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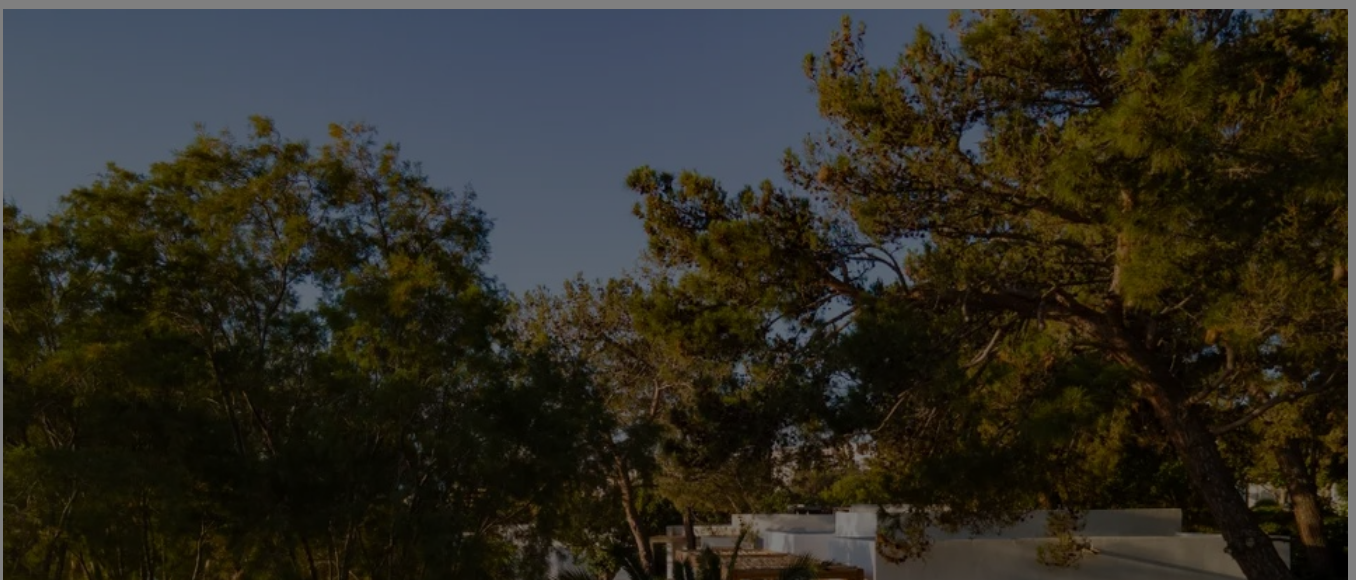
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Minos Beach Art Hotels is one of the best hotels in Greece

Crete is one of the biggest and most [popular islands in Greece](#) and flights from the UK are direct, so accommodation options are plentiful. There's a [hotel](#) to suit every kind of traveller and every kind of trip, from reputable beachside resorts to intimate, off-the-beaten-track accommodations. Set up base inland and the scent of olive groves will fill the air, but choose a spot by the sea to enjoy the island's golden sand beaches – a contrast to the pebbled shores of neighbouring [Santorini](#) and tourist hotspot Mykonos.

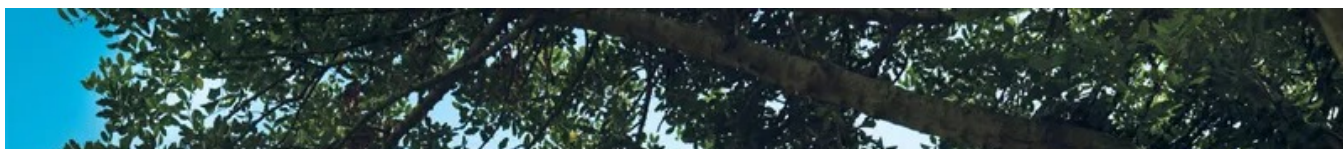
We've narrowed down the hotel options to make planning the perfect trip a little easier. Our top tip? Avoid the crowds and visit during shoulder season when sunshine hours are long, and hazy sea swims are the best way to cool down.

If you're keen to explore the island, why not browse our guide of [the best things to do in Crete](#).

How we chose the best hotels in Crete

As is our passion, we place focus on design within our best hotel edits, and we try to include a range of styles and price points. Experiencing the destination's [culture](#) is a top priority and setting, as well as locally inspired touches, are taken into account. From sleek resorts to charismatic boutique boltholes, each featured hotel on the Greek island of Crete comes highly recommended by a [travel](#) expert. Comfort, style, service, and experience are taken into consideration. Whether you're travelling solo, with one other person or as part of a multi-generational group, these are the best [hotels](#) in Crete right now.

