

# Newsletter 28

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## Welcome note

Welcome to the 28<sup>th</sup> issue of our Newsletter where we present our associates in Zimbabwe and our Assistant to Production Management.

In Health Matters we feature an article for HIV/AIDS, in the ABC of Pharmacy we continue with Calibration and in the feature article we describe some Easter traditions.

Under Environmental Issues we report on the destruction of rain forests. In Corporate Social Responsibility there are reports on Remedica's financial aid to food banks and to the Karaiskakeio Foundation, an Ebola virus information brochure, participation in the Limassol Marathon and our blood donation session.

In Remedica News three topics stand out: our company's progression to the final stage of the European Business Awards, our contribution to medical conferences and our participation in a TV show.

Finally, we take a glimpse at agrotourism in Cyprus.

I wish you a Happy Easter. ■

## Remedica Worldwide: New Avakash International, Zimbabwe



New Avakash International is a leading Medical Marketing Company specialising in the Registration, Marketing and Distribution of Pharmaceuticals which is based in Zimbabwe in the heart of Africa.

In 2008 Zimbabwe faced a harsh economic environment as industry had shrunk by over 50%. The currency had been devalued to the point where one trillion Zimbabwe dollars could only purchase one loaf of bread. For a country that was once considered the breadbasket of Africa this was indeed a mighty fall.

At the end of 2009 the economy began to recover after the introduction of the US dollar as the new legal tender in the country. In 2009 Remedica and New Avakash formed a strategic alliance that has produced exponential growth in the Zimbabwean market and profitability for both companies. When this alliance was created in December 2009 New Avakash International was re-launched with a team of 7 dedicated personnel. This team has grown so that today it has more than 40 employees, led by the Group CEO, Dr V Naik who is the founder and principal shareholder of the company. With a specialty in anaesthetics, he has a vision to provide affordable healthcare solutions to the nation. New Avakash International has been marketing Remedica products countrywide to doctors and pharmacists and has shown a very good yearly growth, especially in the last two years.

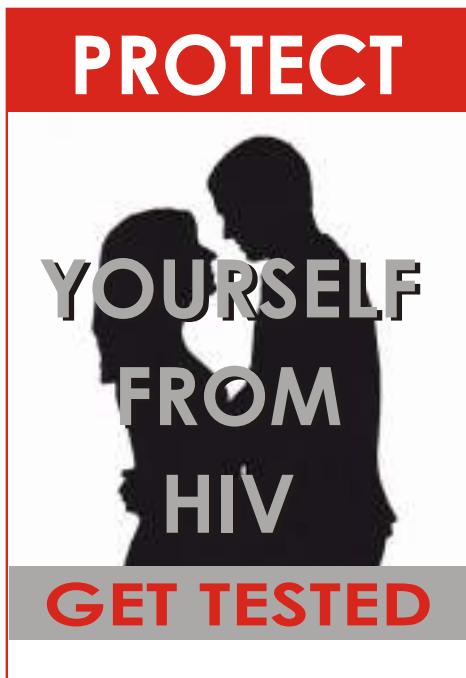
Zimbabwe has a population of approximately 13.7 million people and an estimated GDP per capita of \$600 in 2013. The Pharmaceutical Industry in Zimbabwe is regulated by a body known as Medicines Control Authority of Zimbabwe. At present there are more than 102 Pharmaceutical Wholesalers and 350 Retail Pharmacies in the country of which 28 are believed to be new institutions. New Avakash International is one of the

leading suppliers of pharmaceuticals in Zimbabwe and it has been able not only to remain secure in the face of stiff competition in the industry and but also to retain the top position. One of the main contributing factors to this success has been the strategic alliance with Remedica.

As was the case with most goods, in 2009 Remedica products had virtually vanished from the Zimbabwean market. However, after New Avakash had been appointed as the sole distributor of Remedica's products, despite the difficult times, it achieved an initial year on year growth of 279% in 2009/2010 and an overall year on year growth of 112% in 2010/2011 in terms of new sales over existing ones. In the last 3 years producing growth has remained the priority for both companies and although it has been lower than in the early years it has been kept above 50%.

