



Pafos & the West

Includes »

Pafos	83
Coral Bay.....	92
Akamas Heights	93
Dhrousia, Kritou Terra & Around	93
Kathikas	94
Pano Akourdalia & Kato Akourdalia.....	94
Akamas Peninsula	95
Polis.....	97
Baths of Aphrodite	99
Tylliria.....	100
Pomos	100
Kato Pyrgos	101
Psokas.....	102
Cedar Valley	103

Why Go?

Pafos is packed with historical relics...and tourists. If you find the beach strip at Kato Pafos too developed, head up to Ktima on the hillside, which has an atmospheric Cypriot feel and a good choice of shops, restaurants and cafes. More beach resorts are strung out north along the coast towards Agios Georgios.

To seriously sidestep the crowds, consider renting a car and heading for the unspoilt Akamas Peninsula, where there are traditional villages, remote beaches and some of the best walks on the island. To the east, the vast Pafos Forest is equally enticing, melting almost imperceptibly into the sombre tracts of the Tyllirian wilderness.

Pafos itself has some of the island's most important archaeological sights, such as the extensive Pafos mosaics and the mysterious Tombs of the Kings. The small, pretty town of Polis, still untouched by package tourism, makes a perfect base for the independent traveller.

When to Go

Pafos is the island's top tourist destination, which is worth bearing in mind when planning your visit. July and August are, obviously, when you find the most sunbeds on the sand, the most sunburned noses – and the highest hotel prices. May-June and September-October are less crowded, with plenty of long sunny days. Spring and autumn can also be pleasantly warm, although evening temperatures cool down considerably. In winter, some restaurants and hotels close down altogether; if you head to the Western Troödos, you may even see some snow.

Best Places to Eat

- » Old Town Restaurant (p99)
- » Kiniras Garden (p88)
- » Argo (p89)
- » Imogen's Inn (p94)

Best Places to Stay

- » Axiothea Hotel (p204)
- » Bougainvillea Hotel
Apartments (p206)
- » Amarakos Inn (p205)
- » Ayii Anargyri Natural
Healing Spa Resort (p205)

PAFOS

POP 67,432

Linked by a traffic artery, Kato Pafos (Lower Pafos) and Ktima (Upper Pafos, 3km to the northeast) form a schizoid whole. Kato Pafos, the tourist centre, is blatantly geared towards English tourists, with the inevitable all-day English breakfasts and bars. It could be worse: construction along the palm-fringed seafront is low-rise and, as well as being home to a vast archaeological site, Kato Pafos has backstreets hiding other historic gems, like medieval baths, catacombs and a simple fishermen's church. The official Pafos Archaeological Site is the grand-slam sight, however, being one of the South's richest archaeological locales. When you're standing (relatively) alone here, surrounded by acres of history, a vast blue sky and the wild fennel and caper plants that grow on the Mediterranean's edges, you feel a thousand years away from Guinness on tap.

Ktima, the old centre of Pafos, is overall a calmer place, where locals go about their daily business much as they have for decades. The neighbourhoods are rich with handsome colonial buildings that house government institutions and many of the town's museums. Ktima is also home to some good hotels.

Sights

Pafos Archaeological Site

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

(Map p86; Kato Pafos; admission €3.40; ☀8am-7.30pm) Nea Pafos (New Pafos) is, ironically, the name given to the sprawling Pafos Archaeological Site, which occupies the western segment of Kato Pafos. Nea Pafos was the ancient city of Pafos, founded in the late 4th century BC. Palea Pafos (Old Pafos) was in fact Kouklia, southeast of today's Pafos, and the site of the Sanctuary of Aphrodite. At the time of Nea Pafos, Cyprus was part of the kingdom of the Ptolemies, the Greco-Macedonian rulers of Egypt whose capital was Alexandria. The city became an important strategic outpost for the Ptolemies, and the settlement grew considerably over the next seven centuries.

The city was originally encircled by massive walls and occupied an area of about 950,000 sq metres. Despite being ceded to the Romans in 58 BC, it remained the centre of all political and administrative life in Cyprus, reaching its zenith during the 2nd

ROAD DISTANCES (KM)

Polis	21			
Kato Pyrgos	69	46		
Fyti	36	17	66	
Pano Panagia	47	33	61	13
Lara Beach				
Polis				
Kato Pyrgos				
Fyti				

or 3rd century AD. It was during this time that the city's most opulent public buildings were constructed, including those that house the famous Pafos mosaics.

Nea Pafos went into decline following an earthquake in the 4th century that badly damaged the city. Subsequently, Salamis in the east became the new capital of Cyprus, and Nea Pafos was relegated to the status of a mere bishopric. Arab raids in the 7th century set the seal on the city's demise and neither Lusignan settlement (1192-1489) nor Venetian and Ottoman colonisation revived Nea Pafos' fortunes.

The archaeological site is still being excavated since it is widely believed that there are many treasures still to be discovered. The following sections detail the major sights.

Pafos Mosaics

This mesmerising collection of intricate and colourful mosaics is located in the southern sector of the archaeological site, immediately to the south of the Agora. Found by accident in 1962 by a farmer ploughing his field, these exquisite mosaics decorated the extensive floor area of a large, wealthy residence from the Roman period. Subsequently named the **House of Dionysus** (because of the number of mosaics featuring Dionysus, the god of wine), this complex is the largest and best known of the mosaic houses.

The most wonderful thing about the mosaics is that, apart from their artistic and aesthetic merits, each tells a story, mostly based on ancient Greek myths.

The first thing you'll see upon entering is not a Roman mosaic at all but a Hellenistic monochrome pebble mosaic showing the monster **Scylla**. Based on a Greek myth, this mosaic was discovered in 1977, a metre underground in the southwestern corner of the atrium.

© Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'