



Constantinou Bros Asimina
Suites Hotel, Paphos

Bright outlook

Tourism in Cyprus is springing back for summer, finds
Andrew McQuarrie on a recent agent mega-fam

It's time to get drunk – responsibly," says Eleni Athinodorou, our host at Ktima Gerolemo winery in the Troodos Mountains village of Omodos. She guides us through a series of local varieties, including the Commandaria dedicated to her grandfather's memory, before we are joined by her father Haris.

Addressing the agents in front of him, the winery's co-owner urges them to continue supporting Cyprus. He tells me there was a notable drop in visitors in March, after a drone hit British air base RAF Akrotiri during the Middle East conflict, but numbers have since been climbing.

"People know it's not dangerous and they're coming back now. I hope it will be a good season," he says.

FEELING POSITIVE

The destination's sense of stability and optimism was quickly taken on board by the 84 agents on the annual mega-fam hosted by Constantinou Bros Hotels. The group, which stayed for three nights at the Asimina Suites Hotel in Paphos, engaged with an enriching programme that showcased the strength and range of island experiences in the aftermath of a difficult period for the local tourism sector.

The five-star Asimina Suites Hotel, one of four beachfront Paphos properties operated by the Constantinou Bros group, is fresh from a six-month

renovation that added 30 suites on a newly constructed floor, as well as a rooftop bar.

The new suites take the hotel's room count to 139, compared with 520 at the Athena Beach Hotel, 302 at the Tui-exclusive Pioneer Beach Hotel and 208 at the Athena Royal Beach Hotel.

Thanks in large part to trade support, maintaining

"Customers are always looking for more privacy and we think these new suites are going to give them that opportunity

high occupancy rates has never been a problem, according to Constantinou Bros Hotels general manager Aristos Diomedous, with a brief dip in March having already been reversed with strong booking figures.

"For July to November, we're not affected at all. We even have year-on-year improvements," he says. "I strongly believe [the new suites] are going to be a great success. Customers are always looking for more privacy and we think these are going to give them that opportunity." ➤

DESTINATIONS

CYPRUS | PAPHOS & TROODOS

ASK THE agents



Claire Edwards,
PTC with Hays Travel

“These are lovely hotels and the service is fantastic. I’ve sold a lot of Ayia Napa and Protaras in the summer, but there’s a certain demographic that likes to come to Paphos in the winter months. This will help me promote the destination to them.”



Ani Spalding, Travel Mama

“I’d never been to Cyprus before, and Constantinou Bros Hotels planned this trip really well. We’ve seen multiple hotels with a different offering and vibe – nothing brings them to life like being here. The excursions have also been amazing.”



Nick Wass,
Travel Counsellors

“I wanted to come because it’s about putting your money where your mouth is. You’re showing clients how safe it is. I travelled here with a group of 31 bowlers aged between 65 and 92, who were nervous about travelling. But as soon as they arrived, they realised there was nothing to worry about.”



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Paphos Old Town; Haris and Eleni Athinodorou; the 84 agents on the Constantinou Bros Hotels mega-fam
PICTURES: Cyprus Deputy Ministry of Tourism



FINE FEASTING

From the Asimina Suites, hotel guests can reach Paphos Harbour within 45 minutes by foot via the seafront promenade, with the Old Town a further half-hour away. Both areas are also accessible by car within 15 minutes. Dining venues are plentiful along the seafront and in the Old Town, home to the excellent Honey Restaurant, but some of the most memorable culinary experiences take place outside the city.

Stou Kir Yianni in Omodos offers an eight-dish mini meze featuring a main course of either pork crackling or lamb, served with Commandaria sauce. It was quite the challenge, but we limped our way over the finish line after a heroic effort I swore not to repeat.

Not until four days later, at least – at which point I excitedly returned. Once again, the lunchtime meze proved a mouth-watering yet formidable opponent and we were delighted to have the opportunity to voice our gratitude to husband-and-wife chefs Margarita and Galin Kolev, whose efforts meant this frugal Scotsman saved having to splash out on dinner later that evening.

VISITOR UPDATE

Costas Koumis, Cyprus’s deputy minister of tourism, used his opportunity to address agents on the final night of the fam trip to reinforce a message the group had already been sharing. “Please try to inform your clients how safe and beautiful the destination is,” he

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said. “We’re 1,200km [nearly 750 miles] away from Iran. Cyprus is not part of this story, and it has never been part of the problem. Cyprus has always been a pillar of peace.”

He later explained that UK arrivals in March fell by 25% year on year, and 15% in April, but progress since then has been significant. “Cancellations have stopped and visitors are coming back,” he said. “The destination is open like all the previous years. It’s ready to welcome thousands of visitors.”

In a final message to the UK group, he added: “I’m very optimistic that by the end of 2026, we’ll have had another successful year – and we want to believe the year will also be successful for travel agents.” **TW**

BOOK IT

Jet2holidays offers a seven-night stay at the Asimina Suites Hotel from £1,399 per person, based on two sharing a Junior Suite on a B&B basis. The price includes 22kg luggage, private transfers and flights from Gatwick on June 18. jet2holidays.co.uk