

C Y P R U S

NATACHA 29



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You, cyclists who like to climb, discover in these few pages what makes the list of the national challenge in Cyprus so rich.

GEOGRAPHY

MEDIA

TOURISM

SPORT

Cyprus

Cyprus is the easternmost island in the Mediterranean Sea. It's close to Turkey, Syria and Lebanon and it's a member state of the European Union since 2004, at least the Greek part. Its area is 9,250km².



The Southwestern part of the island is overlooked by the Mount Olympus (1952m), highest point of the Troodos Mountains and #030 of the list.

Nicosia, Famagusta and Larnaca are located in the Mesaoria Plain.

The Kyrenia Mountains (Girne Dağları in Turkish) cross the whole north and finishes in the Karpas Peninsula (Karpaz in Turkish) at the Cape Apostolos Andreas (Zafer Burnu). Its highest point is Silvili Tepe (Kyparissouvouno in Greek, 1024m, our #003).





Mount Olympus



Silvili Tepe



Mammaria in the Mesaoria Plain



Cape Apostolos Andreas

The Cypriot administration is more complex:



-The Republic of Cyprus, member of the EU, occupies 2/3 of the territory, in the south-west.

-The Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, self-proclaimed independent since 1983, occupies the rest in the north.

-The two parts are separated by a buffer zone ('Green Line') controlled by the United Nations (in green on the map above).

-Britain owns two enclaves: Akrotiri and Dhekelia (in yellow).

The Turkish part is the Zone 1 in the Challenge ; the three other parts are grouped together in the Zone 2. We can visit the demilitarized buffer zone thanks to 045-Avdelleró and the first part of 016-Mammari.

The 036-Kourion archaeological site is located in the British enclave of Akrotiri and 049-Xylofagou in Dhekelia.



Tourism in Cyprus

A huge flag (425m x 250m) of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus taunts the Republic of Cyprus on the sides of the Pentadaktylos Mts. An abandoned tank bears witness to the Turkish invasion in 1974 on the road to Selvili Tepe.



Saint Hilarion (003) and Kantara (009) Castles were built by the Byzantines in the 11th century to protect the island against the Arab pirates.



Saint Hilarion on its rocky outcrop



Kantara Kalesi

Several sites show the Byzantine religious practices: the ruins of the Agia Triada Basilica ('Holy Trinity') built in the 6th century (011-NO) and the domed church of Antiphonitis Kilisesi (007), that dates from the 7th century.



The mosaics of Agia Triada



Antiphonitis

Bellapais, 'The Abbey of Peace', was built in the 13th century to host the monk soldiers (005). In 500 B.C. Cypriots were divided between pro-Greeks and pro-Persians. These ones built the Vouni palace (014), that would have 137 rooms.



Bellapais



Vouni

In the Karpaz Peninsula there are several beaches, among them Dipkarpaz (012) and Big Sand Beach (013), whose northern foot is located at the Apostolos Andreas Monastery, next to the homonymous cape.



In the southern part we find a few UNESCO sites:

-10 painted churches in the Troodos region (on the sides of the Mount Olympus). Six of them are directly involved in the Challenge: Panagia Forviotissa (029) ; Agios Ioannis Lampadistis Monastery (Kalopanayiotis), Panagia tou Moutoulla and Archangelos Michail (Pedoulas) in the climb to Olympus-NE (030), Panagia tou Araka (Lagoudera) in Adelphi-NE (031) and Panagia tis Podithou in Adelphi-NW.



The vault of Panagia Forviotissa



Fresco in Lampadistis Monastery

-Aphrodite's Sacred City (Nea Paphos) and the Tombs of the Kings are located by the sea, next to the southern foot of Tsada (026). The third part of the Paphos Archaeological site, the Sanctuary of Aphrodite (Palaepaphos), lies in Kouklia, close to the ... Aphrodite Hills (034).

The Tentative List includes, among others, several natural sites in the Troodos Mts. (041-Kionia, Chandriá in 031-Adelphi and 030-Mount Olympus), as well as the five-domed St. Barnabas and Hilarion Church in Peristerona (031-Adelphi-NE).



The House of Dionysus in Nea Paphos



The five-domed church

National parks

The Akamas National Park bears its name from the son of Theseus and Phaedra. It lies in the north-western horn. We get there thanks to Pyrofilakio (023).

