

# THE GREAT CAPE TO CAPE WALKING CHALLENGE! THE ULTIMATE WALK IN NORTHERN CYPRUS

## ITINERARY

### **DAY 1 – CAPE KORUCAM to GECITKOY VILLAGE (11.5miles/18.4km)**

The walk commences at Cape Korucam in the remote village of Sadrazamkoy at the far western tip of the island. We start the walk by standing on the very tip of the peninsular where we head along the wide level track. Passing out of the village we head along the road until we reach the Kyrenia Mountain Trail which takes us along a dusty track between the sculpted mountains, shortly we reach the maronite village of Korucam. A walk through the village brings us to an old army look out tower which is where we start our decent down towards Gecitkoy village with its large mosque in sight. The walk is most pleasant; the area is teeming with wild flowers in the spring. We pass by the St Hilarion vineyard a popular local wine before reaching the coastal road at the point where it heads inland. A stop at Volkans village restaurant for refreshments is a perfect ending to the days walk.

### **DAY 2 – GECITKOY VILLAGE TO LAPTA CROSS ROADS (13.4miles/21.5km)**

Today we head back to Geçitkoy village where we head towards the reservoir, set behind a small dam in a pleasant valley.

Geçitkoy is the first village at the western end of the main mountain block which makes a stunning backdrop for the start of the days walk. We start by passing over the dam and head south on the eastern side of the reservoir. The hillside alongside us is covered with the usual tough, dense Mediterranean shrubs providing habitat for many birds. The reservoir is usually full of waterfowl and in the migratory season we see lots of birds passing through. We climb gently on the trail through the more wooded lower slopes, with a view over the other side of this attractive valley. Its not long before we reach the far side of this beautiful valley, a gentle climb brings us up on to the range, the area is well shaded as we reach the tarmac ridge path which brings us to the Karsiyaka/kozan pass. Here we make a stop at Savashs mountain restaurant, a really stupendous location set in heavily scented pine woodland. Following our well earned lunch break we make our way along the ridge road passing the highest point of the range at 1040 metres. The ridge is literally on the edge of the mountain face and the views are superb, however its not long before we reach Lapta cross roads which is where we end the days walk.

### **DAY 3 – LAPTA CROSS ROADS TO DIKMEN (15.8/miles/25.2km)**

Today we drive back up to Lapta cross to start the walk from yesterdays finishing point. We head eastwards along the ridge enjoying the mature areas of the woodland that hang over the ridge making for a pleasant and shaded walk. The views are mainly to the north, overlooking the coastal plane below. We pass by an old Greek army camp which is now partly used by the Turkish army, we must not hang around and photography is not permitted in much of this area. We continue along the ridge passing St Hilarion Castle. St. Hilarion is the most intact and interesting of all the Crusader castles and repairs and sensitive renovations have enhanced the experience. From the castle we entre a further military restricted area, here we must take transport for a short journey down to the main Girne to Lefkosa road which we then cross to pick up the track back on to the trail. Once back on our feet we climb across the foot hills of the range with views over to Nicosia and the Troodos in the distance. We head through dry scrubby landscape with limited areas of forestry before dropping down into the village of Dikmen for return transport back to our hotel

#### **DAY 4– DIKMEN TO SOURP MAGAR (13.5miles/21.6km)**

Today we head back to Dikmen to commence our walk along the ridge road, we pass along the foot hills of the range slightly north of some fairly poor farming villages Views are to the south where Nicosia is spread out in front of the ridge. Its not long before we pass under the big white flag which is painted on to the face of the mountain, the flag is in fact the biggest in the world. Our path takes us through the village of Taskent and through a popular picnic area and to the Panayia Aphendrika Monastery. From here the road wends round passing close to Buffavento Castle where a further 6kms stretch takes us along the very edge of the ridge road to the Buffavento pass where we make a stop at Buffavento Café. Once fully refreshed we head down under the southern face of the five finger mountains (Bespermark) and across various mountain headlands towards 'lovers leap' . We proceed eastwards along a tarmac road soon reaching Sourp Magar where return transport takes us back to our hotel.

#### **DAY 5 –SOURP MAGAR TO TATLISU PASS (15.2miles/24.6km)**

We start by climbing up to the Alevkaya Forest Station, a base for the forestry department and also the Herbarium set up by Dr. Deryk Viney. This interesting project contains detail of over 800 plants indigenous to Cyprus. Dr. Viney is very much the expert on the famous orchids of Northern Cyprus and his original drawings are a delight to see. We pass along the range close to the north of the Yayla summit at 936.9m the second highest peak of the range. All along this ridge there are many little springs all coupled up to provide water for the villages far below. It is very noticeable that the vegetation on the southern face of the ridge is less prolific than on the northern face which receives the incoming rains, and thus accounts for the lush greenery. We follow a downwards zig zag along the track as we climb through the summit there are views of the central plane far below to the south. On each corner there is a vista of sea, mountains and woods. The track remains fairly level as we continue across the summit and Its not long before we start to see some of the small villages on the north coast such as Esentepe, which have grown in recent years with the building of new developments. From here the views are almost entirely on the northern flank of the range as we make our way down to the Mersinlik to Iskele road for return transport.

