

Springtime in Crete

A botanical exploration

Day 1

Arrival in Crete and transfer to your hotel

Day 2

Today following breakfast we will visit the **Akrotiri peninsula** where there are olive groves and a profusion of interesting flowers. There will also be time to explore the historic town of **Chania** itself before returning to the hotel in time for dinner.



Target plants - *Ballota*, *orchids*, *bulbs* and *Anemone*

Day 3

This morning after breakfast we head to the south of Chania to the **Omalos Plain** with attractive upland villages which leads to the start of the **Samaria Gorge** - Europe's longest gorge. This is a spectacularly beautiful natural feature with stunning views and magnificent wild flowers. We will not go into the gorge but will have an easy walk to the start looking at the abundant flora.

Target plants - *Anemone*, *Muscari*, *Zelkova*, *orchids* and *tulips*.



Day 4

Today following breakfast we will must check out of the hotel, please ensure an extras are paid before taking your luggage to the coach. We visit the **Souda Bay British War Graves** before continuing to Rethymnon. Fortunately the tourist developments have spared the centre of the city and at its heart Rethymnon remains one of the most beautiful of Crete's

major cities.

Day 5

This morning after breakfast we head to the south of Rethymnon to the coastal village of **Plakias**. This is still a quiet village but it is sadly being sucked into the tourist treadmill. The Plakias Gorge nearby is another excellent botanical site with much to offer.

Target plants - *Arum*, *Ranunculus*, *butterfly orchids*, *black iris*.



Day 6

Today after breakfast we will travel to **Iraklion** and the magnificent Minoan palace of **Knossos**. Barely a hundred years ago the palace existed only in mythology. Knossos was the court of the legendary King Minos, whose wife Pasiphae bore the Minotaur, half-bull, half-man. The discovery of the palace and the interplay of these legends with fact, is among the most amazing tales of modern archaeology. It was left for Sir Arthur Evans, whose name is indelibly associated with Knossos, to excavate the site from 1900 onwards.

Day 7

Today after breakfast we will enjoy a full day excursion of the island, including a visit to **Mount Ida**.

Target plants – *crocus*, *tulip*, *Corydalis*.



Day 8

Sadly we must commence our return journey home. But we hope that you will bring with you all the colors, scents and beauties of Crete.

We will transfer to the airport to check in for our flight back home.

