A Taste of Crete

Exploring TUI's Best Hotels & Experiences

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Discovering Crete: Greece's Largest Island

On 14th May, I was lucky enough to join TUI on an educational visit to the beautiful island of Crete – the largest of the Greek islands and a destination packed with incredible scenery, culture and sunshine! Being the biggest island in Greece means there is so much to discover. From charming traditional villages and stunning beaches to dramatic landscapes and historic sites, Crete really does offer something for everyone.

For those who enjoy exploring beyond their resort, I would highly recommend hiring a car for a few days. It's a fantastic way to experience the island's natural beauty, uncover hidden gems and enjoy the freedom to explore at your own pace.

Crete is served by two main airports, Chania and Heraklion. We flew with TUI Airways into Heraklion, which was ideally located for the hotels we were visiting on the north-east coast of the island. Excitingly, a brand-new international airport is currently under construction and, once completed, will make transfers from the airport to many popular resorts even quicker and more convenient.

Our journey through Gatwick was also incredibly smooth. TUI now has dedicated customer agents within the North Terminal who are on hand to guide passengers through the check-in process and provide assistance whenever needed, helping your holiday get off to a stress-free start.



A Smooth Start to the Holiday Experience

One of the many benefits of travelling with TUI is the convenience of their app. By downloading it and linking your booking reference, you'll have instant access to important travel documents, including boarding passes, transfer information and any excursions you choose to book. It also provides an easy way to contact your TUI representatives during your holiday, ensuring help is always just a few taps away.

After landing in Heraklion, I was pleasantly surprised by how quick and straightforward the arrival process was. Although the airport is relatively small, immigration moved efficiently and we were through in no time at all.

TUI representatives were waiting for us in the arrivals hall and directed us straight to our transfer coach. Another useful feature of the TUI app is that it shows exactly where your transfer is located and even tells you how many stops there will be before reaching your hotel, making the journey completely stress-free from the moment you land.

Stay in TUI BLUE Elounda Breeze – Relaxed Luxury with Stunning Views

During my time in Crete, I stayed at the TUI BLUE Elounda Breeze in Elounda, a fantastic 4-star plus hotel that perfectly combines comfort, relaxation and authentic local charm. Set slightly back from the seafront, the hotel rewards guests with beautiful panoramic views across the bay. While the walk to the beach is around 185 metres, it never feels far, and the peaceful setting is well worth it.

The hotel offers everything you could need for a relaxing holiday, without ever feeling overcrowded. Spacious pool areas, comfortable facilities and a welcoming atmosphere make it easy to unwind from the moment you arrive. One thing to bear in mind is that the resort is built on a hillside, with some accommodation and facilities accessed via steps and sloping pathways, so its not recommended for those with mobility issues. However, the hotel operates a regular buggy service around the grounds, making it easy to get around and helping guests enjoy everything the property has to offer.

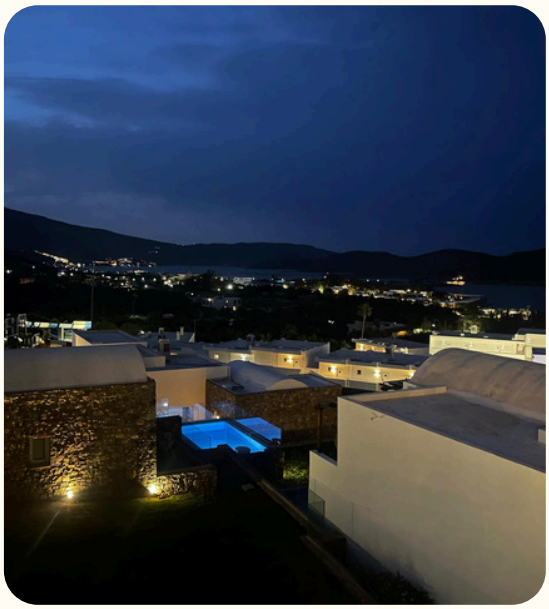
The hotel boasts three swimming pools, including a beautifully elevated pool at the top of the hill. Not only does it offer spectacular views, but it also benefits from a dedicated water slide and children's club, making it a great spot for families to enjoy together.





What really sets TUI BLUE hotels apart is their ability to blend modern comfort with a genuine sense of place. The concept focuses on providing an authentic local experience alongside premium facilities, and TUI BLUE Elounda Breeze delivers this beautifully.
TUI BLUE properties are designed for both families and adults, offering something for everyone whether you're seeking quality family time, relaxation or a chance to explore the local area.





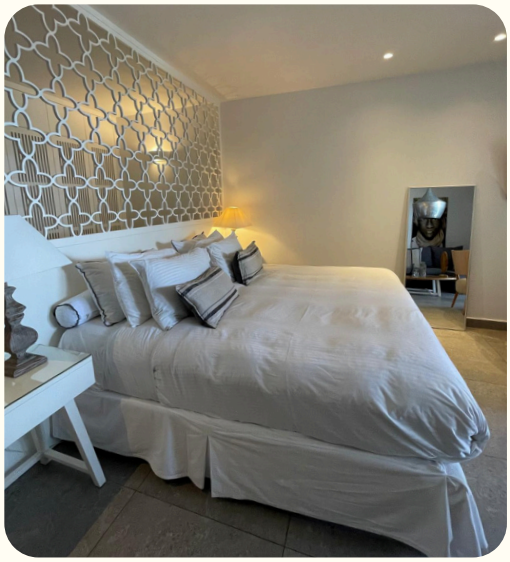
Luxury and Tranquillity at TUI BLUE Insula Alba





Our next hotel visit was the beautiful TUI BLUE Insula Alba, a stylish 5-star adults-only retreat located in Analipsi, with direct access to the beach and a wonderfully peaceful atmosphere.
With just 182 rooms, the hotel feels intimate and exclusive, making it an excellent choice for couples or anyone seeking a relaxing getaway away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. If tranquillity, comfort and quality time are high on your holiday wish list, this could be the perfect fit.







