

PHĀĒA

51 Reasons We Are Proud

a truer,
more
timeless
Greece

PHĀEA



Who We Are

SEEING GREECE IN A NEW LIGHT

Amidst the storied backdrop of Greece, a new view is emerging. Defined by a strong unity of heritage and family values, a collection of hotels by PHĀEA presents a glimpse into the soul of a nation. Privately run and supported by a decades-long history, the group's vision manifests in the shape of four Cretan hotels in which meaningful travel experiences are made. In juxtaposing the old with the new – what was and what will be – these properties are a celebration of both past and present. Here, Phāea's overarching narrative of a truer, timeless Greece comes to life; a palpable energy that is felt at every level.

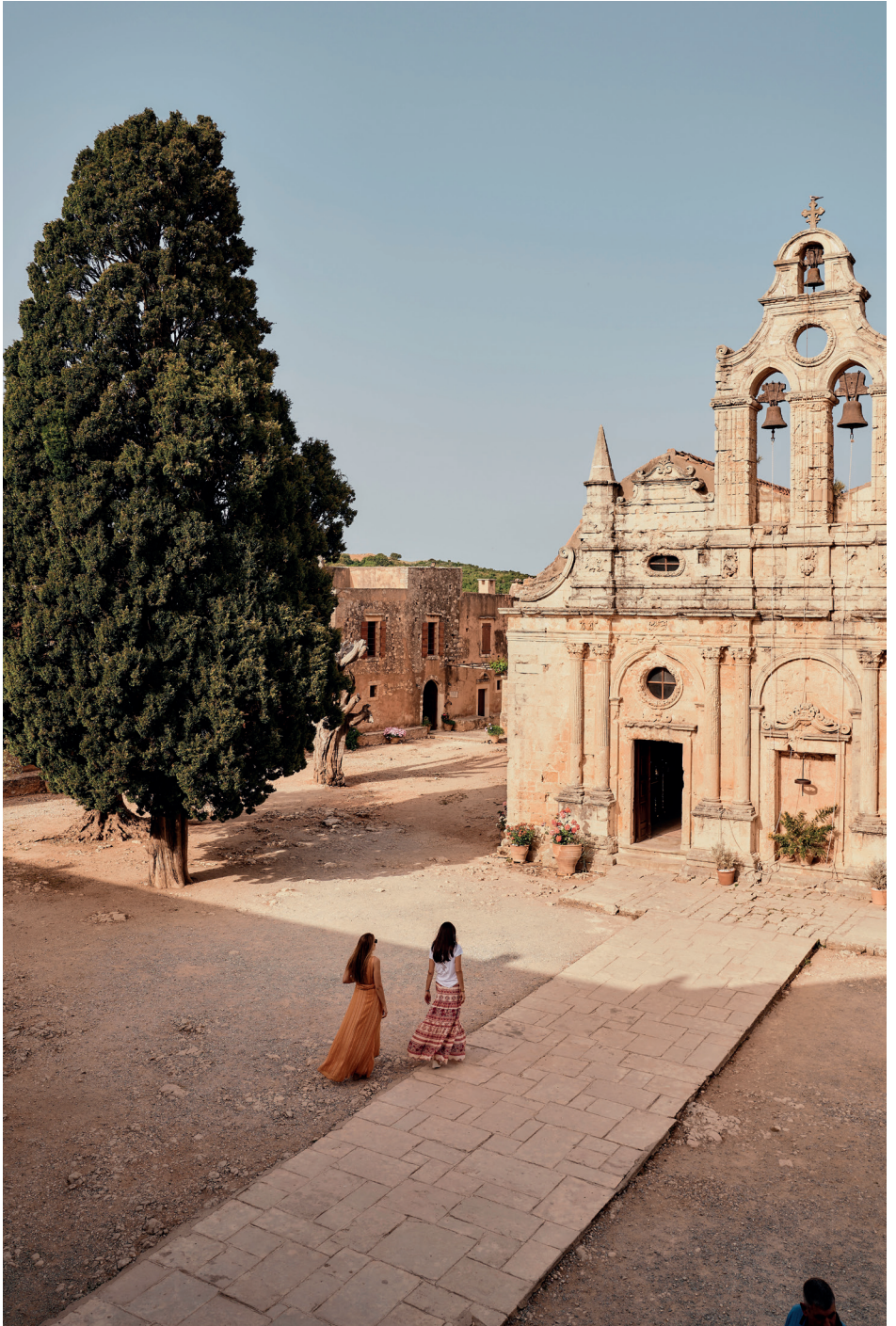
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A Greek hospitality leader, PHĀEA is distinct for its continuous strive to develop new hotel concepts that appeal to international guests seeking responsible travel experiences. Phāea's places allow you to see Greece through a new lens; multiple strands of Greek hospitality are tied together with bold ideas and a unique connection to the land. This exciting dynamic is enhanced by award-winning design, a commitment to sustainability and forward-thinking collaborative projects with locals and the wider Greek community. At present and beyond, PHĀEA will forever be a gateway to a timeless Greece and represents a hub of discovery and innovation.

