



ACO

AMATEUR CHESS ORGANIZATION

2026 ACO WORLD AMATEUR CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP

6th - 15th May, 2026 / Kos (Greece)

5* All-Inclusive Atlantica Belvedere Resort

**Save 200 EUR
per person for
early booking until
30th November
2025!**

**14th May is a
public holiday
in many
countries.**

**The event is limited to
around 150 players**

Hotel booking without risk!
No deposit payment upon booking
Free cancellation

Questions? Contact us:
amateur@amateurchess.com
+49 178 6746167

Back on Kos again!

We are thrilled to announce that we have once again secured our long-standing and much-loved tournament venue on the beautiful island of Kos for the year 2026!

After the great success of the ACO World Super Senior (65+) Championship and the ACO World Amateur Championship on Kos from 2022 through 2025, hopes were high that we could continue hosting our events here. However, due to the extremely high demand for travel to Greece in general – and to this particular hotel complex in particular – it was uncertain for quite some time whether our tournaments could remain on Kos. Fortunately, we managed to secure the location again and are delighted to return to our “chess paradise” on the island!

As in previous years, the number of participants will be limited to around 150, due to the restricted number of hotel rooms available. Accommodation will once again be offered at the 5-star Atlantica Belvedere Hotel and its neighboring sister hotel, the 5-star Atlantica Beach Hotel.

Last year, the tournament was fully booked months in advance. And for 2026, we’ve already received a large number of early registrations. The excitement is growing!

We’re looking forward to ideal playing conditions as we compete for the world championship titles, inspiring training sessions with grandmasters, delicious Greek cuisine, all-inclusive comfort, breathtaking sunsets by the sea – and, of course, to seeing you again!

GM Falko Bindrich and IM Tobias Hirneise
Organizers



The ACO World Amateur Chess Championship 2026 will take place as an open tournament from May 6–15, 2026, on the Greek island of Kos. Any player with a rating below 2400 can represent his or her country and become the ACO World Amateur Champion 2026!

Venue:

5* Atlantica Belvedere Resort on Kos. The hotel was originally known as Helona Resort and was the venue of the ACO events in 2015–2018 and 2022–25. The playing hall is located inside the hotel, and lifts are available. ACO will arrange the accommodation for all participants at the hotel.

The hotel is an adults-only hotel, which means that only participants aged 16 and above can attend the chess tournament.

Players and accompanying persons under the age of 16 can also stay at the sister hotel, the 5-star Hotel Atlantica Beach Resort, just a few hundred metres away. More information on this can be found at on pages 26+27. Participation for players under the age of 16 is possible in exceptional cases, please contact us if you are interested.

All players and accompanying persons are required to stay in the official hotels. All booking must be made directly through the ACO.

Division of rating groups (groups play separately)

Group A: 2201+
Group B: 2001 – 2200
Group C: 1901 – 2000
Group D: 1751 – 1900
Group E: 1651 – 1750
Group F: 1501 – 1650
Group G: 0 – 1500

Please note the explanation regarding the new rating groups on the next page.

Tournament committee:

GM Falko Bindrich, IM Tobias Hirneise and FIDE arbiter Peter Frei. Decisions of the committee are final.

Mode and time control:

9 rounds, Swiss-System / 90 minutes for 40 moves + 15 min. with an increment of 30 seconds per move starting from move 1.
Default time: 30 minutes.

Tiebreaks in case of a tie:

1. Buchholz score (number of points of your opponents added)
2. progress score (adding up your points after each round)
3. Direct encounter

If there are fewer than 11 players per group, a round-robin tournament is played (everyone against everyone). In case of a tie the Sonneborn-Berger scoring system is used. For this you receive all the points of the opponents against whom you have won and half the points for draws. If this tiebreak is also equal, the direct encounter decides.

Starting fee (for players only):

100 EUR

Prizes: EUR 5.000 (based on a minimum of 100 players)

Group A

2201–2400

1st place: 500 EUR
2nd place: 200 EUR
3rd place: 100 EUR

The winners of each group become ACO World Amateur Chess Champion. Players achieving places 1-3 receive trophies. All players receive diplomas.

Group B

2001 – 2200

1st place: 400 EUR
2nd place: 200 EUR
3rd place: 100 EUR

Group C

1901 – 2000

1st place: 400 EUR
2nd place: 200 EUR
3rd place: 100 EUR

Group D

1751 – 1900

1st place: 400 EUR
2nd place: 200 EUR
3rd place: 100 EUR

Group E

1651 – 1750

1st place: 400 EUR
2nd place: 200 EUR
3rd place: 100 EUR

Group F

1501 – 1650

1st place: 400 EUR
2nd place: 200 EUR
3rd place: 100 EUR

Group G

0 – 1500

1st place: 400 EUR
2nd place: 200 EUR
3rd place: 100 EUR

New rating groups without effect! (Starting from 2025)

Our tournament is traditionally played in 7 separate rating groups. This means that you only play against opponents of a similar level. The rating at the time of registration applies. For players with an international rating (Elo) and a national rating, the higher number applies.

Adjustment of rating groups necessary due to FIDE Elo bonus

As of 1 March 2024, FIDE has given all players with an Elo below 2000 an Elo bonus. The Elo minimum for players receiving their first Elo has also been set at 1400. For this reason, we have to adjust the rating groups C to G accordingly (see also next page).

	Previous groups		New groups (from 2025)
Group A:	2201+	→	2201+
Group B:	2001 – 2200	→	2001 – 2200
Group C:	1801 – 2000	→	1901 – 2000
Group D:	1601 – 1800	→	1751 – 1900
Group E:	1401 – 1600	→	1651 – 1750
Group F:	1201 – 1400	→	1501 – 1650
Group G:	0 – 1200	→	0 – 1500

How is the Elo bonus calculated?

Difference of 2000 minus your old Elo (from Feb. 2024) times 0.4.

Example for a player with an Elo rating of 1700:

2000 minus 1700 = 300 difference. $300 \times 0.4 = 120$ points bonus.

The new Elo is 1820 (1700 + 120 points)

This means that a player who previously played in Group D (1601 - 1800) remains in the same Group D (1751 - 1900).

Players without Elo

For players who only have a national rating and no Elo, the before-mentioned formula is used for grouping. Example: if a player has a national rating of 1700 and no Elo, he will be assigned to Group D with a virtual rating of 1820 (see calculation on the left). This means that the same standards apply to all players.

Note for players in Group G

Although the G group now extends up to a rating of 1500 instead of 1200 as before, the playing strength of the opponents does not change. No players from the former F group (1201-1400) can play in the new G group (0-1500), as these players now have a rating of 1501+ due to the rating adjustments and therefore play in the new Group F.

Players without rating:

Players who do not have a national or international number can only participate in Group G.

Playing in another group (voluntary):

Possible if a rating corresponding to that of another group is achieved between the time of registration and the start of the tournament.

The tournament organisers reserve the right to change the grouping of individual players in exceptional cases. Similarly, two groups may be merged if the number of participants is low. In this case, however, the final ranking and prize money distribution will take place separately.

Do you have any questions about the new group division? Please contact us!

By e-mail: amateur@amateurchess.com or by phone: +49 (0) 178 6746167

Overview of the new division of groups (Starting from 2025)

Old rating		New rating	Old group	New group
1000	→	1400	G (0-1200)	G (0-1500)
1025	→	1415	G (0-1200)	G (0-1500)
1050	→	1430	G (0-1200)	G (0-1500)
1075	→	1445	G (0-1200)	G (0-1500)
1100	→	1460	G (0-1200)	G (0-1500)
1125	→	1475	G (0-1200)	G (0-1500)
1150	→	1490	G (0-1200)	G (0-1500)
1175	→	1505	G (0-1200)	F (1501-1650)
1200	→	1520	G (0-1200)	F (1501-1650)
1225	→	1535	F (1201-1400)	F (1501-1650)
1250	→	1550	F (1201-1400)	F (1501-1650)
1275	→	1565	F (1201-1400)	F (1501-1650)
1300	→	1580	F (1201-1400)	F (1501-1650)
1325	→	1595	F (1201-1400)	F (1501-1650)
1350	→	1610	F (1201-1400)	F (1501-1650)
1375	→	1625	F (1201-1400)	F (1501-1650)
1400	→	1640	F (1201-1400)	F (1501-1650)
1425	→	1655	E (1401-1600)	E (1651-1750)
1450	→	1670	E (1401-1600)	E (1651-1750)
1475	→	1685	E (1401-1600)	E (1651-1750)
1500	→	1700	E (1401-1600)	E (1651-1750)

