

# The Digital Nomad's Complete Guide to Crete



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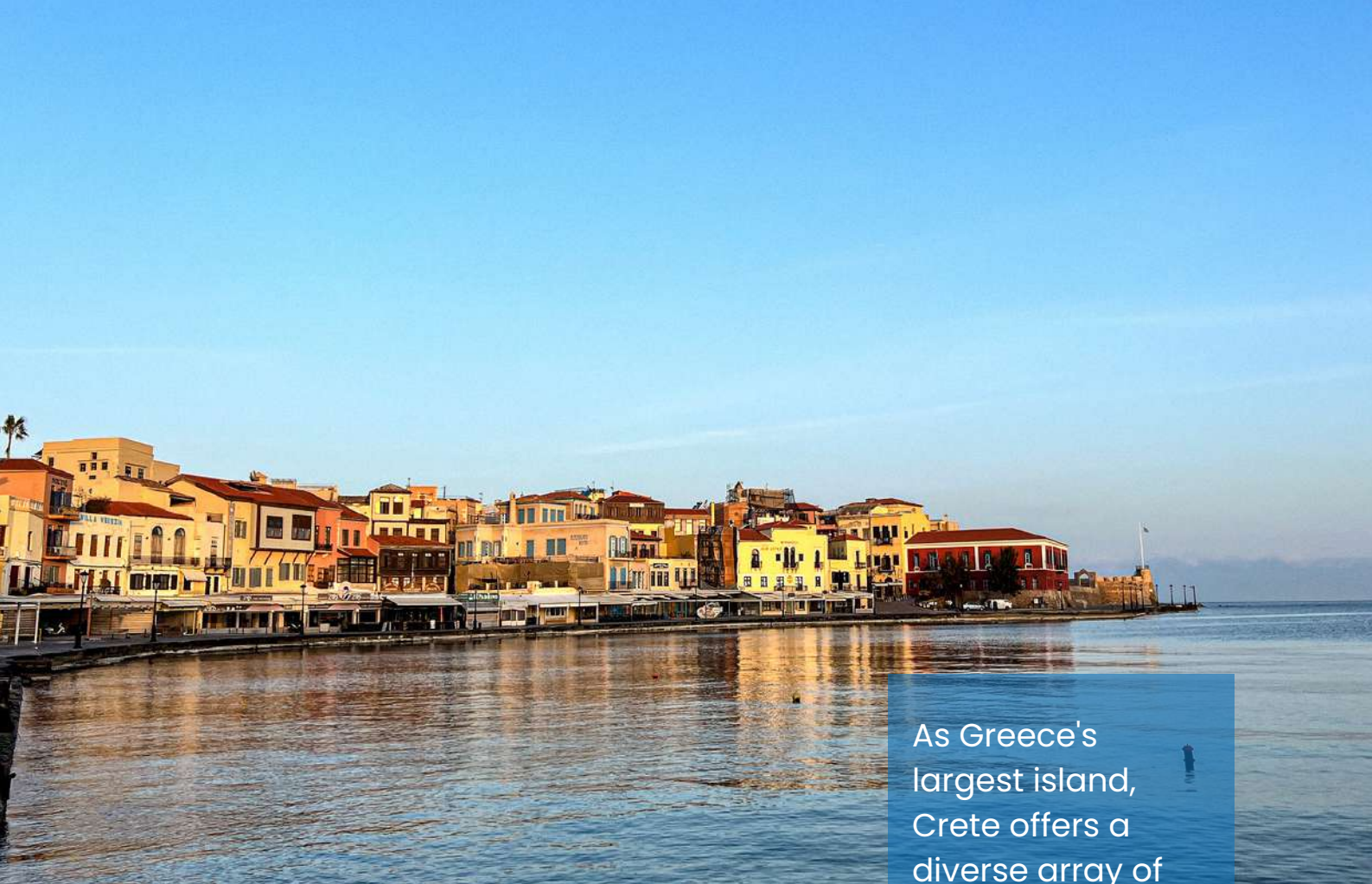
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As Greece's largest island, Crete offers a diverse array of attractions for every visitor, so much so that it could easily be a country of its own!

# Crete for Digital Nomads

Digital nomads seeking vibrant cities, breathtaking Mediterranean beaches, awe-inspiring natural vistas, pleasant weather year-round, and a supportive remote working community should consider adding Crete to their travel itinerary.

Fortunately, Crete is part of Greece, which introduced a digital nomad visa in 2021. This allows digital nomads and remote workers to call this magnificent country and its islands home for a year, with the option to apply for a residence permit and extend their stay for two years or more.

While some digital nomads may prefer larger metropolitan cities like Athens, others yearn for a tranquil environment surrounded by nature and picturesque views of the Mediterranean Sea's crystal-blue waters.

To help you determine if Crete is the ideal digital nomad destination for you, we've compiled the ultimate guide to living and working remotely on this enchanting island.

In this guide, you'll find super helpful tips for navigating around the island, culture tips, things to see and do, how to find housing, and life-saving tips to have a smooth and relaxing time in Crete.

## Island Statistics

**Population:** 617,000

**Size:** 8,450 km<sup>2</sup>

**Official Language:** Greek

**Time Zone:** GMT+2

**Calling Code:** +30

**Currency:** Euro



Crete, Greece's largest island, boasts a diverse landscape that caters to everyone's interests, from snow-capped mountains and pristine sandy beaches with crystal-clear waters to lush hiking trails.

The island is also one of Greece's most popular destinations, attracting both international tourists and Greek nationals seeking a relaxing getaway.



## Where is Crete Located?

Crete is located in the Mediterranean Sea. It is just north of Libya and south of most of the Greek islands.

Crete is an island in Greece. Since Greece is part of the European Union and the Schengen Area, a bloc of countries that allow visa-free travel between them.

So, Greece digital nomad visa holders can travel throughout the Schengen Area visa-free for 90 days out of a 180-day period while residing in Greece.

**Fun Fact:** People have been living on Crete since 7,000 BC making it one of the oldest inhabited places in Europe.

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# **Oustanding Features of Crete**



Crete offers a captivating blend of beauty, relaxation, and interest, making it an ideal remote working destination for digital nomads. The island boasts thousands of years of history, incredibly hospitable locals, and cities that provide a high quality of life, making it a perfect choice for those seeking sun-soaked Mediterranean experiences.

With an impressive 300 days of sun per year, Crete is the ideal destination for digital nomads who enjoy being outside, exploring new towns, and soaking in rays of sunshine.

For remote workers craving a break from bustling cities and wanting to enjoy fresh air while remaining within walking distance of cafes and restaurants, Crete's cities are an excellent choice. Hippocrates even claimed that Crete's air possessed healing and therapeutic properties!

