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Home > Asia > Cyprus > Paphos



## Paphos, Cyprus: On the path to culture's capital Comments (0)

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PAPHOS, CYPRUS: OK! loved the suites at the Almyra

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### LOCATED in the Eastern Mediterranean, Cyprus floats like an oasis of calm in the pathway of Europe, Asia and Africa says LEAH SIMPSON

The island is breathtakingly beautiful and rich in cultural heritage - making it perfect for the traveller looking to escape the stresses of modern day life.

Around the Paphos area, time is dictated by the slow ripening of grapes in the vineyard and wealth is measured in human warmth and hospitality.

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#### WHEN SHOULD I VISIT?

Cyprus enjoys the most clement weather of all the Mediterranean islands, so visitors grace its shores year round for 340 days of sunshine. OK! thinks it's the ideal winter sun destination, made for long, languid summers and mild winters.

#### WHAT CELEBS MIGHT I BUMP INTO?

Topshop boss Phillip Green has been known for holding a party or two at the uber posh **Anassa Hotel**. Tom Jones and Rachel Stevens are also fans of the hangout.

Cypriot singer Peter Andre is of course also regularly spotted on the island when he gets the odd break between working.

#### WHERE SHOULD I STAY?

The Annassa's sister hotel, the **Almyra**, represents the transformation of Paphos Beach Hotel, built in 1973 as the first hotel in Paphos.

Their relaunch as Almyra, meaning "taste of the sea", brings a complete reinvention of the resort experience in the legendary birthplace of Aphrodite.

Rooms are about comfort style and convenience, offering guests a choice of garden or sea view.

The Kyma suites at this resort have individual roof terraces furnished with cushions and lanterns, whilst the Aethon rooms offer a tranquil

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#### WHAT ABOUT SOMETHING MORE PERMANENT?

Thanks to a low tax regime, zero inheritance tax and exemptions for overseas interests and dividends, Cyprus makes the perfect location for second home owners.

OK! thought we had died and gone to heaven when we arrived at Cap St Georges. The development consists of a private enclave of sea-facing bespoke designer villas within paces of an unspoilt shore and a shimmering blue sea.

Those looking for a holiday home can rest assured they will live like the stars. Residents are provided with first-class security and a concierge services 24/7.

[Want incredible deals to Paphos? Click here now...](#)

A reputable operator can also help you with renting out your villa while you're away.

The gorgeous Cap St Georges operates just like a private members club fit for the famous: residents and their guests can enjoy exclusive facilities including a seashore clubhouse, spa, gym, tennis court and cinema.

The nearby islet of St George, the only island off Western Cyprus, is within easy swimming distance and attracts historians as well as romantics: Cleopatra is said to have prayed here.

**For more information visit:** [Capstgeorges.com](http://Capstgeorges.com)

#### WHERE CAN I EAT?

Luckily for us, the World Health Organisation rates Cyprus as one of the healthiest countries in the Mediterranean.

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The Almyra Hotel has a wonderful range of restaurants on site which attracts visitors from all over Paphos.

During our stay, we enjoyed the alfresco seaside Mediterranean, Asian cuisine and sushi at the poolside Notios restaurant, the Cypriot mezze accompanied by live music at seafront tavern Ouzeri and the light and trendy cuisine served up the Almyra Spa's Eauzone Restaurant.

The hotel also offers the "Omakase" gourmet menu presented by their executive chef. Coming from the term "trust the chef" in Japanese, when ordering Omakase, he creates a complete menu suited to your taste – each course having a different flavour and texture. OK! discovered the menu as we dined, each dish a surprise at the table.

#### WHERE CAN I SHOP?

Located in the courtyard at the Almyra entrance, Anthana Boutique displays a well-chosen panel of outfits, shoes and products from designers including Prada and Aqua di Parma.

Alternatively, there are a range of high street stores along Paphos harbour.

#### WHAT ARE THE MUST SEE SIGHTS?

##### Mosaics of Paphos

The House of Dionysos, House of Thesus, House of Aion and House of Opheus are all open to visitors. The mosaic floors of these third and fifth century AD noblemen's villas are considered among the finest in the Eastern Mediterranean - depicting scenes from Greek mythology.

##### Tombs of the Kings

Spread over a vast area, these impressive underground tombs date back to the fourth century BC. They are carved out of solid rock, some decorated with Doric pillars. High officials rather than Kings were buried here but the magnificence of the tombs gave the locality its name.

##### Paphos Mediaeval Fort

Originally a Byzantine fort built to protect the harbour, it was rebuilt by the Lusignans in the 13th century, dismantled by the Venetians in 1570, and rebuilt by the Ottomans after they captured the island in the 16th century.

Discover the 2000-year-old amphitheatre and the ruins at Kourion archaeological site and sample some of the delicious wines pressed in this region.

**WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?**

We took a trip to the [Kolios Vineyards](#). The winery is situated on a mountain peak about a kilometre on the outskirts of Statos Ayios Photios village. Next to the winery at a high of 3000 feet, are the actual "Kolois" vineyards – which we learned had been cultivated for more than four generations of ancestors.

Their wines – which include Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon - are of excellent quality so OK! took home a few bottles of our own.

**HOW DO I GET THERE?**

OK! travelled direct to Paphos from London Gatwick via EasyJet.

*For more information visit [Easyjet.com](#).*

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