For guests, it all adds up to a collection of elevated hotels where like-minded people are brought together to indulge in slow-paced living and sustainable luxury. With innovation, regeneration and consciousness at their core, these stylish spaces are designed to nourish the souls of all those who encounter them. This vision is born from a passion to create memorable moments and singular guest stories that honour creativity, nature and, most importantly, authenticity.







FORWARD -THINKING, HERITAGE-BASED, FAMILY-RUN

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Managed by second generation hoteliers and sisters Agapi and Costantza Sbokou, PHĀEA is a collection of Cretan escapes that have grown and developed with the destination over time. Comprising four hotels across the Greek island PHĀEA represents a historic collection of properties that gently marry bold design, Mediterranean responsible living and original experiences. Equally leaning on family values, beauty and the traditions and philosophies of Greece as inspiration, the brand is wholly in tune with its setting and operates with care and passion.

Our Story

In the journey that has brought it to its current incarnation, PHĀEA has experienced a metamorphosis that has included an identity evolution, creative growth and a notable expansion in community ties. This is an adventure that is not marked by a definitive story, but rather an ongoing tale that continues to grow as the brand expands. This compelling duality of the past and present always looks forward and is constantly developing, with a respect for its heritage in mind.

9 The group's roots date back to 1976, when visionary engineer Yiannis Sbokos established the Sbokos Hotel Group, a hospitality company founded on the integrity of Cretan soul, and which went on to incorporate six popular hotels and resorts on the island. In 2017 Sbokos' daughters Agapi and Costantza took over and in 2019 the company entered its second embodiment as PHĀEA: a trailblazing brand embellished by nearly 50 years of experience and driven by a commitment to generate true innovation. The name itself nods to ancient Greek Homeric poetry where the word 'phāea' alludes to the 'light of the eyes' and a specific feeling of joy and happiness. This is joined by a celebration of the Greek letter phi, Φ , a representation of the golden ratio and a recognition of PHĀEA's reverence for balance, nature and beauty. By incorporating references to both Greek symbolism and etymology, the brand asserts the importance heritage in this new phase of its being.

Authentic experiences at Phāea Blue Palace aboard our traditional caique, sailing around the Gulf of Mirabello, at Elounda.





Our Places

Fuelled by a strong sense of its legacy, a truer, more timeless Greece emerges with a collection that seamlessly connects the past to our present moment.

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Phāea's places allow you to see Greece through a new lens; offering effortless experiences without limits. We're inspired by the idea of an endless summer, filled with sun, light, creativity and connection. Taking a responsible approach to travel, our values align with those looking for community, creativity and softly sophisticated hospitality, bringing like-minded people together. Arrive with an open mind, ready to embrace serendipity, and relax into the slower pace, immersing yourself in the many facets of modern Greece.







A Private Cretan Estate

We bring an authentic approach to experiential travel and luxury – one that is inspiring yet effortless, elevated yet conscious, highly curated yet understated.

