

Pafos & the West



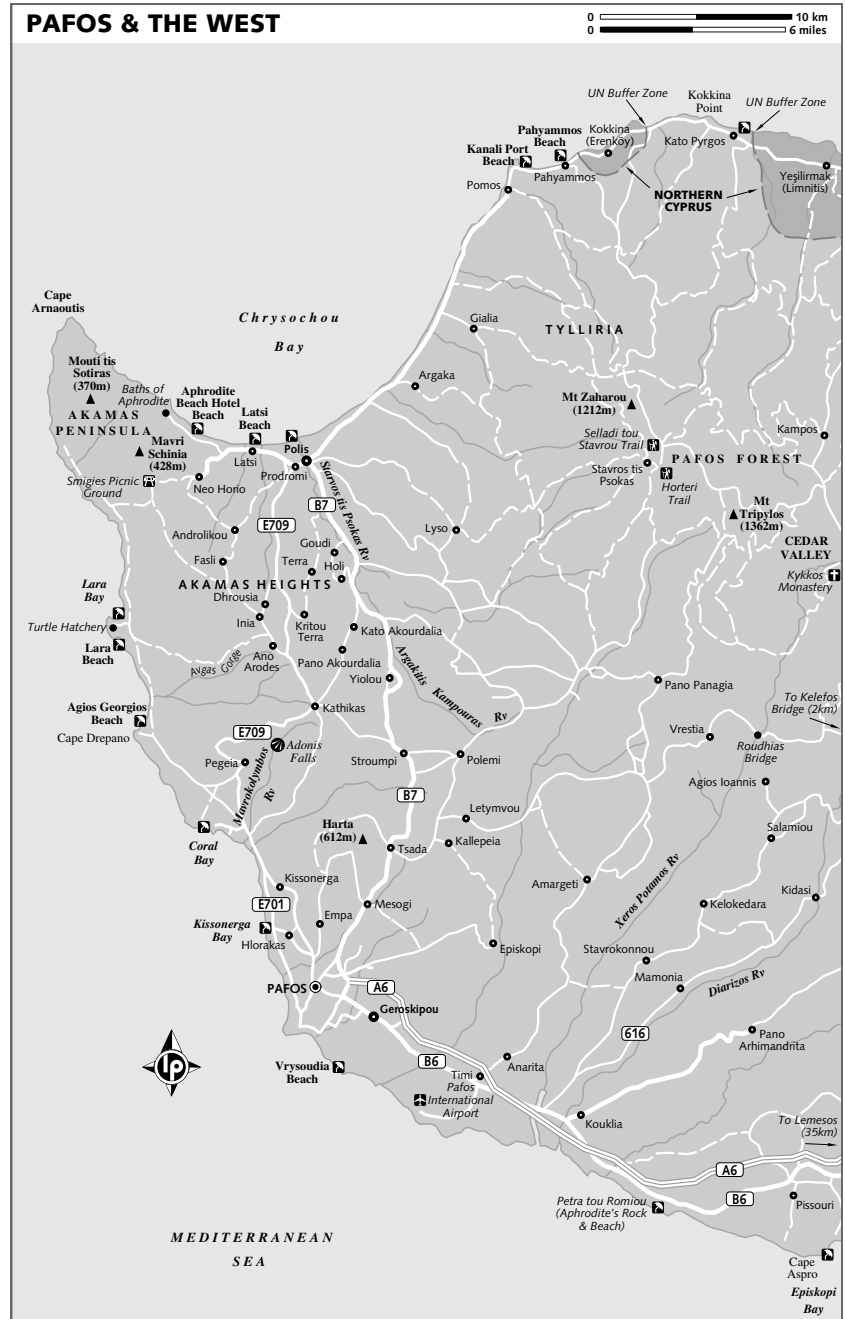
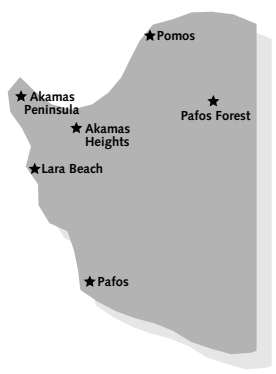
For centuries, this attractive part of the Republic of Cyprus was considered to be the island's Wild West thanks to its physical and cultural isolation from the heartland of the country. The region gained a reputation as backward and introspective, particularly as the Greek and Turkish dialects of the west were among the most difficult for an outsider to understand (the Greeks had even retained parts of Homeric vocabulary). Its people were considered canny yet uneducated, and they became the butt of the island's jokes. They were not bothered by this at all, and in fact considered themselves a notch above the rest of the island in intelligence.

The west's large Turkish population reluctantly moved to the North in 1974, leaving the area solely populated by Greeks. The 1983 construction of Pafos International Airport, a small hutlike structure, means that the region is no longer considered a backwater, and it now attracts an increasing share of the tourist influx, as demonstrated by the rows of resort hotels that stretch north and south from Pafos, the region's capital.

Despite the aesthetic assault that you might experience upon visiting Kato Pafos (Lower Pafos) and the tourist resorts in the area, the wilderness of the western region, particularly the Akamas Peninsula, is beautiful and romantic. It is in fact the most remarkable part of the Republic of Cyprus, with fantastic, remote beaches, villages full of character(s), and long, charming walks. To the east, the vast Pafos Forest melts almost imperceptibly into the sombre tracts of the Tyllirian wilderness. Pafos itself has some great sights, such as the extensive Pafos mosaics and mysterious Tombs of the Kings. Ktima, the old part of Pafos, less crushed by the tourist building boom, breathes a bit of history. The small, pretty town of Polis, recently deserted by package tourists, is a perfect base for the independent traveller.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore Pafos' ancient past by visiting the Roman **Pafos mosaics** (p121) and the **Tombs of the Kings** (p120) necropolis
- Wander the wild and rugged **Akamas Peninsula** (p131)
- Relax in lovely **Akamas Heights** (p129), spending time in its beautiful old villages and swimming on **Lara Beach** (p131)
- Catch a glimpse of an endangered **mouflon** (p137) in Pafos Forest
- Hear some jazz in September at **Paradise Jazz Festival** (p136) in Pomos
- Eat the best meze on the island at Pafos' **Seven St Georges' Tavern** (p126)



PAFOS ΠΑΦΟΣ ΒΑΦ

pop 40,000

Linked by a road artery, Kato Pafos (Lower Pafos) and Ktima (Upper Pafos) form an interesting whole. Kato Pafos, the tourist centre, has endless neon lights, bad music, and bars and clubs promising to cover their customers in suds; yet it has the South's most fascinating archaeological sites. When you're standing (relatively) alone in the midst of the Pafos Archaeological Site, 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 thousands of years away from the tourist paraphernalia.

Ktima, the real centre of Pafos, has managed to escape the tourist building boom; it's a calmer place where 'real Pafiotis' go about their daily business. It has lovely colonial buildings housing government institutions and many of the town's museums. Its old Turkish quarter, Mouttalos, is run-down and slightly deserted, but gives an idea of how things looked 30 years ago. But the highlight of Ktima is its excellent restaurants.

ORIENTATION

Pafos' two distinct sections are 3km apart. Intercity buses and service taxis arrive at Ktima; to get to Kato Pafos, catch bus 11, walk or take a taxi. Leoforos Apostolou Pavlou links the two parts of Pafos, and Leoforos Georgiou Griva Digeni leads east from Ktima towards Lemesos. Leoforos Evagora Pallikaridi heads north from Ktima to Polis.

Kato Pafos centres on Posidonos, and many hotels, bars and restaurants are dotted on this long street. Ktima's main shopping street is Leoforos Arhiepiskopou Makariou III. The two other central streets in Ktima are Gladstonos and Nikodimou Mylona, and both run off Makariou III. Tafon Ton Vasileon, otherwise known as Tombs of the Kings Rd, runs from Kato Pafos towards Coral Bay and has many restaurants and bars.

INFORMATION

Bookshops

Foreign-language newspapers are widely available throughout Pafos, particularly the British tabloid press.

Foreign Press Kiosk (Main Sq, Ktima) Has foreign-language newspapers.

Moufflon Bookshop (☎ 2693 4850; Kinyras 30, Ktima; ☎ 8.30am-1pm & 4-7pm Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri & Sun, 8.30am-2pm Wed & Sat) An offshoot of the bookshop of the same name in Lefkosia; has a good selection of foreign-language books, newspapers and magazines as well as Lonely Planet titles.

Stazo Trading (Posidonos, Kato Pafos) Has foreign-language newspapers; located on the waterfront.

Emergency

Police station (☎ 112; Main Sq, Ktima)

Internet Access

There are, unsurprisingly, more Internet cafés in Kato Pafos than in Ktima.

Baywatch Internet Cafe (Konstantias 1, Kato Pafos; per hr CY£2; ☎ 10am-midnight) With the tacky Baywatch bar.

Maroushia Internet (per hr CY£3; ☎ 10am-11pm Mon-Sat, 3-10pm Sun) Kato Pafos (☎ 2691 0657; Posidonos, Kato Pafos); Ktima (☎ 2694 7240; Plateia Kennedy 6, Ktima) Has branches in both Kato Pafos and Ktima.

Webstation Cafe (☎ 2695 2220; Agiou Antoniou 12, Kato Pafos; per hr CY£2; ☎ 10am-midnight) A large place on the main tourist strip.

Internet Resources

www.paphosfinder.com Lists a lot of useful services for visitors to the city.

Medical Services

Information about private doctors on call can be obtained by ringing ☎ 1426. You can also obtain information on night pharmacies on ☎ 1406.

Pafos General Hospital (☎ 2680 3100/3264; Ahepanos, Anavargos)

Money

There are plenty of banks and ATMs in Kato Pafos and Ktima, and along Leoforos Apostolou Pavlou. There are exchange services in both parts of town; you can also change money at Pafos International Airport.

Hellenic Bank (Kato Pafos (Posidonos, Kato Pafos); Ktima (Leoforos Georgiou Griva Digeni, Ktima) Both branches have ATMs. The Kato Pafos branch has a foreign-exchange service that keeps long hours.

National Bank (Posidonos, Kato Pafos) Has an easy-to-find ATM.

Post

Main post office (Nikodimou Mylona, Ktima) Just west of the main square. Poste restante mail is held here.

Post office (Agiou Antoniou, Kato Pafos) A smaller branch office.

PAFOS

Scale: 0 to 500 m / 0 to 0.3 miles

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PAFOS & THE WEST

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Telephone

Public phones are everywhere; the most convenient phones are on the waterfront in Kato Pafos, close to the harbour.

Cyprus Telecommunications Authority (CYTA); Leoforos Georgiou Griva Digeni, Ktima) You can make phone calls here.

