



10

### Church of Saint Savvas

The Church of Saint Savvas in Old Nicosia, built in 1933 atop the remains of an older church, boasts unique features like two altars and an off-centered Beautiful Gate. The older altar, adorned with intricate carvings and miraculous icons, takes prominence. This church's complex history reflects unwavering faith and dedication across the ages, as it underwent renovations and expansions to honor its spiritual heritage.



11

### Church of the Archangel Michael

During the Ottoman era, the Trypiotis parish was named "Pas Mahalla" due to its beauty. Built in the 16th century, this expansive three-aisled basilica reflects architectural models of its time. Initiated by Archbishop Germanos in 1695, its construction was swift. While there are no preserved images of the "miracle in Chonai" by Archangel Michael, the church's name, derived from "tripa" meaning "opening," honors his heroic act of diverting two rivers to save a monastery from pagans. The church played a vital role in seeking protection from floods in the Pediaios River, akin to Archangel Michael's intervention in Chonai.

12

### Chapel of Saint Eleftherios

Tucked away on Onasagorou Street, the Chapel of Saint Eleftherios, one of the seven branches of the Holy Monastery of Machairas, stands as a discreet treasure. This petite church exudes a humble presence, easily overlooked by most. Nevertheless, it radiates a profound sense of devotion, offering a tranquil sanctuary for those seeking a serene haven to pray and strengthen their spiritual bond.



13

### Church of Panagia Faneromeni

At the heart of Nicosia's historic center lies the Church of Phaneromeni, named after the Greek word "phanerono," symbolizing the miraculous revelation of its icon amid the ruins of an earthquake-damaged church. This grand Orthodox church was once the city's prominent landmark and holds deep historical ties to a Medieval Orthodox convent. Despite attempts to convert it into a mosque after the Ottoman conquest in 1571, it stands today as a testament to Cypriot resilience and unwavering Orthodoxy.



14

### The Cross of Misirikos

The Cross of Misirikos, initially resembling a small mosque, transforms upon closer inspection into a captivating blend of history and art. Its cruciform layout and Byzantine-inspired dome pay homage to the past, while stone buttresses evoke a medieval ambiance. Over time, it evolved from a church to a mosque, offering a captivating journey through history.



15

### Mary of Grace

The cathedral, initially dedicated to Saint John, was converted into a mosque during Ottoman rule, a common practice at the time. Later, the Lebanese Maronite community built the Church of Santa Croce nearby. In 2010, Pope Benedict's visit symbolized a bridge between faiths, showcasing the cathedral's journey of resilience, transformation, and coexistence among different religious communities.

16

### The Church of the Holy Cross

Originally built in 1642, a new church was constructed in 1900 with funding from the Spanish Royal Family and the Franciscan friars of the Custody of the Holy Land. The church and friary were rebuilt in 1959. The church's garden reflects the island's history, as it sits in the buffer zone between Nicosia and North Nicosia due to the Cyprus crisis of 1963-64 and the war of 1974. This diverse parish falls under the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem and welcomes people from fifty different nations, celebrating Mass in eight languages.





## Nicosia's Tapestry of Faith: A Spiritual Exploration

Begin a spiritual voyage through Nicosia where you'll uncover the enduring legacy of diverse faiths and time-honored traditions. Explore iconic religious sites that have remained steadfast over the centuries, including ancient churches like the Church of Chrysaliniotissa, the Church of Saint Kassianos, and the Old Cathedral of Saint John, as well as historic mosques such as the Omeriye Mosque and the Bayraktar Mosque. Wander in awe as you pay homage to the timeless sanctuaries that have weathered the trials of history. Immerse yourself in the spiritual and cultural diversity of this vibrant city, where history comes alive through its sacred landmarks. Whether you seek moments of quiet reflection or a deeper understanding of Cyprus's religious mosaic, this religious tour of Nicosia promises a memorable and enlightening experience.



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## Nicosia's Tapestry of Faith: A Spiritual Exploration



1

### Taht-el-kale Mosque

In the heart of the Taht-el-kale neighborhood, named after the lower part of a historical fortress, proudly stands the Taht-el-kale Mosque. This mosque, built in 1826 by Ottoman Governor Es-Seyyid Mehmet Agha, exudes historical charm with its distinctive architectural elements, including round vaults, gothic arches, and Turkish lattice windows. While its minaret underwent reconstruction in 1948, the mosque's enchanting character remains intact. In the past, Taht-el-kale was a bustling mixed neighborhood where Greek and Turkish communities coexisted peacefully. Today, only the Taht-el-kale Mosque and the Koran School stand as poignant reminders of that bygone era.



