


Lasithi Prefecture

Cultural, Religious & Events Calendar 2026

Ierapetra · Agios Nikolaos · Sitia · Makri Gialos · Myrtilos · Elounda · Kritsa · Neapoli · Palekastro

Legend

 Religious Feast	 Lent / Fasting	 Cultural Event
 Sports	 Feast / Food	 Local Tradition






March 2026


Date	Category	Event / Feast	Description & Location
6-8 Mar	 Feast / Food	Fresh Expo	Exhibition hosting local producers <i>♀ Ierapetra</i>
22 Mar	 Sports	Coast to Coast Race – Ierapetra	A half marathon (21km) and 5km road race described as one of the most scenic routes in eastern Crete.. A Family Run (5km, non-competitive, parents and children) runs alongside. <i>♀ Ierapetra (Minos Park finish)</i>
23 Mar	 Lent/Fast	Mid-Lent (Mesonysti)	Halfway point of Orthodox Great Lent. Extra liturgies observed; stricter fasting days — even olive oil avoided on Wednesday and Friday. A good week for traditional snail (hohlloi) dishes in Lasithi tavernas. <i>♀ All towns</i>
25 Mar	 Religious	Annunciation & Greek Independence Day	Double national holiday. Church services for the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, followed by military parades and student processions. One of the most important national celebrations. Feast of fried cod with garlic sauce. <i>♀ All towns</i>
25 Mar	 Cultural	Independence Day Parade	Students in traditional Cretan dress carry Greek flags through central streets; lyra music, commemorative speeches, and wreath-laying mark the 1821 revolution against Ottoman rule. <i>♀ Ierapetra, Agios Nikolaos, Sitia – main streets</i>

April 2026

Date	Category	Event / Feast	Description & Location
5 Apr	 Religious	Palm Sunday	Churches distribute bay laurel branches Elaborate liturgy; families carry blessed branches home and display them on their icons for the year. Traditionally fish is eaten. <i>♀ All churches</i>
5 Apr	 Religious	Catholic Easter	Solemn services for the international community. Catholic Pastoral Center of Saint Paul the Apostle, in Ierapetra. (also meets in Agios Nikolas). Masses in Albanian, Polish, English and Greek. <i>♀ Ierapetra, Agios Nikolas</i>
6 Apr	 Religious	Holy Monday – Bridegroom Matins	Start of Holy Week. The evening Nymphios (Bridegroom) service is sung with haunting Byzantine chant. Businesses across the prefecture wind down for the week. <i>♀ All churches</i>
7 Apr	 Religious	Holy Tuesday – Hymn of Kassiani	The beloved hymn of Kassiani — composed by a 9th-century Byzantine poetess — is chanted in full at the evening service. A deeply moving and much-anticipated liturgy across all of Crete. <i>♀ All churches</i>
8 Apr	 Religious	Holy Wednesday – anointing of Jesus	Holy Wednesday in Crete is a deeply spiritual, community-centered day. People gather at church for healing and reflection while observing fasting and local traditions, all in preparation for Good Friday and the celebration of Easter.

9 Apr	 Religious	Holy Thursday – Last Supper & Twelve Gospels	Morning Divine Liturgy. Evening: the "Twelve Gospels" service, during which the full story of the Passion is read. Worshippers hold lit candles throughout the two-hour service. Families dye the eggs red. <i>☞ All churches</i>
10 Apr	 Religious	Good Friday (Megali Paraskevi)	The most solemn day of the Orthodox year. Churches draped in black. Evening: the Epitaphios (flower-decorated bier of Christ) is carried through the streets in a candlelit procession, bells tolling. Particularly moving in small villages. <i>☞ Myrtos, Makri Gialos, Ierapetra, all villages</i>
11 Apr	 Religious	Holy Saturday – Resurrection Vigil	At midnight: "Christos Anesti!" The Resurrection is proclaimed. Fireworks burst over every town and village, "Burning of Judas" bonfires, church bells ring, the Holy Light is passed from candle to candle through the crowds. One of the most extraordinary nights in Crete. <i>☞ All towns & villages</i>
12 Apr	 Feast/Food	Mayiritsa – Breaking the Lenten Fast	[after midnight service] Families break the 40-day Lenten fast with mayiritsa: a rich, lemony soup of lamb liver and offal, spring onions, dill, and avgolemono. Eaten in homes and tavernas after midnight. <i>☞ All homes & tavernas</i>
12 Apr	 Religious	Easter Sunday (Pascha)	The greatest feast of the Orthodox year. Whole-lamb/goat roasting on the spit (souvla) begins at dawn. Families feast all day on lamb, kokoretsi, tsikoudia, red eggs, kourambiedes. Lyra music fills courtyards and village squares. <i>☞ All towns</i>
12 Apr	 Feast/Food	Easter Lamb on the Spit	Communities gather from dawn to roast whole lamb and kokoretsi (offal wrapped around a spit) over charcoal. Village squares in Myrtos, Kritsa, and rural Ierapetra are particularly festive. <i>☞ Myrtos, Kritsa, rural Ierapetra, all villages</i>
13 Apr	 Feast/Food	Easter Monday – Continued Feasting	The feast continues: lamb soup, fried lamb chops, Easter cookies (koulourakia), and tsourekis sweet bread. Many families head to the beach or mountains for the day. <i>☞ All towns</i>
23 Apr	 Religious	Feast of Saint George (Agios Georgios)	Patron saint of Cretan shepherds, horsemen, and many villages. Nameday celebrations across the prefecture; some inland villages near Sitia hold traditional horse events. <i>☞ Sitia region, inland villages</i>

