

CRETE NEWSLETTER

UNITED CHURCH OF GOD | 2024 FEAST OF TABERNACLES

In this Newsletter Don't Miss:

Page 2

- Crete Zoom Meeting - **October 1 at 5 p.m. PT**
- Trip Locator Link
- Wristbands
- Legal Drinking Age

Page 3

- Crete Arrival Information
- Transfer Information
- Depart Day - What to do if your flight changes!

Page 4

- Atonement, Transfers & Tours in Athens
- Passport Tip
- Creta Maris Arrival Information
- Crete Optional Tours

Page 5

- Travel Protection
- Good to Know...
- Spa Bookings
- Flotation Devices: children & infants
- Where to Find Information in Past Newsletters
- Travel Gallery Website

Page 6

- Visa & Passport Reminder
- Offering Reminder



Festival Coordinator

Hello Feast-goers for Crete.

Probably you are combining anxious excitement with some nervous stress while planning and preparing for this Feast. Our planning and preparation need this – the urgent emphasis to pray for a blessed Feast. If you have been following the Church-wide reading of the book of Deuteronomy, it is clear that God responds to those who obey and put Him first. Praying for a successful Feast should be added your daily prayers.

The Crete Feast site, plus all sites need the true blessing and guidance of God. As I write this hurricane Helene potentially threatens the Panama City Beach Feast site.

A lot of different questions have risen that we've answered before, but nobody can keep up with all the information. A key to this being a successful Feast is communication. If you have a question, email or call me or contact Travel Gallery.

Continue on page 2

Need To Know!

Crete Trip Locator

Here's a link to the Trip Locator. We suggest you print two copies. Take one on the trip with you and leave one with your emergency contact or someone who might need to reach you.

[Click Here for the Trip Locator](#)

Wrist Bands

Everyone will be issued a wristband when they arrive at the Creta Maris. These wristbands are issued by the Creta Maris Resort and need to be worn the entire length of your stay. These identify you as a hotel guest. Because we are a large group we've opted to have a different color to stand out among the crowd. Parents take note below:

Legal Drinking Age

Parents please be aware that the legal drinking age in Greece is 18 years old. Because of this, the resort issues special wrist bands to all teens 12-17 years old. These wrist bands will be different color than our main group's and will help the staff at the Creta Maris know who is and isn't of legal drinking age.

Continued from page 1

There are links in this newsletter where you will be looking at your arrival and departure information. With 700+ people we can't send individual emails with all the pertinent information, so you will also see other people's names who are attending in Crete. Please keep these lists private.

We also need to be aware that our Crete Festival is a private meeting in a world where danger is a reality anywhere in the world and at any Feast site. I don't expect any problems, but we will have in place a procedure whereby, you can be identified as an officially registered attendee to be in the building. Greeters will be friendly, but if they don't recognize you or know you they will be looking for name badges or whatever we finally decide on for identification.

Safe Travels,

Charles Melear, Conference Planner

United Church of God

(970) 484-5878 office / home * (972) 279-3347 mobile

Dress for Church - Acceptable Church attire for both Sabbath and week days is **business casual** for both men and women (ties or jackets not required). This includes speakers, song leaders, special music and the choir. Jeans and shorts are not acceptable at Church services.

Crete Zoom Meeting - Tuesday, October 1

Join us on Zoom and ask any outstanding questions you have. Be sure to check out page 5 of this newsletter which tells you things already covered in one of our previous newsletters.

See you on **Tuesday, October 1 at 5 p.m. PT**. Here's the link to join the meeting:

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87842800378?pwd=DbOP5i8G8v2mbR5W0SNRLeVEihur6L1>

Meeting ID: 878 4280 0378

Passcode: 680838

Arrival at Heraklion Airport, Crete

Step 1: Collect Your Luggage

Upon arrival at Heraklion Airport, proceed to the baggage claim area to collect your luggage.

Step 2: Head to Hellenic Zeus Desk No. 23

After collecting your luggage, make your way to Desk No. 23 (Hellenic Zeus), located right outside the arrivals lounge. Please refer to the photo provided for easy identification of the desk.



