

THE PLATEAU VILLAGE OF ZIROS



Ziros, standing at the lofty height of 590m above sealevel is the largest village on the fertile plateau that stretches from **Armeni** to **Handras** - if you're seeking to visit a lively community untouched by mass tourism , spend a few days in Ziros.



Buried in a patchwork of vineyards and cottage gardens producing everything from football-sized green-and-white-striped *karpouzi* melons , this picturesque plain is watered by a plethora of underground springs pumped to the surface by rusty, white-sailed windmills that groan in the wind like ghostly memories of the regions' troubled past*.

**"During the 1821 uprising against the Turks, the notorious bloodthirsty janissary Afendakis organised the mass murder of the Christians from Ziros and the surrounding villages of Hametoulo, Kalo Horio, Achladia, Tso and Apidia. The massacre took place about a kilometre from the village, near to where the road branches off to Apidia"Sitia", N.Papadakis, Archaeologist, 1983*

Surrounded by the ruins of Minoan settlements and barely touched by the renovating bug, the village tumbles in a pyramid of white, cubic houses to the bustling main road.

Here you'll find two large shops, the kindly Stavroula's excellent coffee shop-cum-post office serving sticky local pastries perfumed with cinnamon and sticky with honey, plus two petrol pumps, a chemists and a bank with a cash machine.

If you want to stay the night you can check in to the recently refurbished hotel (just opposite the town hall). The hotel also serves copious *mezes* and a small menu of meat dishes grilled on the barbecue and wholesome salads whisked together from ingredients in the surrounding fields.

A second restaurant *O Katras* serves snacks and there is a small kafeneion near the bank.

*Access: You can get to Ziros from the main **Sitia** road – turn off just after **Papagianades** if you're coming from **Sitia** and just after **Lithines** if you're coming from Makrigialos .*

*You can also take the signposted road that winds up to Ziros from **Goudouras** down on the coast, or you can follow the sinuous road leading through the mountains from **Zakros** to Ziros, via **Karydi** and **Sitanos**.*