

World Heritage Sites of Cyprus.

In 1972 UNESCO adopted the Convention regarding to the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage in response to the increased threats to archaeological monuments and nature sites caused by the rapid and uncontrolled pace of economic development.

The Convention promotes the registration, protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage sites considered to be of exceptional value for all mankind.

Since 1992 this Convention is managed by the World Heritage Centre with its head office in Paris and constitutes the point of reference and the coordinator within UNESCO on all subjects related to world heritage.

The Republic of Cyprus ratified the Convention in 1975 and is committed, together with other states, to protecting World Cultural Heritage sites. As a result of the important civilisation that had developed in Cyprus between two key cultural regions, the Aegean and the Near East, it was one of the first countries whose monuments achieved this distinction in 1980. This civilization is reflected through important archaeological sites and Byzantine churches and constitutes a leading event for the cultural promotion of the island.

The first listing in UNESCO in 1980 included the Sanctuary of Aphrodite in Kouklia (Palaipafos) and Nea Pafos (present Kato Pafos) for two basic reasons:

- The part the region of Pafos played in the worship of the goddess, Aphrodite, and
- The part Cyprus, and Pafos especially, played in the spread of Christianity, and with the events associated with the passage of Apostle Pavlos through the region.

The key, however, for the listing of Nea Pafos was the mosaics from the Roman period, not only in the House of Dionysos but also in the Villa of Theseus and the Basilica of Chrysopolitissa. Also included are the "Tombs of the Kings" from the Hellenistic period.

The second listing in 1985 included the Byzantine and post Byzantine churches upon the Troodos mountain range.

The reasons upon which the Committee based its decision to include the ten churches in the list are:

- They constitute a testimony to the Byzantine culture on the island.
- They are important monuments of rural ecclesiastical architecture preserved in very good condition, and
- The art of these churches have elements which show the relation between Eastern and Western Christian art.

The third listing in 1998 included the archaeological site of the Neolithic settlement of Choirokoitia. Choirokoitia was included in the list for three basic reasons:

- It is the most important archaeological site of the Neolithic period that reflects the expansion,
- the permanent habitation of settlements, and
- the role of Cyprus in the spreading of the Neolithic civilisation from the eastern Mediterranean to the West (7th millennium - 4th millennium B.C.).



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Choirokoitia

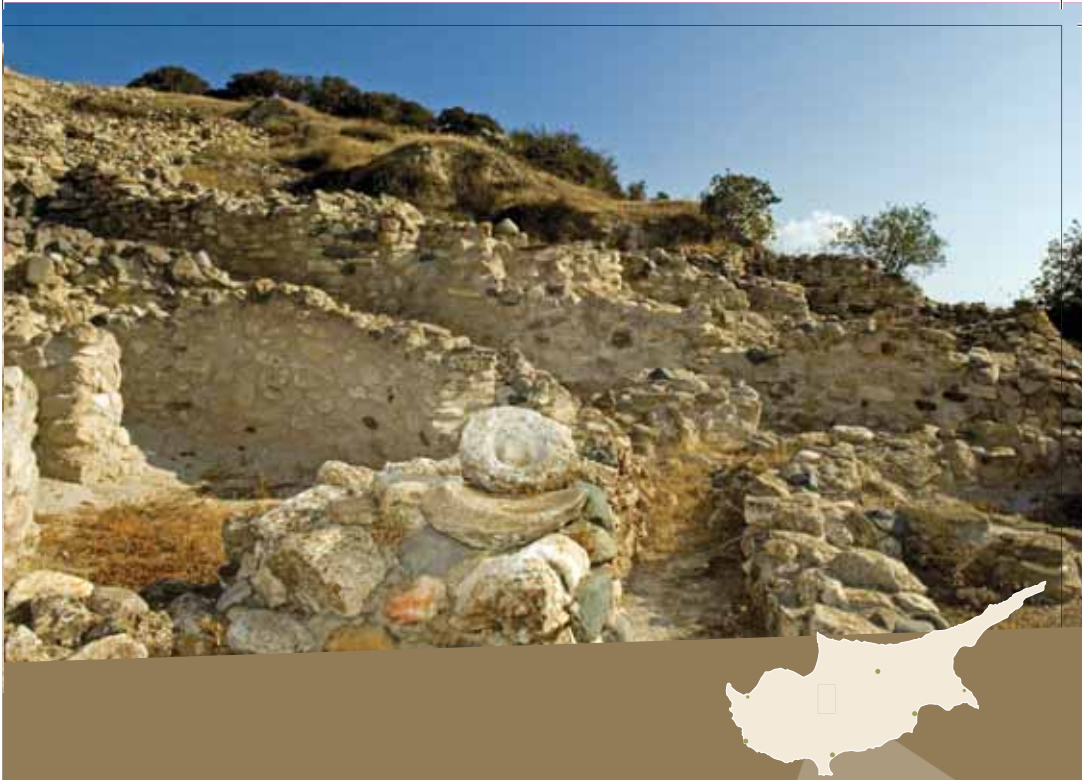
Location - Larnaka district on the motorway between Lefkosia and Lemesos near the village of Maroni.

Founded - At the end of the 7th millennium cal BC and occupied during part of the 6th millennium cal B.C.

History - Towards the end of the 8th millennium cal B.C., according to the most recent research, settlers coming from the mainland arrived in the apparently uninhabited island of Cyprus. It seems that this population rapidly lost its connections with the motherland, and in the isolated island environment developed into a unique civilisation: the Cypriot Aceramic Neolithic Civilisation. Founded during the course of the 7th millennium cal B.C., the site of Choirokitia provides a fine example of this cultural era at its peak.

Excavations - The exceptional architectural activity of the Choirokitians is evidenced by the remains of structures, whether for collective or private use. One of the most impressive collective constructions, implying organised collective labour, is the enclosure wall which protected the village. The village was entered into by an architecturally unique stairway integrated with a bulky stone structure against the exterior face of the enclosure wall.

The basic architectural unit is a circular structure with a flat roof. The materials used for construction, either singly or in combination, are mud or sun-dried mudbricks and stone.



The house consists of a group of such circular structures around an open space where installations for grinding corn were found. Internal subdivisions or arrangements were made according to the predetermined use of each structure, such as a loft supported by massive piers, low walls, basins or hearths defining working or rest areas.

The deceased, sometimes accompanied by intentionally broken stone vessels, were buried in pits inside the house which insured that the dead remained with the living and that death caused no disruption to the cohesion of the community.



From Lefkosia - 48 km.
From Larnaka - 33 km.
From Lemesos - 35 km.
From Pafos - 103 km.

1.	2.	<p>1. A contemporary re-creation of the ancient village.</p> <p>2. Houses of the village built side-by-side.</p>
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Palaipafos

Location - Present village of Kouklia close to the Diarizos River near Petra tou Romiou, known as the legendary Birthplace of Aphrodite.

Founded - Tradition refers to Kinyras, the legendary Cypriot king, as the founder and first High Priest of the sanctuary. Another legend mentions Agapenor, the King of Tegea in Arcadia in Peloponnesos (Greece), as the founder of the city and sanctuary.

History - Although the site was continuously inhabited from the Chalcolithic period to the present day, its most important period is at the end of the Late Bronze Age, when Mycenaean Greeks settled there ca 1200 B.C. According to legend, Pafos was one of the city-Kingdoms of Cyprus established by heroes after the end of the Trojan War. In an 11th century B.C. tomb at Palaipafos a bronze skewer was found bearing the engraved Greek name "Opheltis"; this is the earliest evidence for the use of the Greek language in Cyprus.

Excavations - Archaeological objects found illustrate the material culture of the newcomers at the beginning of the 12th century B.C. and the sanctuary of Aphrodite, built in the 12th century B.C., indicates a deeply-rooted tradition of a fertility cult. The sanctuary was continuously in use until the end of the Roman period.

