

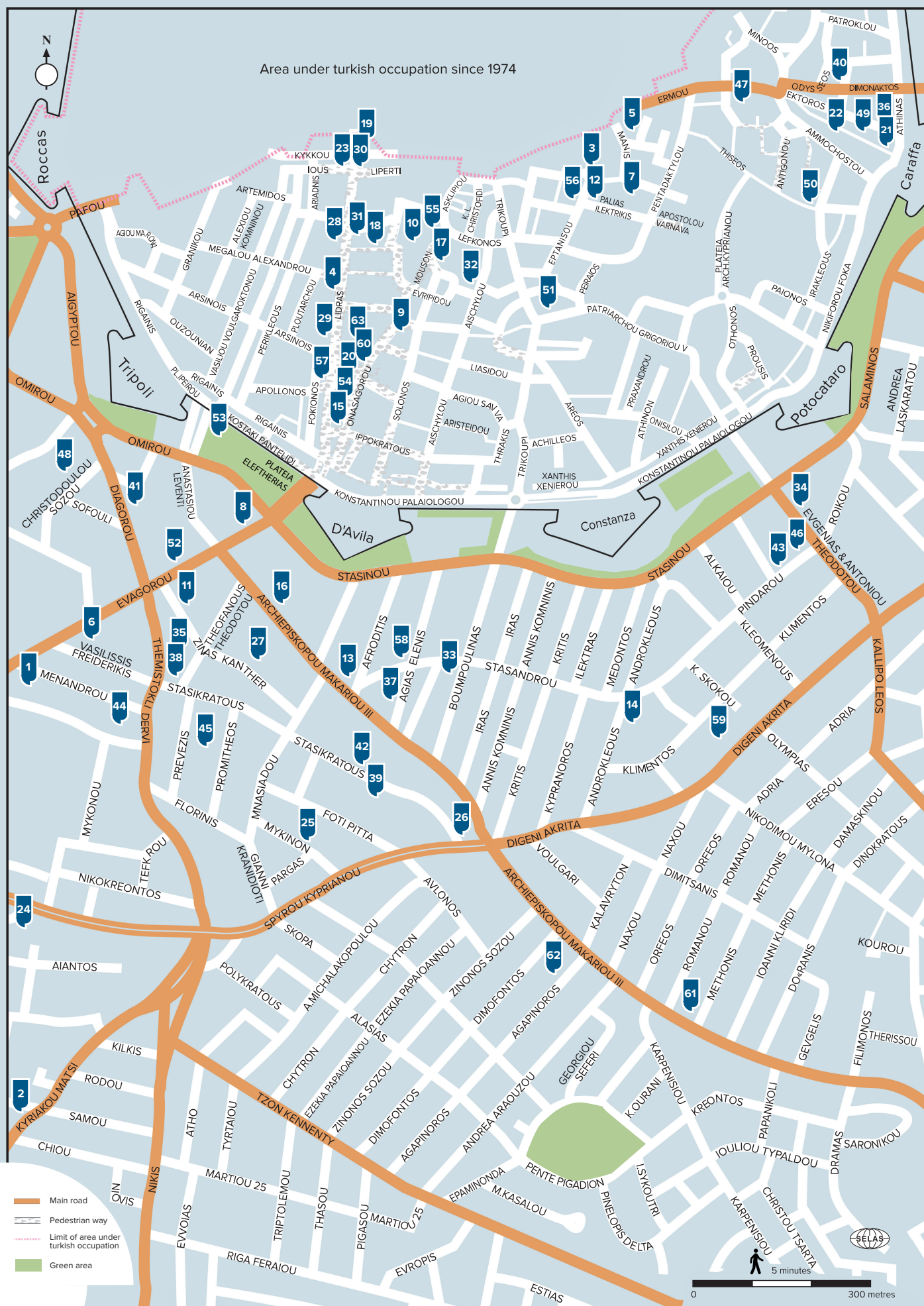
Taste



nICOSIA

The brightest capital of Europe

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The Culinary Journey Ascends to the Mountains: Discover the Hidden Gems of Rural Nicosia

For all your weekend excursions and day trips, Nicosia's culinary charm expands beyond its bustling centre. The outskirts of the city offer their own unique gastronomic experience, with hidden gems, such as restaurants, traditional coffee shops and vineyards, which retain a delightful blend of tradition and natural beauty that speaks directly to the heart of locals and foreign travellers.