Old rating		New rating	Old group	New group
1525	→	1715	E (1401-1600)	E (1651-1750)
1550	→	1730	E (1401-1600)	E (1651-1750)
1575	→	1745	E (1401-1600)	E (1651-1750)
1600	→	1760	E (1401-1600)	D (1751-1900)
1625	→	1775	D (1601-1800)	D (1751-1900)
1650	→	1790	D (1601-1800)	D (1751-1900)
1675	→	1805	D (1601-1800)	D (1751-1900)
1700	→	1820	D (1601-1800)	D (1751-1900)
1725	→	1835	D (1601-1800)	D (1751-1900)
1750	→	1850	D (1601-1800)	D (1751-1900)
1775	→	1865	D (1601-1800)	D (1751-1900)
1800	→	1880	D (1601-1800)	D (1751-1900)
1825	→	1895	C (1801-2000)	D (1751-1900)
1850	→	1910	C (1801-2000)	C (1901-2000)
1875	→	1925	C (1801-2000)	C (1901-2000)
1900	→	1940	C (1801-2000)	C (1901-2000)
1925	→	1955	C (1801-2000)	C (1901-2000)
1950	→	1970	C (1801-2000)	C (1901-2000)
1975	→	1985	C (1801-2000)	C (1901-2000)
2000	→	2000	C (1801-2000)	C (1901-2000)
2000+	→	2000+	B	B

The venue

The 5* Atlantica Belvedere Resort Kos (formerly Helona Resort) was built by the Hilton Group and has 21 pools. The hotel is an adults-only hotel, which means that only participants aged 16+ can take part in the tournament. The hotel has already hosted several ACO events in the years 2015–18 and 2022–2025.





2025 ACO World Amateur Chess Championship

After the years 2015-2018, our event returned to Kos in 2022-2025 with a total of 500+ players from more than 35 countries. See group picture 2025.

How to get to Kos?

From all European countries there are direct flights to Kos.

If you need help with your flight search you can send us an email at amateur@amateurchess.com and we will kindly assist you to find the best option. Free of charge.

For your own search we recommend:

<https://flights.ideal.com/>

In case you cannot find a direct flight there is always the option to fly via Athens or Thessaloniki.





Playing halls

There are three playing halls, all with carpet and lots of space for the players. During the games, all players (and their accompanying persons) can enjoy free coffee, water, tea, soft drinks, fruits, cake, and cookies.

Due to the limited number of available hotel rooms, the tournament is limited to around 150 players.





The organizers

GM Falko Bindrich and IM Tobias Hirneise have been responsible for the organisation of all ACO tournaments since 2012. They are personally on site at all events and are happy to answer any questions you may have.



GM Falko Bindrich (Germany)

learned chess at the age of six from his older brother and was coached by his father Oswald Bindrich at the beginning of his career. He was German Champion U12, U14, U16 and European Champion U18 with the German youth national team. At 12, he was the youngest German ever to win the FM title. At 16, he became Germany's youngest grandmaster at the time, after which he became an honorary citizen of his hometown of Zittau. He took part in the 2008 and 2010 Chess Olympiads as a member of the German national team and trained with former world champion Anatoli Karpov in preparation. During his career Bindrich took part in more than 20 European and World Youth Championships, in which he drew against Magnus Carlsen and won against World Championship challenger Ian Nepomniachtchi, among others. In 2008 he won the largest German Open in Deizisau with more than 700 participants. In 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2009 Bindrich was voted „Player of the Year“ by the German Chess Youth, making him one of the players with the most awards. Bindrich played for years in the Swiss Team Championship for SG Luzern and with his Austrian team SK Hohenems and with his Belgian team Cercle d'Échecs Fontainois he became Austrian and Belgian team champion respectively. In 2017 Bindrich won the German Masters ahead of the best German players. His highest elo rating is 2610. In addition to chess, Bindrich completed a master's degree in psychology and works as a psychologist.

IM Tobias Hirneise (Germany)

comes from Stuttgart (Germany), learned chess from his grandfather and played his first chess tournament at the age of 11. After several state championship titles in the youth field, he became the Men's State Champion of Baden in 2008. Since 2009 Hirneise has held the title of International Chess Champion (IM) and played for many years in the German Chess Bundesliga for the team of SV Wattenscheid. His highest rating is 2481. In 2016, he achieved his first grandmaster norm. He was trained by the coaches IM Valeri Bronznik from Ukraine, GM and ACO coach Zigurds Lanka from Latvia, GM Boris Avrukh from Israel and GM Ognjen Cvitan from Croatia. In Switzerland he played for the clubs Reti Zurich and Herrliberg, in Austria first for the chess club Vöcklabruck and later in the Bundesliga for SK Götzis. As a trainer, he worked mainly with talented children from southern Germany. Several of his students achieved medal places in German championships and qualified for youth world championships. As a player and trainer, Hirneise took part in chess tournaments in more than 30 countries. He is a publishing merchant, graphic designer and former editor-in-chief of the German chess magazine Rochade Europa. Since 2018 he has been the publisher of the children's chess magazine Rochade Kids, which is used by more than 50 000 children. The magazines have been translated into Swedish, Norwegian and English language.



Get to know (y)our chess trainers on site

Zigurds Lanka from Latvia (left) is considered one of the best-known chess coaches in the world. Lanka is a multiple Latvian master and the author of several chess books. He is known above all for his extraordinarily broad opening knowledge, which he understands better than anyone else how to make accessible to amateur players. For Latvia, Lanka took part in three Chess Olympiads and several European and World Team Championships. His best-known students include the grandmasters Alexei Shirov, Viktor Bologan and Falko Bindrich.

Daniel King from England (middle) became a Grandmaster in 1989. Highlights of his career are winning the 1992 Goodricke Open tournament in Calcutta, India, defeating Vishy Anand along the way and representing his country on numerous occasions including the famous victory by England over the Soviet Union in Reykjavik 1990. After his professional playing career, he went into the media appearing on TV and online as a chess commentator and presenter. He has worked all over the world for channels such as the BBC, Channel 4 (UK), ESPN (USA), and Eurosport; and for websites such as chess.com, playchess.com, the ICC, and Chess24.

Spyridon Skembris from Greece (right) finished third in the World Junior Championship in 1977. In the following years he won the Greek championship four times and in 1990 he was awarded the grandmaster title. Skembris is one of the most respected team coaches. He is the national coach of Greece and also coached the national team of Cyprus. Skembris represented Greece in a total of eight Chess Olympiads. In 1992 he won the gold medal on the second board at the European Team Championship in Debrecen.



Train with world-class trainers

GM Daniel King, GM Zigurds Lanka, GM Spyridon Skembris

Get personalized advice from our grandmasters on site and analyze your games with them.

The following services are included in the tournament entry fee :

- ✓ **Participation in the ACO World Amateur Chess Championship**
- ✓ **Free game analysis with a grandmaster**
After your game, you can analyse it with a grandmaster
- Planned grandmasters for the ACO Tournaments 2026:**
GM Zigurds Lanka, GM Spyridon Skembris, GM Daniel King
- ✓ **Free grandmaster lectures**
In the afternoon of each day with a single round.

- ✓ **Free chess side programme**
Blitz tournaments (single or team), GM simuls etc.
- ✓ **English speaking organizing team**
- ✓ **Support**
We will support you at any time and in a timely manner with all questions regarding the tournament and your hotel booking, such as rebookings or changes of travel dates.
- ✓ **Flight search support**
We will be happy to help you find the most convenient and cheapest flight connection for your flight to Kos.

Schedule ACO World Amateur Chess Championship 2026

Wednesday	6 May		Arrival day
		18 - 20:00	Welcome-Drink
Thursday	7 May	09:30	Pairings
		09:45	Opening ceremony
		10:00	Round 1
		16:00	Grandmaster lecture
		18:00	Blitz tournament
Friday	8 May	10:00	Round 2
		16:00	Round 3
Saturday	9 May	10:00	Round 4
		16:00	Grandmaster lecture
		18:00	Grandmaster simul

Sunday	10 May	10:00	Round 5
		16:00	Round 6
Monday	11 May		Free day
Tuesday	12 May	10:00	Round 7
		16:00	Grandmaster lecture
		18:00	Team Blitz
Wednesday	13 May	10:00	Round 8
		16:00	Grandmaster lecture
		18:00	Blitz tournament
Thursday	14 May	10:00	Round 9
		18:00	Prize-giving
Friday	15 May		Departure

Participation in the side programme is voluntary. Schedule subject to change.



Reception

The hotel reception is staffed 24 hours a day.

Lobby

Enjoy the
magnificent
view.



Main pool

At the main pool you can relax before or after the games. Right by the pool is the pool bar, so a drink is always within reach. Same applies for the Ammos Beach Bar, where you can get drinks, snacks, coffee, cakes and ice cream.







