



HOME » DESTINATIONS » ASIA EUROPE » CYPRUS »

Cyprus Past and Present: What to See and Do

Cyprus is a country with a rich archaeological heritage dating back to 5,800 BC. Blessed with a subtropical climate, this island really merits a visit. I'm sharing my memories of Cyprus past and present together with suggestions of what to see and do, as part of #ThrowbackThursday.

APHRODITE'S ROCK

Also known as Petra tou Romiou or Rock of the Greek, Aphrodite's Rock is a popular tourist attraction situated on the road from Paphos to Limassol. Famous as the mythological birthplace of Aphrodite, goddess of love and beauty, it's an idyllic spot. The currents here are quite strong so it's best not to swim here. There's a restaurant called Petra tou Romiou on the hill nearby with great sea views.



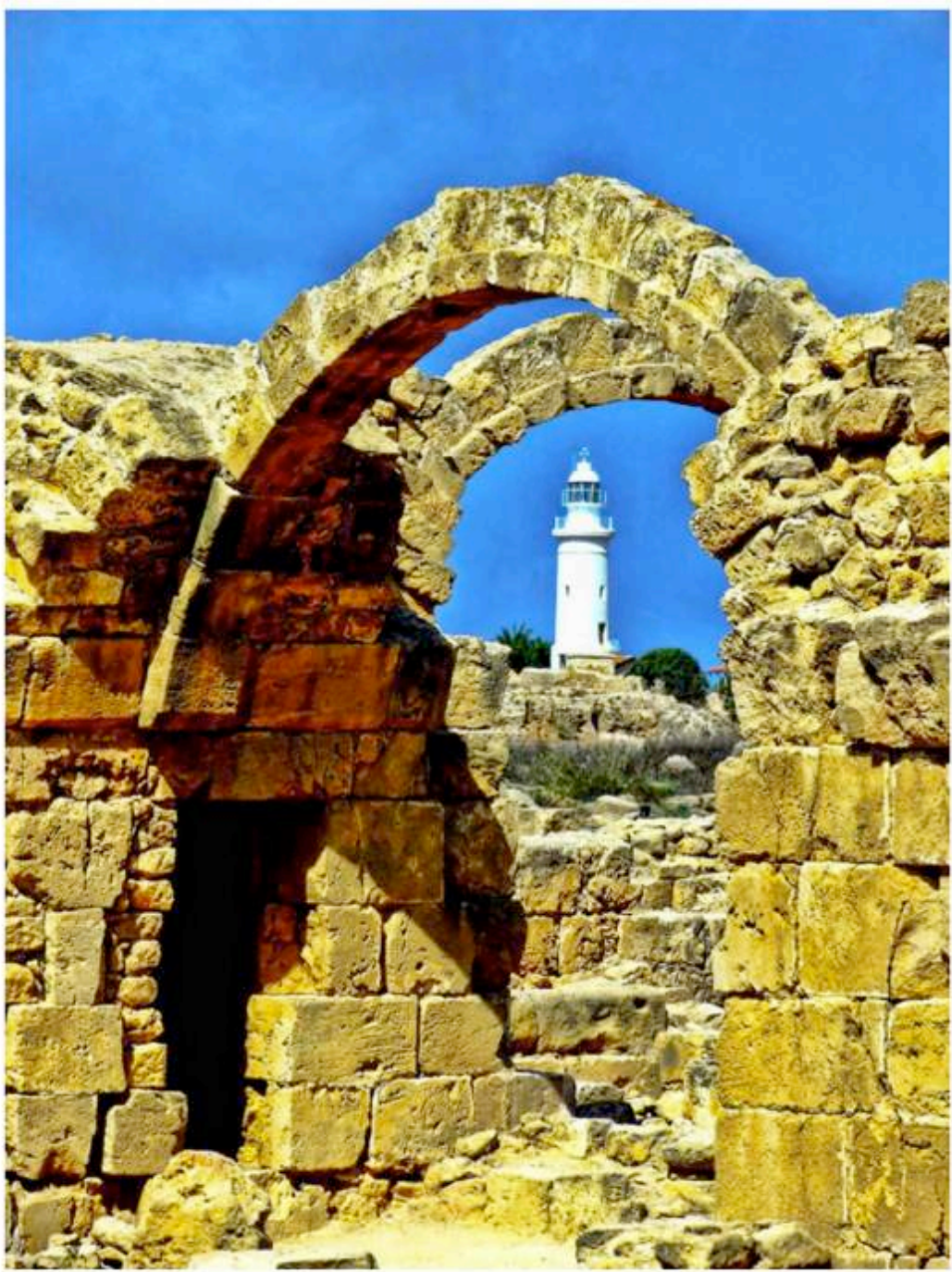
KYKKOS MONASTERY

Take a trip to the Troodos mountains in the centre of the island to see some impressive Byzantine monasteries and churches forming a [UNESCO World Heritage site](#). Kykkos Monastery is one of the best known on the island, with colourful, ornate murals. The original monastery was established in the 11th century but devastated by fires, with the current building dating from 1831. You'll be lent purple robes for your visit to the monastery and museum.



KATO PAPHOS ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK

Just a stone's throw from the centre of Paphos and the harbour, Kato Paphos is not to be missed. This UNESCO World Heritage site includes remains from prehistoric times to the Middle Ages, with particularly important Roman ruins. It can get very hot in here with little shade, so make sure to take water with you and a sunhat.





Another fascinating sight within Kato Paphos is the **Tombs of the Kings**, providing some welcome shade. Dating from the 4th century BC, these underground tombs are decorated with Doric pillars. Although it was high ranking officials rather than kings who were buried here, the opulence of the surroundings gave them their name.



KOURION

Amongst our favourite places in Cyprus is Kourion, a well preserved archaeological site on a hillside overlooking the Mediterranean near Limassol. Its ancient theatre dates back to the second or third century AD and can seat up to 3,500 spectators. There are also some attractive mosaic floors and public baths to see, yet it was not at all crowded when we visited.



PAPHOS HARBOUR

Paphos itself is a lively town with a charming harbour area which is partly pedestrianized and has a medieval castle with good views over the surrounding area.



Dine at any of the beachfront restaurants and enjoy the beautiful sunset – we particularly liked Ouzeri, part of the Almyra hotel but open to non residents.



Away from the harbour but possibly the best place in Paphos for authentic Cypriot mezethes or small dishes, **Seven St Georges Tavern** is an utter delight. There's no website but any cab driver will be able to take you there. Dine in their courtyard garden and enjoy their loaf of homemade bread – when you leave, they'll wrap up the loaf for you to take away.

WHERE TO STAY

I recommend the luxurious Almyra hotel – the name stands for taste of the sea and that sums up the lure of the place pretty well! With eight acres of landscaped gardens, its next door to the equally luxe Anabelle hotel. As they're part of the same group, guests can use the swimming pool and facilities of each hotel. We stayed in a Kyma Suite, with a large roof terrace and king size day bed – the perfect party or family pad!

Whether you prefer to get some serious rest and relaxation or to take in the sights, **Cyprus** has so much to offer. **Have you ever visited Cyprus and what tips would you give to visitors?**