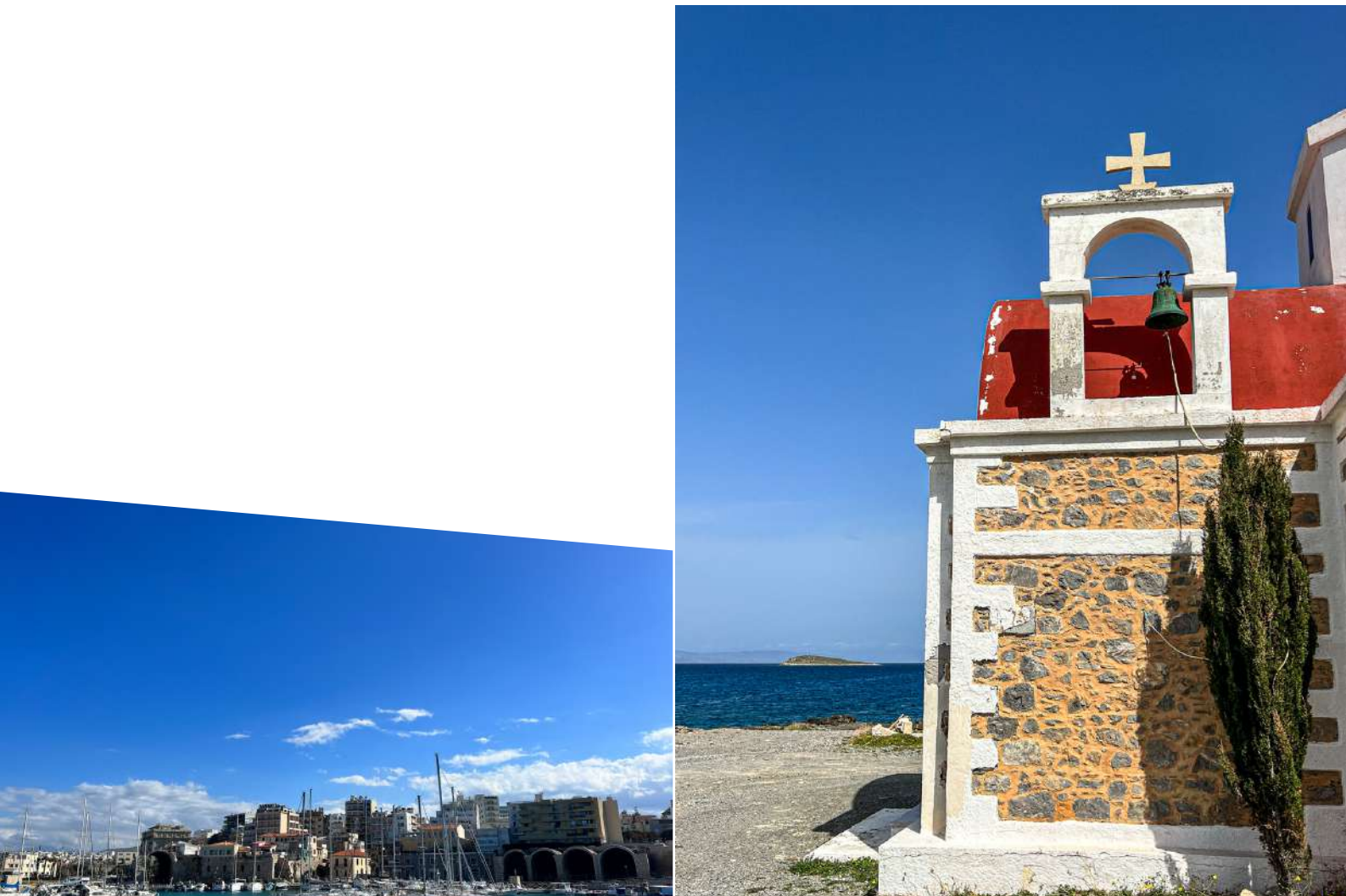
In Crete, digital nomads will never feel isolated or unwelcome. The locals' exceptional hospitality will make you feel right at home on this friendly island.

Thanks to Crete's massive size, there is so much to do and see. It's impossible to get bored as a digital nomad. Even if you were to work during the week and venture off on the weekends, you'll need months, if not years, to fully explore and appreciate the island.

Given Crete's vast size, there is no shortage of activities and sights. Digital nomads will find it impossible to grow bored, requiring months, if not years, to fully explore and appreciate the island, even if they work during the week and venture out on weekends.

As previously mentioned, Crete is home to some of the oldest remains of civilization. With over 9,000 years of history, the island offers a unique opportunity to learn about its evolution and the various cultures that have influenced it over time.

Crete's stunning natural landscapes, ranging from towering mountains to palm tree-lined sandy beaches, are not to be forgotten.



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# **A Brief History of Crete**

In Ancient Greek mythology, Crete is said to be the birthplace of Zeus, the most iconic and powerful god on Mount Olympus.

Crete is one of the oldest civilizations in Europe, with roots tracing back to the Neolithic period. The island has been inhabited by many cultures over the centuries, including the Minoans, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Venetians, Ottomans, and Germans. Each of these civilizations left their mark on the island, making it a unique blend of different cultures and traditions.

The most significant civilization to ever grace the island was the Minoan civilization, which flourished from around 2700 BC to 1450 BC. The Minoans were known for their advanced culture, impressive architecture, and seafaring abilities. They built the famous palace of Knossos, which was the largest building in the world at the time and created stunning artwork that is still admired today.



In the 5th century BC, Crete became part of ancient Greece, and its culture was heavily influenced by Greek traditions. During this time, the island was known for its production of olive oil, wine, and other agricultural products. It also became a center of artistic and intellectual activity, with philosophers and poets like Epimenides and Nikos Kazantzakis calling the island home.

Over the centuries, Crete changed hands multiple times, and each new civilization brought its own traditions and customs. The island was occupied by the Venetians from the 13th century until the Ottoman Empire conquered it in the 17th century.

During the Venetian occupation, the island's architecture was heavily influenced by Italian styles, with many impressive buildings, such as the Venetian fortress in Heraklion, still standing today.



In the 20th century, Crete played a significant role in World War II, with the Battle of Crete being one of the most important events in the island's history. The island was occupied by the Germans, and the local resistance played a crucial role in the fight against the Axis powers.

Today, Crete is a popular tourist destination that attracts visitors from all over the world. The island's rich history and culture can be seen in its many archaeological sites, museums, and cultural events. From the ancient Minoan ruins to the beautiful Venetian architecture, Crete is a fascinating destination that offers something for everyone.

Crete's history is a tapestry of different cultures, traditions, and events that have shaped the island into the unique destination it is today. Whether you're a remote worker looking for a place to work and relax or a history buff looking to explore ancient ruins, Crete is a destination that you won't want to miss.



## Crete's Culture Today

The present-day culture of Crete is a vibrant mix of tradition, hospitality, and modernity. Cretans are known for their warmth and friendliness, and visitors are often struck by the island's laid-back and relaxed atmosphere.

Cretans take great pride in their local cuisine, which is based on fresh, local ingredients, including olive oil, vegetables, and seafood. The cuisine is the epitome of a Mediterranean diet, which is said to be one of the healthiest diets. Made with fresh ingredients, the food is definitely a staple part of Cretan culture.

Cretans are also famous for their strong, aromatic coffee, which is often enjoyed with a slice of sweet, honey-soaked baklava.

Music and dance are also an integral part of Cretan culture, and visitors are often treated to impromptu performances of traditional songs and dances. The island's musical traditions date back to ancient times, and Cretans are proud of their unique style of music, which includes instruments such as the lyra and laouto.

Despite its traditional roots, Crete is a modern and cosmopolitan destination, with bustling cities, chic cafes, and lively nightlife. The island has something for everyone; whether you're looking to relax on the beach, explore ancient ruins, or indulge in some retail therapy, digital nomads can enjoy it all.

The present-day culture of Crete is a blend of tradition and modernity, with a strong emphasis on hospitality, food, music, and fun. Digital nomads and remote workers can expect to be welcomed with open arms and treated to a rich and diverse cultural experience.

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# **What is Crete Known For?**

When you think of Crete, you probably picture five-star hotels with stunning swim-up pools, but Crete is so much more than just an expensive holiday destination.

This incredible island is known for so much more!

## Blue Flag Beaches

If you're looking to relax on some of the most beautiful and well-maintained beaches in the world, then you can choose from 128 Blue Flag beaches on Crete.

The honor of being awarded a Blue Flag means the beach is clean, sustainable, and deemed environmentally friendly. So, you can count on getting some of the most natural and authentic beach experiences while in Crete.

## Ancient Sites and Artifacts

There have been civilizations thriving on the island of Crete for over 5,000 years!

