



## **Conference Guide**

## Conference Venue

Conference Location: Dessole Mirabello Beach & Village

Dessole Mirabello Beach & Village - the ideal starting point

This impeccable resort on the Aegean Sea with elegant facilities and professional service is the ideal choice for those wanting to spend a luxurious holiday in Greece, either as a family or a couple. Its surroundings and landscape that can be seen from the rooms, terraces and swimming pools are spectacular. Furthermore, it is only a few miles from the center of the town of Agios Nikolaos, which has a lively nightlife. The hotel is operating since 1971 thus becoming a landmark to the city of Agios Nikolaos. The beautiful cove was awakened and rejuvenated as a result springing up around town and the surrounding province. The large complex is divided into two parts, the Mirabello Beach Hotel and the Mirabello Village, interconnecting by a newly constructed bridge. The Mirabello Hotel, a six floor high building with 176 rooms, is warmly decorated in style with elegant furniture that spring from Greek colors and create a relaxed and cozy environment. Meanwhile, the Mirabello Village has 115 magnificent bungalows creating a more private yet upscale atmosphere that blends naturally with Crete's tropical surroundings. Apart from the numerous possibilities in facilities and activities the complex has the ultimate location onto two sandy beaches.



Address: 72100 Hania Agios Nikolaos, Crete, Greece

Tel: +30 28410 28400 / 28403

Fax: +30 28410 28810

E-mail: [reservation.mirabello@dessolehotels.com](mailto:reservation.mirabello@dessolehotels.com)

URL: <http://www.dessolehotels.com>

<https://mirabellobeachandvillage.net>

## History of Agios Nikolaos

Agios Nikolaos is a coastal town on the Greek island of Crete, lying east of the island's capital Heraklion, north of the town of Ierapetra and west of the town of Sitia. In the year 2011, the Municipality of Agios Nikolaos, which takes in part of the surrounding villages, claimed 27,074 inhabitants. The town is a municipality of Crete region, and sits partially upon the ruins of the ancient city of Lato pros Kamara. Agios Nikolaos was settled in the late Bronze Age by Dorian occupants of Lato, at a time when the security of the Lato hillfort became a lesser concern and easy access to the harbour at Agios Nikolaos became more important. The name Agios Nikolaos means Saint Nicholas. Its stress lies on the second syllable of the word "Nikolaos". Agios Nikolaos or Ayios Nikolaos (alternative romanizations of the Greek Άγιος Νικόλαος) is a common placename in Greece and Cyprus, since Saint Nicholas is the patron saint of sailors and of all of Greece. Near the town there's an archaeological site of ancient Priniatikos Pyrgos. It appears to have been first settled in the Final Neolithic, circa 3000 BC. Activity on the site continued throughout the Minoan Bronze Age and the Classical Greek and Roman periods, spanning a total of up to 4,000 years. Since 2007, Priniatikos Pyrgos has been undergoing excavation by an international team under the auspices of the Irish Institute of Hellenic Studies at Athens.



Agios Nikolaos is probably best known as a tourist town that serves as a hub to the twenty or so small villages and farms that make up that part of Lassithi. Tourist attractions include the small lagoon Lake Voulismeni, small beaches in the town, the tiny island Agioi Pantes, the archaeological museum, the local flora exhibition “Iris” and numerous fairs. Just a short ferry ride away from Agios Nikolaos is the island of Spinalonga, an old Venetian fortress turned ex-leper colony in the beginning of the 20th century.

Tourism is mainly West European with Greek tourism concentrated in mid August, though there are a considerable amount of Russian vacationers in East Crete. The lagoon features a small park with a trail, traditional fishing boats, ducks, pigeons, an amphitheatre and many cafes. The

modern city of Agios Nikolaos became internationally well-known during the 60's, when it was "discovered" by famous cinema directors (Jules Dassin, Walt Disney etc.), BBC producers and many others. It was then that the rapid tourist development of the area started. Daphne du Maurier's short story *Not After Midnight* was set in and around the town.



Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agios\\_Nikolaos,\\_Crete](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agios_Nikolaos,_Crete)

## How to get to Agios Nikolaos

### By Plane:

From **Athens International Airport (ATH)** there are daily flights connecting the **Heraklion Airport "N.Kazantzakis" (HER)**. The flight should last about 50 minutes. Also, from most European countries there are direct flights operate to Crete. From May through mid-October there are direct charter flights to Heraklion.

Please note that round trip transfer from Heraklion airport to the hotel, can be arranged in a selected, air-conditioned Mercedes taxi at the price of 80,00 € per taxi, one way. Each taxi can take up to four persons. Travel details would be very much appreciated closer to the arrival date, in order to make the respective arrangements.

### By Ferry from Piraeus:

**Piraeus Port** is the main harbor going to **Heraklion**. The passage takes about 8 hours. However it is a very long and tiresome trip and we do not suggest you to follow it.

There are ferries connecting Piraeus to Heraklion Port every day.

Minoan Lines, tel. (+30) 2810399800

ANEK Superfast, tel. (+30) 210 4197470

Before you start planning your travel to Crete you should visit the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs web page to see if you need to get a visa.

For more details: <http://www.mfa.gr/en/>

**Athens International Airport (AIA)**

**Tel.:** (+30) 2103530000

**URL:** <https://www.aia.gr/traveler/>

**Heraklion Airport "N.Kazantzakis" (HER)**

**Tel.:** (+30) 2810397129

**Web:** <http://www.hcaa.gr/>

### Crete Information Office

**Address:** Marina Agiou Nikolaou, 72100 Agios Nikolaos

**Tel.:** +30 2841082384

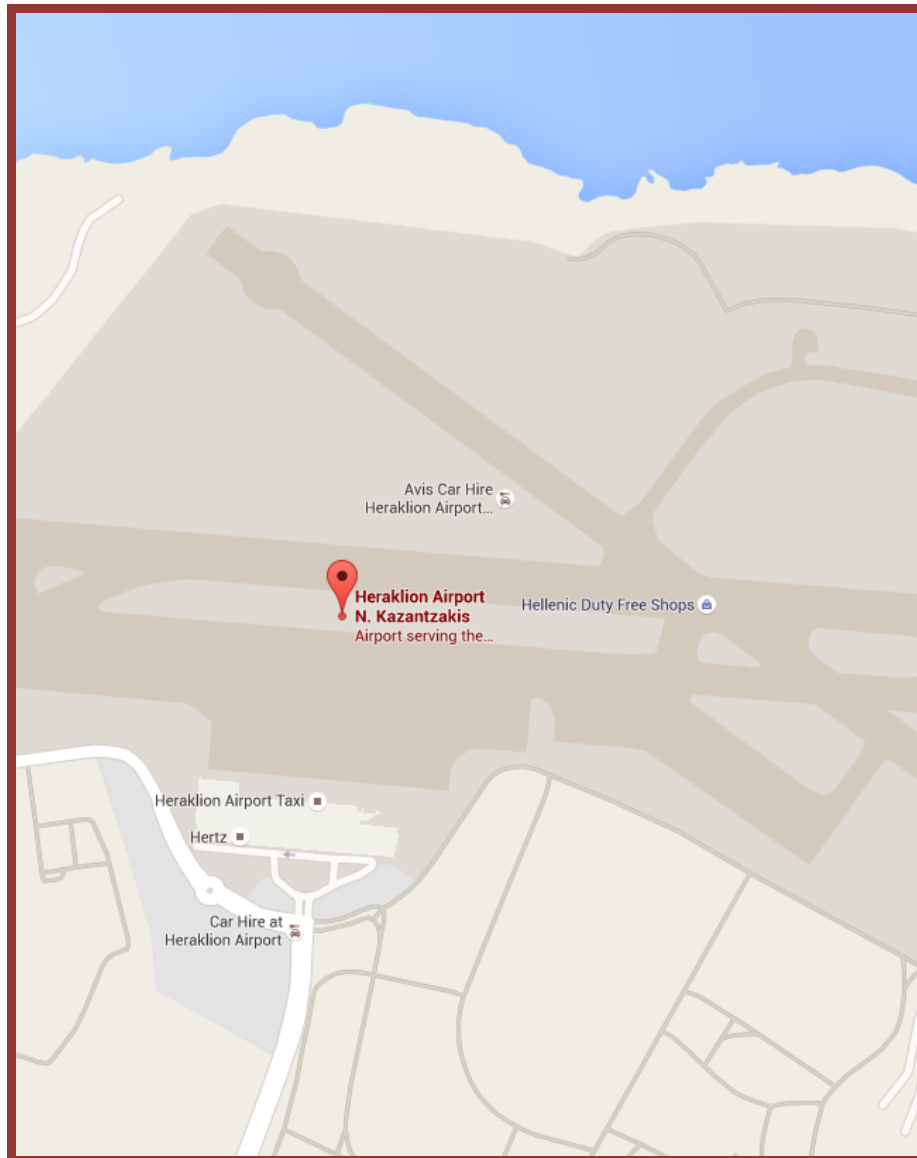
**Fax:** +30 2841082386

## Transportation in Crete - How to get from the Airport to the Hotel

### Car Hire:

There are several car rental companies at the airport available all week long.  
More information about the rates and contact details:

<http://www.heraklion-airport.info/car-hire.html>



### **By Public Transportation:**Taking the BUS

Alternatively, the local bus service is available almost every one hour, from Heraklion airport to the main bus station of Agios Nikolaos, which is located approximately 2km away from the hotel. From there, you can either pick up a taxi to the hotel or the bus towards Elounda. There is a bus stop right outside the hotel's main entrance.

