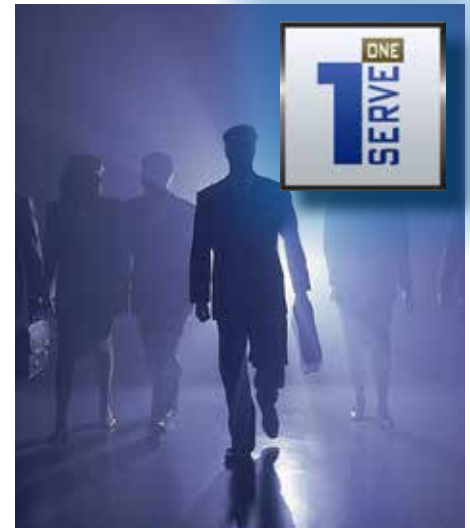


# Unusual Cyprus Secrets

[www.oneIserve.com](http://www.oneIserve.com)

1. Hidden Venetian bridges are testimony to the Venetians rule from 1489-1571. The bridges formed part of the old camel trail, built to aid the extraction of anything valuable the Venetians could find on the island, for example copper from Pera Pedi. Our favourite is this one called Roudias bridge near the village of Vretsia.
2. Rock formations in the Troodos mountains show the best preserved ophiolite complex in the world. The mountains are a true geologist's paradise as there are no faults in the rock which means they can study each sequential, visible layer of the earth's oceanic crust. And you don't have to be a geologist to admire the rock formations - the sparkling colours are a joy for anyone to admire.
3. Cyprus cats aren't just cute, they're pretty old too! Cyprus is famous for having the oldest known archeological evidence of people keeping cats. It's slightly scary, but our two cats look distinctly like the wild cat that probably descended from the old bones found in the village of Shillourokambos!
4. Perfume originated from Cyprus! Aphrodite was not just a pretty face - she must have smelled pretty good too if the 4000 year old traces of perfume found by archaeologists in Pyrgos are anything to go by. Scented with the aromatic herbs of lavender, bay, rosemary and coriander, the perfumes were discovered in alabaster bottles within an enormous underground cave. Archeologists believe they were produced on an industrial scale!
5. Kleftiko, the Cypriot slow roasted lamb speciality, got its name from the word "kleftis" which means "robber". Legend has it that poor men used to steal meat and run away into the mountains to cook it in sealed underground ovens. The sealed oven kept the wonderful aroma of the cooked meat "secret". Today, the kleftiko denotes the earthenware oven present in every Cypriot village household.
6. Hot chillies are not used in any Cypriot traditional dish. Strange, perhaps, considering the island's proximity to the Middle East and the ease of growing them in the hot Mediterranean sun. The only item we have found chillies in is the hot and spicy loukanika sausage, more commonly known as pastourma.
7. The unspoilt west of the island near Polis and Latchi is so far from the tourist crowds, there aren't even any traffic lights! We don't need them!
8. The pine forests of the Troodos and the Kyrenia mountains owe their existence to none other than Winston Churchill. As a junior minister in the early 1900's, he ordered a reforestation programme



to replace the famous forests of centuries gone by, systematically eroded by centuries of felling to build ships and provide fuel for smelting. The island's forests now provide a tranquil haven from the searing heat of summer - make sure you spend at least a day there to enjoy the cool scent of the cedar, pine and eucalyptus trees.

9. Halloumi, referred to by many visitors as the "squeaky cheese" is a pure Cyprus product and does not come from Greece, as many believe. Greece may be the official home of feta, but halloumi most definitely belongs to Cyprus
10. The most secret beach to truly get away from it all has to be Mansoura bay. Hidden away close to the border with the Turkish controlled north, Mansoura bay is a delight and the little taverna there serves the freshest fish imaginable. Bon Appetite!