



## Western Crete Biking Tour 2025



**CHANIA** DAY 1

DAY 5

KISSAMOS DAY 4

INACHORIA

DAY 3

PALATIOCHORA

DAY 2

OMALOS

DAY 6

GEORGIOPOLI

KOURNAS LAKE

DAY 7

**RETHYMNO**

KRHTIKO PELAGOS

**CRETE**

**Western Crete Cycling tour:**  
DAY 1: Chania  
DAY 2: Omalos - Palaiochora or Hiking the Samaria Gorge  
DAY 3: Palaiochora - Elafonissi - Inachoria  
DAY 4: Inachoria - Kissamos  
DAY 5: Kissamos - Chania  
DAY 6: Chania - Georgioupoli  
DAY 7: Kournas Lake - Rethymno

**CRETE GREECE**

TYPE: Self-guided biking tour

LOCATION: Western Crete, Greece

DEPARTURES: 2025, every Saturday April - May & September - October

DURATION: 8 days or 14 days (double overnights)

PRICE: from **€990p.p./1490€p.p. (8 days/14 days) including:**

- Accommodation for 7 nights/8 days or 13 nights/14 days in 3\* hotels/apartments with breakfast
- Luggage transfer between hotels
- Transfer of bikes & bikers to Omalos on day 2
- Complete information about the area
- Mobile phone mount for the handlebar
- Access to GPS application with routes
- 24h emergency phone support

Excluding: hotel tax, flights, excursions on your free time, boat tickets on day 2 and 3, entrance tickets for archaeological sites & museums etc

ADDITIONAL CHARGES:

- Single supplement: 190€ per person (8 days) or 380€ per person (14 days)
- Out of the season single departure: 230€ per person (the single supplement applies too)
- For starting any other day than Saturday, there is an extra charge due to customized transfers:
  - 450€ for the whole booking (1-4 people)
  - 650€ (4-8 people) for the whole booking.
- High season fee ( 13 April -27 April, 2 June – 13 June, 25 October- 1 November, 1 September -30 September) : 100€ per person

BIKE RENTAL:

- Trekking bike 100€/week
- Road bike 140€/week
- E- bike 290€/week
- Tandem 270€/week
- Helmet 10€/week
- GPS device upon request 80€/week

## **About this holiday**

Crete is rightly considered to be one of the most beautiful destinations in Greece and this tour combines its history, culture, mountains, beaches, lakes, good food, lots of raki and Cretan music! It begins in Omalos, a plateau high in the mountains and heads down to the sea passing the famous beach at Elafonissil. From there it follows the west coast of Crete, passes through historical Chania and ends up in Rethymno.

This tour is of moderate difficulty and has been created for the recreational cyclist, however, you must have a standard/good level of fitness to feel comfortable. The daily distances are between 40 and 50km (check daily program) and the average daily climb is around 700m (with some exceptions). Of course, if you need help, we provide 24h telephone support so we will step in and provide all necessary assistance. On some days optional longer/harder routes are provided for the stronger cyclist.

For those seeking a more "in depth" Cretan experience, the tour is also offered with 2 overnights at each waypoint. For these extra days we suggest a variety of cycling routes, boat trips, daily excursions and various other alternatives.

- ❖ Customized programs can be created for you at an additional charge depending on the number of participants, duration and component parts of the tour.

## **Why choose this holiday?**

Crete is a unique destination and cycling is one of the best ways to explore it. The island has a huge amount to offer and appeals to discerning travelers who want a unique experience. History combined with fitness, leisure and natural beauty, all in one.

## **Self-guided biking tour**

Participating in a self-guided biking tour is one of the most pleasant ways to discover a destination in depth. Upon your arrival we will supply you with the code for a GPS application, which you can download for free on your phone. With this code you will have access to the routes. Your bike will be delivered with all necessary equipment such as panniers, service kit, locks etc. From then on you will have the freedom to spend your time in any way you wish. Whether you decide to wake up early or start later, you cycle at your own pace and stop anywhere that catches your interest on the proposed route. In this way you are not obliged to follow a specific schedule but can just follow at your own tempo.

In addition, each day we take care of your luggage transfer (at a specific time), so you don't have to carry anything extra with you, and of course we provide 24h telephone support in case of emergency just to be sure everything rolls along smoothly.

## **Sustainable travel**

Arcas Travel Services believes in sustainable and responsible tourism, and is committed to having the lowest possible environmental impact. By employing only local guides and using only regional services we provide a form of tourism that benefits the community. The visitor also benefits by being able to come closer to authentic local cultures and traditions due to our unique local knowledge.