For further information you are welcome to visit the following website:

<http://www.ktelherlas.gr/>

### **By Taxi**

The taxi rank of Heraklion Airport is located just outside the passenger terminal. Taxis are available when the airport is operating.



## PLACES TO VISIT

### The Archaeological Museum of Agios Nikolaos

The Archaeological Museum, a small, easy to navigate museum, exhibiting finds from the whole of Eastern Crete, like the early Minoan cemetery of Mochlos, the Zakros palace, Lato and Elounda. Good collection of coins ranging from about 330-350 BC to 200 AD. More than 1500 vases .

**Address:** Kon/nou Paleologou 74, Ag. Nikolaos 72100

**Opening hours:**

Daily: 08:30-19:30 (15:00 in the winter)

Monday: closed

**Tel:** +30 2841024943

**Email:** [kdepka@culture.gr](mailto:kdepka@culture.gr)

For more details about the fees you can visit the following site:

**URL:** <http://odysseus.culture.gr/>

### The Folklore Museum

A visit to the Folk Art Museum will help you to become familiar with the sort of work and activities the people of this area had in the old days. The Museum houses a rich and beautiful collection of hundreds of genuine samples of Cretan popular art and mainly hand woven and embroidered pieces, some of which are unique. There are some, interesting Byzantine icons to be seen, a complete series of wooden carved small objects, Cretan costumes, household articles, handicrafts, and some old manuscripts and books. The Museum also houses two private collections kindly offered by two well known people of this area.

**Address:** 2, Kondylaki Street (opposite the bridge), Ag. Nikolaos 72100

**Tel:** +30 28410-25093

**Opening hours:**

10:00-14:00 (but erratically call 28410-25093 to check).

Monday: closed



## **ROUTES & TRIPS**

### **Archaeological sites and villages**

Lato, 4th-2nd century BC settlement, nice elevated location with views, a few km from Kritsa village. Panagia Kera, a triple-nave Byzantine church from the 13th century, with wall paintings. In Logari, 1 km east of Kritsa. Vrokastro and Gournia archaeological sites, near Istron. Spinalonga island. The sunken ancient Olous, across the causeway from Elounda, visible at the sea bottom when the sea is calm. Some villages of local colour worth seeing: Limnes, Zenia, Exo Potami, Prina, Mesa and Exo Lakonia. Faneromeni Monastery, inland from Gournia. [There is also another Faneromeni Monastery just outside Sitia, see our Sitia guide ]