The best hotels in Crete





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Elounda Mare, Relais & Chateaux

Once a low-key fishing village, Elounda, on Crete's eastern coast, is now home to some of the island's fanciest resorts – and is also known for its vast natural beauty as the area faces the perfectly turquoise Mirabello Bay and the lush Sitia Mountains in the distance. Five-star Elounda Mare, sitting on its own 300m of private coastline with a Blue Flag-awarded sandy beach, feels like a little village of craggy luxury villas rather than a splashy hotel and is an ideal escape for foodies wanting some private luxury.

Part of a trio of hotels including the beautiful, larger and even more family-friendly Elounda Peninsula and the slightly more affordable Porto Elounda, Elounda Mare sits a little out of the way of the other two – connected by a 10-minute glamorous boat journey or buggy ride. The trio share a few impressive amenities, including the ginormous Six Senses Spa and a challenging hillside golf course. Guests can also book into any of the hotels' restaurants – like Elounda Peninsula's Il Borro Tuscan Bistro or their pool-front, olive-tree dotted Elies Beach House which offers a relaxed and authentic Cretan menu including a few dishes by renowned nutritionist Emily English. Well worth a visit over lunch.

Though you may well be happy to stay in Mare for the entire stay, indulging in a fine dining experience at The Old Mill set facing the water on manicured gardens or making the most of your private pool. Did I mention each villa gets its own saltwater pool?

– *Tal Dekel Daks*

Address: Schisma Eloundas 720 53, Crete, Greece

Room rates: From £490 per night

eloundamare.com

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Phaēa Cretan Malia

Sister hotel to Phaēa Blue Palace Elounda, [Phaēa Cretan Malia](#) is a brilliant family-friendly stay just 30 minutes from Heraklion Airport. Design Hotel-approved, its interior aesthetic combines natural materials like wood and rattan with a rich, tertiary colour palette to add modern bohemian touches to its inside spaces. Natural light floods the rooms, suites and bungalows, where custom-made tiles and colourful murals decorate the walls.

Sustainability efforts are at the forefront of its concept, and its lush gardens are the source of its restaurants' ingredients, even honey – they have beekeepers and hives on site. Menus are seasonal and dishes are fresh. Expect traditional Cretan, Italian and Levantine cuisine across all dining

destinations and make a point of trying somewhere new each night of your stay.

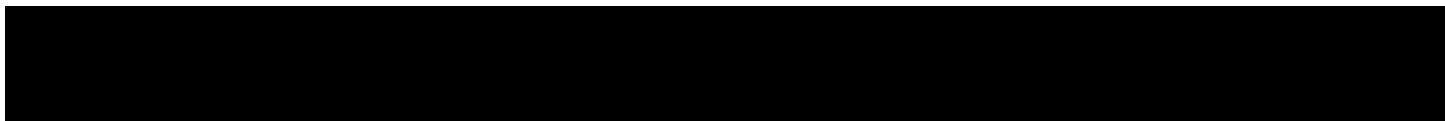
When it comes to well-being, the approach is immersive and holistic; everything is cultivated to celebrate the hotel's surroundings. Wellness retreats are part of the annual offering, but those on holiday can also benefit from the outdoor gym, yoga pavilion and secluded treatment rooms. The private beach is home to crystal-clear water and cosy loungers. The Kids' Club, too, places focus on being outside. All activities allow guests to enjoy the island, and the recurring programme spans sound healing, outdoor film nights and 'Cretan Soul' cooking classes. If you're looking for somewhere that offers everything you need without leaving the property, Phaēa Cretan Malia is it.

– *Tal Dekel Daks*

BOOK NOW

Address: Phaēa Cretan Malia, Malia 700 07, Greece

Room rates: from £212 per night



Minos Beach Art Hotel

[Minos Beach Art Hotel](#) is part of the Design Hotels group and creativity is at the heart of its concept. The jewel in its crown is the open air museum that decorates its tranquil grounds. Here, over 50 sculptures can be found, each as spectacular as the next, many made locally. Whitewashed bungalows and villas pay homage to the original building – a 1960s fisherman’s house overlooking the Aegean Sea, which is accessible from multiple points around the property. Its surroundings are unapologetically natural; craggy rocks and verdant trees frame two private beaches, the crescent-shaped bays instilling a sense of calm from the moment your feet touch the sand.