Sandy beach with a view

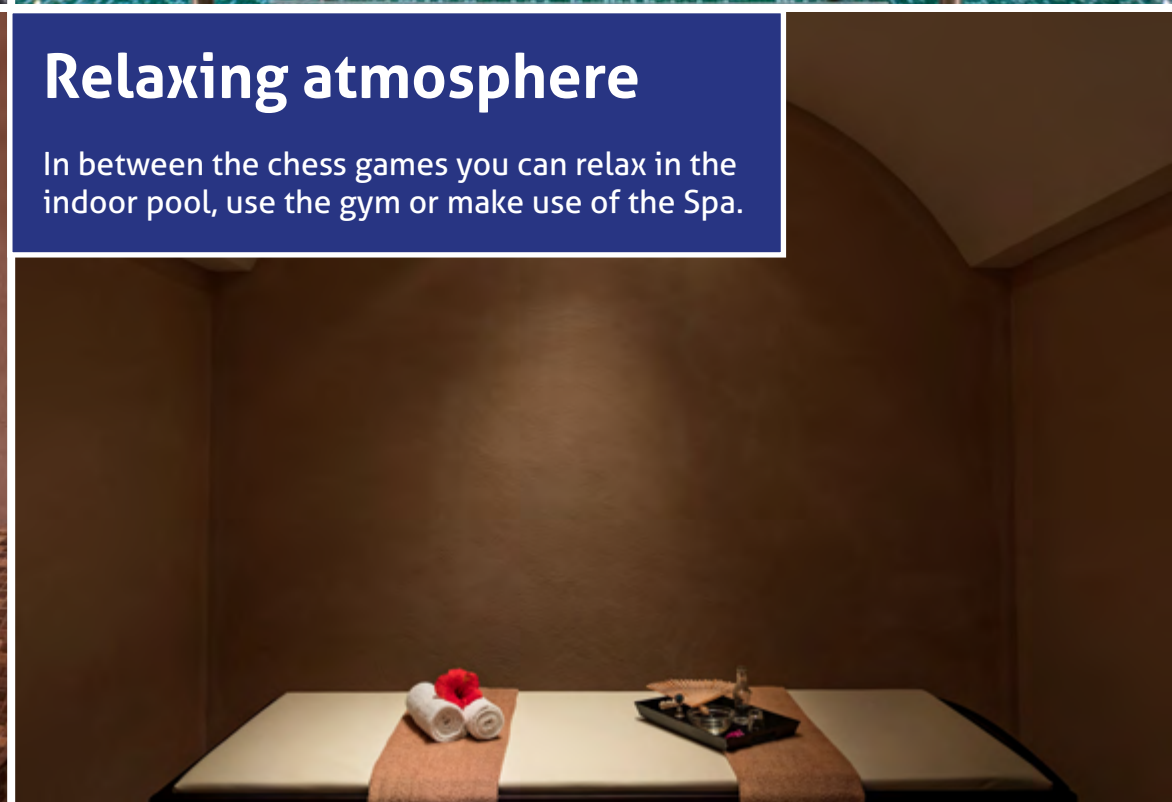
From the private sandy beach you have a magnificent view to the island of Nyssiros.





Relaxing atmosphere

In between the chess games you can relax in the indoor pool, use the gym or make use of the Spa.





Holiday feeling

21 pools and Mediterranean flair.



The image shows an outdoor restaurant terrace with a wooden pergola roof. Several tables are set with glassware and cutlery. In the foreground, there are dark wicker chairs with light-colored cushions. The terrace overlooks a body of water with a prominent dome in the distance. The sky is clear and blue.

Main restaurant of Atlantica Belvedere

The main restaurant is located one floor above the playing hall and one floor below the lobby and is thus optimally accessible.



A la Carte Restaurant

If you are looking for an extremely quiet and cosy place to dine, we recommend the Thallassa Restaurant by the main pool. Every guest can dine there once during their stay free of charge. A reservation is required.

ALL INCLUSIVE DETAILS

Main Restaurant: (Drinks included)

Meal times:

Breakfast:

7:30 -10:30 hrs

Lunch:

12:30 - 14:30 hrs
International Buffet

Dinner:

19:00 - 21:30 hrs
International Buffet
& Live Cooking

Ammos Beach Bar:

10:30 -18:00 hrs

Drinks, snacks + ice
cream, coffee & cakes

Thalassa A la carte Restaurant:

Opening times

18:30- 21:00 hrs
Reservation required,
free once per stay

Ulysses Lobby Bar:

10:30 -00:30 hrs

Local and selected im-
ported alcoholic and
non-alcoholic drinks.

Almyra Pool Bar:

10:00 -18:00 hrs

Local and selected im-
ported alcoholic and
non-alcoholic drinks.



Ulysses Lobby Bar

End the day with drinks and live music in the Ulysses Bar and the beautiful terrace. Chess boards included. One or two grandmasters can also be found there for a spontaneous round of blitz chess.

**Special feature:
The bar is open
until 0:30 a.m. !**



5* Atlantica Belvedere Resort
Main hotel with playing hall

5* Atlantica Beach Resort
sister hotel

NEW!

**Stay at the nearby
5* Atlantica Beach Resort**

Due to limited availability in the main hotel, there will also be the possibility to stay at the sister hotel 5* Atlantica Beach Resort.

From the hotel lobby of the Atlantica Beach Resort to the tournament hall in the main hotel, Atlantica Belvedere, it is only a 5–10 minute walk. You will stay overnight and have breakfast at Atlantica Beach. For lunch and dinner, you can choose between the two hotels. You can also use the facilities and the all-inclusive package of both hotels.



5* Atlantica Beach

Just a few hundred metres from the playing hall.





Prize-giving ceremony at a wonderful scenery

The best comes last. Celebrate with us the seven new World Champions of the different groups. Or even better, let yourself be honored as one of the winners! The prize-giving ceremony takes place at the pool terrace. In 2017 + 2018, the popular chess singer Juga from Chile performed for us.



Superstars visiting:

Judit Polgar & Alexei Shirov 2018 on Kos

At the 2018 ACO World Amateur Championship, guest of honour and best female chess player of all time, Grandmaster Judit Polgar, presented the winners with their trophies. For an exclusive group of chess enthusiasts, former Vice World Champion Grandmaster Alexei Shirov offered a private preparatory seminar prior to the event.

Special guest 2025: IM Eric Rosen

The well-known chess streamer, YouTuber and International chess master from the United States was part of the coaching team on site in Kos in 2025. He is one of the most successful chess streamers in the world with almost 1 million followers. He analysed games with the participants, gave seminars and a simultaneous and played in the blitz tournaments.



No or hardly any tournament chess experience? No problem - play in our group G!

The G Group is designed for chess players with a rating below 1500 or no official Elo rating at all. Many participants in this group are playing in their very first tournament—often filled with curiosity, and sometimes a little nervousness. That's exactly what the group is for: a welcoming, supportive environment for those who love chess but have little or no experience.

A particularly lovely aspect is that partners of more experienced players—who are competing in the higher groups—often decide to take part themselves. What begins as a simple accompanying trip frequently turns into a shared tournament experience. The relaxed and open atmosphere of the G Group invites newcomers to give it a try, even if they've never played in an official event before. You will only compete against other participants with similar playing strength.

This ensures balanced, fair games without pressure—perfect for anyone taking their first steps in tournament chess. And if questions arise—about the clock, notation, or procedures—the organizing team and the tournament arbiter are always ready to help with patience and understanding. Support is always available, and every question is welcome.

At the heart of it all is the joy of playing, the courage to try something new, and the shared experience across the chessboard. The event is accompanied by a carefully designed program featuring grandmaster lectures, simultaneous exhibitions, and many opportunities to connect with fellow chess enthusiasts from around the world. The G Group offers much more than just a tournament—it creates a warm, inclusive community and the ideal setting for an unforgettable introduction to the world of tournament chess.



Do you have questions about the tournament?

Please feel free to contact us!

amateur@amateurchess.com

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Free day – time to explore Kos island

Our free day offers you enough time to explore the lovely island of Kos. Visit the most interesting attractions of the island and enjoy the typical Greek flair in Kos town. You have the possibility to join a guided bus tour including a tourist guide or to discover the island on your own.

Asklepion

Besides the capital Kos with its many alleys and influences of different religions, the beautiful beaches of the island, the mountain village of Zia and the knight's castle of the Order of St. John, the ruin of Asklepion is a must for all lovers of Greek history. Founded by the father of western medicine, Hippocrates, it was one of the first sanatoriums where the sick were treated.



