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Island Tour

- Guided Bus Tour -

We begin the tour with a drive along the East Coast of the Island through the Villages Faliraki and Afantou. We visit Archangelos the second largest Village then we make our way through the orange gardens of the Villages Malona - Massari (MassaroMalona) and we reach to the Village Genadi. Then we cross the Island with a stop in the Village Apolakia for lunch.

After lunch we drive to castle Monolithos built by the Knights with a stop for photographs. Our journey continue to the Village Embona near the highest mountain of Rodos ATTAVIROS and the Wine factory EMERY.

Driving along the West Coast passing several villages, where the locals still live the old Traditional way of life. This Tour is a perfect opportunity to see a lot of the Island with its interesting landscape and most important Villages.

Rodos City Tour

- Guided Bus Tour -

The coach will drive visitors through the modern town of Rodos and along the Coast, reaching Mount Smith, where you will see the Acropolis of the ancient town of Rodos, the Temple of Apollo and the Stadium. The excursion continues through the Industrial section of the town and along the ramparts of the Old Town of Rodos.

Walking in the Medieval Town and inside the Coliseum, you visit the Palace of the Grand Master, the Street of the Knights, where you will see the inns of the seven Nationalities, which made up the Order of the Knights in the 12th century. You will see the 15th century Knight's Hospital, which now houses the Archaeological Museum, containing a rich collection of exhibits, among them the celebrated Aphrodite of Rodos.

Dep. 09:00 - Ret. 13:00

Excursion to Lindos

- Guided Bus Tour -

After a drive along the Eastern Coast of the Island, through the picturesque villages of AFANTOU, ARCHANGELOS, MALONA and MASSARI, we reach LINDOS, where we visit the Acropolis (you can climb up to the Acropolis by foot or on a donkey's back). On the Acropolis, you will see the ruins of the Temple of Lindia Athena. You will see the Port of St. Paul, and below, the dazzling white village of Lindos. On your way down from the Acropolis, you can visit a 13th century Church. On our way to or from, we visit a hand-made pottery workshop.

Village Party

- *Guided Bus Tour* -

The coach will drive us to the Village of PASTIDA or EMBONA, where you are free to visit some of the old houses and the village Church.

After that, we shall dine good food and an UNLIMITED amount of wine (red and white during the dinner you will see the villagers dancing their folklore dances and you will be taught how to dance the Greek dances. Dep. 16:00-Ret.22:00

The Castles of Rodos

- *Guided Bus Theme Tour* -

The coach will drive visitors to all seven castles of Rodos to enable them gain a complete picture of the impact of the Knights of Saint John on the island. The castles to be visited are namely the Palace of the Grand Master in the Medieval City, Arhangelos, Feraklos, Lindos, Monolithos and Kritinia Castle. For further information about the castles, please refer to the Castles section of this manual. In case that, due to limited time, a shorter tour is required, local travel agents may alter the tour to meet special requirements of travel agencies or tour operators.

Churches & Monasteries

- *Guided Bus Theme Tour* -

Throughout a long and turbulent history, the church on Rodos has been at the heart of society and provided an enduring constancy which bonds people even today. The buildings, many from the thirteenth and fourteenth century or earlier, offer a strand of historical and social comment but equally fascinating is the difference in architectural styles which have developed in its isolation from Greece, styles which are not seen elsewhere outside the Dodecanese.

The most obvious of these is the tiered campanile standing separately from the main church building and sometimes used as the entrance gate. Simpler examples, like Moni Skiadi, have just two tiers under a small roof dome, but those on a grander scale, and one of the best examples is at Arhangelos, may have six or seven ever decreasing tiers. Almost invariably white, they offer one of the lasting impressions of the island. Another fairly distinctive feature is the crossvaulting in the roof and few of the modern churches are without it.

Religious pilgrimage is a major form of tourism amongst the Greek people who are prepared to travel island to island to see famous ikons or monasteries. Many of the monasteries now recognise this and are responding by building overnight accommodation within the grounds, as at Moni Thari. Even the most humble of the churches and monasteries recognise their social role and encourage their grounds to be used to celebrate festivals and name days and facilities for this are never neglected when expansion plans are in the air.

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Myth, folklore and religion are intertwined on Rodos more than anywhere in Greece and many of the saints are quite local and completely without pedigree. In much the same way, many local customs and superstitions are built in to religious ritual and some of these, like the belief in the evil eye, are a legacy left behind by the Turks.

The coach will drive visitors to major churches and monasteries on the island of Rodos. Visitors will gain a complete picture on a variety of architecture and painting styles. Following is an indicative list of churches & monasteries that can be included in an excursion to the island's churches & monasteries:

Tsambika Monastery nearbu the village of Archangelos is a tiny white Byzantine church perched high at 984ft (300m) with commanding coastal views both north over Kolimbia where the avenue of eucalyptus trees can be picked out and the grid layout appreciated and south over Tsambika beach and beyond to distant Lindos. Inside is the miraculous eleventh-century icon of the Blessed Virgin found on the mountain by a childless, infertile couple who later conceived a child. The legend is that if a childless woman wishing to conceive walks barefoot up the mountain to pray to the Virgin, she will be blessed with children. Children so inspired are named after the monastery, Tsambikos for a boy and Tsambika for a girl, a name unique to Rodos. As it is so common on the island, it is more likely that fertile women named their offspring after the monastery by way of thanks that it had not been necessary to undergo this ritual. The saints day is 7 September, an especially potent occasion for the infertile.

