

## Flower finding Trip 2009

Week One – 10<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> March

Week Two – 17<sup>th</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> March

### Week One

#### Tuesday, 10<sup>th</sup> March

Airport transfers and a chance to settle in and meet other guests.

Accommodation for the first week will be at Albion House, Pano Elounda ([www.albionhousecrete.com](http://www.albionhousecrete.com)), The Artists' House, Mavrikiano, or The Olive Press at Kritsa ([www.olivepress.centerall.com](http://www.olivepress.centerall.com)), depending on numbers.

#### Wednesday, 11<sup>th</sup> March

Trip into the Thripti mountains to Thripti village and Orino. Lunch at a traditional taverna in the mountains. Guests will have their first chance to wander in the pine forests and meadows of this spectacular area, to find orchids galore!

#### Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> March

Drive to the south coast, passing through Ierapetra and on to Mirtos and Pano Simi, to explore the southern flanks of Mount Dikte – birthplace of Zeus. From there we will take the winding road down to the sea, stopping at meadows full of spectacular orchids on the way.

Lunch on the beach, at a wonderful fresh fish restaurant in Tertsa, with views over the Lybian Sea towards Africa. A chance to photograph the flowers which prefer a sandy location or to just sit back and enjoy the atmosphere and tranquility.

#### Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> March

A chance to discover fields full of wild orchids and ophrys, as we travel along a remote track with stunning views over mountains and sea to Kroustas and Prina.

#### Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> March

Free day and night in Aghios Nikolaos – with a chance to visit the Iris Museum and to explore the shops and restaurants in this pretty town situated by the sea and on the lake. A town of contrasts and surprises.

#### Sunday, 15<sup>th</sup> March

A short drive into the mountains to visit the Katharo Plateau and experience wonderful and breathtaking views of the snow covered mountains and winding crystal streams. The flowers of the Katharo are stunning and besides orchids, we may be lucky enough to find wild tulips and fritillaries. In this clear environment, flowers abound and there will be plenty to do and see. Lunch at Yannis' taverna and a chance to talk about his life and his love of nature - flowers in particular. Yannis has lived in the mountains all

his life. His father was a charcoal burner and as a boy Yannis helped with the work. A real chance to experience and enjoy the reality of life on the island.

### **Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> March**

Short drive to Plaka and Vrouhas to visit another area rich in wildlife and orchids. The views over Spinalonga islands are superb and the day will finish with visit to The Pines taverna for meze and raki. The Pines overlooks Spinalonga island and the village is the setting for Victoria Hislop's best selling book 'The Island'.

## **Week Two**

### **Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> March**

Those booked for the second week in the west of the island will travel with Julia to the village of Spilli. above the town on Rethymnon, stopping at several locations on the way to see a variety of wild flowers and places of interest. First night at the quiet and comfortable Green Hotel in Spilli.

Spilli is a charming village full of interesting shops and tavernas.

Those guests returning home today will be taken to the airport by Jane or Sylvia, after a farewell get together to compare impressions and photographs.

### **Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> March**

Trip into the mountains above Spilli to visit a water meadow, where the rare and beautiful *Ophrys candica* grows. Here, once again, the habitat changes and a wealth of different flowers can be found. The day includes a visit to an old and very skilled basket maker, who will offer us raki and walnuts and happily explain his art. Lunch will be in a wonderful taverna in Gerakari, where the owner will offer tiny glasses of her homemade cherry brandy. Not to be missed, as the owners make some of the best cheese pies in Crete.

Second night at the Green Hotel.

### **Thursday, 19<sup>th</sup> March**

Moving west along the north coast, we will make a small stop at Fodele village for lunch. Fodele is the birthplace of El Greco and is a pretty and very lush village to enjoy for an hour or so. As we travel towards Hania, there will be many places to stop and photograph as the area becomes more verdant and the vegetation thicker.

First night in Hania is at Hotel Amphora ([www.amphora.gr](http://www.amphora.gr)) overlooking the port and its ancient lighthouse. This hotel is housed in a Venetian merchant's palazzo and, despite its central location, is quiet and very atmospheric.

### **Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March**

Into the White Mountains to find endemic species, such as the endemic *Crocus sieberii*, which grows only in the snow melt. The Mountains are very rich in flora and the day will be spent driving and walking to see what riches we can find.

Second night at Amphora.

### **Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> March**

We leave Hania and travel through chestnut forests to the eco village of Milia where we will spend the late afternoon and evening exploring the area, which is rich in orchids at

this time of the year. The eco village is famous throughout Greece and has won many awards for its eco friendly approach to modern tourism.

### **Sunday, 22<sup>nd</sup> March**

As the area around the eco village is so rich in flora and fauna, Sunday is a free day for guests to 'do their own thing' and to relax and enjoy the peace and tranquility of the unspoiled forests around them.

### **Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> March**

A trip to the west of the island to visit the magical Elafonissi with its lagoon and tiny unspoilt island. Here a wealth of wild flowers can be found, some endangered and endemic to the island.

We will wade through crystal clear waters to admire the coral sands of this truly exquisite spot. A chance for the brave to take a swim and the rest of us to photograph some special flowers and plants.

Last night at Amphora Hotel in Hania.

### **Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> March**

Julia will take guests to the airport after a farewell morning get-together for coffee and a chance to compare images and notes.

### **Please Note:**

Places are limited to a maximum of 10 so please book early to avoid disappointment. Please contact Julia for further information.

Price €1,400 per week per person, excluding lunch and dinner and flights.

Email: [julia@flowersofcrete.info](mailto:julia@flowersofcrete.info)