The one of Athalassa is located in the outskirts of Nicosia. At the top, La Cava, ruins of a castle built in 1385 by James I of Cyprus, King of Cyprus from 1382 to 1398.



Akamas



La Cava

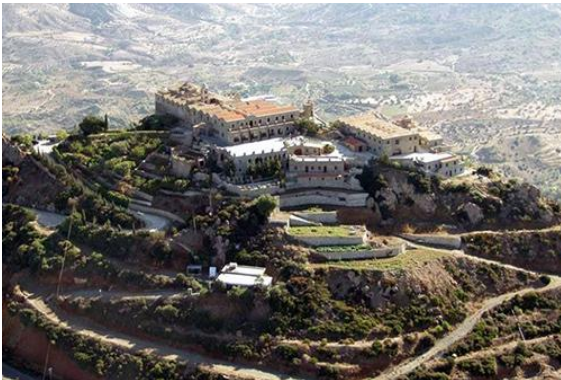
Religious sites

Several Byzantine monasteries from the 11th and 12th centuries:

- Gialiá Monastery Ruins (021)
- Chrysorrogiatissa (027)
- Kykkos and the Tomb of Archbishop Makarios III (028)
- Monastery of St. John the Forerunner of Mesa Potamos (032)
- Machairas Monastery (041)
- Stavrovouni Monastery (047)

The chapel of Panagia Tsampika (044) is much more recent. It was built in 2002 to host a miraculous icon of the Virgin Mary.

Panagia Semistrelia (048) is a Russian Orthodox church.



Stavrovouni



Machairas



The tomb of Makarios III



Panagia Tsampika

Historic sites

Kourion (Curium in Latin) is an antique city. Our climb #036 starts close to the amphitheatre and finishes next to the Sanctuary of Apollo Hylates.

The Kolossi Castle (foot of 038) was built in the early 13th century by the Knights Hospitaller. The current fortress dates from 1454.



Wine routes

7 wine routes in the south-west of Cyprus are described on:

http://visitcyprus.com/files/wine_routes/Cyprus_Wine_Routes_4600414_EN.pdf



Visited climbs: Kathikas (025), Tsada (026), Adelphi (031), Lófou (033) and Odou (042).

Two **viewpoints** announced as such:

The scenic road between Pacchyammos and Kato Pyrgos (018-NW)

Kellaki Viewpoint (043)



Two interesting **places of interest on the coast**:

-The Coral Bay Sea Caves at the foot of Kathikas-SW (025)

-The Bridge of Lovers at the foot of Fanós-SW (050)



Difficulty

-Our Top10 exceeds 700m

Olympus (030) 1951m

Adelphi (031) 1577

Kionia (041) 1400

Tomb of Makarios III (028) 1268, Odou (042) 1148, Prophet Elias Chapel (027) 1138, St. John the Forerunner (032) 1024, Selvili Tepe (003) 1003, Lófou (033) 902 and Sinoas (043) 769.