## Day-by-day itinerary

### DAY 1: Arrival-Chania

You arrive in Chania, for many the most beautiful city on Crete, with its picturesque harbor, old town and castle. Chania has a long history and had a huge impact on the region during Venetian times. It has a truly unique character that you are sure to fall in love with.



### DAY 2: Omalos-Cycling to Palaiochora (52Km, +800m/-1834m descent) or Hiking the Samaria Gorge (14Km, 5-7h walk)

In the morning we transfer you by minibus to Omalos in the heart of the "Lefka Ori" (the famous White Mountains). From here you have 2 options:

The first option is to begin cycling directly and passing through

fantastic

mountainous

scenery you will

end up in

Palaiochora. This

route has several

ascents and

descents, with a

final downhill section that you are sure to find exciting.



The second option is to hike the fantastic Samaria Gorge, the longest gorge in Europe, with its incomparable beauty. Once you reach the coast and you are transported by boat to Palaiochora.



Samaria gorge is the 2<sup>nd</sup> most visited attraction in Crete after Knossos, a designated National Park, and is home to unique wildlife and many rare species.



Hiking here is an unforgettable experience, however be aware that it takes 5-7h of walking on uneven ground so correct footwear is essential. Please note that Samaria Gorge is open from May up to end of October.

**Extra Day:** If you choose to take the 15-day trip you could enjoy the sandy beach in Palaiochora, take private boat trip to the ancient town of Lyssos (a magical location that can only be reached by boat), or stronger cyclists can ride to Sougia (34Km/+920m) and then arrange private boat transfer back.

**DAY 3: Palaiochora-Elafonissi-Inachoria** (15Km/+560m or 34Km/+1000m)

Today you again have 2 options. The first is to take the boat and



arrive at one of the highlights of this trip; the beach of Elafonissi. The boat departs every day (except Sundays) from Palaiochora at

10:00 a.m and returns back at 16:00 p.m. Information at: Selino travel, tel.: +30 2823 842272. Enjoy the golden sand, swim in the crystal-clear waters, enjoy your lunch in a taverna, and then ride up to Inachoria.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> option is to ride directly to Inachoria, adding an extra 19km to your trip. The route is mountainous on small, quiet roads and has a unique beauty; however you should be aware that the ascent is around 1000m.

Upon reaching Inachoria you can either visit Elafonissi by bike or leave it for the next day to avoid the return journey.



Inachoria is a picturesque group of mountain villages in southwestern Crete. It took its name from the fact it consists of 9 villages (Enniachoria in Greek) and is a tranquil destination for the

discerning traveler. There you will find taverns and traditional Cretan houses all set in an outstanding natural environment.

**Important:** Due to weather conditions, the boat might not be able to transfer you to Elafonissi and in which case the only option is cycling directly to Inachoria. Of course, in case of emergency you can contact us (24h) and we will provide help with transportation.



**Extra Day:** There are many options for this extra day. Of course, the first is a relaxing day on Elafonissi beach.

Stronger riders can cycle to Kandanos village and back (54Km/+1000m return journey), a historic small town in the mountains where you can enjoy the local culture.

Another option is to cycle north to Topoliano Gorge and visit the Saint Sofia cave (10Km); this is an amazing place to visit as you will discover a small church among stalactites and stalagmites deep in the cave.





**DAY 4: Inachoria-Kissamos** (40Km/+675m or 49Km/+943)

We suggest 1 of 2 routes. One is 9km longer and has an extra 300 meters during the ascent.

Both routes will take you along the west coast of Crete and passing through spectacular landscapes you will eventually reach Kissamos (or Kastelli), a coastal town that has managed to retain its character despite regional tourism.



**Extra Day:** There are plenty of options on this additional day. You can take a boat trip to Balos, one of the most popular beaches on Crete, or

perhaps Agria Gramvousa island could be of interest.

You can even cycle to the amazing beach at Falasarna and visit the ancient town or perhaps you prefer to enjoy the beaches around Kissamos such as Mavros Molos, (just in front of the town), Livadia or Telonio

**DAY 5: Kissamos-Chania** Today you follow the northern Cretan coast and cycle to the capital, Chania. On the way there is an optional visit to Karavitakis winery near Pontikiana village (an extra 10Km and +200m) for wine tasting, or perhaps a stop at the Agios Ioannis cave with an amazing church in it (an extra 3km and +110m). Overnight in Chania.



**Extra Day:** This day a cycle tour of the Chania Peninsula is an absolute must. It is a ride of around 53Km and a total climb of 665m. Amazing scenery, unspoilt beaches and fascinating monasteries all await you. Gouvernetou monastery is particularly to be recommended.