The Sanctuary did not follow the plan of a Greek temple. According to representations of the sanctuary on coins and amulets of the Roman period, it was an open shrine with a peribolos wall enclosing a tripartite cella that housed a conical baetyl in the centre, symbolising the power of the goddess.



Incense burners were found in the side rooms and the actual baetyl was found at the site of the sanctuary.

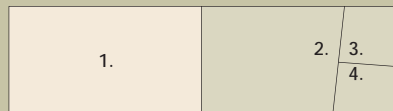
The orthostats of the peribolos of the temenos of the original temple are amongst the most imposing structures in Cypriot architecture of the Late Bronze Age that survived until the 4th century A.D.

Parts of the defensive walls of Palaipafos have also been uncovered including the northeast gate which is associated with the dramatic siege of Pafos by the Persians during the revolt of the Cypriots in 499 B.C.

Other buildings of the late Archaic and Classical periods have also been uncovered at this site.

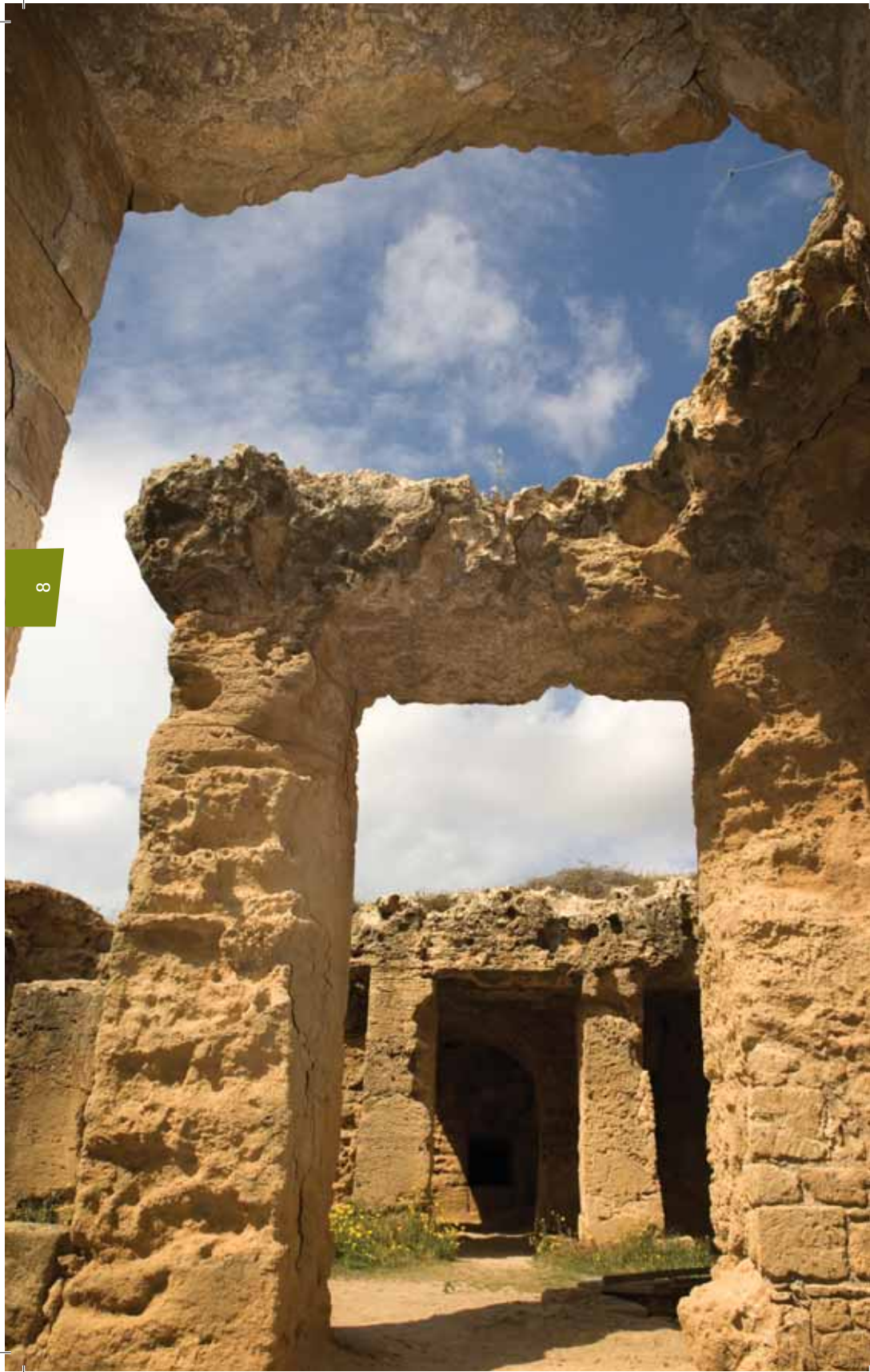


- From Lefkosia** - 130 km.
- From Larnaka** - 115 km.
- From Lemesos** - 50 km.
- From Pafos** - 21 km.



1. General view of the excavated area of the sanctuary of Aphrodite. At the background a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary Galaktortrofousa (milkgiving)

2 - 3. Architectural remains of Palaipafos
4. Mycenaean limestone capital from the sanctuary of Aphrodite (ca.1200 B.C.).





Nea Pafos



Location - Present Kato Pafos.

Founded - By Nikokles, last king of Palaipafos, towards the end of the 4th century B.C.

History - It was a walled city that became the main administrative centre of the area and significant parts of its walls survive today. Soon after the city was founded, Cyprus came under Ptolemaic rule where it remained as part of the Kingdom of Egypt for the whole of the Hellenistic period. In the 2nd century B.C. Nea Pafos became the capital of the island.

Excavations - Excavations of Hellenistic remains show a wealthy city following mainstream artistic traditions. The early 3rd century B.C. mosaic of Scylla, the sea monster, is made of natural pebbles in what was then a fairly new decorative technique in the Greek world.



