

#DestinationHighlightAgiosNikolaos

Agios Nikolaos and the Liquid Gold of Crete



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CRETE



Agios Nikolaos: Discover the Liquid Gold of Crete

In Crete, olive oil is not simply a product. It is part of everyday life and culture.

For thousands of years, olive trees have shaped the landscape, the cuisine, and the traditions of the island.

Across eastern Crete and the region of Agios Nikolaos, olive groves stretch across hillsides overlooking the sea, producing some of the finest extra virgin olive oils in the Mediterranean.

For visitors arriving by cruise, this is often their first introduction to the authentic flavors of Crete. A single taste reveals the richness, freshness, and character that have made Cretan olive oil famous around the world.



A Tradition More Than 3,000 Years Old



Olive cultivation in Crete dates back to the Minoan civilization. Archaeological evidence shows that olive oil production was already an essential part of the island's economy and daily life more than three millennia ago.

Many of the olive trees found across the region today are centuries old. Some are believed to be over a thousand years old and continue to produce olives every year.

These ancient trees are living witnesses to the history of the island. Their roots run deep in the soil of Crete, just as olive oil remains deeply connected to the identity of its people.

Just a short drive from Agios Nikolaos, near the village of **Kavousi**, stands **one of the oldest olive trees in the world**.



This monumental tree **is estimated to be more than 3,200 years old, dating back to the Minoan era**.

Even today, it continues to produce olives, reminding visitors that the tradition of olive oil in eastern Crete has been alive for millennia.

From Tree to Table



Every autumn, the olive harvest begins across the countryside of Crete. Families, farmers, and producers gather in the groves to collect olives using traditional methods passed down through generations.

Once harvested, the olives are taken to local presses where they are transformed into fresh extra virgin olive oil. The process happens quickly to preserve the oil's natural aroma, flavor, and nutritional value.

The result is a product known for its vibrant color, rich taste, and exceptional quality. For many visitors, seeing this journey from tree to table offers a deeper appreciation of the craft behind every drop of Cretan olive oil.



More Than an Ingredient: A Natural Beauty Secret

In Crete, olive oil is present in almost every aspect of daily life.

It is used generously in cooking, drizzled over fresh salads, vegetables, and grilled dishes, and served with warm bread at nearly every table. It is also a key ingredient in many traditional recipes that define the Cretan diet.



Beyond the kitchen, olive oil has long been valued for its natural health benefits. It is known for its antioxidants, healthy fats, and its central role in the Mediterranean diet, which has been widely studied for supporting longevity and heart health. For generations, Cretan families have also used olive oil as **a natural beauty treatment**.

A simple face mask made with olive oil and local honey is known to hydrate and nourish the skin. Olive oil is also commonly used as a natural hair treatment, helping restore shine and moisture.

These simple home remedies reflect a long tradition of using natural ingredients from the land. In Crete, the same olive oil that enriches the kitchen can also support daily wellness and self care.

Try a Simple Cretan Olive Oil Face Mask

Cretan families have long used olive oil as a natural beauty treatment.

Here is a simple mask inspired by traditional home remedies.

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon local honey

How to use

- Mix the olive oil and honey in a small bowl
- Apply gently to clean skin
- Leave for 10-15 minutes
- Rinse with warm water

The result is naturally hydrated, glowy and nourished skin, using two ingredients deeply rooted in Cretan tradition.



Discover the Taste of Crete

Just a short distance from the port of Agios Nikolaos, visitors can explore olive groves, meet local producers, and take part in authentic olive oil tastings.

These experiences allow travelers to connect directly with the people and traditions behind this iconic product. They offer a moment to slow down, taste the flavors of the island, and understand the culture that has grown around olive oil for centuries.

For cruise passengers arriving in Agios Nikolaos, these experiences are both accessible and authentic. Within a short drive from the port, visitors can step into the countryside of eastern Crete and discover how olive oil is produced, tasted, and celebrated.

This connection between port and local culture is what makes Agios Nikolaos such an attractive cruise destination. For many cruise passengers, this simple yet powerful experience becomes one of the most memorable moments of their visit. It allows travelers to experience the true essence of Crete through one of its most iconic traditions.