### **Elounda and Plaka**

Elounda is a smallish coastal town, 10 km from Agios Nikolaos. Enjoys fine views of the Mirabello gulf, a sandy beach, a harbour, a speck of archaeology. Used to be a fishing village; now Elounda's fame comes from being home of the most luxurious and exclusive resorts in Crete. Many of these are well designed, sporting wonderful gardens and attractive areas, pools and walkways. The renowned Elounda Beach, Elounda Bay Palace, Elounda Mare, Elounda Gulf Villas, Elounda Gulf Suites and the fine Porto Elounda with its exclusive Peninsula. World leaders and jet-setters arrive every year to enjoy the blue sea views the pampering luxuries these hotels offer, including fine restaurants and spa facilities. The luxury Elounda hotels are on the outskirts of the town. The town itself has some smaller hotels and apartment units, quite a few tavernas, cafes & shops, both on the only main street and the waterfront. More of a watering-hole/local shopping hang out than anything else. You can walk across the causeway to Kolokytha island, to enjoy the views, or see the remnants of the ancient city of Olous in the sea. Plaka village (15 km from Agios Nikolaos) is much quieter than Elounda, although with the arrival of the Blue Palace luxury hotel (just before the village), it has become more visited. A few fish tavernas and cafes by the waterfront, with Spinalonga in view, and a crystal clear pebble beach.



## Walking in the area

There are lots of interesting routes and hikes, going through villages, hills and beaches. The suggested routes and maps on <http://www.agiosnikolaos.com/> are helpful.

## Activities

**Diving:** Scuba-diving centre is about 250 m from the lake, on the seafront (of course!), in front of the Coral and Hermes hotels.

"Creta's Happy Divers"

**Tel:** +30 2841082546 (they also have 2 more sites towards Elounda)

**Golf:** There are 2 golf courses in Crete. A 9-hole course is available 10 km from Agios Nikolaos, at the Porto Elounda resort (open to outside guests, by appointment only).

**Tel:** 28410-68000.

The Crete Golf Club, an 18-hole, full facilities golf course, 45 km (about 30 minutes drive) from Agios Nikolaos, between Hersonissos & Kastelli. Has a very pleasant club house.

**Tel:** +30 28970-26000



## **Greek cuisine – what you should taste in Crete**

Cretan cuisine is renowned both in Greece and internationally for its unique ingredients and flavours. Based on simple techniques, it's the variety of local produce that distinguishes the dishes: mountain herbs and greens, bulbs, unique cheeses, fresh fish, the famous Cretan oil, and raki a bracing grape brandy.

### **Olive Oil**

Crete has about 60 olive trees per inhabitant so olive oil (the only oil traditionally used in cooking) is one of the staple foods. A family of four will easily use a litre a day if not more. A good restaurant must use good oil, the rest of the cooking comes second. Most people have their own supply of oil or buy from each other but of course you can buy oil in the supermarkets. Buy Extra Virgin oil, it will often be written in English on the labels. If you are considering buying some really good olive oil to take back with you, it is best to buy from a producer, not because it is cheaper (which it is) but because you can find some really good oil.



### **Cheese**

You will be able to find a reasonable variety of cheeses in the supermarkets but there are only a few types of Cretan cheeses.

Graviera: the name is a loose rendition of the word "gruyere" and it is a little similar. This is the standard hard cheese and being of local production, there are many types and tastes. Taste before buying.

Myzitra: a fresh cheese made of ewe's milk. It can also be made of goats milk (in which case it is called "katsikithia") or mixed milk. This is the standard fresh cheese. A good goat's one will taste like these expensive French that you can buy in good delis, at a fraction of the price.

Anthotiros: from the words "anthos" and "tiros" meaning "flower" and "cheese" it is a very mild, soft spring cheese made when the sheep pastures are still full of flowers. The closest cheese that I could compare it to is mozzarella although it is quite different.



### **Paximadi**

Paximadi is the hard dry bread (it is baked, cut in slices and baked again) that peasants take to the fields and soften with a little water and olive oil. It will keep forever.