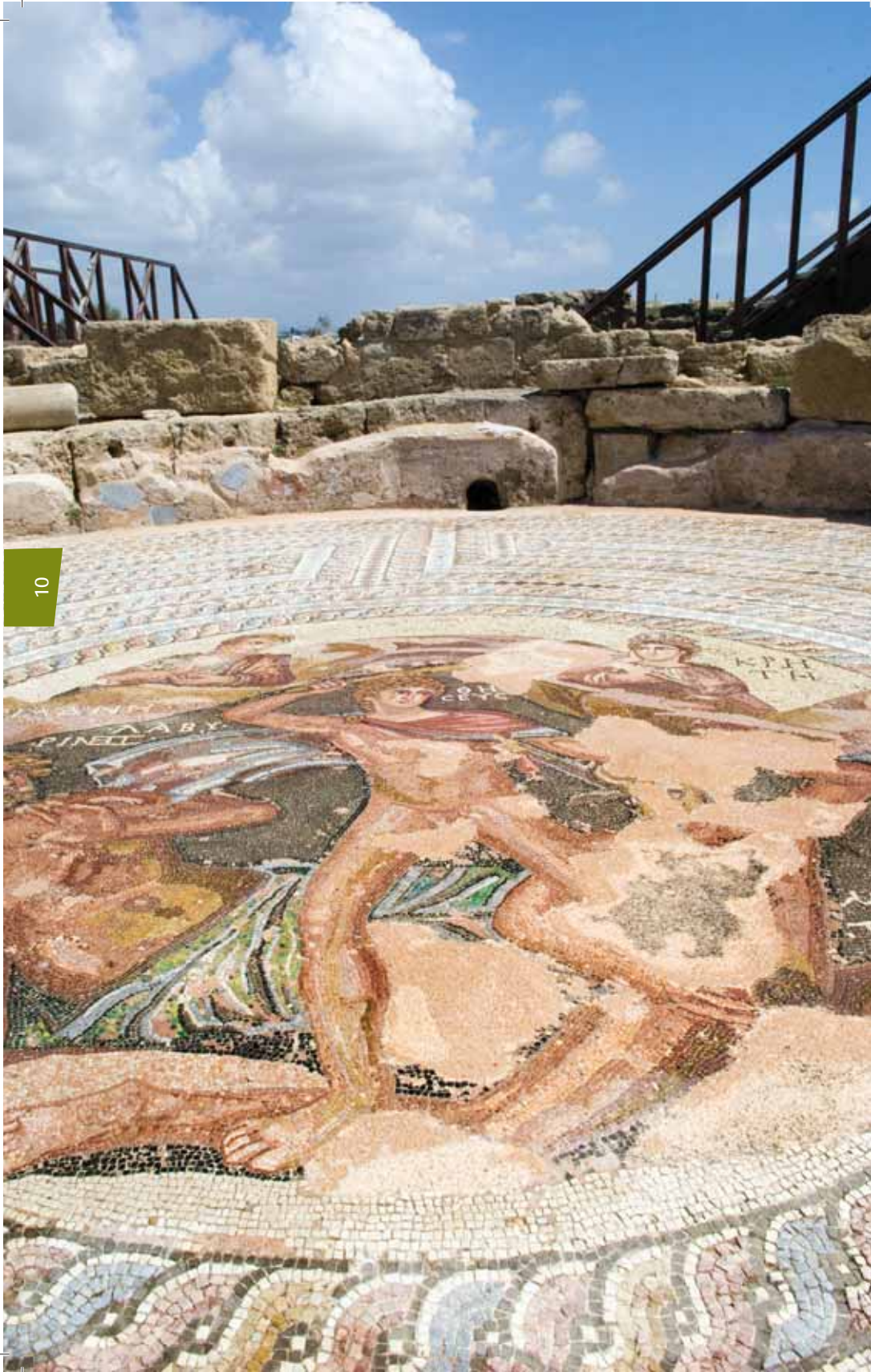
From Lefkosia - 151 km.

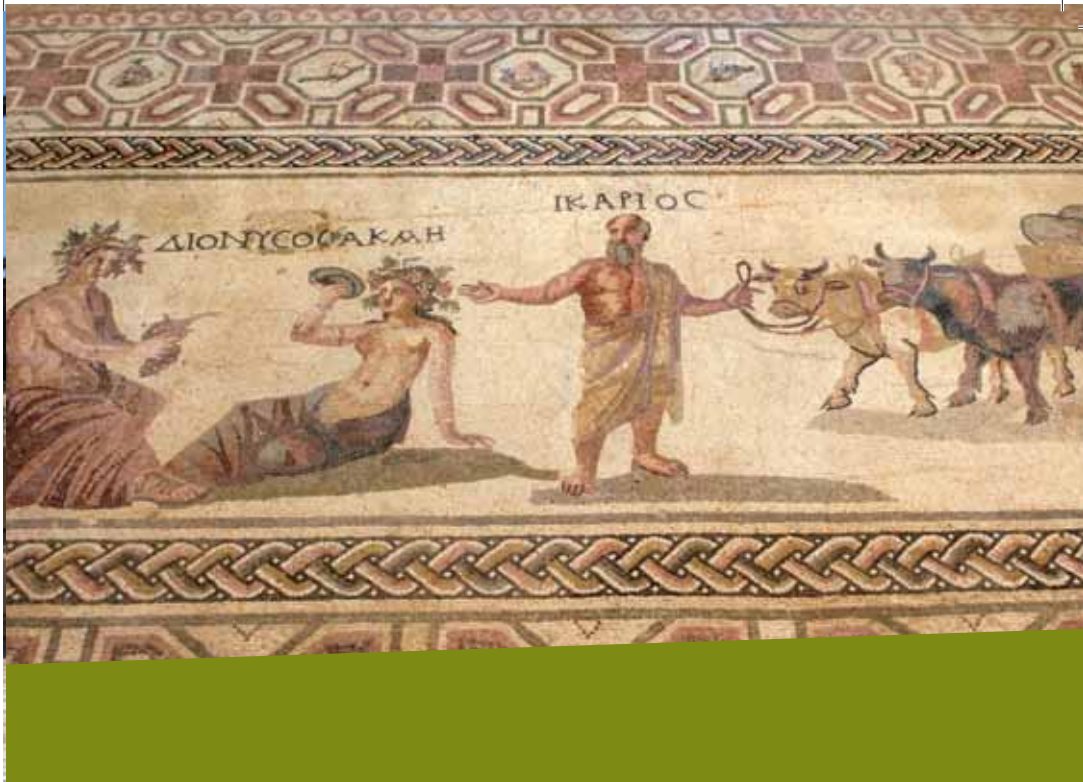
From Larnaka - 135 km.

From Lemesos - 70 km.



1-2. View of the Tombs of the Kings, 3rd Century B.C.





The theatre of Pafos also dates to this period as well as two underground rock-cut sanctuaries including one at the «Toumballos» area.

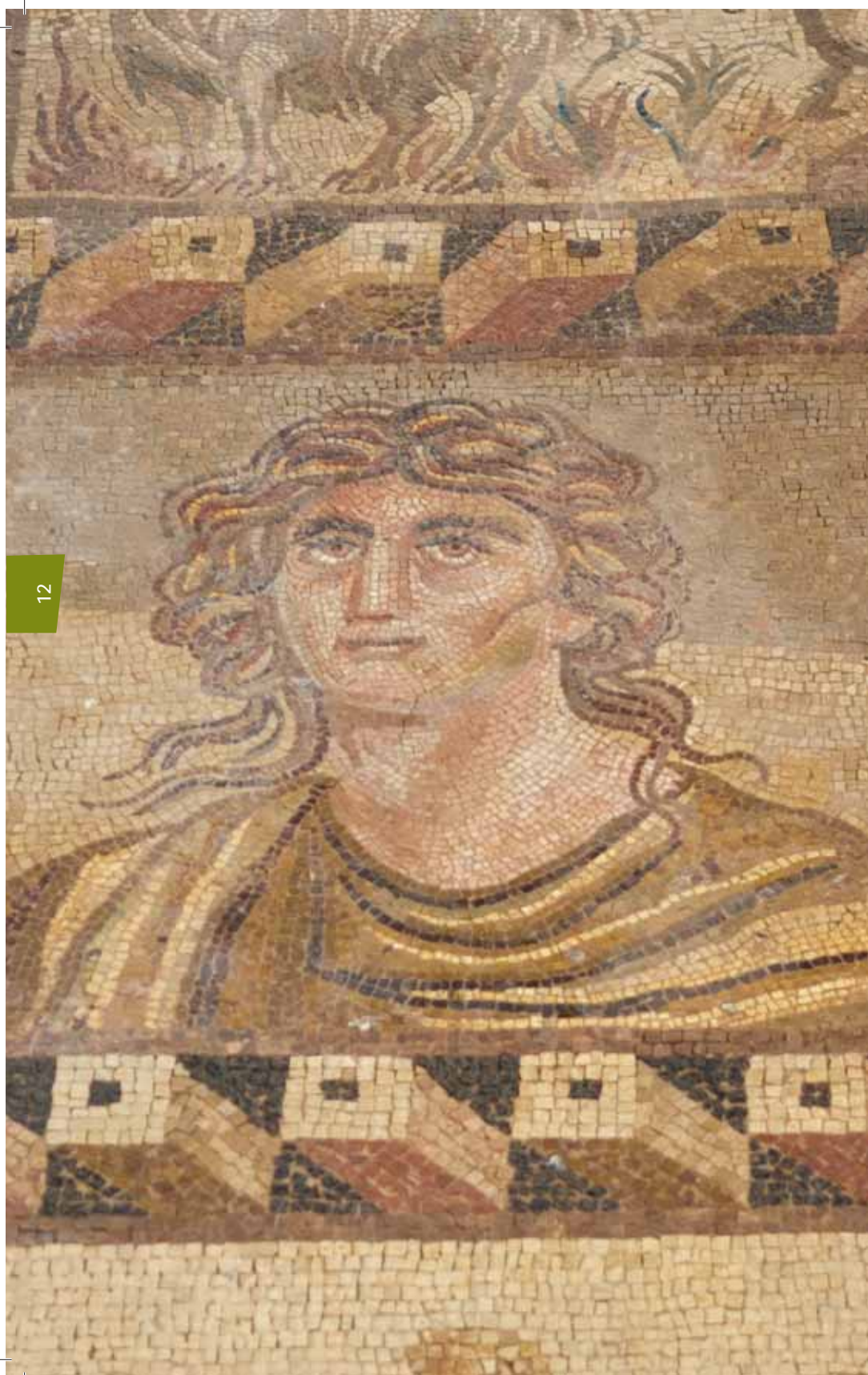
The «Tombs of the Kings» reflect the wealth and sophistication of Hellenistic Pafos. These have parallels in Alexandria whereas other tombs, such as those from the «Ammoi» area, retain important remains of painted decoration.