Stavros village in the north offers green waters and sandy beaches, with some nice taverns for your lunch.



### **DAY 6: Chania - Georgioupoli (44Km/+780m)**

Today the tour continues heading east to Georgioupoli, a small coastal town, with a wonderful beach. It is known for its church which has been built on the rocks in the sea just in front of the town.

On the way it is strongly recommended to pass through ancient



Aptera (adding 10km and 170m of climbing), one of the most important archaeological sites on Crete. You can visit the ancient Greek theatre, the ruins of the ancient Greek city from 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. There is an Ottoman tower (Koule) about 1Km away, situated imposingly on the top of the hill, a fantastic example of 19<sup>th</sup> century military architecture.

**Extra Day:** You can visit Dourakis winery in Alikampos (20Km and +370m each way) for winetasting or cycle to the villages of eastern Chania Region (25Km and +550m). Of course, you could choose to just relax in Georgioupoli and recharge your batteries.

**DAY 7: Kournas Lake - Rethymno** (38Km and +516m)

Start cycling south for your last day on your bike and within a short time you will arrive at Kournas lake, one of very few freshwater lakes on Crete. This is a lake of unique natural beauty, with crystal clear waters where you can swim, sunbath, rent canoes, kayaks or pedalos, and later enjoy your lunch at one of the tavernas.



You then continue on to Rethymno, the provincial capital, which has a long and famous history. The city expanded after the Venetian conquest and there is a great deal of period architecture on offer. Wander through the old town on the small lanes which meander down to the "Fortezza", the Venetian citadel.



Small shops, bars and tavernas complete a unique environment. Don't forget to sample the raki once again together with Greek meze!

**Extra Day:** You can enjoy the long beach in front of the town and the walk in the centre. Alternatively, cycle to ancient Eleftherna (47Km and +685m) a major archaeological site (city was founded in 9<sup>th</sup> century BC) and has an amazing museum.

5Km further up the road and a visit to the 1000 years old Arkadiou monastery (52Km/+770m) where the Greeks blew themselves up



so as not to surrender to the Ottomans in 1866. Today it is a European Liberty Monument as designated by UNESCO.

## **DAY 8: Departure**

We Greeks don't like to say goodbye. Instead we prefer to say «ΕΙς το επανιδείν» which means that we hope to see you again some time!

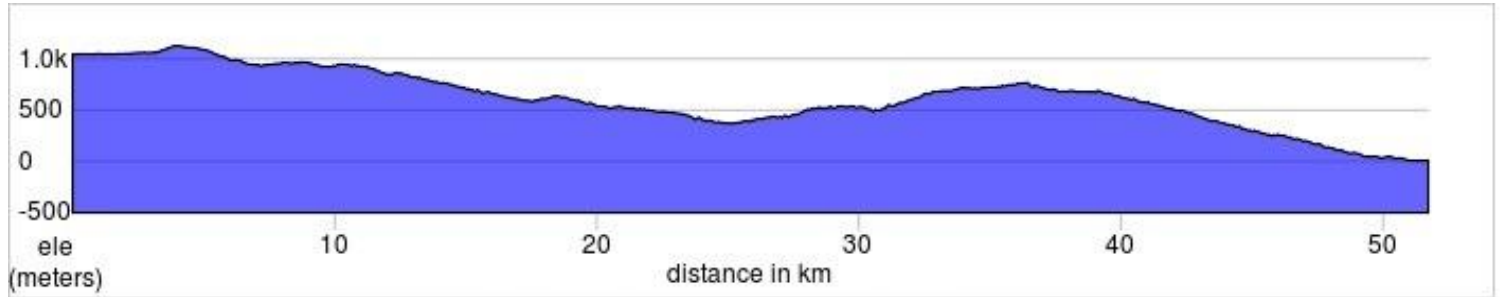
### **Price includes:**

Accommodation for 7 / 13 nights (3 / 6 overnights with breakfast ), luggage transfer between hotels, transfer of bikes & bikers to Omalos on day 2, GPS with the routes, information about the area, 24h telephone support.