Remedica's continued support of New Avakash's marketing campaigns coupled with strategic management of the supply chain from both sides has been instrumental in this growth. Remedica products are becoming increasingly well recognised in the market, associated with quality and reliability, so much so that New Avakash's goal is to make it the brand of choice for health professionals and patients in Zimbabwe. Remedica offers a variety of unique molecules that have enabled New Avakash to identify and service niche markets such as major Government Hospitals. With the continued submission of dossiers for new products, and support of Remedica's R&D and Registration departments, New Avakash looks forward to increasing sales steadily over the next 5 years. ■

# Health Matters: HIV/AIDS



HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus which can only infect human beings and as such is much like many other viruses, including those that cause the "flu" or the common cold. But the important difference between this and other viruses is that the human immune system cannot eradicate it. That means that once a patient contracts HIV, they have it for life.

However, although a patient may have the virus which can attack key parts of the immune system such as T-cells or CD4 cells, it can lie dormant in cells for a number of years. It can destroy so many of the CD4 cells that the body becomes incapable of fighting infections and diseases anymore and when this happens it can lead to AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) which is the final and fatal stage of HIV infection. However, not everyone who has HIV progresses to this stage and since it is a syndrome, rather than a single disease, it presents as a wide range of symptoms and complications.

Certain body fluids from an HIV-infected person can act as carriers of the virus. These body fluids are:

- Blood
- Semen
- Pre-seminal fluid
- Rectal fluids
- Vaginal fluids
- Breast milk

HIV is NOT spread by:

- Air or water
- Insects, including mosquitoes or ticks
- Saliva, tears, or sweat
- Casual contact, like shaking hands, hugging or sharing dishes/drinking glasses
- Drinking fountains
- Toilet seats

## Signs and symptoms

The symptoms of HIV vary, depending on the individual and the stage of the disease

-Early stage: Within 2-4 weeks after HIV infection, many, but not all, people experience flu-like symptoms

Symptoms can include:

- Fever (this is the most common symptom)
- Swollen glands
- Sore throat
- Rash
- Fatigue
- Muscle and joint aches and pains
- Headache

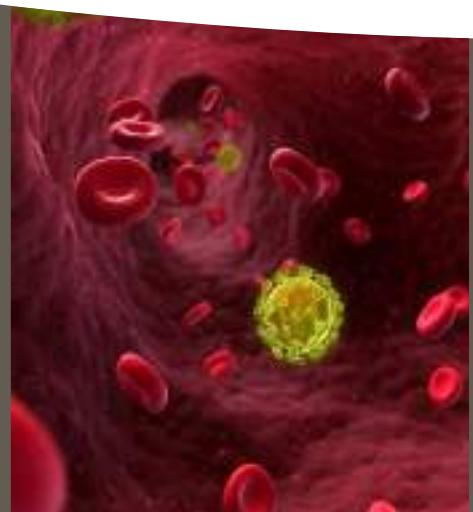
These symptoms can last anything from a few days to several weeks.

## Late stage

After the early stage of HIV infection, the disease moves into a stage called the "clinical latency" stage. "Latency" means a period where a virus is living or developing in the body without producing any symptoms. During the clinical latency stage, the HIV virus reproduces at very low rates, although it is still active.

## AIDS

If the patient with HIV is not taking HIV medication (antiretroviral therapy),



## HIV CAN BE TRANSMITTED THROUGH...



Sexual Contact



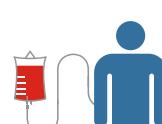
Injection Drug Use



Pregnancy,  
Childbirth & Breast Feeding



Occupational  
Exposure



and rarely,  
Blood Transfusion/  
Organ Transplant

eventually the virus will weaken the body's immune system. The onset of symptoms signals the transition from the clinical latency stage to full-blown AIDS.

During this late stage of HIV infection, patients may exhibit the following symptoms:

- Rapid weight loss
- Recurring fever or profuse night sweats
- Extreme and unexplained tiredness
- Prolonged swelling of the lymph glands in the armpits, groin or neck
- Diarrhoea that lasts for more than a week
- Sores of the mouth, anus or genitals
- Pneumonia
- Red, brown, pink, or purplish marks on or under the skin or inside the mouth, nose, or eyelids
- Memory loss, depression, and other neurologic disorders.

Once the condition has reached this stage, if the patient does not take medication to stop the development of the infection, AIDS will develop and the patient will eventually die. ■



## The ABC of Pharmacy: Calibration

Calibration is the task of checking or adjusting (by comparison with a standard) the accuracy of a measuring instrument in order to ensure that the indicated reading is both correct and accurate. The measuring instrument under calibration is usually called Unit Under Test (UUT) and the instrument that is used for verification purposes is called the Calibrator or the Standard. Calibration has to be performed at regular intervals as recommended by the manufacturer and accordance with the quality policy of the user. The calibrators are sent to an external authorised and approved body for calibration and a certificate is generated to prove compliance. It is extremely important that both calibrators and UUTs fulfil all traceability requirements in respect to their location and calibration history.

