to our hotel on the outskirts of historic Bellapais to relax by the pool, or enjoy delicious, locally-grown food in nearby restaurants.

Why Book this trip

Get off the beaten track and explore the real North Cyprus.



Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Accommodation Grade: Standard

Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Trek Grade: Easy to Moderate

This grade is ideal if you want to enjoy both easy and moderate level walks on the same tour. You'll be walking mainly on good paths and at low altitude, with occasional more demanding ascents or descents.

Your trip itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

DAY 1 Join tour in Kyrenia

Upon arrival, we will settle in to our hotel on the outskirts of Bellapais village - our base for the next week. Close to Kyrenia and with panoramic views of the town, this friendly hotel offers comfortable rooms, and a swimming pool in which to enjoy a refreshing dip at the end of each day's walking. Depending on your arrival time, you may choose to explore Bellapais village or head into Kyrenia to sample some excellent North Cyprus food and explore the town's beautiful and eclectic mix of



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Venetian facades, mosques and minarets. Kyrenia is particularly famous for its 'picture postcard' vista of its striking Crusader castle and old harbour set against the dramatic backdrop of the Besparmak Mountains.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** None

DAY 2 Walk through Besparmak Mountains to Bellapais village

After a morning briefing, a short drive takes us to the start of our first walk in the Besparmak Mountains. Translated as "The Five Fingered Mountain" because of its distinctive jagged peaks, 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. From the Arapkoj area, we will walk through the mountains back to our base in Bellapais, taking a picnic lunch en route in the forest. Made famous by Lawrence Durrell in his 1950s award-winning autobiography, *Bitter Lemons*, much of the Bellapais village still retains the easy charm of those Durrell days. The village's main attraction is Bellapais Abbey. Now an imposing ruin with spectacular views of Kyrenia and the Mediterranean Sea, it was founded by Augustinian canons fleeing Palestine in 1200. The abbey flourished until it was looted and vandalised during the 14th century Genoese invasion. It went on to earn a reputation for scandal and corruption, eventually shutting down in the 16th century. After visiting the abbey and the famous Tree of Idleness, under which Durrell would often drink coffee, we continue our walk back to. Later this afternoon, we will drive into Kyrenia for an optional visit to Kyrenia Castle and the Shipwreck Museum, which houses the remains of a 4th century BC merchant ship, and a look around this pretty harbour town. Today's 14km walk will be expected to take around 4.5hrs with 300m of ascent and 350m of descent.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 3 Discover Kantara Castle; walk to Kaplica Beach

Heading east, we drive along the coast to Kantara Castle, through a beautiful rural landscape of green fields, olive groves and small villages. En route, we will stop off at Cyprus' largest cavern, Incirli Cave, to see its impressive collection of stalactites and stalagmites along its 100 metre passage. Kantara Castle has seen its fair share of conflict over the centuries. 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 have lunch and then enjoy a walk around the varied landscape of the stunning Karpaz Peninsula upon which the castle stands. Before driving back to the hotel, we will have the opportunity to swim and relax on the beautiful Kaplica beach. Today's 7.5km walk is expected to take around 2.5hrs with 50m ascent and 450m descent.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 4 Visit Saint Hilarion Castle; walk to the hillside village of Lapta

This morning we visit Saint Hilarion castle, a stunning historic fort. We then drive to the western edge of the Besparmak Mountain range that also offers spectacular views over the Mediterranean Sea. Starting in the village of Kozan, we will walk among wild flowers and orchids to the ruins of the Sinai Monastery. Although very little is known about this building's history, archaeologists are in agreement about its Byzantine importance. We continue walking on a forest track to Lapta Village, taking a picnic lunch en route, before returning to our hotel. Today's 10km walk is expected to take around 4hrs with 150m ascent and 450m descent.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 5 Optional excursion to the historic city of Famagusta

Today has been left free for you to use as you wish. You may choose to visit Famagusta - once one of the richest cities and most important trading ports in the world. The so-called 'City of 365 Churches' has been ravaged by severe wars and earthquakes throughout history, but still contains beautiful examples of medieval and gothic architecture. William Shakespeare is purported to have used it as the setting for *Othello* and the Venetian Citadel, overlooking the harbour, is popularly known as Othello's Tower. Just five miles to the north of Famagusta is the ancient site of Salamis, which is also well-worth a visit. With its significant collection of Mycenaean, Roman and Byzantine artefacts, it is the most important ancient city on the island. Alternatively, you may prefer to use your day to relax, spending time on one of the local beaches.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

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DAY 6 Hike amongst the ancient sites of the western coast

Today we head out to the West Coast, through one of the most fertile agricultural regions in Cyprus, with huge polythene hot-houses growing an abundance of fruit and vegetables. From the village of Kalkanli, our walk takes in pretty countryside and interesting archaeological sites, such as the Iron Age Tumba tou Skuru. Its excavation in the 1970s uncovered just a fraction of the site and many mysteries about its use and the people buried there remain unsolved. Unfortunately, the political situation has prevented much-needed further excavation. We have a picnic lunch en route, before descending to the coast. Our walk finishes by the sea. Today's 15km walk is expected to take around 4.5hrs with 200m descent.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 7 Visit Buffavento Castle; descend to Bellapais monastery

Transferring by bus 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 helps us to understand why. On a clear day, our efforts are rewarded with a spectacular view of half the island, with the Troodos Mountains, Famagusta and Nicosia stretching out beneath us. From here we take our picnic lunch and follow our walking route via the tiny Church of Panayia Plataniotissa, housed inside the hollow of a huge plane tree. Before our bus picks us up from the Alevkaya Herbarium, we will have a chance to look around. Founded by a British botanist in the 1980s, it is home to over 1,250 flora specimens of Northern Cyprus. Today's 13km walk is expected to take around 4hrs with a 70m ascent and 170m descent.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**
Single Room Available

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 8 Tour ends in Kyrenia

Our tour ends after breakfast this morning.