Whether you're driving along the main highways and unknown roads, you will likely come across ruins of an ancient city. While they may look like neatly placed rocks now, they were once an essential and protective town for our ancestors.



You can also visit archaeological sites, such as the Palace of Knossos near Heraklion, to get an even deeper look into the history of Crete's Minoan civilization.

## Diverse Landscapes

It's an out-of-this-world feeling to be soaking in the sun on the beach in Rethymno while admiring snow-capped mountains settled behind the city, but that's the best way to describe just how diverse Crete's landscape is.

From pristine beaches to mountains tall enough to ski on to rough terrain perfect for the adventurous hiker, Crete literally has it all!

## Ancient Greek Mythology

No matter where you are in Greece, you'll run into a myth or two about where you're staying. Crete is no exception!

The island played a significant role in Ancient Greek mythology as it was the birthplace of Zeus, the most powerful and well-respected god of all. Crete was then under the protection of Zeus and the god twins, Apollo and Artemis.





## Incredible Hospitality

Cretans are known for being extremely hospitable to virtually everyone who visits the island. You will experience kindness in almost every situation. From asking for directions to ordering your favorite Greek meal to simply checking out at the grocery store, there is an overall friendly welcome from the residents.

In fact, during my time in Heraklion, I went to a bookstore in search of a particular book. Unfortunately, the store didn't have the book I was looking for, but as I thanked the owner for his help, he pulled out a pink box of sugar rose water cookies from a nearby bakery and offered me one.

So, while I didn't walk away with a book, I did walk away with a delicious cookie and a new favorite memory.

## Wine and Olive Oil

Crete is known for producing savory olive oil and fine-quality wines. You'll find plenty of old family-run wineries and olive oil presses throughout the island. We highly encourage you to visit one or two while you're there.

The olive oil in Crete is so rich and ingrained in the diet that the average Cretan consumes 30 kilograms of it per year. That's double what Greeks on the mainland consume!

# Tasty and Healthy Cuisine

They say that the Mediterranean diet is one of the healthiest in the world, and Greek cuisine lines right up with it.

Greek food is some of the most delicious you'll ever get to experience; from savory meat to delicate fish to fluffy pita bread to sticky baklava, you'll definitely eat well in Athens.

Some of the most traditional and must-try Greek dishes include:

**Moussaka** – A layered dish of eggplant or potato, ground meat, pureed potatoes, and cheese.

**Gyro** – A handheld sandwich with chicken or pork wrapped in a warm pita served with lettuce, tomato, french fries, red onion, and tzatziki sauce.

**Souvlaki** – Grilled meat, such as chicken or pork, on a skewer and is sometimes served with vegetables.

**Greek Salad** – A fresh salad with feta cheese, cucumber, tomato, pepper, red onion, kalamata olives, olive oil, and oregano.

**Fava** – A side dish or appetizer of pureed fava beans topped with chopped onions and olive oil.



**Dolomades** – Savory appetizer of grape leaves stuffed with long-grain rice and minced meat.

**Dakos or Rusk** – A hard bread often topped with tomatoes, herbs, and olive oil. It's also sometimes served in a Greek salad, making it a Cretan salad.

**Chochlioi Bourbouristi** – Snails are a traditional Cretan dish served since the second century. You can find them fried or steamed and topped with rosemary, vinegar, and olive oil.

**Octopus** – A tentacle or two of octopus either grilled, marinated, or stewed in wine.

**Greek Yogurt** – A thick yogurt often served with fruit, granola, nuts, and honey for breakfast.

**Koulouri** – Large fluffy bread rings covered in sesame seeds, or sometimes poppy seeds, and usually eaten for breakfast or as a snack.



**Loukoumades** – Fried dough balls often covered with honey, cinnamon, and nuts.

**Baklava** – Sweet pastry made of layered filo pastry dough filled with nuts and covered in honey or syrup.

The list could really go on, but these are some of the most traditional and delicious foods you'll find on the streets of Crete.





## Luxury Resorts

You've probably been scrolling through Instagram or TikTok and came across a gorgeous white villa with a swim-up pool to the room overlooking the gorgeous blue sea. It's most likely one of the many resorts that are located in Crete.

In fact, Lasithi, a region located east of Heraklion, is known for its five-star resorts catering to wealthy vacationers and A-list celebrities.

While staying in one of these resorts for a month isn't necessarily in every digital nomad's budget, it could be a great weekend experience during your time in Crete.

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# **Why Digital Nomads Love Crete**



# Why Digital Nomads Love Crete

So, what exactly do other digital nomads and we love about Crete so much?

Crete is one of the most beloved islands in Greece. Many people say that once you visit Crete, you will definitely come back.

We can definitely speak to that too!

To be honest, when we first arrived in Heraklion, we were a bit underwhelmed.

We were hoping there would be the iconic white buildings you would see on Santorini or Mykonos. But after exploring the island and getting to know the cities, we fell in love with it and will definitely be back again soon in our digital nomad travels.



## Ideal Weather

Crete's weather is ideal for digital nomads who do not enjoy cold winters and want to bask in the Mediterranean sun no matter what time of year it is.

We stayed in Crete from mid-February to mid-March and had great weather for it being the end of winter. With mostly sunny days, minimal rain, and mild temperatures that required a light coat, we couldn't have been happier.

During the summer months, you can expect slightly hotter weather. There's no need to worry, though! A quick dip in the crystal blue waters off the shore will cool you down in no time.

From sunbathing to swimming to hiking and even skiing on snow-capped mountains, the weather is perfect for digital nomads who enjoy spending time outdoors.

## International Community

There is a large community of digital nomads and international expats living in Crete. There are also a couple of universities that welcome international students.

As you walk through the major cities of Crete, you'll often hear foreigners speaking in languages other than Greek and taking in the island's sights.

This creates a great opportunity for digital nomads to expand their friend groups and network. They get to meet people from all over the world who are also experiencing Crete as a new destination.



Of course, Crete brings in a ton of tourists visiting on holidays and vacations too. In fact, over five million tourists visited Crete in 2018, and the number is growing each year.

## Vibrant and Lively Cities

There are three main cities in Crete: Heraklion, Chania, and Rethymno. All are excellent choices for digital nomads to stay and have their own unique characteristics.

We'll dive more into the best cities for digital nomads in Crete later on in this guide. However, we can say that these cities are lively and vibrant both with their architecture, things to do, and people.

You'll always find people hanging out at all-day bars and cafes at all times of the day, enjoying a gelato, or taking a walk through a park or along the sea. Even in the off-season you'll find the cities alive with both residents and visitors.

## Everything You Could Need

When traveling through Crete, it's easy to forget that you're on an island in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea. With its large size and diverse landscapes, it feels like you're on the mainland.

Even though it's an island, Crete has absolutely everything you need as a digital nomad. From great wifi connection to cafes and restaurants to things to do, you won't be left wanting more.

Plus, with Crete's autonomous features, you'll get fresh ingredients, great wine, and olive oil from local vineyards.



## English is Widely Spoken

As a major tourist destination, English is widely spoken throughout Crete. Menus are translated from Greek to English and other languages, as well as street signs.

Of course, it is always respectful to learn common words used in the local language to show respect to the residents. But you'll find that the Cretan people will happily communicate in English with you.

# Daily Life in Crete as a Digital Nomad

A day in Crete is best spent enjoying some coffee, soaking in the sunshine, admiring a pristine beach, exploring the city, and of course, eating delicious traditional cuisine.