At Phāea Blue Palace, a member of SLH the virtues of care and authenticity are celebrated and anchored by an understated sense of luxury. It's something that comes naturally to us. Connecting visitors to the 'real' Greece through original Phāea experiences that mirror our values, with kindness, generosity and a dedication to people and place.





A lifestyle worth discovering

Proudly local, enveloped by an idyllic locale and the bearer of a finely crafted Greek identity, Cretan Malia Park, a member of Design Hotels presents a hideaway in every sense where mindfulness and design intertwine seamlessly, welcoming families and couples alike. From its boundless slow-paced aura, carefully aligned with the tempo of the island, to an authentically Cretan gastronomic experience, Cretan Malia Park is a microcosm of the island on which it resides — an accurate and detailed snapshot of Crete, where guests are offered ample opportunity to explore, experience and live.





Crete's mindful retreat

Nestled in the embrace of Cretan nature, Village Heights Resort harmonizes with the sounds of cicadas and the gentle rustle of olive, locust, and pomegranate trees. This mindful retreat offers spacious accommodations for groups and families, encouraging nature immersion and outdoor activities against the backdrop of the picturesque Cretan mountainscape. Enhanced by a holistic wellness program and proximity to the Crete Golf Club, it creates enduring shared memories.





A charming Cretan getaway

Residing within the premises of the picturesque old village of Koutouloufari, our hotel inspires travelers to connect with the real Crete and re- member to live, within the peaceful surroundings, the understated elegance and unrequited privacy they will enjoy inside. Sparking emotions and creating experiences amidst mountain and sea, Koutouloufari Village Holiday Club has been designed to intuitively take guests on a laid-back summer journey. Take a step into our world and indulge, then venture out and explore.





Executive chef Lefteris Iliadis cooks for the guests at the organic kitchen garden of Cretan Malia Park.

“51 REASONS WE’RE PROUD”

- WORDS BY JULIET KINSMAN

At PHĀEA, we are proud of our philoxenia. The Greek word for hospitality, it translates as showing kindness to a guest. We work enthusiastically to ensure our philoxenia is also paying it forward. At Cretan Malia Park and Phāea Blue Palace, our whole ethos is to show kindness to people and planet – conserving natural resources, doing good for community, being conscious custodians of Crete and hosting you for happy times.

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Ethos hails from the word ‘character’ in Greek – it’s a significant word to us as it represents our values and that we are proud of our Greek heritage, proud of our Cretan identity, yet we challenge the status quo, adapting and innovating as we develop our own nature-positive human-centric approach to hospitality. For us, being sustainable is about much more than enabling guests to reuse their bath towels. It’s about a true love for your community, while seeking solutions to local and global challenges and sharing inspiring stories along the way.



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ART AND ARTISANS.

Our original artworks underscore our proud Greek spirit. Loom weaving, embroidery, and expert metalwork are brought to life in our interiors and furnishings — tactile storytelling emphasising our pride in our identity and gives recognition to our island's world-class makers. Our partnerships with next-generation Greek designers highlights our support of those who share an appreciation for the eclectic complexity of the Cretan culture. Custom-designed hand-made herringbone cement tiles found in the lobby area of Cretan Malia Park while iconic works at Phāea Blue Palace include murals by Philippos Theodorides and Nisaki Mu's Gamopilafo plates at Anthós, as inspired by ancient civilisations and folk art.

AGRICULTURE. Heading to the laiki agora to buy plump tomatoes straight from the grower at the traditional farmers market, is as Greek as clacking worry beads and drinking raki. An important part of our heritage, buying locally from small farmers is also better for the environment. Seeing a move away from old-fashioned farming makes us sad. We buy local, and showcase exceptional organic produce in our restaurants and through our powerful Phāea Farmers programme, which trains islanders in regenerative growing. Boosting an appreciation for responsible agriculture is considered a priority by many of those on the frontline of environmental activism. For us, it's always been our way of being.