The city reached its peak around the Severan period (late 2nd - early 3rd century A.D.), from which date most of the affluent residences excavated. It was then called «Augusta Claudia, Flavia Pafos, the sacred metropolis of the towns of Cyprus». The most well-known of these, with almost its entire mosaic decoration intact, is the «House of Dionysos». Iconographically speaking, the most important, is the House of Aion of around the mid-4th century.

In 45 A.D. Saints Paul and Barnabas arrived on the island and became the first Roman province with a Christian governor and the 4th century finally saw the advent of Christianity. After the Edict of Milan, basilicas appeared in Cyprus such as the church of Agia Kyriaki which still stands today.



1. Theseus and the Minotaur, Mosaic in the Villa of Theseus, 4th century A.D.
2. Dionysos and Ikaros, House of Dionysos, 3rd century A.D.





From the 4th to the 6th centuries, pagan and Christian Pafos developed side-by-side and Christian mosaics adopted elements from pagan mosaics. The decoration of the floors in the basilicas became almost entirely geometric with subjects such as fish, birds and small animals, while the human form was completely absent.

After the earthquakes of the 4th century, Nea Pafos ceased to be the capital of Cyprus and although still prosperous for the next two centuries, gradually sank into oblivion.

1.

2.

1. Detail from the mosaic of the Four Seasons, House of Dionysos, 3rd century A.D.

2. The Presentation of Baby Dionysos, House of Aion, 4th century A.D.



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Agios Nikolaos Tis Stegis (Saint Nicholas Of The Roof)

Location - South of the village of Kakopetria on the banks of the Karkotis River in the Solea valley.

Founded - It is the sole remnant of an old monastery founded in the 11th century that flourished in the mid-Byzantine period and during Frankish rule but fell into decline in the 18th century, eventually dissolving.

Architecture - It belongs to the domed cross-in square plan and takes its name from the second timber roof with flat tiles that were made in the Solea district, giving it the epithet, "of the Roof". The narthex, covered by a calotte and two traverse arches, was added at the beginning of the 12th century. At a later stage the church's original appearance was altered resulting in the destruction of important paintings.

Wall Paintings - The 11th century wall paintings are characterised by clear-cut features, accentuated formal lines and a limited colour spectrum that nonetheless conveys intense spirituality, such as the scene of the Ascension of Christ and the Transfiguration.

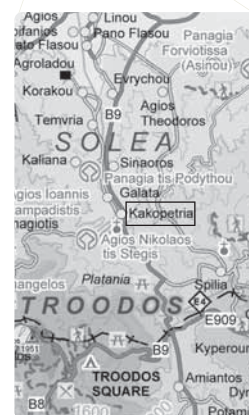
The 12th century is mainly represented by the Day of Judgement scene decorating the narthex and the wall paintings decorating the southwest wing, such as the Presentation of the Virgin.



Thirteenth century wall paintings include the re-painting of sections of the church and narthex, such as the Crucifixion, the Resurrection and the Myrrh Bearers.

The 14th century is represented by the Pantocrator surrounded by the Angels in the dome and the Prophets in the drum of the Dome. Some of the wall paintings in the narthex belong to this period too. The arch and east and south vaults were also decorated during this period and are today exhibited in the Byzantine Museum of the Archbishop Makarios III Foundation in Lefkosia.

Only the full length apostles, Peter and Paul, who adorn the piers that support the dome near the iconostasis also attributed to the 17th century, have a date inscribed on them --1633.

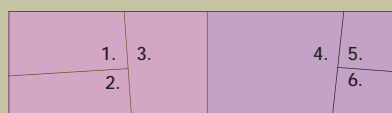


From Lefkosia - 61 km.

From Larnaka (via Lefkosia) - 100 km.

From Lemesos - 58 km.

From Pafos (via Lemesos) - 121 km.



1. General view of the church.

2. The Transfiguration (detail), southern half of the west vault. 11th century.

3. St. Nicholas with a donor. Early 12th century.

4. The Nativity, east half of the south vault. 14th century.

5. St. Anna, on the eastern face of the south-west pillar of the church. 14th century.

6. 'The stone'. The three women in front of the Empty Tomb. 13th century.



Panagia Phorviotissa (Asinou)

Location - South of Nikitari village on the foothills of the Troodos Mountains.

Founded - Erected between 1099 and 1105 by the magistrate Nikiphoros Ischyrios who, after his wife's death, took a monastic vow and became a monk under the name Nikolaos.

Architecture - Small, single-aisled church vaulted with a second timber roof covered with flat tiles. The narthex, with 2 semi-circular arches and calotte, were added at the end of the 12th century.

Wall Paintings - The interior of the church was painted with frescoes in 1105/6, whereas the narthex was decorated immediately after it was erected. Towards the end of the 13th century or at the beginning of the 14th century, the arch was rebuilt and the narthex redecorated resulting in wall paintings dating from different periods in the church.

The earliest are the most important ones distinguished for their colour, rhythm and harmony, restrained expression and mobility of movement. These wall paintings express the then-new trends of Comnenian painting and experts believe they are of the few surviving frescoes that reflect the technique of Constantinople, thought to be the birthplace of the artist.

Of the original wall paintings only those on the east and west section of the church and sanctuary and a few others under the layer of the 14th century remain. They include: The Dormition of Virgin Mary, the Assumption and the Communion of the Apostles. The oldest narthex wall painting, which appears chronologically to belong to the original 1105 cycle, is Panagia Phorviotissa on the arch over the original entrance to the church.



Only sections of the original beautification of the narthex dating to 1200 survive under the more recent layers from 1332/3. A mounted St. George, painted in the 13th century on the narthex's south arch as a votive wall painting of a certain Nikiphoros Kallia, is most interesting and is part of a 'portrait gallery' of the numerous donors.

Also interesting is the wall painting of the Virgin with Frankish donors on the semi-dome of the southern arch of the narthex in which the female donor wears a long black veil common amongst refugees from Syria to Cyprus mourning the fall of Acre in 1291. Several wall paintings in the church, dating from the 17th century, survive including Christ Emmanuel, located in the sanctuary.

