



# ACO WORLD SENIOR (50+) CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP 2026

1<sup>st</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> October 2026

Crete / Greece

5-star All-Inclusive  
Fodele Beach Resort

Save  
EUR 200 per  
person for early  
booking until  
31<sup>st</sup> March  
2026

Open to all  
players aged  
50 and  
above

**Hotel booking  
without risk!**



No deposit payment



Free cancellation

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

Coaches on site: GM Daniel King, GM Robert Rabiega,  
GM Zigurds Lanka and GM Spyridon Skembris.



## Page overview

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Contact for questions:

Email:  
senior@amateurchess.com

Phone:  
+49 178 67 46 167

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## **5 STAR ALL-INCLUSIVE FODELE BEACH RESORT**

The venue is the award-winning 5-star all-inclusive Fodele Beach Resort. The hotel has already hosted eight ACO World Championships and was extensively renovated in 2023-2025 including a completely new lobby and pool area.



The ACO World Senior (50+) Chess Championship 2026 will take place as an open tournament from 1<sup>st</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> October 2026 on the Greek island Crete. Any player who has reached the age of 50 by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026 can represent his or her country and become World Senior Champion in his or her rating group!

### **Accommodation for all players and accompanying persons:**

The venue is the award winning 5-star All Inclusive Fodele Beach Resort. The playing hall is located inside the hotel. Elevators are available. The hotel reception speaks English. ACO arranges accommodation for all participants at the host hotel 5-star All-Inclusive Fodele Beach Resort.

### **Division of groups:**

The tournament will be played in the following rating groups:

**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 pages.

Each group plays separately meaning you only play opponents of similar playing strength in your group. For the division of groups we will use your ELO/national rating at the time of registration. For players having both an ELO rating and a national rating, the higher rating counts. Exceptions can be made by the organizers in case there is a big difference in these ratings or one of the ratings has been inactive for a longer period.

### **Players without rating:**

Players without a national or international rating can only participate in group G (0 - 1200). For exceptions, see next point.

### **Playing in a different group (voluntary):**

Only possible if rating is achieved between the time of registration and the start of the tournament which corresponds to the rating of another group.

### **Mode and time control:**

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

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
4. If all tiebreaks are equal, the places are shared.

### **Hotel booking:**

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

### **Starting fee (for players only):**

50 EUR

### **Prizes: EUR 5.000**

<b>Group A</b> <b>2201 – 2400</b>	<b>Group B</b> <b>2001 – 2200</b>	<b>Group C</b> <b>1901 – 2000</b>
1st place: EUR 500	1st place: EUR 400	1st place: EUR 400
2nd place: EUR 200	2nd place: EUR 200	2nd place: EUR 200
3rd place: EUR 100	3rd place: EUR 100	3rd place: EUR 100

<b>Group D</b> <b>1751 – 1900</b>	<b>Group E</b> <b>1651 – 1750</b>	<b>Group F</b> <b>1501 – 1650</b>
1st place: EUR 400	1st place: EUR 400	1st place: EUR 400
2nd place: EUR 200	2nd place: EUR 200	2nd place: EUR 200
3rd place: EUR 100	3rd place: EUR 100	3rd place: EUR 100

**Group G**  
**0 – 1500**  
1st place: EUR 400  
2nd place: EUR 200  
3rd place: EUR 100

**The player in 1st place of each rating group becomes ACO World Senior Champion.**  
**Players achieving places 1-3 receive trophies.**  
**All players receive diplomas. The prizes are based on a minimum of 100 players.**

# New rating groups without effect!

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
Group A:	2201+	→	<b>2201+</b>
Group B:	2001 – 2200	→	<b>2001 – 2200</b>
Group C:	1801 – 2000	→	<b>1901 – 2000</b>
Group D:	1601 – 1800	→	<b>1751 – 1900</b>
Group E:	1401 – 1600	→	<b>1651 – 1750</b>
Group F:	1201 – 1400	→	<b>1501 – 1650</b>
Group G:	0 – 1200	→	<b>0 – 1500</b>

## 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: [senior@amateurchess.com](mailto:senior@amateurchess.com) or by phone: +49 (0) 178 6746167



# Overview of the new division of groups

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

**Combine a chess tournament and a 5-star vacation**



# Schedule 2026 ACO World Senior (50+) Chess Championship

<b>Thursday</b>	<b>1/10</b>		Day of arrival
		18 to 20:00	Welcome drink
<b>Friday</b>	<b>2/10</b>	09:30	Pairings
		09:45	Opening
		10:00	Round 1
		16:00	Grandmaster lecture
		18:00	Blitz tournament
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>3/10</b>	10:00	Round 2
		16:00	Round 3
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>4/10</b>	10:00	Round 4
		16:00	Grandmaster lecture
		18:00	Grandmaster simul

<b>Monday</b>	<b>5/10</b>	10:00	Round 5
		16:00	Round 6
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>6/10</b>		Free day
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>7/10</b>	10:00	Round 7
		16:00	Grandmaster lecture
		18:00	Team blitz event
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>8/10</b>	10:00	Round 8
		16:00	Grandmaster lecture
		18:00	Blitz tournament
<b>Friday</b>	<b>9/10</b>	10:00	Round 9
		18:00	Prize-giving ceremony
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>10/10</b>		Departure

Participation in the side programme is voluntary. The times vary slightly and will be announced again during the course of the event.  
Schedule subject to change.





GM Zigurds  
Lanka



GM Daniel  
King

The following services are included in the tournament entry fee (50 EUR):

✓ **Participation in the ACO World Senior Chess Championship 2026**

✓ **Free game analysis with a grandmaster**

After your game, all participants have the chance to analyze their games with the help of grandmaster

**Planned trainers on site:**

GM Daniel King

GM Zigurds Lanka

GM Spyridon Skembris

✓ **Free grandmaster lectures**

✓ **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 Crete.

## BONUS: Guests of Honour

Also for our 2025 tournaments we will again try to invite several guests of honour. Judit Polgar, Alexei Shirov and Vlastimil Hort attended some of our events in the past.