Step 3: Verify Your Transfer Information

Transfers are grouped according to the arrival times. We have done this to minimize wait times. This [Crete Transfer Lists](#) shows all the arrivals. If you notice any discrepancies, contact us immediately at: groups@travelgallery.com.

Note About Airline Codes and Flight Numbers

- Aegean Airlines' code is "A3," which often appears before the flight number (e.g., A3 306). To avoid confusion, we've adjusted the list to focus on the flight numbers and include the airline name in a separate field.
- Additionally, code-sharing can cause similar confusion. For instance, United Airlines may market an Aegean Airlines flight with a different number (e.g., UA 8306). In some cases, we've edited the list to show the actual operating carrier.

Day of Travel Contact - see box below.

Arrival at Heraklion Ferry, Crete

Step 1: Collect Your Luggage

Upon arrival head to disembarkation deck, be sure to take collect your luggage.

Step 2: Proceed to the Transfer Area

Head to the transportation area where the Hellenic Zeus representative will meet you.

Step 3: Verify Your Transfer

Review the [Crete Transfer Lists](#). If you spot any errors, email us at groups@travelgallery.com.

Day of Travel Contact: See the box to the right.

Transfer to Creta Maris Resort

Transfers Included for Booked Stays:

Transfers to the Creta Maris Resort are arranged based on your arrival date. If you booked extra nights through Travel Gallery, your transfer for those additional days is also included.

For Travelers Arriving Early or on Their Own:

If you are arriving in Crete before the scheduled group arrival and have not booked your extra nights through Travel Gallery, no transfer will be provided. You will be listed as "SELF" on the transfer document, indicating you are responsible for securing your own transportation to your accommodations and to the Creta Maris Resort on October 16.

Missed Deadlines for Arrival/Departure Info:

If you did not submit your arrival or departure information by the deadline, you will also be categorized as "SELF" and responsible for arranging your own transfers.

Transfer Information Link:

You can find your transfer group assignment in the following Google Drive document:

[Crete Transfer Lists](#)

- **Tab 1:** Crete Arrivals
- **Tab 3:** Crete Departures
Tip: Use "Command + F" (Mac) or "Control + F" (PC) to quickly search for your name.

For your convenience, the transfer details and links can also be found on our website:

[Travel Gallery - UCG Crete 2024](#)

Day of Travel Changes

Arrivals (air travel or ferry):

- Crete ground handling agents will be tracking arrival times - there is no need to advise of arrival delays if you are still on the original flight or ferry.
- If your travel is changed to a different date, flight number or ferry please text or WhatsApp message Frank Fish, +1-818-332-6141 with your name, new date, airline (ferry), flight #, originating airport (island), arrival time.

ATHENS PROGRAMS

For those of you on the pre booked Athens programs with Travel Gallery, which includes arrival transfers, tours and departure transfers we have prepared a special document which we are sending directly to you. We are also providing the link again here:

[Link](#) to the Trip Locator for Athens Programs

[Link](#) to the Transfers & Tour Document

Athens Atonement Services

If you are a part of the Athens pre booked programs with Travel Gallery you are automatically included in the Atonement Service. There's no extra cost.

For those of you who would like to attend Atonement Services there's a cost to cover the meeting rental space and support.

Some of you have already booked Atonement Services. You can find confirmation of this by clicking the "Check on Atonement" link below.

Atonement Space Still Available...

We have ample space to add more people, please email or call us by Friday, October 4 to add it to your reservation.

Saturday, October 12
Wyndham Grand Athens
Time: 1:30 p.m.
Cost per adult: \$30

[CHECK ON ATONEMENT](#)

Flights In / Out of Heraklion

If you haven't already selected your seats for your flights in / out of Heraklion, now is a good time for you to do that.

Passports

You should have a physical or digital copy of your passport. It is really helpful if something happens to your passport. And don't forget to bring your visa, if applicable.

Creta Maris Resort - Arrival Information

When you arrive at the Creta Maris resort please collect your luggage and look for the UCG group check in.

Please note: For those who did not provide their passport information there will be a separate check-in line when you arrive at the Creta Maris Resort.