A visit to the Machairochoria villages, such as Lazanias, Gourri, Phicardou, Farmakas and Kampi is an opportunity to savour picturesque landscapes, while appreciating fine architectural details and historical monuments. With everything from cobblestone pathways to quaint churches from centuries past, visitors have the opportunity to delve into the history of these destinations.

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VINEYARD DELIGHTS

“Drink wine to have life!” This Cypriot proverb, taken from the island’s folklore, perfectly expresses the importance that Cypriots attach to the wine: is not just a drink, is like a bottled embodiment of life’s very essence. The history of winemaking on the island goes back to 5500 B.C and has been present in moments of joy, sorrow, religious celebrations, and various social events, symbolizing life, and shared experiences. The mortals believed that the wine could be nothing less than a divine gift: a godsent liquid capable of bringing

joy and vanishing grief. So don’t lose an opportunity and make wine your trusty travel companion, embracing your every mood. Explore wine delights within the city at **Barrique Wine & Deli¹**, **Vino Cultura²** and **Hugo**.

Venture beyond Nicosia to Kalo Chorio Orinis village for the modern **Aes Ambelis Winery** with state-of-the-art facilities. Further into the Troodos Mountain area, discover the **Santa Irene Winery** in Farmakas village and the **Anama Concept**

Winery in Lythrodontas village, offering a complete sensory experience. Long after you leave, you might find yourself yearning for Cypriot wine, much like the Greek poet Hesiod.



DRINKERY DISCOVERIES

As the Mediterranean sun sets, life doesn't come to a halt in Cyprus. The carefree spirit of the Mediterranean continues from day to night, with each moment a testament to the enduring joy of life. Immerse yourself in the Nicosian way of celebration, and as the hot sun fades, cool down with a refreshing cocktail at one of the many bars and lounges in the capital some of them globally recognised for its pioneering mixology, diverse design, and welcoming atmosphere. The choices flow like a never-ending river:

Lost + Found Drinkery, **Patio**⁴, **Palia Pineza Bar**⁵, **Notes & Spirits**⁶, **Old Powerhouse**⁷, **Balza**⁸, **The Gym**⁹, **Balcony**¹⁰ and **Seven Monkeys**¹¹.



Extra tip! A must try concoction is the Brandy Sour, a Cyprus staple. Crafted with Brandy, Sprite, mint, and lemon, it is not just a drink but a journey to mindfulness, cherished by locals and international travellers alike. You can find it at **Haratsi**³. And if you are interested in exploring more about alcoholic drink creation in Cyprus, don't miss the chance to visit Aristidis Distillery for a Cypriot distilled drink tasting tour.

Plus, if you are lucky, you might catch the buzz at the **Mediterranean Bar Show**, where mixology takes the spotlight in April, or the **Cyprus Cocktail Festival**, a celebration of cocktail artistry.

DRINKERY DISCOVERIES

In every nook of the city, coffee shops are a cherished part of Cypriot life. It's a long-standing tradition for Nicosians to jumpstart their day with a humble request: "coffee, please." But coffee is not just a beverage; it is more like a hobby, or let's admit it, a necessity. People from all walks of life gather, chit-chat, and savour their java for hours on end. As for the ideal time to enjoy coffee, well, there's no such thing as a bad time. How many hours can one chat and sip coffee? There is no set limit! For exceptional specialty coffee

take a journey through the caffeinated universe at **Swimming birds**¹², **Bean Bar**¹³, **Kxoffee project**¹⁴ and **Coffee Berry**^{15, 16}.

Extra tip! Don't forget to experience Cyprus's coffee tradition. We use a copper pot, known as a "brike," which is filled with water, the amount of which is measured using the coffee cup itself. A heaped teaspoon of finely ground coffee beans is added for each cup. Next, the level of sweetness is chosen: "glykis" for



sweet, "metrios" for medium sweet, and "sketos" for unsweetened. The sugar is added while the water is still cold. The magic begins when the brike is placed on a "hovoli," a bed of hot sand. The coffee slowly heats up, creating a rich foam that rises and falls but never spills over. Once the foam's dance is complete, the coffee is poured into small cups and served with a glass of cold water. However, be cautious not to drink the thick layer at the bottom of the cup! To seal the deal on becoming an honorary Nicosian, raise your glass and cheer with a hearty "eis ygeian" which is the local way of saying "to a good health!"