Chess, chess, chess! Our side programme

Blitz chess:

The many highlights of ACO Championships include our blitz tournaments with five minutes per player. Our Welcome Blitz tournament always takes place in the evening after the first round. There is always a good atmosphere and it is very easy to make contacts. All participants play together in a single group.

Team blitz:

Equally popular is our Team Blitz tournament, where teams of 2 (on two boards) compete against each other. You may choose your partner, everybody is involved, from beginner to grandmaster!

Simultaneous exhibition:

There is always a big crowd at the simultaneous exhibition, too. Over 80 players competed against our team of title holders in 2019.



Break guaranteed! The bye rule

In our tournaments we play 2 double rounds. As this can be very exhausting, we offer all participants the chance to take 1 or 2 'rest breaks'. **This is totally voluntary!** These rest breaks are called 'byes' in chess language. A bye is when you sit out a round but receive half a point in return. This allows you to rest and still not slip down the table. Afterwards, you can play in the tournament again as normal.

You can take up to 2 byes in rounds 1-6. Byes are not possible if a round robin tournament (everyone against everyone) is played or if the number of participants in a group is less than 13, as otherwise problems with the pairings are possible.

A 'bye' is also included in your Buchholz rating (second rating in the event of a tie, in which the points of all opponents are added together). According to the current FIDE rules (as of 2025), you receive your own score as Buchholz for a game not played. **Example:** You take a BYE in round 3 and have scored 5 points in the final table. Your Buchholz score for round 3 is 5 points.



TROPHIES FOR 5 OR 10 PARTICIPATIONS

Not only tournament winners receive trophies at our tournaments. It is our tradition that players receive a special trophy for their fifth or tenth participation.

We are proud to say that almost 200 players already played at least 5 tournaments with us!



Enjoying chess - the ACO experience

Our goal is to offer you a chess tournament of a special kind. Of course the tournament takes priority, but we also want you and your companions to enjoy the tournament in the truest sense of the word. That's why we only select interesting locations and beautiful hotels with high 5 star standards for our tournaments.

Our team consists, among others, of Grandmasters and International Masters with huge tournament experience, so we know what matters at a chess tournament.

Beside you will find an overview of all previous ACO tournaments. Many more will follow!

2012 ACO WACC: Dubai **72 participants / 25 nations**

Our first tournament took place in sunny Dubai in 2012. The venue was 5-star Jebel Ali Hotel. The highlight of the event was the prize-giving ceremony in the ballroom of the famous 7-star Burj-Al-Arab Hotel (photo)



2013 ACO WACC: Crete **168 participants / 26 nations**

The 2nd ACO WACC took place on the Greek island of Crete in 2013. Compared to 2012, the number of participants more than doubled. The venue was 4-star Aquis Arina Sand Hotel with a beautiful hall with direct sea view.



2014 ACO WACC: Rhodes **240 participants / 26 nations**

Our 3rd tournament took place on the „sun island“ of Rhodes in 2014. The playing hall stretched of over 1000 m² where 240 players from 26 countries fought for the titles. Players were accommodated in 4 & 5 star hotels.





ACO WACC 2015-2018 + 2022-2025 on Kos (1500+ players)

Between 2015-18 and 2022-2025 the ACO WACC took place on Kos. Venue was the 5* Atlantica Belvedere Resort (former Helona Resort). In 2017 + 2018 more than 300 players took part.

ACO World Super Senior (65+) Chess Championship

Our first Championships for players aged 65 and above took place beginning of May 2022-2025 with a total of more than 200 players from 20+ countries.



ACO World Senior (50+) Championships 2018 + 2019 + 2021 + 2022 + 2023 + 2024 + 2025: Crete

Since 2018 we host our 50+ events on the island of Crete. Venue is the 5* all-inclusive hotel Fodele Beach Resort. A total of over 900 players from 30 countries took part.

ACO WACC 2019 + 2021: Rhodes

366 participants / 29 nations

The 5* Sheraton Rhodes Resort was the venue and offered perfect playing conditions for more than 350 players from 29 countries.



Double & single room

The standard single and double rooms (with or without sea view) are spacious with 32m² of size with a roomy bathroom. The rooms have recently been renovated and improved.





Rooms with private pool (with or without sea view) - **only very few rooms available!**

This means that you have direct access to a pool from your terrace. Several rooms share this pool. Mostly separated by a stone wall, so that you have your own private swimming area.





Rooms with private pool (with or without sea view) - **only very few rooms available!**

This means that you have direct access to a pool from your terrace. Several rooms share this pool. Mostly separated by a stone wall, so that you have your own private swimming area.

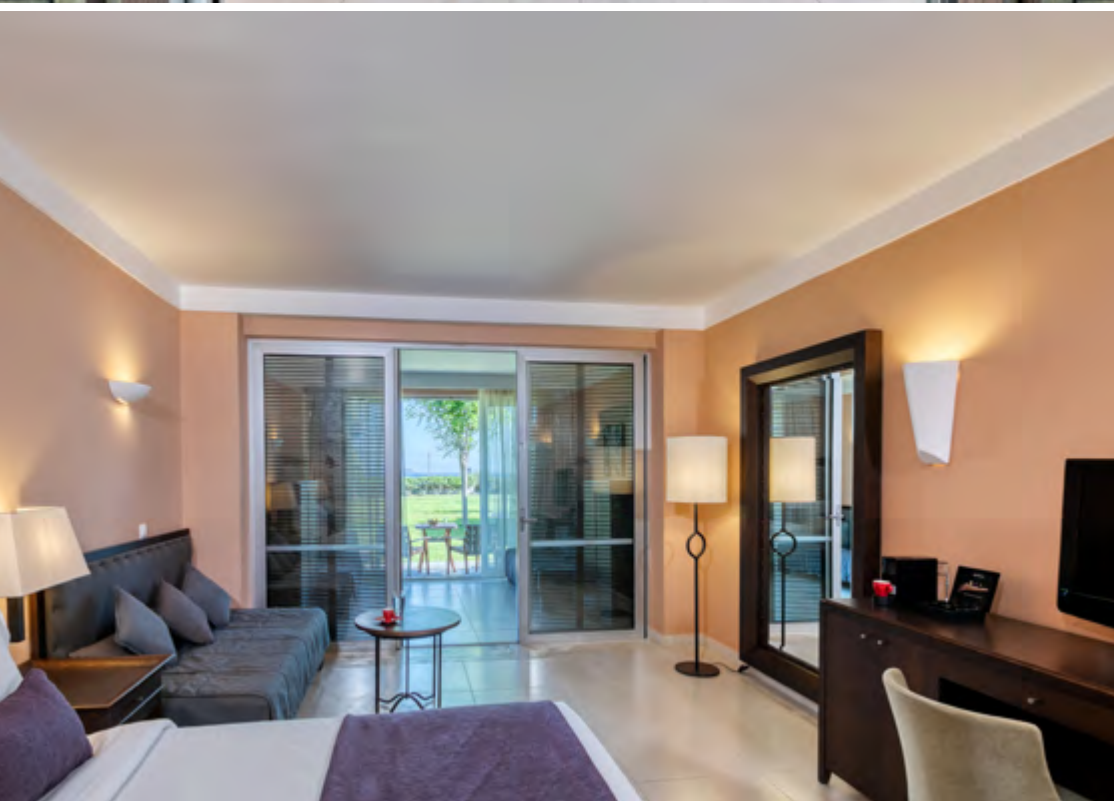




Junior Suite 43m² only 3 available

The rooms offer more space due to a separate, extra area with balcony.





Suite for 2 persons 63m² - **only 2 available**

The Suites are luxurious, ultra spacious units, each with one master bedroom, a living room, a marble-lined bathroom with an extra shower cabin, a separate wc, a walk-in wardrobe and a private swimming pool. All floor area is tiled. All Suites are located on the ground floor and enjoy a large, furnished terrace with spectacular sea view.





Private Villa (120 m²) **only 1 available**

Each villa is an independent building for up to 4 persons, with two floors (ground level and upper level), with great sea view and a private swimming pool (36 m²).





Testimonials Kos 2025

Like you, I checked before the tournament to see if it was for me. With the experience I have now, I can only say that it was the right decision to take part! The following reasons were decisive:

1. excellent general conditions at the Atlantica Belvedere: Rooms, food, pool, beach, service top.
2. excellent conditions at the tournament: space at the board, draws and referees, relaxed atmosphere and good organisation.
3. you definitely learn something from the uncomplicated encounters with the 3 grandmasters after your own games and their analyses or in training in a small group or during blitz or simultaneous. No engine can replace that.
4. there are lots of nice people to meet around the tournament, e.g. in the restaurant.

If your partner wants to relax, go to the pool or the beach, bring him or her along. If not, maybe wait for your next holiday ;-), but take part yourself!