Sight from the top of Adelphi



Radar on Mount Kionia

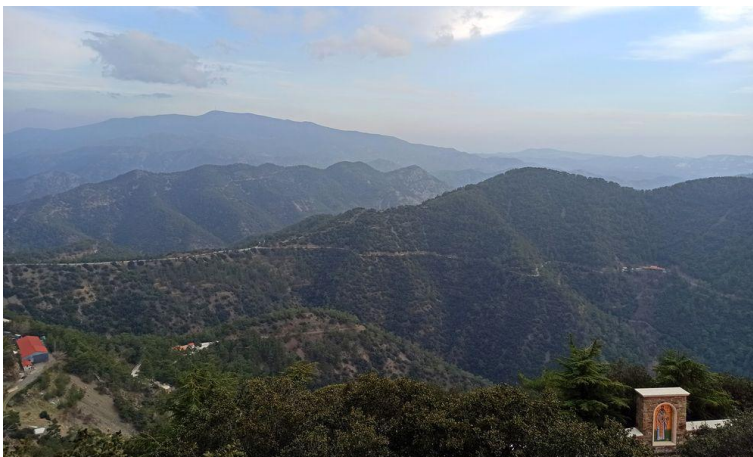
Top10 in elevation gain

Olympus (030) 1400m

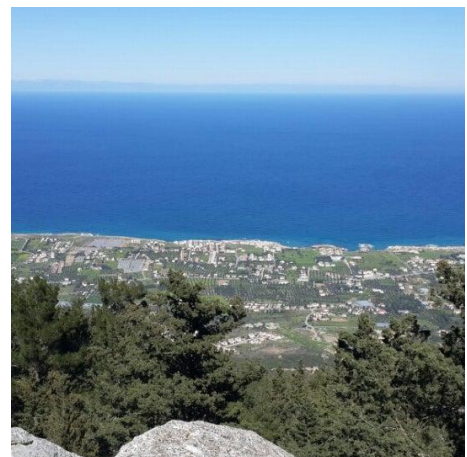
Kionia (041) 1395

Adelphi (031) 1351

Tomb of Makarios III (028) 1079, Selvili Tepe (003) 960, Prophet Elias Chapel (027) 814, Sinoas (043) 746, Kathikas (025) 640, Lófou (033) 639 and Odou (042) 626.



Elevation gain from Makarios



and from Selvili Tepe

Europoints

12 summits exceed 500 points:

Olympus (030) 1309pts, Kionia (041) 1212, Adelphi (031) 1044, Makarios (028) 895, Selvili Tepe (003) 849, Prophet Elias Chapel (027) 818, Sinoas (043) 636, Agios Georgios (018) 591, Kathikas (025) 580, Kantara Kalesi (009) 567, Odou (042) 551 and Lysos (024) 508.



Extensive view from Prophet Elias Chapel

Top 10 in bombs

Rancho Appaloosa (037) 40,5

Road Kato Pyrgos - Kampos (020) 31,4

Selvili Tepe (003) 30,8

Agios Georgiou (039) 30,1, Olympus (030) 29,8, Road Lefka Dam - Kampos (022) 28,9, Prophet Elias Chapel (027) 27,5, Lapta (002) 27, Agios Georgios (018) 26,6 and Kionia (041) 26,5.



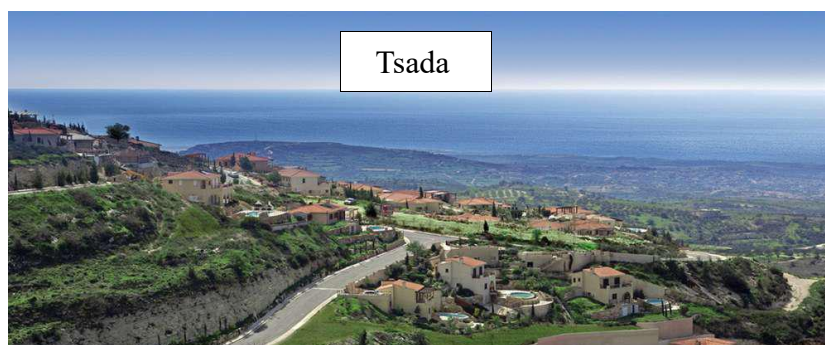
Rancho Appaloosa



Road Kato Pyrgos – Kampos

The 10 longest

Kionia (041) 46,4km - Adelphi (031) 37,9 - Olympus (030) 35,1 - Makarios (028) 30,5 - Stavrovouni (047) 19,4 - Selvili Tepe (003) 19,1 – Sinoas (043) 18,3 - Prophet Elias Chapel (027) 17,9 - Kathikas (025) 15,1 and Tsada (026) 13,1



Cyclism in Cyprus

-**L'Etape du Tour** has its Cypriot version. In 2023, the 2nd edition will be 137km long and will reach the highest point of the island, the Olympus (030). The finish line will be located in the Aphrodite Hills Resort (034), after a 1,7km at 7% climb.

<https://cyprus.letapebytourdefrance.com/route/20>



We found informations about a **Cyprus Cycling Tour** in 2014 and 2016, with three stages in the south-west, from Paphos. The 1st stage (from Paphos to Kouklia) passed in Kourion (036) ; the 2nd (89km) took place on the sides of Olympus as far as Arsos (800m) ; the last one climbed Kathikas (025) and finished uphill in Tsada (026).

The **Cyprus Gran Fondo**, that exists since 2017, seems to have taken the torch of the former Cycling Tour, since its form and routes are similar.