# How do I get to Crete?

There are direct flights to Crete from all European countries.

**To search on your own we recommend:**  
**<http://flights.ideal.com/>**

The nearest airport is Heraklion, 30 minutes from the hotel. Alternatively, you can fly to Chania. Although this airport is two hours from the hotel, it sometimes offers cheap flights. If you are interested, we can organise a transfer from there.

**We are happy to assist you free of charge in finding the best flight connection for your independent flight booking. To do so, please send an email to: [senior@amateurchess.com](mailto:senior@amateurchess.com)**

If you cannot find a direct flight, it is also possible to fly to Crete with a stopover in Athens or Thessaloniki.

Direct flight connections are available from the following airports, among others.

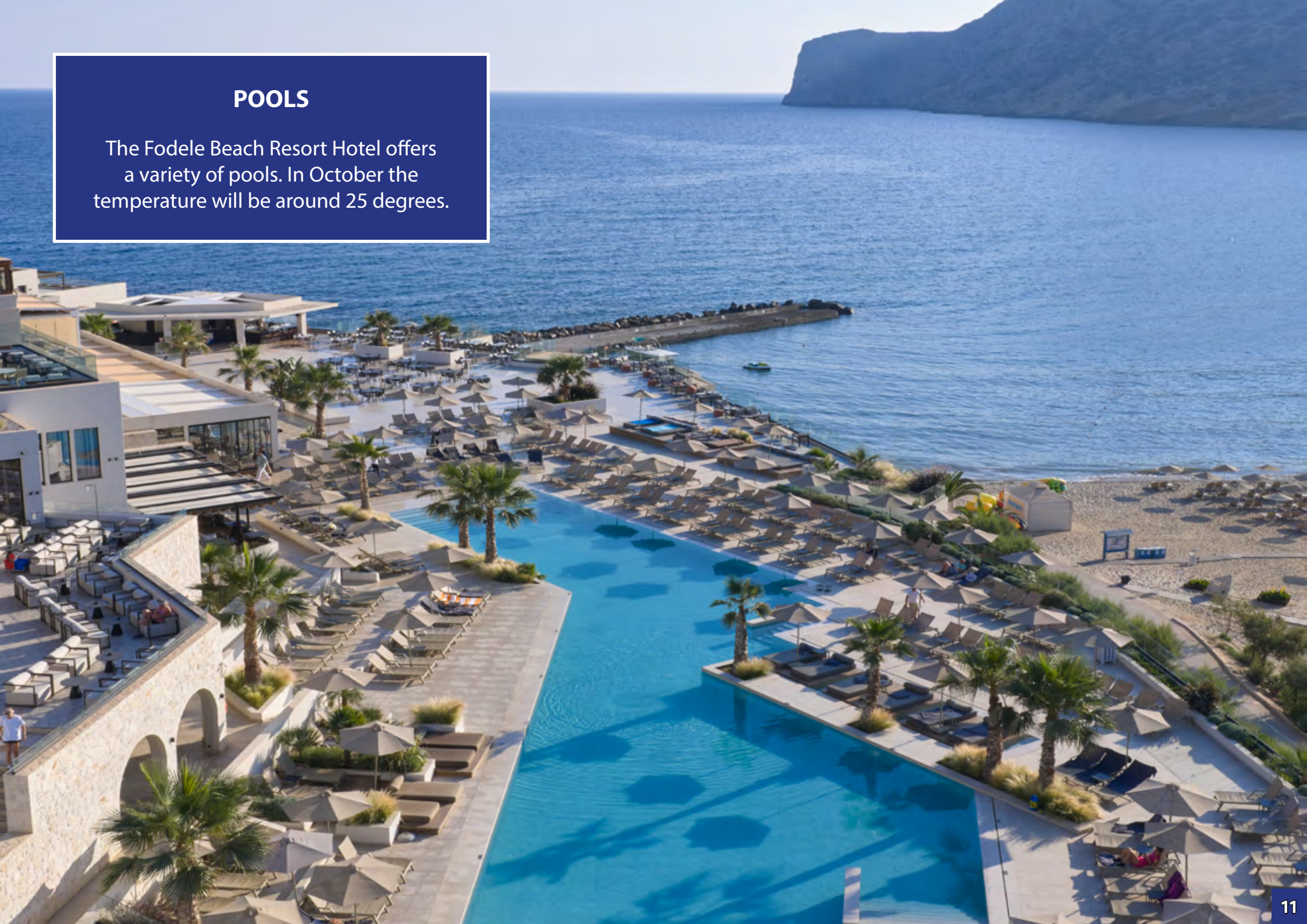
Berlin	Bremen
Munich	Zürich
Stuttgart	Basel
Frankfurt	Geneva
Hamburg	Vienna
Düsseldorf	Salzburg
Cologne Bonn	Paris
Dresden	Prague
Hanover	London
Leipzig	Stockholm
Erfurt	Oslo





## POOLS

The Fodele Beach Resort Hotel offers a variety of pools. In October the temperature will be around 25 degrees.







## ALL-INCLUSIVE PROGRAM (alcoholic drinks included)

### RESTAURANTS

#### Food:

Continental breakfast (07:00-07:30) Main Restaurant

Full buffet breakfast (07:30-10:30) Main Restaurant

Lunch buffet & show cooking (12:30-14:30) Main Restaurant

Dinner buffet & show cooking (18:30-21:30) Main Restaurant

Late dinner (21:30-23:00) light buffet – snacks, Main Restaurant

Seven themed buffets per week (Greek, international, Italian, Cretan, fish, Asian, gala dinner)

#### Drinks

Drinks during meals in main restaurant: water, soft drinks, juices, local beer & local house wine.