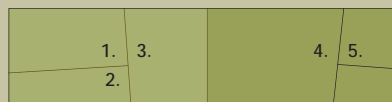


From Lefkosia
(via Nikitari village) - 51 km.

From Larnaka
(via Lefkosia) - 90 km.

From Lemesos - 81 km.

From Pafos
(via Lemesos) - 145 km.



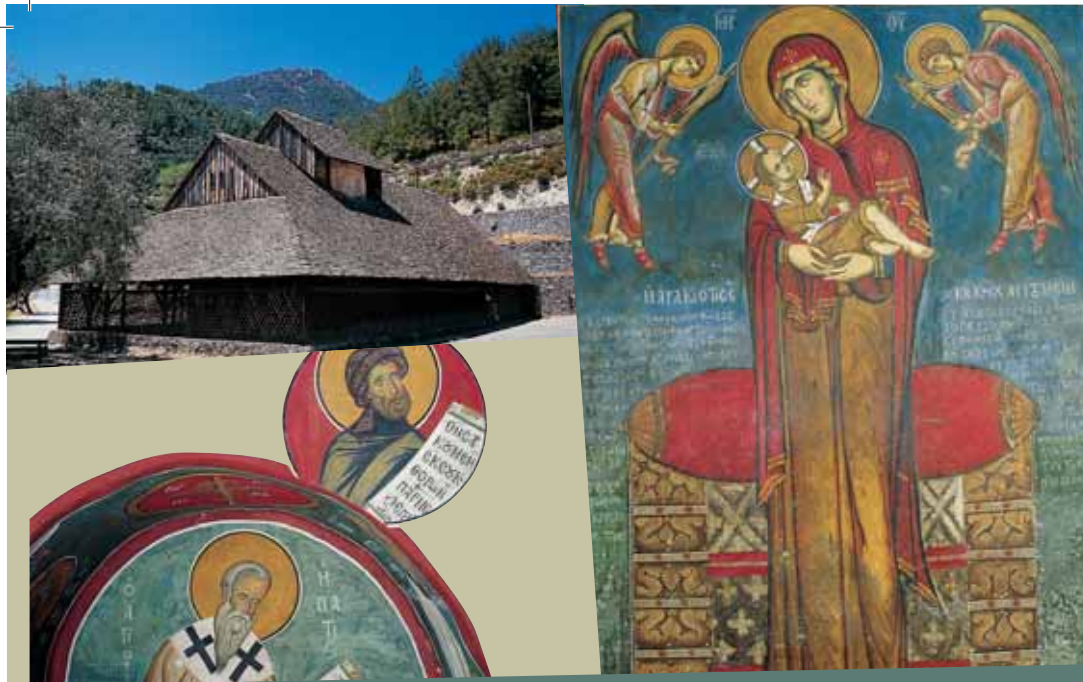
1. General view of the church.

2. The road to Calvary, the north half of the central part of the vault. 14th century.

3. General view of the wall paintings of the calotte of the narthex: Christ Pantocrator, Virgin and Angels in Prayer, the Twelve Apostles. 1332/1333.

4. General view of the south half of the narthex 13th century (St. George) and 1332/1333. (Apostles, pendentives, Virgin and donors.)

5. General view of the wall paintings of the central part of the south wall. the donor Nikiforos Magistros offering the Church to the Virgin who introduces him to Christ (centre) and the Virgin between the Archangels and St. George (below).



Panagia tou Araka

Location - Village of Lagoudera in the Pitsilia area at the foothills of the Troodos Mountain range.

Founded - Probably built at the end of the 12th century. According to local tradition, the name originates from 'ierakas' or hawk, which miraculously guided the owner-prince to the location of the Virgin's icon. Today the church and a two-storey monastery building north of the church survive.

Architecture - It is a single-aisled domed-hall with a cross-shaped roof to which a second timber roof was added covered with flat tiles extending beyond the church walls, creating a covered enclosed porch on the north, east and south side of it. The dome had a separate roof.

Wall Paintings - The most complete set of mid-Byzantine wall paintings in Cyprus painted in 1192, in late Commenian style. Characteristics are slenderness of form, meandering garment folds, vivid movement, exceptional colour combinations, manneristic details and calligraphic effect.

Scenes include the Pantocrator surrounded by the Preparation of the Throne, the ultimate symbol of The Day of Judgement, and The Angels in medallions, the Prophets, the Annunciation of the Virgin and the Evangelists. In addition, the enthroned Virgin between Archangels with Christ and 7 Cypriot saints are depicted. The Nativity, the Descent to Hell, the Baptism, the Ascension, the Presentation and Dormition of the Virgin and a row of Saints complete the iconographic circle. A standing Panagia Arakiotissa occupies the south wall under the Dormition of the Virgin. The wall paintings are attributed to Theodoros Apsevdīs.



The icons of Christ and John the Baptist are from the 16th century.

In the 17th century, images of several saints were painted on the exterior of the north wall while the iconostasis dates to 1673.

Wall paintings on the sanctuary of the semi-dome of the apse are in a different style and were probably painted by another artist.

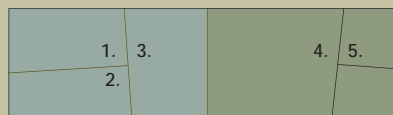


From Lefkosia (via the villages Peristerona & Xiliatos) - 53 km.

From Larnaka (via Lefkosia) - 92 km.

From Lemesos (via Karvounas & Agros) - 52 km.

From Pafos (via Lemesos) - 118 km.



1. General view of the church.

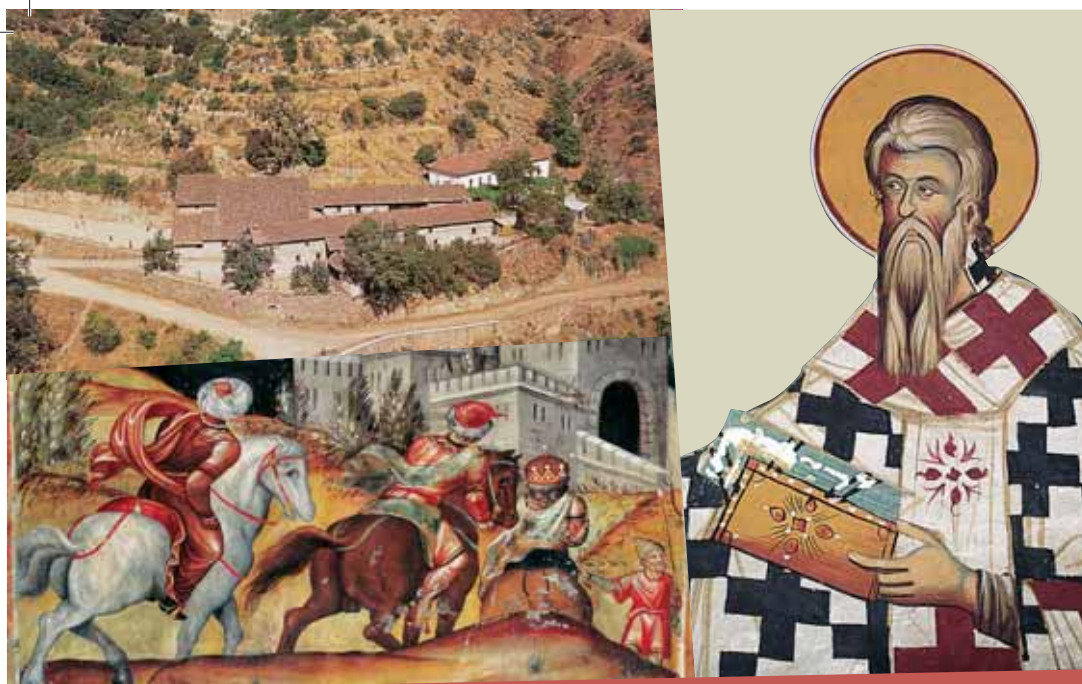
2. St. Joseph, the poet (above). St. Hypatius (detail). Wall painting in the lunette of the east blind arch of the north wall, 1192.