BEES. Our apiculture initiative, Plan Bee nurtures adami honeybees across twelve hives. A breed that has been buzzing since Minoan times, they're managed organically by our expert keeper, who feeds knowledge and techniques back to the Beekeeping Cooperative of Heraklion. It's estimated these important pollinators are responsible for one out of every three bites of food we eat, so you can see why we have a bee in our bonnet about protecting and promoting this precious species. And it gives us 101kg for 2023 of the most flavoursome vitamin-rich honey, too.

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BIODIVERSITY. This significant word describes the mind-boggling complexity of life on Earth; it's under threat, causing our planet's systems to short circuit. In the natural world, every ecosystem is perfectly balanced and works in harmony, but human activities such as pollution, exploitation and the introduction of invasive species throw it out of whack. At PHĀEA, we go the extra mile in boosting biodiversity by training local farmers to work sustainably, expanding our organic gardens and seed saving. Our gardens at Cretan Malia Park were first planted in the 1970s, and we've treasured witnessing endemic species, like local herbs – thyme, mint, arismari, sage and caper – and plants, palm trees, Indian figs and local banana trees aplenty flourish since.

BLUE FLAG BEACH. We're especially proud of this world-recognised accreditation for our private beach as it demonstrates how much we care for our surroundings.

Sustainability

BMS. Hotels don't often talk about their building management systems. (If you want to get really geeky, they're also known as building automation systems). They're crucial in helping us tune our operations into more sustainable ways. The BMS controls the electrical equipment it houses, including energy, ventilation, lighting, fire systems, security. We use an 'open architecture system', which means the data is fully accessible for our staff to check every day, rather than waiting for an expert from the company that installed it to read it every few weeks or months. Important so that we can measure how much energy our utilities use, and so we can set ourselves targets and act fast when we detect anything that decreases the system's efficiency.

CAT CAFÉ. Testament to the fact we love all flora and fauna, we show particular care to our feline friends and support their neutering through a non-profit and host our furry four-legged visitors in their own outdoor open-air mini-hotel.

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CERTIFICATIONS. There's a dazzling blur of so-called accreditations out there — we make sure much of what we buy has the necessary reputable credentials where it's important: from fully FSC certified wood in our furnishings to fair-trade ingredients, Fiberpack paper goods, coffee and tea with Rainforest Alliance and Sustainable Quality Program AAA marques, Green Seal Certified and EU Ecolabel endorsed cleaning products, plus our hotels have seals of approval from Travelife and Green Key and Green Key and comply to ISO 14000, ISO 9001, ISO 21401, ISO 50001, EFQM 5 star recognition and Codex Alimentarius standards.

CLEANER CLEANING. We aim to protect our guests, and the animals and plants on our beautiful island, from pathogens. We avoid exposing you to dangerous chemicals as found in many toxic cleaning products: phosphates, triclosan, quats, chlorine and oxide compounds, ugh, to name a few. We use green-as-can be detergents, clever concoctions of sugar beet, maize, straw bran, wheat bran, and coconut to keep our rooms feeling as fresh as a sunrise swim. We work with Diversey as we love their plant-based disinfectant and Ecolab.

CRAFTSMANSHIP

Ever since the legendary King Minos established the Minoan civilization in 2200BC, handicrafts such as ceramics and embroidery have been an important part of Cretan culture. By drawing architectural inspiration from Sbokou family heirlooms and featuring contemporary work by street artists such as Thanassis and Dimitris Kretsos, celebrate our island's cultural legacy while helping curate its future. From a striking Reywal lighting installation by Joy Stathopoulou to the tables at Almyra Restaurant, lovingly handcrafted by third-generation furniture-maker, Cretan Malia Park is an ode to Greek design.



Sustainability



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CRETAN DIET

Simple, traditional, good for you — it's also the blueprint for what is celebrated more widely as the Mediterranean Diet. A thousand years since its Minoan origins, it endures as a healthy array of fruit, vegetables, whole grains, herbs, pulses, nuts and healthy fats such as olive oil, with sensibly sized occasional servings of fish, seafood, eggs, and dairy. Delicious, nutritious. The term 'foodprint' speaks to a carbon footprint that considers every part of food production, from growth to transportation and storage to waste — we're always on the lookout for ways to help guests reduce their foodprints: this is a terrific way to achieve that.