May 2026			
Date	Category	Event / Feast	Description & Location
1 May	 Cultural	May Day – Flower Wreaths (Protomagia)	Families collect wildflowers and weave decorative wreaths hung on their front doors — tradition holds they stay until June 24th. Organised countryside picnics around Kritsa and in the Lasithi hills. One of the most joyful folk traditions in Greece. <i>☞ All towns, Kritsa, hills near Ierapetra</i>
16-17 May	 Feast/Food	Wineries open doors day	Winery all over Crete open their doors to the public.
21 May	 Religious	Feast of Saints Constantine & Helen	Major nameday — Constantine and Helen are among the most common names in Greece. Tavernas and homes host large celebrations; it is one of the biggest nameday parties of the year. <i>☞ All towns</i>
24 May	 Sports	Kronio Iasithi mountain trail run	[TO BE CONFIRMED] This trail running festival features various distances, including a 42km, 14km, and 5.6km race, taking runners through scenic mountain terrain. It is known as a premier trail running experience in the area, offering a blend of competition and nature <i>☞ Tzermaido</i>
25 May	 Sports	Lasithi Road Cycling Race	[TO BE CONFIRMED] Annual cycling event through olive groves, mountain roads, and coastal scenery. Confirm with local cycling clubs closer to the date.

30 May	 Cultural	Kornaria Festival Opens – Sitia	[ANNUAL - confirmed as opening end of May/early June] The Kornaria festival, Sitia's major summer cultural programme, begins its season. Named after Cretan poet Vitsentzos Kornaros, it runs through to mid-August/September. Events include concerts, theatre, dance, photography exhibitions, lectures, and road races — all held at the Venetian Kazarma fortress and the Municipal Cultural Centre (Polikentro). <i>♀ Sitia – Kazarma fortress & Polikentro</i>
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June 2026

Date	Category	Event / Feast	Description & Location
5 Jun	 Cultural	Kornaria – Village Festival	[ANNUAL - late June within Kornaria programme] The Klidonas midsummer tradition: young women write wishes on paper, place them in a water vessel left under the stars overnight, and read their fortunes the next morning. Traditional music and dancing follow in village squares near Sitia. <i>♀ Sitia area villages</i>
6-7 Jun	 Feast/Food	Open farm day	[TO BE CONFIRMED] farms open their doors to the public so visitors can learn about rural life, meet producers, take part in workshops, see how food is grown and made, and buy local products directly at the source <i>♀ Ierapetra, Sitia, Agios Nikolaos</i>
8-9 Jun	 Religious	Pentecost and Holy Spirit Monday	Pentecost celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles, and Holy Spirit Monday is a local holiday marked by church services, family gatherings, and traditional feasts. Public Holiday, and 1 st long weekend of summer. <i>♀ Villages Ierapetra, Kalo Chorio, Neapoli, Kritsa, Mialtos</i>
12 Jun	 Cultural	Last day of School	Marks the beginning of the 3month summer vacation for children all over Greece.
13 Jun	 Sports	Ierapetra City Run	City Run Vol 6 (10k, 5k, Beer Mile) <i>♀ Ierapetra</i>
20 Jun	 Cultural	Yoga Festival	[TO BE CONFIRMED] <i>♀ Ierapetra</i>
20-21 Jun	 Feast/Food	Myrtos Beer festival	[TO BE CONFIRMED] In the village square of Myrtos with local craft brewers, live music, street food, and beer tastings — a festive weekend celebrating Cretan beer culture. <i>♀ Myrtos</i>
21 Jun	 Cultural	Music Day (Fete de la Musique)	International Music Day celebrated with free outdoor street concerts. Local bands, Cretan lyra ensembles, and youth orchestras perform at harbourside and lakeside venues. <i>♀ Agios Nikolaos, Sitia</i>
24 Jun	 Religious	Feast of Saint John the Baptist – Midsummer - Klidonas	The Nativity feast of John the Baptist. May Day wreaths are ceremonially burned in bonfires — a custom blending Christian celebration with ancient Midsummer traditions. Bonfires lit in many villages. <i>♀ Villages Ierapetra, Kalo Chorio, Neapoli, Kritsa, Mialtos</i>
29 Jun	 Religious	Feast of Saints Peter & Paul	Major nameday feast. Churches and chapels dedicated to these saints hold outdoor panegyria with music, food stalls, and dancing into the night. <i>♀ Village chapels across the prefecture</i>
29 Jun	 Cultural	Full Moon (Strawberry Moon)– 1st summer full moon	Full Moon Celebrations during summer are a popular tradition tied to nature, music, and community gatherings, often held in open-air settings like beaches, villages, or archaeological sites <i>♀ Crete</i>
30 Jun	 Cultural	Naval & Maritime week	[TO BE CONFIRMED] includes concerts, fishing and beach events, water sports demonstrations, visits to Hellenic Navy vessels, children's activities and cultural presentations tied to maritime life <i>♀ Agios Nikolaos, Sitia</i>