More specifically calibration ensures that the UUT is capable of accurately making measurements within its specified measuring range. If an instrument is found to deviate significantly from the calibrator then if it is possible it can be adjusted or otherwise it will have to be replaced. The adjustment procedure is known in the calibration field as re-spanning if it is adjusted for the whole measuring range, or re-zeroing if it is only adjusted at the zero indication.

Following a strict calibration policy ensures that manufacturing processes are repeatable and reliable and hence product quality is maintained and enhanced. It is therefore of paramount importance that calibration records (which will include values and indicate any trends) are kept safely in the instrument's log book. The purchase and installation of appropriate PC software which enables

the fulfilment of all the above requirements is so important nowadays that it is considered to be a basic requirement, especially as the number of instruments that need to be assessed is constantly growing. ■





# Environmental Issues:

## Rainforest destruction

According to the United Nations Environment Programme, forests cover one third of the Earth's land mass providing habitats for more than half of the terrestrial species of plants, animals and insects. In addition, forests play a vital role in sustaining life on earth due to the fact that the vast numbers of plants that they host produce oxygen in vast quantities whilst at the same time consuming carbon dioxide through the natural process called photosynthesis.

In other words, forests act like enormous natural oxygen factories pumping the right amount of oxygen into the atmosphere that is necessary for life to flourish. At the same time forests act as enormous carbon sinks and thus help to control the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. This property is crucial for the stabilisation of our planet's climate especially nowadays where increased man-made carbon emissions have shifted the climatic and meteorological patterns.

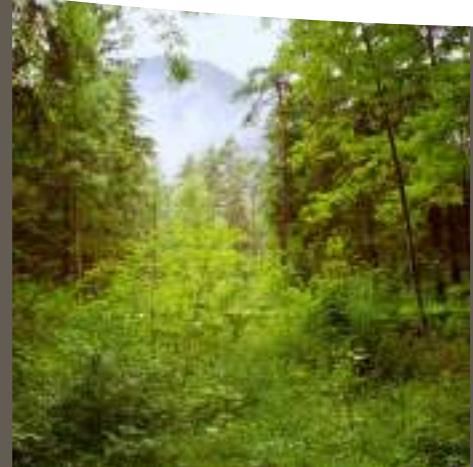
Despite the benefits that forests provide to the planet, even to this day their existence is threatened by deforestation as a result of the interventions of man. Data provided by the United Nations Environment Programme suggests that thirteen million hectares of forest are destroyed each year and to put this into perspective, this figure is equivalent to the an area of the size of Portugal. This is a major concern especially in the case of tropical rainforests which, despite the fact that they cover only seven per cent of the Earth's landmass, provide habitats for half of the species of terrestrial biodiversity. Finally, it should be noted that, according to the World Wildlife Fund, around seventeen per cent of the Amazonian rainforest has been destroyed in the past fifty years.



The main reason why rainforests are being destroyed is that certain groups of people wish to acquire the land and thus make it available for economic activities such as agriculture, ranching and mining. In addition, illegal logging remains a major threat to rainforests and a significant driver for their destruction. Moreover, as the World Wildlife Fund argues, arson takes places regularly in targeted rainforest areas in order to provide space for urban and rural development and expansion.

Taking the view that, since the vast majority of rainforests are found in developing countries, it could easily be argued that they should be viewed as national commodities, so in 2008 the United Nations launched an initiative directed towards Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation. This initiative provided financial incentives to developing countries to encourage them to conserve their rainforests. The UN-REDD programme achieves its targets by providing financial support and technical knowhow to local communities, indigenous rainforest-dependent people, stakeholders and national governments to implement strategies and practices for the conservation of rainforests and their biodiversity. According to the United Nations Environment Programme, the UN-REDD programme includes fifty six partner countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia-Pacific. By June 2014, the total financial support to these countries had reached a value of one hundred and ninety five million US dollars.