Despite the hotel’s 121-room occupancy, it’s easy to find private nooks and secret sun spots. There are spa and fitness facilities on-site, but the most exciting way to stay mobile is through the activities and experiences available: boat rides, scuba dives and cycle rides are designed to appeal to all ages. On that note, children are welcome and adjoining rooms or larger villas are bookable. There’s also a babysitting service if an adults-only dinner or wander into the local town appeals. Only a ten-minute walk away, Agios Nikolaos is well worth a visit. It’s dotted with exceptional eateries and brimming with Cretan culture. Much of the hotel’s wine and kitchen ingredients are sourced here, too.

BOOK NOW

Address: Minos Beach Art Hotel, Agios Nikolaos, Crete 721 00, Greece

Room rates: from £276 per night for a Seaview bungalow

Domes of Elounda

The area around Elounda has the highest concentration of five star hotels on Crete, set discreetly back into the hills that sweep straight up from the sea. It's a clever arrangement - you can rarely see the neighbouring hotel from the one you're in, and beaches nestle under the coastal road, sheltered from view. Domes of Elounda (one of four Domes hotels on Crete) is situated in between Elounda village and Plaka up the road. Like the other hotels on this stretch of the island, it rises up from a gloriously calm and shallow stretch of sea, with views of the picturesque island of Spinalonga from the beach. The hotel takes up a vast site, starting at the beach and then extending all the way up a steep hill, and all the way down on the other side. There are two core sites, one near the beach which consists of the main reception, the main restaurant and bar, the adults-only pool and the fine-dining restaurant Makris. On the other side of the hill is The Core, which features shops, the kids club and family pool, and more restaurants. In between, on the slopes of the hill, are a series of pretty pink and stone villas that look like charming contemporary Greek houses. The interiors are pared-back, veering rather heavily towards grey and brown, but stylish nonetheless. Guests zoom between them all in golf buggies, driven by the friendly staff.

Domes of Elounda is a brilliant destination for families, with plenty to offer kids, from its long sandy beach to the kids' club and vast family pool. Breakfast and dinner time at the main buffet restaurant, Tholos, can be a bit of a zoo, but there is an indoor adults-only area, and the quiet zone on the beach is a popular spot for those who are sans children. The beach in general is a highlight - longer and sandier than most others in the area, it has plenty of room to stretch out

and a restaurant and bar, so there's no need to leave during the day. The 'Core Residences' at the top of the hill are brilliant to book if you want a bit of space of your own – each comes with a bedroom, living room and a spacious terrace with a small private pool.

BOOK NOW

Address: Tsifliki, Schisma Elountas 720 53, Greece

Room rates: from £329 per night

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Kapsaliana Village Hotel

Those looking to immerse themselves in Cretan history should book a stay at [Kapsaliana Village](#). Beautiful in its homage to the island's past, it comprises a cluster of 17th-century buildings lovingly restored over 40 years. Its proximity to the ancient olive press is no coincidence – here is

where the village's first inhabitants worked, building a self-sustainable community of around 50 people. Room sizes range from a single occupant (something hard to come by in luxury accommodation) to suites and a villa available to rent for groups of up to eight. Every design element is chosen to respect the heritage and inside, original stonework is complemented with wood and terracotta furnishings. Elegant and understated, this is an authentic approach to luxury.

The scent of olive trees in the surrounding hills infiltrates the air, making the temptation to join an oil tasting session hard to ignore. Alternatively, book into a natural soap-making workshop or cooking lesson to enjoy the fruits of your labour. The restaurant is modelled on a traditional Cretan kitchen, so wooden furniture contradicts arch-shaped doorways and brightly coloured wall hangings. Food is locally grown and lemonade is homemade. This is about as close to being a guest in someone's home as it gets.

BOOK NOW

Address: Kapsaliana Villiage Hotel, Kapsaliana 741 50, Greece

Room rates: from £251 per night

Elounda Peninsula

This smart hotel a few minutes' drive down the coast from Elounda village has much to recommend it. It is relatively boutique in scale, with 59 suites, but shares a vast site and many amenities with its sister hotels, Porto Elounda and Elounda Mare. The whole site feels like a small town of its own, with lawns, gardens and the usual golf buggies to convey you around. There are plenty of facilities on offer, including a Six Senses Spa (shared between the three hotels), a small plaza filled with shops, and a nine-hole golf course. At the bottom of the slope is a generous beach and harbour, with plenty of activities and watersports on offer (including a beautiful yacht for special trips). The fine dining restaurant Il Borro is a highlight by the sea – it is an outpost of the Ferragamo family's wine-making operation, and well worth a visit.

