

## Title:

Secret Cyprus

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## Summary:

When most people think of Cyprus, they think of sand, sea, boat trips and water sports, but there is more and it entails luring you away from the coastal resorts.

## Keywords:

Paphos, Cyprus, villas to rent Paphos, Paphos Holidays, Cyprus villa holidays,

## Article Body:

When most people think of Cyprus, they think of sand, sea, boat trips, cocktail bars and a confusing mix of restaurants. This is not a bad thing and is definitely what a lot of people are looking for or they would not be happy to return year after year. But, there is more and I have found it. It entails luring you away from the coastal resorts to discover the 'Secret Cyprus'.

After having travelled to Cyprus many times I decided I was bewitched by the people and the Mediterranean way of life. Having seriously decided that I would like to make Cyprus my home, I resolved to discover what this beautiful 'Island of Love' was all about on my next <B>Paphos</B> holiday.

The warmth of the Island in mid-March was a shock after arriving from the freezing climes of England and the colours in the fields and the full banana plantations were a respite from the bustle of city life.

I decided to check out a holiday in the villages and short-listed my choice to Kathikas, Anarita, Tsada and Episkopi. I chose these because they all have a traditional village square and I was eager to experience the real Cypriot way of life.

The contrast between spending my Paphos holidays in a village rather than close to the coast could not be more acute. I was away from the all-night karaoke bars and the tourist shops selling a confusing mix of Cyprus lace, sweet delicacies and t-shirts for grandma to buy for the kids back home.

The villages of Episkopi and Kathikas are a reminder of what Cyprus living is

really all about and the locals still go about their daily business, quite oblivious to what is happening on the coast 15-20 minutes drive away. Having said this though, they are more than happy to see any day trippers and will make every effort to supplement their income by selling local produce such as fruit, vegetables, lace, and of course their home made Commandaria (sweet Cyprus wine).

I made my accommodation selection from a variety of villas to rent Paphos and opted eventually to stay in Kathikas Village, which is approximately 15 minutes drive from Coral Bay and 20 minutes drive from the pretty fishing port of Latchi in the other direction. I hired a car though and made sure I visited all these villages during my stay. They all have attractions of their own and charms that tug more at the senses than the purse strings. For a start, the climate is cooler in summer, they all have a central village square and church around which life revolves. I even stumbled across the unexpected family run Sterna winery and was made very welcome to try a tasting and sit a while to hear the fascinating story of the cellar history.

Episkopi village entrance is dominated by a steep rock face displaying the full bodied colours of Cyprus soil. The traditional structure of the village remains largely unchanged and the roads are narrow and often steep. I was entranced to see working donkeys carrying crops of oranges from the fields. The landscape in this area reveals a stunning display of oranges, limes, lemons, grapes and almonds.

Anarita and Tsada are not so far inland, in fact only a 5 to 10 minutes drive from a beach or golf club if you feel you still need to feel sand between your toes or take the challenge of an unfamiliar course, but all still have the allure of village life and the locals will extend their welcome in the village tavernas if you wish to try a Cyprus Meze or any local speciality.

All these villages exhibit a community spirit and it is fascinating to watch the older gentlemen of the village gather at the local coffee shop to play cards, backgammon or set the world to rights. I have yet to pass through any Cyprus village without seeing the elderly locals sharing a tale or having a laugh.

A failure of imagination or knowledge means that we often park ourselves where it feels familiar and amongst others from our own Country which often leaves us wondering why we traveled abroad, apart from the sun, obviously. Take the challenge, discover 'Secret Cyprus' and experience some real Cyprus living in the villages.