A typical day could look a bit like this:

**7:30 AM** Wake up

**8:00 AM** Morning run or walk

**9:30 AM** Breakfast at a local cafe

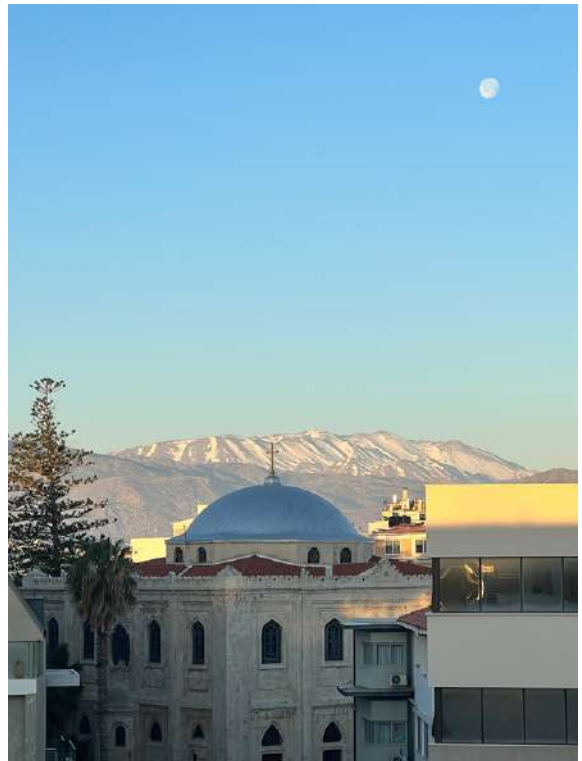
**10:00 AM** Work from a cafe

**2:30 PM** Grab a gyro for lunch in the city center

**3:00 PM** Visit a museum or archaeological site

**5:00 PM** Stop in a cafe or bar to finish working

**9:00 PM** Enjoy a delicious dinner



You'll notice that the typical schedule in Crete starts a bit later than in other countries. For example, many cafes don't serve breakfast until 9:30 am or later. Lunch and dinner are also served a bit later than you may expect.

While walking along the seaside, you'll likely find fishermen with their poles patiently waiting for a bite or people running or briskly walking along the coast in the mornings.

Of course, being a digital nomad means thriving in your freedom, so your schedule may not look just like this. Crete has so many opportunities to create your own daily routine that caters to your needs.

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**Little Known  
Secrets That Will  
Save Your Life**

As with any destination, there are certain things that you can only learn by visiting. Below are some of the secrets we experienced during our time in Crete that we thought were important to share with digital nomads.

**Secret #1** You cannot flush toilet paper due to the narrow pipes in Greece's plumbing. Instead, you'll put it in a wastebasket next to the toilet.

**Secret #2** Pedestrian crosswalk times are extremely short. You'll often only have a few seconds to cross the street before the lights change and the cars go on their journeys.

**Secret #3** The average price of a good gyro wrap is between €3 and €3.70. Don't pay more than this! They are a delicious snack or quick lunch when you're on the go.

**Secret #4** Most stores, even supermarkets, close on Sundays. You'll get to enjoy a quiet and peaceful city on Sundays in Crete.



**Secret #5** After enjoying a meal at a restaurant for lunch and dinner, you may be surprised to receive a dessert on the house and a little bottle of raki, a traditional after-dinner liqueur. It's not a scam! They are genuinely offering you a free sweet and drink after your meal.

**Secret #6** You'll quickly notice the number of stray cats and dogs strolling through the streets of major cities. These animals are well taken care of by the community and are often very friendly. You may notice bowls of food and water outside of retail stores or cafes for them.

**Secret #7** The weather can change depending on where you are on the island. So, Crete is the perfect place if you want to chase the sun! Escaping the wind simply means driving to the other side of the island sometimes.





**Secret #8** If traveling in Crete during the off-season (November 1st to March 31st), you can get free entrance to archaeological sites, such as the Palace of Knossos, on the first Sunday of every month.

**Secret #9** While driving through Crete, you'll notice little houses or chapels on the side of the road. These are often the sites of car accidents set up by the family or person who survived the accident and are dedicated to a Christian saint.

**Secret #10** You will save money shopping at the local farmers' markets to buy fresh produce, olives, olive oil, honey, and sometimes meats and cheeses.

**Secret #11** It's common while driving in Crete that other cars will pass you on the left, even if the road isn't double lanes. If a slow driver or a trailer truck knows they are driving slowly, they will often drive closer to the side of the road so you can safely pass them.

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# **Greek Phrases You Should Learn**



While English is widely spoken in Crete, it's always a good idea to learn Greek for some of the most common words you'll use during your time there.

Not only does it show respect, but it will help you become more worldly.

<b>Greek</b>	<b>Pronunciation</b>	<b>English</b>
Γειά Σας	Yia-sas	Hello/Goodbye
Καλημέρα	Kalimera	Good morning
Καλησπέρα	Kalispera	Good evening
Παρακαλώ	Parakaló	Please/You're Welcome
Ευχαριστώ	Ef-ka-ree-stó	Thank you
Ναι	Nei	Yes
Όχι	O-hee	No
Στην υγείά σας	Stin Yeia Mas (Yamas)	Cheers!

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# **Famous Events and Celebrations**

Crete is home to plenty of festivals, events, and celebrations throughout the year. From traditional Greek celebrations to religious holidays to more modern festivals, digital nomads can experience a new unique event depending on when they plan to visit the city.

## February: Carnevale

For three weeks, Crete has multiple events to celebrate Carnevale, the time leading up to Easter. There are three main events that take place over three weekends. They are each held in Heraklion, Rethymno, and Chania, allowing residents and visitors to visit each city and experience the celebration three times.

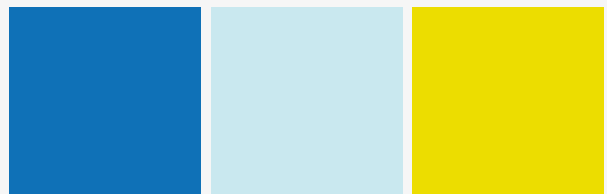
You'll see people dressed up in costumes, wearing masks, and have intricate makeup as they walk through the streets eating and drinking. In the late morning, usually on a Sunday, there is a large parade with paper mache floats riding through the center of the cities.



## May: The Battle of Crete

In World War II, Crete defended itself from the Axis powers on the western side of the island. To this day, the battle is commemorated, usually in May, so the new generations don't forget about the important event.

The event takes place in a town called Mame, which is not far from Chania. It is organized by the families of veterans who fought in the battle.





## July: The Cretan Diet Festival

FCrete is known for its delicious cuisine and healthy Mediterranean diet. It's so famous that there is an entire two-day Cretan Diet festival dedicated to it in July.

Local food producers and farmers come together to offer some of the best dishes in the Cretan diet to residents and visitors alike. You can also count on getting a great glass of locally-made wine too.

Don't be surprised if you see traditional Cretan dancing to the island's historic music during the festival either.

## July: Renaissance Festival

Taking place for a couple of weeks in July in Rethymno's city center, the Renaissance Festival celebrates the city's history and the historical art and performances that influenced major events and today's art.

You can view entertaining theatrical dances and performances as well as people dressed up in costume walking the streets. It's almost like taking a step back in time and seeing the city as it could have been back then.





## July: Eftazymo Festival

One of the foods Crete is known for is its bread; in particular, eftazymo bread. This chickpea-based bread translates to “seven times kneaded” and is a beloved starter and side dish in Crete.

Just outside the town of Kastelli, there is a festival dedicated solely to this delicious and traditional bread. The townspeople bake thousands of loaves of eftazymo for the residents and visitors coming to enjoy music, dancing, and a wholesome good time.

## July: Thrapsano Pottery Festival

The Cretans have been making pottery for thousands of years, dating back to the Minoan era. To celebrate the art and history of this important practice, the Thrapsano Pottery School has an annual festival in Heraklion showcasing locally made pottery.

