

CHANIA

Do It Yourself!

THE BEST OF CHANIA IN ONE DAY

MORNING HIKE Exit base, turn left at Flokati Mike's Store and continue on the straight road for about a couple minutes, then turn right at the large signs directing you to the **Monasteries of Agia Triada & Gouverneto**. Follow the signs for about 10 minutes to **Agia Triada Church**. After stopping in (please dress conservatively, no swimsuits!), proceed up to the top of the mountain to the **Jangarolon Monastery** to check it out. It was built in 1612 by the monks Laurentius & Jeremia, and it houses the Seminary of Crete, which includes an extensive library and a collection of icons and codes. To the left of this monastery is a scenic overlook and a staired path leading to the base of the mountain. Take the ½ hour hike down to the bottom to the **Gouverneto Monastery**, which is dedicated to the Presentation of Virgin Mary or, as it is known widely, to the Lady of Angels. During the Venetian Rule in 1548 its altar was decorated with amazing ornate sculptures; although it was destroyed by the Turks in the Greek War of Independence in 1821, it has been restored and belongs to the monastery of Agia Triada. Hike back up and return to the main road leading towards downtown Chania.

NOON SIGHT-SEEING After the hike, continue to the main road towards downtown Chania; 5 minutes past NAMFI Military Base, turn right at the "Kounoupidiana" sign, where there's a small roundabout and a sign indicating **Venizelo's Graves**. Get your camera ready, this park is the gravesite of **Eleftherios Venizelos**—the renowned statesman who in 1913 united Crete with Greece—and provides one of the most spectacular views of Chania, the old Harbour, and the beautiful fortress ruins protecting it. The park also contains the grave of Venizelo's son Sophokles, and a quaint 16th c. church. Enjoy the breathtaking scenery at one of 3 cafes right outside the park, then head back up to the main road!

AFTERNOON SHOPPING Turn right towards downtown Chania and continue to the bottom of the road (Astra sign), then turn left into the city center. Park your vehicle and take a few moments to browse the large, stone **Indoor Marketplace**, the oldest in Europe, on your right. It's a wonderful haven of old-world shopping, offering fresh produce, Cretan cheeses & honey, nuts, dried herbs, olive oil & soaps, and tons of gift items. When you're done shopping, exit out the rear or left side of the market and you will find yourself in the middle of the tourist shopping area at the Chania Harbour. You'll see "**Leather Alley**" right away, giving you a good opportunity to browse the plethora of leather, souvenir goods, and jewelry. But if you bypass Leather Alley and continue towards the old Venetian Alleyways, you'll find yourself at the rear of the main church of Chania, the Metropolitan, or the Church of the Three Martyrs. The church's front doors are usually open and you are welcomed to walk-in and take a look. Proper respect and hushed voices are most definitely required, but you can take walk around the interior of the church and notice the ornate Christian and Byzantine artwork that decorates the interior from floor to ceiling. After you've enjoyed a meal or traditional coffee and one of the many Harbour cafes or restaurants, get back on the main downtown road going further into the city (oriented away from Base and the water stays on your right). Turn left at the light directly after the Indoor Market (careful! you'll pass a couple streets, but you can't turn left on them!) onto Apokoronou Road. Follow until you come to a sign that points to Rethymno and the National Highway; don't turn, just continue straight for 5 minutes and you will come to the **Arts and Crafts Village**. Here you'll find ceramics, leather goods, art glass, pottery, gemstones, lace, weaving, and silver/gold.

EVENING EXPLORATION Then, go back to the national Highway and take it towards Rethymno; turn right at 12km at the **Aptera** Sign. Follow the winding road into the village of **Megala Horafia** and turn left at the top of the hill. This will lead to **Aptera** where you will discover the **ruins of ancient Roman reservoirs** and the **Byzantine Monastery of Agios Ioannis** (monastery visiting hrs: 0830-1500 Tue-Sun/closed Mon). Proceed back down the road and turn right; go to the top of the hill to the **Aptera Castle**. From this hill is a gorgeous view of the **Lefka Ori** (White Mountains) where you can see, at the mountain's base to the left, the **1646 Ancient Fortress Itzendin**, which was used as a prison during the Greek War for Independence from Turkey. Go back through the village and turn right onto the Highway. Turn left at the fork at the **Kalami/Kalives** sign (there's a restaurant on the left side), take a right uphill at the first buildings, and proceed straight to get to **Itzendin**. Return to the Highway and take a right to return to Chania. Turn right at the forked road exit at Souda; follow the road and small turns through little Souda Town, to the large intersection at the INKA Supermarket. Proceed straight (not towards the