Klaus Fischer (Germany)

I really enjoyed the tournament and my trip to Greece. The playing conditions were excellent. The food at the hotel was of a high quality. The lectures and simul were very enjoyable too. To top it all, I made some friends and contacts.

Vimal Simha (Canada)

Unique - every chess fan must have experienced it!

Bruno Spälti (Switzerland)

As always, the tournament was well organised, and if it hadn't been, this would certainly not have been my 8th participation. I can only recommend it!

Helmut Löffler (Switzerland)

We see many (chess) friends here year after year. More praise is hardly possible!

Dr. Andreas Gerlach (Germany)

The tournament is excellently organised, with no waiting times, plenty of space, hot coffee and endless treats. If playing chess anywhere is really fun, then here on Kos. Great ambience in a 5-star environment, 4 charismatic grandmasters to help analyse and give tips, lots of additional events such as grandmaster lectures, blitz tournaments, partner blitz and so on! My wife and I usually start looking forward to the next tournament as soon as we fly home. Tobias and Falko: Please keep up the good work!

Michael und Lisa Nölle (Germany)

Attractive grouping of the players and therefore an exciting tournament. Everything was perfectly organised and therefore a complete package at a great tournament venue.

Michael Hoferichter (Germany)

Testimonials Kos 2025

A wonderful tournament in an excellent hotel. The organisation is fantastic, and what can you say about the hotel... great surroundings, lovely rooms and more food than you could eat in a lifetime! Kos 2025 was my tenth ACO tournament and it's so lovely to reunite with chess friends from other countries. If you love chess and love holidays then this is for you!

Andy Proudfoot (England)

The completely calm and professional organisation of the tournament was just so perfect that all participants always knew where they were in the group ranking, which opponents they had next, etc. So it couldn't have been better, I think. Thank you and especially Peter Frei.

Hans-Peter Lorenz (Austria)

Everything was perfect arranged: Very nice location, Great hotel, comfortable playing hall, Interesting side Program, and friendly atmosphere. We will join next year. Many thanks to the organisation team.

Bert van Oudvorst (Netherlands)

It was a really great atmosphere that swept you away. You only experience something like that once a year or once in a lifetime. There were many great moments, whether it was the narrow victory or the defeat. I am always thrilled and excited before the tournament/game. Many thanks also to all the participants, the hotel and the organiser for the great success. Congratulations also to the tournament winners. As we all know, after the tournament is before the tournament, and I would be delighted to take part again in 2026.

Olaf Rückstieß (Germany)

As always, the tournament was perfectly organised, which ensured that everything ran smoothly. The hotel is perfect for a senior chess tournament (quiet location without a riverside road, good food, spacious tournament rooms). The 3 accompanying grandmasters were always friendly and patiently available to analyse games. I'll be back next year!

Dr. Reinhold Schnelzer (Germany)

The tournament was excellently organised and as far as I could see there was not a single problem among the players. In addition, both the hotel and the food were excellent. I would also like to emphasise the punctuality and the very good willingness of the grandmasters to analyse our games!

Dr. Daniel Chan (Argentina)

A big compliment to the organisers: a perfectly organised chess tournament with a noticeable wealth of experience and great skill: the best playing conditions in the playing rooms with plenty of space, great grandmaster support during the game analysis, lectures, simultaneous chess, blitz tournaments - there really was everything on offer! Plus a first-class hotel right by the sea (I had a very nice, spacious room with a sea view!), with a private beach and excellent, extremely varied food, which you can eat on the terraces or indoors, depending on your choice. I took advantage of the flexible time allocation, took advantage of a so-called bye and had - in addition to the very knowledgeable and interesting all-day island excursion - several beautiful afternoons on the beach and in the neighbouring village of Kardamena.

(Anonymous testimonial)

Testimonials Kos 2024



I took part in an ACO tournament for the first time because friends had recommended it to me. I can only pass this recommendation on to other chess friends. Everything was perfect!

**GM Lothar Vogt
(Germany)**

The „chess-life balance“ is perfect, and we can fully utilise and savour the chess game with the participants even after the end of the game thanks to the very relaxed atmosphere at dinner or in the evening round. This not only emphasises the sporting decision but also the social interaction, which tends to wither away in today's very entertaining times. The chess days are an experience, and each participant can set their own „chess horizon“—how much and which chess activities they take part in. My wife, who doesn't play chess, enjoys the „tournament surroundings“ and can also develop freely thanks to the various leisure activities (spa & co. send their regards...)

Ariane und Thomas Fernandez (Germany)

I look back on ten great days that I wouldn't want to have missed. I will not only have fond memories of the competitive yet relaxed atmosphere but also of the attractive supporting programme, in particular the entertaining and informative grandmaster lectures. But there was also plenty of time to relax. In any case, there was enough time to splash around in the sea and the pool, and after a drink or two at the pool bar, any displeasure about my own shortcomings at the chessboard quickly disappeared.

Michael Seiler (Switzerland)

It was really a great tournament. The combination of holidays by the sea and playing chess was great fun!

Pascal Kaeser (Switzerland)

The ACO World Amateur Championship never fails to disappoint. Held on the beautiful Greek island of Kos, with a welcoming feeling from the staff and many returning participants. The chess event is exciting and challenging (I finished 3rd in group E), and it combines well with the sunny beach and plenty of free time. The programme supporting the event, from grandmaster simuls and lectures to Blitz tournaments, ensures that it's the best holiday experience for keen chess players. I will definitely be back annually.

Andrew Todd (Scotland)

Testimonials Kos 2024

It was my first ACO tournament after many years out of competition. The fact that you play in performance groups gave me the courage to take part. And it was the right thing to do. And when I was pretty exhausted after the first double round, I took a bye the next time. I hadn't heard of it before, but it's a great idea. But I realised what I needed to learn and practice again. I want to do better next time. I've met some great people here, and I'm enjoying playing again. Even my husband (who was not playing in the tournament) was enthusiastic and got infected. He will also be playing next time and is already practicing hard. Many thanks to the team.

Carsta Göring (Germany)

I like the combination of holidays and the hobby of chess. Perfect tournament conditions and a wonderful holiday environment with enough time to relax.

Florian Puchner (Germany)

The combination of holiday and chess is very nice - everyone can decide on the spot and at short notice whether they want to play the double rounds or take some time off to have more time for non-chess holiday pleasures.

Uwe Töllner (Germany)

It's a fantastic tournament series organised by the ACO, with perfect organisation and great hotel and resort facilities. You can combine a nice chess tournament with a nice holiday, it doesn't get any better than that. And where else is it possible to analyse the game with a nice grandmaster after the round? That's absolutely unique!

Frank Schröder (Germany)



This was the most AMAZING tournament I've ever attended in my life! The schedule was well organized, the chairs were comfortable, the spacing between boards was adequate, and the lighting was sufficient. The all-you-can eat snacks and drinks truly were delightful! The GM lectures were very insightful, and the blitz tournaments were very fun!! I've told all my friends and fellow local tournament players back home about it, recommending that they attend!! Very well done, everyone!!

Damon Rucker (USA)

Testimonials Kos 2023

The ACO 2023 Chess tournament in Kos provided the perfect environment for chess amateurs to enjoy 10 days of professionally organized tournament games at very nice 5 star resort in Greece. The opportunity to attend chess lectures taught by GMs combined with the option to get your chess games analyzed and reviewed by a GM makes this event a truly unique chess experience unlikely to be found anywhere else.

Attached a picture of a „Hand & Brain evening“ at the pool.

Dr. Oliver Werther (USA)



Dear Falko and Tobias,

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to you for organizing this amazing tournament in the past week. This was my second time on the ACO World Championships and however I'm not very satisfied with my overall performance (only 4 points), I'm extremely satisfied with the organization: it has been an amazingly friendly, chess-centered environment taken place on an absolutely awesome environment. I thought I prepared properly for the tournament in the past year (or at least I did everything to do so), but this is the nature of sports - sometimes you just can't perform well enough in competitive situations, maybe next time - because there will definitely be a next time! :)

Viktor Somogyi (Hungary)



Testimonials Kos 2023

This year was my third time at an ACO World Championship. The first time in Kos. It's a wonderful combination of chess and a holiday. Whether alone or with a companion, everyone gets their money's worth. We can only pay a big compliment to the ACO team. Everything is excellently organised. With Greece, a country was chosen that offers constant summer temperatures over a longer period of time and where there is definitely a holiday feeling. The hotel in Kos stands out from the other well-known hotels, which can be seen in the construction and architecture of the entire complex. You are pampered with an all-round carefree package.

Now to the chess tournament itself. Every participant has the chance to play for the world championship title in his or her group, which is not easy, as the competition is very strong and international. It's a challenging tournament, and you meet old faces and get to know new ones when you take part. You exchange ideas and look forward to seeing each other again. The social programme is also great.