July 2026

Date	Category	Event / Feast	Description & Location
1 Jul	 Cultural	Kyrveia Festival – Summer Program around Ierapetra	[ANNUAL - July through End August] a series of cultural events including concerts, theatrical performances, traditional music and dance evenings, exhibitions and family activities: <i>☞ Ierapetra, Makry gialos, Myrtilos and surrounding villages.</i>
3 Jul	 Cultural	Sitia Mediterranean Radio Festival	[ANNUAL - first Friday–Sunday of July] Three-day music festival held at the Sitia port and pedestrian waterfront (Papies).. Features Mediterranean, Balkan, and Greek traditional music alongside Cretan lyra performances. <i>☞ Sitia port & waterfront (Papies)</i>
15 Jul	 Cultural	Agios Nikolaos International Music Festival	[ANNUAL - mid-July to early August] Open-air international music festival with classical, jazz, and contemporary performances beside the famous Lake Voulismeni and along the waterfront. International and local artists perform in the warm Cretan evenings. One of the premier cultural events of eastern Crete. <i>☞ Agios Nikolaos – Lake Voulismeni & waterfront</i>
16-17 Jul	 Religious	Feast of Saint Marina (Agia Marina)	Widely celebrated nameday across Crete. Chapels dedicated to Agia Marina hold panegyria the evening before (16 July) with outdoor feasting, traditional music, and dancing that lasts until dawn. <i>☞ Agia Marina chapels, Ierapetra region, exo mouliana</i>
18 Jul	 Sports	I run Myrtilos	[TO BE CONFIRMED] 12 km, 5 km, and a 750 m children's run <i>☞ Myrtilos</i>
20 Jul	 Religious	Feast of Prophet Elijah (Profitis Ilias)	Celebrated on mountaintops across Greece. In Lasithi, chapels on high peaks hold dawn liturgies; villagers hike up the evening before by torchlight. The views over the Mirabello Gulf and Libyan Sea at sunrise are spectacular. <i>☞ Mountaintop chapels, Lasithi & Thrypti hills</i>
18 Jul	 Sports	Lasithi plateau road race	[TO BE CONFIRMED] The Lasithi Plateau circuit routes are ideal for organised groups, training rides, or self-guided touring. <i>☞ Lasithi Plateau</i>
26 Jul	 Religious	Feast of Saint Paraskevi	Patron saint of eyes and sight. Special liturgies at churches dedicated to Agia Paraskevi. At the village of Ziros near Sitia, a traditional panegyri is held in the church courtyard. <i>☞ Agia Paraskevi churches, Ziros (Sitia area)</i>
28 Jul	 Cultural	Reggae Vibes Festival	[TO BE CONFIRMED] long-running summer Reggae & Dub music festival held on Almyros Beach in Agios Nikolaos, Crete — a major cultural event for reggae fans from across Greece and abroad. <i>☞ Agios Nikolaos , Almyros beach</i>
29 Jul	 Cultural	Full Moon (Buck Moon)– 2nd summer full moon	Full Moon Celebrations during summer are a popular tradition tied to nature, music, and community gatherings, often held in open-air settings like beaches, villages, or archaeological sites <i>☞ Crete</i>