3. The Virgin Arakiotissa and the supplicatory inscription of Leon Afthentis, south wall, 1199.

4. The wall paintings in the dome. 1192.

5. St. Symeon the Stylite the Miracle Worker, 1192.

6. St. Symeon, the God-bearer (detail), north wall, 1192.



Agios Ioannis (St. John) Lampadistis Monastery

Location - Village of Kalopanagiotis, in the valley of Marathasa.

Founded - 15th or 16th century. Main church, dedicated to St. Heraklidios, was built in the 11th century.

Architecture - St. Heraklidios is a cross-in-square type main church.

The St. John Lampadistis chapel was added to the north side in the 12th century but collapsed in the 17th or 18th century and rebuilt in the vaulted style seen today. A small section of the north wall from the original chapel survives today. At the end of 14th or early 15th century a narthex common to the main church and the St. John Lampadistis chapel was erected. At the end of the 15th century a vaulted chapel was built to the north of the chapel with a timber-roofed narthex in the west.

Wall Paintings - Date back to different periods:

12th century - few wall paintings survive, including the two kneeling monks facing each other on the lower part of the arch.

13th century - the dome together with the west and south vaults, the central part of the west wall and the piers supporting the dome were decorated. Wall paintings on the north and west side of the southwest pier, on the south and west sides of the north-west pier and on the western side of the two east piers survive.

14th century - the remaining parts of the main church were redecorated with biblical scenes of which the Evangelical Narration survives in good condition.



Six prelates / Hierarchs, largely destroyed, appear on the semi-cylindrical wall of the apse semi-dome, and on the central apse of the semi apse, the Virgin with Christ at her breast, between the Archangels. There are remnants of two Deesis scenes on the north and south walls.

14th or 15th century - on the west part of the main church of the St. John Lampadistis monastery and the chapel, a common narthex was built, possibly wooden, but with a different slant from the narthex that exists today.

15th century - a vaulted chapel with a wooden-roofed narthex on the west was built north of the St. John Lampadistis chapel.

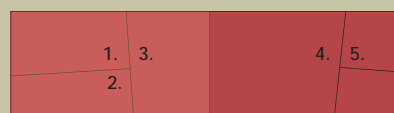


From Lefkosia - 65 km.

From Larnaka (via Lefkosia) - 104 km.

From Lemesos (via Platres & Troodos) - 58 km.

From Pafos (via Lemesos) - 122 km.



1. General view of the monastery.

2. Eleventh stanza of the Akathistos Hymn. The Magi being made heralds God-inspired went back to Babylon, vault of the Akathistos Chapel. Around 1500.

3. Prelate-saint, main church. Second half of the 14th century.

4. The Magi offering their gifts, east vault. Second half of the 14th century.

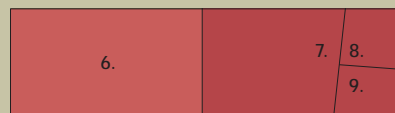
5. Miracle of the fishes, narthex of the main church 15th century.





16th century - the north chapel was decorated with wall paintings showing strong influences from contemporary Italian Renaissance art such as the enthroned Virgin holding the Infant in the niche at the centre of the east wall.

17th century - or beginning of the 18th century - the south wall of the chapel common to the main church and the north chapel, was replaced by an arch, destroying many wall paintings. The main church and the St. John Lampadistis chapel complex are covered by a single steeply-pitched timber roof with flat tiles similar to the one covering the north chapel.



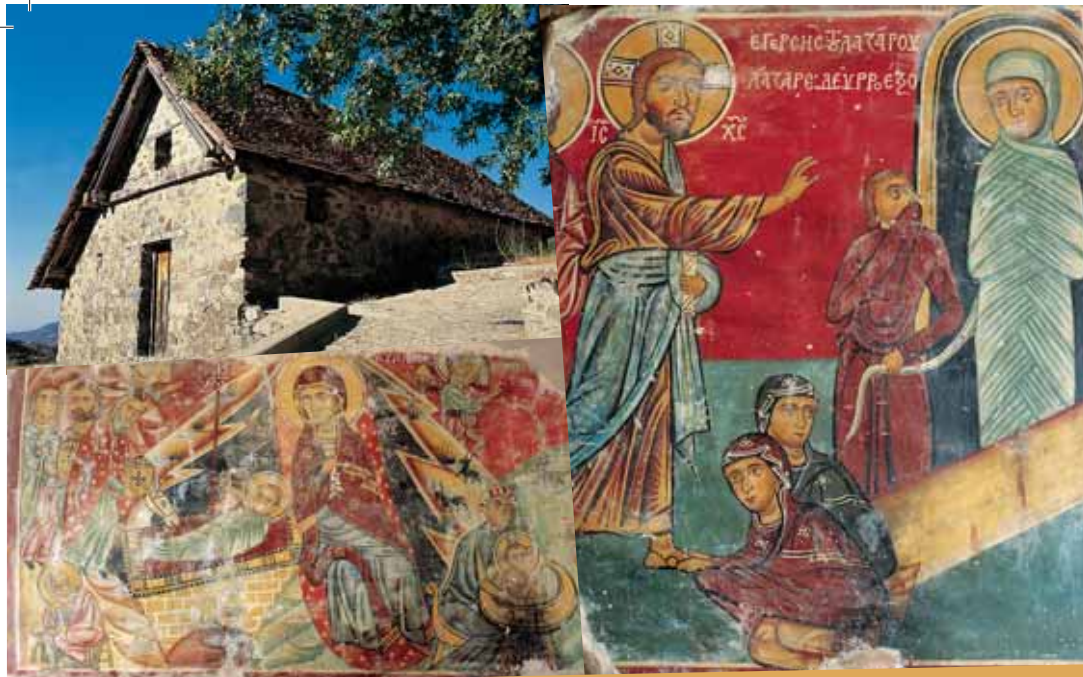
6. The Hospitality of Abraham, (above)

The enthroned Virgin with Child from wall painting on the east wall of the chapel of the Akathistos. Around 1500.

7. The Virgin-Burning Bush, detail from wall painting on the east wall of the chapel of the Akathistos. Around 1500.

8. The Entry into Jerusalem, west vault of the main church. 13th century

9. Moses receiving the Ten Commandments



Panagia tou Moutoulla

Location - In the Marathasa Valley on the north side of the Troodos range of mountains in the village of Moutoullas.

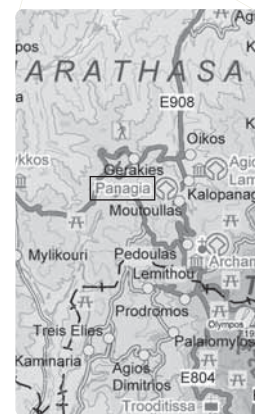
Founded - According to a dedicatory inscription, it was erected and decorated with funding from John Moutoullas and his wife, Irene, in 1280.

Architecture - A small, timber-roofed church with a more recent L-shaped narthex covering the north and west sides and a steep-pitched roof covered with flat tiles, typical in the Troodos Mountains because it was easy and economical to construct. It is a rectangular construction ending in a semi circular apse on the east side. Uneven pieces of local stone were used for the walls, and wood from the surrounding forests for the roof.