Tourist Information

There are three Infopoint touch-screen electronic information booths in town. One is on the main square in Ktima and the other two are on Posidonos in Kato Pafos: one at the entrance to the Pafos Archaeological Site and the other on the main promenade. The information is in English, Greek and German.

Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CTO; www.visitcyprus.org.cy) airport (☎ 2642 3161; Pafos International Airport; ☎ 9.30am-11pm); Kato Pafos (☎ 2693 0521; Posidonos, Kato Pafos; ☎ 8.15am-2.30pm & 3-6.30pm Mon-Sat, closed Wed & Sat afternoons); Ktima (☎ 2693 2841; Gladstonos, Ktima; ☎ 8.15am-2.30pm & 3-6.30pm Mon-Sat, closed Wed & Sat afternoons) The CTO has decent maps, useful brochures and booklets on hiking, biking and agrotourism, a hotel guide, transport information and tons of other useful information about Cyprus.

Travel Agencies

Salamis Tours (☎ 2693 5504; fax 2693 5505; Leoforos Georgiou Griva Digeni 44, Ktima) A branch of the Lefkosia agency. It can issue cruise tickets for Greece and Egypt as well as air tickets to most destinations outside Cyprus.

SIGHTS

Tombs of the Kings

Imagine yourself surrounded by ancient tombs in a desertlike landscape, with waves crashing on rocks the only sound. If you're here in the summer, the sun will beat hard on you, making you seek shade down in the cool tombs. This is a fascinating and mysterious place.

The **Tombs of the Kings** (☎ 2694 0295; admission €0.75; ☎ 8.30am-7.30pm May-Sep, 8.30am-5pm Oct-Apr), a Unesco World Heritage site, is Pafos' main attraction. Two kilometres north of Kato Pafos, the site contains a set of well-preserved underground tombs and chambers used by residents of Nea Pafos from the 3rd century BC to the 3rd century AD, during the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Despite the name, the tombs were not actually used by royalty; they earned the title 'Tombs of the Kings' for their grand appear-

ance and the Doric pillars that help support the structures. Members of the higher social classes were buried here.

The seven excavated tombs are scattered over a wide area and all are accessible to the public. The most impressive is No 3, recently restored, which has an open atrium below ground level, surrounded by impressive Doric columns. A wooden staircase has been added for easier entrance. Other tombs, accessible by stone stairways, have niches built into the walls where bodies were stored. Most of the tombs' treasures have long since been spirited away by grave robbers – notably the late-19th-century American consul of Larnaka, Luigi Palma de Cesnola.

The tombs are unique in Cyprus due to their peristyle court structure, which was influenced by Egyptian architecture. The ancient Egyptians believed that tombs for the dead should resemble houses for the living, and this tradition is reflected in the Pafos tombs.

Allow at least two hours for the site; try to visit during the early morning as it can get very hot walking around the sprawling necropolis. Bring a hat and bottled water, and be very careful when descending into some of the tombs, as the stone steps are large and uncomfortable. To get here from Kato Pafos, jump on bus 15, heading for Coral Bay.

Pafos Archaeological Site

Nea Pafos (New Pafos) is the name given to the sprawling **Pafos Archaeological Site** (☎ 2694 0217; admission €1.50; ☎ 8am-7.30pm), which occupies the western segment of Kato Pafos. Nea Pafos is 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 Graeco-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, reaching several hundred metres east of today's Leoforos Apostolou Pavlou. The streets were laid out in a rectangular grid pattern, and archaeological excavations have shown evidence of

commercial and cultural activity over the life of the city. Nea Pafos was ceded to the Romans in 58 BC but remained the centre of all political and administrative life in Cyprus, reaching its zenith during the 2nd 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 (below).

Nea Pafos went into decline following an earthquake in the 4th century that badly damaged the city, as well as many other cities on the island. Subsequently, Salamis in the east became the new capital of Cyprus, and Nea Pafos was relegated to the status of a mere bishopric. It was at this time that the fine Hrysopolitissa Basilica (p123) was built. 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 being excavated slowly since it is widely believed that there are many treasures still to be discovered. Visitors can spend a busy half-day exploring the digs. Access to the Pafos Archaeological Site is via the entrance at the western end of the large harbour car park.

The following sections detail the major sights in the Pafos Archaeological Site.

PAFOS MOSAICS

This mesmerising collection of intricate and colourful mosaics in the southern sector of the archaeological site, immediately to the south of the Agora, is a pleasure to discover. Found by accident during levelling operations in 1962, 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 large 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. In particular, many are based on 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**. Mentioned by Homer, among others, this creature was once a

young girl who was the object of Glaucus' affections, but she did not care to return his love. Distraught by her rejection, he went to seek help from the witch Circe who, as fate would have it, was herself in love with Glaucus. Jealousy and black magic being a bad combination in the hands of a witch, Circe poured a dodgy potion into a bay that Scylla frequented for bathing. When Scylla dipped into the sea, her lower body was transformed into that of a long-tailed beast. Scylla, a miserable monster forever on, vented her anger at her fate by sinking passing ships. This mosaic was discovered in 1977, 1m underground in the southwest corner of the atrium.

The famous tale of **Narcissus** is depicted in a mosaic in room 2. This beautiful, vain man was so attractive that he loved no-one. Instead, he fell in love with himself and spent his entire life gazing at his image in a puddle, pining away with desire. The gods took pity on him, turning him into a yellow flower that only grows near water so he could look at his reflection.

The wonderful **Four Seasons mosaic** (room 3) depicts Summer holding a sickle and wearing ears of corn, Spring crowned with flowers and holding a shepherd's stick, Autumn crowned with leaves and wheat, and Winter as a bearded grey-haired man.

Phaedra & Hippolytos (room 6) is one of the most important mosaics in the house. The mosaic depicts the tragic tale of a step-mother's bizarre love for her stepson. Theseus married Phaedra after abandoning his first wife, the Amazon Antiope, the mother of Hippolytos. Phaedra, tormented by her love, wrote a letter to Hippolytos declaring her affections.

The mosaic depicts the moment when the panicked Hippolytos reads the letter, and Phaedra, waiting to hear his reaction, is burned by Eros' torch of love. The spurned Phaedra told her husband the story, only switching facts and telling him that his son had in fact declared his love to her. Outraged and hurt, Theseus prayed to his father, the sea god Poseidon, for punishment, and Hippolytos was killed by a wild bull that attacked him one night. But, after his death, the truth was revealed, and Phaedra, wracked with guilt, ended her own life.

One of the best mosaics in the house is the **Rape of Ganymede** (room 8). Ganymede,

a beautiful young shepherd, and so desirable that not even Zeus could resist him. Zeus turned himself into an eagle and lifted Ganymede to Olympus, where the boy became the cupbearer of the gods. The mosaicist had apparently miscalculated the space allowed to him, which is why the eagle's wings are cropped.

In the Western Portico (room 16) is a mosaic based on a tale familiar to any lover of Shakespeare: the story of **Pyramus & Thisbe**. Told by Ovid in his *Metamorphosis*, it was adapted in *Romeo and Juliet* and was performed by the 'mechanicals' in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The story tells of two lovers from hostile families who could not make their love public, but who arrange to meet at dawn. Thisbe, having arrived first and wearing a veil across her face, encounters a bloody lioness wanting to drink at a stream. Afraid of the beast, Thisbe runs into a nearby cave, leaving her veil behind. The lioness, doing what lionesses do, rips the veil to shreds. You can guess the rest; Pyramus arrives at this moment and sees the lioness with Thisbe's bloody veil, and thinks she has been devoured by the animal. Unable to imagine life without Thisbe, he draws his sword and kills himself. Thisbe then comes out of the cave and, upon finding Pyramus dead, kills herself with his sword.

For details on other mosaics, buy the excellent official *Guide to the Pafos Mosaics*, on sale for CY€3 at the ticket kiosk.

A short walk away are the smaller **Villa of Theseus** and the **House of Aion**. The latter, a purpose-built structure made from stones found on the site, houses a 4th-century mosaic display made up of five separate panels. The house was named after the pagan god Aion, who is depicted in the mosaics. Although the image has been damaged somewhat, the name Aion and the face of the god can be clearly seen.

The Villa of Theseus is most likely a 2nd-century private residence and is named after a mosaic representation of the hero Theseus fighting the Minotaur. The building occupies an area of 9600 sq metres, and so far 1400 sq metres of mosaics have been uncovered. The round mosaic of Theseus and the Minotaur is remarkably well preserved and can be seen in room 36. Other mosaics to look out for are those of Poseidon in room 76 and Achilles in rooms 39 and 40.

Allow at least two hours to see the three houses properly.

AGORA, ASKLIPIEION & ODEION

The Agora (or forum) and Asklepieion date back to the 2nd century AD and constitute the heart of the original Nea Pafos complex. Today, the Agora consists mainly of the Odeion, a semicircular theatre that was restored in 1970 but does not look particularly ancient. The rest of the Agora is discernible by the remains of marble columns that form a rectangle in the largely empty open space. What is left of the Asklepieion, the healing centre and altar of Asklepios, god of medicine, runs east to west on the southern side of the Odeion.

SARANTA KOLONES FORTRESS

Not far from the mosaics are the remains of the medieval Saranta Kolones Fortress, named for the 'forty columns' that were once a feature of the now almost levelled structure. Little is known about the precise nature or history of the original fortress, other than it was built by the Lusignans in the 12th century and was subsequently destroyed by an earthquake in 1222. The structure had four huge corner towers and another four intermediary towers along the joining walls. A few desultory arches are the only visual evidence of its original grandeur.

Fort of Pafos

This small and empty **fort** (admission CY€0.75; ☎ 9am-6pm May-Sep, 9am-5pm Oct-Apr) guards the harbour entrance and is entered by a little stone bridge over a moat. Most visitors climb the fort for the good views of the harbour from its roof. The fort also serves as an event venue during the Pafos Aphrodite Festival (p124).

The fort is in fact all that remains of an earlier Lusignan fort built in 1391; the rest of it was destroyed by the Venetians less than a hundred years later. The Ottomans fixed only the roof, on which they built eight cannon slots aiming in all directions.

Agia Solomoni & the Christian Catacomb

This fairly nondescript **tomb complex** (admission free) just off Leoforos Apostolou Pavlou is the burial site of the Seven Machabee Brothers,

who were martyred around 174 BC, during the time of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Their mother was Agia Solomoni, a Jewish woman who became a saint after the death of her seven sons. It is thought that the space was a synagogue in Roman times. The entrance to the catacomb is marked by a collection of votive rags tied to a large tree outside the tomb. This ostensibly pagan practice is still carried out by Christian visitors today. The tomb was used as a church in the 12th century, as shown by the still-visible frescoes.