The monastery of St George nearby the castle of Archngelos. Step inside and admire the modern fresco of St George slaying the dragon. The icing sugar tower of the church is easily picked out from this vantage point, finding a route down to it through the maze of narrow streets is a different matter. It lies at the heart of the old town crowded in by houses. The wedding-cake style of church tower is commonly seen on this island and others in the Dodecanese group but this one at Archangelos is one of the prettiest. Cross vaulting, instead of the more usual barrel vault, is also a feature of church architecture on the island.

The domed Church of the Panagia, in the heart of the village of Lindos, just off the main square. This fifteenth-century church has a dark interior with a black and white pebbled floor and is decorated with eighteenth-century frescoes by Gregori of Symi. With typical polarisation male saints are on the right and female on the left.

The Byzantine church of the Dormition of the Blessed Virgin at the village of Asklipion. Built in 1060, it started as a cross but extended later to accommodate a larger congregation. There are some fine frescos to see. Nest to the church is a museum displaying ancient religious artefacts, old bibles and ikons in the one room while the second room depicts the old way of village life with agricultural tools, bread making implements and even an old olive oil press. This is a co-

operative venture by the villagers themselves who contributed many of the exhibits and well worth a few moments.

The Church of Our Lady at Filerimos. The church has four chapels, the outer of which was built by Grand Master d'Aubusson and the innermost still has the floor of the original early Christian church with the mosaic fish decoration. Solitude reigns in the cloister at the rear of the church where the monks cells are each marked with a plaque, each showing a different flower. The remains in front of the church are those of the Temple of Athena Polias and Zeus Polieus. This temple was a larger version of the one at Lindos with a vestibule entrance guarded by four columns and an enclosed section at the rear, also with four columns. The remains of a paved floor of an even older Phoenician temple can be seen in front of one of the rectangular statue bases. In front of the temple to Athena is the small underground Byzantine chapel of Agios Georgios whose walls were decorated with frescos by the Knights of St John around the fourteenth to fifteenth century .

Moni Kalopetra, startlingly white in the glare of the sun, is reached just before the descent to the Valley of the Butterflies. The monastery has a peaceful courtyard with picnic tables where the countryside can be overlooked in quiet contemplation, perhaps with a drink since light refreshments are available.

Agios Soulas, a tiny chappel, within extensive grounds with a taverna, a play area and a race track! Crowds do gather, especially on the 29 and 30 July, the chapel's saints day, for a large festival which includes a major attraction unique on the island, donkey racing !

Agios Nikolaos Foundoukli, the fourteenth-century Byzantine church of with its interesting wall paintings, on the drive to Eleousa through the cool, green forests passes. It is believed that the hillsides here were once covered with hazelnuts.

The monastery of Ag Nectarios, nearby the Seven Springs. An archway leads to steps up to the grandiose Byzantine style church guarded by columnar cypress trees. The separate campanile, with a tiered construction, is borrowed from a later period. Picnic tables are provided just outside the church.

Moni Thari, nearby the village of Laerma. Built around the thirteenth century on much earlier foundations offers some fine, old frescos. The north and south walls are the oldest, twelfth century, part of the building but some ninth-century remains can be seen in the surrounding grounds. The dome, the apse and the nave all carry frescos of exceptional craftsmanship. Some parts of the wall have as many as four layers of painting, the earliest from 1100. The apse has three layers. Centuries after construction, it is now expanding with the addition of sleeping

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accommodation. It is a quiet and tempting place to picnic with facilities on hand, unless there is a festival in full swing. The 21 and 22 May is one of those occasions.

Moni Ipseni, nearby the village of Lardos, is of recent construction and unusual in that it is a living, working monastery with nuns who greet visitors kindly and happily show them around. Cool elegance awaits with citrus trees surrounding a fountain in the quiet courtyard. Outside is a large area used for festivities and a white chapel overlooks from a nearby hill.

Moni Skiadi, nearby the village of Messanagros. One of the more important monasteries on the island made famous by its miraculous ikon of the Blessed Virgin (Panagia). Legend tells of a heretic who stabbed the painting many centuries ago and brought blood from the cheek of Mary. Still visible brown stains provide their own persuasive evidence. The ikon is carried around at Easter time from house to house and village to village until it finally comes to rest for a period on the island of Halki. Most of the present buildings arise from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries built around a thirteenth-century Church of the Holy Cross. In its present form, the tiered campanile is attached to the church building which has a typical cross vaulted roof. Rooms are available for guests wishing to stay overnight but expect it all to be full on 8 September.

The Nature of Rodos

- Guided Bus Theme Tour -

The coach will drive visitors to Seven Springs, the Valley of Butterflies, Profitis Ilias, and Fasouli Spring with enough time for walking around. Tour Operators and Travel agents have the option to include the ravine of South Rodos, and the biotope of Apolakia dam. For further information about on the above nature sights, please refer to the nature section of this manual.