EDIBLE LANDSCAPES. We grow fruits, vegetables and mountain herbs around in our gardens — follow the scent of sage, marjoram, oregano, thyme, mint, rosemary. And feel free to have a nibble.

EDUCATION. We love learning more and sharing enlightening interesting information with our team, our guests and our community, encouraging a more holistic relationship with nature and each other. We partner with local elementary schools to provide engaging environmental and wellness lessons through interactive beach cleaning and recycling initiatives, tours of biological plants and engine rooms and cooking lessons. During the pandemic, we supplied tablets to support distance learning. We also educate younger guests with dedicated environmental activities offered through our Kids' Clubs, and sharing ecological facts on our gripping garden tours.

ENERGY

Renewables are how we roll. We're proud to say our hotels run almost-entirely on squeaky-clean renewable energy — solar and geothermal. In order to be considered renewable, energy must come from a source that isn't depleted when used – such as the wind or sun – rather than fossil fuels, which take millions of years to form and, once burnt, are therefore gone forever with nothing but global-warming-causing emissions as their legacy. We even have our own meteorological station, which allows us to adjust our heating/cooling systems based on the weather forecast. When it comes to saving fossil fuels, every little bit helps. Efficiency is the ultimate act of sustainability.

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FAMILY OWNED

PHĀEA was born almost 50 years ago thanks to our founder Yannis Sbokos. We're still an independently owned company run by his two Cretan-raised daughters, Agapi and Costantza, and this helps us consider all stakeholders in every decision we make.

GENDER EQUALITY. Equity when it comes to the balance of men and women working for a business is a key part of any company's Corporate Social Responsibility. We think having a balance of male and female talent is the right thing to do and fundamental to a better guest experience. With two female leaders, who oversee all aspects of management and operations, a 50:50 ratio among our staff and 58% women holding managerial positions, we are proud to fly the flag high for equality.

GREEK IDENTITY AND HERITAGE. We believe the essence of travel is discovery, and that's part of why PHĀEA properties pay an unmistakable homage to our proud Greek heritage. Everything you see, taste and touch, tells the story of our flower-filled island, millennia of Greek history, and the crafts-people of centuries past who passed down their skills to the artisans who brought our vision to life. We're not a could-be-anywhere resort — we are proud of our home, and we want you to eat, breathe, sleep, Greece while you're with us.

GEOTHERMAL HEAT PUMPS. An open-loop system pipes clean groundwater directly from an aquifer to an indoor geo-thermal heat pump, then back out through a discharge well. They're more energy-efficient than closed-loop systems, which is why we've embraced this technology in a way that heats much of our hot water, powers our air-conditioning and keeps our cocktails clinking with ice.

HUMAN CAPITAL. Quite simply, this economics theory maintains that people are the most important resource any company has and investing in them in intangible ways such as education and training can improve economic output and productivity. For us, hospitality is all about having heart and soul, which is why the health and happiness of all people is always of utmost importance to our business.

INDIGENOUS PLANTING. In our opinion, green was always in style, which is why we're ever boosting the landscaping with a focus on water-saving, endemic plants. Follow the smell of medicinal herbs to the certified-organic garden. Nourished by organic fertilizers such as composted scraps from our kitchens, as well as vermiculture rather than synthetic pesticides and herbicides, the colour green is always in season here.

INSULATION. Did you know that heating and cooling buildings is one of the biggest culprits for carbon emissions? We've developed wonderful ways to regulate temperatures naturally. First up, four seasons glass – also known as solar-control double-glazing – is the most efficient material on the market, which is why it features in the doors and windows of 90% of our rooms and bungalows. Our living roofs are planted with water-saving endemic plants, are another secret weapon playing the dual role of natural insulator and pollinator haven. Lovely stuff.

