



Why book this trip?

Explore one of the most unspoilt regions of the Mediterranean on this walking trip through North Cyprus' beautiful Beshparmak Mountains. Follow quiet, flower-rich mountain trails and discover imposing ruined castles, with stunning cobalt sea backdrops.

- **Bellapais** - Explore the famous twelfth century Crusader abbey
- **Mediterranean food** - Enjoy the fresh flavours of mezes at local restaurants
- **Buffavento** - Spectacular views from this less visited castle

**INCLUDED MEALS**

Breakfast: 7
Lunch: 5

**TRIP STAFF**

Explore Tour
Leader
Driver(s)

**TRANSPORT**

Bus

**ACCOMMODATION**

7 nights
comfortable hotel

**WALKING GRADE:**

Easy To
Moderate

**GROUP SIZE:**

10 - 16

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join trip in Kyrenia

Our trip begins at our hotel, a small resort located around 1.5 miles from the centre of Kyrenia. For those arriving on time our Leader plans to meet you in the hotel reception at 8pm for the welcome meeting and for those that wish, there is the chance to go out for dinner. There are no other activities planned today, so you are free to arrive in Kyrenia at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to arrive into either Ercan Airport (North Cyprus ECN) a 25 minutes' drive from the hotel or Larnaca Airport (Cyprus LCA) and 1.5 hours' drive. Should you miss the welcome meeting, your Leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.

If your flight arrives earlier in the day, you could choose to head into Kyrenia. It's an easy 40 minute walk to the centre of town or you can catch one of the frequent local buses which pass outside the hotel. Explore the town's eclectic mix of Venetian facades, mosques and minarets. Kyrenia is particularly famous for the picture postcard vista of its striking Crusader castle and old harbour set against the dramatic backdrop of the Beshparmak Mountains.

Our base for the week is the family-run Ship Inn. The hotel facilities include an indoor and outdoor pool, bar and restaurant. The comfortable rooms are all en-suite with air conditioning/heating and a balcony or terrace with views either towards the Kyrenia Hills or the pool and distant sea.

**ACCOMMODATION:**

The Ship Inn (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel





SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Discover Kantara Castle; walk to Kaplica Beach

Our main briefing will be after breakfast this morning before we drive along the coast to Kantara Castle, through a beautiful rural landscape of green fields, olive groves and small villages. En route, we will stop off at Cyprus' largest cavern, Incirli Cave, to see its impressive collection of stalactites and stalagmites along its 100 metre passage.

Kantara Castle has seen its fair share of conflict over the centuries. Indeed, Richard the Lionheart won a famous victory here when he defeated the self-proclaimed king of the island, Isaac Komnenos, after the latter's ill-judged slight against Richard's fiancée. After visiting the castle, we have lunch and then enjoy a walk around the varied landscape of the stunning Karpaz Peninsula upon which the castle stands. The descent is gradual with spectacular coast views, can see Turkey on a clear day. Before driving back to the hotel, we will have the opportunity to swim and relax on the beautiful sandy Kaplica beach.

Today's easy seven-and-a-half kilometre walk is expected to take around two hours with 50 metres of ascent and 450 metres of descent.



ACCOMMODATION:
The Ship Inn (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

DAY 3 - Walk through Besparmak Mountains to Bellapais village

Today a short drive takes us to the start of our first walk in the Besparmak Mountains. From the Arapkoy area, we will walk through the mountains to Bellapais village, taking a picnic lunch en route in the forest.

Made famous by Lawrence Durrell in his 1950s award-winning autobiography, *Bitter Lemons*, much of the Bellapais village still retains the easy charm of those Durrell days. The village's main attraction is Bellapais Abbey. Now an imposing ruin with spectacular views of Kyrenia and the Mediterranean Sea, it was founded by Augustinian canons fleeing Palestine in 1200. The abbey flourished until it was looted and vandalised during the 14th century Genoese invasion. It went on to earn a reputation for scandal and corruption, eventually shutting down in the 16th century. After visiting the abbey and the famous Tree of Idleness, under which Durrell would often drink coffee, we return by bus to our hotel.

Later this afternoon, we will drive into Kyrenia for an optional visit to Kyrenia Castle and the Shipwreck Museum, which houses the remains of a 4th century BC merchant ship, with time to stroll around the harbour.

Today's moderate 12.5 kilometre walk is expected to take around four hours with 300 metres of ascent and 350 metres of descent.



ACCOMMODATION:
The Ship Inn (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

DAY 4 - Visit Saint Hilarion Castle; walk to the hillside village of Lapta

This morning we visit Saint Hilarion castle, a stunning historic fort overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. There is time to explore the three floors of the castle complex on foot, one of the best preserved of the Crusader castle. Built into the hillside there are some steep sections and steps to climb to the upper section. We meet at the café for a refreshing home made lemonade before driving to the western edge of the Besparmak Mountain range.