## August: Chania Rock Music Festival

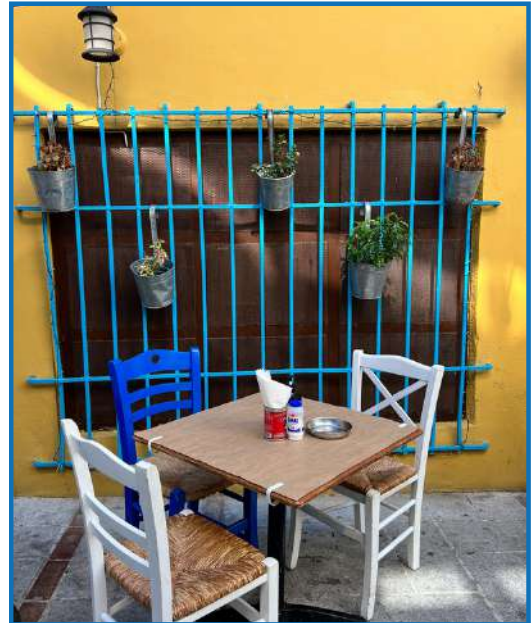
Fans of rock music will have a blast at the Chania Rock Festival. Greek artists gather from all over the country to come to perform and listen to live performances.

It's a fun, entertaining, and friendly event that will surely get you up on your feet.

## Summer: Wine Festivals

With numerous vineyards and wineries on the island, there are many wine festivals that take place during the late summer months. You can often find wine tastings paired with locally grown and produced snacks with music performances and dancing.

Some wine festivals are even known to hand out the wine for free!



## October: Chestnut Festival

During the chestnut harvest, you can attend the Chestnut Festival on the west side of the island in Kissamos, near Chania. Enjoy freshly roasted chestnuts, local dishes, and traditional Cretan dancing during this fun and historic festival.

## October to December: Rakokazana/Kazananema

Raki is a traditional Cretan liqueur made from grapes. It's served after a meal as a sign of friendliness and politeness. During the grape harvest, there are raki festivals that happen in the Kazania region. You can expect music, food, and of course, lots of raki!



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# **Weather in Crete**



# Weather in Crete

Crete has beautiful weather and mild winters. With 300 days of sun every year, it's one of the best major destinations for digital nomads in the Mediterranean.

There is minimal rainfall, mostly during the late autumn and early winter months.

You'll see mostly clear skies and sunny weather year-round. Greece truly has some of the most beautiful pale blue skies around, making it great for taking photos or reading a book in a nice park.

The spring and summer months are when you can expect the most activity in Crete. From millions of tourists to festivals and events to the hot weather, it's one of the busiest times for Crete.

However, during the summer, you can expect a great cool breeze coming off the sea to stay feeling refreshed.

We'll get into the best time to visit later in this guide, though.



Month	Temperature (High/Low) °C	Precipitation Days
January	16°/8°	9 days
February	16°/8°	8 days
March	17°/10°	6 days
April	20°/12°	3 days
May	24°/15°	1 day
June	28°/18°	0 days
July	29°/22°	0 days
August	29°/21°	0 days
September	27°/19°	1 day
October	24°/16°	3 days
November	21°/13°	5 days
December	17°/10°	8 days

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# **Best Time to Visit Crete**



# Best Time to Visit Crete

The straight and personal answer for the best time to visit Crete for digital nomads is between March and June and September to October.

There are two times of the year when we would consider to be the best time to visit Crete as a digital nomad. While there is no “bad” time to visit, if you’re looking to be outside in warmer weather and take full advantage of the city, there are definitely better times to visit.

The weather is perfectly warm and comfortable for walking through the historic cities, admiring the Cretan sea, or relaxing on the beach.

# Crete's Travel Seasons

As mentioned previously in this guide, Crete welcomes over five million tourists every year. Due to the weather and the yearly schedules and routines of European families, there are specific travel seasons.

Depending on the season you visit Crete, it could affect your overall experience.

## High Season (June to August)

During the high travel season, you can expect many people laying out their towels on a gorgeous sandy beach, crowding restaurant tables, and leaning over each other to get the perfect photo of the sunset or ancient statues.

Since this is when summer is in full swing, many tourists, especially those following a school schedule, will come to Crete. Since Crete is one of the top destinations in Greece during the summer, you can expect tourists to spend a few days to a week exploring the island.



However, for digital nomads, this may be the worst time to visit Crete. Prices for accommodations, such as Airbnbs and hotels, skyrocket, and it can be difficult to get reservations and tickets for places you wish to see.

If possible, we suggest avoiding spending time in Crete while working remotely during these months.



# Shoulder Seasons (April to May/September to October)

The perfect time for digital nomads to visit Crete is during the shoulder seasons. The weather is still warm enough to enjoy the island but cool enough not to sweat and dehydrate.

There are much fewer tourists visiting Crete, which means you can easily grab a seat at a cafe to work on your laptop and can mostly always get a table at a beloved traditional restaurant.

Digital nomads can also get some pretty great accommodation deals if they plan to stay for a month or longer. Also, most restaurants and stores are open during the shoulder seasons, so you know you won't be missing out on anything during your time in Crete.

## Low Season (November to March)

If you don't mind the chilly weather and have a strict budget to stick to, then the low season is the perfect time to visit Crete as a digital nomad. You can find great accommodations for almost half the price they would charge during the summer.

Museums and archaeological sites also have discounted tickets from the beginning of November to March.

There are much fewer tourists during the low season. Now, that's not to say that there aren't any at all, but they are less noticeable. This is great if you're a content creator looking to take pictures and videos of empty streets and famous sites.

You may find restaurants and hotels closed in certain towns during this period. Sometimes entire resort towns will shutter their businesses, waiting for the high season to begin again.

But, for digital nomads coming from more northern countries with extremely cold winters, Crete could be a pleasant escape. When the sun shines in the winter, you can count on it being warm enough to sit out and bask in.

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# Cost of Living



## **Currency in Greece:** Euro (€)

Check the most current exchange rate [here](#).

As mentioned earlier in this guide, the cost of living in Crete, Greece, is affordable compared to other Greek islands and even the capital city itself. The average salary for someone living and working in Greece in 2022 is 1,183€ per month.

When we look at the average cost of living, a single person can expect to spend around 628€ per month, not including rent. The average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in the city center can be around 460€ per month.

Some common expenses for digital nomads in Crete, Greece include:

- **Local SIM Card:** 20€/month
- **Intercity Bus Ticket:** 15€
- **Single Ride Ticket:** 1.20€
- **Domestic Beer:** 3.50€
- **Cappuccino:** 2.75€
- **Meal at an Inexpensive Restaurant:** 10€

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# Tech Specs

# Tech Specs

Crete is a very modernized and technologically advanced city.

With 5G mobile network throughout the city and reliable wifi in most bars and cafes, digital nomads have everything they could need to stay connected.

The median internet speed in Crete, Greece, according to SpeedTest, is 33.7 Mbps for download and 4.97 Mbps for upload.

For reference, a decent and reliable download speed is around 35 Mbps. So, Crete has a fairly reliable connection for remote workers.



## Cell Service Providers

It's quite easy to get a local SIM card while traveling or living in Greece as a digital nomad. With fast 5G connection throughout the city, digital nomads can stay connected no matter where they are.

The main cell service providers in Greece are:

- Vodafone
- Cosmote
- WIND

You'll find many stores and kiosks throughout the city. Simply go into one with your passport in hand, and you can purchase a monthly plan with 15 or 20 GB of data.





## Power Outlets for Devices

Traveling to different countries and continents means being prepared in almost every aspect, including how to plug your electronic devices into an outlet.

Greece uses type C, or “Euro” plugs, and F, or “Schuko” plugs with 230 V. These types of plugs have two prongs with rounded ends.

It’s always a good idea to bring a universal adapter with you so you can charge your devices.

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# Getting Around Crete



# Getting Around Crete

Getting around Crete is a bit different than traveling around any other European destination. Fortunately, there is an extensive network of public transportation to help you see the island.

