

# Athens, the highlights of Peloponnese & Central Greece, Santorini and Crete

 15 Days

 Locations Included

- Athens (4 nights)
- Olympia (1 night)
- Galaxidi (1 night)
- Meteora (1 night)
- Spilaio (1 night)
- Santorini (2 nights)
- Heraklion (2 nights)
- Chania (2 nights)

## Daily Schedule

Day	Highlights	Location
Day 1	Arrival in Athens, Free afternoon/ evening in Athens	Athens
Day 2	Athens Highlights Mythology Tour	Athens
Day 3	A Dazzling Day Trip to Hydra Island from Athens	Athens
Day 4	The Millenia Tour: Nafplio, Mycenae, Olympia Day 1	Athens to Olympia
Day 5	The Millenia Tour: Ancient Olympia & Galaxidi Day 2	Olympia to Galaxidi
Day 6	The Millenia Tour: Delphi & Amfissa Day 3	Galaxidi to Meteora
Day 7	The Millenia Tour: Meteora Day 4	Meteora to Spilaio
Day 8	The Millenia Tour: Greek mountain scenery Day 5	Spilaio to Athens
Day 9	Athens to Santorini, Free afternoon in Santorini	Athens to Santorini
Day 10	Picturesque Lava Experience	Santorini
Day 11	Santorini to Heraklion	Santorini to Heraklion
Day 12	Knossos Palace & Heraklion Museum with Local Food & Wine Tasting	Heraklion
Day 13	Heraklion to Chania, Self-guided exploration of Chania	Heraklion to Chania
Day 14	Elafonissi Beach Idyllic Escape & Spirit of West Crete	Chania
Day 15	Depart Chania	

## Detailed itinerary

1

### Arrival in Athens, Free afternoon/ evening in Athens

#### Private Athens Airport transfer (45 minutes)

Welcome to Athens! Your private driver will be waiting for you outside of your arrival gate to transfer you safely and hassle-free to your hotel in Athens.

#### Free afternoon/ evening in Athens

Use the afternoon to scope out some of the museums that you are interested in. The city has a whole slew to be explored, depending on what specialty speaks to you.

For more history and mythology:

- Acropolis Museum
- National Archaeological Museum
- Museum of the Ancient Agora
- Archaeological Museum of Kerameikos

Find some fine arts at:

- Benaki Museum
- Museum of Modern Art
- National Gallery

Go off the beaten path at:

- Museum of Cycladic Art, where you can also buy some truly unique souvenirs
- The digital interactive museum at the Platonic Academy, next to the site where the actual Academy stood
- Museum of Ancient Greek Technology in the center of Athens, featuring a working model of the Antikythera mechanism, the first analog computer

Museum tickets and guided tours can be arranged upon request.

**Overnight:** Athens



2

### Athens Highlights Mythology Tour

#### Athens Highlights Mythology Tour (4 hours)

Discover the myths behind the greatest landmarks in Athens. Enjoy a unique mythological tour, suitable for all ages, that will help you understand how Athens became one of the greatest cities of the world and a beacon of civilization.

Learn about Greek gods and heroes and discover what really hides behind the universal myths.

At the same time visit the best landmarks and sites in Athens, such as:

- The Acropolis (Parthenon, Theater of Dionysus, Temple of Athena Nike, Temple of Erechtheion, Sanctuary of Asclepius),
- Olympian Zeus' temple,



- the Ancient Agora and
- the temple of Hephaestus

Start your tour at the magnificent Temple of Olympian Zeus which was, and still is, the unofficial entry point to Athens and the mythological start of this glorious city.

From there, your English-speaking guide will take you all the way to the Theater of Dionysus and the Acropolis to visit the Temple of Athena Nike, the Temple of Erechtheion, the Propylaia, and of course, the marvelous Parthenon.

It is here that the most famous ancient myths come to life, stories about Gods and Heroes, such as almighty Zeus, Athena, Goddess of Wisdom and protector of Athens, Poseidon, God of the Sea, Dionysus, God of Wine, and many more. But what's even more intriguing is that you'll also find out what truths hide behind these myths and why the Ancient Greeks created them.

Your tour back in time continues to the Ancient Agora. It is here that democracy was born and where great philosophers such as Socrates spoke about global truths. Here you'll have a rare chance to see the Hephaisteion, the most perfectly preserved of Greece's temples and one shared between Athena and the God of the forge, Hephaestus. You'll hear more mythical stories about Theseus and the Minotaur, the jealous wife of Zeus, Hera, and Aphrodite, Goddess of love and beauty.

