

CULTURE & SOCIETY

The Worlds most Luxurious Abandoned City

by Jessica Bayley · October 21, 2021

A city with remains of peeling luxury is attempting to regain its footing and stand once more. With turquoise waters running around its perimeter, the finest white sand, and no tourists... This destination seems to be the perfect place to relax and unwind. There's just one problem, you can't visit it without guarded supervision and you're not allowed to enter any of its buildings.

Welcome to... Varosha in Famagusta, Cyprus. A romanticized city and knockoff of the French Riviera or rather was a knockoff of The French Riviera. Varosha was a resort home to the most famous celebrities, luxurious parties, and expensive tastes. Often gathering global attention with its extravagance and grandeur. It was a town that was filled with the best of the best, in every way possible. From the expensive resorts to the latest fashion and tantalizingly foreign cuisine, it was a destination that created an allure that many found hard to ignore.

However, interethnic violence resulted in a coup encouraged by Greece's ruling militia. Turkey then invaded the Northern third of Cyprus in 1974. This forced the Greek-Cypriot communities to move out of their homes, hoping to return once the unrest had settled. Meaning that the Turkish Cypriots occupied the North and the Greek Cypriots occupied the South. However,

the Turkish military fenced off the resort and it has remained in its metal net ever since the 1970s. The UN then created a buffer zone between the two regions, dividing Cyprus to encourage peace. The buffer zone was named the Green Line. In 1984, the UN forbid resettlement in Varosha, leaving the town to the military to occupy.

Those visiting Varosha do so at their own risk, must be accompanied by military personnel, cannot take photos, cannot record anything without approved permission, and must not enter the buildings found in the towns of Varosha. If these rules are violated, military personnel have received orders to mobilize the threat.

Those who have ventured into the apocalypse-themed land have returned with stories of misery after recalling decaying matter, bulleted walls, lives left at a standstill and crumbling buildings. As well as recalling the marvelous empty beach, showrooms filled with classic cars, the enormity of the village and the quaint cafés with peeling signs.

However, the time capsule is seeing signs of reopening. The prime minister of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Ersin Tatar plans to reopen the area to the public after 46 years to its former glory. Varosha was occupied by 25000 residents and boasted 12000 hotel rooms for visitors in its prime. Tatar aims to encourage the previous lavish lifestyle that Varosha once saw to be rekindled and attract

various celebrities similar to those who used to vacation in the town, such as Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, and Brigitte Bardot. The TRNC recognizes Varosha as a part of Turkey and thus, according to Tatar, should be reopened to the public. So, would you go to Varosha



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