

## Half Day Excursion

**When:** Wednesday, 31 May 2023

**Departure time:** 15:00 pm

**Meeting point:** Conference Venue, Hellenic Mediterranean University, Building K45

**Drop -off:** Archaeological Museum of Heraklion, Eleftheria sq.

**Destination:** Arolithos Traditional Cretan Village

**Includes:** Transportation, entrance fee to the museum, light food and drinks.

Arolithos is a traditional Cretan village<sup>1</sup> built on the slope of a mountain, in the wild Cretan landscape.



AROLITHOS is an ancient greek word still alive in the cretan dialect. Its two components are "Aros" i.e liquid and "Lithos", i.e stone. The natural surface dug stone or rock that gathers rainwater. The rock

gathers, maintains and transmits the coolness of the water to humans or animals. The village Arolithos has this symbolic name because it gathers, maintains and transmits the traditions, the culture and the beauty of Crete.

The *Goals* of the owners is to gather, preserve and promote the Cretan tradition, the customs of the country and the values of the Cretan people. The visitor experiences the tradition and enjoys the Cretan hospitality which is our main concern. Man, History, Society, Environment are pillars at every step of our goal.

- Social & Environmental Responsibility
- Cultural Contribution

### *Museum*

Arolithos Traditional Cretan Village and the Museum of Rural History and Folk Craft are top tourist cultural attractions in the Crete region and the prefectures of Heraklion and Malevizi. Heraklion has a long history of agricultural life and handicrafts. Both are available in the museum of Arolithos village. The museum is one of the most interesting places to visit around and near Heraklion. Items of everyday life and economic activity of the Cretan people have been collected and displayed in an outstanding exhibition of the traditions and folklore of Crete.



<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://www.arolithos.com>

Founded since 1999 by the owner of Arolithos village, the museum of agricultural history and folk art aims to preserve within it the tradition and culture of Crete. It also contributes significantly to the promotion of the island and culture abroad, since many of its visitors are foreigners

### *Old traditional houses*

A very important part of the folklore parts of Arolithos are the two traditional houses which represent rural houses of the 19th century. Their architecture and decoration refer to houses that could be found in mountainous areas of Crete.

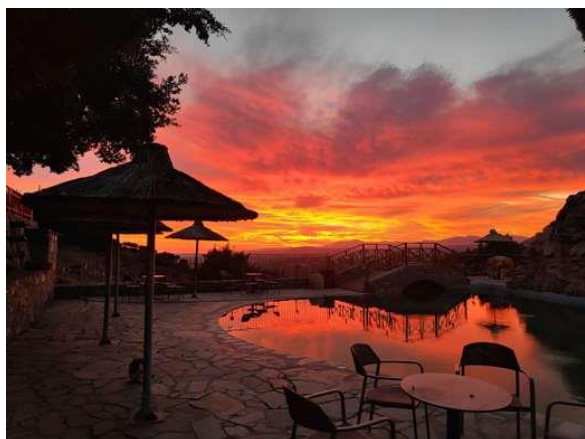
In the first house we recognize the basic characteristics of a rural house. The other house could be considered as the residence of the village's elite.

### *Orthodox culture*



The Greek Orthodox Easter is celebrated every year in AROLITHOS, always according to our age-long customs and traditions. Preparations and the celebration include typical activities from the local tradition. Christian celebrations take place in an ambience of piety and devoutness during church liturgies, according to the Greek orthodox rituals. It is early on Good Friday morning that the decoration of the Holy Rod and Sepulchre with flowers commences. Visitors and all people present in AROLITHOS work to that intent, if they wish to do so. After the decoration with flowers is complete, the priest commences the liturgy of Apokathilosis, which means the procedure of unpegging the Holy Body from the Cross and placing It in the Sepulchre, during an emotive ritual. Upon completion of the Mass, the Holy Sepulchre is carried along the narrow alleys of the village, in a procession followed by those who attend the Mass, as well as by

anyone who wishes to follow. On Holy Saturday, there are fervent church preparations for Christians to receive the joyous news of the Resurrection.



When the night comes, everyone gets prepared for the Mass of the Resurrection. Christians carry candles with the Holy Flame and the News of the Resurrection is announced. Right afterwards, church bells chime cheerfully and another age-old tradition is practiced at the churchyard: people burn the effigy of Judas, since he betrayed Jesus and sent him to the Cross. "Judas" is

nothing more than a big bundle of woods gathered on Good Friday and placed outside the church. Christians exchange blessings and they subsequently proceed to the restaurant. There, a sumptuous feast awaits all banqueters including a wide array of Easter dishes such as magiritsa (sort of gible soup served at Easter), red dyed eggs and sweets.

On Easter Sunday at noon, there is a second Mass of the Resurrection. After the procession of the icon depicting the Resurrection of our Lord, around AROLITHOS, the congregation and other visitors proceed to the restaurant to enjoy roast lamb, as well as other traditional dishes served on the Easter Day. Thus, the most significant occasion of the Greek Orthodox Church is celebrated, in an environment where all customs and traditions of Crete remain unaltered until our times.

### *Experiences*

Arolithos offers authentic Cretan memorable experience with interactive activities and breathtaking beauty of the place and the view. Enjoyable hands-on experiences are waiting for you in Arolithos village.

### **Cretan Cuisine**

Trust the welcoming people and cook with them. Taste the pure products of the Cretan land. Hands-on experience for an exceptional souvenir. A culinary journey of smells and tastes.

### **Cretan dances**

A professional, enthusiast and patient Cretan dancer teaches the steps of the famous dances of Greece and Crete. Zorba the Greek, Syrtaki and much more OPA !!

### **Bread kneading**

The baker, willing and smiling, will reveal the secrets of homemade bread.

### **Worry beads**

What an incredible experience. Learn about Kompoloe.

### **The social life of the village**

Greek coffee, delights and much more pleasant surprises will all happen in the traditional kafenion. Such a gorgeous time. You will experience the authentic life that the Cretans lived a few decades ago. Just relax, feel comfortable and let's start.