

# Aphrodite

the Greek Goddess  
of Romance,  
Love and Beauty



# The birth of Aphrodite



Olympian goddess  
Aphrodite was born  
of the sea foam in  
Paphos area, Cyprus.  
For that reason she  
was called  
"foam-arisen".

# The birth of Aphrodite

More specifically, the “golden girl” of Greek mythology arose on a large shell, at a scenic shore called “Petra tou Romiou” (Rock of the Greek).



# The birth of Aphrodite



Aphrodite's legendary birthplace  
in Paphos: Petra tou Romiou

# The birth of Aphrodite



Since Cyprus was considered as the birthplace of the goddess, Aphrodite was also known as Kypris or Cyprian.

Aphrodite of Soli  
Archeological Museum,  
Nicosia, Cyprus.

# The origin of the goddess' name

- The name "APHRODITE" is strongly related with the legend of goddess birth.
- It derives from the Greek word "afros", meaning foam in English.

# The origin of the goddess' name

➤ Therefore, the name Aphrodite refers to the one that emerged from the sea foam.



National Archaeological  
Museum of Athens

# Paphos: the birthplace

Pafos is entwined with Greek mythology, and especially the legendary birth of Aphrodite on her shores. Landmarks associated with Aphrodite, apart from "Petra tou Romiou" are:

- the sanctuary of Aphrodite
- the Baths of Aphrodite
- the Fountain of Love or Fontana Amorosa

# Paphos: the birthplace

## The sanctuary

In the ancient Greek world, the Temple of Aphrodite at Paphos was one of the most famous religious centers.



# Paphos: the birthplace

## The sanctuary

There were many others sanctuaries dedicated to Aphrodite, but Paphos was unique as the birthplace of the goddess. Pilgrims visited the temple and worshipped Aphrodite as the goddess of love and fertility.



# Paphos: the birthplace

## The sanctuary

Nowadays, the sanctuary is named as a place of interest among tourists. Many visitors gather there and admire the impressive ruins of Aphrodite's holly place.



# Paphos: the birthplace

## The sanctuary



Sanctuary to Apollo



# Paphos: the birthplace

## The Baths



The baths of Aphrodite is another area of breathtaking beauty, associated with the goddess.

# Paphos: the birthplace

## The Baths

According to the legends, Goddess Aphrodite used to take her bath in a pool of a natural grotto, shaded by a fig tree, which can still be visited.



# Paphos: the birthplace

## The Baths

The waters here were believed to have had special rejuvenating powers. Swimming here would guarantee eternal youth and beauty. So now we know why Aphrodite could make any man fall in love with her.



# Paphos: the birthplace

## The Fountain of Love or Fontana Amorosa

Nearby the Baths is Fontana Amorosa, or the fountain of love, which is said to bubble with Aphrodite's fabled love potion. The fountain is very difficult to access and can be reached only on foot or with a four-wheel drive vehicle.

# Paphos: the birthplace

## The Fountain of Love or Fontana Amorosa

Fontana Amorosa can be reached by walking along the Aphrodite Trail, which is one of the highlights of the area. Starting just above the Baths, it follows the mythical route taken by Aphrodite and her lover Adonis. This walk is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful hiking trails in Cyprus, offering fascinating views across blue lagoons.

# Aphrodite in Art History

The immense beauty of Aphrodite has inspired many artists. In the past, various sculptors tried to create statues that represented the perfect woman. In modern art, famous painters, have attempted to imagine and attribute the figure of the stunning goddess.

# Aphrodite in Art History

## Aphrodite of Cnidus

Aphrodite of Cnidus was one of the most famous works of the ancient Greek sculptor Praxiteles of Athens. It was carved for a temple of Aphrodite on the Greek island of Cnidus. The sculpture, that is now lost, depicted the goddess Aphrodite as she prepared for her ritual bath.

# Aphrodite in Art History

## Aphrodite of Cnidus

The statue and its copies are often referred to as the *Venus Pudica*, which means the modest Venus. The body of modest Venus leans on a dolphin, which represents one of Aphrodite's symbols of life.



# Aphrodite in Art History

## Aphrodite of Melos

The marble statue known as the *Aphrodite of Melos* is one of the most recognizable works of art from the ancient world. It is often referred to as *Venus de Milo*. Venus is the Roman version of Aphrodite's name.

# Aphrodite in Art History

## Aphrodite of Melos

This imposing image of the goddess has caused admiration over the centuries. The famous statue, with its elegantly twisting pose and its memorable missing arms, has become an icon of Western art. Today, Aphrodite of Melos continues to dazzle audiences with her eternal beauty. It is, at present, on display at the Louvre.

# Aphrodite in Art History



**name** | Aphrodite of Melos

**artist** | unknown

**period** | Hellenistic (Ancient Greek Art)

**date** | *circa* 150 BC

**collection** | Mus e du Louvre, Paris



# Aphrodite in Art History

## Birth of Venus

One of the most recognizable images in the history of art is the *Birth of Venus*. The painting of Sandro Botticelli depicts Venus, the Classical goddess of love and beauty, to emerge fully grown from the sea. It is evident that the painter, taking inspiration from the legendary birth of Aphrodite, used all of his artistic skill to create a timeless masterpiece.

## **Birth of Venus**

**title | Birth of Venus**

**artist | Sandro Botticelli**

**period | Early Renaissance**

**date | *circa* 1482**

**collection | Galleria degli Uffizi,  
Florence**



# Aphrodite in Art History

## Venus Anadyomene

Venus Anadyomene , literally meaning Venus rising from the sea, is a painting by Titian. It depicts Venus, who was said to have been born from a shell that is identified at the bottom far left, rising from the sea and wringing her hair. The shell is smaller than the one in Botticelli's scenes of Aphrodite's birth.

*Venus Anadyomene*

Artist

Titian

Year

c.1520

Type

Oil on canvas

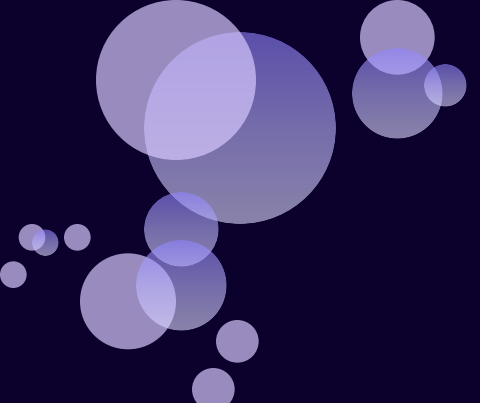
Dimensions

75.80 cm × 57.60  
cm  
(29.84 in × 22.68  
in)

Displayed



National Gallery  
of  
Scotland, Edinburgh





# Aphrodite in the planet system

As one of the brightest objects in the sky, planet Venus has been known and observed since prehistoric times. The name of the planet varied with regards to historic age and culture.



# Aphrodite in the planet system

The Romans would name the planet Venus in honour of their goddess of love. At the same time Greeks used the name Aphrodite which is equivalent to Venus. These two names are still used today in astronomy.