Agios Lambrianos Rock-Cut Tomb

A little further north, on the side of Fabrica Hill, are a couple of enormous **underground caverns** (admission free) most likely dating from the early Hellenistic period. These are also burial chambers associated with the saints Lambrianos and Misitikos. The interiors of the tombs bear frescoes that indicate they were used as a Christian place of worship.

Hrysopolitissa Basilica & St Paul's Pillar

This fairly extensive **site** (admission free), which is still being excavated, was home to one of Pafos' largest religious structures. What's left are the foundations of a **Christian basilica** (built in the 4th century), which aptly demonstrate the size and magnificence of the original church; it was ultimately destroyed during Arab raids in 653. Green-marble columns from this church lie scattered around the site and **mosaics** from the church floor are still visible. Further incarnations of the basilica were built over the years, leading to the present small **Agia Kyriaki** church. The overall area is loosely roped off, so you can't get a total picture of the remains.

What is visible on the western side of the basilica is the so-called **St Paul's Pillar**, where St Paul was allegedly tied and scourged 39 times before he finally converted his tormentor, the Roman governor Sergius Paulus, to Christianity.

On the northwest side of the site is a tiny **early-Christian basilica**, the entrance to which has been almost completely taken over by the gnarled root of a nearby tree.

Agia Paraskevi

One of the loveliest churches in the Pafos area is the six-domed Byzantine church of **Agia Paraskevi** (admission free; ☎ 8am-1pm & 2-5pm),

in Geroskipou, east of Pafos. Most of the surviving frescoes date back to the 15th century, but many, restored in the 1970s, are covered at present and cannot be seen. The first frescoes visible when entering are the **Last Supper**, the **Washing of Feet** and the **Betrayal**. A primitive but interesting depiction of the **Virgin Orans** (the Virgin Mary with her arms raised) can be seen in the central cupola.

Archaeological Museum

This small **museum** (☎ 2694 0215; Leoforos Georgiou Griva Digeni, Ktima; admission CY€0.75; ☎ 9am-5pm Mon-Fri, 10am-1pm Sat & Sun) houses a varied and extensive collection of artefacts from eras ranging from the Neolithic period to the 18th century. Displayed in four rooms, the collection includes jars, pottery and glassware, tools, coins and coin moulds. Hellenistic and Roman artefacts include a limestone grave stele, marble statuettes, votive objects, pottery from the House of Dionysus (p121) and terracotta figures of dogs and stags. All in all, it's a collection for admirers of archaeological minutiae, although it lacks any outstanding items. It is worthy of a browse before visiting Ktima's other two museums.

The Archaeological Museum is located about 1km from the centre of Ktima.

Byzantine Museum

This noteworthy **museum** (☎ 2693 1393; Andrea Ioannou 5, Ktima; admission CY€1; ☎ 9am-4pm Mon-Fri, 9am-1pm Sat) is south of the main square in Ktima. It is worth visiting for its collection of icons from the 13th and 14th centuries, ecclesiastical vestments, vessels, documents and copies of scriptures. The collection contains a 9th-century icon of Agia Marina, thought to be the oldest icon on the island, and an unusual double-sided icon from Filousa dating from the 13th century.

Ethnographical Museum

Also in Ktima is the privately owned and maintained **Ethnographical Museum** (☎ 2693 2010; Exo Vrysis 1, Ktima; admission CY€1; ☎ 9am-6pm Mon-Sat, 9am-1pm Sun), which houses a varied collection of coins, traditional costumes, kitchen utensils, Chalcolithic axe heads, amphorae and other assorted items. There's more of the same in the garden, including a Hellenistic rock-cut tomb. The CY€3 guidebook available at the entrance helps you sort out the seemingly jumbled collection.

Agios Georgios Museum

Of possible interest to buffs of recent Cypriot history is this rather bizarre and nationalistic museum (Hlorakas; admission free; ☎ 9am-6pm) located on the spot where the caïque *Agios Georgios* (now the museum's prime exhibit), captained by EOKA rebel Georgos Grivas, landed in November 1954 with a large supply of arms and munitions to start the uprising against British colonial rule. Grivas and his band of rebels were finally arrested while attempting another landing two months later. The museum walls document the rebels' capture and subsequent trial, and make for some fascinating reading.

The site, known as 'Grivas Landing', is 4km north of Kato Pafos and is easily identified by the large Agios Georgios church, built to commemorate the event. Take Coral Bay bus 10 or 15 to get there. The museum is on the coastal road going northwest, past the village of Lemba, near St George Hotel.

ACTIVITIES Beaches

The blue waters around Pafos are clean and alluring, and all the beaches listed below have earned EU Blue Flags for cleanliness, so you can swim freely. Keep in mind, however, that the open sea often develops a swell, making swimming a bit of a hit-and-miss affair unless you like choppy seas.

The most popular town beach is the **municipal beach**. Although it is next to Posidonos in central Kato Pafos, tourists love it and the swimming is good. You will need a scooter or a car to get to **Faros Beach**, north of the archaeological site. It's an exposed, sandy beach with some sandstone rocks, and a couple of on-site snack bars.

Even further out, around 8km north of Kato Pafos, is the long, sandy undeveloped beach of **Kissonerga Bay**, where you can find banana plantations and solitude. There are almost no facilities, so bring a book, food and water, and relax.

Southeast from Kato Pafos is the handy **Alykes Beach** – this place is nothing special, but it's good if you want to have a swim away from the municipal beach. Further along is **Vrysoudia Beach**; like Alykes, it's not particularly attractive, but the water is clean and fine for swimming when there is no surf. There's a range of facilities, from umbrellas for hire to restaurants and toilets.

Diving

The waters off Pafos are ideal for diving, and with around 30 sites to explore, some with evocative names such as 'Bubbles', the 'Wreck of the Achilleas', 'Stan's Dilemma' or the 'Valley of Caves', there are enough dives to fill a month or more. **CyDive** (☎ 2693 4271; www.cydive.com; Posidonos, Kato Pafos) can help you take full advantage of the opportunity. Single dives, including all equipment, cost CY€22 while a package of 10 dives costs CY€200.

For more on the best dives in Cyprus, see the boxed text, p86.

PAFOS FOR CHILDREN

Children won't be bored in Pafos. Like the rest of Cyprus, the town is child-friendly, and there are a few places for them to use up all that energy and be entertained at the same time.

Pafos Bird Park (☎ 2681 3852; www.pafosbirdpark.com; Agios Georgiou; adult/child CY€9/€5; ☎ 9am-8pm Apr-Sep, 9am-5pm Oct-Mar) may be Cyprus' best zoo and best children's attraction rolled into one. Apart from birds, there are giraffes, antelopes, deer, gazelles, moufflon, reptiles, giant tortoises, emus, ostriches, small goats and so on. There's also a restaurant and snack bar, and a kiddies' playground. It's located on the road to Coral Bay.

Aphrodite Waterpark (☎ 2691 3638; Poseidonos; www.aphroditewaterpark.com; ☎ 10.30am-5.30pm May & Jun, 10am-6pm Jul & Aug, 10am-5pm Sep & Oct; admission adult/child/under 3 yrs CY€15/8/free) is all-day-entertainment material, where the adults can have a massage while the kids battle the mini volcano. A wristband can keep track of all your daily expenses, which you then pay at the end of the day.

Pafos Aquarium (☎ 2695 3920; Artemidos 1, Kato Pafos; adult/child/family CY€3.75/2/10; ☎ 10am-9pm) has 72 tanks of all things with a fish face and, scarily, some crocodiles. It's situated very close to the harbour.

TOURS

Exalt (☎ 2694 3803; www.cyprus-adventure.com; Agias Kyriakis 24, Kato Pafos) is a Pafos-based outfit that runs hiking and 4WD-based expeditions to the Akamas Peninsula, the Avgas Gorge and the Troödos Massif.

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

In early September, the **Pafos Aphrodite Festival** (www.pafc.com.cy) has opera under the stars. The

festival specialises in classic opera performances, such as Puccini's *Tosca* (2003), and Verdi's *Rigoletto* (2004) and *La Traviata* (2005).

Every year, one opera is chosen and performed alfresco in Pafos Castle to enraptured audiences.

SLEEPING

Accommodation in Pafos is designed for package-tour groups; there are hardly any places that might be used to independent travellers. However, hotels will accommodate you if there is space.

The only worthwhile camping ground nearby is at Coral Bay (p129), 11km north of Pafos.

Ktima

Kiniras (☎ 2694 1604; www.kiniras.cy.net; Arhiepiskopou Makariou III 91; per person Oct-May/Jun, Jul & Sep/Aug CY€15/20/25) Bang in the centre of Ktima, Kiniras is passionately run by its house-proud owner, who painted the Cyprus-themed pictures on the walls of the bedrooms. The

rooms are decorated in dark-red wood, and have telephone, radio, TV, fridge and safe box. The hotel's downstairs restaurant, Kiniras Garden, is a good place to eat (p127).

Agapinor Hotel (☎ 2693 3926; www.agapinorhotel.com.cy; Nikodimou Mylona 24-25; s/d CY€32/46; ☎) This is a three-star hotel with a large pool (which is very welcome in inland Ktima), airy rooms, an evening restaurant, a coffee shop and guest parking.

Axiothea Hotel (☎ 2693 2866; fax 2694 5790; Ivis Mallioti 2; s/d CY€23/31.50) This hotel, on the high ground to the south of the CTO, has a glass-fronted bar and reception with wonderful views of the sea – perfect for watching sunset. It's a two-star place that is a reasonable budget option.

HI Hostel (☎ 2693 2588; Eleftheriou Venizelou 37; dm CY€4.50) Although cheap, this rather run-down hostel, northeast of Ktima, is a bit out of the way for the beaches. To get to the hostel, walk up Leoforos Evagora Pallikaridi and turn right onto Leoforos Eleftheriou Venizelou; the hostel is 750m along on the left.

SPA LIFE

A wonderful new branch of tourism seems to be taking hold in Cyprus, where spa-lovers are being pampered to death in the island's top hotels. This luxury is best taken advantage of in the mild winter days, when the stifling heat doesn't undo the effect of all that relaxing.

You can take sanctuary in the **Anassa Hotel** (☎ 2693 8333; www.thanoshotels.com/ans/ansfrm.html; d from CY€105; ☎), near Polis. Its rooms, overlooking the sea, are endlessly comfortable, and the spa is built under the hotel chapel. There are large indoor and outdoor pools, steam room, sauna and Jacuzzi, and a candle-lit room for yoga and meditation classes (Hatha and Kundalini yoga are practised here). Aromatherapy massage, hand and foot treatments, Indian head massage, reiki, detox wraps and salt scrubs are all offered, to soothe the body and mind.