Painting in Rodos

- Guided Bus or Walking Theme Tour -

The coach will drive visitors to the Municipal Art Gallery housing one of most significant collections of the Modern Greek Painting in Greece hosting a total of 690 exhibits. Featuring works by Maleas, Bouzianis, Kontoglou, Theofilos, Vassiliou, Hadzikyriakos-Gikas, Spyropoulos and other prominent Greek artists, is an invaluable experience for the scholar of Modern Greek painting. The visitor has the opportunity to see some of the most significant examples of their work. Many of the paintings have been part of official exhibitions, both in Greece and abroad. Visitors are then walk to the nearby Church of the Virgin of the Castle, hosting the Byzantine Museum, where they will find a significant exhibition covering painting in Rodos from the early

Christian period up until the 18th century. This exhibition was opened on the occasion of the European Community Summit Meeting and has remained open due to its great success. (Please refer to the Museums and Exhibition section of this manual for further details on this exhibition). Please note that Tour Operators and Travel Agents may combine this tour with the free painting lessons offered to visitors by the Rodos Municipality Cultural Organization.

Pottery in Rodos

- Guided Bus Theme Tour -

Rodos has a long history of pottery going back many centuries at least to the time of the ancient cities. The island has many ceramic factories selling hand painted pottery, typically vases, plates and ash trays. Vivid colours, especially blue, feature strongly as do certain motifs which are uniquely Rodian, the pomegranate flower and the stylised deer. The coach will drive visitors to the Museum of decorative Arts which houses a collection of beautiful Rodian wall plates, as well as other ceramics. Visits will then follow to both modern and traditional pottery factories located in the villages of the island. Some factories also make copies of pottery found on the island's ancient sites.

Please note that Tour Operators and Travel Agents may combine this tour with the free painting lessons offered to visitors by the Rodos Municipality Cultural Organization.

Walking around the walls

- Guided Walking Tour -

The Byzantine walls of Rodos (7th-13th c.) divided the town into three sections: the acropolis (later the Grand-Masters' Palace), the Collachio and the Burgum (lower town). Before the curtain wall and its towers stretched an advance wall and dry ditch. Today parts of this fortification survive mostly in the Collachio, incorporated into later structures. In the Hospitaller period (1309-1522) the town grew in size: the fortifications of the Knights enclose an area larger by two-fifths than the Byzantine town.

The fortifications of Rodos reflect the development of military architecture, a consequence of important changes in siege warfare involving the increased use of gunpowder. Artillery became a decisive factor from the mid- 15th century; while gunpowder made undermining much more effective. Successive adaptations sought, with various means, to achieve effective flanking fire at every point, solidity and massed firepower. Innovations respected, as far as possible, priorities of earlier times- e.g. capability of isolating advance fortifications from the main line of the defence; directing assaults into traps; or the heavy fortification and use of a limited number of gates.

Modifications were carried out gradually, with limited financial means and under constant threat of attack. Sections of wall in sheltered positions preserved their medieval appearance: such are

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the north and sea walls, well protected by the fortifications of the commercial harbour, Fort St. Nicholas and the Grand Masters' Palace.

Originally the Hospitaller curtain wall was flanked by independent square towers open at the back. Their base was protected by an advance wall and dry moat. There were at least seven gates. The entrance of the commercial harbour was protected by the tall Tower of Naillac. After the Egyptian siege of 1444 the first round towers were built. Grand masters Milly (1454-61) and Zacosta (1461-7) undertook the systematic reinforcement of towers and land gates while Orsini (1467-76) took care of the moat and the hitherto neglected sea wall. His successor, Pierre d' Aubusson (1476-1503), successfully faced the great Turkish siege of 1480. In the twenty years following the siege he reduced the number of land gates to four, which were heavily fortified; built massive revetted earthworks before the more exposed sections of the walls; and widened the moat. Later the Hospitallers sealed one more land gate and strengthened the fortifications west of the Grand Masters' Palace (Amboise Gate). Grand master Carretto (1513-21) made the main land wall three times thicker adding masonry and packed earth on the inside; thus the south and west walls became a continuous gun platform able to hold back massive enemy attacks. The siege of 1522, which lasted six months, led to the fall of the town to the Turks and the departure of the Knights from Rodos. It caused heavy damage to the fortifications, particularly vulnerable points like battlements and advance works. After the conquest the Turks carried out extensive repairs but did not add new defensive elements.

THE FORTIFICATIONS OF RODOS

In the late 7th century AD Rodos, directly threatened by the Arabs, was fortified. A small but strong fortress rose for the first time to the NW of the ancient great harbour, refuge for the Rodians during enemy attack. With the passing of time the defences expanded; Rodos gradually became an impregnable fortified city, acquiring its present form and size in the early 16th century. Those responsible for its plan, little concerned with aesthetic values, aimed at a lethally effective fortification able to annihilate enemy forces. In time the development of weaponry and military tactics altered its original purpose and function. Now a monument in the full sense of the word loaded with the experience of the past, its military technology and history, it is no empty shell serving solely as an inspiration for romantic imaginings. Silence has succeeded the roar of the guns, the shouts of combatants and the clash of the weapons. Scenes of slaughter and death have faded them away. Yet the fortifications, the moat and the walls, the towers and bastions, have been consecrated by the sacrifice of thousand of human beings, most of them young men, who fell here during successive sieges, great or small, by Arabs, Franks and Turks. The visitor is called upon to seek the memories soaking through the stone and show due respect for this hallowed ground.

