

## Holiday Itinerary

**Day 1: Meet at Rhodes airport and transfer to our hotel on the gentle slopes of Mount Attaviros.** After we're checked in, and have enjoyed lunch, we'll set out on foot to explore the orchid-rich countryside on our very doorstep.

**Day 2: Mount Attaviros.** There is a road that wends its way up the highest mountain on the island, which makes our life easy today – we will gradually work our way up the mountain, using our vehicles to gain altitude, and exploring different elevations on foot as we go. Targets include: *Ophrys reinholdii*, *Ophrys dodekanensis*, *Ophrys omegaifera*, *Orchis anatolica*, *Ophrys ferrum-equinum* and *Ophrys candica*.

**Day 3: Kameiros & Kritinia.** We will spend the morning at the extensive and well-preserved ruins of the ancient city of Kameiros. Orchid hunters note, there are several species of *Ophrys* to be looked for here too! In the afternoon we will wander some of the nearby trackways that intersect the surrounding countryside, breaking some new orchid hunting ground, and bringing us in the later afternoon to the imposing later era acropolis of Kritinia, which we will also pay a visit to.

**Day 4: Southern Rhodes coastal sites.** Today we'll explore various habitats in the south of the island, including phrygana and sandy substrates. Targets: *Ophrys regis-fernandii*, *Ophrys cretica* ssp. *beloniae*, *Ophrys parvula*, *Ophrys iricolor*, *Serapias carica*, *Ophrys halia* and *Ophrys cornutula*. We will also encounter our first endemic *Fritillaria rhodia* and *Campanula rhodensis*.

**Day 5: Windmill hill.** Today takes up another mountain, again with easy road access that allows us to explore habitat that would otherwise require hours of arduous trekking. Instead we will drive straight to the heart of an orchid wonderland, which we can then explore on foot. Targets: *Ophrys tenthredinifera*, *Ophrys phryganae*, *Ophrys bombyliflora*, *Ophrys oreas*, *Ophrys sitiaca*, *Ophrys ferrum-equinum*, *Orchis anatolica*, *Orchis provincialis*, and *Anacamptis papilionacea*. We will also make a stop en route to check a site for *Ophrys speculum*, and the possibility of early examples of *Anacamptis sancta*, and late examples of *Anacamptis collina*.

**Day 6: Lindos.** In the morning we will visit the achingly beautiful white-washed coastal town of Lindos and, making our way through the polished cobbled streets, climb up to the acropolis that guarded the ancient town, and provided a place of worship too. Here we will also find a bustling colony of Lesser Kestrels *Falco naumanni*. In the afternoon, we will focus on exploring nearby olive groves both ancient and more recent, and the orchid flora they support. Targets: *Ophrys colossaea*, *Ophrys rhodia*, *Ophrys calyso*, *Ophrys polyxo*, *Ophrys blitopertha*, *Ophrys attaviria*, *Serapias bergonii* and *Serapias carica*.

**Day 7: Profitis Ilias.** Another mountain, a well-forested one with a network of small roads and footpaths that make its exploration a pleasure. The ground beneath the trees, and the numerous

rocky outcrops, support a new plethora of orchid species. Targets: *Orchis lactea*, *Ophrys cinereophila*, *Ophrys persephone*, *Ophrys lucis*, *Neotinea maculata*, *Anacamptis picta*. Here we may also find Eastern Festoon on the wing, and abundant anemone and cyclamen flowers carpeting the forest floor.

**Day 8: The Medieval Town of Rhodes, UNESCO World Heritage Site.** This morning takes up to Rhodes Town itself, where we will enjoy a guided tour of the charming town and a journey back into its colourful history. After lunch, we take a meandering rural route back to Mount Attaviros, stopping at several woodland sites that boast thriving colonies of *Ophrys lucis*, *Ophrys tenthredinifera*, *Ophrys oreas*, *Ophrys dodecanensis*, Naked Man Orchid *Orchis italica*, and also Dragon Arum and Rhodes Peony.

**Day 9: River Gadouras area.** The countryside around the flanks of the Gadouras hides some marvellous orchid species, and we'll be looking for treasure here. Targets: *Limodorum abortivum*, including the scarce pink var. *rubrum*; *Orchis italica*, *Ophrys cornutula*, *Ophrys persephone*, *Anacamptis laxiflora*, *Serapias bergonii*, and *Neotinea maculata*.

**Day 10: Democracy Day.** Greece was the cradle of democracy, and we firmly believe it's a principle that lends itself well to our final full day in Rhodes! We will put the day to good use, returning in the morning to check on any species that may still not have been quite at their peak of flowering when we saw them last, and choosing one favourite location, decided by the group over dinner and a glass of wine the prior evening, for an unforgettable afternoon orchid finale.

**Day 11: Depart Mt.Attaviros, and transfer to Rhodes airport.** If time permits, we'll stop *en route* to visit a good orchid site or two.