KAFENIO. Spotighting Greek cafe culture is more than a meeting place for coffee, it's about celebrating slow, traditional living. Our distinct Greek coffee hails from Dandalis, and we model the art of enjoying a soul-caffeinating conversation over your cuppa rather than just grabbing a disposable cup to sip on the move.

LOCAL AND SEASONAL CUISINE

All our restaurants celebrate local seasonal ingredients —reducing the greenhouse gas emissions that arise from transport and long-term storage — including honey and olive oil produced by our staff and fresh fruit and veg grown in our very own organic gardens. It's better for your health and better for the planet too. We don't like air-mile-heavy imports, and we buy as much as we can from neighbours — from food and drink to all that's used to make our hotels tick. Food systems are one of the biggest environmental influencers – they're responsible for 34% of all man-made greenhouse gas emissions.



LOW-ENERGY LIGHTING. LEDs use more than 75% less energy than incandescent bulbs because diode light is much more efficient than filament light. We replaced all our old-fashioned bulbs with shiny LED ones in 2017 and have never looked back.

LUXURY

We are redefining what this means — to us, it's not just being comfortable and enjoying the best things in life. It's about being sustainable. Some call it conscious luxury. For us, there's no greater luxury than the privilege of looking after people and the planet — and that's what we're most proud of.



MEASUREMENT. We're sticklers for using quantifiable data science to keep track of our accountability and ensure full transparency. It's important to know we're measuring our negative impact, upping the good effects from our operations, constantly keeping our eye on our scores and stats.

MEDITERRANEAN CLIMATE. Mild winters and hot summers are the usual way the weather rolls in Crete, and the advantages of this are it's great for all our growing.

MERAKI. This is the Greek concept of the joys of doing everyday things with love, care and passion — and it's something all our staff have in spades. People are at the heart of hospitality, and our team pours their soul into their work. While it's great to hear guests complement our service, Meraki is all about doing something with grace simply for the love of it. Our team has been with us for a very long time, most of them from our immediate region, and we think you can feel that they truly love doing what they do.

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MICRO-COMPOSTING. You might spot little piles of leaves scattered throughout Phāea Blue Palace's gardens — these little composting sites where we collect organic matter help us enrich the soil in every way we can.

NATURE POSITIVE. We lovingly look after our gardens and actively restore and regenerate nature win our grounds through resource-sensitive operations.

ORGANIC. We swerve chemicals in every way possible, from ingredients to bathroom amenities and cleaning products. Much of our wine is too. Better for anyone who spends time with us, and the world as a whole.

Sustainability

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PHĀEA FARMERS

Small farms can be a boon to the environment as they reduce soil degradation and preserve biodiversity, so with the support of Local Food Experts, we developed a unique training programme. In low-season, staff who also have their small holdings work with agronomists specialising in sustainable organic farming methods to learn to grow in a way that replenishes the environment rather than ravaging it further before selling their goodies to us for a fair price. Phāea Farmers is all about respect: for the health of our guests, the provenance of the ingredients, the agricultural heritage of local people and for the island.

PLANT-BASED DIETS. It's easy to follow a more vegetarian diet when you have Crete's sun-enriched fruits and vegetables winking at you. Even dedicated carnivores could be tempted to ditch the animal products and go all green while they're with us. Palikaria Salad is a tasty traditional Cretan dish with lentils, chick-peas, manarolia peas, spring onions and Yiahi is a nourishing aubergine and tomato stew with, onions, garlic, parsley — both enhanced with our own extra virgin olive oil. Anthós at Phāea Blue Palace and Mouries at Cretan Malia Park are masters of recreating age-old traditional Cretan recipes for sophisticated contemporary tastes.

PLASTIC. PHĀEA is a signatory in the Global Tourism Plastic Initiative. By 2025, our aim is for 100% of the plastic packaging and items in our resorts to be recyclable. According to the World Wildlife Fund, 34 plastic bottles are thrown into the Mediterranean Sea every minute, many from hotels. While we already follow EU regulations by reducing unnecessary single-use plastics and have an ongoing partnership with Nespresso to recycle coffee capsules, our vision is much bigger than this, and we're excited to bring our staff and guests along with us on that journey.