Medieval Highlights

- *Walking Unguided Tour* -

A confusion of influences assail the senses on a walk through the old town. The stoic grandeur of the medieval fortress-like buildings seem at odds with the narrow alleyways and homespun architecture of the houses. Graceful minarets, rickety balconies, tranquil squares with fountains and shady trees still exude an oriental air. Blue glass eyes, to ward off evil, Loukouma and the names of many dishes in restaurants are all part of the Turkish legacy.

A visit to all or some museums is usually on everyone's list. Even if ancient remains do not excite, the Museum of Decorative Arts with its insight into life during the past couple of hundred years, will interest all the family. If time is pressing, and there is only time for one museum visit, save it for the Palace of the Grand Masters. The Exhibition of Archaeological Excavations, displaying finds from Prehistoric to Hellenistic times is clear, informative and above all fascinating. The palace closes at 3pm and admittance to the museum stops at 2.30pm but the exhibition demands much longer than half an hour.

From the taxi stand in Platia Rimini, head past the ranks of sponge sellers to enter the old town through the Freedom Gate (Pili Eleftherias). This narrow bridge has to cope with a steady stream of traffic, in both directions, as well as a swell of tourists. An early or later start will allow chance to observe the deer in their compound to the left or glorious curtains of bougainvillea cascading down the walls, without being swept along by the crowd.

Once inside, leaving the traffic to hurtle left out through the Arsenal Gate, head up the right-hand side of Platia Simis. The tour starts in the Collachium, the Knights-preserve. To the left are the remains of a third-century BC Temple of Aphrodite and in front of this is a useful the layout of the town. Further up the rise, on the left, kastro, is the Inn of Auvergne built in 1507 and more recently restored. A Byzantine baptismal font serves as an unusual fountain in the Argirokastro Square and heaps of cannonballs, from the Turkish siege of 1522, are displayed as decoration. One of the earliest buildings in the Collachium fronts the square, the colour and texture of its stonework softened by a tumbling mass of bougainvillea. This was originally the Palace of the Armeria, constructed under the Grand Master Roger de Pinsot in the fourteenth century, and the First Hospital of the Knights. It was also used by the Knights and Turks as an arsenal but today it enjoys a more peaceful role, it houses the offices of the Archaeological Institute of the Dodecanese and is where the first museum is located.

The Museum of Decorative Arts: an off-putting title for a delightful and intimate Folk Art Museum where decorated tiles, intricately carved woodwork, brightly coloured Rodian style pottery and exquisite needlework are elegant reminders of an earlier culture. A reconstruction of the interior of a traditional Rodian house provides a good insight into everyday life. Even here, a Turkish influence can be detected. Many exhibits seem to originate from the island of Symi where women could appear well provided with rich dresses by owning just one long, sleeveless, elaborately embroidered 'gilet' to wear over a basic plain dress embroidered only round the neck, hem and sleeves.

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Not much further up the street, again on the right, is the Ministry of Culture Museum Shop. For a piece of Creek history to take home, look no further. On sale are authentic casts of parts of friezes and funeral stele and replicas of ancient Greek jewellery. From hereon, souvenir shops jostle for attention with displays of gold and silver, leather, lace and the inevitable T-shirts. On the opposite side of the road is the thirteenth century Byzantine Church of St Mary (Panagia tou Kastrou or Virgin of the Fort), which became the first cathedral of the Knights. A forced change of allegiance under Turkish rule saw its steeple converted into a minaret and renamed Enderoum. After a Christian massacre here in 1523 it became known to Rodians as the 'red mosque'. Converted back again for use as a Christian church it has become a fitting home for the Byzantine Museum which contains an exhibition of well displayed Byzantine paintings and frescos in an atmospheric setting. One fresco has even been transferred from Halki and is displayed on the ceiling of the barrel vault.

The cobbled street Odos Ipoton, the 'Street of the Knights', rises up right to the Palace of the Grand Masters. For the moment though, continue into Platia Moussieo (Museum). Tucked back on the left is a bank, separated from the rather undistinguished Inn of England by a narrow street. Of more interest are the eateries along the narrow alley which leads off the far left-hand corner of the square beyond the inn.

The impressive building to the right commands attention. This was the new Hospital of the Knights and their original *raison d'etre*. Begun in 1440, over the remains of a Roman building, it was not until the Grand Master d'Aubusson took charge over 40 years on that it was completed. It was built along similar lines to Byzantine hostleries. Eight plain arches support the facade, the only relief to the severe exterior being the decorative, recessed Gothic arch of the main gateway which lies beneath the projection of the chapel above. Unfortunately, the original wooden main gate found its way to Versailles when it was sold by the Turks in the nineteenth century. After the Knights' departure it was used variously as a hospital then ignobly as a barracks. Skilfully restored by the Italians and again after suffering bomb damage during World War II, it now serves as the Archaeological Museum. The entrance opens into a courtyard, surrounded by a galleried upper story accessed by an outside stairway. Stone fragments and stacks of cannonballs, relics from various sieges, lie on the ground and a first-century BC marble statue of a crouching lion takes centre spot. Upstairs is the large room which was the Infirmary Ward. What the small windowless rooms down the sides were used for is open to conjecture, possibly isolation wards or maybe wardrobes. Pilgrims came here for treatment until the needs of the Knights themselves became paramount. When this happened, the vow of poverty seems to have been conveniently forgotten! Simple wooden beds were replaced by beds decked with brocaded canopies and nothing less than silver plate was good