Le Meridien Limassol (☎ 2586 2000; www.lemeridien-cyprus.com; d from CY€165) is Cyprus' oldest and most famous spa. It has 32 treatment rooms, with treatments ranging from the curious-sounding Hawaiian Wave Four Hand massage (where your hands are covered with frangipani oil and then rubbed) and Fennel Cleansing Cellulite and Colon Therapy to good old Thai massage.

A haven for those who want to be waited on hand and foot, **Thalassa Hotel in Pafos** (☎ 2662 3222; www.thalassa.com.cy; d from CY€365) provides a private 24-hour butler, reachable by mobile phone, with your room. The therapies on offer here are innovative: the Trhana Body Ritual has yoghurt and herbs rubbed over your skin (sounds a little like you're going to get roasted!), and Kofo Therapia Me Keri uses the old technique of drawing wax out of your ears with a thin candle. A highlight of this place is that you don't have to be confined to the therapy rooms – you can have your massages and treatments on the beach.

Columbia Beach Resort (☎ 2583 3000; www.columbia-hotels.com; d from CY€195) in Pissouri has been praised highly by spa-lovers. It's built in a remote area and has been designed to look like a traditional village without ending up as a hideous travesty. It is comparatively more affordable than the other spa hotels. There are around 25 treatments, many of which seem to be named after abstract ideas and philosophies. The highlights include Chinese Taoist body massage, Metamorphosis massage and Ayurvedic massage.

Kato Pafos

This part of town is a sea of characterless hotels and apartments, and prices generally don't match what's on offer. The following choices are hotels that are used to walk-ins.

Dionysos (☎ 2693 3414; fax 2693 3908; Dionysou 1; s/d CY€56/82; 🍷 🍷) Off the main Posidonos avenue, this is the best small hotel in Kato Pafos. The rooms are in white-painted wood, with navy, marine details, and are neat and comfortable. There is a pool and a Jacuzzi in a cool garden, with an open-air dining area and a bar.

Alexander the Great (☎ 2696 5000; www.kanika-hotels.com/article.php?id=31; Posidonos; r per person from CY€44.50; 🍷 🍷) A stylish four-star place where a dishevelled traveller is not a welcome sight. The rooms are plush, with large silky-quilted beds. It has everything you need if you don't want to leave the hotel: tennis, gymnasium, children's area, restaurant and bar, and it's right on the beach. Discounts of 40% apply out of season.

Annabelle (☎ 2693 8333; www.thanoshotels.com/anna/annafirm.html; Posidonos; r CY€131-174; 🍷 🍷) A five-star hotel with wonderfully luxurious rooms, some with private pools. The large hotel pool snakes through the site and the deck chairs that sit on the pool's edge are shaded by tall trees. Discounts of 30% apply out of season.

Basilica (☎ 2693 3500; fax 2693 3110; Alkminis 3; studios & apt from CY€45) This is an apartment complex with a good choice of studios and one- and two-bedroom apartments. All are fully equipped and neat, and allow for self-catering. The location is very central.

Porto Paphos (☎ 2694 2333; porto@spidernet.com.cy; Posidonos; s/d CY€43/62; 🍷) Right on the main tourist beat, sandwiched between Pizza Hut and a large hotel, Porto Paphos is a cement-block building, ugly from the outside, a bit better from the inside. The terrace has nice sea views, but as you watch the sun sinking into the sea, you can also gaze at Pizza Hut diners sinking their teeth into their dinner. The hotel has its own pool and the rooms all have balconies. There is also a gym, children's area and restaurant.

Pyramos Hotel (☎ 2693 5161; pyramos@cytanet.com.cy; Agias Anastasias 4; s/d CY€22/28) Having got an extra star after its renovation in 2004, this place has spacious, run-down rooms. The service is friendly and it's right in the centre of Kato Pafos. TV is available on request.

EATING

Pafos' food scene is as random as its sleeping one. The restaurants, particularly in Kato Pafos, are predominantly used to diners seeking low-quality food; we advise you to check a place out before you eat there. Tafon Ton Vasileon (Tombs of the Kings Rd) and the harbour have some good restaurants, but the restaurants in Ktima are the ones you should really go for.

Ktima

Zaffron (☎ 2693 3026; Tafon Ton Vasileon 110; mains CY€7-10; 🍷 lunch & dinner Tue-Sun, dinner only Mon) Zaffron has caused a stir among Cypriot gastronomes, and the place is always full of people who want to be spotted in this most fash-

ionable of restaurants. But being seen is not what it's all about: the food is truly delicious. The menu is Mediterranean, so try the rack of lamb with pesto or the homemade pâtés, and end your meal with a chocolate dessert you will remember for months. There is also a good cocktail lounge bar. Basically, in Pafos, this is where it's at.

Fetta's Corner (☎ 2693 7822; Ioanni Agroti 33; mains CY€3-5; 🍷 evenings) A little old lady cooks and dishes things out through a low window on the side of the house; the grill's smoke is so thick it makes you think she might come running out with her apron on fire. Through the clouds of smoke, efficient waiters dodge the cars, crossing the little street between the lady's window and the tables sprawled on the pavement and in the little park. The food is simple, meze and grills, but it's cheap and tasty, and the service is great.

Kiniras Garden (☎ 2694 1604; Arhiepiskopou Makariou III 91; mains CY€7.50-12.50; 🍷 dinner) This little oasislike restaurant is in the leafy and shaded garden of the Kiniras hotel (p125). The owner demands booking in advance, as he gets his ingredients fresh according to the number of diners booked, a very good sign. The appetisers are named after villages in the North, where the owner was born. *Kleftiko* (oven-baked lamb) is a house specialty and worth coming for – once you eat a good *kleftiko*, you'll become fussy indeed. There are homemade desserts, and the digestive drink is on the house. The wine list has good wines from the Pafos area (CY€7 to CY€15).

Kato Pafos

Hondros (☎ 2693 4256; Leoforos Apostolou Pavlou 96; mains CY€3.50-7.50; 🍷 lunch & dinner) A fat Cypriot bloke in an undershirt gives you 'come hither' glances from the big board above Hondros. Below is a lovely terrace shaded by vines. Tables are covered in simple pink checked cloths, the service is good and the food traditional and delicious. The menu offers all the usual Cypriot dishes, with meaty *stifado* (rabbit or beef stew) for CY€6.50 and *kleftiko* for CY€7.50, and a variation on the tasty Turkish dish *Imam Bayildi*, here known as *Imam* (aubergines and courgettes in a tomato and garlic sauce), for CY€4.95. The children's menu ('Kids corner') looks as if it was lifted out of a McDonald's, with

a choice of chicken nuggets, fishfingers and hamburgers, all for CY€3.50.

Koh-i-Noor (☎ 2696 5544; Cleous 7; mains CY€6.50; 🍷 dinner) From the dozens of Indian restaurants in Pafos, this is the one that everyone recommends. The North Indian cuisine has aromatic tandoori dishes, and the lamb korma is great. There is also a good wine list, so you could be here for hours.

Mother's Restaurant (☎ 2696 3474; Leoforos Apostolou Pavlou; veg dishes CY€3.90-10.50; 🍷 dinner) A good place for a bit of fish, which explains all the cats lounging in the courtyard. The fresh seafood platter is a good starter for two people. It also serves 'vetererian' dishes. It's across the road from Hondros, in the Basilica Centre.

Argo (☎ 2693 3327; Pafias Afroditi 21; 3-course set dinner CY€6; 🍷 dinner) Decent *kleftiko* is made freshly and twice a week (Tuesday and Saturday), when it's advisable to book. The moussaka is recommended. The restaurant has a small terrace and is in the (relatively) quiet part of tourist-tastic Kato Pafos.

Almond Tree (☎ 2693 5529; Konstantias 5; mains CY€5-10; 🍷 dinner) One of Pafos' better-kept culinary secrets, featuring Cypriot 'fusion' cuisine. Thai-Cypriot tastes titillate the palate along with a smattering of stock Cypriot and international dishes.

Mandra Taverna (☎ 2693 4129; Dionysou 4; mains CY€5.25-9; 🍷 dinner) This place sells itself as the 'genuine article' among the vast number of cheap, bad eateries and restaurants by virtue of having been there since 1979 and its name having originated from the word for barn. But it really does look like yet another mass-tourism place. The dozens of tables and chairs scream quantity over quality, but many guests swear by the fish meze.

Nikos Tyrimos Fish Taverna (☎ 2694 2846; Agapinoros 71; fish meze CY€8; 🍷 lunch & dinner) You can smell the fresh fish as soon as you walk into this busy place. This is the place in Pafos to come for the creatures of the sea, caught daily from the owner's own boats. Choose from the ones on display (CY€3.75 to CY€8) or settle for an enormous helping of fish meze, consisting of 22 different dishes.

DRINKING

There is not a nontouristy, nontheme, non-special-offer, non-blasting-music bar in sight, so don't come here if you're looking for class, fashion or understatement. Places

THE AUTHOR'S CHOICE

Seven St Georges' Tavern (☎ 2696 3175; Geroskipou village; www.7stgeorgestavern.com; meze CY€10) If only everyone was as loving and meticulous about food production and preparation as George, the tavern's owner. Everything you eat and drink in this place is grown, dried or pickled organically by the owner. He has a herb garden at the back, and a meat-smoking cabin from where drool-provoking smells tickle the nostrils. Even the wine is produced here, from organic home-grown grapes. Your meze, the house speciality, comes in the usual trickle of olives and capers, beetroot and carrot salads, cold meats, casseroles and smoked ham. Everything is season-dependent so you might get hand-picked wild asparagus, herbed wild mushrooms, aubergines in tomato, or fantastically tender *kleftiko* (oven-baked lamb). In terms of food, this is the closest thing to a self-sufficient heaven. The restaurant is in an old house, with a vine-and-palm-leaf-covered terrace. A good, traditional host, George walks around and chats to his guests. His 'food philosophy' is proudly displayed on the website and he's happy to tell you about it himself. And as you'll see once you've eaten here, you'll come out feeling the harmony between your stomach and your soul.

like Woody's bar or Tropical Nights adorn the once-quiet streets of Kato Pafos, and Bubbles stays true to its name by shooting bubble guns outside to lure customers. Clubs are always promoted by women in bikinis (actual or pictured) and suds and foam parties are a tourist's delight. English pubs are just like back 'ome, but with the added treat of Robbie Williams impersonators (and such like) entertaining the sunburnt crowds. Most bars and pubs are clustered along Agiou Antoniou, known locally as Bar Street.