Optional Tours During the Feast

Please see the link below for the tours you have booked. All have been pre-arranged and pre-paid. (In the document see the 2nd tab: Crete Optional Tours).

The list is in alphabetical order or use Command F (Apple) or Control F - it let's you search for your name.

[Optional Tours Booked](#)

Travel Protection - Trip Mate

For those that purchase travel protection in the group portal from Trip Mate. If you have questions or challenges while traveling you can reach Customer Service at: 1-844-777-6856.

For medical, legal or travel assistances services 24 hours a day/365 days a year contact Generali Global Assistance with US/Canada 1-855-205-1232 or worldwide (collect) at: 1-954-370-3251.

For a full description of coverage - please see the email you received when you first enrolled. The email would be from TripMate.

Flotation Devices for Infants & Children

There are flotation devices for children and infants available in the mini market at the Creta Maris to purchase.

Travel Gallery Website

<https://www.travelgallery.com/ucg-crete-2024>

What's on the website?

- ❖ Booking Portal Access
- ❖ **NEW** - Link to Crete Transfers & Optional Tour List
- ❖ **NEW** - Link to Athens Transfers, Atonement & Tours List
- ❖ **NEW** - Trip Locator Links
- ❖ **NEW** - Current & Past Newsletters
- ❖ FOT Schedule & Activities

It might be good to bookmark our website so you can find information you didn't print or send us information if your flight changes.

Reminder - Spa Bookings

Following is the email address of the Creta Maris spa center. You can communicate directly with the Spa to book therapies and treatments.

aegeospas@cretamaris.gr

Good To Know...

Many hotels in Greece do not provide washcloths. You might want to bring a fast-drying washcloth with you.

Looking for Information? Past Newsletters Addressed:

May

- **Greek Room Tax 10 € per room, per night due payable by guest**
- Passport Validity Requirements
- Getting to Crete
- Island Jewels Article Link

July

- Packing List & Tips
- Creta Maris Resort Services
- Daily Schedule
- Tips for Cell Phones
- Adapter/Voltage Converter
- Weather

August

- Dress for Church
- Children's Choir
- Offering
- Meal Times
- Currency
- Gratuities/Tipping

Current and past newsletters can be found on our UCG 2024 Crete Festival webpage:

<https://www.travelgallery.com/ucg-crete-2024>

July 29, 2024

Important VISA and PASSPORT reminder!

Please READ this email SLOWLY and CAREFULLY. And do it NOW.

Please read this email NOW!!! As we begin reviewing passport and country of residency details it seems prudent to remind you of entry requirements for Greece.

Citizens of Canada and United States do NOT need a visa for entry into Europe and Greece for the upcoming trip in October 2024 to Crete.

European Union passport holders should NOT need additional documents for visiting Crete this fall. Please verify appropriate Schengen Zone rules.

Holders of Australians & United Kingdom passports please review requirements at: <https://www.schengenvisainfo.com/#calculating-the-90-180-rule>

All citizens holding OTHER passports please use the Schengen Visa Wizard (link above) to determine entry requirements. Of particular concern are those foreign nationals residing outside your home country. This process may require an in-person interview in another city or country before leaving your country of residence.

In most cases, you are NOT able to obtain a visa at the time of arrival into the European Schengen Zone. It must be done in ADVANCE of travel.

ALL travelers should be aware of PASSPORT VALIDITY. Some countries require that your passport have at least six months of validity beyond the dates of your trip. Some airlines will not allow you to board if this requirement is not met. At a minimum it must be May 1, 2025 or later depending on your return date.

Now is the time to check your passport expiration date and be sure it is within the guidelines of any country you are traveling to. Thank you.

**Offering Information:
Atonement, FOT 1st and 8th Day**

As is customary and an administrative decision by the United Church of God, on Festival Tour Programs we ask that you forward your holy day offerings to the applicable home office where you reside, prior to the fall holy days. You can do it online at: donate.ucg.org

Creta Maris Resort

Check in starts at 3 p.m.

Check out is by 11 a.m.

MEAL TIMES

7:30 - 10:30 ~ Breakfast

12:30 - 14:30 ~ Lunch

18:30 - 21:30 ~ Dinner