Taking the above into consideration, although international initiatives have taken place, yet still more needs to be done at an international and national level in order to effectively tackle rainforest destruction. ■



# Corporate Social Responsibility: Remedica Cares

## 1. Donations to Food Banks. (photo 1, 6)

As has been the practice in recent years, instead of holding a staff party, Remedica donated the money to worthwhile social causes including Food Banks on the island. Specifically, monetary contributions were made to the Food Banks of the Archbishopric (in Nicosia), the Municipalities of Pafos, Larnaka and Limassol, the Bishopric of Konstandia and Free Famagusta, and the Cyprus Red Cross.



1

## 2. Financial aid to the Karaiskakeio Foundation. (photo 2)

As part of its corporate social responsibility activities, Remedica has made a donation to the Karaiskakeio Foundation. During the annual charity dinner held at the Presidential Palace, under the auspices of the President of the Cyprus Republic Mr. Nicos Anastasiades, Remedica's Group CEO, Mr. Charalambos Pattihiis presented the Foundation's President Dr. Popi Kanari with a cheque for €2,000. The Karaiskakeio Foundation is a charity organisation set up with the aim of organising and running a donor's bank for bone marrow in order to offer the hope of life to fellow human beings. It is worth pointing out that many Remedica employees, as well as making regular donations of blood, are also bone marrow donors.



2

## 3. Remedica sponsors Cyprus Red Cross Society informative leaflet on Ebola virus disease. (photo 3)

The Cyprus Red Cross (CRC) as part of its policy to promote the health of the population of Cyprus issued a brochure entitled "How to protect yourself from Ebola virus disease" in order to inform and protect public from contracting this serious infectious disease. The brochure was presented in Greek, English and Turkish with the co-operation of the Ministry of Health, the assistance of Dr Michael Voniatis and was sponsored by Remedica.



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## 4. Remedica at the Limassol Marathon. (photo 4)

Remedica supported the 9<sup>th</sup> Limassol International Marathon GSO held on the 29<sup>th</sup> March with a corporate entry of 35 colleagues thereby making a significant contribution to the fund-raising effort. In total about 10,000 runners took part and thousands more participated in the student run, the charity run or as mere spectators. In addition to raising valuable funds for various charities, the Marathon aims to spread the spirit of sportsmanship, participation and volunteerism.



## 5. Remedica's Blood donation. (photo 5)

"Millions of people owe their lives to people they will never meet". Using this message, Remedica organised a blood donation session where more than 80 employees made this altruistic gesture. The purpose of the blood donation was to boost the stocks of the blood bank of the Limassol General Hospital. Remedica organises yearly blood donations and encourages all its employees to participate.



4

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# Remedica News

## 1. Remedica progresses to the final stage of the European Business Awards. (photo 1)

Our company has progressed to the final stage of the European Business Awards which are sponsored by RSM, where it will compete for the "Best Company in Europe" award in the "Import / Export" category and it is worth mentioning that it now ranks amongst the top ten companies in Europe. This award is fitting recognition for organisations that can demonstrate a continuous positive trend in the export/import or re-export of goods and an expansion of coverage in existing or new markets and, through the introduction of creative and innovative operational processes, show robustness in managing and developing international trade and maintaining and improving their market position in the face of competition. The awards are officially made under the auspices of Karel de Gucht, former EU trade Commissioner.

## 2. Medical Conferences. (photo 2, 3)

Remedica's local sales team attended 6 conferences where participants (doctors and other health care professionals) had the opportunity to be briefed on both new and existing Remedica products.

## 3. Short film on Cyprus TV on the cooperation between Remedica and the Cyprus University of Technology. (photo 4)

On the occasion of the release of a short film on the successful cooperation between the Liaison Office of the Cyprus University of Technology and Remedica, a representative of the Cyprus University of Technology involved on the project "Development and Liaison Office: Co-operation of the business world with universities operating in Cyprus", Mr. Charalambos Chrysostomou, and the Marketing Manager of Remedica, Mr. Andreas Hadjipanayis, were hosted in a morning TV show on the state channel CyBC where they explained the cooperation and answered journalists' questions. ■



# Remedica people

In this edition, we present our Assistant to Production Management, Mrs. Lisa Theodosiou.

Lisa is a Chemical Engineer who graduated from the Polytechnic School of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and is a member of the Technical Chamber of Cyprus (ETEK).

During her studies, she undertook internships at a sausage factory and a production plant for juices and beverages, working in the quality control department in each case.

She elaborated a project on a techno-economic study of a "Terephthalic acid Production Plant" and as soon as she completed her studies she returned to Cyprus where she joined Remedica starting her career being trained in the Research and Development Department and then after three months she transferred to the Production Department where she still works.