This walk will also help you figure out how this city was created and how it rose to become one of the greatest cities of the old world, how Athens managed to create such a reputation, and such monuments that are still immortal and legendary. Just like their Gods.

### **Overnight:** Athens

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### **Optional Activities**

Your specialist has selected these for you to consider.

#### **"Medea and other friends I made in Athens" a unique live theatrical performance in Athens (1hr)**

The funniest 60 minutes you will spend in Athens!

Come Watch a Unique, Funny, And Touching Play Right Under The Acropolis!

A 60-minute show of ancient Greek theatre with a twist! Ideal for small kids or big kids!

"During his visit to the Acropolis, a modern-day tourist slips and gets knocked out. When he awakens, he finds himself transported to 5th century B.C, Athens.

There, he will have a talk with Medea on raising children, chase the god of Wealth himself around the Parthenon, and find out how Odysseus solved a Cyclopean problem."

The director Nancy Rigopoulou, has staged a unique show that allows the spectators of every nationality to meet the deep, omnipotent, and timeless messages of the ancient Greek civilization in the most entertaining and uncomplicating way.

In 60 minutes, without the need for any prior knowledge, the average viewer will become a participant in some of the most important works of the world repertoire. Everything is done with redeeming laughter as their guide, the surest way for anyone to deal with the twists of fate.

A unique product for all visitors to enjoy, offering a complete experience of Greece that will make your trip unforgettable.



### **Greek Cooking Classes in Athens (5hr)**

Greek cuisine made easy! The secrets of Greek cuisine unravel in a simple and fun way under the patient guidance of contemporary home cooks. Learn how to make famous Greek dishes such as tzatziki, Greek salad, pies, and more!

A class designed by home cooks like yourself, that will let you cook the same dishes at home and take back a memorable slice of Greece that you'll always remember.

Learn how to cook real food for real people - your home cooks keep it simple.

Cook in the warm and authentic atmosphere of a real Greek home.

Enjoy a meal based on the freshness of the ingredients and the seasonality of the products.

Suitable for beginners but also for foodies that want to explore the Greek cooking philosophy.



## **A Dazzling Day Trip to Hydra Island from Athens**

### **A Dazzling Day Trip to Hydra Island from Athens (11 hours)**

A great cosmopolitan island escape, with pristine beaches, stunning architecture, and international cultural allure!

Less than two hours from Piraeus, the island of Hydra is an ideal day-trip destination.

Completely traffic-free (no cars or scooters), the port town is positively charming, thanks to the magnificent 18th-century mansions lining the steep streets that rise up from the harbor's edge. The stunning beaches are tranquil, laid-back locations and the island is full of history and cultural charm.

Enjoy a Scenic horse ride around the island of Hydra.

Water taxi round trip from the center of the island to a secluded beach and back.

Sightseeing in a historic location, an important center of activity during the 1821 Greek War of Independence.



What a way to spend your day away from the crowded city center!

At the port of Piraeus, you'll board the Flying Dolphin for a quick and comfortable hydrofoil ride to the harbor town of Hydra. Once you reach the island you'll be amazed by the local landscape that has made it a favored retreat of jetsetters and rock stars such as Maria Callas, Leonard Cohen, Eric Clapton, The Rolling Stones, Picasso and many more.

Then it's time to saddle up for a family-friendly ride through the town's different neighborhoods, because the best way to explore Hydra is on the back of a horse, the island's traditional means of transportation (no cars allowed!).

After your ride through town, you'll return to the harbor to board one of the island's famed water taxis, the easiest and the most exciting way to reach the island's best beaches. Foremost among these is Plakes Beach, equipped with sun-loungers and umbrellas, where you'll be heading for hours of fun in the sun and the crystal-blue sea, as well as a delicious lunch at the seafront taverna right at the water's edge.

Following lunch, it's back to Hydra Town for a second trip, this time on foot, down the maze-like side streets and by-ways where you'll spot artists' workshops, stylish boutiques, and a number of well-preserved historic residences, some of which, once owned by important figures in Greece's 19th-century struggle for independence, are now museums. Hydra has evolved into a cultural hub, where innovative exhibits, hip happenings, and events with international appeal attract famous visitors from all over the world each summer.