3 Fanaria¹⁷, **Kala Kathoumena**¹⁸, **Giagia Victoria**¹⁹, **Pieto**²⁰, **Erma Cafe**²¹ and **Apomero**²².

BREWS & CHEWS

Nicosians' relationship with brews and chews goes way back in time. Archaeologists discovered a peculiar oven-like structure, rewriting the history books of the Cypriot Bronze Age. This unique contraption was a drying kiln, a key player in the production of malt, a crucial ingredient for brewing beer. Beer seems to have been the social glue uniting communities during this period. So, raise your glass of beer to an ancient tradition that continues to shape our social bonds and celebrations, making beer the ultimate time traveller across the ages.

BrewFellas²³, **Babylon's²⁴**, **Moondogs²⁵** and **Beer & Beer²⁶**.

And if you are feeling outdoorsy but still want to brew and chew, you might stumble upon one of our **Fork Food Market** events organized on some Fridays of each year at the Nicosia Municipal Gardens.



SWEET TRADITION

Lunchtime isn't complete without the grand finale: “popaston”. It's another charming Italian word that has made its way into the Cypriot lexicon, meaning 'dessert.' It translates to 'after lunch,' and it's the sweet touch that seals the deal after a satisfying meal.

Giagia Victoria, Paul's²⁷, Pralina Confectioneries.

Now, as the sun sets over Nicosia and the night starts to sizzle (or even if it doesn't), why not indulge your sweet cravings with a tempting treat? **Heracelis ice-cream²⁸**, **Papafilipou²⁹** and **Regis ice-cream³⁰** offer an array of original handcrafted ice cream flavors that will make your taste buds dance the tango. So, whether you're winding down or turning up the heat, there's always room for something sweet in this culinary journey.



LOCAL DELIGHTS

Nature has bestowed a blessing upon the Nicosians, gifting us with an abundance of fresh, delectable products. Here, fresh and flavourful products are not just a tradition; they're a way of life. Don't miss the chance to experience the true essence of our city – the unmistakable freshness that fills the air. As you wander through the streets of the city, the aroma of fresh

produce wafts towards you, a delicious promise of culinary delight. Treat yourself to mouthwatering cheeses and cold cuts from **Kantina food and wine** or

pick up some freshly harvested fruits and vegetables from **Palia Apothiki** and at the outdoor **OXI veggie market** every Saturday.

For a sweet local twist try **Hurricane Bakery³¹** and **Melissa Confectionery³²**.

Check also **Bakali³³** for some earthy spices and discover a world of nuts and Cypriot delicacies at **Karpos Stavraki Athieniti³⁴**, **Marathasa Valley** and the **Nutzz Shop**.



BRUNCH BLISS

Brunch culture in Nicosia might have become mainstream recently, but it's a tradition that's been handed down through generations. Our grandparents, and even their grandparents, fondly referred to it as "boukoma". We owe this word to the Latin "bucca," which now equals to brunch. Back in the day, a simple combo of bread and halloumi was the breakfast star. But today, our brunch game has gotten an epic upgrade!

Silver Pot³⁵, Dot³⁶, Nom³⁷, Boys at Number 5³⁸ and Artigiano³⁹.



VEGAN - VEGETARIAN

In this city, vegan and vegetarian cuisine is not just a passing trend; it is a scrumptious celebration! Every dish is a masterpiece, carefully concocted to honour the purity and authenticity of our local ingredients. And when it comes to plant-based delights, we have dedicated spots like **Inga's Veggie Heaven⁴⁰** and **Elysian Plant Based Kitchen Bar⁴¹**, where they are not just crafting meals; they are creating experiences that will tickle your taste buds

and uplift your spirits. It is a veggie extravaganza, and you are cordially invited to join the party!



EAT & SAVOUR

Nestled in the far east of a Mediterranean island, Nicosia offers an irresistible culinary experience that can even tempt the most dedicated dieters. The city's abundant harvest of sun-kissed fruits and vegetables is bursting with freshness, practically leaping from the vine onto your plate. Shaped by a history of conquests from great eastern empires, Nicosia's cuisine boasts a treasure trove of Oriental herbs and spices, creating a tapestry of rich flavors. Delectable meats leave an impression on your taste buds. This cultural epicentre welcomes culinary maestros from diverse backgrounds, resulting in a captivating fusion of tastes that crafts unforgettable dishes, elevating your senses.