Mikro Café (☎ 2691 1567; Municipal Gardens, Ktima) A great place for coffee or booze, with wooden chairs and tables under the pine trees, and fabulous pastrami and smoked-cheese walnut-bread sandwiches. There is a children's playground close by, so it's an ideal spot if you have kids.

La Place Royale (☎ 2693 3995; Posidonos, Kato Pafos) This is one of the classiest café-cum-bars, right on the people-watching strip at the eastern end of Posidonos. This little oasis of glass, cane and wrought iron in a shaded paved patio is perfect for a prepub or preclub cocktail.

Different Bar (☎ 2693 4668; Agias Napas, Kato Pafos) 'Different' is different in that it is a gay bar and is not as tacky as all the bars and eateries surrounding it. The front terrace has simple square tables and stools, and a big steel sign.

Baywatch (nr Konstantias & Agias Napas, Kato Pafos) If bright-green cushioned chairs, pool playing, and large-breasted waitresses are your thing, then this is the place for you. All the tables are facing the street for yet more visual stimulation, and the cocktails just keep on coming.

ENTERTAINMENT

As with the bars in Pafos, clubs are two a penny and mostly all the same. Disco, '70s funk, '80s pop, house, trance, garage and R&B are the usual choices of music. Don't confuse ordinary clubs with 'cabarets', which are basically brothels.

Starsky & Hutch (☎ 9983 8054; Agiou Antoniou, Kato Pafos) It's all about the TV series here, with glitzy décor, sequins and zebra stripes. Diana Ross, ABBA and other '70s biggies dominate the playlist – before you come here, make sure you remember the moves to 'YMCA'.

Zik-Zak (☎ 2694 7127; Tafon Ton Vasileon) This is where the Cypriots live it up at night, particularly the older generations, who do the dances from their youth.

Club S-cape (Agiou Antoniou, Kato Pafos) Two enormous bars (less queuing) and a seated chill-out area mean that once you're danced out, there's plenty of space to rest. Be present for the weekly carwash disco parties (prepare to be sudsed and rinsed!) and enjoy classic tracks from the '70s and '80s, and house music and R&B on the new sound system.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Air

Pafos International Airport is 8km south-east of the town. Many charter planes and some scheduled planes fly here. There are two offices for **Cyprus Airways** (airport ☎ 2642 2641; Pafos International Airport; Ktima ☎ 2693 3556; Gladstonos 37-39, Ktima) in Pafos.

Bus

Nea Amoroza Transport Co (☎ 2693 6822; Leoforos Evagora Pallikaridi 79) and **Kemek Transport** (☎ 2693 6822; Leoforos Evagora Pallikaridi 79) operate buses to Polis, Lemesos and Lefkosia. The companies' shared office is northeast of Ktima's main square, and buses leave from the urban bus station. There are two services per day to Lemesos (CY€2) and Lefkosia (CY€3), and around 10 buses a day to Polis (CY€1). There are also three buses daily (except Sunday) to Pomos village (CY€1.10), northeast of Polis.

Alepa Bus Co (☎ 2693 1755; Nikodimou Mylona 17) also has daily buses at either 7.30am or 8am to Lefkosia and Lemesos. If you book in advance you can be collected from your hotel; otherwise, buses leave from the urban bus station near Karavella Parking.

Service Taxi

Service taxis are operated by **Travel & Express** (☎ 0777 7474; Leoforos Evagora Pallikaridi 9) in Ktima. Sample rates are CY€3.50 to Lemesos, CY€8 to Larnaka (change at Lemesos) and CY€9 to Lefkosia (change at Lemesos).

GETTING AROUND

There are no buses to the airport. A regular taxi to the airport from Pafos will cost between CY€5 and CY€7 or you can get a service taxi.

The urban bus station in Ktima is near Karavella Parking, behind the Alepa Bus Co office. From here, buses leave for various local destinations. Bus 10 runs every 20 minutes for Coral Bay and its beach (CY€0.50, 25 minutes). Bus 11 leaves every 10 to 15 minutes for Kato Pafos (CY€0.50, 15 minutes).

Bus 15 runs between Geroskipou Beach, 3km to the southeast of Kato Pafos, and Coral Bay, via Kato Pafos. This service is every 15 to 20 minutes and travels along the coastal route, past the major hotel strip. The cost is CY€0.50.

Afroditi Taxis (Georgiou Griva Digeni) is handy for a quick lift if you are up in Ktima, while **Daphne Taxi** (☎ 2624 4013; nr Pafias Afroditis & Agias Napas) is easy to spot in Kato Pafos.

D Antoniaides Ltd (☎ 2693 3301; Leoforos Evagora Pallikaridi 111-113), in Ktima, rents mountain bikes, motorcycles and mopeds.

AROUND PAFOS

The area around Pafos is superb for exploration, beaches and walks. To visit, however, you'll generally need to take a tour or organise your own transport. While a scooter is great for pottering around beach resorts, you won't be able to tour the region on one. A car is best if you want to cover any distance, especially if you want to go around the western Troödos foothills and villages, the wild and desolate Akamas Peninsula or the seldom-visited and sparsely populated Tyllirian wilderness of northwest Cyprus. A small 4WD is ideal for reaching some of the more isolated places, although the roads are generally pretty good. Many private tour companies run 4WD 'safaris' out of Pafos and Polis, should you prefer to let others do all the hard work.

CORAL BAY

Locals talk about how there used to be coral on this beach, now a well-developed and busy stretch. But although rows of umbrellas and crowds of bathers are no longer conducive to finding coral on this lovely beach, the atmosphere is lively and it is good for families. Coral Bay is located 12km west of Pafos, and there are several different stretches of the beach, all accessible from different parts of the approach road. The

cafeterias are indifferent and serve mainly hamburgers and chips or varieties thereof.

Camping Feggari (☎ 2662 1534; tent & 1 person CY€2.50) is about the only worthwhile camping ground in the Pafos region. There are 47 sites and a snack bar.

ADONIS FALLS

This is a tourist trap if there ever was one, although it's a pretty place. This 10m-high waterfall splashes into the so-called Baths of Adonis, a small swimming hole just upstream from the Mavrokolymbos reservoir. Bought by a local entrepreneur who charges CY€4 to go in and have a look or swim, the reservoir is reached by a windy dirt track, for which a 4WD is a must. The journey could last up to 30 minutes, so think carefully before you decide to go. The reservoir is signposted inland off the main Pafos-Coral Bay road, about 1km before Coral Bay.

AKAMAS HEIGHTS

If you're spending any time in the Pafos area, make sure you dedicate your most active and attentive hours to the Akamas Heights area. Most of the villages have great agrotourism-restored traditional houses for rent (check www.agrotourism.com.cy); the food in the taverns, cooked for the locals, is drop-dead delicious; the atmosphere is peaceful; and the hiking possibilities are fantastic. And did we mention the beaches? This area has some of the best beaches in the South. So what are you waiting for?

Villages

The villages of Akamas Heights can be visited en route to Polis, on the picturesque western road (E701/709). There's no public transport to get to these villages, the beaches or Avgas Gorge.

PEGEIA ΠΕΓΕΙΑ

pop 2360

The climb to the heights starts at Pegeia, the largish escarpment settlement populated mainly by wealthier Brits. The main reason to visit Pegeia is the **St George's Fish Tavern** (Agios Georgios; ☎ 2662 1888; fish around CY€10), a basic village tavern that looks like any bog-standard Cypriot eatery. But the fish here is the best in the region – and you know it's good when it's just grilled, with nothing but a bit of olive oil and lemon. The squid and

octopus are simple and divine. Weekends get busy and you may have to queue for a table, but you can enjoy the sea views while you wait.

From Pegeia you can head northwest towards the southern approach to the Akamas Peninsula.

DHROUSIA, KRITOU TERRA & AROUND ΔΡΟΥΣΙΑ, ΚΡΙΤΟΥ ΤΕΡΑ pop 390 & 90

Once you are up on the heights, you will come across a series of villages that enjoy a cool climate, grow fine wine grapes and are prettier than most Cypriot villages. They also make a useful alternative base for travellers wishing to avoid the busy beach scene of the coast further south.

Particularly beautiful are the villages of Dhrousia and Kritou Terra. Few tourists spend their time here, but each village has a lovely place to stay and is a great base for a relaxing holiday.

Dhrousia is a village of winding streets, moustached men sitting outside the *kafeneio* (coffee shop), large fig trees offering their fruit to passers-by, and an occasional donkey standing by the road. To complete the rural idyll, **Sapho Manor House** (☎ 2633 2650; studio CY£33), an old mansion restored in 2002, is the perfect place to stay. It has five studios, all decorated in the traditional style, with doors and windows made out of Cypriot pine. There is a communal garden and a swimming pool, plus a laundry room (CY£3). The *kafeneio* is right opposite, as is the village supermarket.

A little-known local quirk is Dhrousia's 'Magic Road' phenomenon, which occurs at the bottom of the windy road to Polis, by a kiosk called, ehm, Phenomenon. Around 20m after you turn onto the Polis road, switch off your engine, and the car will go by itself to the top of the hill. There have been numerous scientific investigations into this bizarre occurrence, which was discovered by a Dhrousia villager in the '90s. Despite many arguing it is due to magic, it has been attributed to underground water magnetism. And you thought life in Dhrousia was boring?

Kritou Terra, a little east from Dhrousia, is one of the prettiest villages in the region, with some splendid traditional houses tastefully renovated by their inhabitants. **Makrinari**

(☎ 2693 2931) is an agrotourism house where you can spend a relaxing few days. It has lush gardens overlooking a green gorge. The late-Byzantine church of Agia Ekaterini, at the southern end of the village, is a pretty sight.

Two other villages, not far from Dhrousia and Kritou Terra, are **Inia** (population 350) and **Goudi** (population 160), both of which are lovely. **Kostaris** (☎ 2962 6672; www.agrino.org/eleonora; Goudi; 2-person house CY£50; 🏠), located in Goudi, has three beautiful wood-and-stone houses.

KATHIKAS ΚΑΘΙΚΑΣ pop 330

This is the most easily accessible village from Pafos, famous for its vineyards and wine, and home to a couple of good restaurants.

Loxandra Inn (☎ 9960 8333; www.gmbds.com/lox.htm; 2-person apt CY£18-27) consists of two one-bedroom apartments and a studio built around a large open courtyard. All rooms have a kitchen and fridge, a fireplace, central heating and a TV.

Two good restaurants here attract people from both Pafos and Polis. **Araouzos Taverna** (☎ 2663 2076; mains CY£4-7; 🍷 lunch & dinner, closed Sun evening) has no menu as such, but serves dishes like oven-roasted chicken and stuffed vegetables, and the meze is great value at CY£6 per person. It's in an old stone house, decorated in a rustic style with a massive plough hanging on a wall and local ceramics scattered around the dining room.