Unlimited consumption of food & beverages during the meals

#### “F” ALL-DAY RESTAURANT

10:00-18:00 Various choices of pizza/pastaa, snacks, salads, show cooking, grilled food, ice cream (12.00-17.00), fruits

16:30-17:30 coffee,tea and cookies

Beverages provided: soft drinks, juices, water, coffee & tea, vermouth, raki, ouzo, local beer & local house wine

#### THEMED RESTAURANT (19:00 – 22:00)

### BARS

#### Belvedere Cocktail Bar at the lobby area, (17:30 -23:00).

International and local alcoholic drinks (brand names), cocktails, soft drinks, juices, aperitifs, local beer & local house wine, all brand names.

#### Starlight Bar\* at main plaza area, 17:30 -23:00)

International and local alcoholic drinks (brand names), cocktails, soft drinks, juices, aperitifs, local beer & local house wine, coffee & tea

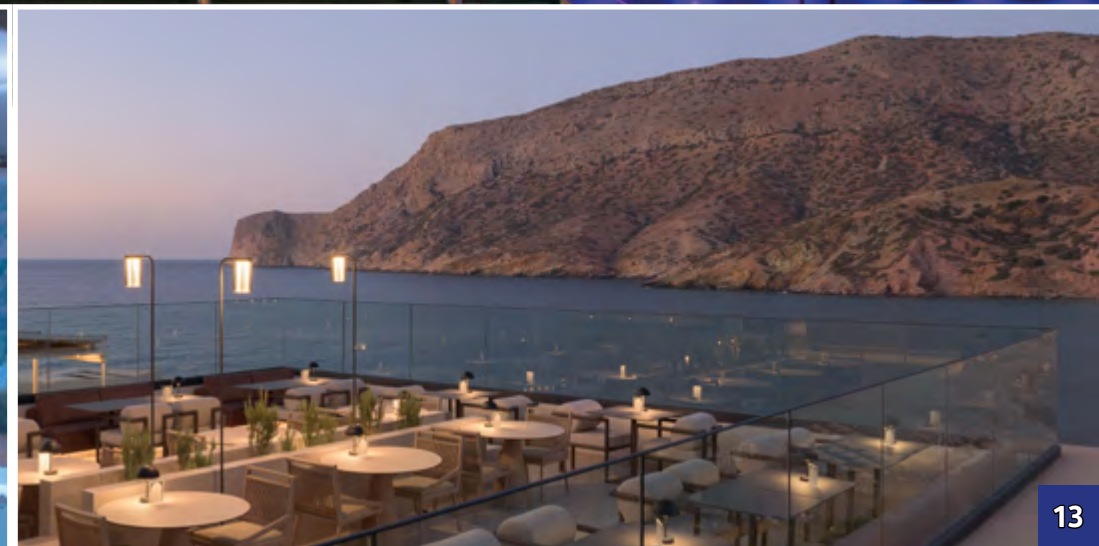
#### Starfish Beach Bar (10:00 -18:00)

Beverages provided: soft drinks, juices, water, coffee & tea, vermouth, raki, ouzo, local beer & local house wine. Light snacks & fruits also provided



## ALL-INCLUSIVE

Choose from 3 bars and enjoy unlimited alcoholic & non-alcoholic drinks





## WELCOME & FAREWELL DRINKS

On the day of arrival between 6 and 8 pm (and on the last day), the organisers invite you to a drink with snacks and canapés. This event is voluntary but will enable you to get to know the participants and organisers.





## Closing ceremony

Traditionally, following the award ceremony, a farewell banquet is held against an impressive backdrop, concluding with fireworks on the hotel's large plaza.





## UNIQUE!

Enjoy Greek and international cuisine. "Restaurant F", picture below, is located exactly between our two playing halls and offers food and drinks while games are underway as well!





## ALL-INCLUSIVE

Choose between 3 restaurants!  
Main restaurant (pictured below)  
or themed restaurants





## CHESS FRIENDS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

In the years 2018-2019 + 2021-2025  
a total of more than 1100 players from  
50 countries took part in the event.







## AMBROSIA PLAYING HALL

The "Ambrosia" playing hall is located near the main playing hall and is connected by Restaurant F, which is available to the players for drinks and snacks during the rounds. With direct sea view the games take place in the very best surroundings.





# ACO WORLD SENIOR (50+) CHAMPIONS 2025

From left to right: IM Tobias Hirneise (Organiser), Cholponbek Tilenbaev (KGZ), Joachim Kellenberger (SUI), Jan Ove Lorentzen (NOR), Andre Matzat (GER), Dominik Schneider (GER), Facundo Pierrot (ARG), Karel Bern (CZE), GM Falko Bindrich (Organiser)





Rk.	Group A (2201-2400)	FED
1	Pierrot, Facundo	ARG
2	Hoshor, Mark	USA



Rk.	Group B (2001-2200)	FED
1	Matzat, Andre	GER
2	Zech, Andreas	DEN
3	Senner, Peter	GER



Rk.	Group C (1801-2000)	FED
1	Schneider, Dominik	GER
2	Wilson, Edgar	ENG
3	Ritter, Uwe	GER

Rk.	Group D (1601-1800)	FED
1	Kellenberger, Joachim	SUI
2	Kane, Robert	ENG
3	Page, Denis	CAN



Rk.	Group E (1401-1600)	FED
1	Tilenbaev, Cholponbek	KGZ
2	Otten, Arnold Prof. Dr.	GER
3	Josephs, Gavin	ENG



Rk.	Group F (1201-1400)	FED
1	Lorentzen, Jan Ove	NOR
2	Gilbert, David	ENG
3	Oser, Artur	GER



Rk.	Group G (0-1200)	FED
1	Bern, Karel	CZE
2	Coombs, Robert	ENG
3	Kverh, Bojan	SLO

## Chess, chess, chess! Our side programme

### Blitz chess:

The many highlights of the ACO Senior World Championship include the 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. 200 players have already succeeded in doing so.



## 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 all 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 four trainers on site

**Zigurds Lanka from Latvia (left)** is considered one of the best-known chess coaches in the world. 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 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 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.

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



### **GM Robert Rabiega (Germany)**

Rabiega became German Champion in classical chess in 2002. He has also won the German Blitz Championship four times and the German Rapid Chess Championship three times. He works as a chess coach in Berlin.