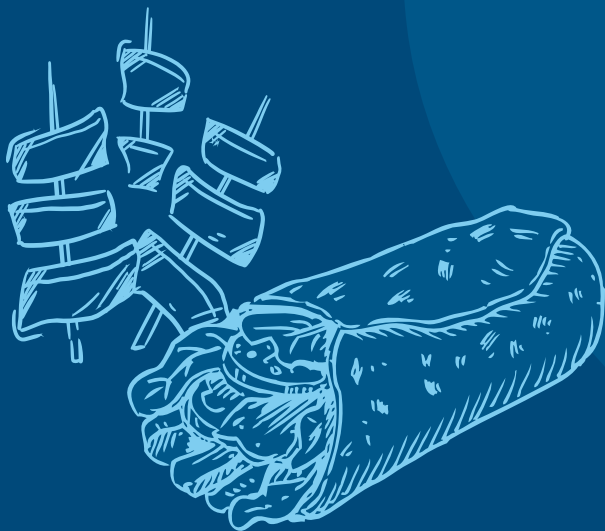
Pro foodie's tip:

Embark on a culinary journey that weaves together a fusion of cultures at **Pralina Experience**⁴², **Cookshop**⁴³, **Skinny Fox**⁴⁴, **Tocayo**⁴⁵, and **Kuzuba**. These restaurants expertly merge flavors and cultural traditions from diverse regions, delivering a swift culinary journey with each bite.

Indulge in the Mediterranean delights at **Mpempa's**⁴⁶, **Vintage**⁴⁷, **Topika**⁴⁸, **Aigaion**⁴⁹, **Pantopolio Kali Orexi** and **Tsipouraki – Mezedaki**⁵⁰ where you will savour dishes so flavourful that you might be tempted to break a plate and shout "Opa!" like the Greeks do in sheer satisfaction.

TASTE OF TRADITION

A famous traditional eating habit is mezes. A feast for the senses, combining a variety of small, flavourful dishes that are meant to be shared and enjoyed with friends and family. The word ‘meze’ comes from the Persian ‘maza,’ meaning taste or snack. A typical meze spread includes both hot and cold dishes. If someone asks if you want to try a meze, remember it is not just about eating, it is about sharing, laughing, and creating memories. Immerse



yourself in the flavourful history of Cypriot and Greek cuisine and discover tavernas with a warm hospitality and traditional dishes that will take you on a journey through time.

But beware, travellers: leave your diet plans behind, as they will likely succumb to the allure of Nicosian cuisine.

Zanettos⁵¹, Mezostrati⁵², Odofragma, Palaia Elia, Stou Oresti and To Istorikon.

Extra Tip!

If you don't fancy a wide variety of meze plates, check out **Christakis Kebab house⁵³** and **Evroutla⁵⁴**. For traditional yiayia's (grandmas) homemade recipes taste **Mathaios Restaurant⁵⁵** and **St. George Tavern⁵⁶**.

MULTI-CULTI

Nicosia, a multicultural city, offers a passport to a world of flavours!

Italian: Enjoy a taste of Italy at **Il Forno**⁵⁷, **Rokoko**, **Jamie's Italian** and **Guido and the Goose**⁵⁸, where you can savour delectable pasta and mouthwatering pizzas.

Syrian: Experience Middle Eastern charm and hospitality at **Sawa Syrian Restaurant**⁵⁹, and the **Syrian Club**, with aromatic shawarma and exquisite baklava from Syria's cuisine.

Armenian: Delve into rich flavours with **Avo's**⁶⁰ **Armenian Food** and **Dora's Armenian Kitchen**, from delectable lahmajoon to aromatic dolma.

Asian: Journey through the flavours of the East at **East Asian Restaurant**⁶¹, **BAO PAU**⁶², and **Bamboo Chinese Restaurant**⁶³, exploring Chinese, Japanese, and other Asian cuisines.





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CONTACT US

Cyprus Chamber building
Grivas Digenis Ave, P.O. Box 21455,
1509, Nicosia

T: 0035722889600
Fax: 0035722667433 / 38
E: info@visitnicosia.com.cy



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