After continuous training in Cyprus and abroad attending seminars on Pharmaceutical Technology and administration / management,

she was appointed Assistant to Production Management, a position she has held for the last five years and she recently took over the additional duties of Head of the Production Office.

In the 7 years she has spent at Remedica, Liza has actively contributed to the development of the Production Department creating training manuals and productivity indicators and hiring scientific personnel. She is now actively engaged in the implementation of an electronic program which will control the production schedule.

Her professional dream is to see the Production Department to continue to work professionally with other supporting departments to provide an efficient customer service. ■



# Feature article:

## Easter traditions in Cyprus

For Cypriots, Easter is more than just a religious festival, it is a time when the island's oldest traditions, predating even Christianity, come to life and bring family and friends closer together. There are many events across the whole of Cyprus during the Holy Week as well as Easter Sunday and Monday.

### Holy Thursday

For many decades, on Holy Thursday in some of the villages in the Limassol district, such as Pachna, Vouni and Kilani, they knead the "arkatena". These are pretzels based on "arkatis", which is a specific leaven (yeast) made from chickpeas. Although they are made throughout Cyprus, the best arkatena are considered to be made in the village of Omodos. In other areas, especially around Pafos, for centuries now buns have been baked containing milk and sugar and these are called "galena". These are sold all over Cyprus on Holy Thursday together with other pretzels and "flaounes" (a Cyprus specialty pastry filled with cheese). In the villages around Pafos, they use the same dough that is used to make flaounes to bake "Paskies", the name of which is derived from Paska which means Easter in the Cypriot dialect. Their filling consists of small pieces of fried lamb or goat, with cinnamon, pepper and onions, all mixed with a filling called "fouko". Also it should not be forgotten that "Kotsinopempti" is dedicated to the painting eggs (mainly red, hence the name which means Red Thursday). This year, may we suggest taking the "green" route in dyeing eggs by using natural products such as poppies and violets, parsley for a green colour, dried onion skins for a honey colour and paprika or chili powder for orange? The more talented may wish to bake Tsoureki (a kind of brioche) which, despite being purely a produce of mainland Greece, has won the heart of the Cypriot housewife!

### Good Friday

It is said that one of the most beautiful Epitaphs\* of Good Friday is the one in Vasa of Kilani. Some of the most beautiful church services on Good Friday are the ones performed in the Church of St. Pantaleimon Achera and the Convent of Agios Minas. If closer to Nicosia, one may attend the service of the Epitaph in the Church of Archangel Michael in Lakatamia. If what is wanted is something from the true mystery of monastic life, it can be offered by the Monastery of Machairas where a service without noise and disruptions can be enjoyed at the Monastery of St. Kendeou with



the nuns singing hymns by candlelight. A deeply religious experience can be experienced by bowing at the Epitaph at the St. Lazarus Church in Larnaka, accompanied by the melodies of the choir of the Municipality of Larnaca, which then follows the procession making it seem even more devout. In addition, for something special, we suggest visiting the church of St. Savvas in Nicosia. There, the lights remain switched off and the whole church is lit by candles.

\* Epitaph in the ecclesiastical language is golden-weaved or painted image of the relinquished body of Jesus. It is presented to secular pilgrimage throughout Good Friday, where children mainly, but also older people, pass underneath the wooden artefact (canopy) where His body (actually a handmade representation from fabric) is placed. The whole devoutness culminates with the procession of the Epitaph, in a circular path around the Temple, which is followed by the faithful (congregation). The return to the Temple ends with the deposition of the wooden artefact in plain view of the congregation, while His body is removed from it and placed on the altar, where it remains throughout the Easter period.



### Easter Saturday

Quite a different experience is offered at the village of Kalavasos. There, the priest takes off the vestments and runs three times around the central interior part of the church. Subsequently, after the congregation begin to chant "Christ has risen", fireworks light up the village.