## LECTURES WITH GM LANKA

The world-famous chess trainer (best students: Alexei Shirov & Victor Bologan) will give several lectures during the tournament in German and will be available to you for a free analysis of your games (in English also).

"The seminars and, even more so, the individual game analyses by GM Lanka were real highlights! His enthusiasm, his lively lecturing style and last but not least his untiring willingness to be available to everyone (and at every free moment!) for questions and game analysis were extraordinary for me! But you do not only profit from his enormous chess knowledge, he also conveys the enthusiasm and passion without which chess is inconceivable. At the age of 67, I felt 50 years younger "chesswise"!"

Henryk Wiktor 





## LECTURES WITH GM SKEMBRIS

The former Greek national coach will give several lectures in English during the tournament and is available to you for free analysis of your games.



"It was a great experience going through my game postmortems with congenial grandmaster Spyridon Skembris. I learned a lot and took a few tips home."

David Gilbert







## GM DANIEL KING

Since 2021 Grandmaster Daniel King is part of our team. All participants have the chance to analyze their games with the English grandmaster, who is also fluent in German. In addition, he gives several lectures, a simul and will host the award ceremony.





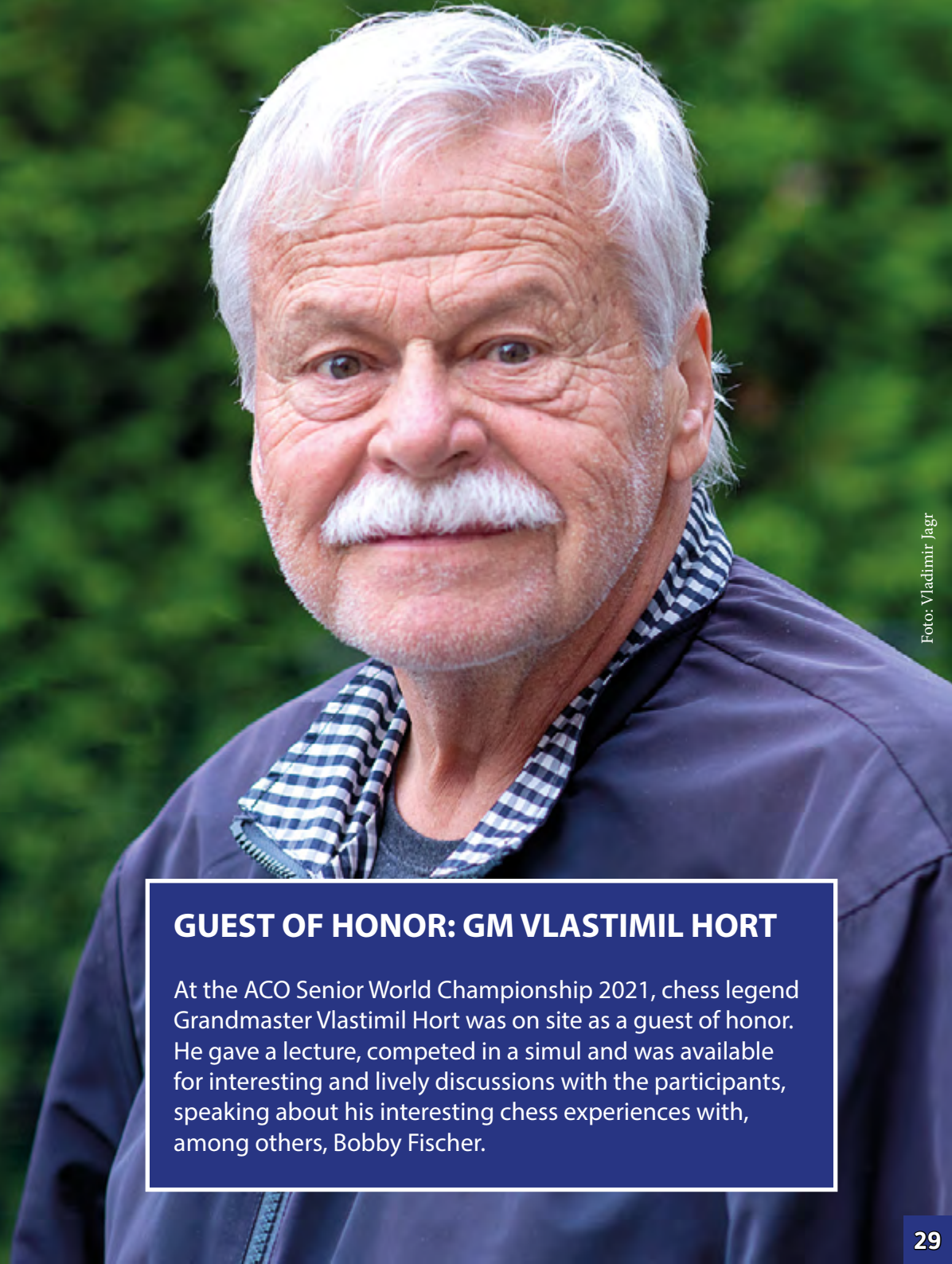
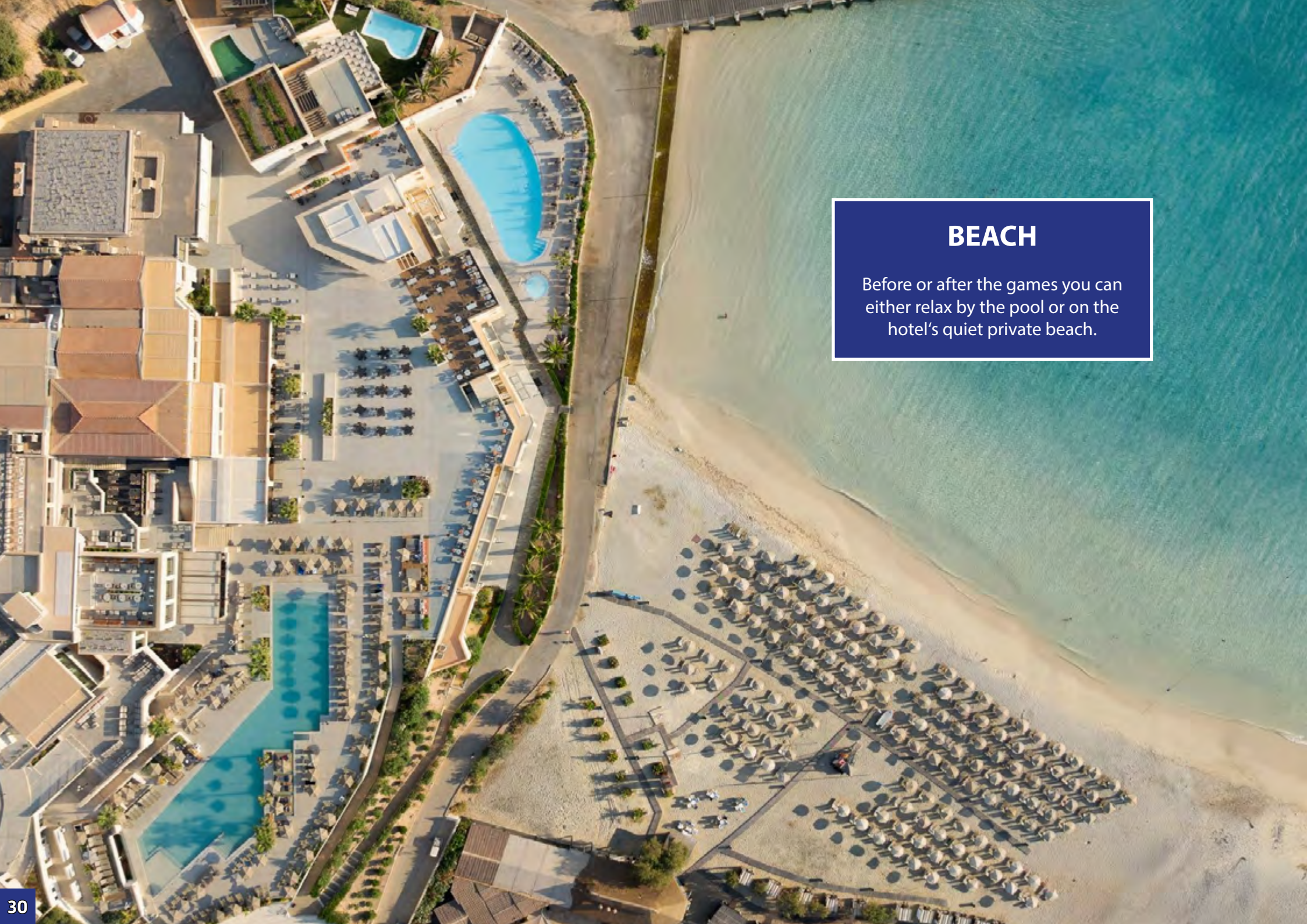