August 2026

Date	Category	Event / Feast	Description & Location
1 Aug	 Lent/Fast	Dormition Fast Begins (Dekapentavgoustos Nisteia)	A two-week fasting period begins before the Dormition of the Virgin Mary. Fish is allowed on 6 August; otherwise a strict fast. Cretan tavernas offer expanded seafood menus — grilled octopus, stuffed squid, sea bream. <i>☞ All towns</i>
2 – 20 Aug	 Cultural	International documentary and film festival	This event is one of Greece's important documentary festivals. <i>☞ Ierapetra</i>
6 Aug	 Religious	Feast of the Transfiguration (Metamorfofi)	Mid-fast feast when fish is permitted. Grapes are blessed in church for the first time of the season — the faithful receive bunches after the liturgy. A joyful pause in the two-week fast. <i>☞ All churches</i>
7 Aug	 Cultural	Festival in the square - Neapoli	[TO BE CONFIRMED] typically a weekend of live music and cultural performances in the square. — from contemporary and traditional Greek sounds to creative performances — presented by local and visiting artists <i>☞ Neapoli</i>
10-15 Aug	 Religious	Pilgrimage to Moni Faneromeni	Thousands of pilgrims visit the monastery to attend services, venerate the icon, and fulfill religious vows. Many pilgrims walk on foot to reach the monastery <i>☞ Pachia Ammos</i>
15 Aug	 Religious	Dormition of the Virgin Mary (Dekapentavgoustos)	most important summer feast. All-night vigil the night before; grand morning liturgy and procession of the Virgin's icon through the streets. Every village holds its panegyri; the date is the biggest single feast day in the Orthodox calendar after Easter. <i>☞ All churches and villages – especially Myrtos, Kritsa</i>
15 Aug	 Feast/Food	Panegyri Feast – Dormition	Following the morning liturgy, villages hold all-day outdoor feasts: whole lamb roasts, grilled fish, barrels of wine and tsikoudia, and live Cretan lyra music and dancing. The feasting at Myrtos and Kritsa village squares is legendary. <i>☞ Myrtos, Kritsa, Ierapetra villages</i>
16 Aug	 Cultural	Sitia Sultana Grape Festival (within Kornaria)	[TO BE CONFIRMED] festival marking the start of the Sultana grape harvest — Tastings of raisin-based products, local wine and raki, traditional music and dance, and tours of the drying terraces. <i>☞ Sitia, piskokefalo</i>
21-23 Aug	 Cultural	Potato Festival Iasithi	[TO BE CONFIRMED] A three-day festival featuring a wide variety of potato dishes (wood-oven potatoes, local recipes, etc.) along with Cretan music, dances and social events <i>☞ Tzermiado</i>
23 Aug	 Cultural	Kritsa traditional wedding	[TO BE CONFIRMED] a cultural heritage event that reenacts Cretan wedding customs a community festival showcasing the island's folk traditions. <i>☞ Kritsa</i>
28 Aug	 Cultural	Full Moon (Sturgeon Moon)– last summer full moon	Full Moon Celebrations during summer are a popular tradition tied to nature, music, and community gatherings, often held in open-air settings like beaches, villages, or archaeological sites <i>☞ Crete</i>
29 Aug	 Sports	Diktaioi Games- road running event and festival	[TO BE CONFIRMED] athletics, tradition, music and local culture across several days, making it both a sport and cultural highlight of the plateau's summer calendar. 24 km race (ZeusRun), 6 km , fun runs like 1.5 km, 750 m, 500 m, and 50 m for younger participants and families <i>☞ Psychro</i>
29 Aug	 Religious	Beheading of Saint John the Baptist Pilgrimage to Moni Kapsa	A strict fast day. No meat, dairy, wine, or oil. A day of solemn reflection; no festive gatherings. Marks the end of the summer feast season. thousands of believers traditionally arrive from around Crete — many traveling on foot — to attend the liturgy and venerate the saint. <i>☞ All churches, Makry Gialos</i>