### Easter and Easter Monday

Easter games are never absent from any villages in Cyprus. Some are purely sporting in nature, like "triappithkia" (triple jump), the "shinin" (the rope) whilst others are simply fun games ("sytzia" and "ziziros") and are usually played in the village square, mainly by young children and older people. In the village of Kouka, in the Limassol district, there is a massive stone which dates back to Roman times that has a perfect "bell" shape. At Easter, attempts are made to lift it but, with one exception, no one has so far managed to lift it above the waist. A nice traditional custom that is still preserved by the Municipality of Agia Napa, is that of the "sousa" (swing): every Easter Monday the municipality hangs two swings on the sycamore tree known as "Toumpezia" in the village square and children cram onto it singing traditional folk songs. It is interesting to note that the tree made such an impression on the poet George Seferis that he wrote a poem about it some 600 years ago. ■

# A glimpse of Cyprus: Agrotourism in Cyprus.

An island of stunning beaches and dense forests, crystal-clear waters and towering mountains, cosmopolitan towns and unspoilt countryside, Cyprus is truly a country of contrasts. Though widely popular for its expansive coastlines and the high quality beach holidays it offers, the island is also known for its many picturesque villages, unique rural architecture, narrow cobbled streets, quaint old houses, traditional squares, taverns and craft shops surrounded by colourful flowers, fruit trees and vineyards.

Though many of these villages now have only few permanent residents, they all welcome both local and foreign visitors on a daily basis who wish to take the opportunity to escape the hustle and bustle of the major towns and explore local traditions, admire culture and reconnect with nature. Away from the tourist areas, the villages that comprise the Cyprus countryside seem almost forgotten by time, providing a glimpse into the island's rich history. With fresco-painted churches and world heritage sites, beautiful wineries and interesting museums, lovely squares surrounded by cafeterias and taverns, and mesmerising views over forests, vineyards or flat expanses of wheat fields and citrus orchards, the many villages of Cyprus provide a pleasing alternative to the island's seaside towns and famous beaches.

Newly-restored houses and small but charming hotels have over the years become very popular among both locals and foreign visitors who take advantage of the opportunity to spend more than a day in a traditional village, relaxing in a calm, natural environment and exploring the surrounding countryside. Indeed, the sun-kissed

Mediterranean valleys, slopes and hills of the island are ideal for hiking, cycling, and bird-watching which ultimately allow the visitor to escape from their daily routine. From camping sites where families and groups can enjoy lunch under the forest trees to imposing gorges and caves that welcome adventure lovers, and from exciting animal sanctuaries with donkeys, horses, camels and ostriches to the numerous designated nature trails that lead hikers to hidden lakes and waterfalls, the Cyprus countryside has much to offer to those who set out to explore it.

There are numerous villages around the island that boast a unique tradition and culture, one of which is the village of Lefkara. Situated at the foothills of the Troodos mountain range, Lefkara is the birthplace of Cypriot needlecraft art, with many tourists visiting the village in order to buy their own 'Lefkaritiko.' Also found at the foothills of the Troodos mountains is Kakopetria, a beautiful community famous for its many vineyards and the abundance of fruit-bearing trees that grow in the region and include apples, pears, plums and cherries.

Equally popular among visitors are the villages of Platres, Lofou and Omodos. At an altitude of 1,200 metres, Platres is only five kilometres away from the Troodos village square. It is one of the most-visited villages on the island, since many tourists and locals stop at Platres for a coffee, lunch or simply to wander around its streets on their way to the Troodos square. Though it only has 250 permanent residents, the number of people staying at Platres during the summer months rises to 10,000. On the other hand, Lofou is recognised as one of the wine villages of

Cyprus, or, 'Krassochoria'. Built in a circular pattern on a hill, it features recently-restored houses with lovely wooden balconies, narrow cobbled streets, a neoclassical school, a church and a museum. Since it provides the setting for a number of annual events and festivals, Lofou, like Platres, is one of the most-visited villages of Cyprus.

Another wine village and, indeed, one that has only too much to offer to its visitors is Omodos. Apart from the stunning views of vineyards and the local wineries where guests can taste a variety of locally produced wines and the traditional zivania, Omodos is famous for the stunning Monastery of the Holy Cross. The Monastery is adjacent to the village square, where visitors can rest at one of the many cafeterias and taverns and taste numerous sweets and delicacies, all of which are produced by the residents of the village. By wandering through its cobbled streets, one can admire traditional architecture mirrored in the houses with the wooden doors, tiled roofs and terraces, upper storeys and flowery yards, while by visiting a craft shop guests can discover the beautiful handmade embroideries created by the women of the village.

It does not come as a surprise that both locals and visitors from around the world choose one of the many villages of the island for their holidays. Indeed, the Cyprus countryside has recently come to boast a widespread reputation, with the number of tourists it attracts growing year by year.

Sources:  
<http://www.agrotourism.com.cy>  
<http://www.chooseyourcyprus.com>