enough to eat off. Medieval gives way to an earlier era in other rooms along the gallery. It is difficult not to admire the art of the sculptor in Hellenistic times and the marble statuette of Aphrodite bathing, an adaptation of an earlier first century BC sculpture, is a fine example. There is also another sculpted Aphrodite from the third century BC more commonly known as the Marine Venus after being hauled out of the sea nearly 70 years ago. It is this sculpture which inspired the title of Lawrence Durrell's book *Reflections on a Marine Venus* about his life on Rodos. A second-century BC head, from a statue of the Sun God Helios driving his chariot in the sky, still has the holes where iron spikes for the sun's rays would have been positioned. It is thought that this was sited in the Temple to Helios. Grave stele, as here, provide an insight into the everyday life of ordinary people of the time. One from Kamiros depicts a fifth-century BC bas-relief of a girl saying good-bye to a dead mother and another, erected by Damokles to his dead wife Kalliaista, shows her seated in front of her maid. Besides these gems there are many funerary objects which is not too surprising, as most of the information gleaned about this early period comes from ancient cemeteries. Pottery figures strongly, especially Geometric and there are also some mosaics.

Leaving the Collachium with its austere façades, it is time for a complete change of scene. Continuing in the same direction, outdoor tables on the square at Folydorou are invitingly placed for the thirsty visitor and it is tempting to pause and watch the world go by. Moving on through the square, Sokratous is not difficult to miss. Its wide bustling street, reminiscent of its central role in the bazaar rises up towards Suleiman Mosque. With the projecting wooden balconies (*sachnisi*) of its Turkish style buildings, this is the most famous and photographed street in the old town. A short diversion left here leads into Platia Ipokratous, beyond which is the medieval courthouse and stock exchange, the Kastellania, and close by the impressive Marine Gate. Wandering up Sokratous could take a long time. Colour spills onto the street as traders entice with their assortment of wares, ikons, replica helmets, embroidery, carpet weaving, ceramics and leather sandals all clamouring for attention. Pastry shops and Cafes seduce the foot weary while the lure of shady alleyways suggest more peaceful oases. An arch jutting out into the street, the Aga Mosque, has so far restricted the view ahead but from hereon the Suleiman Mosqu comes into better focus. Built on the site of an earlier Church of the Apostles, it was constructed in honour of the Sultan after his conquest of Rodos in 1522 and rebuilt in 1808. The pink colour on man old buildings is not paint but a special pink cement used for waterproofing on floors, roofs, domes and walls. Do not continue up past the mosque but go right in front of it along Panetiou. The commanding walls of the Palace of the Grand Masters loom ahead. On the left are excavations of medieval buildings behind which is the Turkish school constructed on the site of the Conventual Church of St John destroyed in the 1856 gunpowder explosion.

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A fragment of wall being the sole remains. Built in a plain architectural style during the fourteenth century it contained the tombs of the Knights, remnants of which are found in the Knights Hospital. Pass the top of the Street of the Knights' to enter the palace environs. At the end of the street is Platia Kleovoulou and the restored Loggia of St John which, when the Knights were in residence on the island, connected the palace with the Church of St John. Two round towers announce the entrance to the palace, its large pointed door being one of the parts preserved from the original building.

The Palace of the Grand Masters stands on the highest part of the Collachium, and was built on the probable site of the Sanctuary of Helios in the fourteenth century. Helios was the original sun god on Rodos but he appears to have been supplanted at some later time by Apollo who was also a sun god as well as sometime god of light, poetry, music etc. The role of gods being manipulated by different peoples to suit their personal requirements. Designed as a fortress in its own right with underground storerooms to withstand siege, it served as the Grand Masters' residence and the hub of the Knights' activities. Although it survived the Turkish siege of 1522 little damaged, its use as a prison and the earthquake of 1851 hastened structural decline. The gunpowder explosion and fire 5 years later, coupled with removal of stone for other building work by the Turks, effectively sealed the fate of this once commanding edifice.

Left to languish for the next 80 years, it took a new master to restore its fortunes when, under the Italians in the 1930s, it was rebuilt as an intended summer residence for Victor Emmanuel III and Mussolini. The exterior is supposed to follow the style of the old building with the interior adapted more to modern day requirements with electricity and central heating. Even camouflaged lifts were installed so as not to appear incongruous in such a setting. Ostentation was more a prerequisite than taste when it came to interior design, or so it seems. The lavish style extending to the use of Roman and Byzantine columns and importation of some fine Roman and Early Christian mosaics from Kos.

The entrance to the main body of the palace is up the sweep of stairs to the left, opposite the pay desk immediately on entering. Inscriptions near this entrance appertain to the Italian Fascist regime and to Greek Independence gained in 1947. Ahead is the inner courtyard with its display of Roman statuary and off this courtyard is a snackbar and the entrance to the special exhibition within the palace of ancient local finds. The exhibition covers the period from prehistoric times to the Hellenistic City and includes some excellent mosaics. It is well annotated and displayed and time spent absorbing the information in here really helps to recreate the living and breathing Rodos of old. Climb the stairs to wander through the corridors and spacious rooms open to the public where a combination of seemingly wall to wall mosaics, statues, Italian Renaissance carving and scant furnishings add to the sterile atmosphere. This mix of periods lie uneasily together. Views from the windows over the town and gardens give a different perspective as does a walk along the old city walls.