Besides analyses with well-known grandmasters, seminars, blitz tournaments and simultaneous play, there is something for every chess enthusiast. Culinary delights are also well catered for. In conclusion, you can enjoy chess and a relaxed holiday in a great atmosphere. So, come to Kos, it's worth it!

Jens Wehrmann (GER) about the 2022 ACO World Amateur Chess Championship

In my experience, ACO chess tournaments take the concept „play chess while being on holidays“ to a very high standard. I like the tournament formula of playing games in groups with players of broadly equal strength. The conditions in the playing hall are nearly perfect. And after the games there is the possibility to analyze your game with a GM or go to one of their insightful lectures. If that isn't enough, you can also participate in blitz tournaments or a simultaneous game with one of the GMs. So the chess is serious, but so is the relaxing. In Kos, the 5 star hotel is beautifully located near the sea, has nice pools and a good restaurant, and there is much more to enjoy. On the „free day“ I participated in a tour of the island passing by some of the highlights that Kos has to offer.



Bert Talloen (Belgium) about the 2022 ACO World Amateur Chess Championship on Kos

As a newcomer to your ACO tournaments, I would like to thank you very much: Perfect organisation regarding hotel and tournament, organisation team always present and yet discreetly in the background. Interesting chess social programme, family atmosphere, well-organised island tour and close GM analyses of one's own games. Great anticipation, also on the part of my partner, for the ACO tournament in October 22 on Crete!

Dr. Guntram Hilbenz (Germany) about the 2022 ACO World Amateur Chess Championship on Kos

The Wimbledon of Chess

An experience report by Uwe Ritter (Germany) about the ACO World Amateur Chess Championship 2018 on Kos



It is May and it already has a good tradition, embedded between two holidays and two weekends the chess players meet for **the most beautiful amateur event of the year.**

Like every year when the ACO calls, one travels from all over the world to the beautiful Mediterranean island KOS to meet at the 5-star Hotel Helona Resort. 307 participants

from 30 countries followed the call of the organizers and travelled with their wives and accompanying persons, in some cases the children were there as well.

As every year, the official reception with a glass of sparkling wine or wine on the eve of the tournament was very popular, as one always meets many good old friends again. Even if the last participants did not arrive until after midnight due to flight delays, all chess players sat on the board punctually the next morning at 10.00 a.m. 9 rounds were played, in 7 rating groups, A to G. The rating groups were formed starting with the group A Elo 2201 - 2400, downwards.

The time control was 90 minutes for 40 moves and 15 minutes for the rest. There is also a bonus of 30 seconds per move. There were no disputes due to the always very fair interaction between the players.

Similar to the legendary tennis event, many things here are already good old tradition. In addition to a full board wellness program, there is free catering during the game in a beautiful playing hall equipped with carpets.

Present grandmasters, with whom one can analyze one's own game, a free day, which is always used for an island excursion in the group or on one's own initiative and ends with a Greek evening in the hotel.

Simultaneous exhibition events of master players present and various Blitz events were also an integral part of the supporting program this time. All this always takes place in a very familiar atmosphere.

Even before the tournament started, world chess star Alexei Schirow was a guest and prepared 8 chess players from all rating groups for this tournament for 3 days. Furthermore he was a star to touch, who was not afraid to play a blitz match against other amateurs. The also present grandmasters Spyridon Skembris and Zigurds Lanka were always sought-after analysis partners, some amateurs could be helped with tips and tricks. Both grandmasters also gave chess lectures in German and English, an offer which enjoyed great popularity.

In the 8th round at the best lunchtime, many chess players were already at the table, the remaining participants in the tournament hall temporarily did not believe their eyes and some even suspected a „Hungarian mirage“ when surprisingly the best female chess player of all times appeared in the playing hall.

Judit Polgar, now 41 years old and long since retired from active tournament chess, visited her friend Maria in the tournament hall to keep her fingers crossed for her personally. Maria had only scored a modest three points last year, now she dominated her group for 8 rounds, was equal on points with Simon Faber from Germany before the final round and in the end, due to an unfortunate defeat, was only second behind Simon Faber, who won the F-group with 7.5 points. I can't prove it, but let's assume that Judit Polgar plays a not inconsiderable part in this positive development.

The highlight of the prize-giving ceremony with guest of honour Judit Polgar, was, as last year, the mini free concert of the Chilean artist Maria Jose Yurar Rescaglio, who is well known as an artist in South America, thus far beyond her own national borders, and performs under the artist name Juga de Prima. Even before the start of the 9th round, the artist gave all participants a little surprise. We heard and saw a music video with the title „Oh my dear Capablanca“ which she had recorded.

The concluding remarks were made by participants who were there for the first time.

„The participants are all very relaxed. Nothing is missing. A beautiful Holiday tournament in an ambience of a World Championship, plus a great prize performance ratio“. (Peter Trzaska, Group B)

„A perfect organization“ (Marco Siebarth, Group C)

**„All very well if only the defeats weren't.“
(Barbara Kroll, Group E)**

„It was my first holiday in Greece and my first participation in an World Amateur Chess Championship and I was looking forward to it for months. **My expectations of a wonderful time were exceeded in every respect. The fantastic hotel complex with the best conditions for such an event left nothing to be desired; the good service of the staff, the excellent kitchen as well as the hotel's own sandy beach rounded the thing off and one could really enjoy the stay in a wonderful feel-good climate.**

At this point I would like to praise the organizers, who had the preparation, management and execution of the tournament (including the side tournaments) up to the evaluation and the festive award ceremony completely under control and ensured a perfect and smooth process, this was also confirmed by the other participants! Many thanks to Falko Bindrich and the Hirneise family!

As a subscriber to the german chess magazine „Rochade Europa“, I have been following the tournament for years and have now decided to participate. I can highly recommend it to every chess friend who wants to play a tournament in a relaxed atmosphere (Chess and Beach) in combination with a holiday feeling.

Even my personally worst tournament result (there's even that) will not cloud my memory of this beautiful time. Professionally and family-wise it fits with me with a participation at the earliest again in two years, but I can look forward to it already now.“

Andreas Borchert about the ACO World Amateur Chess Championship 2018 on Kos



„A big thank you to the ACO team for the organization of the World Amateur Chess Amateur Championship on the Greek island of Kos.

The tournament, its realization, the complete side program as well as the entire hotel (team) had to show an enormously high quality, which absolutely lived up to the claim of a World Championship.

Also worth mentioning is the Mediterranean weather on Kos, which will remain positively in your memory with many hours of sunshine.

I am already looking forward to next year to participate in this great tournament, to meet the Greek sun as well as the food and the nice people I met“.

Marco Siebarth about the ACO World Amateur Chess Championship 2018 on Kos



Spring, sun, sea, wine and chess

An experience report by Dr. Jürgen Kraft (Germany) about the ACO World Amateur Chess World Championship 2017

Dear chess friends, this was a really successful holiday! Admittedly, the “Amateur Chess World Championship” is somewhat bombastic. But: 314 players from all over the world had come, including Chile and Australia making the longest journey. My opponents came from India, the Netherlands, England, Poland, Norway, France, Switzerland, and Germany. A member of the regional chess club Kosstadt was also there. The youngest player of the tournament was 6 years old, the oldest one was a whopping 92 years old! The Helona Resort, a beach hotel complex on the south coast of the island, was where the tournament was held. Rightly 5 stars. 9 rounds Swiss system, usual reflection time, rating groups staggered according to ELO 200. 7 game days, one day off, to explore the island in the spring bloom.

In the evening flashing tournaments - very recommended for imitation - teamblitz: A strong and a weaker player fight together. Enjoy! Who of you now thinks we have been playing holiday coffee house chess, has gotten quite another idea: Since we had all the time in the world - apart from the time of reflection – where the fighting was fierce: accepting a draw? Only with a Queen and a tower less ... A typical chess day: 7.30 getting up, at 8.30 Anne and I want to have breakfast. Since I have to swim in the sea before. After breakfast, a short walk along the sea, at 10 am it starts. Excitement ... After the game, Anne and I had arrangements for lunch at 13.30 - it was several times later. I had never played so many final games. In the evening: There are chess games in the hotel bar. But with the English people, one can also talk about music: Are Deep Purple or the Dire Straits the better band? If you have lost, you can comfort yourself with a glass of red wine and the Rolling Stones: “You can not always get what you want”; If you win, you can listen to Freddy Mercury at the pool bar... “We are the Champions!”

The off day was very nice: Bus trips over the island are offered. In addition to tourism, Kos-Stadt has a beautiful ancient market square in the middle of the city and a Kreuzritterburg. Two beautiful old mosques built peacefully next to orthodox churches.