Your stroll will end at a family-run pastry shop that's famous for the local sweet (made from almonds) known as amygdalota, and for its rich and delicious homemade ice cream. As you finish your treat on the shaded veranda of the pastry shop, you'll be ready to leave the island with more than just a sweet taste on your lips; you'll have the long-lasting memory of a special day spent on this little gem of an island.

Please note that some changes to the itinerary may be necessary between Nov-Mar.

**Overnight:** Athens

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## Optional Activities

Your specialist has selected these for you to consider.

### **Enchanting Aegina Island day tour from Athens (11hr)**

A surprisingly unspoiled island escape!

This beautiful island, beloved of Zeus and blessed with a rich history, gives a great taste of all other Greek islands. Unspoiled landscapes, 19th-century charm, lovely beaches, and an outstanding cultural tradition in fine arts and handicrafts are what make Aegina a favorite getaway just a short ferry ride from Athens!

During the tour you will:

- Visit the Temple of Aphaia, one of ancient Greece's most graceful monuments
- Swim at a beautiful island beach, followed by lunch at a family-run seaside taverna
- Try your skills at traditional local craft-making or learning traditional folk dances
- Discover hidden corners and enter locals' homes and workshops

The trip to Aegina, an island steeped in historical significance, begins with a ferry ride to the island, a relaxing and enjoyable crossing during which you can loiter on deck and watch the playful seagulls or duck inside for morning refreshments in the ship's comfortable lounge.

Upon arriving at the port of Aegina, we will head straight to one of the island's traditional houses; this one has been transformed into a café, where we'll enjoy local delicacies and fresh homemade lemonade in the charming courtyard.

After this refreshing pause, it's off to a lovely modern sculpture Museum with breathtaking views, to quickly view works by an internationally acclaimed modern Greek sculptor, and to hear how he was inspired by the mythology and the art of ancient Greece. From here, we'll head inland to the ruins of the island's medieval capital, Paleochora, which is said to have once boasted 365 churches.

Further east lies the Temple of Aphaia, dating from approximately 500BC. It is a remarkable edifice, perfectly placed to afford a stunning view back over the island and down to the shoreline, which is where we'll head next, for a swim at one of Aegina's prettiest beaches. The swim will be followed by a delicious lunch at a local seaside taverna offering authentic island cooking.

Once the meal is done, it's back to the port town for a wander through the colorful alleyways and a taste of some Aegina pistachios, the island's most famous agricultural export. Then we'll meet some of the island's women that still hold alive its traditions and we'll find out about the long tradition of arts and crafts that the residents here still maintain; you'll have the chance to try your hand at lace-making or if you prefer something a little more lively, there will be an opportunity to learn a traditional folk dance!

As the music fades and you finish dancing, your day in Aegina will be at an end, but on the evening boat ride back to Piraeus, you'll have plenty to look back on from your all-day island adventure.

**\*Itinerary may be subject to changes during the winter and autumn months.**

#### **What's included**

- Professional, fun, knowledgeable top-rated English speaking tour leader from our specially trained team
- Professional English speaking driver throughout the tour
- Modern spacious air-conditioned vehicle throughout the tour,
- Round-trip ferry ride on a high-speed vessel in assigned seats
- Local activity (lace crafts or traditional dances lesson)
- Visit an artist's studio and scenic photo stop
- Hotel pick up & drop off, taxes, tolls, gas, 24/7 on the ground support

#### **Not included**

- Entry fees to Temple of Aphaia
- Food or drinks
- Beach towels



## Cape Sounio & The Athens Riviera Sunset Tour (5hr)

A gorgeous coast and a stunning Greek temple!

Don't let the sea escape you, because Athens is all about the sea!

Tour the celebrated Athens Riviera shoreline all the way to the stunning Temple of Poseidon overlooking the Aegean

Sea, and end your day admiring the dramatic sunset over Cape Sounion.