Wall Paintings - The unknown painter drew mainly from the indigenous 11th century painting tradition without ignoring contemporary influences. It is distinguished by intense Eastern influence and elements of so-called 'Crusader' painting, developed by westerners living in small states created in Palestine by the Crusaders. The style is characterised by poor proportions, heads disproportionately larger than bodies, linearity combined with a limited colour spectrum, instability of movement and large wide-open eyes with strongly accentuated pupils. There is an almost complete absence of colour gradation, shaping, volume and a third dimension. Despite these weaknesses, the general effect is pleasing and the wall paintings are a characteristic example of painting of the late 13th century.



The exact date of the addition of the narthex is unknown. Perhaps it was after the exterior of the northern wall was decorated at the beginning of the 16th century although earlier wall paintings also exist on the exterior of the western walls on either side of the western entrance. The narthex and the wall paintings of the exterior of the walls are covered by the extension of the roof. The exterior of the church's north wall was also decorated during the same period with a complex scene of the Last Judgement. The Seven Sleeping Youths of Ephesus is painted on the eastern extremity and is a unique portrayal for Cyprus.



From Lefkosia - 67 km.

From Larnaka
(via Lefkosia) - 106 km.

From Lemesos (via Platres & Troodos) - 56 km.

From Pafos
(via Lemesos) - 120 km.



1. General view of the church.
2. The Nativity, south wall, 1280.
3. The Raising of Lazarus, west wall, 1280.

4. St. Marina (detail), west wall, 1280.

5. St. Christopher, south wall, 1280.

6. St. Sozomenos, Archangel Michael, St. Peter, north wall, 1280.



Timios Stavros (The Holy Cross) in Pelendri

Location - Pelendri village in Lemesos area southeast of Kato Amiantos village near Saittas.

Founded - Built in 1178 according to an inscription surviving in the apse.

Architecture - A small single-aisled domed church decorated with wall paintings in 1178. For unknown reasons it was destroyed and only the apse remained which was incorporated into the new church built at the beginning of the 14th century. Later in the century, the north chapel was added with a rectilinear east wall rather than an arch but in the 16th century the south chapel was built with an arch. At some point the north chapel's vault and north wall collapsed leaving only the wall paintings on the west and south walls and on the lower part of the east wall. In addition, the east wall with the arch, the south wall and the arch of the southern chapel were destroyed, although the exact date is unknown.

Today it is 3-aisled with wall paintings on the eastern part of the central aisle. The vaults, but not the dome, are covered with a pitched tiled roof, a recent construction that possibly replaced an older steep pitched sloping roof covering the dome.

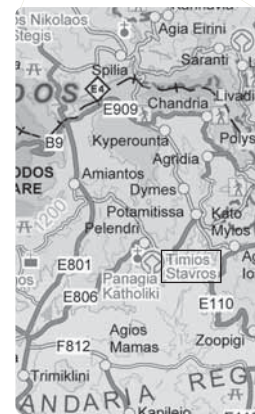
Wall Paintings - Some survive in the church apse with compositions and techniques that were rare in Cyprus, but common in the wider region.

The main part of the church was decorated with wall paintings during the first half of the 14th century by at least three painters from the same atelier.



The first followed the Paleologan style developed in Constantinople in the 13th and 14th century, the second has a less sophisticated, more linear and schematised style and the third followed the local tradition of Byzantine painting with eastern elements of the 14th century. Wall paintings of the central part of the church, also a work of the third painter, were removed and placed in the south chapel to save them from destruction. They had become detached from the original wall painting layer.

Some surviving wall paintings in the north chapel date from a later period and follow the more mainstream style of Paleologan painting, whereas those in the south chapel follow the local Byzantine tradition.

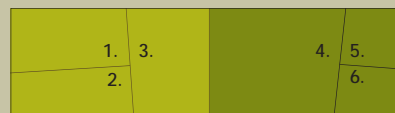


From Lefkosia (via Karvounas & Kakopetria) - 83 km.

From Larnaka (via Lefkosia) - 122 km.

From Lemesos - 36 km.

From Pafos (via Lemesos) - 100 km.



1. General view of the church.
2. The Annunciation at the well and in front of the house, west vault, 14th century.
3. Christ Pantocrator, dome, 14th century.

4. The Embracing of the Mother of God by Elisabeth, west vault, 14th century.
5. Prophets, dome, 14th century.
6. Male figure on lower branches of Tree of Jesse, west wall of the north aisle.



Church of Archangelos Michael (the Archangel Michael)

Location - In the Marathasa valley on the north side of the Troodos range of mountains in the village of Pedoulas.

Founded - According to a dedicatory inscription the church was built and decorated with a donation by the priest Vassilios Chamados in 1474.

Architecture - Small and timber-roofed, with an L-shaped narthex covering the church's west and south side. The narthex was used as a place set aside for the women, whereas the men entered the main church.

Wall Paintings - This church is one of the few in Cyprus where the name of the artist, Minas survives. Minas followed the local Byzantine tradition and the iconographical programme with influences from the last phase of the Byzantine tradition as it developed in Thessaloniki and Macedonia. In addition western art is evident in the small details in certain scenes.

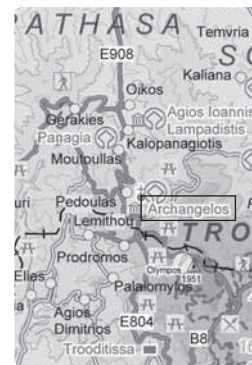
Two icons in the church itself, a Virgin Hodegetria and an Archangel Michael painted by Minas were taken to the Church of the Holy Cross at Pedoulas for security reasons.

On the small blind arch over the south entrance, which appears to have originally been the church's main entrance, there is a bust of the Archangel Michael, while Christ Life-Giving and the Virgin Hodegetria are painted on either side of the entrance.



The artist used an extremely personal style; he broke down faces and background into crooked geometrical lines and had a preference for red which he also broke down into various shades. In spite of the lack of correct proportions in rendering the human form, he succeeded in placing people comfortably in multi-person scenes and in giving the scenes breadth without however managing to correctly express volume and depth.

Irrespective of the influences on Minas, both from the last renaissance of Byzantine painting and from western art, he remained a true naïve painter of his time.

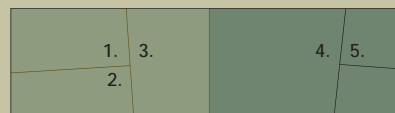


From Lefkosia (Marathasa valley) - 71 km.

From Larnaka (via Lefkosia) - 110 km.

From Lemesos (via Platres & Kakopetria) - 52 km.

From Pafos (via Lemesos) - 116 km.



1. General view of the church.
2. The donors offering the church to the Archangel Michael, north wall, 1474.
3. St. George, south wall, 1474.

4. The Betrayal, west wall, 1474.
5. The Sacrifice of Abraham, north wall, 1474.
6. The Archangel Michael, north wall, 1474.



30

Timios Stavros (The Holy Cross) Agiasmati

Location - Near the village of Platanistasa in the Pitsilia area at the foot of Troodos mountain range in the area of Madari.

Founded - The church, probably built in the last decade of the 15th century, belonged to a small monastery.

Architecture - It is timber-roofed and surrounded on all sides by a unique (for-Cyprus) covered portico that is wider on the west side where the narthex would normally be, and is under the same roof as the church.

Wall Paintings - Decorated with wall paintings by Philippos Goul who was influenced by Byzantine and Western art as well as by local tradition, but was unable to create a coherent personal style. Nonetheless, his style is pleasing and impressive.

The entire west wall is covered with wall paintings and the entire interior of the church is painted. The south and north walls are divided into two horizontal zones, whereas the east wall with the apse and the west wall are divided perpendicularly. The church's founder, chief priest Petros Peratis and his wife, Pepani, are depicted on the exterior south wall offering the church to Christ through the Virgin. Further to the right, on the small blind arch, is depicted the composition "From Above the Prophets have Heralded Thee".