 **Included Meals:** Breakfast

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation Notes

Bellapais Monastery Village Hotel is located in the foothills of the Besparmak Mountains, within walking distance of Bellapais village and the abbey. It is in an area of outstanding natural beauty around three kilometres from Kyrenia, with views down to the coast. With two outdoor swimming pools and a roof terrace there is a lot of space to relax outside and enjoy these sea views. From here it is also easy to discover nearby Bellapais, or take the courtesy bus into Kyrenia to explore the harbour, castle and narrow backstreets.

The hotel facilities include the two outdoor swimming pools with pool loungers, a pool bar and an indoor pool. There are two restaurants: one a roof restaurant with a roof terrace bar. Breakfast is included. Lunch snacks are available at the pool bar, while a la carte menus are available for dinner in the restaurants. Other hotel facilities include a sauna, a steam bath and massage treatments.

All the standard rooms have air-conditioning, satellite television, direct dial telephone, minibar, safe box, and an en suite bathroom with shower and hairdryer. A kettle and cups are also provided. All the rooms have a balcony or terrace.

The Bellapais Monastery Village Hotel provides an ideal base for walking in the area. During this tour you'll have the opportunity to partake in a number of day walks that showcase the mountains, beaches and history that the region is famed for, as well as having time at leisure for you to relax at the hotel or explore Kyrenia.

Food & Drink

Included meals: 7 breakfasts, 5 lunches, 0 dinners included in the price of this trip. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Trip

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

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

North Cyprus

Lunch £: 10

Dinner £: 18

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

North Cyprus

Bottle of Beer £: 2.50

Water £: 1

Other Sightseeing & Activities

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. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

Famagusta & Salamis - optional day trip. 3-6 people £50, 7-11 people £45 and 12-16 people £35

Tipping - Tour Leader

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

Tipping - Local Crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

Foreign Exchange

North Cyprus

ATM Availability: ATMs available in Kyrenia town centre

Credit Card Acceptance: Credit cards are accepted at some restaurants, hotels and shops

Travellers Cheques: Travellers Cheques can be exchanged at local banks, however this may be difficult and the exchange rate will not be as good as cash.

Local Currency: Turkish Lira

Recommended Currency for Exchange: All major currencies are suitable for exchange, £sterling, euro or \$US

Where to Exchange: Most major towns, Tour Leader can advise

Joining your Trip

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to <https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers>.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

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DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE



Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

Explore Worldwide is an Introducing Appointed Representative of Campbell Irvine Ltd who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Travel Aware

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

We strongly advise that you register with the FCO to receive updates to the travel advice for your chosen destination. A hard copy of the current FCO Travel Advice for your chosen destination is available by contacting cr@explore.co.uk or 01252 379438.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Visa Information

Northern Cyprus: Visas are not required by UK, EU nationals, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

Vaccinations & Protection

North Cyprus

Nothing compulsory but we recommend protection against tetanus and polio. 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/>

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Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure

Preparing for your Trip

DAILY DISTANCES

Day 2	14km	4.5hrs
Day 3	7.5km	2.5hrs
Day 4	10km	4hrs
Day 5		
Day 6	15km	4.5hrs
Day 7	13km	4hrs

Maximum Altitude on Trek (m)

820

Trekking Details

We walk on 5 days with a daily average of 4 hours, mainly on established paths. This trek has been graded as easy to moderate.

Climate

North Cyprus

The climate in North Cyprus is generally very favourable. Typically mediterranean, North Cyprus has very hot dry summers and cooler, yet still pleasant, winters. Temperatures mid summer could reach into the 40s with the lowest temperatures in winter around 15 degrees.

Clothing

Clothing should be lightweight. However a warm layer is also advisable for walking in the mountains, particularly at the beginning and end of the season. A jumper or fleece is also advisable for the evenings during these times as temperatures can drop sharply. A raincoat is advisable for early spring as there may be sporadic rain showers.

Equipment

We recommend that the equipment you bring includes a personal water bottle, trekking poles, insect repellent, suncream, lip salve, sunhat, sunglasses and a day sack. You may also wish to bring binoculars.

Footwear

Bring well broken in walking boots or shoes with ankle support, plus sandals or trainers for relaxing.

Luggage: On Tour

You may bring one main piece of baggage and a daypack. Remember you may be expected to carry your own luggage at the airport and hotel so don't overload yourself.

Luggage allowance on trip: 20kg

General Information

Country details

North Cyprus

Population: 264,172

Size of Country: 3,355 Sq Km

Major Language: Turkish, although English is widely spoken

Religion: Islamic

Time Difference to GMT: +2

Electric Supply & Plugs

North Cyprus

3 Pin Flat

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailor-made holidays.
- Award-winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one of the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, or any number of unusual forms of transport. Often you will stay in family-run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers' flights each year.

Earth Matters

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people) and have recently supported women's cooperatives in Borneo and Morocco. We are a member of Tourism Concern's Ethical Tour Operator Group (www.tourismconcern.org.uk) and support their campaign for fair and ethical tourism. We also care passionately about the world's wildlife and actively support and promote the Born Free Organisation and Mahouts Elephant Foundation.

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is 'Available' or 'Guaranteed' we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking.

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2016 and 31st December 2017.

Trip Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2017 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2017. 2018/19 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2018.

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