- Visit the Temple of Poseidon at Sounion, a stunning 5th century BC structure in a picture-perfect cliff-top setting, watching one of the best sunsets in Greece
- Enjoy the wonder that is Lake Vouliagmeni, a natural spa with year-round warm water
- Visit the newest star on the city's architectural and cultural scene, the impressive Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center
- Enjoy a selection of meze (Greek tapas) and a drink at a seaside tavern
- Get a real taste of beach life along the city's favorite coastline and discover an ancient Temple

Athenians love the sea. And in this tour, you'll understand every bit of why. But even before the tour reaches the seashore, there's a stop to be made at the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Center, the newest great edifice in the city and home to both the National Library and the National Opera. The Center, an engineering achievement designed by the renowned architect Renzo Piano, is set in an enormous park filled with olive trees and flanked by a 400-meter reflecting pool. Together, the building and the park achieve an aesthetic balance that's both soothing and invigorating.

From there, you'll head to Lake Vouliagmeni, where fresh spring water and saltwater mix to create a mineral-rich environment that is home to those funny little doctor fish (*Garra rufa*) that nibble your toes clean for you! The lake is, in fact, a collapsed cave, and there are underwater tunnels leading so far back under the mountain that they've never been fully mapped.

Then it's time for a walk along one of the most scenic seaside settings where you will probably forget you are still in Athens... and you will discover an ancient Temple whose location is a big surprise.

You are now ready to head to Cape Sounion, with one of the world's most graceful monuments, the Temple of Poseidon, a 5th-century archaeological site perched on the very top. The view here is tremendous, and it's obvious why this spot of land was chosen as a site where people could worship the god of the sea. Don't forget to look for Lord Byron's bit of 19th-century vandalism – the British poet's name is chiseled into a column here. And while you're taking that look, spare a thought for old King Aegeus, the man who, in death, gave his name to the whole of the Aegean Sea. It is here that you'll enjoy one of the most beautiful sunsets in Greece from the site of the temple itself – this lets you catch the last rays of the sun over the water from the ideal spot where geography and history work together to give you a timeless memory.

### What's included

- Professional English speaking tour leader
- Transfer by a/c vehicle
- Hotel pick up & drop off
- Petrol, tolls, and taxes
- Snack

### Not included

- Entry fees
- Food or drinks



### **Full Day Boat Tour Unique Sailing Experience to Agistri Moni Aegina (10hr)**

Escape the urban energy of Athens for the day and set sail for the Saronic Islands to Agistri, Moni, and Aegina aboard a spacious Greek sailing ship. Find your favorite spot on deck to soak up the Mediterranean sun while island-hopping.

From ancient temples and wild peacocks to pristine beaches and an optional bike ride, there's something for everyone at each stop. Swim and snorkel right off the boat, and indulge in a delicious Greek lunch onboard during this luxury island adventure.

Cruise across the Saronic Gulf to three islands, with free time at each to explore.

Take advantage of stops to swim, snorkel, relax on beaches, and even ride a bike.

Enjoy drinks, snacks, and a generous Greek lunch onboard the motorized sailing ship.



## The Millenia Tour: Nafplio, Mycenae, Olympia Day 1

### The Millenia Tour: Nafplio, Mycenae, Olympia Day 1 (12 hours)

The fabled Homeric city of Mycenae, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and capital of one of the oldest civilizations in the world, is where you'll start your adventure into antiquity, by walking under the famed Lion Gate into ruins that are part history, part myth. While you'll be literally walking in the steps of King Agamemnon, your expert guide will reveal every story, myth and legend that hide behind the imposing ruins of the citadel.

You'll then head towards the historic seaside city of Nafplio, where a scrumptious lunch awaits you in one of the best tavernas in town only locals know of. This romantic, picturesque town, the old capital of modern Greece, is crowned by Venetian fortifications and embraced by a beautiful seafront.

You'll visit local craftspeople, including a potter and a weaver at work in their workshops, to discover how they carry the traditions of the past into the present. You'll also see a number of other local crafts and goods and a confectionery where the traditional almond pastries are still made the way they were generations ago.

From Nafplio, your trip will take you through the beautiful Peloponnesian countryside towards Ancient Olympia; along the way, you'll stop at a beautiful honey farm, where you'll learn the secrets of the world-renowned Greek honey firsthand from a working beekeeper. You'll also see her mother making "diples", a traditional dessert drizzled with honey, cooked just for you in an outdoor kitchen under the trees!

You will spend the night near Ancient Olympia.