There are a few ways to travel around Crete, both publicly and privately. With many means of transportation available, it's important to find the best one for your plans and destinations.

# Public Transportation

While there are no trains on Crete, like on mainland Greece, there are plenty of regional and intercity buses that travel the island frequently.

## Buses

The main regional bus routes, also known as the KTEL, connect from Chania to Rethymno to Heraklion to Agios Nikolaos. They have daily schedules, allowing you to see as many cities as possible during your time in Crete.

The trip from Heraklion to Chania is just two and a half hours and costs around €15.

There are also city buses that service the direct areas. For example, Heraklion's bus routes have two areas that they service, known as A and B zones.

One of the most popular routes for visitors is from Heraklion to the Palace of Knossos, which takes just around 20 minutes.

Chania also has a city bus that will take you around the second-largest city on Crete.

When traveling in the A zone of the cities, you can purchase a single-ride bus ticket for €1.10 at the bus station and €2 directly on the bus. For B zones, the ticket price at the station is €1.50 and €2.50 on the bus.

There are monthly passes available that range from €55 to €80 per month. However, these cities are so walkable that it probably won't be necessary for many digital nomads.

## Taxis and Rideshares

You will see plenty of taxis and stands around the cities. You can easily hail one down and ask them to take you where you need to go.

The taxi fares are actually regulated by the Greek government, so you always know you're getting a fair and honest price. You may be able to pay with a credit card, but they do prefer cash.

While Uber doesn't operate in Crete yet, there is one rideshare app, [18300](#) that will call a taxi to your door. You can also schedule rides for when you have to be at the airport or a bus station.

## Rent a Car

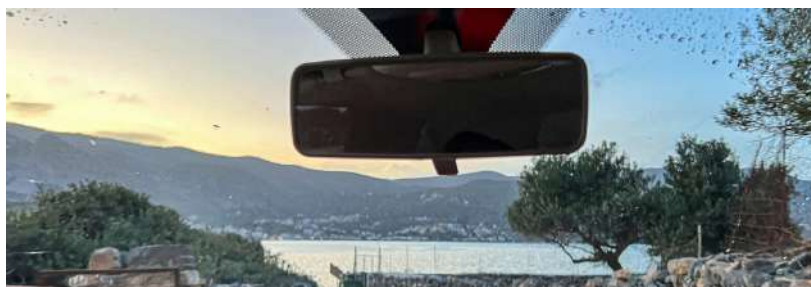
One of the easiest, but most expensive, methods of traveling throughout Crete is by renting a car.

You'll see plenty of car rental places throughout the major cities clustered together. Feel free to stop in and compare the prices and cars available before reserving your car.

Most of the car rental agencies include insurance, so you won't have any extra fees other than the gasoline.

I definitely recommend renting a car if you want to travel Crete on your own terms. It gives you the freedom to truly explore this gorgeous island. From pulling off the main road to stopping by a white sandy beach to venturing through the mountain villages, renting a car is the best way to travel Crete.

Driving around Crete is quite easy. The roads are well-maintained, and there wasn't much traffic when we were there. You will have to keep an eye out for adventurous goats or sheep crossing the roads in some areas.



# Best Ways to Get To and From the Airport

There are two international airports in Crete: Heraklion (HER) and Chania (CHQ). You will most likely arrive at one of these airports if flying to Crete.

Getting to the city center from the airport is fairly easy.

When arriving at Heraklion's airport, you can take either a bus or taxi to the city center. Taxis have a flat rate of €16 going from the airport and sitting outside of Arrivals. It will take about ten minutes to arrive at the center.

You can also take an air-conditioned coach bus from the airport for just €2. There are two stops in the center of Heraklion where you can get off. The bus departs every 10-15 minutes year-round.



When arriving at Chania's airport, you can also take a bus or taxi to the city center. If you take a taxi from outside of the airport, the rate can be from €25 to €30 for the 20-minute drive to Chania's Old Town.

The airport coach bus costs just €2.30 for a single ride to the city's center. You can purchase tickets online or directly on the bus. The journey takes about 25 minutes. However, the departure schedule can be a bit sporadic, sometimes with an hour or more between buses.



## Walkability

The towns and cities in Crete, particularly Chania, Agios Nikolaos, Rethymno, and Heraklion, are all very walkable.

You will find everything you need, including grocery stores, cafes, restaurants, bars, retail stores, parks, and pharmacies. These cities also have wide promenades along the shore so you can take leisurely walks by the sea.

There are pedestrian areas that are comfortable to walk around without worry of getting out of the way of cars and motorcyclists. When staying in or near the center, you can reach virtually everything on foot in just 15 to 20 minutes.

Pedestrian crosswalks also pose a challenge as they allow a very short window to cross the street. When walking across crosswalks without a light, it's important to know that the cars won't usually stop for you. You'll have to wait until there is a break in traffic.

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# **Best Cities for Digital Nomads in Crete**



# Cities for Digital Nomads

With the vast size of Greece's largest island, digital nomads may feel overwhelmed with choosing a city to call home for a while in Crete. It's full of unique cities and towns, each with its own personality.

We've compiled a list of the most convenient, comfortable, and affordable cities for digital nomads who want to stay in Crete.

You'll find that these cities are on the north side of the island. While the southside is absolutely beautiful, it's better suited for vacationers. However, that shouldn't stop you from venturing down there for a day or two of relaxation!





## Heraklion

The largest city in Crete, Heraklion, is an excellent choice for digital nomads to stay. Nicknamed “Little Athens,” Heraklion is a bustling modern city with tall buildings near the sea on the north side of Crete.

The old town center is just large enough to lose your way through the small and winding streets, but small enough to always find your way home. There are plenty of restaurants, bars, and cafes to sit and enjoy the weather or have a great meal.

You’ll also find plenty of retail stores, both major recognizable brands and small boutiques. The municipal market is also a great place to find fresh produce, butchers, souvenirs, and Cretan delicacies.

Between the old Venetian fountain, the lush green park, and the old Venetian fort in the marina, Heraklion has an interesting history to experience. It is also the closest city to the Palace of Knossos and its archaeological site.

With the main airport of the island just ten minutes from the city’s center, Heraklion is a smart and strategic city to stay as a digital nomad.



# Chania

On the west side of the island is Chania, another excellent city for digital nomads in Crete.

Home to the old Venetian harbor and a gorgeous mosque and lighthouse surrounded by beautiful restaurants, the old town is charming and a great area to walk through and explore. With narrow and winding streets, centuries-old buildings, and colorful character, you can feel the history that took place here.

On the outskirts of Chania's old town is a busier area with traffic, retail stores, restaurants, and parks. You can also find weekly farmers' markets along the street selling fresh produce for a fair price.

Chania is also home to the Technical University of Crete, so you can expect to see many students around town studying on their laptops in cafes.

As the island's second-largest city, Chania will have absolutely everything you could need. There are supermarkets, medical clinics, hospitals, and more.

It's also strategically located near some of the most beautiful beaches in Crete, including Seitan Limania and the pink sand Elafonisi beach.

With its own airport, it is easy for digital nomads to arrive and depart from Chania when their time in Crete has ended.



## Rethymno

Situated between Chania and Heraklion is Rethymno. This unique city offers the perfect mixture between Medieval European towns and modern cities.

The most iconic structure in Rethymno is the Venetian Fortezza Castle at the top of a high hill overlooking the sea. The old town is full of winding streets lined with restaurants, cafes, small shops, and boutique hotels.

There is a gorgeous waterfront promenade lined with palm trees, perfect for sitting out and reading or soaking in the sun on the sandy beach. Just like Chania, there is also an old lighthouse that you can walk to and admire.