PROCUREMENT. We are committed to using almost all locally-sourced products and adore encouraging the creation of new microbusinesses that can be invited into our supply chain. We care about the origins and provenance of everything and we source everything from Crete that we can, or else Greece. Our suppliers have become our friends. Take a bow, Kassakis Bros, fifth-generation traditional cold cut producers, whose genuine traditional Cretan meat products you can taste when you're with us. And the Women Association of Kritsa, who are all too happy to host you to taste their handmade local delicacies.

RECYCLING. A main tenet of sustainability, we follow stringent glass and plastic recollection processes. One figure we don't mind seeing go up, up and up is the amount of metal, glass, paper and plastic items being successfully recycled, upcycled, and repurposed. Even our cooking oils are treated in a special way to produce biodiesel. In 2022, we began collaborating with a soap company to work wonders with any amenities leftovers.



ROOFS

We see every flat space as a potential destination for a plant party. Our roofs are also fantastic at hosting lots of solar-energy-generating photovoltaic fun, but we're especially de-lighted to be achieving a long-held dream of installing living roofs on some buildings to encourage biodiversity and to up the natural insulation. According to studies, a green roof can reduce a building's cooling demands by about 30% and its heating by 15% on an average day, which adds up to significant energy saving every year. We love the fact that they also capture carbon and produce clean air for our guests too.

SEED BANK. More than 1,600 endemic plant species can be found throughout Crete's forests and canyons, many of which are ancient relics from the Mesozoic Era. We work to preserve their seeds through an ongoing relationship between PHĀEA Farmers, LFE Team and Local Farmers and currently have more than 180 species safely stashed in our seed bank. These are either planted in our gardens or shared with other growers in their second year through the Rural Development Directorate.

SOIL HEALTH. One of the most important considerations for us and in the climate emergency conversation — it is responsible for supporting life on Earth, and helping ecosystems function as they should. Nutrient uptake, microbial life and sequestering carbon are just some of the vital roles on its job description.

SOLAR PANELS. While you're basking in Crete's golden sunshine, the photovoltaic panels at our hotels are too. At Cretan Malia Park, we estimate we're saving around 80.000kWh every year thanks to these beauties.

SOUVENIRS. Yes, we have the most beautiful corner that celebrates handcrafted Hellenic accessories, but what we most want you to go home with is a head full of memories. Better than things are experiences — and we want our legacy to be your health and happiness.

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VOLUNTEERING. Sharing is caring, and we like to offer our team's time and talents to the wider community whenever we can spare them. To date, the Phāea team has planted 250 trees, grown and gifted potatoes to local families in need, participated in beach cleans and even donated bone marrow.

WALLS. How often do you think about the sustainability of the wall finishes you see around you? At Phāea Blue Palace, the time-tested rendering technique of kourassani has been used instead of just painting the walls, lending soul-stirring warm terracotta tones where the patina enriches with time. Feel free to take a closer look at the plastering which comes care of Kourasanit, a Greek company with a commitment to sustainability since 1978. Their products made from natural aggregates don't generate waste with many based on recycled materials such as ceramic powder and pulverised glass, and you'll see this beautifully enhances the form as well as the function of our external walls.



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WATER

Changes to water supply affect us all and they're particularly pronounced on Crete where groundwater is being extracted from aquifers faster than it can naturally recharge. We do all we can to save this precious resource, from low-flow regulator filters in taps and showerheads to watering after sunset to reduce evaporation loss. Additionally, we've installed rain-sensitive watering systems and smart water meters that use ultrasonic technology for more detailed monitoring and more targeted leak detection.

WASTE. Circularity is our ultimate goal, and we avoid sending anything to government-run land-fills, and of course, we go well beyond following EU regulations on single-use plastics to keep our trash truly in check.

WILDFLOWERS. We love the pretty blooms that grow right in our grounds we don't order in any cut flowers or imported blooms — we don't need to when we have the likes of sea daffodils growing on our doorstep.