A visit to the ancient hippocrates sanctuary is a much just like the journey to the mountain villages over narrow serpentine: flowers, forest and a wonderful view of the deep blue Aegean.

Back to Chess: 5,5 out of 9, Rank 19 of 88 in my rating group. Despite many mistakes I am satisfied. The most beautiful part was a black victory in the English four-knight game. Thanks to Bernd’s English tutoring course, the opening was clearly in my favor, and I had an opportunity for polychrome for the first time in my chess career, despite a mistake in the middle game: two black ladies were too much for my opponent. Thanks to the good hoteleses (Oh these calamares with garlic and capernmayonnaise!) My belly unfortunately increased more than my ELO. Now I have to switch to lettuce! My wife has now enjoyed the beach life and has become really tanned - perhaps the only disadvantage of the air-conditioned playroom.

We will be back next year! Highly recommended!

Dear Organizers,

I was there for the first time. And I’m thrilled. So many possibilities, as banal amateur chess to play and to experience, with free water, coffee and cake on the board, to exchange with so many from other countries, in such a beautiful place, with a super tour on the off day, with best and ample kitchen, and all this in a pleasant atmosphere that you can work with. A big big thank you!

Greetings from Switzerland

Ruth Huber (Group E)



Constantine Ananiadis, (USA, Group D) about the World Amateur Chess Championship Rhodes 2014

„I was fortunate enough to have the chance to participate in the 2014 ACO World Championship in Rhodes, Greece and I can easily say that it was the best organized event I have ever participated in!

The organizers made sure every detail was taken care of and made the players feel very special. The venue was great with ample space and good lighting.

I also enjoyed the side events (blitz tournament etc) that they made available to us and was able to participate in one of them.

The schedule of the games was well thought-out and allowed for family time as well as time to explore the island of Rhodes itself. The hotel was also great and considering that it was „all-inclusive“ it was very affordable.

All in all, a great event and great initiative by the organizers! Bravo!

I really hope I can make this an annual event for myself and my family and I hope that more and more people will support ACO and participate in future championships!”



Mikael Svensson, (Sweden, Group B) about the World Amateur Chess Championship Crete 2013

Hats off and a big round of applause to the entire ACO team for yet another brilliant performance! ACO is a young organization, now with its second World Championship organized for chess amateurs from around the world. Being a participant in both Dubai and Crete, it's natural for me to compare the two tournaments. Playing in Dubai was certainly a privilege. With the luxurious resort as both accommodation and playing hall for the participants, and with the prize giving ceremony in Burj Al Arab, it was truly a once in a lifetime experience. All things considered the tournament on Crete took the tournament one step further, even surpassing the experience in Dubai. While the hotel in Dubai was great, the climate on Crete was strongly preferable. While a decent amount of players around the world gathered in Dubai, the number of participants more than doubled on Crete. While I was having a good time in Dubai, **the friendly atmosphere in the tournament on Crete reached a level that I have never experienced before in any chess tournament. Ever.** That the organizers recognized me from last year was perhaps not that surprising. But that they all seemed to know everybody by name was truly impressive, and helped to make everybody feel part of the ACO family.



Harry Wubs, (Netherlands, Group D) about the World Amateur Chess Championship Dubai 2012

“For me the tournament in Dubai was great. Although I did not know what to expect, I would say that it succeeded all my expectations.

The group of participants was small, what gives an intimate atmosphere. After a few days you knew all players by face and most of them by name.

Despite the heat outside, there was warmth and friendliness inside the hotel. This friendliness was very strongly present in the persons who organized the tournament.

A great compliment for ACO for their ideas, their hard working, their friendliness and their professionalism.

The whole organization was just perfect. Their were no incidents, the sportsmanship was of a high level and there were a lot of contacts between the organizers and between the players.

These contacts continued even after the tournament in some cases. I personally will surely meet several players in Crete, Greece again next year in May.”

Four players from the Einsiedel (Switzerland) chess club at the World Amateur Chess Championship on Kos

The amateurs chose their new titleholder in Greece – away from the sport, the event was marked by a relaxed atmosphere.

The Einsiedler quartet returned from the World Amateur Chess Championship without a cup but with many experiences and memories. Peter Telser, Hans Forster, Meinrad Bettschart and Victor Kälin together have about 150 years of experience of competitions. But they had never before participated in such a tournament as this, of the Amateur Chess Organization (ACO). There were 250 chess players from 30 countries competing from 7 to 15 May on Kos for the crown of the amateur world championship. There were exactly 7 crowns, one per group. The programme was intense, with 9 rounds. It offered, however, enough time to relax.

The players' passion was inexhaustible. That can be said for Meinrad Bettschart (Brunnen/Einsiedeln), who was second oldest person at 82 years and who sat for a further 3 hours with his 14 years old opponent to analyse the game. One typical image for the occasion. "Chess is more than competition", said prudent ACO-president Lothar Hirneise (Germany) during the announcement of the rankings. Chess is also education and friendship, and encourages the Olympic spirit at such amateur championships, according to which taking part is more important than winning.

Very relaxed atmosphere

The four members of the Einsiedeln chess club were competing in three different groups. Hans Forster had the best performance, with 5.5 points from 9 games, which was excellent for rank 14. Peter Telser nevertheless succeeded in finishing the tournament without defeat. As well as the sport, the event had a relaxed atmosphere, a great hotel just by the sea, mild temperature as well as an organization, which translated the motto of World Chess Federation «Gens una sumus» (We are a family) perfectly from theory to practice.

Victor Kälin, (Switzerland, Elo 1876) participant group C

World Amateur Chess Championship 2016 on Kos

A report by the participants Rafael and Kevin Jaussi (Switzerland)

On Saturday May 7, our journey from home to Kos began. When we arrived there, we had already been overwhelmed by Greek hospitality. A small aperitif was organized in the five-star hotel Helona Resort. When it was over, we were desperately looking for our suitcases until someone from the hotel told us that they had already been taken to our room. Later we went to have dinner and we were astonished to see the big selection at the buffet. In the beginning we were as if paralysed.

The food was delicious and we didn't need to fear being hungry for these 10 days. On Sunday the first round began.

It was difficult to be focus on chess with the panoramic view and beautiful weather. After 2/3 of the tournament, Rafael Jaussi had started really comfortably in category E with 3 points from 6 rounds. With me, it did not run according to desire with 1.5 from 6 rounds in category C, the start was very modest. On Thursday May 12 a day trip was planned with a touring bus, which enabled us to learn a lot about the island, its history and attractions. Half the time the guide was telling us everything about olives, which were very delicious. There were theory evenings and blitz tournaments, where we both got 3 out of 7 and there was a blitz team where the brothers Jaussi also gained 3 points out of 7. Which was very strong for our ELO rating. The last round was on Sunday May 15 and Rafael ended the tournament at 22nd place, with 4.5 out of 9 points, of 36 participants in category E. I finished the tournament with 3 out of 9 points, 53rd out of 56 participants in category C. The tournament ended with a small aperitif and the announcement of the rankings. On Monday after breakfast, we began our trip home.

This was a great chess event, with great impressions of the trip and we can only recommend the 2017 tournament on Kos and give our thanks to tournament directors for the great organization.

Kevin Jaussi, (Switzerland, Elo 1833) participant group C

“What a great idea. Combining a beach holiday with chess. Don’t you just love them both. And the ACO putting that package together in the top-class Helona Resort in Kos was pure genius! As always the chess was tremendous. But we were on holiday too, so universally having a good time. It was a chance to meet new friends. Language isn’t a barrier. The conversation is conducted primarily in English. However, I spent a few minutes analysing my game with a Russian opponent, he pointed in Russian and I generally waved my arms in English. Perfectly understood on both sides! One of the nice little extras was having a genial Grand Master on hand to help with the after game post-mortem, that was a real boon for all the players. **Let’s just say a word about the Helona Resort. “Brilliant!”**. We were treated like Kings and Queens. The rooms are top of the range, bright, spacious and clean. My party was blown away by the food, and the desserts especially were a triumph! We were not alone in our praise. On the evening of the awards presentation the Chef took as much applause as all the winners put together. Even those on the strictest diet would surrender to his delights! Overall Kos 2015 was a glittering success. These are the Friendly Amateur World Chess Championships. **If you love chess, warm sun and good food, come and play. / David Gilbert, (ENG, 1899, Group D)**



„World Amateur Chess Championship 2015 on Kos was organised at the highest level and left only the most pleasant memories. I am very happy with this tournament, especially with the result. There was a lot of chess experience, a lot of fun and new friends. First of all I would like to say thank you to GM Falko Bindrich and Hirneise’s family for the organization of this really perfect tournament. Because of them everyone is getting a chance to play living chess with a different opponents from all over the world, and even become a chess world champion, as me. Secondly I would like to thanks all my opponents and participants for the friendly atmosphere during all period of the tournament. And finally I would like to wish all previous and future participants of the ACO tournament the success at the chessboard as well as in all life.“

Nikolay Gutsulyak, (RUS, 0, Group G) about the tournament on Kos 2015

Lovely atmosphere with ideal playing conditions, lots of interesting chess offers such as single blitz, team blitz, seminars, simultaneous exhibitions and excursions... in a nutshell: Kos forever!