### **Herbs**

The whole island smells of herbs and is covered in them. Buy a supply before you leave the island, they will be fresh and cheap. A few herbs are also found only on Crete, like "diktamos" or Cretan dittany (which is supposed to have all sorts of medicinal properties).

### **Honey**

Crete has been an important honey producer for a good few thousand years (it was a main export item to Ancient Egypt) and the honey is very good, especially the thyme honey. You can find honey in all the shops but it is better (and a little cheaper) to buy it from a producer.



## **Meat**

Not something that you would take back with you of course! Particularly noteworthy is lamb and goat's meat. They are not as cheap as one could think but almost all of them are free range and fed on wild herbs.

## **Fish**

The Mediterranean is very overfished so do not expect masses of cheap fish. There is good fresh fish but it is expensive. The best place to buy it is in the covered market in Chania.

## **Local drinks**

### **Raki /Tsikoudia**

The local "hard drink" is called "raki" or "tsikoudia" and is distilled from what is left over from pressing grapes so in fact it is the same as the Italian grappa. It is a strong, pretty clean alcohol, meaning that you'll get drunk on it really quick but will feel halfway human the next day. It is a little difficult to buy because it is mainly home-produced. A very rare variation of it, is called mournoraki and is distilled from mulberries. It is very strong but quite nice.



### **Soumada (Orgeat Syrup)**

Soft drink of the highest caliber, sometimes associated with happy occasions, weddings and engagements, this orgeat syrup is produced from almond juice. Soumada (soumadha) has a very ancient history, stretching back into the Roman period where it was presented as an exotic eastern delicacy.

### **Cretan wine**

Traditionally Cretan wine is home-made and rarely bottled. The wine is a golden brown colour with a fairly high alcohol content (13 - 14%) and more akin to port or sherry. Whether you like it or not is very much a matter of taste and of course a matter of where you drink it. It is cheap and you may be able to buy it by the liter in your local shops.

## Where to eat in Agios Nikolaos

### Pelagos

An elegant and neat restaurant in the green courtyard of an old mansion. Inspired cuisine with lots of appetizers, nicely grilled food, some cooked dishes, pasta and emphasis on fresh fish and seafood. Try fish soup, garlicky fried prawns, cuttlefish with spinach or fennel, salmon with orange sauce, chicken with olive paste and smoked local cheese and finish with homemade halva. Good wine list. Be sure to make a reservation.

**Address:** Str. Koraka 11, Ag. Nikolaos 721 00

**Tel:** +30 2841025737

### Ferryman

Wonderful Cretan cuisine by the famous chef Yiannis Baxevanis, by the sea, with the Bay of Elounda and Spinalonga in the background. The dishes that stand out: tomato balls with frumenty and mint, greens and curd, sea bass stuffed with herbs, “kakkavia” (fish soup), braised billy-goat with green beans and cumin scented carrot-apple puree. Nice roasts, the signature carob bread of Baxevanis and rusks from the outdoor wood oven.

**Address:** Akti, Elounda, Crete 72053, Greece

**Tel:** +30 2841041230

**Mob:** 6944512771

**URL:** <http://ferryman.baxevanis.com/> (in greek)

**Open period:** Easter, end October, noon to evening

### Gargodoros

A modern version of a taverna, with a sense of freshness in the unfussy decor, next to the remote beach. Some of the dishes have a modern touch, like the rizotto with seafood and saffron. You will find several pasta (fresh seafood, shrimp and curry), salads, grilled meats, fried seafood and grouper fillet with boiled greens.

**Address:** Ag. Nikolaos 72100

**Tel:** +30 2841022599

**Open period :** Easter-October, daily, noon to evening



## La Strada

La Strada - by the square - is an old standard for pizzas, dishes with garlic (the aroma calls you as you walk past) and standard Italian fare.