Imogen's Inn (☎ 2663 3269; meze CY£7) resembles a French bistro, with the sounds of jazz and blues twinkling into the garden that sprawls out under a large fig tree. There are the usual meze here, but there is also a vegetarian meze option, which includes the Turkish dish *turlu turlu* (baked and spiced aubergines, courgettes, carrots and chickpeas), falafel and *fasioli* (beans) alongside the standard haloumi (helimi) and olives.

PANO AKOURLALIA & KATO AKOURLALIA ΠΑΝΩ ΑΚΟΥΡΔΑΛΙΑ & ΚΑΤΩ ΑΚΟΥΡΔΑΛΙΑ pop 25 & 30

From Kathikas you can detour onto the B7 (the direct road between Pafos and Polis) via these two picturesque villages, where you have the option of staying overnight or taking a relaxing lunch.

Amarakos Inn (☎ 2663 3117; www.amarakos.com; Kato Akourdalia; s/d CY£35/55; 🏠 🍷) has spacious air-con apartments in a wood-and-stone complex of buildings. There is a pool, children's facilities and an in-house restaurant, Vasilikos Drys (Royal Oak). This cosy old house-cum-restaurant, open for lunch and dinner, serves up palate-pleasing fare such as village sausages, and grilled mushrooms and *afelia* (pork cooked in red wine). Mains cost around CY£4 to CY£6.

Olga's Cottages (☎ 2276 1438; lakes@spidernet.com.cy; Kato Akourdalia; 2-3-person apt CY£60) is a lovely 200-year-old stone residence that offers relaxed self-contained accommodation.

Beaches

There is a real treat on the southwestern side of the Akamas Peninsula. The long grin that is **Lara Beach**, cupped by lime rocks in a bay, is the most spectacular beach in the South. There is no development on it, the water is clean and calm, and the beach is laid out in small pebbles and sand. The beach also serves as a **turtle hatchery**, so tread carefully at egg-laying times. The path towards the beach is a dirt track, but can be driven on by 'normal' (non-4WD) cars, although you should take care when parking not to get stuck in the sand. A word of warning: try to leave as soon as the sun sets, as colonies of mosquitoes come out to play.

Agios Georgios Beach can be reached by conventional vehicle from Polis (via Pegeia) or Pafos (via Coral Bay). It is a 100m stretch of shadeless sand and rock with a little harbour, but beach umbrellas and loungers are for hire. There is a small beach cantina and a couple of restaurants up on the bluff overlooking the beach to feed hungry bathers. It's not flashy, but it's quiet and clean and some people prefer it that way.

Avgas Gorge

Also known as the Avakas Gorge, this narrow split in the Akamas Heights escarpment is a popular hiking excursion. The gorge is reached by vehicle from its western end via Agios Georgios Beach. You can drive or ride more or less up to the gorge entrance, though low-slung conventional vehicles will have to take care. The hike up the gorge, which becomes a defile with cliffs towering overhead, is easy and enjoyable. There is usually water in the gorge until

at least June. The walk will take no longer than 30 to 40 minutes one way, although some groups do press on upwards – with some difficulty – emerging on the escarpment ridge and then finding their way to the village of Ano Arodes (not much use if your vehicle is at the gorge entrance).

If you have not taken a picnic with you, excellent food is available close to the entrance of Avgas Gorge at **Viklari** (☎ 2699 6088; mains CY£4-5.50) – a great little eating oasis. It provides lunch (only) for hungry hikers. For CY£4 you get a delicious *kleftiko* barbecue and can relax at heavy stone tables while enjoying great views. Look for signs to the 'Last Castle' from the coastal road and seek out jovial owner Savvas Symeou.

AKAMAS PENINSULA

This anvil-shaped chunk of western Cyprus, jutting almost defiantly out into the Mediterranean, is one of the island's last remaining wildernesses. There's at least one reason why the Akamas has remained relatively untouched: the British army has used the interior of the peninsula as a firing range for a long time and has never been too happy about travellers spoiling their games. While not strictly part of the Sovereign Base Area agreements of 1960, the Cypriot government has tacitly allowed the Akamas to be used for this purpose. This hasn't sat well with conservationists, whose outspokenness and lobbying have brought the controversial status of the Akamas into the public consciousness. It could be argued that by isolating the peninsula for such dubious purposes, the wilderness is being preserved. However, the spent (and perhaps even unspent) ordinance littering the land doesn't look too environmentally or politically sound.

Despite this, visitors can still traverse the Akamas as long as they are prepared to walk, ride a trail, bike or bump along in a sturdy 4WD. Visitors with less stamina can take tour boats that sail the Akamas coastline from Latsi, west of Polis. The peninsula can be approached from two sides: from the east via Polis, or from the south via the little village of Agios Georgios. Tracks linking the two entry points are very rough, perhaps deliberately so to discourage traffic. Care should be taken if riding or driving, although this is as much to avoid live firing ranges as it is to avoid becoming stuck in a big rut.

The peninsula's big attraction is its abundant flora and fauna, resulting from Akamas' position as the easternmost point of the three major plant-life zones of Europe. There are around 600 plant species here, and 35 of them are endemic to Cyprus. There are also 68 bird species, 12 types of mammals, 20 species of reptiles and many butterflies, including the native *Glaucopteryx pafos*, the symbol of the region.

The only public transport to the area is the bus from Polis to the Baths of Aphrodite; see p136 for details.

Baths of Aphrodite

The myth surrounding the cool cave that is Baths of Aphrodite (Loutra tis Afroditis) is great advertising. Aphrodite, goddess of love and patron of Cyprus, came to the island in a shower of foam and nakedness, launching a cult that has remained to this day. Legend has it that she came to this secluded spot to bathe after entertaining her lovers.

The baths attract a fantastic number of people, but it is easy to wonder if the visitors expect more than they find. Surrounded by fig trees and filled with the relaxing sound of running water, the grotto is a nice spot away from the heat, but it's far from the luxurious setting that may be associated with a goddess of such amorous prowess.

THE CULT OF APHRODITE

Cyprus is indelibly linked to the ancient worship of the goddess Aphrodite (known as Venus in Roman mythology). She is known primarily as the Greek goddess of sexual love and beauty, although she was also worshipped as a goddess of war – particularly in Sparta and Thebes. While prostitutes often considered her their patron, her public cult was usually solemn and even austere.

The name is thought to derive from the Greek word *afros*, meaning 'foam'. Cypriot legend has it that Aphrodite arose from the sea off the south coast of Cyprus. She was born out of the white foam produced by the severed genitals of Ouranos (Heaven), after they were thrown into the sea by his son Chronos (the father of Zeus, king of the Greek gods). The people of Kythira in Greece hold a similar view, and an enormous rock off the south coast port of Kapsali is believed by Kytherians to be the place where Aphrodite really emerged.

Despite being a goddess, Aphrodite was disposed to taking on a few mortal lovers. The most famous of them were Anchises (by whom Aphrodite became mother to Aeneas) and Adonis (who was killed by a boar, and whose death was lamented by women at the festival of Adonia).

The main centres of worship on Cyprus for the cult of Aphrodite were at Pafos and Amathous. Her symbols included the dove, the swan, pomegranates and myrtle.

Greek art represented her as an Oriental nude-goddess type. Ancient Greek sculptor Praxiteles carved a famous statue of Aphrodite, which later became the model for the Hellenistic statue known as *Venus de Milo*.

The baths are 11km west of Polis, along a sealed road. From the baths' car park, follow the well-marked paved trail from the car park for 200m. You are not allowed to swim in the baths.

If you're suitably inspired, you can continue up the path to start the Aphrodite Trail (below), which conveniently starts and ends here.

Hiking

Easily the most popular way to get a taste of the Akamas is to spend a few hours hiking one of the following trails, which run through the northeastern sector of the peninsula. All can start and end at one of two points: the Baths of Aphrodite or the **Smigies** picnic ground, reached via an unsealed road 2.5km east of Neo Horio.

The most popular two trails are those that start and end at the Baths of Aphrodite. They are both longer than the Smigies trails and offer better views. The first is the **Aphrodite Trail**. This is a three-hour circular loop, 7.5km in length. It heads inland and upwards to begin with; as this can be tiring on a hot day, make an early start if you can. Halfway along the trail you can see the ruins of a Byzantine monastery, the so-called **Castle of Rigena**, before you head up to the summit of **Mouti tis Sotiras** (370m). At this point you head eastwards and down towards the



coastal track, which will eventually lead you back to the car park.

The second hike, the **Adonis Trail**, shares the same path as the Aphrodite as far as the Castle of Rigena, but then turns left and southwards before looping back to the car park. Allow at least three hours for this trail, which is also about 7.5km in length. Alternatively, you can turn right (south) just after the village of **Kefalovrysi** and continue on to the Smigies picnic ground if you have arranged a pick-up beforehand.

Water is usually available at the Castle of Rigena and, on the Adonis Trail, at Kefalovrysi. However, don't count on it in high summer. In any case, these trails are best attempted in spring or autumn or, if you must do it in Cyprus' extremely hot summer, just on sunrise.

The CTO produces a step-by-step, plant-by-plant description of these two trails in a booklet entitled *Nature Trails of the Akamas*, available from the main CTO offices. There's no similar brochure for the two trails that commence from the Smigies picnic ground: the circular 5km, two-hour **Smigies Trail** and the circular 3km, 1½-hour **Pissouromoutis Trail**, both of which afford splendid views of Chrysohou Bay and Latsi, and Lara Bay to the west.

POLIS ΠΟΛΙΣ

pop 1890

Polis is an ideal base for hiking or mountain biking in the Akamas, swimming at

nearby beaches, touring the wine-making villages of the Akamas Heights or exploring the often wild and rarely visited northwest of Cyprus.

The village also has the island's loveliest camp site, as well as some decent, affordable restaurants.

