

# WELCOME TO RETHYMNO

Rethymno's timeless attractions and verdant landscapes, city architecture, museums, archaeological sites, endless sandy beaches and escapes to nearby villages will reward you with a rich cultural yet relaxed experience.

*Step off of the beaten path and into the untouched Greece of the past.*

*Cultural pride and natural beauty - Rethymno offers the best of both.*

## WANDERING THROUGH THE HISTORIC CENTER

The **Rethymno Historic Center** is a multicultural, bustling, colorful and well preserved center. Rethymno is steeped in history and tradition and has been inhabited since 1600 BC. You can trace the steps of influence from Turkish, Arabic and Venetian dominance giving this unique its obvious cultural influences. Stroll along Rethymno's narrow streets and discover our roots as you enjoy historical re-enactments. Below is highlighted the not to miss places of the historic center. **Not only is Rethymno is historically rich but it hosts many local carnivals and sustainable festivals for foodies and revelers alike.**

Explore the **Venetian Fortezza** fortress on the "Paleokastro" hill, located on the west side of the city. Built in 1573-1580 by the Venetians in order to protect the city. It houses the temple of Saint Nicolo, and remains of buildings where exhibitions are now hosted.

The **Rimondi Fountain** is at Sq. Titou Petihaki, in 1626 by the city's Rector A. Rimondi original town water source, it was located in the center of the Venetian city. Today the fountain still springs water through the three lion heads.

**Loggia** is at Konstantinos Palaiologos St. and it was built during the 16th century by Michel Snamicheli, it was an eminent building of the city centre and a meeting point for the nobles. Today loggia hosts a market of archeological art copies.

## LOCAL HOTSPOTS

**Mikrasiaton Square** located at the heart of the city's historical center is surrounded by valuable monuments and beautiful buildings and cultural centers. Its multicultural atmosphere is its best feature and gives the opportunity for meeting people from all over the world whether they are visitors or permanent residents of Rethymno. **Iroon Politechniou Square** as well as **Agnostou Stratioti Square** are bustling meeting points where you can feel the urban rhythm of Rethymno.

## RETAIL THERAPY

Numerous shops for **souvenirs** with many local products available, trendy fashion to original jewelry combined with the scenery to make a colorful street market. **Souliou, Paleologou and Arabatzoglou street** are perfect stops for gathering all the gifts you need to complete your shopping lists. **Kountouriotou, Arkadiou and E. Antistaseou Strs** are excellent shopping areas with upscale wares far from the usual tourist souvenirs.

## TAKE A BIT OF CRETE HOME!

Cretan olive oil and oil based cosmetics, local red wine and tsikoudia, graviera and other traditional Cretan cheeses, the beneficial Cretan herbs, as well as the retro traditional hand sewn needlework.

## SEASONAL FAVORITES FOR LOCALS AND GUESTS

Do not miss **Laiki (farmers market)** happening every **Thursday** in the area of the parking lot next to the municipal garden. One of Rethymno's basic trademarks where you can buy local greens and



## MUSEUMS OF RETHYMNO

Museum of Contemporary Art of Crete (Messologiu 32) [www.cca.gr](http://www.cca.gr)

1/5 - 31/10 Tuesday - Friday: 9:00 - 14:00 & 19:00 - 21:00

Saturday - Sunday: 10:00 - 15:00 Monday closed

1/11 - 30/4 Tuesday - Friday: 9:00 - 14:00

Wednesday & Friday: 9:00 - 14:00 & 18:00 - 21:00

Saturday - Sunday: 10:00 - 15:00, Monday closed

Archaeological Museum (St. Francis Church, 4 Ag. Fraiskou str.)

10:00 - 18:00 Except Monday

Folk Museum (Vernardou 30)

April - October: 9:30 - 14:30 Except Sunday

Paleontological Museum (Satha & Markellou str)

April - October: Monday - Saturday 9:00 - 15:00

November - March: Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday 9:00 - 15:00

Church Museum (Tombazi & Manoussaki str)

April - October: 10:30 - 13:00 Saturday - Sunday closed

Fortezza Castle

Spring time: 9:00 - 17:00 / Summer time: 8:00 - 21:00

Autumn time: 8:00 - 17:00 / Winter time: open to the public

Museum of ancient Eleutherna (MaE)

Opening Hours: 10.00 - 18.00 Monday closed



A SMART CHOICE ALL YEAR ROUND

# Rethymno



During the Venetian times the Mosque "**Neratzes**" was a church dedicated to the Mary of Augustans. In 1657 turned the temple into a mosque named "Neratze". Today the Mosque "Neratzes" is hosting the city conservatoire. It is located at Emmanouil Vernadou.