Starting in the village of Kozan, we will walk among wild flowers and orchids to the ruins of the Sinai Monastery. Although very little is known about this building's history, archaeologists are in agreement

about its Byzantine importance. We continue walking over the mountain range, through the pine forest to Lapta Village, taking a picnic lunch en route, before returning to our hotel.

Today's moderate 10 kilometre walk is expected to take around four hours with 150 metres of ascent and 450 metres of descent (including a short steep section).



ACCOMMODATION:
The Ship Inn (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

DAY 5 - Optional excursion to the historic city of Famagusta

Today has been left free for you to use as you wish. You may choose to visit Famagusta - once one of the richest cities and most important trading ports in the world. The so-called 'City of 365 Churches' has been ravaged by severe wars and earthquakes throughout history, but still contains beautiful examples of medieval and gothic architecture. William Shakespeare is purported to have used it as the setting for Othello and the Venetian Citadel, overlooking the harbour, is popularly known as Othello's Tower. Just five miles to the north of Famagusta is the ancient site of Salamis, which is also well-worth a visit. With its significant collection of Mycenaean, Roman and Byzantine artefacts, it is the most important ancient city on the island.

Alternatively, you may prefer to use your day to relax, spending time by the hotel's pool or on one of the local beaches.



ACCOMMODATION:
The Ship Inn (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 6 - Hike amongst ancient olive trees and wildflowers to the coast

Today we head out to the West Coast, through one of the most fertile agricultural regions in Cyprus, growing an abundance of fruit and vegetables. From the village of Kalkanli, our walk takes in pretty countryside, through ancient olive groves, some trees are over 1,000 years old, and past colourful flowered fields. We have a picnic lunch en route, before descending to the coast. Our walk finishes by the sea, with time for a drink in the beach cafe before continuing to visit the Iron Age Tumba tou Skuru 'Kings Tombs' archaeological site. Its excavation in the 1970s uncovered just a fraction of the site and many mysteries about its use and the people buried there remain unsolved.

Today's easy 13.5 kilometre walk is expected to take around four with 200 metres of descent.



ACCOMMODATION:

The Ship Inn (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

DAY 7 - Visit Buffavento Castle; Walk in the shadow of Besparmak Mountain

This morning, we head again into the Besparmak Mountains and to the highest of the Kyrenia strongholds, the ruined fortress of Buffavento. The name means 'buffeted by the wind' and a walk up to the top of the highest tower helps us to understand why. The zig zag path gradually ascends to the ruins, with some steeper steps to get to the top to the castle. On a clear day, our efforts are rewarded with a

spectacular view of half the island, with the Troodos Mountains, Famagusta and Nicosia stretching out beneath us.

Our main walk for the day takes us to the base of Besparmark, translated as 'The Five Fingered Mountain' because of its distinctive jagged peaks. Legend has it that the mountain was formed when the Byzantine hero, Dhiyenis Akritas, leapt across the sea from Anatolia, leaving his handprint forever etched into the landscape as he landed.

We follow a trail into the pine forest, keeping an eye out for orchids (in spring time). Enjoy a picnic lunch at the tiny Church of Panayia Plataniotissa, with views across to Nicosia. Meeting the bus we drive the short distance to the final walk, under the forest canopy we walk to an abandoned monastery.

Today's moderate walks total 13 kilometre which is expected to take around four hours with 70 metres of ascent and 170 metres of descent. The forest paths are uneven under foot in places and undulating with a few very short steeper sections.



ACCOMMODATION:
The Ship Inn (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

DAY 8 - Trip ends in Kyrenia

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Kyrenia.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart at any time. If your flight is departing later in the day luggage storage facilities are available at our hotel. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you need to depart from either Ercan Airport (North Cyprus ECN) a 25 minutes' drive from the hotel or Larnaca Airport (Cyprus LCA) and 1.5 hours' drive.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Climate and country information

North Cyprus

Climate

The climate in North Cyprus is generally very favourable. Typically mediterranean, North Cyprus has very hot dry summers and cooler, yet still pleasant, winters. Temperatures mid summer could reach into the 40s with the lowest temperatures in winter around 15 degrees.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
+2	3 pin flat	Islamic	Turkish, although English is widely spoken

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Famagusta & Salamis - optional day trip. 3-6 people £50, 7-11 people £45 and 12-16 people £35

Clothing

Bring light and comfortable clothing that can be layered according to the temperature. The weather conditions in the mountains can be changeable, and it can become cool, especially at night, so bring warmer layers. Tops made from wicking materials which keep you drier and warmer are recommended as a base layer, and walking trousers are preferable to trousers of heavier material such as jeans. A waterproof jacket is advisable for early spring as there may be sporadic rain showers.