**Overnight:** Olympia



## The Millenia Tour: Ancient Olympia & Galaxidi Day 2

### The Millenia Tour: Ancient Olympia & Galaxidi Day 2 (10 hours)

The next morning belongs to Ancient Olympia, the most important athletic, religious, and political center of the ancient Greek world. Here your top-rated guide will let you into the secrets of the temples, the training area, and the original stadium where the ancient Olympic Games were born, and held for centuries. The on-site Archaeological Museum holds world-class masterpieces and treasures like the breathtaking statue of Hermes and the infant Dionysus, sculpted by Praxiteles.

Then it's time for an unusual off-road adventure and an exciting lunch break: after an easy guided walk through a stunning gorge, you'll discover two impressive waterfalls where your lunch will be served, right by the river picnic-style, with home-made local specialties, cooked by local women. For the bravest of you, you'll have the chance to swim there too!

After leaving the waterfalls, you'll travel to one of the most picturesque seaside villages of Greece, Galaxidi, where you will spend the night.

**Overnight:** Galaxidi



## The Millenia Tour: Delphi & Amfissa Day 3

### The Millenia Tour: Delphi & Amfissa Day 3 (10 hours)

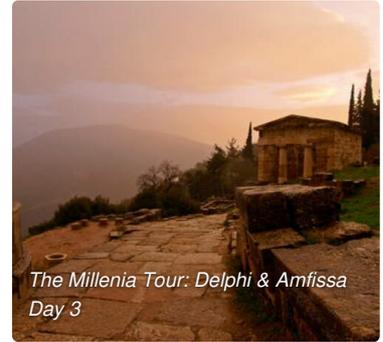
We'll start the day by exploring Galaxidi, once a thriving port and home to some of the most powerful families of seafaring merchants in the Mediterranean Sea. Then we'll head to the regional capital of Amfissa, where Greece's last hand-made bell-maker will show you how livestock bells have been forged by hand in his family for generations; then you'll stroll through the cobbled streets of the old leather-tanning district. Here, in one of the last remaining tanning workshops in Europe, you'll see what a tanner's working life was, almost unchanged from a century ago up to today, and listen to the tanners' stories – father and son – to understand what life is like today in this part of Greece.

You'll then enjoy your lunch under the shade of the large plane tree in the town square, where you will taste local delicacies prepared for you by women of the village.

After lunch, it's off to Delphi, the sacred oracle of the ancient Gods. There you'll marvel at the ruins of the Temple of Apollo and the Athenian Treasury. You'll have plenty of time to soak in the magical scenery, after which it'll be time to visit the Delphi museum, where some of the finest examples of ancient Greek art are on display – including the world-famous bronze statue of the Charioteer of Delphi.

From Delphi, you'll then head north across the mainland towards Meteora. A few miles before reaching your destination, you will have dinner in a traditional family-run taverna in the foothills of Mt Koziakas. The food there is superb, sourced from local farms and gardens! You will spend the night in a charming family-run guest house in the pretty village of Kastraki, right under the towering rocks of Meteora.

**Overnight:** Meteora



## The Millenia Tour: Meteora Day 4

### The Millenia Tour: Meteora Day 4 (10 hours)

Meteora is a stunning natural phenomenon, featuring enormous sandstone columns, formed millions of years ago, all pointing heavenward.

These remote rock skyscrapers became dwelling-places for Christian Orthodox monks and, by the 14th century, large monastic communities were flourishing on the summits of many of these rocks.

Today, six monasteries are still functioning, of which you will visit two. You'll also walk around and drive among the rocks, to make sure you soak in the sights and the awe-inspiring landscape before enjoying lunch in a nearby Kalambaka.

After lunch, you'll visit a local icon painter from a family of artists linked for generations to the monasteries here. In his tiny workshop you'll have a chance to learn about his art and try out your skills in customizing an orthodox icon to take back home with you!

Then it's a stop at the small but original Book Museum, where you'll get to try your skills in Greek handwriting and find out about Greek classrooms of the past. The owner is a fascinating personality, a collector of rare books that decided to turn his passion into a private museum!

You'll then leave the Meteora towards the south, to the little-known Forest of the White River, a group of small mountain villages hidden in the depths of a massive forest. Here, you'll spend the night at a mountain lodge in perfect harmony with its surroundings.

**Overnight:** Spilaio



## The Millenia Tour: Greek mountain scenery Day 5

**The Millenia Tour: Greek mountain scenery Day 5** (12 hours)

The next day you'll start exploring the beauties of the region with a swim at a beautiful river spot known only to locals. Close by is a fascinating small monastery rarely visited by tourists, which you will also visit.