Walking the walls is an excellent way to appreciate them as a tremendous feat of fortification. It also provides a superb overview of the old town which helps to put the layout into

perspective. Only accessible on Tuesdays and Saturdays at 2.45pm but often open from 2.30pm. Tickets at the entrance to the palace. The unguided walk starts up the steps and through the small Cannon Gate off the outer courtyard. Covering only about a third of its original length, the walk passes along the 'Curtains' defended by Auvergne, Aragon and England, in that order, ending at the Koskinou Gate. Descend into Efthimiou and follow right then round left along Dimosthenous to Platia Evreon Martiron, the Square of the Jewish Martyrs which is easily identified by its tasteless modern fountain of bronze seahorses. The square was renamed in memory of the remaining Jewish population, who were deported from this spot to concentration camps when the Germans arrived in 1943. Only a few Jewish families live in the old town now out of a population numbering 6,000 before 1939, a fortunate 4,000 of whom emigrated at the outset of war. Close by, in Dosiadou, can be located the synagogue. The next street out of the square on the left leads to the Ibrahim Pasha Mosque and very pleasant Platanos Square, reputed to have been used as a place of execution by the Turks with the Demerli Mosque lying a little further along. This is also a good area for exploring the numerous alleyways with less tourist shops. Sokratous lies just north of here.

Leaving the palace, go left down Ipton, the Street of the Knights', one of the best preserved medieval streets in existence. Besides being the main route from the palace to the port through the Collachium, it is the location of the inns of the various tongues. The present day pristine appearance of the cobbled street is thanks in no small measure to the Italians, who dismantled the Turkish addition of rickety wooden balconies to restore the late medieval architecture. Now used mainly as offices, it lacks the buzz of habitation and shows itself for what it has become - a museum piece, nevertheless, it is an impressive street. Even before it gained its medieval mantle it was an ancient route to the port. From this angle, the first point to catch the eye is an arch spanning the street. The Inn of Spain lies to the right either side of the arch and the room above the arch belongs to it while opposite is the later built, more elaborate, Inn of Provence.

Lower down on the left is the small fourteenth-century Church of Agia Triada (Holy Trinity) attached to the Inn of France which was converted by the Turks to a mosque called Han-Zade and before the chapel the house belonging to its chaplain. Well down the street now, reach the richly ornamented Inn of France on the left where the coats of arms of France, with its three lilies and royal crown, and the Grand Master d'Aubusson with its cardinal's hat can be seen in a carved frame, dated 1495. The building across the road, next to the hospital, had connections with the Inn of Spain. Finally, near the bottom of the street on the left, is the Inn of Italy with its exterior showing simpler lines than those of the Inn of France.

The Old Quarter

- *Walking Unguided Tour* -

A voyage of discovery lies awaiting intrepid explorers willing to explore the maze of alleyways and streets of the old town. Medieval and eastern styles blend to create a unique and intriguing atmosphere within the confines of the old walled town. Tucked away in here are countless small workshops where skilled craftsmen still practice their art in much the same way as their ancestors. Although this tour follows a defined route, it is only a guideline and forays where the fancy leads add to the enjoyment. Keeping a map to hand can help, even if only to make sure not too many ever decreasing circles are tramped although a number of principal streets assist in making some order out of seeming chaos. Sokratous leads down from the mosque of Suleiman towards the harbour, continuing as Aristotelous then Pindarou as it skirts round parallel with the Commercial Harbour. A rough grid of streets south of Sokratous is formed by Ipodamou, Fanouriou, Pythagora and Omirou. Many of the small hotels and pensions are to be found in the tortuous network of narrow lanes within this grid. The Bourg shows an equally fascinating face by night when murmuring voices, clinking glasses, bouzouki music, soft shadows and twinkling lights change leafy platias into magical enclaves. This walk could take all day if a lunch in ambient surroundings, haggling over souvenirs and frequent pit stops for a drink is part of the equation. Enter the old town via the d'Amboise Gate off Dimokratias. There is no mistaking the narrow entrance road lined with lace and souvenir stalls. With a swirl of activity going on all around, the magnificence of the gate itself is easily overlooked. Entry through this early sixteenth - century gate, one of the most impressive of all the gates, allows for an appreciation of the complicated defensive structure of the fortifications. Through the gate, a gauntlet of artists all too willing to draw your portrait, encourage an audience along the shaded walled road of the inner fortifications.

Once out of the confines of the walls, the rich tapestry begins to unfold. Restaurants and souvenir shops compete for attention but stopping along here for a drink might surprise the unwary. The result of a casual beer order could be an outsize trumpet-shaped glass of German beer, containing enough liquid to slake the thirst of a few. By now, the Clock Tower (To Roloï) will probably have captured attention. This offers the highest viewpoint in town. It was built in 1852 on the site of a previous tower and formed a corner of the wall which ran parallel with Ipoton to the port, separating the Collachium from the Bourg.