Near Neratzes is the church of **Saint Francesco**, one of the most important monuments of Rethymno with a unique and impressive architecture. It was the main temple of the Monastery of the Francesca Order. From 2016 the archeological museum of Rethymno is hosted at Saint Francesco Church.

The **old harbor** and the **lighthouse** is one of the most picturesque sights of Rethymno and a must visit spot for everyone. This lonely lighthouse is of the Ottoman period. The founder was Mehmet Allie, governor of Crete 1830- 1840 and founder of the Farouk family of Egypt. Stripped away of its old use, today it stands at the entrance of the old port as a proud reminder of simpler times.

After a long walk in the old town pause and relax underneath the citrus, pines and palm trees in the **municipal garden** located at the center of the city. Embrace spiritual detoxification and family bonding through experiencing shared activities in the natural beauty of the garden and multitude of recreational opportunities at an array of a new playground with several playing activities specially designed to be friendly for children with special needs.



products. Local producers bring their finest, fresh products and local goods every week to community. Also on **Wednesday noon** the **local organic products open market** (begins at 13:00) is hosted at Koumondourou St. behind the municipal garden and the **Saturday's morning open market**, 200m next to the central bus station.

## NIGHT MOVES

If you like to dance, or just listen head to Rethymno's historic center, where you will find many **bars and night clubs**, all within striking distance, most of them located at the **venetian port** area and across the **El. Venizelou, Melisinou St.** and many more in the modern city of Rethymno.

## FOR FOODIES

For those **interested in gastronomic** experiences many **tavernas** in every corner will provide you authentic tastes based on the world famous **Cretan diet**. Visit "**rakadika**" for a combination of the traditional drink "tsikoudia" with a variety of **mezes** prepared using only local ingredients. You will find "rakadika" in every alley of the historic center.

The **BEACH OF RETHYMNO** is 12km long, stretches from the historic center and extends to the eastern part of the region reaching Scaleta. Rethymno beach has a fine-grained, light brown sand and crystal clear water that has been awarded with **9 Blue Flags** for the quality of the coast. It's a safe, well organized beach, fully covered by lifeguards, with accommodations such as sunbeds, umbrellas, water sports, beach volleyball court and all kinds of amenities.



## MAIN CULTURAL EVENTS

In Rethymno, holidays never end! Live in the moment, in the rhythm of Rethymno Carnival in the heart of winter, or taste authentic Cretan products at the Cretan Diet Festival in July, travel in time through deifying arts during the Semiannual Festival of Rethymno in September.

Every year during the period of Carnival the Rethymnians, Cretans as well as visitors from all over the world participate in the famous Rethymno Carnival. Over 12.000 people participate with more than 25 floats that parade through the main streets of Rethymno, inviting thousands of visitors! [www.rethymnocarnival.gr](http://www.rethymnocarnival.gr)

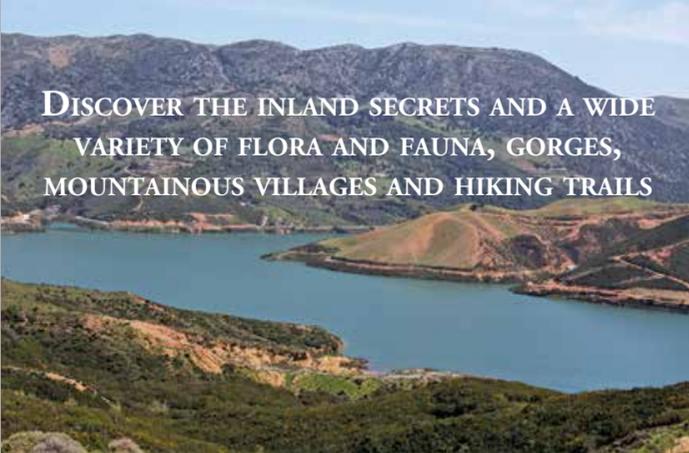
The Cretan Diet has long been hailed as healthy, based on the high-fibre fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as fresh fish and dairy products. Every July Rethymno organizes a week full of tastes, colors and music celebrating the quality Cretan products. [www.cretandietfestival.gr/en/](http://www.cretandietfestival.gr/en/)

The Renaissance Festival celebrates the period of Cretan Renaissance in order to bring this period to the present.

The interdependence of many cultural fields proves that the Venetian period exerted great influence, providing the spiritual seeds that brought the Arts to their peak.