Then you'll embark on a food tour to discover the local specialties and flavors of Northern Greece!

Afternoon Greek coffee will be at a charming rustic outpost with far-reaching valley views. Here you will also taste Greek yogurt and traditional 'spoon sweets' that Mrs. Soula, the owner's mother, makes year-round.

Then it's off to a nearby winery to taste the area's best wines, cheeses, and cold cuts, before lunch at a local tavern. Here, you'll eat like locals, savoring wild mountain greens, juicy lamb ribs, and other local specialties. With this wonderful meal in a village that isn't featured in any tourist map or guide, you'll finish our mountain odyssey, satisfied in body and soul and ready for the ride back to Athens.

**Overnight:** Athens



## Athens to Santorini, Free afternoon in Santorini

**Transfer Athens, ferry to Santorini and transfer to hotel in Santorini (5 hours)**

### Athens → Piraeus

Your private driver will be waiting for you at your hotel to transfer you safely and hassle-free to the port of Piraeus to catch your ferry.

Ferry to Santorini.

### Santorini port → Santorini

Your private driver will be waiting for you at the port to transfer you to your hotel in Santorini.

### Free afternoon in Santorini

The popular Greek island of Santorini is blessed with all of these attractive features and more. This lovely volcanic island in the Cyclades lies in the middle of the Aegean and is well known for its strikingly white cliff-side homes with their pretty deep blue rooftops.

Visitors will be treated to dramatic ocean views, pristine beaches, traditional Grecian architecture, many fascinating historical sites, fine dining, and numerous, excellent local wineries. With all of this on offer, it is little wonder that this remarkably romantic island has become one of the world's most popular island getaways with numerous points to explore and indulge your senses!

**Overnight:** Santorini

### Optional Activity

Your specialist has selected this for you to consider.

#### Dinner at Oia Gefsis, Oia

The sublime ambiance of Oia Gefsis perfectly complements your dinner. The restaurant is located in a 19th-century captain's house with the typical Cycladic architecture of that era. The traditional decorating combined with contemporary touches creates a warm and unpretentious place ideal for those who seek an authentic experience.

Dining at Oia Gefsis is more than just a simple meal. Combining local ingredients, imagination, and contemporary techniques, we have created a unique menu that will stimulate all your senses and guide you through the gastronomy of Greece.

The menu included: Two dips with tomato sauce and eggplant sauce, bread, mineral water, Tzatziki, Tomato balls, Santorini fava, Feta cheese saganaki, Greek Salad, Salmon with orange sauce and celery root puree, Chicken souvlaki with pita bread, potatoes, tzatziki, and tomato, Baklava

\* if you have special dietary preferences please let us know so we can arrange your menu accordingly.



## Picturesque Lava Experience

### Picturesque Lava Experience (8 hours)

Unforgettable experience in the only 9D cinema about Lost Atlantis phenomenon.

Photostop at Prophet Elias Monastery the highest spot of the island.

Caldera view photostop at Akrotiri's village.

Visit to Red Beach, one of the most scenic and interesting beaches on the island.

Sample of local wines will offered to a traditional winery.

Sailing with a traditional boat to Volcano and then to the Hot Springs for a comfort swimming in warm waters. Wine on board & Dinner included!

**Overnight:** Santorini

### Optional Activity

Your specialist has selected this for you to consider.

#### Santorini Traditional Villages tour (8hr)

Walking tour around Megalochori, one of the most picturesque villages on the island.

Visit to Red Beach, one of the most scenic and interesting beaches on the island.

Walking tour around the traditional village of Emporio.

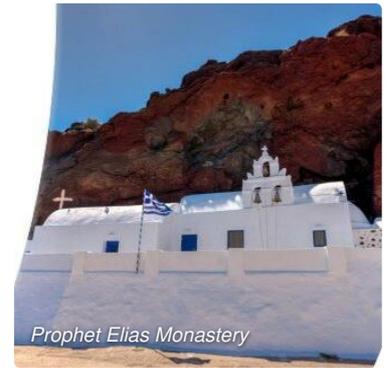
Free time for lunch and swimming in the longest black beach of the island.

Photostop for Panoramic view from the highest point of the island.

Amazing view to the capital and sea from Blue Dome Church at Firostefani.

Photostop at the highest, most central part of the caldera at Imerovigli.

