

Namaste~

Thank you for your interest in joining us this year on the Yoga Journey to southern Greece! The 2008 trip takes its form in two sessions: for those who like to travel independently thereafter or have limited vacation time, one weeks' journey to Crete only during June 21<sup>st</sup> -28<sup>th</sup> is offered, or you may join us for two weeks total for immersion in Yoga and sightseeing on both Santorini and Crete during June 16<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>. The two weeks' inclusive trip is a wonderful way to treat yourself to daily practice, with a more sightseeing-intensive program through Santorini at the start of the trip, and an experience of the relaxed pace of southern Crete in the second week. The two weeks' trip portion concludes with local sightseeing in Crete at the Minoan Palace of Knossos and the National Archaeological Museum.

This is a transformative journey that will bring your soul home to an experience of the riches of Mediterranean culture, geography, and history-- while connecting your body, mind and heart to the healing wisdom of Yoga sadhana (practice) rooted in the Vinyasa and Iyengar methods of Asana practice, as well as instruction in traditional techniques of pranayama, chanting, mudra and Indian philosophy.

Both the one-week and two-week trip begin in Heraklion. You can fly directly to Heraklion in the capital city of Crete, connecting from the mainland in Athens. For those taking in the full two weeks' inclusive journey, we will arrive and stay overnight in Heraklion on the 16<sup>th</sup>, and ferry to Santorini the following morning. Retreatants who sign up for one week only at Triopetra are met by the group in Heraklion on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Pre-arranged taxis take us on the two-hour journey to the south part of the island. The retreat intensive from the 21<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> begins in the evening at the oceanfront Triopetra Yoga Center with an opening circle and shared dinner. The one week trip ends on the 28<sup>th</sup> in Heraklion in the afternoon, and those who attend the two-weeks inclusive will stay on an extra two days in Heraklion to take in a guided tour of the Minoan Palace of Knossos, and Heraklion Museum in Crete, departing on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

On most days we will start with a 2-hour practice of pranayama, meditation, and asana. At Triopetra in Crete, there will be specialty seminars given in the afternoon deepening our understanding of the body through asana from the perspective of Samkhya and Ayurvedic philosophical schools, and a Vedic chanting workshop in which you will be introduced to Sanskrit---the language of the ancient Rishis (sages) and Yogis.

During the two weeks' journey there are many enriching excursions. We visit most of the island of Santorini on day trips by van: beaches throughout the crescent perimeter of the island, the Minoan Akrotiri site, and Pre-Historic archaeological museum. The group also takes a daylong boat trip to the Nea Kameni volcano for a hike around its smoldering lip, and an afternoon swim in its' hot springs, and lunch on the neighboring island of Therasia. The week at Triopetra will allow you to take in the timeless flow of the island of Crete and immerse yourself in depth-studies of Yoga.

The week at Triopetra includes seminars on Minoan culture and ancient Greek history in an informal circle-setting on the beach, after our morning practice and breakfast. We will learn about the Minoan people's history, architecture, art, and religion, which exemplify a culture that revolved around the reverence for nature and the mysteries of the Great Goddess. The legacy of Minoan civilizations become apparent for our witness through history revealing a society that deeply valued creativity, the erotic, and nature, expressing itself through Minoan pottery, metalwork, frescoes, religious and practical aspects of life. We also visit the lush river Preveli that meets the sea near our retreat center, where many gorgeous trees and birds reside and freshwater swimming is enjoyable. Another day trip takes us to Rethymno, a Venetian influenced town with an ancient fortress, wonderful local artists' shops and tavernas; and to beautiful Spili, a traditional Cretan village.

The focus on Minoan culture during this trip has several inspiring and relevant points that we can benefit in learning from in our challenging times:

While having a spirituality rooted in the awareness of the life-giving, sustaining and transforming qualities of the Divine Feminine, Minoans were able to also maintain a working gender-balance in matters political, religious and economic, creating a stable infrastructure that enjoyed unparalleled periods of relatively frictionless prosperity in trade and shared learning between neighboring cultures such as the ancient Phoenicians, Egyptians, Anatolians and Pelasgians. They were able to maintain and rule a vast area of sea trade because they relied on the value of their inimitable creative art and functional pieces for trade, such as pre-made ships made of native cedar and cypress, metalwork and swordsmithing, and their beautiful and prized pottery. Minoans did not, as far as we know, have a currency system. The intrinsic value and quality of the things they produced encouraged their economic and social relationships with their neighbors. They lived fruitfully from the things given by their native land and made great innovations with their resources.

