

Press release

Culinary delights, culture, and Mediterranean joie de vivre: Crete becomes partner region of f.re.e. 2026

12. November 2025

- **Discover, enjoy, relax: a vacation for all the senses**
- **German vacationers particularly appreciate the island**
- **A wide range of possibilities make Crete the perfect year-round destination**

With the Greek island of Crete as its partner region, the travel and leisure fair f.re.e (February 18–22, 2026) promises exciting insights into one of the most popular vacation paradises for Germans: sun and sea, traditions and culture, and sustainable enjoyment inspire enthusiasm for the island.

The fact that Greece is very popular with German vacationers is proven by around 5.7 million German tourists per year. Germans particularly appreciate Crete – the largest Greek island with more than 1,000 kilometers of coastline – for its diverse opportunities. It offers rugged mountain ranges, olive groves, and turquoise bays. Outdoor enthusiasts will find perfect conditions for hiking, cycling, and water sports. Culture lovers can discover Minoan excavations and Venetian architecture. Last but not least, the island combines culinary delights—local olive oil, raki, herbs, and wine—with a strong awareness of sustainable tourism.

Living traditions and unspoiled nature

"We are delighted to have Crete as a partner region for f.re.e," say Dr. Reinhard Pfeiffer and Stefan Rummel, the two managing directors of Messe München.

"The island stands for joie de vivre, hospitality, and fascinating nature like no

Dr. Matthias Glötzner
PR Manager
Tel.
matthias.gloetznier@messe-muenchen.de

Messe München GmbH
Am Messesee 2
81829 Munich
Germany
messe-muenchen.de

other. Visitors to f.re.e. 2026 can look forward to exciting insights and plenty of inspiration."

Experience Cretan *Φιλοξενία* at f.re.e

With its diverse range of activities—from beach vacations on dream beaches, living history at ancient sites, or whitewater rafting—vacationers of all ages and interests get their money's worth, even beyond the classic summer vacation. "Our island welcomes guests all year round with unspoiled nature and lively traditions," says Dr. Kyriakos Kotsoglou, Crete's Deputy Governor for Tourism. "Anyone who wants to experience a taste of genuine Cretan hospitality (*Φιλοξενία*) should visit us at f.re.e. We look forward to the exchange and want to show that Crete is much more than sun and beaches – it is a place for excellent food, discovery, encounters, and sustainable vacation quality."

The vacation and leisure opportunities that Crete offers perfectly reflect the five main themes of the trade fair – travel, caravanning & camping, cycling, water sports, and outdoor & fitness. Visitors can look forward to culinary discoveries, music, dance, and inspiring ideas. f.re.e. 2026 will take place from February 18 to 22 at the Munich Exhibition Center. In a total of seven exhibition halls, around 900 exhibitors will present the latest trends and products. In addition, there will once again be an attractive supporting program and hands-on activities.

Travel and leisure fair f.re.e

f.re.e is Bavaria's largest travel and leisure fair, covering the topics of travel, caravanning & camping, water sports, outdoor & fitness, and cycling. Visitors will gain a comprehensive overview of the market in these areas, can book trips directly, and test and purchase products on site. The varied supporting program promises additional information and entertainment.

Messe München

As one of the world's leading trade fair organizers, Messe München showcases the world of tomorrow at its approximately 90 trade fairs worldwide. These include twelve world-leading trade fairs such as bauma, BAU, IFAT, and electronica. The portfolio includes trade fairs for capital goods and consumer goods as well as for new technologies. Together with its 1,300 employees in the group and its affiliated companies, it organizes trade fairs in China, India, Brazil, South Africa, Turkey, Singapore, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Thailand, and the USA. With an international network of affiliated companies and foreign representatives, Messe München is active worldwide. The more than 150 events held each year attract around 50,000



exhibitors and around three million visitors from Germany and abroad. This makes Messe München an important economic driver, generating billions in purchasing power.