

## Troodos

The Cyprus Mountains Nine Byzantine churches in the Troodos mountains, are included in the official UNESCO list of cultural treasures of the World's heritage: Stavros tou Ayiasmati, Panayia tou Araka, Timiou Stavrou at Pelendri, Ayios Nikolaos tis Stegis, Panayia Podithou, Assinou, Ayios Ioannis Lampadistis, Panayia tou Moutoula, and Archangel Michael at Pedhoulas. The impressive Troodos mountain range stretches across most of the western side of Cyprus, offering cool sanctuary and idyllic hours spent in long walks in its scented pine forests in summer and winter sports and ski-ing in winter. Here are the many famous mountain resorts, Byzantine monasteries and churches on mountain peaks, and nestling in its valleys and picturesque mountain villages clinging to terraced hill slopes. The area has been known since ancient times for its mines, and in the Byzantine period it became a great centre of Byzantine art, as churches and monasteries were built in the mountains, away from the threatened coastline. The Cyprus Tourism Organisation has a leaflet for the unique Nature Walks, which have been created by the Forestry Department in co-operation with the Cyprus Tourism Organisation at Troodos itself, with full details of the rich profusion of flora and fauna found on these very attractive walks, which attract many visitors every year. In the Troodos mountain range, besides Machairas to the east, and the actual Troodos district around Mount Olympus (height 1951 metres), there are four other districts, each of which has its own character and separate charm. These districts are: 1. Pitsillia to the east of Mount Olympus, the 2. Solea Valley and the 3. Marathassa Valley to the north of Mount Olympus, and the 4. Krassochoia (the Wine Villages) to the south (north-west of the Limassol district). These districts are easy to reach from either Limassol or Nicosia.