The suites are designed to look just like a Greek village, with pretty planting outside to soften the outline. The decoration is sleek and minimal, but very comfortable, and each one looks out over the sea with its own private saltwater pool. The larger residences are extremely luxurious (some even have their own indoor pool and direct beach access) so if you're after space and privacy, this is the place to be.

BOOK NOW

Address: Pigadakia, Schisma Elountas 720 53, Greece

Room rates: from £259

Monastery Estate Retreat

Those looking for rural, remote accommodation in the heart of the Cretan countryside should consider [Monastery Estate Retreat](#). It's close to Moni Villiage in Sougia, 90 minutes in a taxi from Chania airport. Despite its easy-to-get-to location, privacy and seclusion are par for the cause. Every suite has its own pool or hot tub and outside space, so if you simply want to enjoy a few days of relaxation, it's easy to achieve.

Surroundings are beautifully raw; mountainous landscapes are peppered with muted green gorges and at night, clear skies transition from blue to black, spotlighted with glimmering star constellations. Set the tone when you arrive and book into the spa to enjoy a treatment before sinking into one of the plush charcoal cushions that top the sun loungers by each pool. If getting out and about appeals, why not explore the hiking trails in the natural reserves nearby?

The hotel's aesthetic complements its location; exposed wooden beams, concrete walls and crisp white linens make inside spaces feel as pure as the outdoors. Breakfast is best enjoyed in the room, and there's an on-site restaurant that champions local produce, serving delicious homemade goats cheese as part of its seasonal menu. In essence, Monastery Estate lives up to its 'retreat' description. It's wholesome, pared-back and best enjoyed if you need a reset.

BOOK NOW

Address: Monastery Estate Retreat, Moni Village, Sougia, Greece

Room rates: from £76 per night for hotel members and £98 for non members

Minos Palace Resort

There's a no-kids-allowed policy at [Minos Palace Resort](#), a beautifully secluded, luxury hotspot, perfect for couples and friends. Set on a private peninsula with a concept that focuses on wellbeing, it's undoubtedly blissful and one for the wishlist. For 2024, the restaurant has introduced a new dining concept that champions traditional recipes and restorative ingredients – think nourishing, healthy food that doesn't compromise on taste.

By day, there's enough to do to keep those in need of stimulation occupied. Start with an 'early riser' yoga session or morning meditation before taking a boat and snorkel out to sea.

Alternatively, join one of the herbology classes in the hotel gardens to learn about Crete's thriving ingredients. At sunset, settle down to enjoy 360 degree sea views and a backing track of live music, or position yourself by the infinity pool, cocktail in hand, to watch the romantic colour transition of the night's sky.

Much like its sister property, Minos Beach Art Hotel, furnishings and materials in each bedroom and suite are tactile, earthy and carefully chosen to strike the balance between luxurious and understated. In a nod to the current barefoot bohemia trend, colours are muted and natural light is celebrated. Reclaimed wooden benches and gauzy linen sheets are strewn with sun rays and shadows cast by the wooden verandas that border each balcony.

BOOK NOW

Address: Minos Beach Hotel and Suites, Ammoudiou, Ag. Nikolaos 721 00, Greece

Room rates: from £217 for a Zen Room, including breakfast

9/9

Phaēa Blue Palace

The family-owned Blue Palace resort has been one of the longest-standing luxury hotels on the island and one of the best-known names, but it's all change on the site this year. Now split into two, half of it has reopened as Phaēa Blue Palace, a boutique hotel with 47 suites and a strong design ethos, while the other half is set to open in 2025 as Rosewood Blue Palace. For anyone with a love of style, Phaēa is a must-visit – a lot of effort has gone into making the hotel a showcase for Greek culture and design. Pieces from the Benaki Museum in Athens and from a variety of Greek artists and makers are on show throughout the hotel, from a show-stopping display of textiles and ceramics in the lobby to the art and photography that adorns the suites. For a particularly luxurious trip, book the Phaēa Blue Villa, an exclusive-use house for 8 guests with

its own pool and a private chef and butler to cater to your every need.

There's a strong emphasis on Greek hospitality at Phaēa which you won't necessarily find in other hotels on the island, with their international restaurants and themed buffets. The Blue Door Taverna on the beach is a great example, serving refined versions of traditional Greek cuisine in a rustic setting, with painted blue chairs and tables overlooking the sea and the magnificent view of Spinalonga. We also love the Phaēa Farmers Feast, where you can handpick your ingredients in the hotel's organic garden, and watch as the chef incorporates them into a meal.

BOOK NOW

Address: Plaka Elounda, Crete 72053

Room rates: from £355, breakfast included.

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