Full of unique cafes and bars, Rethymno is perfect for digital nomads looking for a community of young people. With the University of Crete, you can expect to see students from all over the world studying in Rethymno.

While there isn't a coworking space in this city, there are laptop-friendly cafes where you can set up your workspace for a few hours.



## Agios Nikolaos

Located on the eastern side of the island is the smaller town of Agios Nikolaos. This is the perfect spot for digital nomads who want a more authentic experience in Crete and appreciate peace and quiet.


The downtown area has a small saltwater lake where you can find fishing boats and restaurants along it. The pedestrian-only streets are lined with beautiful trees and unique retail stores.

Finding a digital nomad-friendly cafe can be a challenge at first, but there are all-day cafes and bars with free wifi that wouldn't mind you pulling out a laptop for a couple of hours.

It's important to note that if you plan to stay in Agios Nikolaos during the off-season, some restaurants and businesses will be closed. For the full experience of living in this peaceful town, we recommend staying from April to October.

Nearby are beautiful towns such as Plaka and Sitia. You can also take a day trip to the abandoned former leper colony on Spinalonga Island from Agios Nikolaos or a traditional Cretan Olive Oil farm.

While there isn't much to do in Agios Nikolaos, it offers a tranquil, focused, and beautiful place for digital nomads to settle down for a bit in Crete.



# How to Find Accommodations in Crete

Some of the best sites to search for accommodations in Crete are [Airbnb](#), [Vrbo](#), and [Booking](#) if you plan to stay for a month or more.

When you decide to stay in Crete as a digital nomad, it doesn't always make sense to stay in hotels as they can get quite expensive.

Some of the best sites to search for accommodations in Crete are [Airbnb](#), [Vrbo](#), and [Booking](#) if you plan to stay for a month or more.

However, if you are staying in Crete on Greece's digital nomad visa, then you will have to find a lease of at least a year if you plan to apply for the resident permit. Sites like [Spitogatos](#) and [XE.gr](#) are great for finding apartment listings.

You can also use Facebook and expat groups to find rentals. There are real estate agencies around the city happy to help you find an apartment as well.

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# **Coworking Spaces and Cafes**

Being on an island with such a laidback atmosphere, it can be difficult to find a coworking space or digital nomad-friendly cafe.

There are a few coworking spaces in Heraklion and one in Chania. They offer day, weekly, and monthly passes. Members can also take advantage of other features, such as free coffee, networking events, and more.

As for digital nomad-friendly cafes, you may see remote workers or students with their laptops open. Mostly, though, you'll see people sitting at cafes with friends or family, enjoying good conversation and a coffee.

We've put together a list of the [best digital nomad-friendly cafes in Heraklion](#) to help you plan your time in Crete.



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# Healthcare in Crete

# Healthcare in Crete

Greece has a national healthcare system, ESY, which is free and accessible for all Greek citizens and residents. Digital nomads holding a resident permit through the digital nomad visa can access this program.

There are also private doctors and hospitals that you can visit. This is often a better option for digital nomads who are traveling with private international health insurance.

Private hospitals and doctors are often the best option for digital nomads using private international insurance as many will speak English and have connections with insurance companies.



## Emergency Numbers

It's always a good idea to know the emergency numbers in your area just in case you need them one day.

In Crete, the emergency numbers are:

- **Police:** 100
- **Fire:** 199
- **Ambulance:** 166

## Doctors On Call

Sometimes you just need a quick visit with a doctor to get something squared away. Instead of waiting for hours in an emergency room or clinic, there are on-call doctors that accept same-day appointments and even make home visits in Crete.

Digital nomads can find these doctors on the platform [doctoranytime.gr](https://doctoranytime.gr).

They have a large directory of general practitioners as well as specialists. You can also filter them by language.

# Hospitals

You will most hospitals in major cities like Chania, Rethymno, Heraklion, Agios Nikolaos, Kissamos.

Below is a list of private and general hospitals that are great for digital nomads and expats with their contact information.

Hopefully, you will never need to visit one, though!

## Chania

### Private Hospital Tsepeti

Address: Papanastasiou 9, Chania 731 33, Greece

Phone: +30 2821 028828

### Gavrilaki General Clinic S.A.

Address: Mark. Mpotsari 76, Chania 731 36, Greece

Phone: +30 2821 070800

### General Hospital St. George

Address: Αγίου Ελευθερίου, Chania 733 00, Greece

Phone: +30 2821 342000

## Kissamos

### Health Center

Address: Amerikis ke Theocharaki, Kissamos 734 00, Greece

Phone: +30 2822 340100

# Rethymno

## General Hospital of Rethymno

**Address:** Γενικό Νοσοκομείο Ρεθύμνου, Trantalidou 19-21, Rethymno 741 00, Greece

**Phone:** +30 2831 342100

## Rethymno Medical Office

**Address:** Αδελιανός Κάμπος 741 00, Greece

**Phone:** +30 2831 071960

# Heraklion

## University General Hospital of Heraklion

**Address:** Leof. Panepistimiou, Iraklio 715 00, Greece

**Phone:** +30 281 340 2111

## Venizelio Hospital

**Address:** Leof. Knosou 44, Iraklio 714 09, Greece

**Phone:** +30 281 340 8000

## EuroMedica Maternity Hospital

**Address:** Archiepiskopou Makariou 56, Iraklio 712 02, Greece

**Phone:** +30 281 039 6700

## Creta Interclinic

**Address:** Leof. Minoos 63, Iraklio 713 04, Greece

**Phone:** +30 281 037 3800

# Malia

## Cretan Medicare Malia

**Address:** Dimokratias, Malia 700 07, Greece

**Phone:** +30 2897 031661

## Agios Nikolaos

General Hospital of Agios Nikolaos

**Address:** Knossou 4, Ag. Nikolaos 721 00, Greece

**Phone:** +30 2841 343000

## Sitia

General Hospital Health Center of Siteia

**Address:** Ξεροκαμάρες, Σητεία, 72300, Greece

**Phone:** +30 2843 340100

## Pharmacies

There are many pharmacies around Crete. Every neighborhood has at least one!

If you aren't feeling well, you can ask a pharmacist for advice. Sometimes they can prescribe you something. However, if you require an antibiotic, you will need to see a doctor beforehand.

Keep in mind that pharmacies close on Sundays.

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**Greece**

**Digital Nomad**

**Visa**

# Live in Greece



Announced in the summer of 2021, Greece is welcoming digital nomads to live in the country for one to two years if they meet the requirements. Greece has long been a favorite destination for vacationers and travelers, but now it's catering to adventurous remote workers.

Greece's digital nomad visa is valid for one year. If you want to prolong your stay in Greece for more than a year, you may choose to obtain a two-year residence permit, which is renewable. Holding a residence permit could also put you on a path to obtaining permanent residency or Greek citizenship.

There are two ways to go about applying for the Greek digital nomad visa or residence permit. If you require an entry visa into Greece, then you must apply for the digital nomad visa at a Greek embassy or consulate serving your country of residence.

However, if you can enter Greece visa-free (such as passport holders from the USA, Canada, and Australia), you can simply apply for a two-year residence permit in Greece. This is a quicker and often more affordable method to relocating to Greece as a digital nomad.

Another great benefit of the Greece digital nomad visa is that digital nomads are not liable to pay local income taxes. Even if they stay in the country for over 183 days, they will not have to file taxes in Greece as long as they work remotely and have no economic ties to Greece.

Since Greece is part of the Schengen Area, visa holders will have visa-free access to 27 European countries. It's important to note that you must spend at least six months in Greece for the duration of your visa.

You may bring your spouse and dependents with you to Greece with the digital nomad visa too.