Accommodation options range from elegant standard rooms through to luxurious pool access rooms and private pool villas, giving guests plenty of choice depending on the type of holiday experience they are looking for.

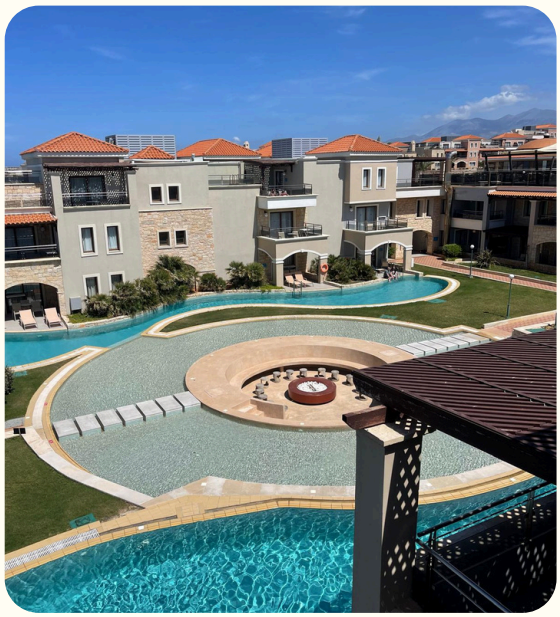
The hotel also offers an impressive range of activities and wellness experiences. Whether you fancy starting the day with yoga, getting creative at a pebble painting session, joining a fitness class or simply unwinding in the excellent spa facilities, there are plenty of opportunities to relax, recharge and make the most of your stay. With its contemporary design, attentive service and calming atmosphere, TUI BLUE Insula Alba is an ideal choice for adults looking to enjoy a sophisticated slice of Crete.

Beachfront Luxury at Atlantica Caldera Palace

For lunch, we visited the impressive TUI BLUE Sensatori Atlantica Caldera Palace, and it certainly made an impact from the moment we arrived.

With 411 rooms, this expansive beachfront resort offers a more elevated holiday experience, combining stylish accommodation, excellent facilities and a fantastic choice of dining options. It's one of those hotels where everything you need is right on your doorstep, making it easy to settle into holiday mode from day one.











Perfectly positioned on a beautiful stretch of beach, the hotel enjoys a prime seafront location and a relaxed atmosphere that appeals to both families and couples. Whether you're looking for fun-filled days with the children, quality time as a couple or simply a luxurious base from which to enjoy Crete, this hotel caters brilliantly to all types of travellers.

The variety of restaurants and food options was particularly impressive, offering plenty of choice throughout your stay. Accommodation is equally appealing, with spacious, contemporary rooms and the option to upgrade to private pool rooms for an extra touch of luxury.

Combining fantastic facilities, a stunning location and high-quality accommodation, it's easy to see why TUI BLUE Sensatori Atlantica Caldera Palace remains such a popular choice for visitors to Crete.

TUI Magic Life Candia Maris – Activity, Relaxation and Exceptional Dining

If you enjoy a holiday packed with activities, fantastic food and beautiful beachfront surroundings, then TUI Magic Life hotels are designed to appeal to both couples and families.

TUI Magic Life Candia Maris is a vibrant adults-only resort offering the perfect balance of relaxation and entertainment and definitely a hotel worth considering.

During our visit, I spent time exploring the property and quickly discovered why it has such a loyal following.











The hotel sits directly on the beachfront, giving guests easy access to the sea and stunning coastal views. The spacious pool areas are ideal for unwinding in the sunshine, while those looking to stay active will be spoilt for choice. From cycling and fitness classes to tennis and a wide range of organised activities, there is always something to get involved in.

One of the standout features for me was the food. The buffet restaurant offered an incredible selection of dishes, many created using fresh produce, grown on site. Every meal felt fresh, flavoursome and authentically Greek, making dining a real highlight of the stay.

Accommodation is equally impressive, with a variety of room types available to suit different budgets and travel styles. Whether you're travelling as a couple seeking a relaxing escape or looking for a more active holiday experience, there's an option to suit your needs.

Combining excellent facilities, a prime beachfront location, outstanding dining and a lively yet relaxed atmosphere, TUI Magic Life Candia Maris offers something for everyone looking to make the most of their time in Crete.

Off the Beaten Track in Crete

One of the highlights of the trip was stepping away from the hotels and experiencing the authentic side of Crete. We spent a full day island touring in a 4x4 jeep safari, which included a delicious traditional taverna lunch along the way.

This excursion offered a fantastic insight into the island's rich history, unique wildlife, the plants/herbs that grow in the mountains and everyday local life.

Our knowledgeable guides brought Crete to life with fascinating stories and information as we travelled through breathtaking scenery and picturesque villages.

Throughout the day, we stopped at a variety of locations, from spectacular mountain viewpoints with panoramic views stretching across the island to a working olive oil factory, where we learned about one of Crete's most important traditions. We also had time to wander through charming local gift shops and visit the island's oldest tree, a remarkable natural landmark that has stood for centuries.

For anyone wanting to discover the true character of Crete beyond the beach, this excursion is an unforgettable way to experience the island's culture, landscapes and hidden treasures.















Gemma Cunningham
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So if these highlights (and photos!) have sparked your wanderlust, **come and see us** – let's start planning and booking your own Crete adventure.

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