- Breathable wind and waterproof jacket
- T-shirts
- Long sleeved tops
- Sunhat
- Long trousers
- Shorts (if you prefer to walk in them)
- Swimwear and towel
- Midlayer Fleece/pullover
- Socks (liner and thicker pair)

Footwear

We recommend you bring walking boots with ankle support- leather or fabric are both fine. Make sure that your boots are worn-in and comfortable before the start of the trip. Also trainers or sandals for relaxing and general wear. We suggest that on international flights you either carry your walking boots in your hand luggage or wear them - should your luggage be lost or delayed, your own boots are the one thing that will be irreplaceable.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

Bring one main piece of luggage and a 20-30 litre day sack is recommended. You will need to carry what you need for the day which may include a raincoat, jumper, camera, sun-cream, water and picnic lunch. On hot days you will carry fewer clothes but more drinking water.

Equipment

- Sunglasses
- Sun cream
- Small Torch (with spare batteries and bulb)
- Camera
- Walking poles (if you usually use them)
- Personal toiletries
- Personal first aid kit - On each walk a first aid kit is carried but you should have your own blister kit, supply of plasters, aspirin and other essentials.
- Insect repellent
- Small waterproof dry bag (for items such as your mobile phone)
- Reusable water bottle (minimum 1 litre) - Get 15% discount on a Water-to-Go bottle www.explore.co.uk/about-us/responsible-travel/water-to-go-discount-with-explore
- Lunch bag/Tupperware (for packed lunches)
- Gaiters (if you usually use them)
- Binoculars

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. You may however, want to recognise a leader that has done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It is a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we would recommend £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline.

Local crew

Although voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow approximately £20 of local currency for tipping.

In order to make things easier for you, the Explore Leader may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is

the case, they will account for it throughout the trip.

North Cyprus

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£10	£18	£2.50	£1.00

Foreign Exchange

Local currency	Recommended Currency For Exchange
Turkish Lira	All major currencies are suitable for exchange, £sterling, euro or \$US

Where To Exchange	ATM Availability
Most major towns, Tour Leader can advise	ATMs available in Kyrenia town centre

Credit Card Acceptance

Credit cards are accepted at some restaurants, hotels and shops

Travellers Cheques

Travellers Cheques can be exchanged at local banks, however this may be difficult and the exchange rate will not be as good as cash.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Bus

Accommodation notes

Bellapais Monastery Village Hotel is located in the foothills of the Besparmak Mountains, within walking distance of Bellapais village and the abbey. It is in an area of outstanding natural beauty around three kilometres from Kyrenia, with views down to the coast. With two outdoor swimming pools and a roof terrace there is a lot of space to relax outside and enjoy these sea views. From here it is also easy to discover nearby Bellapais, or take the courtesy bus into Kyrenia to explore the harbour, castle and narrow backstreets.

There are two restaurants: one a roof restaurant with a roof terrace bar, breakfast is included. Lunch snacks are available at the pool bar, while a la carte menus are available for dinner in the restaurants. Other hotel facilities include a sauna, a steam bath and massage treatments. All the standard rooms have air -conditioning, satellite television, safe box (charged for), and an en suite bathroom with shower and hairdryer. A kettle, cups and coffee and teabags are provided (limited number then chargeable so you

may like to bring more!) please note that a bottle of milk will be also charged for. All the rooms have a balcony or terrace, some rooms are split level with the bed above the bathroom and seating area.

Essential Information

Government Travel Safety Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK citizens, check the latest Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office advice.

Please refer to our COVID-19 entry requirements page for any country-specific conditions of entry. Whilst we strive to update this on a regular basis we recommend you also check the FCDO website for the latest advice on entry requirements in this fast-evolving situation. Information can change at any time.

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

Northern Cyprus: Visas are not required by UK, EU nationals, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

Find out more about [Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions](#) before you book.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. Read more about them [here](#).

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Maximum altitude (m)

820

North Cyprus

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory but we recommend protection against tetanus and polio. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure

Walking and Trekking information

DAILY DISTANCES		
Day 2	7.5km	2hrs
Day 3	12.5km	4hrs
Day 4	10km	4hrs
Day 5		
Day 6	13.5km	4hrs
Day 7	13km	4hrs

Walking grade

Easy to moderate

Trek details

Walks on 5 days for between 2.5 to 4.5 hours, mainly on established paths.

Max walking altitude (m)

Additional Information



Why book this trip

Get off the beaten track and explore the real North Cyprus. During this trip you'll have the opportunity to partake in a number of day walks that showcase the mountains, beaches and history that the region is famed for, as well as having time at leisure for you to relax at the hotel or explore Kyrenia.

Reviews



AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS



PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE



AIRPORT
TRANSFERS