WINE. We proudly showcase world-class Cretan and Greek wines, including ancient local grape varieties that have been revived through modern vinification techniques, such as vidiano. Our wine list includes vegan, organic and biodynamic options from local wine-makers such as Lyrarakis Winery, Michalakis Estate, Manousakis, Silva Winery and Gani Estate.

WORM COMPOSTING. What's the secret behind our flourishing gardens? Aside from our green-fingered team, the answer is worm poo or (or vermicast to use its scientific name). 24 tones of organic waste has been treated through our composters to produce organic fertilizer for our gardens.

XENIA OR PHILOXENIA. In Ancient Greece, this concept of hospitality was prized for the significance of the host showing respect and love to their guest. With a dedicated sustainability officer and engaged green team, we're very proud our *φιλοξενία* — philoxenía — not only hosting guests in the best way, but always striving for our hospitality to do better for our ultimate host, Mother Nature. Being sustainable isn't about box-ticking for us, it's about doing the right thing in every way we can.

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YPAITHROS. Meaning 'from the countryside' — *ύπαιθρος* as it is in Greek, even more literally translates as 'under the clear sky'. This chimes with our ethos of showing reverence and respect to the countryside and the great outdoors — and spending time with us will have you feeling this love too.

ZEUS. Defined by dappled olive groves and the clear blue of the Aegean Sea, Crete is steeped in legends even by Greek standards. Zeus, the king of gods and men, was supposedly born here and raised on wild honey by doting nymphs. To stay with us is to walk in the footsteps of powerful female deities, the terrifying bull-headed minotaur, divine youths and legendary kings. We celebrate our ancient heritage through everything from the design that nods to the past to carefully curated experiences and the stories behind what you eat and drink.



“The landscape affects the human psyche - the soul, the body and the innermost contemplations - like music. Every time you feel nature deeper, you resonate better with her, finding new elements of balance and freedom.”

Nikos Kazantzakis (1883-1957) - Cretan philosopher and author of Zorba the Greek

THE GENEROUS SPIRIT OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

Well explored yet ripe for new discovery, Crete is an enclave of peace and sublime beauty. An idyllic destination that is well placed to offer sanctuary, transformative experiences, and a hideaway from the din of urban life, the island is the largest in Greek islands and accordingly presents a stunning diversity of settings.

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Amongst a striking visual clamour of magnificent mountain ranges, gorges, valleys, and views of the Aegean Sea, an abundance of culture and activity is ready to be uncovered. Noted for its strong identity and distinct cultural traits, Crete presents a gateway to the Greece of past and present. This is an island on which authentic food concepts, cultural experiences and pure connections with nature are all just moments away, along with the chance to observe a truer, timeless Greece.

Crete, Greece



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This contemporary fantasy is built on millenniums of history. This is the birthplace of the Minoans, Europe's first advanced civilization, and Zeus, the father of both gods and men. It's also where the aura of ancient legends is a pervading mood that merges seamlessly with a vision of contemporary Greece for a compelling duality of historicism and modernity. These varying components all combine to form an image of a Greek fantasy come to life; a present-day tale that is rooted in a storied history and unique heritage.

For visitors and locals alike, this appears today as a multitude of pockets ready for exploration. Between rolling mountains, olive groves and winding coastlines, Crete's varied landscape binds nature and culture. These join the many archaeological sites that dot the island, and the rustic tavernas, whitewashed houses and meandering streets and alleys that are synonymous with Greek island life. Further afield, neighbouring islets complete the picture of Crete's dynamic scenery. These include Spinalonga, a former leper colony and a UNESCO World Heritage list nominated site that offers a glimpse into Crete's past with its medieval ruins and crumbling remnants of Venetian and Turkish homes.

Against this backdrop of unspoilt beauty, the dream of slow-paced living becomes a reality. With Greek identity as its main character, the legend of Crete tells a memorable story of both the past and present — a place in which new experiences are made and the soul of ancient Greece is embraced.



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