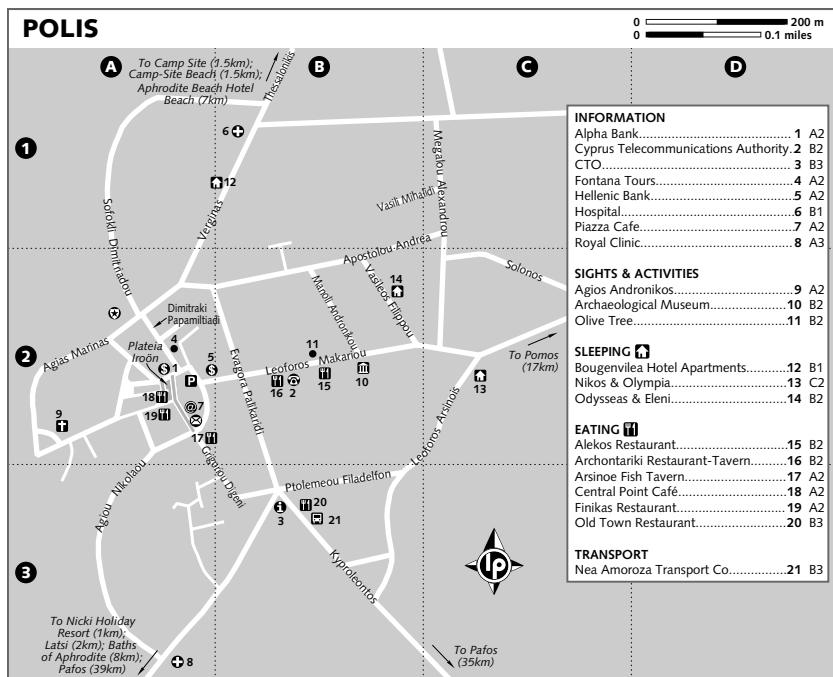
The sand-and-sea package-tour agencies have turned away from Polis in recent years, and thankfully this little town has managed to evade the overdevelopment and decay of quality that comes from mass tourism. With a small town centre and all the necessary amenities, and situated close to the sea and nature, this is the perfect base in the west.

Polis lies on wide Chrysohou Bay, which runs along the northwest sweep of Cyprus from Cape Arnaoutis at the tip of the Akamas Peninsula to Pomos Point at the start of the Tylliria wilderness.

Orientation

The town is set back about 2km from the sea on a gradual rise and is fairly compact. Its centre is a pedestrianised zone from which the main streets radiate. Buses from Pafos arrive at the Nea Amoroza bus station on Kyproleontos on the south side of town – one of the two approach roads from Pafos.

Restaurants and accommodation are all within easy walking distance, though the camp ground is a fairly lengthy trek out towards the beach area.



Information

There are several ATMs scattered around town, as well as banks that exchange travellers cheques. There's a clutch of phones on Leoforos Makariou, with more phones on the road to the camp ground.

Alpha Bank (Plateia Iroön) On the main square; has an ATM.

Cyprus Telecommunications Authority (CYTA; Leoforos Makariou) You can make phone calls from here.

Cyprus Tourism Organisation (CTO; www.visitcyprus.org.cy; ☎ 2632 2468; Vasileos Stasioikou 2; ☎ 9am-1pm & 2.30-5.30pm Sun-Tue, Thu & Fri, 9am-1pm Sat) Very central.

Fontana Tours (☎ 2632 1555; Apostolou Pavlou 147) Books flights and other transport, and organises 'safaris' tours and boat trips to the Akamas Peninsula. You can also hire cars here for between CY£14 and CY£46 per day, and rent accommodation ranging in price from CY£17 for a basic room to CY£45 for an apartment for two to three people.

Hellenic Bank (Leoforos Makariou) Centrally located; has an ATM.

Hospital (☎ 2632 1431; Verginas) A small hospital, located between the camp ground and the town centre.

Piazza Cafe (per hr CY£3; ☎ 10am-10pm) Prominently signposted off the pedestrian street, Piazza offers email access.

Royal Clinic (☎ 9962 2331; Efessou 13) Dr Dimitris Polydorou is on call most hours to assist travellers in need of medical assistance.

Sights & Activities

Polis' main attractions are its relaxed atmosphere and its proximity to the Akamas Peninsula and the region's lovely beaches, which are among the most attractive on the island. But if you're dying for some history, visit the **Archaeological Museum** (☎ 2632 2955; Leoforos Makariou; admission CY£0.75; ☎ 8am-2pm Mon-Wed & Fri, 8am-6pm Thu, 9am-5pm Sat), which offers you finds from the nearby graves at Marion and Arsinoo.

The church of **Agios Andronikos**, previously a mosque and the centre of local Turkish Cypriot religious life, has in recent times had some of its Byzantine frescoes revealed. Sitting on the western side of town, by the car park, the 16th-century church can only be visited in groups of ten or more. The key is held at the Archaeological Museum.

The nearest stretch of sand is the **camp-site beach** – a good beach and convenient if you don't want to move far from Polis or

are camping there. It's sandy and has natural shade, and the scent of the eucalyptus trees that shade the ground is wonderful. There's a beach restaurant and lifeguards. It's a good place to make a day of it with your own picnic.

The best beaches easily accessible from Polis are those on the eastern side of **Latsi**, a small fishing village 2km to the west of Polis. These beaches tend to be mixed sand and pebble, and are somewhat exposed to the vagaries of the weather, but they are popular enough and well serviced with restaurants. You can reach Latsi by bus (see p136).

A lovely, calm beach is the **Afrodite Beach Hotel beach**, on the way to the Baths of Aphrodite. It's good for children, with its clear, swimmable waters and comfortably small pebbles.

There is an extremely old **olive tree** close to the museum, for those interested in such floral phenomena. The trunk of the tree is almost split in two but it is still producing olives after 600 years.

Festivals & Events

In summer, various free concerts take place in the Plateia Iroön (Town Hall Sq) under the banner of **Summer Evenings in Polis**. These range from traditional dancing, music and folkloric events to classical music and jazz concerts.

Sleeping

Bougenvilea Hotel Apartments (☎ 2632 2201; fax 2632 2203; Verginas 13; 2-4 person apt CY£36; ☎ ☎) Positively the best place to stay in Polis. A flowery path runs alongside the apartments, which have one bedroom, a living room, and a balcony with views of peaceful olive groves. There is a swimming pool, which can get crowded, but the camp-site beach is very close. The price drops by up to 50% out of season. Breakfast is CY£2.

Nikos & Olympia (☎ 2632 1274; nolympia@cytanet.com.cy; Arsinoo 1; 2-person apt CY£25; ☎ ☎) This is another small apartment complex. The studios and one-bedroom apartments here are lovely, with wood-panelled ceilings and balconies.

Odysseas & Eleni (☎ 2632 1172; fax 2632 2279; Vasileos Filippou 8; 2-person apt CY£25-30; ☎) Bright, airy apartments with everything you need, and friendly service to go with it.

Nicki Holiday Resort (☎ 2632 2226; www.nickiresort.com; apt from CY£25; ☎ ☎) A large hotel a little out of town on the way to Latsi, with comfortable rooms decorated with clay sunshines and wrought-iron beds. The rooms also have phones and TVs with local and satellite channels. The hotel is used to walk-ins and boasts a restaurant, snack bar and large pool. The service is friendly and the place is open year-round.

Camp site (☎ 2632 1526; sites per tent/person CY£1.50/1) Enshrined by fragrant eucalyptus trees that offer good, thick shade, this lovely camp site has its own quality beach. There is plenty of space, with good facilities. Located about 2km north of Polis, it's signposted from the town centre.

Eating

You'll find that good, affordable restaurants are Polis' trademark.

Archontariki Restaurant-Tavern (☎ 2632 1328; Leoforos Makariou 14; mains CY£4-9; ☎ dinner) This is a classy and atmospheric tavern where the service is attentive and the food top class. Dine in an old renovated stone house and try chicken stuffed with haloumi and mushrooms, or *kathisto* (octopus cooked in wine and oregano).

Arsinoe Fish Tavern (☎ 2632 1590; Grigoriou Digeni; fish meals CY£4-6; ☎ dinner) An atmospheric place on the south side of the pedestrian zone, housed in an old stone building. Dining is alfresco, and fish is the speciality. Try the succulent octopus.

Finikas Restaurant (☎ 2632 3403; mains CY£5.60-8.50; ☎ dinner) This large, airy terrace is a wonderful setting for a dinner of pork marsala or the vegetarian house special. The chef recommends the 'Finikas chicken'. It's located in the pedestrian zone.

Old Town Restaurant (☎ 2632 2758; Kyproleontos 9; mains CY£7-10; ☎ dinner) A discreet and relaxing place south of Arsinoo, with a leafy, secluded garden. Its specialities include wood-grilled chicken, chicken in a spicy yoghurt sauce and duck breast in black-cherry sauce. There is also a children's menu.

Alekos Restaurant (☎ 2632 3381; Leoforos Makariou 20; mains CY£3-4; ☎ dinner) Tucked away where almost no-one notices, this budget-minded local eatery serves filling dishes such as black-eyed beans, or garden beans with tomatoes and meat. There's a complimentary litre of house wine for each pair of diners.

Central Point Café (☎ 2681 5032; snacks CY€1-2.40; ☎ breakfast, lunch & dinner) For a quick snack, a beer or two and a spot of people-watching, this café probably has the edge over the other pedestrian-zone eateries in the main square. Sandwiches and pizzas are on offer at reasonable prices.

Entertainment

Call the CTO office for details of events. Ticketed concerts, often given by top-name artists from Greece, take place in the Evkalyptionas (Eucalyptus Grove) at the Polis camp site. These outdoor events can be magical on a hot summer night. Tickets cost between CY€7 and CY€10.

Getting There & Around

Two minibus companies go to Lefkosia (CY€5) via Lemesos (CY€3.50): **Lysos Minibus** (☎ 9941 4777) leaves at 5.30am Monday to Saturday (except Wednesday), and **Solis Minibus** (☎ 2635 2332, 9943 1363) leaves at 5am Monday to Friday (except Tuesday). You can buy tickets on the bus.

Nea Amoroza Transport Co (☎ 2632 1114; Kyproleontos) runs buses more or less hourly to Pafos (CY€1, 40 minutes), and in summer it also has services to Latsi (CY€0.50) and the Baths of Aphrodite (CY€0.50) at 10am, noon and 3pm. Buses return 30 minutes later.

There are plenty of companies that rent cars, motorcycles and mountain bikes. Fontana Tours (p134) rents cars.

TYLLIRIA ΤΥΛΛΙΡΙΑ

If you love untouched, tranquil nature, Tylliria is your heaven. It's a sparsely populated, forested territory with a few desultory beach resorts nestling between Chrysohou and Morfou Bays. Enjoying its wilderness for a few days is highly recommended.

The only public transport in this area is the bus connecting Pomos with Polis and Pafos.

POMOS & PAHYAMMOS ΠΟΜΟΣ & ΠΑΧΥΑΜΜΟΣ

pop 570 & 100

The trip up the coastal road from Polis towards Tylliria is stunning. The first village on this road is the small village of Pomos. This is an agricultural area, and Pomos is close to the border with the North.