<https://www.facebook.com/cyprusgranfondo/>

In 2023, the CFG for 'experts' started with an ITT (28km and 240m elevation gain) around Agios Georgios. The 2nd stage (from Paphos to Kouklia) used the sides of Troodos as well, with 1850m e.g. and a highest point in Arsos-Ag. Nikolaos. 54km and 1440m e.g. for the last stage finishing in Tsada (picture just below).

Witness from inside: <https://www.climbbikeski.com/2019/04/03/cyprus-gran-fondo-2019/>



The **Apollo-Aphrodite** is a sportive. The edition 2022 was 89km long, with 1380m e.g. It started in Limassol and ended in Kourion (036), via Pachna (700m high).



The **Aphrodite Women Cycling Race 2023** was probably the most interesting cycling event from our perspective. A first edition took place in 2019 and a second in 2023. This one was a triptych in the Troodos Mts.:

- a hill climb (ITT - 13,4km and 680m e.g.) from Ora to Machairas (foot of Kionia, 041-SE)
- a race that climbs the sector Ora-Vavatsinia (4,3km at 7,3%)
- another race (62km) with arrival at the top of Stavrovouni (047)

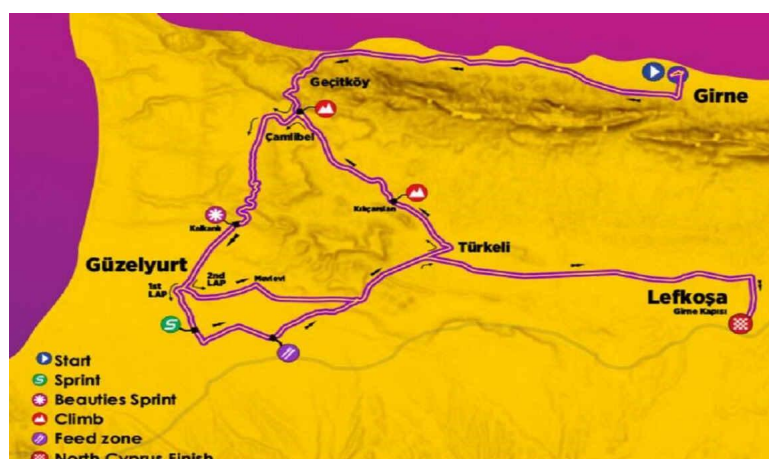


Christoforou in the ITT



Vandembulcke in Vavatsinia

In the Turkish part, a **North Cyprus Cycling Tour** with 4 stages was organized from 2016 to 2018, between Girne and Nicosia. According to the map below, Tepebaşı (001) was climbed.



Cypriot cyclists

Cyprus is not a great cycling country, but there are a few notable achievements.

Mários Athanasiádis won a stage of the Tour of Central Macedonia and the Cyprus Road Cup in 2008. Cyprus road champion from 2011 to 2013, he is also a 7-time mountain bike champion in the cross-country event, in which he also finished silver medallist at the Games of the Small States of Europe. He represented Cyprus at the cyclo-cross world championships in 2009.

Andréas Miltiádis won 3 medals in 2017 at the Games of the Small States of Europe. In 2018, at the Commonwealth Games, he was 20th in the time trial and 15th in the road race. Selected for the Mediterranean Games, he was 12th in the time trial and 14th in the road race. He won a bronze medal at the World University Championships in Braga. He was Cypriot champion 6 times between 2019 and 2024. In 2025, he won the time trial at the Games of the Small States of Europe and finished 2nd in the Tour of Bostonliq in Uzbekistan.



Mários Athanasiádis glorifies Cyprus by riding



Andréas Miltiádis in the national jersey

Two women's names stand out, one in the professional peloton and one for the future.

Ántri Christofórou has been Cyprus champion several times and has also medalled at the Games of the Small States of Europe. She took part in the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio. Bronze medallist at the Mediterranean Games in 2018, she won the Scorpions' Pass TT. She won the Classique Morbihan in 2022, the GP Mayor Žiar nad Hronom as well as the Aphrodite Cycling Race in 2023 and the GP Suf City in 2024 before finishing 3rd in the Tour of El Salvador.

Eleni Koukouma is an excellent representative of the future of Cypriot cycling. She represents her country in the junior category at the 2021 WC and finished 2x2nd in the national championships in 2023 and 2024.



Ántri Christofórou gagne la Classique Morbihan



Eleni Koukouma aux championnats juniors

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