September 2026

Date	Category	Event / Feast	Description & Location
1 Sep	 Religious	Ecclesiastical New Year (Indiction)	Start of the Orthodox church year. Blessing of the Waters ceremony; sea and harbour blessing in fishing communities. <i>☞ Ierapetra, Sitia, Agios Nikolaos harbours</i>
8 Sep	 Religious	Nativity of the Virgin Mary	Major feast celebrating the birth of the Theotokos. Particularly celebrated in churches and chapels dedicated to the Panagia. Village panegyria held on the eve (7 September) in many communities. <i>☞ Village churches across Lasithi</i>
11 Sep	 Cultural	First day of school	It's a mix of excitement and nerves, for kids and parents alike. Most visitors and tourists have left and a different pace evolves. <i>☞ Crete</i>
14 Sep	 Religious	Exaltation of the Holy Cross	Strict fast day. Solemn services across all parishes; the cross is raised and lowered four times to bless the four directions. Basil bunches are distributed to the faithful. <i>☞ All churches</i>
16-19 Sep	 Sports	International Cliff Diving Lake Voulismeni	[TO BE CONFIRMED] international competitors diving from heights of around 20 metres into the lake's waters. Often accompanied by a rich cultural programme including music, light shows, opera performances, DJ sets and entertainment set around the natural amphitheatre of Lake Voulismeni. <i>☞ Agios Nikolaos</i>
18-23 Sep	 Sports	On SUP event	[TO BE CONFIRMED] international competition <i>☞ Agios Nikolaos</i>
26 Sep	 Cultural	World Tourism Day – Cretan Cooking Demonstrations	Local municipalities and tourism associations host free demonstrations of traditional Cretan cooking — olive oil tasting, cheese-making, and raki distillation. Confirm exact events with local tourism offices. <i>☞ Agios Nikolaos, Ierapetra, Sitia</i>
27 Sep	 Cultural	Yoga Festival – Ierapetra	[<i>☞ Ierapetra</i>

October 2026

Date	Category	Event / Feast	Description & Location
4 Oct	 Cultural	Olive Harvest Season Opens Open farm days	The olive harvest officially begins in Lasithi — the backbone of the local economy. Families return to ancestral groves; the sound of mechanical harvesters fills the hillsides. The harvest runs through December. <i>☞ Ierapetra, Myrtos, Sitia area</i>
18 Oct	 Sports	Afentis mountain marathon Kavousi	[TO BE CONFIRMED] climbing through mountain terrain, old paths (kalderimia), forests, gorges and up to the Afentis peak (~1,476 m) <i>☞ Kavousi</i>
26 Oct	 Religious	Feast of Saint Demetrius (Agios Dimitrios)	Major nameday feast. The eve (25 October) is traditionally the day the first barrel of new wine is opened: the saying goes "Agios Dimitrios brings out the wine." Wine cellars near Sitia and Ierapetra hold informal tastings. <i>☞ All towns; wine cellars near Sitia & Ierapetra</i>
28 Oct	 Cultural	Ohi Day – National Anniversary	"No" Day — commemorating Greece's historic rejection of Mussolini's ultimatum in 1940. Military and student parades, wreath-laying ceremonies, and patriotic speeches in all towns. Schools and buildings decorated with Greek flags. <i>☞ All towns – central streets</i>
30 Oct	 Cultural	Kazanemata - distillation of raki	Farmers, neighbours and visitors gather around the still as the spirit distills, and the event becomes a

			communal celebration with music, singing dancing, and plenty of food ☞ <i>All towns</i>
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November 2026			
Date	Category	Event / Feast	Description & Location
8 Nov	 Religious	Feast of Archangels Michael & Gabriel (Taxiarchai)	Major feast for the Taxiarchai. Nameday of Mihalis and Gavriil — two of the most common names in Crete. Chapels dedicated to the Archangels hold panegyria with outdoor feasting and music. ☞ <i>Archangel chapels across the prefecture</i>
15 Nov	 Lent/Fast	Christmas Advent Fast Begins	A 40-day fasting season before Christmas. Stricter days are Wednesday and Friday. Cretan cuisine adapts naturally: legume soups (fasolada, revithia), boiled greens (horta), wild snails (hohlioi me xython), dried figs and carobs. ☞ <i>All towns</i>
21 Nov	 Religious	Presentation of the Virgin Mary (Eisodia)	Major feast celebrating the presentation of the young Mary in the Jerusalem Temple. Grand liturgy. Women named Maria celebrate one of the year's most important namedays. ☞ <i>All churches</i>
30 Nov	 Religious	Feast of Saint Andrew (Agios Andreas)	Patron saint of fishermen. Fishing communities in Ierapetra and Agios Nikolaos hold special harbour chapel services. ☞ <i>Ierapetra harbour, Agios Nikolaos port</i>

Disclaimer : Please, check with organizers, or their official webpages for confirmation of events and exact dates, as they are mostly confirmed only 1-2 months in advance