Vladimir Paleologu, (SUI, 2152, Group B, President of Chess Club Lugano) about the tournament on Kos



I allow myself to express my feelings and my comments about your tournament Kos 2015 and its hotel, it’s not my habit to throw with flowers, but it’s true that I have never seen anything like this before, your team has not left any wishes open, at any time the team was there and everyone desired to play chess. The big playing hall, lots of space for the chess games, free cold drinks and coffee, cookies and several large screens for the seminars not to forget. This tournament and the 5 Star Hotel Helona Resort was the BEST TOURNAMENT in my amateur chess career, the place and the infrastructure was nice and clean, a warm welcome at the hotel reception and all the players and their accompaning persons had the same benefits. I cannot find enough words to express our satisfaction and to summarize it I would say it was just ABSOLUTELY AMAZING, AND EVEN MORE!!! WILL WE BE THERE NEXT YEAR? YES!! OF COURSE!

Arezki Bouchelaghem, (SUI, 1770, Group D) about the tournament on Kos

Prices 5* Atlantica Belvedere Resort

9 nights All-Inclusive: 6 - 15 May, 2026



The following services are included in the arranged hotel booking:

- 9 overnight stays on All-Inclusive basis
- Drinks and snacks during the games
- Private hotel beach
- Access to the gym
- Free internet access in the whole hotel
- Extra nights before or after the tournament are bookable at the same conditions.

All prices per person on All-Inclusive Basis	Booking till 30 th November 2025	Booking till 31 st December 2025	Booking from 1 st January 2026	Availability
Villa (120m ²) + private pool (36m ²) for 4 persons	2099 EUR	2199 EUR	2299 EUR	only 1 available
Suite (63 m ²) + private pool for 2 persons	2599 EUR	2699 EUR	2799 EUR	only 2 available
Junior Suite for 2 persons	1699 EUR	1799 EUR	1899 EUR	only 3 available
Single room Standard	2199 EUR	2299 EUR	2399 EUR	low
Single room Sea view	2499 EUR	2599 EUR	2699 EUR	very low
Double room Sea view with private Pool	1699 EUR	1799 EUR	1899 EUR	very low
Double room Standard with private Pool	1499 EUR	1599 EUR	1699 EUR	very low
Double room Sea view	1549 EUR	1649 EUR	1749 EUR	medium
Double room Standard	1399 EUR	1499 EUR	1599 EUR	medium

ACO is the organizer of the chess tournament ACO World Amateur Chess Championship 2026 and arranges accommodation for all participants in the host hotel 5-star Atlantica Belvedere Resort or in the sister hotel 5-star Atlantica Beach Resort. Contractual partner for accommodation is the hotel (Atlantica Hotels & Resorts, P.O. Box 52001, Potamos Yermasoyias, 4060 Limassol, Cyprus). The registration for the chess tournament is done separately after booking the accommodation via ACO, see procedure on the next pages.

Note: Since 2024, Greece has introduced a Climate Resilience Tax for all hotels in the country. As of 2025, for 5-star hotels, the rate amounts to €15 per room per night. The fee must be paid directly at the hotel reception.

Important note:

The number of participants for the chess tournament is limited due to capacity reasons. In the last few years, the tournament at Kos was fully booked many months in advance! For this reason, we recommend early registration to be able to guarantee a place.

Prices 5* Atlantica Beach Resort

9 nights All-Inclusive: 6 - 15 May, 2026



The following services are included in the arranged hotel booking:

- 9 overnight stays on All-Inclusive basis
- Drinks and snacks during the games
- Private hotel beach
- Access to the gym
- Free internet access in the whole hotel
- Extra nights before or after the tournament are bookable at the same conditions.

All prices per person on All-Inclusive Basis	Booking till 30 th November 2025	Booking till 31 st December 2025	Booking from 1 st January 2026	Availability
Single room Standard	1999 EUR	2099 EUR	2199 EUR	medium
Single room Sea view	2199 EUR	2299 EUR	2399 EUR	medium
Double room Standard	1299 EUR	1399 EUR	1499 EUR	medium
Double room Sea view	1449 EUR	1549 EUR	1649 EUR	medium

Due to the limited room availability in the main hotel Atlantica Belvedere (where the tournament hall is located) you also have the option to stay in the sister hotel 5* Atlantica Beach Resort which is just a 5 minutes walk away from the tournament hall. It is also possible to arrange a shuttle service between the hotels without extra costs.

- You sleep in Atlantica Beach Resort and have breakfast there.
- For lunch and dinner you can choose between Atlantica Beach and Atlantica Belvedere (tournament hotel).
- You can use all facilities and the All-Inclusive packages of both hotels, Atlantica Beach and Atlantica Belvedere!
- In Atlantica Beach guests below 16 years are welcome so feel free to bring your family and kids with you. Please note that Atlantica Belvedere is an adults-only hotel in which only guests from 16 years of age are allowed.

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Important note:

The number of participants for the chess tournament is limited due to capacity reasons. In the last few years, the tournament at Kos was fully booked many months in advance! For this reason, we recommend early registration to be able to guarantee a place.

Registration & booking

ACO is the organizer of the chess tournament ACO World Amateur Chess Championship 2026 and arranges accommodation for all participants in the 5-star Atlantica Belvedere Resort (or Atlantica Beach Resort) in Kos. The contractual partner for the booking is only the hotel.

The arranged hotel booking and the registration for the chess tournament take place in two separate steps:

Step 1: Hotel booking

You choose your desired room type through the ACO online booking form. See the following link:

<https://booking.amateurchess.com/amateur26>



Immediately after your hotel booking, you will receive a booking confirmation by email on behalf of the hotel.

Step 2: Tournament registration

After your hotel booking, you will receive a separate email from us with the link for the payment of the starting fee.



In the event that you need to cancel your participation, regardless of the timing, you will receive a 100% refund of your starting fee.

Hotel booking without risk!



No hotel deposit is required upon booking.



You can cancel your booking free of charge until 10 April 2026!

Payment to the hotel



The total amount must be paid by 10 April, 2026, at the latest. This can be done by bank transfer or credit card.



In the event of late payment, the booking will be automatically cancelled by the hotel.



One month before the due date, you will receive a payment reminder by email.



For cancellations after April 10, 2026, or no-shows, the hotel will charge 100% of the total amount as a cancellation fee.

Questions? Send an email to: amateur@amateurchess.com



Further information

Rooms with private pool and rooms with sea view (limited) are particularly popular and often booked out early.

Room booking for accompanying persons:

The booking of rooms for accompanying persons who are not taking part in the tournament tournament is also possible.

Weather on Kos:

The weather in May is mild and sunny with temperatures up to 25 degrees. May is considered one of the most attractive months.

Transfer from the airport

The hotel is 15 minutes from the airport.
Taxis run at a fixed price (25 EUR).

Arrive earlier or depart later

Would you like to extend your stay on Kos? No problem, you are welcome to book as many days as you like at the hotel prior or after the event at the same conditions. The prices depend on the type of room you choose.

Sometimes it is cheaper to book extra nights in exchange for better or cheaper flight connections.

Tip:

When you register using the online form, the costs for extra nights are automatically calculated and displayed. Extra nights do not have to be specified directly when registering, but can also be booked at a later date. To do so, please send an email to amateur@amateurchess.com

Special hotel offer: stay 14 nights - pay 13 nights!

**The chess tournament lasts 9 nights. Relax before or after
and enjoy Greece - whether alone or in company.**

If you are interested, please contact us by e-mail at
amateur@amateurchess.com or by telephone on +49 178 6746167



REGISTRATION & BOOKING

ACO WORLD AMATEUR CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP 2026

6th - 15th May, 2026 Kos / Greece



ACO
AMATEUR CHESS ORGANIZATION



For hotel booking please use the
ACO online booking form at the following link:



<https://booking.amateurchess.com/amateur26>

Questions? Send an email to: [**amateur@amateurchess.com**](mailto:amateur@amateurchess.com)

REGISTRATION & CONTACT

Online registration:

<https://booking.amateurchess.com/amateur26>

Email:

amateur@amateurchess.com