The Renaissance era is a source of inspiration for the collective conscience that acknowledges the establishment of this heritage and contributes to its revitalization and enhancement. Thus bringing to light the local cultural identity and historical cultural exchanges that created new paths which led Cretan literature and poetry to flourish. [www.rfr.gr/](http://www.rfr.gr/)

Organized races for running and walking, beach running and many beach sports are taking place yearly in the historic city center or at the villages with participants covering a wide range of ages.



## DISCOVER THE INLAND SECRETS AND A WIDE VARIETY OF FLORA AND FAUNA, GORGES, MOUNTAINOUS VILLAGES AND HIKING TRAILS

*Inland from Rethymno discover a pace of life that encourages you to stop and appreciate all of nature's beauty. Known for its welcoming people, thriving nature and also for its rich history and tradition, Rethymno's inland is the perfect place to experience a true cultural and outdoor getaways. Check our website [www.rethymno.gr](http://www.rethymno.gr) for the many festivals happening every summer in many villages.*

### OLD ROAD RETHYMNO - CHANIA ROUTE

**Atsipopoulo** is a suburb of Rethymno city offers a unique old-world atmosphere from the Venetian times. Enjoy the many churches of Atsipopoulo, the picturesque arched paths and the stone houses. Some of these houses have been turned into villas and hotels.

**Prines** was founded in the 10th century. Its many archways and balconies remain as clear evidence of Venetian domination. Next to Prines there is the village of **Vederi**.

**Gonia, Metochia** and **Kato Valsamoreno** are small villages that show signs of Venetian architecture in its many beautiful buildings.

In **Ano Valsamoreno** and **Malaki** you will find a Venetian fortress built on a steep isolated cliff, offering an enchanting view dominating the torrent and the valley.

**Agios Kostantinos** is built on a high cliff, was one of the preferred summer places of Venetian aristocracy. You can still see samples of Renaissance villas. The villa Barozzi is a typical example of Venetian architecture.

**Roustika** established by the Venetians - its name meaning "rural" - preserves the atmosphere of that period. Noteworthy is the monastery of Profitis Ilias, founded in 1637 and situated amidst a large garden. There are also many other Byzantine churches in the village. Visit Roustikon Melathron where the "museum of Greek Traditional costumes" is housed. Keep going till you reach **Moudros** in the direction of **Kali Sykia** that leads you to **Plakias** and **Preveli**.

### PATHS OF HISTORY AND CULTURE

23 km from the city of Rethymno, at an altitude of 500 m you will find **Arkadi monastery**, a monument of faith and history that will surely present you with the deepest essence of Cretan soul and spirit. Arkadi monastery is a symbol of freedom and self-sacrifice, an act of heroism that marked the history of the Greek revolution against the Ottomans. Today this breathtaking building is considered one of UNESCO protected treasures. Spend a moment to walk around the beautiful gardens experiencing the deep religious atmosphere.

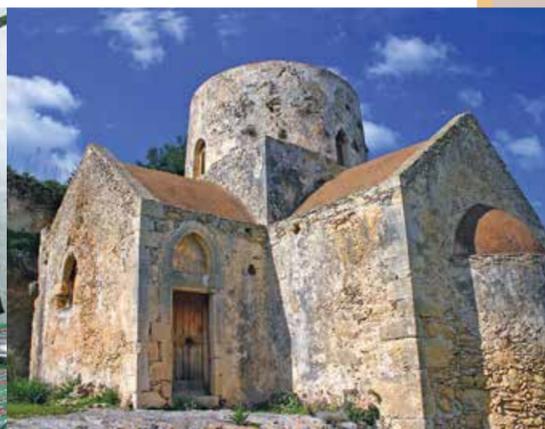
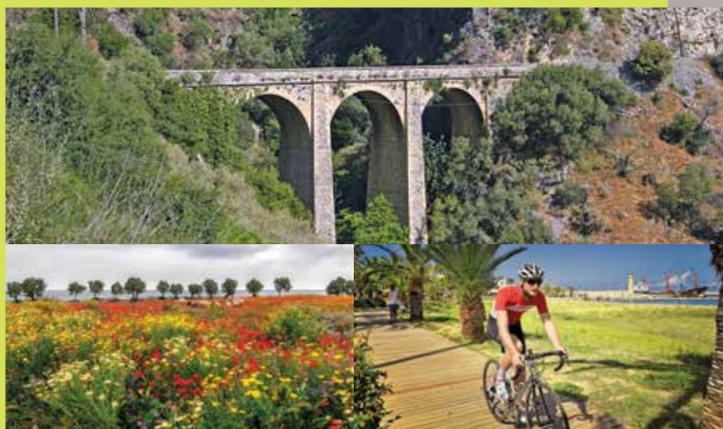
12 km northeast you will come across with a place of natural beauty and archaeological significance, **Ancient Eleutherna**. The archaeological site is located on the serrated ridge of **Psiloritis mountain**. The archaeologists brought to light an ancient settlement of several eras that includes Hellenistic, Roman and ecclesiastical eras of significance. On the west side of the hill, visitors of the museum will have the opportunity to see a necropolis of the geometric and archaic era. Next stop **Margarites**, a village that can boast a long tradition of pottery handcraft, and even nowadays it's possible to see the work in progress while strolling around the village.