**Address:** Str. N. Plastira 5, Ag. Nikolaos 72100

**Tel:** +30 2841025841



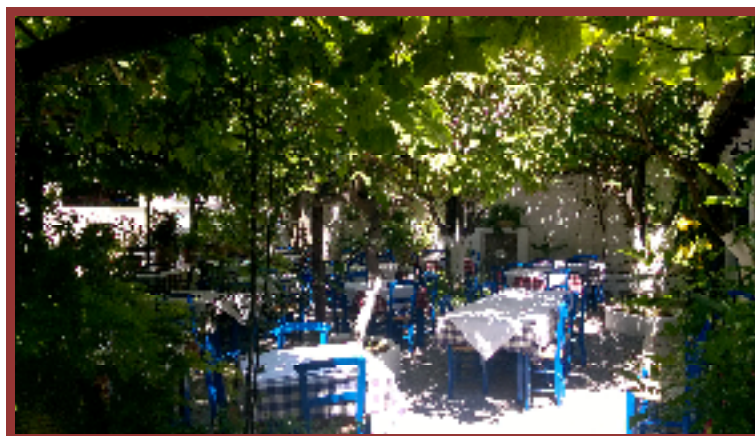
## Avli

The Avli Ouzeri serves fantastic traditional mezedes in a relaxing pebbly courtyard with a garden. It is the best of Cretan atmosphere with great food and service.

**Address:** Str Pr. Georgiou 12, Ag. Nikolaos 72100

**Tel:** +30 2841082479

**URL:** <http://avli-taverna.gr/>



## **Chrisofyllis**

Chrisofyllis is a taverna, ouzeri, a restaurant or mezedopolio, whichever you prefer, located near Kitroplateia Beach in town, with a sea view. Stay for a drink and some snacks or stay for dinner, it is up to you. Try the zucchini flowers and shrimp saganaki.

**Address:** Akti Pagalou, Kitroplatia, Agios Nikolaos, Crete, Greece  
**Tel:** +30 2841022705

## **Piato**

Piato, located on Ammoudi Beach, is a waterside taverna with good service, excellent reviews and plenty of ambience. The speciality is seafood so try the swordfish and the fresh fish of day caught in the very Mirabello Bay you look over whilst you dine.

**Address:** Minoos 5, Agios Nikolaos, Crete 72100, Greece  
**Tel:** +30 2841023173  
**Fax:** +30 2841023889  
**E-mail:** [info@piato.gr](mailto:info@piato.gr)  
**URL:** <http://www.piato.gr/>



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**URL:** <http://www.piato.gr/>

**Sources:** <https://mirabellobeachandvillage.reserve-online.net/http://www.dessolehotels.com/default.asp?islem=menudetay&id=235&catid=1&hotel=26&title=Overview>  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agios\\_Nikolaos,\\_Crete](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agios_Nikolaos,_Crete)  
[https://www.google.gr/webhp?ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&gws\\_rd=cr&ei=CQ4NVvv2IMuqafXwqsgJ](https://www.google.gr/webhp?ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&gws_rd=cr&ei=CQ4NVvv2IMuqafXwqsgJ)  
<http://www.cretetravel.com/guide/agios-nikolaos/>  
<http://www.alpha-guide.gr/en/restaurants/restaurant.aspx?lan=2&id=7000610>  
<http://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/top-10-foods-try-crete>  
[http://www.west-crete.com/food\\_drinks-cretan-specialities.htm](http://www.west-crete.com/food_drinks-cretan-specialities.htm)  
<http://uncorneredmarket.com/crete-food/>  
[https://fava.gr/liqueurs/soumada/soumada250ml.html?lang=en\\_us&cat1=liqueurs&cat2=soumada&url\\_slug=soumada250ml](https://fava.gr/liqueurs/soumada/soumada250ml.html?lang=en_us&cat1=liqueurs&cat2=soumada&url_slug=soumada250ml)  
[http://odysseus.culture.gr/h/1/eh155.jsp?obj\\_id=3523](http://odysseus.culture.gr/h/1/eh155.jsp?obj_id=3523)  
<http://www.crete-kreta.com/folklore-museum-agios-nikolaos>  
<http://www.agiosnikolaos.com/>  
<http://www.heraklion-airport.info/>