## Visa Requirements

- **Valid Passport** – Your passport must be valid for the duration of your visa
- **Earn 3,500€/month** – You must meet the minimum income requirement
  - Earn 4,200€/month if bringing a spouse
  - Earn 4,830€/month if bringing a spouse and one dependent
  - 15% increase in the income requirement with each dependent
- **Work Remotely** – Work as an employee, business owner, or freelancer with companies or clients outside of Greece
- **Clean Criminal Record** – A certified copy of your criminal record from your home country (if applying from outside of Greece)
- **Health Insurance Coverage** – You must have health insurance coverage in Greece for the duration of your visa





# How to Apply

## Step 1: Gather Documents

The easiest way to start the application process is to gather all of the necessary documents and paperwork beforehand. Below is a list of the documents you'll need to submit.

- Passport Copies
- Passport Photos
- Proof of Remote Work
- Proof of Income
- Criminal Background Check
- Proof of Health Insurance
- Medical Certificate of Good Health
- Address of Accommodations in Greece

Be sure to keep copies of these documents when you submit them to the Greek consulate.

## Step 2: Submit Application

After gathering your documents, you may submit your application in person.

You can schedule an appointment with the nearest Greek consulate using an online appointment schedule or call.

Visit the website of the Greek consulate in your country of residence to find the application.

There is also a 75€ application fee plus a 150€ administration fee you must pay.

## Step 3: Wait for Approval

Applicants of the Greece digital nomad visa will be notified by the Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum within ten days whether or not their visa application is accepted or rejected.

## Step 4: Register for a Residency Permit

Once your digital nomad visa has been granted, you can register for a residency permit when you arrive in Greece. You'll need your residence agreement, either a booking confirmation or a residential lease, your visa, and your passport to apply for the permit.

You must find the closest Aliens and Immigration Department of the Decentralized Administration office in your residence district to submit your paperwork immediately after you arrive in the country.

The residence permit fee is 1,000€.

It's important to note that you do not have to apply for a residence permit if you have been approved for the Greece digital nomad visa. However, the digital nomad visa is only valid for 12 months and is not renewable.

The residence permit is valid for two years and is renewable.

If you forego applying for the Greece digital nomad visa from abroad, you will have to register for a residence permit when you enter the country.

You can always get the most updated information about Greece's digital nomad visa on [nomadsembassy.com](https://nomadsembassy.com).

## Benefits of the Greek Digital Nomad Visa

There are quite a few benefits to obtaining Greece's digital nomad visa.

1. Visa-free access to 27 countries in the Schengen Area
2. Path to permanent residency and even citizenship with the residence permit
3. No obligation to pay local taxes as a digital nomad
4. You only have to spend six months in Greece each year
5. Family reunification is allowed, so you can bring your spouse and children

Not only will you get to experience the beautiful and unique lifestyle in Greece, but you'll get to travel through Europe and have an opportunity to permanently relocate to this gorgeous country.



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**Top**

**Instagrammable**

**Spots to Visit**

Crete has plenty of gorgeous hidden gems around the island. Some make for a fantastic photo or video to post to your social media while most make for a great and beautiful experience.

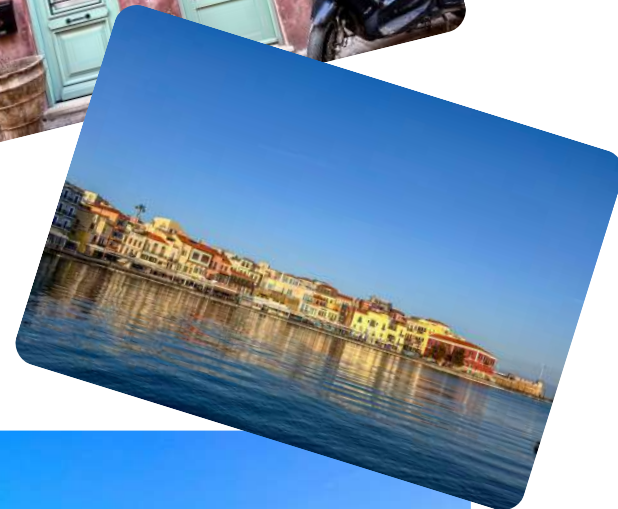
Below is a list of our top Instagrammable spots in Crete that you should definitely visit if you have the chance. We recommend renting a car to visit many of these places.

## Chania Old Town

Step back in time and get lost in narrow winding streets in the old town of Chania. With historic and colorful buildings and the beautiful Venetian harbor and lighthouse, there are plenty of fun photo opportunities.

## Rethymno City Center

Rethymno also has a historic city center but is much larger to get lost in. With colorful flowers outside of homes and boutique hotels, you'll enjoy every turn you take. Make sure to look for the large antique store to admire trinkets from the past while you're there!



## Vai Beach and Palm Tree Forest



Located all the way on the eastern part of the island is one of the most serene and beautiful beaches in Crete. As you drive down the long road, you'll see the large palm tree forest towering over you and the soft white sand.

## Ancient Monumental Olive Tree

It's more than just a tree! Drive halfway up a mountain on a narrow dirt road to see one of the oldest olive trees in the world. This tree is estimated to be 3,000 years old and still produces olives!

## Church of Agios Titos

The main church in Heraklion is quite a beautiful site to see. Settled in a large square, what was once a mosque is now a Greek Orthodox church. There is a quaint little park with benches and a fountain on the side of it, perfect for reading a book or people-watching.



## Rocca a Mare Fortress

The old Venetian fortress in Heraklion has been made into an interesting museum filled with old cannons and pottery from centuries ago. You can even walk on top of the fortress to get a beautiful view of Heraklion and the vast sea.



## Cave Andreas

On the eastern side of the island, you can climb up a narrow dirt path behind an old chapel to find Cave Andreas. With thousands of caves on the island, this is one of the easiest to get to and offers a stunning view of the sea.



## Spinalonga Island

The former leper colony is now an abandoned island with monuments and structures from an old 15th-century fortress. You can take a day trip to explore Spinalonga Island or simply admire it from the side of the highway or a restaurant in Plaka.



## Toplou Monestary

Founded in the 14th century, Toplou Monastery is still active today and produces some of the best olive oil and wine on the island. You can tour the monastery and go for a wine tasting while admiring the architecture and green lands surrounding it.



## Chapel of Agios Nikolaos

The iconic and extraordinary Chapel of Agios Nikolaos is in the sea, surrounded by blue Cretan water. The only way to get there is by walking along a path of sea rocks, which can take about five minutes. It's a truly unique experience and a beautiful white Greek chapel that is worth the trip.



## Seitan Limania Beach

Situated between two large rocky hills is the secluded Seitan Limania Beach. With a patch of white sandy beach and a long, calm stretch of water before opening up to the sea, it's the perfect place to relax, have fun with friends, or take photos.





## Elafonissi Beach

One of the two pink sand beaches in Crete is Elafonissi Beach on the southwestern side of the island. It can be a bit difficult to get to as it's protected and fairly secluded. Many people choose to book a day trip with a guide for easy traveling. The beach is truly spectacular and a great experience.

## Matala

Matala is a pure vacationers' spot on the south side of the island, but it has plenty of beautiful views to admire! From the numerous caves on the side of a cliff to the quaint beach town to the crystal blue waters, it's a great day trip for exploring.



# Crete for Digital Nomads

Fall in love with the culture, delicious cuisine, stunning views, and incredible travel opportunities in Greece when you stay in Crete as a digital nomad.

With a relaxed atmosphere, friendly people, a large international and remote worker community, and so many things to see and do you'll never get bored, Crete is an excellent destination for digital nomads.

Thanks to the Greece digital nomad visa, remote workers can relocate to Crete for one to two years and even get permanent residency!

Fall in love with the culture, delicious cuisine, stunning views, and incredible travel opportunities in Greece when you stay in Crete as a digital nomad.

In a world where you can work from anywhere... choose to work from Crete!

[See if you're eligible for the Greek digital nomad visa](#)