There is a rather good place to swim at **Kanali Port Beach**, a smallish, sheltered pebbly beach just beyond the little Pomos harbour, where you can rent umbrellas. The snorkelling in the rocky sheltered bays here is good. The handmade sign at the beach entrance reads 'Relax to be happy'. Say no more.

Five hundred metres from Kanali Port Beach is **Gabriel Beach Villas** (☎ 2696 2485; www.cyprus4villas.co.uk/Gabriel_Villas_PP.htm; 4-person villa CY€110), a good place for a group of friends wanting some space to themselves. The four villas are fully equipped and there is a pool.

Pomos village has three tavernas but the best one is at Kanali fishing port, where you can enjoy the catch of the day at **Kanali Fish Restaurant** (meze & fish CY€8.50). It specialises in fresh fish, namely sea bass, bream, red snapper and red mullet. The views of the harbour are dreamy at sunset.

Pomos, small though it may be, creates musical waves every year with the **Paradise Jazz Festival** (www.paradise-jazz.com), which takes place in September at **Paradise Place** (☎ 2624 2537; mains CY€3-4.50; ☎ 11am-late Apr-Dec). The rest of the year, this is an outdoor bar-restaurant with a positively loungy, decadent feel – but in a good way. A hammock here, wooden chairs there, local photographers' exhibitions, fantastic music, zucchini-and-cheese fritters and sunsets to die for. No wonder they called it Paradise.

Palyammos is next up, 5km further eastwards. Palyammos means 'broad sand', and beach is indeed broad and sweeps around a large bay up to the UN watchtowers that mark the beginning of Kokkina, a Turkish Cypriot enclave.

The beach is made up of darkish sand and there is no natural shade, but the swimming is reasonable. There are no facilities whatsoever on the beach, but there are one or two places to eat in the settlement of Palyammos, which is strung out along on the main through-road.

KOKKINA (ERENKÖY)

Tylliria really felt the pinch when it was effectively isolated from the rest of Cyprus following the Turkish invasion in 1974. Since that time, this small Turkish enclave, known in Greek as Kokkina and in Turkish as Erenköy, has been surrounded by Greek Cypriot territory.

KATO PYRGOS ΚΑΤΩ ΠΥΡΓΟΣ

pop 1120

This remote beach resort is as far out of the way as you can get in the Republic, yet it attracts a regular summer clientele of Cypriots who come for its isolation, cheap accommodation and food, and laid-back ambience. Kato Pyrgos is like Cyprus used to be, and many Cypriots come here just to get away from the rampant commercialism that they recognise has overwhelmed the more popular coastal resorts of their island.

The breezy village is strung out along a wide bay running from Kokkina Point to where the Attila Line meets the sea. The border's proximity is emphasised by the frequent chatter of UN helicopters that fly in and out of the nearby base. You can bathe at a number of locations along the bay, though the most popular spot seems to be the far eastern end, close to the Attila Line.

Tylos Beach Hotel (☎ 2652 2348; www.tyloshotel.com.cy; Nikolaou Papageorgiou 40; s/d incl breakfast CY€20/40; ☎) is a very basic, clean place with no décor to speak of, but with wonderful views of the harbour. The rooms all have TV and balcony.

Not too far away from Tylos Beach Hotel, on the main road of Kato Pyrgos, **Ifigeneia Hotel** (☎ 2652 2218; s/d CY€17/34; ☎) has decent rooms and an in-house restaurant.

Quite near the Ifigeneia and also on the main Kato Pyrgos road, the rooms at **Pyrgiana Beach** (☎ 2652 2322; fax 2652 2306; s/d CY€15/30; ☎)

have harbour views and TV. There's also a restaurant specialising in fresh fish (meals CY€4 to CY€6) – the owner goes fishing daily on his own little boat.

Kato Pyrgos has a fair sprinkling of restaurants and tavernas. **Klimataria** (meals CY€5), at the far eastern end, right on the beach, has the cosiest feel and the food is pretty reasonable.

STAVROS TIS PSOKAS ΣΤΑΥΡΟΣ ΤΗΣ ΨΟΚΑΣ

From Kato Pyrgos or Palyammos you can strike out southwards into the Tylliria hinterland. Make sure you detour slightly to the lovely forest reserve of **Stavros tis Psokas**, also accessible from Pafos (51km) via a picturesque road that is unsealed for a considerable distance. This vast picnic site is a forest station responsible for fire control in the Pafos Forest. Nature-loving Cypriots come here to walk and enjoy the peace, and they like it so much that there is quite a little crowd in the summer. In a small enclosure, signposted from the main parking area, you can get a glimpse of the rare and endangered native Cypriot **mouflon** (see the boxed text, below). Move quietly and slowly if you want to see them as they get rather skittish at the approach of humans.

You can do some hiking from the Stavros tis Psokas forest station. The **Horteri Trail**, a 5km, two-hour circular hike, loops around the eastern flank of the Stavros Valley. The

THE MUCH-MALIGNED CYPRIOT MOUFFLON

Featured as a stylised graphic on the tail fin of Cyprus Airways' planes, the Cypriot moufflon (*Ovis orientalis ophion*), known as *agrino* in Greek, is Cyprus' de facto national symbol. The moufflon is similar to a wild sheep and is native to the island of Cyprus. It has close cousins on the islands of Sardinia and Sicily, and in Iran. Today, Cyprus' moufflon population is limited to the dense vegetation of the Pafos Forest Reserve on the west side of the Troódos Massif.

The moufflon was once treated as vermin and was fair game for trigger-happy hunters, and by the 1930s there were only 15 alive in Cyprus. Since then an enlightened preservation programme has seen numbers rise to around 10,000. The moufflon is a shy, retiring animal and is rarely seen in the wild as it will disappear into the forest long before your arrival. The male moufflon sports enormous curved horns and, while not aggressive to humans, uses its horns in mating battles with other males.

While numbers have reached stable levels, the moufflon is still considered an endangered species. The main danger nowadays comes from forest fires and poachers. In Sardinia, an Italian biogenetics team in 2001 successfully cloned a Sardinian moufflon, thus setting a precedent for the preservation of other endangered species.

Moufflons can be seen at the Stavros tis Psokas Forest Reserve where they are kept safe from depredation in a secure enclosure.

trail starts at the Platanoudkia Fountain, about halfway along the forest station's approach road, which begins on the main through-road at Selladi tou Stavrou (Stavros Saddle). The hike involves a fair bit of upward climbing and can get tiring in the heat of summer, so tackle the walk early in the day if you can.

The second trail is the **Selladi tou Stavrou**, a 2.6km circular loop of the northern flank of the Stavros Valley. The start is prominently marked from Stavros Saddle (at the junction of the forest station approach road and the main through-road). A longer option (7km, 2½ hours) is to tackle the trail anti-clockwise and then branch south (right) to the heliport. From there you can walk along a forest road to the forest station proper.

The CTO brochure *Cyprus: Nature Trails* describes these trails in more detail.

The Stavros tis Psokas forest station has a **hostel** (☎ 2633 2144; r per person around CY£12) with cool rooms that should be booked for the June–September period. You will need your own car to get here.

KAMPOS ΚΑΜΠΟΣ

pop 430

A truly untouristy village, Kampos is the only significant place of habitation in Tylliria. The scenery is beautiful and the locals will be curious to meet you since they don't get to see that many foreigners in these parts. There is a local guest house should you decide to stay put for the night.

Although technically part of the Kykkos Monastery sector of the Troödos, Kampos is stuck out on the southern edge of the Tyllirian wilderness with – these days – only one road out. The road that leads north from the village now comes to an ignomini-ous end after 12km, at the Attila Line.

However, this part of Tylliria is now less isolated than it was, thanks to the completion of the good sealed road that leads across the Tyllirian hinterland and northern extent of the vast Pafos Forest, linking the Kykkos Monastery with Kato Pyrgos and Pahiymmos. Take it slow though; the road, while good, is very winding and tiring to drive. Most maps still show it as unsealed. It is a much shorter, if more challenging, route into the Tyllirian wilderness than the traditional road from the southeast via Polis.

WESTERN TROÖDOS

The sparsely populated area flanking the western foothills of the Troödos Massif is home to few attractions other than slow-moving villages, where traditions hold fast and the local Cypriot dialect is just that bit more impenetrable. If you are looking for a route to central Troödos from the west coast you can now easily follow a mixture of good sealed and unsealed roads into the mountains. The best route takes you to the Kykkos Monastery via the village of Pano Panagia.

Pano Panagia Πάνω Παναγιά

pop 560

If you love Archbishop Makarios and Cypriot history makes your heart go 'boom boom' then the village of Pano Pangia will make you a very happy person. This is the **birthplace of Makarios III**, the island's famous archbishop-president (see the boxed text, p110, for more about his life). There is also the **Makarios Cultural Centre** (admission free; ☎ 9am–1pm & 2–5pm), a place for hard-core fans, containing memorabilia from Makarios' life as a politician and priest, including plenty of photos.

Among the odder exhibits are his priestly vestments, overcoat, dressing gown, shoes and slippers. (If only they tried to sell those on eBay!)

Carrying on in the same vein, the **childhood house of Makarios** (admission free; ☎ 10am–1pm & 2–6pm) is quite a large house, containing more photos and memorabilia from the life of the younger Makarios. If the house is locked, obtain the key from the nearby cultural centre.

If you decide to spend the night close to the memory of Makarios, **Arhondiko tou Meletiou** (☎ 2693 5011; fax 2694 7395; 2–3-person apt CY£20) is right next to the house of Archbishop Makarios. The folksy **Stelios House** (☎ 2672 2343; fax 2672 2971; 2-person apt CY£24) is also lovely, as are the spacious apartments of **Palati tou Xylari** (☎ 9961 4673; palati@cytanet.com.cy; 2-person apt CY£25) and the twin apartments of **Liakoto** (☎ 2623 5597; fax 2624 2025; 2-person apt CY£20). All four places are part of the CTO-sponsored agrotourism scheme and represent good value, high-quality accommodation.

A few simple tavernas on the main street provide adequate food.

Cedar Valley

This is the highlight of the western Troödos hinterland. This cool valley is home to a large number of the unusual indigenous Cypriot cedars (*Cedrus brevifolia*), a close cousin of the better-known Lebanese cedar. The valley is approached via a winding, unsealed forest road from Pano Panagia on the Pafos side of the Troödos Massif, or along

a signposted unsealed road from the Kykkos side of the Troödos. There is a picnic ground here and the opportunity to hike 2.5km to the summit of **Mt Tripylos**.

You'll need a vehicle to see these places, as public transport is patchy or nonexistent. Alternatively you could join a tour from either Polis or Pafos (see p124). Ask at the CTO office for details.

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