airport) for 10 minutes and you will be back in downtown Chania! On your right will be the **Public Gardens and Amphitheater**, where there's a small café in the gardens and a restaurant located on the pond.

DINNER & COFFEE After you've taken your walk in the gardens, end your day –and start your night!-- on Chania's beautiful Harbour again! Head down into the Harbour towards the waterfront; any alleyway will do and you'll love the short walk if you get "lost". Once you hit the Harbour, you'll see the **Venetian Lighthouse**, built in the 16th c. and restored by the Egyptians in the 1830's, and you'll see the **Firkas**, with the distinct domed roofs, built in 1629, that today house the Maritime Museum of Chania and a summer theater. All along the waterfront and in the back winding alleyways, you'll find a variety of shops, restaurants, cafes, and bars. On the same side as the Lighthouse is the **Fortezza Cafe**, with a water-taxi waiting to take you across. This might be a good time to check out Harbour from a different vantage point, while enjoying ice-cream, traditional Cretan food, or just coffee.

HISTORY OF CHANIA Chania is built on the site of the ancient city of **Kydonia**. This site was inhabited from Neolithic times and through all phases of the Minoan Period. Kydonia developed into an important center of the Minoan civilization, famous for its pottery workshops and bustling trade and commerce. It remained a significant commercial center during Roman times, but was destroyed in 828 AD by the Saracene pirates, after which it ceased to be a major competitor in the trade community. Venetians came to Chania in 1204 and settled in Kastelli, fortifying the mountain loft which commands the harbour. They built the Cathedral of Santa Maria, as well as a palace, theatre, and homes for nobility. The city flourished once again, as an economic as well as intellectual center. Fear of Turkish invasion forced the Venetians to enclose the entire town with a wall and moat but, in 1645, Turks occupied Chania after a two-month siege. Finally, after centuries of oppression, Crete was liberated from the Turks in 1821 and in 1897, Chania became the capital of Crete. In 1913, Crete, which had been its own country-state, was united with the rest of Greece.



USEFUL INFO

Kriti Info

The Kriti Info office, located in "Perks Liberty Chania and cities across the island, around the island, we'll clue you in on feel like doing a "Do It Yourself", join one of calendar. We'll also pay your bills for just a we'll book your luxury day spa appointment at one of the **Spa's downtown**, where you can get a massage, jacuzzi, manicure/pedicure, facial, and a ton of other services in a nice and calming environment. Kriti Hours of Op: 1000-1600 Mon-Fri.

Center" ,will help you get around! With **maps of information** on attractions and destinations where, how, and when to do it. And if you don't our group tours, listed on our monthly events fee of 5\$ per bill. Just to show you that we care,

PARKING DOWNTOWN

There are metered parking spaces available throughout downtown Chania. You must find the Ticket Box that generates permits on the street where you're parked. Put coins into the machine according to the time chart and then put your ticket IN your car on the dash, so that it shows through the windshield. A few Euros will last you hours!

Car Rental

MWR's Travel Contractor, SPA Tours, located in the "End Zone" Building rents vehicles to age-eligible persons on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. Visit them or call x1291 for reservations. Hours of Op: 0900-1700 Mon-Fri / 0900-1400 Sat.

Shop Hours Downtown

Souvenir shops, or the stores that line the Harbour roads, stay open all day in the summer season, everyday, and accommodate shoppers well into the night, sometimes as later as 11pm. In winter, souvenir shops mostly get onto the Chania regular store year-round schedule, which is: Mon-Sat: 0900-1330 & Tues/Thurs/Fri additional hours of 1800-2100.