Foto: Vladimír Jäger

## GUEST OF HONOR: GM VLASTIMIL HORT

At the ACO Senior World Championship 2021, chess legend Grandmaster Vlastimil Hort was on site as a guest of honor. He gave a lecture, competed in a simul and was available for interesting and lively discussions with the participants, speaking about his interesting chess experiences with, among others, Bobby Fischer.





## BEACH

Before or after the games you can either relax by the pool or on the hotel's quiet private beach.





## Double and single rooms standard or with sea view

Approx. 26 m<sup>2</sup>, double bed (separate beds on request) flatscreen TV, air conditioning, fridge, hair dryer, safe, tea-making facilities etc.





## VIEW

Enjoy the wonderful view and direct sea location of the hotel, either from your hotel room or while enjoying a drink







## FREE DAY

The chess-free day offers enough time to explore the island. Visit the historical sights of the island and enjoy the typical Greek flair. On the left you can see the famous palace of Knossos.





## RETHYMNO

On your day off you can visit the beautiful port city of Rethymno. The many buildings from Venetian and Ottoman times characterise the cityscape, which is one of the most attractive in Greece. Not for nothing do the Cretans call Rethymno the most beautiful city on the island.





## 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 4 and 5 star standards for our tournaments.

Our team consists, among others, of GMs, IMs and FMs with huge tournament experience, so we know what matters at a chess tournament.

In addition to the ACO World Senior Chess Championship, since 2012 we have also organised the ACO World Amateur Chess Championship, which takes place in May 2023 on Kos. For more information visit our website [amateurchess.com](http://amateurchess.com).

### 2012 ACO WACC: Dubai 72 participants from 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) at a height of 220 metres.



### 2013 ACO WACC: Crete 168 participants from 26 nations

The 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 playing hall with direct sea view.



### 2014 ACO WACC: Rhodes 240 participants from 26 nations

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







## **ACO WACC 2015-2018 + 2022-2024 on Kos (100+ players)**

Between 2015-18 and 2022-2023 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+2023 with a total of more than 110 players from 15 countries.



## **ACO World Senior Championships 2018-2019 + 2021-2025:**

The ACO Senior World Championships were held on Crete in 2018-2019 and 2021-2025. The 5\* all-inclusive hotel Fodele Beach Resort was the venue for each event.

A total of over 1100 players from 50 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.





# Testimonials about the event 2025

Again a very well organized chess tournament with lots of interesting side events. If you're a chess enthusiast, this is the place to be.

## **Bojan Kverh (Slovenia)**

I like the spirit of the organization, it is the best vacation for a chess lover like me.

## **Denis Pagé (Canada)**

Well overall I had an amazing time and so no complaints at all. Grandmasters were amazing and friendly and helpful and so willing to give much of their time to everyone. Was fantastic!

## **Gavin Josephs (England)**

Combining a great tournament with a holiday is definitely possible at ACO.

## **Carsta Göring (Germany)**

It was my first year and I will definitely recommend this tournament to all my fellow club members. I hope to be able to attend next year.