2

### Church of Chrysaliniotissa

The Church of Chrysaliniotissa, an ancient marvel, holds a rich history within its time-worn structure. Legend attributes its construction to Helena Paleologina in 1450. However, a closer look reveals the church's evolution through Byzantine, Frankish, Venetian, and Ottoman eras, preserving the essence of each period in its architecture. Its majestic twin domes symbolize the duality of God's nature, and as you step inside, the graceful sculptures and ornate details transport you through time, making it a captivating journey down memory lane.



3

### Church of Saint Kassianos

The Church of Saint Kassianos, lending its name to a lively district in the city's heart, resides within the lower parishes of the old town. Nestled amid charming streets adorned with vibrant flowers draping from traditional houses, this petite church holds a unique place. Positioned along the Green Line, symbolizing the divided capital, it has borne witness to significant moments in Cyprus's tumultuous history. It played a central role in inter-communal conflicts in 1958, 1963, and the Turkish invasion of 1974. The church itself is a striking two-aisled stone edifice, constructed in 1854 atop an earlier church dating back to 1750.

4

### Old Cathedral of Saint John

The Cathedral of Saint John, known as "Saint John Pipis," once Nicosia's main cathedral during the Ottoman era, symbolizes Cyprus's resilience. Despite its size, it was a beacon of hope and a Church of Cyprus stronghold, even playing administrative and political roles. A belfry was added centuries later, defying the Ottoman prohibition on bell ringing. "Saint John Pipis" is named after the Arabic word "habib," meaning "the favorite," befitting Christ's beloved disciple. Originally a Syrian Orthodox monastery site, the church still echoes with ancient prayers, while its wall paintings reveal diverse cultural influences.

### Holy Archdiocese of Cyprus

The Archbishop's Palace, built in the 1960s, echoes Cyprus's ties to the Byzantine Empire with its Neobyzantine architectural style. It functions as the residence and administrative center of the Church of Cyprus, one of the ancient Eastern Orthodox autocephalous churches. Here, the Archbishop of Nea Justiniana and all of Cyprus holds authority. Beyond its physical structure, the Archbishop's Palace is a symbol of Cypriot identity and a reminder of religion's enduring role in shaping the island's history.



### Byzantine Museum

Makarios III, the Archbishop of Cyprus and the first President of the Cypriot Republic, established two centers for health and culture. One of them houses the Byzantine Museum, showcasing a remarkable collection of Byzantine artifacts such as icons, murals, mosaics, and manuscripts. This museum serves as a living testament to Cyprus's enduring connection with the Byzantine Empire, highlighting the ongoing impact of history on our identity and society.



5

### The Church of Saint Antonios

The Church of Saint Antonios, an 18th-century gem, showcases Ottoman-era architectural style. It was a cherished sanctuary for one of Nicosia's Christian parishes. The church's charm lies in its intricately carved wooden iconostasis and beautifully adorned stone bell tower, crafted by local artisans. Generosity from the renowned dragoman, Xatzigeorgakis Cornesios, and his descendants, who lived nearby, enriched the church's cultural and historical significance with donated land and sacred icons.



6

### Bayraktar Mosque

The Bayraktar Mosque derives its name from the Turkish word "bayrak," meaning "flag" or "war banner." It became historically significant during the siege of Nicosia in 1570 when the first Turkish flag was raised on this site, marking the city's surrender. Initially intended as a grave, it later became a tomb and eventually a masjid. Until 1930, the mosque held hairs from the Prophet Muhammad's beard, kissed by visitors during religious occasions. Unfortunately, this relic was stolen on November 27, 1930, leaving the mosque with an intriguing yet incomplete history.



7

### Exarchate of the Holy Sepulchre

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8

### The Cathedral of the Apostle Barnaba

The Cathedral of the Apostle Barnaba, completed in 2021, embraces Byzantine architectural style with its compressed cross-in-square design. This style harkens back to the era when Archbishop Anthemios of Cyprus made a profound discovery - the grave of Barnabas, the Church of Cyprus's founder and protector, along with relics like a copy of the Gospel of Matthew. This discovery bolstered the church's influence and led to Emperor Zeno's recognition, making it fitting to dedicate the new city's cathedral to Apostle Barnabas.

9

### Omeriye Mosque

The Omeriye Mosque, formerly a monastery and 14th-century church dedicated to Saint Mary of the Augustinians, has a rich history. It stood amidst a lush sugar cane plantation until the winds of war and conquest brought change. After the Ottoman occupation in 1571, Lala Mustafa Pasha ordered the construction of a mosque on the site where the church once stood. This decision was influenced by the belief that Umar, the second caliph of Islam, was buried here in the 7th century. Thus, the mosque symbolizes the transformation of faith and serves as a reminder of history's ever-changing course.