Head across the top of Sokratous past the mosque of Suleiman into Ipodamou. On the right is the Turkish Library of Ahmet Havuz, whose collection includes a chronicle of the siege of 1522 and two illuminated Korans of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Immediately, the narrow cobbled street transports the visitor into a different age blanking out the hustle and bustle of the main tourist thoroughfare. Arches, protection against earthquakes, bridge the street, enticing alleyways, flower decked courtyards all exude a more tranquil air. Even the tourist shops become less intrusive. Divert left along Arhelaou, to Platia Arionos and the Turkish Baths.

Dominated by the Mustafa Pasha Mosque and baths of the same name, the square provides another opportunity to sit at one of the Cafes and absorb the atmosphere. This Turkish bath (*hammam*) still functions, despite bomb damage during World War II, and subsequent renovation work is difficult to detect to the non expert.

Return to Ipodamou to continue down the street. An intriguing wend through a narrow alleyway leads onto Omirou, emerging by the Ancient Market Garden Bar. Continue left along the street. There are better opportunities for sideways exploration and capturing a real flavour of the old town in this area.

Pass the end of Fanouriou, by Hotel Paris, to shortly turn left through an archway into Platia Dorieos with its domed fountain which makes a great setting for eating out under the trees. Tucked into a corner, and almost masked by a taverna, is the old Byzantine Church of Agios Fanourios but dominating the square is the Retzep Pasha Mosque, one of the most striking of all the Turkish buildings. To regain Fanouriou, cross the square to the left, from the entry point, then turn right. Fanouriou is one of the oldest streets in the old town and can be better appreciated at this lower end. As the street rises up towards the Collachium, an increase in souvenir shops announces the return to the tourist heart. Emerge onto Sokratous by the Aga Mosque.

Mandraki And Shopping

- *Walking Unguided Tour* -

Most of the new town has developed since the Italian occupation of 1912. The added impetus of tourism, especially during the past 20 years, has greatly accelerated development even further. Besides being the shopping, administrative and business quarter, the northern tip also contains most of the hotels and revolves around the tourist industry. Mandraki Harbour is part of this quarter and a buzzing meeting place for locals and tourists alike. To the west, especially on the slopes of Monte Smith, are to be found leafy suburbs with larger houses and villas while the south has the densest population and the south-east most of the light industry. This too is the location of the CAIR (KAIR) winery which is only open to visitors for wine tasting on an organised tour.

Although this tour concentrates on the northern section, a walk round the outside of the old town walls is not without interest, nor a walk or drive down the Lindos road to Rodini Park where the famous Rodos 'School of Rhetoric' was located. The wooded park was designed and laid out by the Italians who populated it with deer and peacocks. According to legend, the Delphic oracle urged the introduction of deer as a means of ridding the island of snakes but, when the Italians arrived, all signs of deer had disappeared. Unfortunately, as with much of the Italian legacy, neglect has taken its toll and the deer have been long gone from the park. Depleted

Tours & Excursions

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almost to extinction on the island, only a few deer remain in the moat of the old town and in a pen on Profitis Ilias. Also in the vicinity is a large Hellenistic rock tomb, wrongly named 'tomb of the Ptolemies'.

Breakfast in the New Market (Nea Agora) makes a fitting start to this tour, as most local activity starts early. Using Rimini Square as the starting point, and before heading for Mandraki, wander into the lush gardens beneath the castle walls where the *son et lumiere* is held. The flowers here create a riot of colour, softening the gaunt crenellated walls of the palace towering above. Its never too early for coffee, so it is straight to the harbour front and the New Market. An irregular seven sided construction built by the Italians in the Turkish style, this building displays an unusual departure from the more severe lines of their other building work. Round the outside are crowded numerous snack bars, Cafes and all manner of small shops selling herbs, spices, nuts, olives and duty free wines and spirits. Rodos was a duty free island and spirits are still cheap. Inside the huge and colourful tree shaded courtyard, fresh fruit and vegetable stalls, butchers, tourist paraphernalia and Cafes combine in a kaleidoscope of constant activity. The large centrepiece has a dual function, fish market above and underneath, free WC's. Most of the fish market activity seems to take place around 8am, with the fresh catch spilling out into the courtyard area. *Tiropitta*, *souvlakia* and pizza snacks are readily available from kiosks, especially those hot from the oven at the kiosk in the exit to Platia Alexandrias. The smaller market Cafes provide good value for a quick breakfast or snack. Newspapers of all nationalities can be bought under the main gateway onto Mandraki. More sophisticated cafes, with a price to match, line the Mandraki frontage and offer more comfortable seats but the accompanying exhaust fumes, noise and crush of people may not be to everyone's taste. On the plus side, the coffee is good and the cakes ...! Try the Greek *ekmek* which is particularly indulgent and delicious but very different from the original Turkish meaning of the word; bread.

Busy Mandraki Harbour, a name derived from its shape meaning , " sheepfold", is crammed to capacity with sea craft during the summer. Besides use as an international yachting marina, the harbour accommodates local ferry and excursion boats including hydrofoils while larger ferries and cruise ships dock in the Commercial Harbour further south. A stroll along the harbour wall past the three windmills, where grain was milled for cargo boats, to St Nicholas Tower, now a lighthouse and chapel, provides a clear overview of the waterfront. The view is thwarted somewhat by a forest of bobbing, jangling masts. One of the best vantage points is from the narrow channel at the harbour entrance, especially after 9am when a mass exodus of excursion boats clears the waterfront. Two bronze statues of a stag and doe guard the harbour entrance. The doe replacing a statue of an Italian she-wolf which now resides in the grounds of the Palace of the Grand Masters.