## **Roger Simon (Canada)**

Even if my German teacher were to turn in his grave: the ACO tournaments on Kos and Crete are not just perfect, they are clearly perfecter. And the few minor problems that do arise are successfully resolved before they have a chance to develop into anything serious. I'd go back anytime – see you in Kos in the spring at the latest!

## **Dr. Andreas Gerlach (Germany)**

Once again, it was a very successful tournament with lots of great events. I am particularly pleased about the intensive support provided by the grandmasters who were present. The lessons given by Grandmaster Lanka were great fun and provided new insights. It's not every day that you get the opportunity to discuss your games with a grandmaster immediately afterwards. Many thanks to all the hard-working organisers and contributors. The location was also very well chosen, of course.

## **Mathias Kresse (Germany)**

A great and superbly organised chess tournament, it includes everything a chess player could ask for, tough tournament sections, three GMs who are friendly, very approachable giving simul, lectures, all this being optional, if this isn't enough you make friends from players and partners from around the world, who on many occasions return the following year. For a chess holiday this can't be bettered and in between throw in some sunshine, don't think about it give it a try.

## **Clifford Peach (England)**



# Testimonials about the event 2024

The best organized tournament I ever played.

**Huub van Helvoort (Netherlands)**

Best "adults-only" open chess tournament on the agenda!

**Jos Heesen (Netherlands)**

Anyone thinking of playing in ACO tournaments need only to look at the names of the players who return yearly, your opponents in a short time become friends when away from the chessboard, as we see each other daily at breakfast, lunch and tea. With 9 games you may think you have no free time to be with family & friends but far from it, you have most afternoons and a complete free day, every thing has been thought of. All members of the organisational team are friendly and very approachable, my next ACO tournament will be in the super seniors, in Kos 2025 my eighth time playing ACO tournaments, very much looking forward to it and seeing friends again. Yes, book your place and enjoy the chess and sunshine, I'm sure you will think why didn't I do this sooner.

**Clifford Peach (England)**

The participation was a real highlight in my long chess career. It was a perfectly organized chess tournament with a friendly, fair atmosphere in a splendid setting. The hotel left nothing to be desired. The supporting program was unique due to the great efforts of the international titleholders present. Especially the opportunity to analyze one's recently played games with a grandmaster was special. But the lessons will also remain in lasting memory. In addition, there were opportunities to get to know the island, and then also time for relaxation, as with the bye option, only one round needs to be played per day. Above all, it was great to make new friends from all over the world (including India, the USA, and Canada).

**Mathias Kresse (Germany)**

After my fifth participation, I am still anxious to play in both events, Senior 50+ and Super Senior 65+. Every time I participated, ACO took care of my needs, as helping to find better flights and make sure we get comfortable room with nice view. All tournament halls are spacious with plenty of space for all players and all rounds always start on time. Finally at these hotels, employees are very nice and the food is very good.

**Pierre Maheux (Canada)**

Well-organized tournament, with a great location and a fantastic hotel. I was there in 2023 and even managed to win the tournament in my group, but participating in 2024 was great too, even without a win :-). The lectures by the grandmasters on site are always top-notch and a great experience. I will definitely come again from time to time. I can only recommend the ACO tournaments! **Mario Kristofic (Austria)**

Everything is just perfect here! The tournament, the support, the people, the location, and the side program! **Ralph Becker (Germany)**

Anyone who, as a chess player, knows the atmosphere of an open tournament doesn't need to be told what the difference is with this event. No question, serious chess is played here too, and battles are fought with great intensity. Nevertheless, there is a unique, relaxed atmosphere surrounding this event. It's not just the beautiful hotel complex and the nearby sea that immediately put you in a kind of vacation mode after the game. The accompanying program offered is also unique and simply a kind of unique selling point for this tournament. I can only congratulate the organizers on everything they have accomplished. A great thing! I hope they continue to have fun and joy from it for a long time, because putting something like this together is also a huge effort.

**Manfred Gradwohl (Germany)**



# Testimonials about the event 2024

This was my first visit and I would certainly recommend it to my fellow chess enthusiasts. The hotel is excellent and the food excellent varied and available throughout the day and well into the evening. The organisers do a superb job and are present at all times to help with questions and any information you may require. The Grandmasters are always on hand to analyse games and offer advice as well as giving simultaneous displays on a couple of the free evenings. It is a friendly tournament and solo travellers will soon get to know other players. The playing times are perfect, leaving evenings free to enjoy the facilities and ambience of the hotel. All in all a most enjoyable experience and one that I would highly recommend for any chess players (and their families) to experience. I will definitely play here again and commend the organisers and all the hotel staff on making it such a memorable experience. If you are able to participate you will have a super time and take away some great memories.

## **Mark Roberts (England)**

Very pleasant and well-organized tournament in a beautiful hotel. Particularly noteworthy are the analyses after the game with GM Daniel King or GM Zigurds Lanka. Here, you can really take something away for your understanding of chess.

## **Thomas Braun (Germany)**

It was a super tournament, the grandmaster support with game analysis was very good, and there was delicious food from morning till evening.

## **Dr. Wolfgang Rasch (Germany)**

The organization of the tournaments was really great, many thanks to the organizers and helpers. **Giuseppe Margarone (Switzerland)**

Food and weather were perfect and provided the entire event with an overall perfect setting. The tournament management was very professional, the organizing team always in control. **Franz Neubauer (Germany)**

The event is very well organized and takes place in a well-managed hotel on a beautiful beach located in the north of Crete. The organizers take care of every detail necessary to carry out a massive chess tournament like this. **Bojan Kverh (Slovenia)**

Good organization, nice environment, good food, lots of opportunities to play good chess. **Tomaž Bajec (Slovenia)**

This is a really fun event for dedicated chess players. While the main tournament progresses in the background, the rounds are interspersed with some enjoyable evening rapid chess tournaments and simultaneous displays. Several GMs are on-site to personally analyse your good and not so good games. Away from the chess, there are excellent restaurants, bars, swimming pools and a beautiful beach to enjoy some relaxation. I made many new friends and have managed to keep in contact with them through on-line games and social media. **David Helps (England)**

A perfect spot to be immersed in the passion of chess. Remarkable hospitality services and fantastic organization of chess tournament and events. Cannot be missed!