**Argiroupoli** is a picturesque village, built on the ruins of the ancient village of Lappa, in between the river Petres and Mousela, with an impressive panoramic view. Most likely founded by the Dorians, the town of Lappa flourished in 3rd century B.C. as a rival of Knossos. In its history, it has been dominated by the Romans and you can still find some Roman baths, a Roman mosaic and a Roman gate. Archeolo-



### DISCOVERING THE BIRTHPLACE OF ZEUS

Take a colorful journey to the base of the breathtaking Psiloriti mountain - according to mythology the birthplace of Zeus - a mountain that extends to the sea with crystal-clear waters and a long coastline. You will come upon picturesque villages such as **Spili, Anogia, Eleftherna, Axos**, regions such as **Amari** and **Mylopotamos, Plakias, Rodakino, Agia Galini, Panormo** and **Bali** along the coastlines offer visitors unforgettable moments and experiences.



### Day Trip to the Unspoiled Inland and enjoy:

- ✿ 1,624 native wild plants with 170 endemic plant and 1,000 animal species
- ✿ 12 walking trails (E4)
- ✿ 4 Natura2000 - 13121.4200 acres areas
- ✿ 10 of the most famous caves of Crete - Ideon Andron (the birth cave of Zeus)
- ✿ 1059km 22 cycling paths in the broader area
- ✿ 11 small and large, impressive gorges
- ✿ 65km sandy beach
- ✿ 150 nests of endangered sea turtle *Caretta caretta*, which lays its eggs every year on the 8 Blue Flags of Rethymno.

### THE TRAIL OF MILI- CHRONOMASTIRI - MAROULAS

Leaving Rethymno you immediately encounter the village of **Agia Irini**, which hosts the recently restored Agia Irini Abbey built in the year 1362 and walk as far as the village of **Roussospiti**. Continuing on your way you find the new and the old village of **Mili**. The old village architecture holds its previous inhabitants style offering a chance to see a traditional Greek village. The Mili gorge begins there. Walk among the old mills and the wild mountain. Continue to **Chromonastiri** an important site of the area's religious history that today is hosts the **Military Museum**. Also in the center of the village you will find the "**Milos Prinari**" a **History and Folklore museum**.

A must visit is also the **Arsani monastery**, 12 km east of Rethymno. It was established by the Venetians around the half of 17th century and dedicated to St. George.

Continue with turning towards **Maroulas**. You cannot fail to be impressed by this mesa covered in **olive groves**. In the town of **Amnatos** take a break and visit the **museum of olives in Kapsaliana**.

gists unearthed thousands of relics in the town of Lappa. In the lower part of this two-village town the spring waters keep the temperature lower than the coast. The village is rich of towering plane trees and vegetation creating a shade spot for the visitors.

Less than 10 km from Rethymno we find the small village of **Armeni** and its famous **Minoan cemetery**. The village was built in 961 by Armenian troops, from which it took its name. The necropolis is the larger cemetery of carved graves in Crete. There are several studies about the findings of the cemetery, revealing facts about ancient people's diets and customs.



### LIVE THE FULL CRETAN EXPERIENCE IN RETHYMNO

Take part in authentic village life with the people and explore a wider spectrum of adventures that make your trip truly special and authentic. Whether you are hanging out with locals or challenging yourself on all the cycling routes these memories stay with you forever.

Get the insider scoop by visiting [www.rethymno.gr](http://www.rethymno.gr) and download all the necessary information that provides you a solid basis for sustainable visiting initiatives and solutions.

Find cycling routes to the 8km cycling path into the historic center or 1059km choose from **22 cycling paths** to create a unique, personal tour that shies away from the touristy, crowded attractions, and instead focuses on all the hidden details that make the city so wonderful to experience.