You will have the chance to enjoy the amazing view of Santorini, the beautiful Caldera view, the different Volcanic islands and the famous Sunset.



## Santorini to Heraklion

### Santorini to Heraklion Crete transfers & ferry

Time to say goodbye to majestic Santorini and get ready for fascinating Crete island!

Your private driver will come to pick you up and transfer you to Santorini port to catch your ferry to Heraklion port in Crete.

Upon arrival in Heraklion port, your private driver will be waiting for you to greet you and transfer you to your hotel.

**Overnight:** Heraklion



## Knossos Palace & Heraklion Museum with Local Food & Wine Tasting

### Knossos Palace & Heraklion Museum with Local Food & Wine Tasting (8 hours)

Enjoy a personal pick-up by your personal driver with a premium class vehicle at your full-day disposal, at any convenient time of the day (morning or early afternoon). Your archaeology specialized private guide will guide you at the iconic Knossos Palace (King Minos/Minoan Palace) and the Heraklion Archaeological Museum. You will receive all the informative highlights with highly personalized attention.

Avoiding the queues and mass tourist crowds at the archaeological areas, your professional private guide will provide you with personal touch impressions, historical information about the period of the rule of the mythical king Minos, the legends of the Labyrinth and the Minotaur. It will be ensured that you will not miss any of the key pieces. This also means you can savor each area in a peaceful, unhurried atmosphere.

Afterward, a short stroll takes you to a quintessentially local award-winning winery. There, you will experience a full flight of local wine, perfectly paired with local delicacies such as a handpicked selection of charcuterie and cheese, a great way to fill your day full of art and culture!

At the end of the day, you will have the opportunity for a guided walking tour around the city of Heraklion. Your local insider guide will acquaint you with the history of this diachronic city and guide you along the main streets, where you will explore the medieval ports, temples, Morosini Fountain (Lion's Fountain), and the city's iconic street markets.

By receiving the best recommendations, you can also have a delicious Cretan dinner in one of the best local taverns or gourmet restaurants in the city center.

**Overnight:** Heraklion



### Optional Activity

Your specialist has selected this for you to consider.

### **Matala & South Crete Escape with Local Food & Wine (8hr)**

Enjoy a personal pick-up with a premium vehicle at your full-day disposal, at any defined time of the day. Your private day trip will start with a memorable journey to the heart of the South-Central Crete by following bespoke itineraries off-the-beaten-path.

On the way to the South Crete, your private guide will arrange a stop for coffee and local product tasting at the traditional Cretan village of Mironas. There, you will also visit the sacred Cave of Saint Mironas - the ascetic spot of the Saint - with the ornaments of the pilgrims from all over the world, where still sparkles the fragrance and holy water - the perfect place to ease your mind and soul.

The next stops will be at two (2) "must-see" iconic archaeological sites of Crete island. The ancient city of Gortyna, where we highly recommend taking a guided tour, and a photosop above the stunning Phaistos Minoan Palace, the place where the worldwide known Festos/Phaistos Disc was found. Then, you will be taken to an authentic Cretan winery with the finest local wine selection, which is produced with the best soil and springs of the Southern Crete!

Then you will explore more hidden gems of Southern Crete by visiting the mountainous ancient Byzantine monastery of Odigitria which hosts Cretan iconography and frescoes of the 15th century. Not to mention that in this monastery the monks still produce natural products with pure raw materials!

When you finally arrive at Matala you will witness the amazing scenery of the Libyan shore which is surrounded by Roman caves. In this Southern corner of Crete, you will experience azure waters with a stunning sunset scenery. After the walk in the village of Matala, you will have the opportunity to savor the authentic seafood tastes of the island, at the best handpicked traditional taverns. Do not forget that your local insider is also a fantastic food advisor expert!



## Heraklion to Chania, Self-guided exploration of Chania

### Private Transport from Heraklion to Chania (2 hours)

Your private driver will come to pick you up and transfer you to Chania.

### Self-guided exploration of Chania

Chania itself is the second largest city in Crete and one of the most scenic spots on an island with stiff competition for that title. Life in this former Venetian city revolves around its charming 14th-century harbor, narrow streets with winding alleys, and colorful architecture influenced by past Ottoman and Egyptian eras.