## **Pedro Chidichimo (Spain)**



# What participants say about the event and Fodele Beach Resort

The offered chess vacation package has more than met our expectations. All the promises of the tournament brochure were fulfilled. The tournament organization is perfect. Despite the three-digit number of participants, there is almost a familiar atmosphere. October is ideal in Crete.

**Christoph Kandler**



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I have played numerous international tournaments. What am I looking for when I enter such an event ? Well, a professionally organised event, a great hotel, nice venue, side events and a friendly but competitive playing environment. The first ACO experience ticked all the boxes when I played in Crete in October, 2021. I was pleased to play the guest of honour, Vlastimil Hort, in a simul set up by the organisers and it would seem that the legendary grandmaster has not lost none of his chess prowess. It was also great to have access to grandmaster analysis of one's games and for the English players, Daniel King was the ideal mentor with his clear, helpful and friendly advice although it has to be mentioned that Daniel is equally fluent in German; his lectures too were well received. All in all, it was a wonderful time in Crete, especially meeting old friends, making new ones, attending the side events, eating well, getting sun and enjoying the chess, amongst other things. Nothing was too much trouble for Falko, Tobias and their team and I give the experience 10/10. As someone once said, I will be back !

**Kevin Winter**



It's hard to decide what to praise first. The organization of the tournament, for which GM Falko Bindrich and IM Tobias Hirneise are responsible, is simply perfect. The hotel, located directly by the sea, impresses every visitor, the hotel's cuisine leaves nothing to be desired. In the battle on the 64 squares, everyone gives his best, even if it is not always the best.

At the grandmaster lectures and the simultaneous exhibition everyone can learn a lot. Where else can you meet chess players from so many countries? For the inspiring encounters inside and outside the playing hall we say thank you very much.

**Dr. Jürgen Harbich & Dr. Frank Höfer**



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It's really hard to say whether playing chess or swimming in the sea and pool was more fun. Rarely have we experienced such a great combination of chess and vacation: a great hotel, a super organization that made chess possible at all levels in Corona times, and exciting opponents. The concept with the different groups is also very family-friendly. We will come again at any time!

**Almut Steinbach und Marius Deuer**





# What participants say about the event and Fodele Beach Resort

As an avid chess player, this holiday with like-minded chess enthusiasts is a highlight for me every year. Mainly because of the **perfect organisation, the beautiful holiday destination, the delicious food with a large selection and because almost the whole day revolves around our beloved game of chess.** There is the actual tournament itself, the analyses, the seminars and the blitz tournaments. **Each time you meet friends from all over the world and get to know new ones.** That one day is chess-free and you have time to visit sights the country has to offer is a welcome change. And I think that all this is very good value for money. I am already looking forward to the next ACO events in 2020!

Max Auer



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The plane takes homeward bound. Behind me lies the ACO World Senior Chess Championship; already my third ACO event. **Chess in this setting and ambience can be addictive and if there is a ray of hope in my modest chess life, it is this tournament.** Even after a late arrival I am greeted with a friendly “hello” and I have the opportunity to have a drink and a bite to eat. The hotel room is big, clean and well located. **I feel good immediately.** The tournament starts the next morning. **Everything is perfectly prepared and planned, carried out by the lovable and helpful organisers.**

A big, quiet tournament hall awaits us players from all over the world and often there are happy reunions. I quickly find my playing board with the help of the information boards and lists. The atmosphere is relaxed, but, with the upcoming game in mind, concentrated also. I get a drink, greet the opponent and make the first move. **After the game, grandmasters Lanka and Skembris are available for game analyses into which they put their heart and soul. In addition there are grandmaster lectures and much more.** These have always been of great benefit to me and chess activities are pleasantly interposed the whole tournament. **So this first-class event also represents a huge compliment to the committed organisers.**

Since for me life does not only consist of chess, I find a nice place in the very good restaurant, enjoy a cool drink at the bar or relax in a sunny or shady spot on a beautiful beach. **In short: a chess tournament suddenly becomes a holiday with chess.** Here everyone can choose their priorities and also the day without play offers many possibilities. **All in all, I always find a perfect package of options at the ACO chess tournaments, which are worth every penny.** I already know that next year I'll be back on the plane, approaching the next ACO Championships.

Fritz Engau





The whole thing was excellent! From the registration, the organisers, the hotel staff starting with Zoe and Elena, the restaurant staff were always helpful and friendly. Birgit, Falko, Tobias and the Arbiter were wonderful people. The resort facilities were perfect for the whole family.

**I have registered for next year's event. My wife and I are planning to bring our children and grandson with us. I know they too will enjoy their visit here even though they don't play chess.** GM Spyridon Skembris was really generous with chess knowledge and wisdom as he was always available to help us analyse our games.

**Congratulations and a big thank you to the organizers and staff!**

Rolando Geronimo



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**As a veteran of six ACO tournaments - and they have all been fantastic** - I'd say Crete 2019 was the best yet. And there was hardly a mention of Brexit! **We played thrilling chess at an incredible hotel, under blue skies and a warm sun. Does it ever rain in Crete?**

**It was great experience going through my game postmortems with congenial grandmaster Spyridon Skembris.** I learned a lot and took a few tips home. **The All-inclusive Fodele Beach Hotel was everything we could ask for, from the waterpark at top of the hill to the exclusive beach and clear sea at the bottom.** Unfortunately the amazing cuisine and the exhaustive menu, especially those heavenly desserts, left a mark on my waistline! Just a year to lose those extra kilos.

David Gilbert



This is the second time that I have visited this great tournament. Everyone is so friendly, the organisation staff, the GMs and the players themselves.