**Rest day.....**

#### **DAY 6 – TATLISU PASS TO KANTARA VILLAGE(15.7miles/24.3km) (accommodation at kantara guest house – dinner bed and breakfast)**

Today we again head back to the previous days finishing point by the Mersinlik to Iskele road. We head on to the range passing large areas of carob and olive trees. We follow a track on to the Kyrenia Mountain Trail which leads us high up above Tatlisu quarry. It's a good steady climb up to the ridge track but once there we enjoy an easy walk for much of the day with plenty of shade. The navigation of the trail is all too easy, there are no alternatives until we reach the Tatlisu crossover but again we continue straight across the range. As we reach the half way point you can clearly see over to Famagusta some 32miles in the distance this is the view for much of way now as we head over to Kantara Village. We eventually come out on to a new road which is sign posted for Kantara, we follow this road a very short distance before returning to the ridge path which winds round to the village. Kantara is the highest village in Northern Cyprus at 700m, this really is a special location. Here we head to the vine covered terrace at Kantara Inn for a much needed refreshment of two?

#### **DAY 7 - KANTARA VILLAGE TO ZIYAMET(16.8miles/26.8km)**

This morning we head out of Kantara on to the Kyrenia Mountain Trail, a downwards track takes us to the summit of the Kaplica to Buyukkonuk pass at 330m. The track continues to descend for much of the way, we follow a trail perched on the northern face of this little mountain range with fabulaous views of the sea below us. Shortly we approach the little village of Yedikonuk. We head through the village following the off road track which leads us in the direction of Ziyamet Village. On our approach to Ziyamet we pass rough poor agricultural areas, there is a mix of crops and various pasture areas where shepherds with their universally mean looking dogs look after their sheep and goats. It is hard to tell which are which and the biblical reference to sorting out the sheep from the goats represents

more of a challenge than one would realise. we continue through the village to the crossroads where transport awaits us

**DAY 8 – ZIYAMET – KARPASIA RANGE (14.7miles/23.5km) (accommodation TBA)**

Today we head back to Ziyamet crossroads, we have to follow the road for a while due to the lack of alternative routes, however we are rewarded with the Panayia Kanakaria Monastery which with EU funds has been restored and has beautiful icons - well worth seeing. We soon reach Boltasli we pass several picnic areas in a beautiful woodland location, a short section of tarmac, leads us to an off road track and into a wide open agricultural settlement. We head down towards Yenierenkoy. Passing out of the village we follow the road until we reach a track which makes big loops around the various headlands. We soon overlook the north coast and head to a small track which links the north and the south coast. We head north through an area where trees have been cleared to make further agricultural land. We continue along the Karpasia range until we meet our transport to our evening's accommodation

**DAY 9 – KARPASIA RANGE TO DIPKARPAZ (17.6miles/28.1km) (accommodation TBA)**

Today we head back on to the Karpasia range, as we head up the wooded valley we are surrounded by hardy shrubs which still manage to give a profusion of wild flowers in the spring,. As we precede through this area the hill slopes all around have been terraced, a huge undertaking in an attempt to induce some limited forestry and ground cover. Decades later the effects have been very limited but is never the less very pleasant. The view to the south coast below is over small settlements and numerous ruins of Roman and early, middle and late Byzantine period. We head along the Karpasia range which rises to 250 meters. However we soon make our decent towards Dipkarpaz, much of this area is made up of small farming communities. We reach Dipkarpaz main street which is dominated by a huge Orthodox church along side a massive new shiny domed mosque. There are a small selection of small markets that make a good refreshment stop before we make our way out of the village to meet our transport.

**DAY 10 –DIPKARPAZ TO CAPE ZAFER (13.3miles/21.2km)** Well it's the final leg of our adventure, we head across agricultural land through a pleasant valley, we cross the summit heading north, passing through the range. We enter further areas of extensive agricultural activity with fields of wheat and barley. There are poor quality fences and gates in an attempt to prevent the ever ingenious donkeys dropping in for a free lunch. We continue passing down the spine of the Karpasia range we later swing northwards towards the coast which brings us down to the coastal track, we pass many small lagoons continuing eastwards on the final leg of our adventure. Its not long before the cape is in sight, however the adventure is not complete until we are standing on the very eastern tip of the island, a moment to gaze over the tranquil azure sea with little to show just what history has passed by this corner of the Mediterranean. You can now feel the satisfaction of having completed North Cyprus's ultimate walking challenge of Cape to Cape. Now we head to Golden Beach for a sunset celebration where refreshments await us.