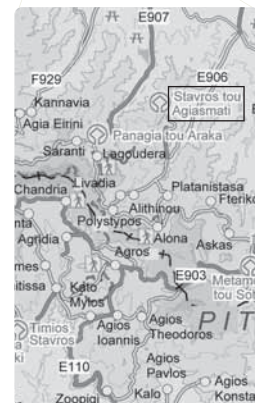
All the depicted biblical scenes are reminiscent of miniature manuscripts, influenced by the art of the Middle Ages but with poor proportions and often unnatural postures. In scenes of the Passion and Resurrection and the Recovery of the Holy Cross by St Helen, there are clear elements of western Medieval Art such as tall Venetian buildings in the background and the three-dimensional portrayal of buildings.



In contrast, other scenes indicate a rather naïve expression of Byzantine tradition including Christ the King of Glory and the wall paintings behind the iconostasis on the eastern parts of the south and north walls which are technically different from the other paintings in the church.

The portrayal of the standing Saints in the Byzantine tradition on the lower zone of the north and south walls is more successful. The modelling of forms, the garment folds and in general, the iconography of the standing Saints show the artist's thorough knowledge of Paleologan painting, the last phase of Byzantine painting.

The iconographies of Agios (St.) Mamas mounted on a lion and a mounted St. George, both on the lower part of the western wall, conform to local tradition.



From Lefkosia - 49 km.

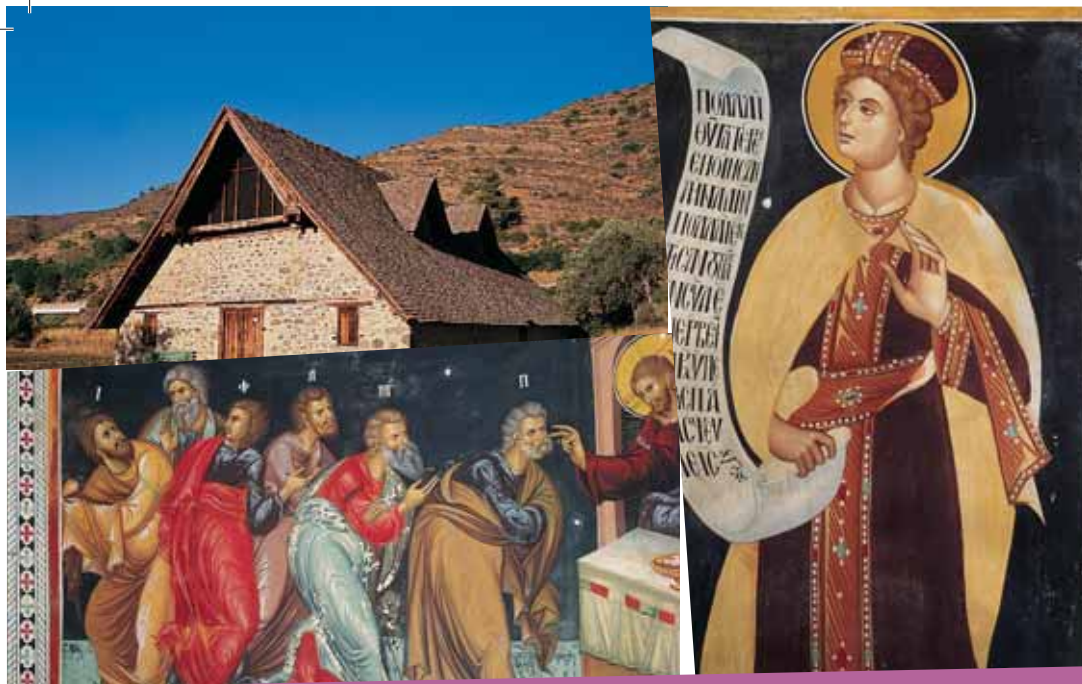
From Larnaka (via Lefkosia) - 88 km.

From Lemesos (via Karvounas, Kyperouna & Platanistasa) - 62 km.

From Pafos (via Lemesos) - 131 km.

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1. General view of the church.
2. Standing Saints, south wall, 1494.
3. The story of the finding of the Holy Cross (above) and Saint (below), recess of the north wall, 1494.
4. The Presentation of the Virgin, south wall, 1494.
5. St. Mamas, west wall, 1494.



Panagia Podythou

Location - Near Galata Village on the banks of the Karkotis River in the Solea valley.

Founded - According to the dedicatory inscription on the upper part of the exterior west wall, it was built in 1502 and is consecrated to the Virgin Eleousa. It is the main church of a monastery of the same name that was dissolved at the beginning of the 19th century and of which, until approximately 50 years ago, a small two-storey monastery building from the period of the Ottoman rule survived.

Architecture - It is rectangular, with a semi-circular apse at the eastern end. The other three sides were later enclosed by a U-shaped portico sheltered by the same steep-pitched timber roof with flat tiles that also covered the church whose floors are paved with terracotta tiles.

Wall Paintings - Never entirely decorated, the wall paintings in the church were painted around the time that it was constructed, with the exception of those of Apostle Peter and Paul on the north and south walls respectively painted in the 17th century.

The wall paintings are significantly influenced by western painting techniques from the Italian Renaissance, with the use of vivid colours and three dimensional scenes.



Two scenes stand out in the semi- dome of the apse in the Holy of Holies. The first is the enthroned Virgin with the Infant Christ on her lap, flanked by the Archangels Gabriel and Michael that face her holding torches and dressed in richly embroidered garments and second the Communion of the Apostles.

These are considered to be amongst the best examples of the Italo-Byzantine school in Cyprus; a style that combined classical Byzantine elements with those of the Italian Renaissance and first appeared at the end of the 15th century after the Venetians occupied the island in 1489.

The wood-carved iconostasis, re-gilded in 1783, and the Venetian lectern are from the same period as the wall paintings.

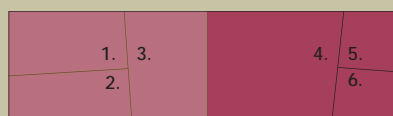


From Lefkosia - 56 km.

From Larnaka
(via Lefkosia) - 95 km.

From Lemesos (via Platres
& Troodos) - 59 km.

From Pafos (via Lemesos)
- 123 km.



1. General view of the church.
2. "Take, eat, this is my body", detail of the Communion of the Apostles, apse, 1502.
3. King Solomon, east wall, 1502.

4. The Virgin enthroned with Child between the Archangels semi-dome of the apse, 1502.
5. The Annunciation, detail showing the Virgin, east wall, south of the apse, 1502.
6. King David, east wall, 1502.



Church of the Transfiguration of the Saviour

Location - Overlooking the eastern section of the village of Palaichori in the area of Pitsilia on the foothills of Troodos.

Founded- Early 16th century.

Architecture - A steep, pitched-roof-type chapel with a 17th century enclosure on the south-west and an arched recess in each of the side walls.

Wall Paintings - The paintings are influenced by various styles and techniques.

The interior of the chapel is completely painted with an impressive series of post-Byzantine wall-paintings that form part of the 16th century Cretan School. The side walls have been divided into two zones and the west one into three, plus the pediment.

The Last Supper and the Agony in the Garden are from the Macedonian School of the early Paleologue period. The features of the two thieves in the semi-narrative Crucifixion have a Western influence yet their general depiction goes back to early Byzantine times. For the Resurrection, the artist used a western influenced scene with Christ stepping out of a sarcophagus with three sleeping soldiers in the foreground.

The Communion of the Apostles is one of the two surviving examples in Cyprus in which the disciples are depicted twice. Here, Christ does not express the strong Byzantine character with a clipped beard and moustache. The Sacrifice showing the Infant Christ in both the paten and the chalice is unique to Cyprus.