Wild Crete Travel Tour Itinerary
May 8 to 17, 2027
Note: The itinerary is subject to minor changes.



Day 1 | Saturday, May 8 Welcome to Crete: Settling into Village Life

Arrive in Chania, the beautiful harbor city of western Crete, and travel about 40 minutes into the countryside to the traditional village of Vamos. Your home for the first six nights will be in a charming stone house on a working farm at the edge of the village.

We'll begin with a welcoming lunch at the farm, a chance to meet one another and start getting acquainted with Crete's flavors. After settling into our rooms, we'll gather for an orientation to the week ahead. In the late afternoon, we'll take an easy walk to meet the spring wildflowers and aromatic plants growing around the farm and village. We'll finish the day with dinner in Vamos, beginning our exploration of Cretan food and hospitality at a neighborhood taverna.

Day 2 | Sunday, May 9 Wild Greens & the Cretan Kitchen

Wild greens are among the most treasured ingredients in traditional Cretan cooking. Gathered from fields, hillsides, and garden edges, they appear in pies, salads, and simple dishes that celebrate the changing seasons. Today, we'll join a hands-on cooking class at the farm.

First, we'll head out to gather spring greens, learning to recognize the plants and appreciate their place in local food traditions. Then we'll return to the kitchen to prepare several traditional Cretan dishes, discovering the techniques, ingredients, and kitchen wisdom passed down through generations.

Our reward will be a celebratory feast, sharing the meal we've prepared together.

The evening is yours to enjoy. Wander through Vamos, explore the surrounding countryside, or simply relax at the farm and savor the pleasures of a day spent gathering, cooking, and eating together.

Day 3 | Monday, May 10 Aromatic Herbs & a Farm-to-Table Experience

Crete's aromatic plants are woven into nearly every aspect of traditional life, from seasoning everyday meals to preparing home remedies. Today, we'll visit a nearby permaculture herb farm to explore these connections firsthand. On a guided walk, we'll meet some of Crete's essential culinary and medicinal herbs, learn how they grow, how locals use them, and what makes the island's aromatic flora distinctive.

We'll discover how climate, landscape, and traditional agricultural practices shape the plants that give Cretan food and folk healing their characteristic flavors and healing powers. After our walk, we'll enjoy a leisurely lunch at the herb farm, with time to talk, ask questions, and learn more about the people and practices behind the food on our plates. The rest of the evening is free.

Day 4 | Tuesday, May 11 Chania: A Walking Tour Through Cretan Food Culture

Today we'll head to Chania, one of Crete's most beautiful historic towns, where Venetian architecture, Ottoman influences, and centuries of Mediterranean trade have shaped a distinctive local culture.

Our guide, Mariana Kavroulaki, a local food historian and experimental food archaeologist, will introduce us to the ingredients, traditions, and stories behind Cretan cuisine. As we wander through the old town, we'll explore markets and food shops, discover regional specialties, and learn how the island's history shows up in everyday cooking. We'll enjoy lunch near the old Venetian harbor, then have time to browse the shops, stroll along the waterfront, or settle into a café to watch the city's life unfold.

We'll return to Vamos later in the day, leaving the evening free to enjoy at your own pace.

Day 5 | Wednesday, May 12 Wild Herbs of the White Mountains

Today we'll travel into the magnificent White Mountains to encounter Crete's wild herbs in their natural habitat. Our guide, Giorgos, is a lifelong resident of these mountains, with extensive knowledge of the island's plants and their traditional uses. As we walk through the mountain landscape, we'll learn to identify aromatic herbs growing among rocks, along trails, and in the open countryside. We'll explore their distinctive fragrances, traditional culinary and medicinal uses, and how local people have developed intimate knowledge of the plants around them. A picnic lunch is a time to rest, share observations and enjoy the mountain scenery. In the late afternoon, we'll return to Vamos. The evening is free for a quiet dinner, a stroll through the village, or a little time to reflect on the day's discoveries.

This outing may change slightly based on weather and trail conditions.

Day 6 | Thursday, May 13 Into a Cretan Home: Cooking, Sharing & Hospitality

One of the best ways to understand a culture is to be welcomed into someone's kitchen.

We'll enjoy a relaxed morning before traveling to Chania to visit my friend, Rianne Buis, in her home. She will show us how to prepare several traditional Cretan dishes, learning the recipes, techniques, and small kitchen secrets that make home cooking such an important part of island life.

We'll share the meal on her terrace, enjoying the food and the pleasure of gathering around a table.

This is a chance to ask questions, exchange stories, and experience Cretan hospitality in a personal, memorable way. After lunch, we'll return to Vamos. The evening is yours to enjoy.

Day 7 | Friday, May 14 From Village Life to the Capital

After several days in the countryside, we'll head east to Heraklion, Crete's lively capital.

The journey takes us across the island, offering glimpses of changing landscapes and everyday life.

We'll settle into our boutique hotel, then head out for lunch at a nearby taverna. In the afternoon, we'll explore the city together. We'll visit herb shops and open-air markets, and discover new ingredients, spices, teas, and traditional products. We'll also make time for one of life's essential Cretan pleasures:

lingering over a cup of strong Greek coffee while watching the world go by.

Heraklion has a different rhythm from the villages, and we'll enjoy the contrast without trying to see everything at once. In the evening, we'll gather for dinner by the Venetian harbor.

Day 8 | Saturday, May 15 Ancient Crete & the Flavors of Wine Country

Today we'll travel back through time with a guided visit to Knossos, one of the most significant archaeological sites of the ancient Minoan civilization. As we explore this remarkable place, we'll consider the long history of human life on Crete and the agricultural traditions that have sustained its people across millennia.

After our visit, we'll head into a nearby town in the heart of the island's wine-growing region.

Here, we'll enjoy a leisurely lunch and a local wine tasting,

discovering how Crete's distinctive landscape, grape varieties, a

nd farming traditions contribute to its rich food culture.

We'll return to Heraklion in the late afternoon, with the evening free to enjoy the city.

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Day 9 | Sunday, May 16 Treasures of the Past & a Final Taste of Crete

We'll begin the day with a visit to the Heraklion Archaeological Museum,

home to extraordinary artifacts from archaeological sites across Crete.

A guided tour will help bring the island's long and complex history into focus.

From there, we'll head to the harbor for lunch at one of our favorite fish restaurants,

enjoying the fresh flavors of the Mediterranean.The afternoon is yours.

You might want to shop for herbs and local products, revisit a favorite neighborhood

or simply find a sunny spot to sit and enjoy the city. In the evening, we'll gather for a final celebration of our time together, sharing drinks and meze, the traditional small dishes meant to be enjoyed in good company. We'll have a chance to exchange favorite memories, reflect on what we've experienced, and say our goodbyes.

Day 10 | Monday, May 17 Farewell, Crete

Morning departure for the airport and your journey home or to continue your travels, carrying with you the aromas of wild herbs, the flavors of Cretan cuisine, and memories of the people who welcomed us into their world. Perhaps you'll return home with a new favorite recipe, a deeper understanding of Mediterranean food traditions, or a fresh appreciation for the plants around you. Most of all, we hope you'll leave with the feeling that you've experienced something real about Crete, not just as a visitor but as a guest.

BotanoLogos Inc., Wild Crete Travel wildcrete@gmail.com