**Where else can you go to have a holiday in the sunshine and play chess?** Plenty of food and alcohol with great evening entertainment, **highly recommended.**

Peter Merrifield



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**The seminars and, even more so, the individual game analyses by GM Lanka were real highlights! His enthusiasm, his lively lecturing style and last but not least his untiring willingness to be available to everyone (and at every free moment!) for questions and game analysis were extraordinary for me!** But you do not only profit from his enormous chess knowledge, he also conveys the enthusiasm and passion without which chess is inconceivable. At the age of 67, I felt 50 years younger "chesswise"!"

Henryk Wiktor



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**I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your excellent organisation.** I did not get a chance to do so during the event. All the more reason for me to do this now. **It was a perfect tournament from my point of view, and I will be happy to come back next year!** Perfect organisation, great rooms, ideal free drinks, great supporting programme, emphasising the international (21 nations) feel of the event - brilliant. **All in all, just perfect! Thanks a lot!**

Jürg Morf





# Price list 5-star All Inclusive Fodele Beach Resort

## 9 nights All-Inclusive 1<sup>st</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2026

Special hotel offer:  
14 nights for the price of 13!  
See page 46.



### Hotel booking without risk!

- No deposit payment
- Free cancellation until 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2026

All prices per person	booking until 31 <sup>st</sup> March, 2026	booking until 31 <sup>st</sup> May, 2026	booking from 1 <sup>st</sup> June, 2026
Double room standard	1449 EUR	1549 EUR	1649 EUR
Double room sea view	1599 EUR	1699 EUR	1799 EUR
Single room standard	2399 EUR	2499 EUR	2599 EUR
Single room sea view	2499 EUR	2599 EUR	2699 EUR

Further room categories such as suites, family rooms (2 adults + 1 child or 2 adults + 2 children) etc. on request: [senior@amateurchess.com](mailto:senior@amateurchess.com)

**Note:** Since 2018 Greece has introduced a tourist tax for all hotels in the country. For 4 and 5 star hotels this tax is EUR 10 per room per night. The tax has to be paid directly at the hotel reception.

ACO is the organizer of the chess tournament ACO World Senior (50+) Championship 2026 and arranges accommodation for all participants in the host hotel 5-star Fodele Beach Resort (S. Giannikakis S.A., Fodele 715 00, Crete, Greece). Contractual partner for accommodation is the hotel. The registration for the chess tournament is done separately after booking the accommodation via ACO, see procedure on the next page.

The following services are included in the arranged hotel booking:

- ✓ **9 nights in 5\* Fodele Beach Resort**
- ✓ **All-Inclusive (see page 12)**
- ✓ **Free access to the fitness studio**
- ✓ **Private hotel beach**
- ✓ **Free internet**
- ✓ **Welcome and farewell drinks (for ACO guests only)**



### Important note on registration

Due to the hotel's high demand, we will have fewer hotel rooms available in 2025. **Therefore, we have to reduce the maximum number of participants from 170 to 150!** In recent years, the tournament has been fully booked several months in advance! We therefore recommend registering well in advance of 31 March in order to guarantee a place.

If you have any questions, send an email to: [senior@amateurchess.com](mailto:senior@amateurchess.com)

# Registration & booking

ACO is the organizer of the chess tournament ACO World Senior (50+) Chess Championship 2026 and arranges accommodation for all participants in the 5-star Fodele Beach Resor in Crete. 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/senior26>



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 deposit payment required upon booking.**



**You can cancel your booking free of charge until 31st August, 2026!**

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## Payment of the hotel price



You must pay the total amount for your hotel booking by August 31st, 2026, at the latest. You will receive the exact payment details from us at a later date.



All hotel bookings that are not fully paid by August 31st, 2026, will be automatically cancelled.



You will receive a payment reminder via email one month before the due date.



In case of cancellations after August 31 or no-shows, the hotel will charge 100% of the total amount as cancellation fees, regardless of the reason.

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





## Further information

### **Rooms with sea view (limited)**

Are very popular and are therefore fully booked very early.

### **Room bookings for accompanying person**

It is also possible to book rooms for accompanying persons who are not taking part in the tournament.

### **Weather:**

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

### **Transfer from the airport:**

The hotel is 25 minutes away from the airport. Taxis operate at a fixed price. There is also a bus connection with a stop in Heraklion.

## Arrive earlier or depart later

Would you like to extend your stay in Crete? No problem, you are welcome to book as many days before or after the tournament at the Fodele Beach Resort as you like under the same conditions as during the tournament. Prices depend on the type of room you choose.

### **Sometimes it is cheaper to book extra nights to obtain better or cheaper flight connections.**

**Tip:** If you register via the online form, the costs for extra nights will be automatically calculated and displayed. More information about registration will follow on the next page. Extra nights do not have to be selected at the time of registration, but can also be booked at a later date.

Please contact us by email at [senior@amateurchess.com](mailto:senior@amateurchess.com)



# Special hotel offer: Stay 14 nights - Pay for 13!

The chess tournament lasts 9 nights. Relax before or after and enjoy Greece! If you are interested, please contact us by email at [senior@amateurchess.com](mailto:senior@amateurchess.com). Please also note the offer for your flight booking! There are currently cheap flights available for the period 30 September to 13 October 2026, for example.



# Registration & hotel booking

**2026 ACO WORLD SENIOR (50+) CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP**

**1<sup>st</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> October, 2026 Crete / Greece**



**ACO**  
AMATEUR CHESS ORGANIZATION



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



**<https://booking.amateurchess.com/senior26>**









A large crowd of people is gathered at night, looking up at a spectacular fireworks display. The fireworks are exploding in the dark sky, creating bright, starburst patterns of light. The crowd is diverse in age and is standing on a paved area. In the background, there is a building with a lit-up facade and a large, illuminated structure that looks like a fountain or a large sculpture. The overall atmosphere is festive and celebratory.

## FIREWORKS

The award ceremonies of the  
ACO World Senior Championships  
2018-2019 + 2021-2025 ended  
with a firework display!

## CONTACT & REGISTRATION

[senior@amateurchess.com](mailto:senior@amateurchess.com)

Online registration:

<https://booking.amateurchess.com/senior26>