

*Press Announcement*  
*19 July 2023*

## **PAFOS: A GREEN AND DIGITAL DESTINATION**

**Pafos, 2023 European Capital of Smart Tourism, immerses tourists in the city's mystical beauty with digital and sustainable initiatives**

Pafos, Cyprus is paving the way for Europe to become a sustainable, digitally immersive tourist destination. [Pafos](#) and Seville, Spain are the [2023 European Capitals of Smart Tourism](#), awarded by the European Commission in recognition of their innovative initiatives to improve the sustainability and accessibility of their tourist experience.

The city effortlessly blends ancient archaeological wonders with [sustainable and digital initiatives](#), offering a unique and immersive experience for visitors to discover. With its rich historical legacy, stunning natural beauty, and warm climate, Pafos has become a beloved destination for travellers seeking an unforgettable escape. The coastal city has something for everyone, whether you may be an [avid history buff](#), a [sports enthusiast](#), or simply [seeking relaxation](#) under the sun.



*Pafos, 2023 European Capital of Smart Tourism*

As the mythical birthplace of the Greek goddess Aphrodite, the city carries an air of mystique and legends. With its captivating architectural marvels and profound historical importance, Pafos stands as a testament to the island's rich cultural heritage. Beyond its archaeological wonders, Pafos also boasts a charming old town with narrow streets lined with traditional Cypriot houses adorned with colourful bougainvillea. The quaint area also

offers cafes, boutique shops, and traditional taverns where visitors can savour authentic Cypriot cuisine.



*Pafos, European Capital of Smart Tourism 2023*

## **SMART HISTORY**

One of the city's most iconic sites is the [Pafos Archaeological Park](#), a sprawling UNESCO World Heritage Site that showcases an impressive collection of ancient ruins. Within this vast complex, visitors can explore the awe-inspiring remains of Roman villas, stunningly preserved mosaics depicting mythological scenes, ancient amphitheatres, and the renowned Tombs of the Kings—a necropolis carved into the solid rock.

The [UNESCO Archaeological Park app](#) is an exemplary measure implemented by Pafos to allow visitors to immerse themselves into the city's rich history. This tool is filled with informative videos, audio guides, infographics, and 360 tours, all accessible in multiple languages. [Smart QR-coded signs](#) have been set to replace static information signs throughout the city. This initiative offers the opportunity to share more dynamic and detailed information while eliminating visual pollution.



*UNESCO Archaeological Park in Pafos*

## **TAKE YOUR BREATH AWAY: SCENIC CYCLE ROUTES**

[Pafos offers a wide range of cycling paths](#) for all abilities that cover 600 km with 12 dedicated routes for visitors to choose from. These routes pass through streams, forests, villages, and historically significant sights. Additionally, these routes have QR codes along the way to provide information and enrich the cycle experience. Cyclists can enjoy the fresh air and stunning scenery for a fun and low-carbon method of exploring the area. Whether you are looking for a self-guided tour or a challenging mountain biking holiday, Pafos has a unique and suitable cycle route to get you there.



*Travel in style and discover Pafos' stunning views*

## **SMART PARKING PROJECT**

Visitors who travel by car will still enjoy a hassle-free experience with the [Pafos' Smart Parking Project](#). It aims to optimise the city's parking management and help those with mobility needs by informing app users of when and where to find free parking spaces to save time and fuel.

Discover Pafos and experience the intersection of natural beauty, sustainability, and innovation. To learn more about the European Capital of Smart Tourism competition and Pafos' smart practices, [watch this video](#).

## **LEARN FROM THE BEST: Best Practices from the 2023 European Capital of Smart Tourism Competition**

**Learn from the smartest destinations** -- To find out more about other smart measures that cities put forward in their applications to become the European Capitals of Smart Tourism, visit [the initiative's website](#) or download the Best Practices 2023 Report [here](#).

For the [latest updates](#) on the European Capital of Smart Tourism, follow us on our [website](#), [Facebook](#), or [Twitter](#), and subscribe to our [Podcast series](#).

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### Notes to Editors:

1. Smart tourism responds to new challenges and demands in a fast-changing sector, including the expectation of digital information, products and services; equal opportunities and access for all visitors; sustainable development of the local area; and support to creative industries and local talent.
2. In 2022, 29 cities from across 13 countries competed, and Pafos and Seville won the European Capital of Smart Tourism 2023 competition. In 2021, from amongst 30 EU cities which applied, Bordeaux and València were selected as the European Capitals of Smart Tourism 2022. In 2019, amongst 35 EU cities which applied, Málaga and Gothenburg stood out and were selected as the European Capitals of Smart Tourism 2020. In 2018, amongst 38 EU cities, Helsinki and Lyon stood out and were selected the European Capitals of Smart Tourism 2019.
3. The competition is open to cities in the EU Member States and non-EU countries that are eligible to the [Single Market Programme](#) with a population of over 100,000. In countries where no city has more than 100,000 inhabitants, the largest city is eligible to apply. Please refer to the Guide for Applicants for more information.
4. The 2023 European Capitals of Smart Tourism Pafos and Seville provide a series of smart tourism experiences that they are continuing to develop and expand upon. Watch the video for Pafos [here](#) and the one for Seville [here](#).
5. The EU Smart Tourism Podcast was successfully launched to help listeners gain a greater understand of and showcase insights into the world of European smart tourism.