In many ways, Mandraki is the link between the old town and the new. This spacious frontage is where the Italians chose to construct a new commercial quarter. Designed with a mix of Venetian, Gothic and Arabic elements, these monumental public buildings dominate the shoreline. On the seaward side of the road is the Church of the Evangelist, built in 1925 on the model of the Knights' Church of St John in the old town which was destroyed in the explosion of

1856. Next to the church is the Archbishop's Palace and then the former Governor's Palace, now Government House (Nomarhia), constructed in a more photogenic Venetian-Cothic style, whereas a Mussolini square style was used for the Town Hall, Post Office and National Theatre. Fashionable comment derides the tasteless grandeur of these honeycoloured buildings but, they at least provide a better foil for the medieval citadel than the angular mass of soulless concrete they mask.

North of Mandraki, off Platia Koundourioti, is the private Nautical Club and the start of the public beach. The coarse sand and shingle beach stretches round the point of Akrotiri Amμου (Sandy Beach) known also as Kumburnu Point. There is plenty of activity on these beaches in summer and changing facilities are available at the Elli Club for a small admission fee. The regimented rows of coloured beach umbrellas, all angled the same way, tell of the persistent breeze along the west coast. Moving west along Papanikolaou, the Murad Reis Mosque watches over a secluded backwater that was once the cemetery for the Turkish elite. Murad Reis himself was a prominent pirate killed during the Turkish siege of 1522 and his tomb is the circular mausoleum next to the mosque. Carved turbans top headstones of men while those for women are sharp-angled stone. Despite the air of obvious neglect, a dignified atmosphere still prevails where eucalyptus shade the graves of the many Moslem notables, including a Shah of Persia, which are transformed by carpets of white *Cyclamen persicum* in spring.

Leave this reminder of another age along Sava, in the direction of the sea. Still making for the point along the shoreline, pass the closed and shuttered Hotel des Roses; yet another abandoned Italian building. The Aquarium (Enidrio), its more grandiose title being the Hydrobiological Institute, sits in splendid isolation on the northernmost tip of the island and entrance to the subterranean grotto is behind the main building. In an attempt to simulate the seabed, fish found locally are displayed in tanks along the walls of a narrow twisting passageway while dried and pickled specimens of sword-fish, sharks and a whale can be viewed in separate rooms. A good place to go on a rainy day or to escape the heat.

Now for shopping! From the Aquarium head directly south through Platia Vas. Pavlou, across Papanikolaou into Grivas. The network of streets between here and 28th Octovriou is the tourist heartland of bars, restaurants and shops. An inelegant collection by day but lively by night! For more upmarket shopping go east along Mandilara to Amerikis then head south. On Amerikas and 25th Martiou are what pass as department stores on Rodos. Make for Platia Cyprus (Kiprou) down Lambraki, a central point for banks and the more chic establishments. Designer label fashions and shoes sit comfortably alongside discreet and alluring displays of gold. A decade ago, fur products shared the umbrellas prominence but, due to current lack of demand, these outlets have shrunk considerably. Interspersed between these high-class retailers are some equally stylish cafes. The triangle bounded by Averof, Papagou and Platia Cyprus has been pedestrianised, making it very pleasant for browsing or just sitting where a small enclave of eastern style houses with wooden balconies has been preserved.

Rodos Acropolis & Ancient Stadium

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A visit to Rodos Town would not be complete without a trip up the hill of Agios Stefanos, better known as Monte Smith, named after the English Admiral Sir Sidney Smith, who kept watch on the Napoleonic fleet from there in 1802. This was the second-century BC site of the ancient acropolis, excavated and restored, in part, by the Italians. Very little remains of the once magnificent Temple of Apollo, but a small Theatre and the Stadium have been restored. Views over the town and across the water to Asia Minor are an unexpected bonus on this trip. If you don't feel like to follow the 20 to 30 minute walk up, there is always a taxi or the regular blue bus which leaves from Mandraki waterfront. Do not forget to buy a prepaid ticket, also one for the return if required, from the kiosk by the bus stop which is validated in the machine on the bus. From Rimini Square head up Papagou, into Dimokratias then right up Venizelou, signposted Acropolis of Rodos. Follow the signs from here to the large car parking area below the remains. First to catch the eye are the three columns from the Temple of Apollo, re-erected in a somewhat piecemeal fashion and which look better viewed from a distance. The small reconstructed 800 seat Theatre, more likely Odeon, sits beneath the site of the temple. Only the orchestra and three seats remain from the original structure, which was probably used for events associated with the cult of Apollo and maybe by the Rodian School of Rhetoric. A much larger theatre is thought to have been sited elsewhere on the same hill. On the left is the reconstructed stadium of which again only a few rows, in the middle of the curve, are original. To the east of the stadium lay a Gymnasium. The Temple of Apollo sits on a platform above the huge retaining wall behind the theatre, approached by a flight of steps, and excavations close by are the remains of a fountain house and possible Nymphaia, for the worship of nymphs. To the north, foundations of a Temple to Zeus and Athena Polias have been revealed. Return down Voriou Ipirou for spectacular views over the town.