You will learn a great deal about the history of the Minoans, ancient Greece and Crete up until the modern period during informal talks given by Phoenix in Santorini and at Triopetra during the retreat. Those attending the two weeks' trip meet in Heraklion, Crete and stay overnight at a hotel, beginning the Santorini portion the following morning on the 17<sup>th</sup> with a one-hour ferry ride to the island, where we will stay at the Boathouse Hotel for four nights overlooking the lapis Aegean sea. A beachfront taverna floor looking right into the stunning ocean, or an indoor conference center at our hotel, becomes our Yogashala as we continue with daily practices.

On our second day in Santorini we will take a boat ride to Nea Kameni volcano at the center of the island, and enjoy hot springs which well up in the sea by the edge of the volcano's shore. Nea Kameni's eruption in 1630 BCE created the current crescent shape of Santorini, and caused a tsunami which destroyed the major Minoan palace of Knossos, leading to the conquest of Minoan civilization by the Mycenaens, who invaded while the Minoans were struggling to rebuild their society and overtook their ports. The eruption of Nea Kameni and the sinking of the island of Santorini (then known as Callisto) and destruction of its' Minoan inhabitants is thought by many scholars to be the famed Atlantis written about by Plato. We will also visit the small but archaeologically rich Minoan site of Akrotiri and it's wonderful museum with ancient cult statues and incomparably beautiful frescoes. We return to Heraklion by ferry on the 21<sup>st</sup> in the morning and will continue on to Triopetra retreat center.

Those who are joining for one week only will fly in from Heraklion Int'l airport and meet us at Triopetra on the 21<sup>st</sup>. Triopetra Yoga center has a stunning location in a pristine unspoiled area in the south of Crete, and has a wonderful sea-facing Yoga room for our practices. A range of optional activities are available during the free periods of the retreat intensive during this week, such as bodywork and massage therapy, and rental of scuba and snorkel equipment. All apartments at Triopetra are ocean-facing and within walking distance of the sea, so there will be abundant opportunities to relax and immerse your awareness in the rhythmic sounds of the tides. This portion of the retreat ends on the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup> after breakfast, after which time you will taxi back to the Heraklion airport to catch your flight or, ferry on to another island as you like!

As part of the two weeks' trip, we will spend two more days in Heraklion enjoying morning Yoga sadhana together and seeing the Palace of Knossos and the incredible National Archaeological Museum, travelling on to home or an extended visit of the islands or mainland Greece at your leisure on June 30<sup>th</sup>.

The food is truly an amazing part of experiencing Greece. Triopetra serves Greek-inspired, mostly macrobiotic vegetarian food made from fresh local produce. The tavernas nearby at other locations offer us the best in traditional Cretan and Greek fare and seafood delicacies. For those who have a Dionysian flair, local wines and the Cretan spirit of choice, Raki, are available at the tavernas near Triopetra, and at Your Memories and Boathouse hotels. Most of the meals are included in the cost of the trip as follows:

Dinner at Castello Hotel Heraklion, June 16th

Breakfast at the Boathouse hotel, Santorini June 17-20

Breakfast, lunch and dinner at Triopetra June 21 – 28 (full week inclusive)

Breakfast and dinner at Your Memories Hotel, Heraklion June 28 - 30

The cost of the one weeks' Yoga intensive in Triopetra includes all meals. The two weeks' trip covers most meals except for lunch and dinner in Santorini, and lunch in Heraklion from the 28<sup>th</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup>. You want to allow for at least 30 Euro a day for meals on the Santorini portion and up to 15 Euros a day for lunch on two days at the end of the trip in Heraklion.

During this period the weather in southern Greece is moderate to hot, averaging between 82 and 95 degrees. The weather will encourage you to dip your toes and more into the Libyan, Aegean, and Mediterranean Seas. The swimming is so enjoyable that many people simply go from a Yoga class to the sea and we hardly see them outside of classes or meals...!

We hope that you will join us this year for a unique and transformational opportunity to share in-depth Yogic practices—while making new friends and exploring the magnificent ancient Minoan culture together in Crete and Santorini.

In the words of Jalall'ud-din Rumi,  
May the Beauty we love be what we do—

Phoenix Artemisia

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