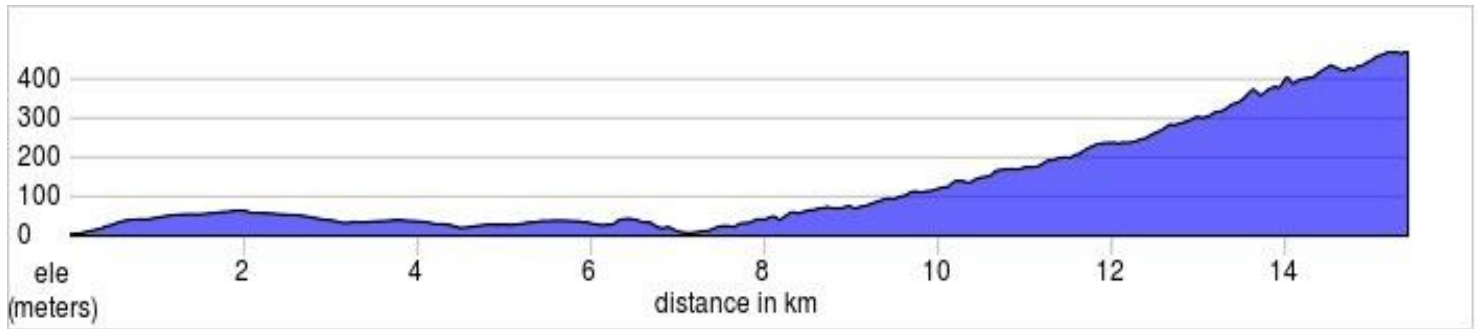
### **Price does not include:**

Flight tickets, hotel tax, excursions on your free time, boat tickets on day 2 and 3, entrance tickets for archaeological sites & museums etc.

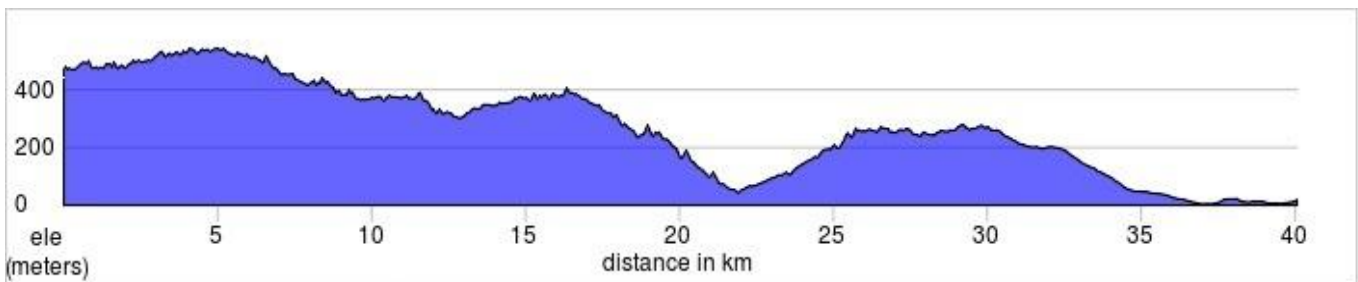
## Elevation Profiles:



**Day 2 / Route: Omalos- Palaiochora**



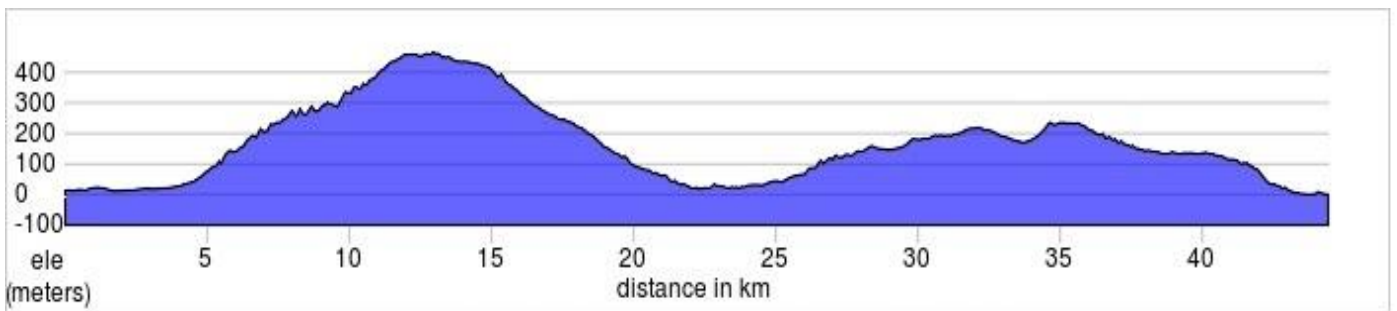
**Day 3 / Route: Elafonnisi- Inachoria**



**Day 4 / Route: Inachoria- Kissamos**



**Day 5 / Route: Kissamos- Chania**



**Day 6 / Route: Chania- Geogioupoli**



**Day 7 / Route: Georgioupoli- Kournas Lake- Rethimno**