Chania's Old Town Harbor

While you're exploring the area, don't miss some of these spots:

- The elevated neighborhoods of Topanas, Splantzia, Kolombo, and Kasteli for panoramic harbor views, Cretan taverns, and architectural history. You can see the ruins of the Minoan city of Kydonia and high walls of former Venetian moats integrated into the city.
- The Municipal Market of Chania and neighboring Municipal Garden to enjoy a coffee amid the shade of the trees or garden clocktower.
- The Botanical Parks and Gardens of Crete to enjoy Cretan nature at its finest. The special micro-climate formed at this specific area allows plants from three different climate zones to grow in the park.
- The olive-oil-producing region of Vouves, to the west of the city, complete with a museum and one of the oldest olive trees in existence.
- Falassarna and Elafonissi beaches, also to the west, where you can find solitude on the sands.

Top it all off with a sunset drink on the rooftop at trendy Pallas or visit Cafe Koukouvaya for a pastry and a view of Chania town and harbor.

**Overnight:** Chania

## Elafonissi Beach Idyllic Escape & Spirit of West Crete

### Elafonissi Beach Idyllic Escape & Spirit of West Crete (8 hours)

Enjoy a personal pick-up with a premium vehicle at your full-day disposal, at any defined time of the day.

On the way to the most amazing pink sand beaches of the world, you will immerse yourself into the beauty of Western Crete: its stunning nature, dramatic panoramas, nutshell mountains, which are split with deep gorges, and honeycombed with caves rise in sheer walls from the sea.

Most importantly, you will get acquainted with the vivid feeling that the sea is everywhere, even if it's not visible! You will connect with quaint villages and their authentic local lifestyle, which is deeply



Elafonissi Beach Idyllic Escape & Spirit of West Crete

family-oriented and rooted in ancient culture and traditions. In addition, you will make a stop in one of your favorite villages to enjoy a delicious Cretan breakfast.



Just not so far from Elafonissi beach, we highly recommend visiting the Monastery of Panagia Chrisoskalitissa (Our Lady of the Golden Step), a hilltop Orthodox monastery with a stunning view of the Libyan Sea.

There you will have the opportunity to witness the millennial icon of the Assumption of Virgin - one of the "strongest" relics in the Cretan Orthodoxy.

When you finally arrive at Elafonissi you will notice how harmonically the lagoon is mixed with the Mediterranean and Libyan waters at this South-Western corner of the island.

There you will spark your body and mind by relaxing on the pale pink sands, bathing in azure shallow waters, and admiring the floating nature reserve.

Please note that our team, as original Cretans who tend to take their meals seriously, keeps a unique handpicked collection of authentic Cretan taverns and restaurants. Thus, on your way back, do not hesitate to ask their recommendations for a special dinner at the most unique places!

**Overnight:** Chania

## Optional Activities

Your specialist has selected these for you to consider.

### **Samaria Gorge with a Local Insider (10hr)**

By arriving at Samaria, you will be guided through the majestic gorge by your private guide, while your private chauffeur, with the vehicle on disposal, will be waiting for you at the end of Samaria Gorge, in Agia Roumeli village.

The Gorge contains 450 species of plant and animal life. In addition, Samaria Gorge is a UNESCO-protected Biosphere Reserve. You will pass through Cretan forests of pine, cypress, and ancient holly trees, and by 22 drinking water springs, as well as abandoned villages and churches you can pop into.

If tackled from Xyloskalo to Agia Roumeli, by the sea, it is downhill all the way. And although you will crisscross a river multiple times – sometimes over wooden bridges, sometimes hopping from rock to rock – it's not a difficult or technical hike. Just don't expect to pass as effortlessly as the gorge's real residents – the Cretan 'kri-kri' mountain goats!



### **Western Crete - Six Senses Mosaic & Venetian Rethymno (8hr)**

Enjoy a personal pick-up with a premium vehicle at your full-day disposal, at any defined time of the day. Your private day trip will start with a memorable journey to the heart of the iconic West Crete by following bespoke itineraries which are inaccessible by mass tourism crowds.

On your way, descending to the South-Western Crete your private local insider guide will engage you with many traditional ancient villages and their unspoiled local lifestyle. You will enjoy a Cretan breakfast in the

village of Spili, with its huge plane trees and a row of 25 fountains with the form of a lion head.

The next stops will be at two (2) stunning gorges. The first one will be on your way while descending to the South and the second one on the way back to the North. In between, you will visit the ancient Monastery of Preveli, which hosts the Holy Cross (The cross bears part of the True Cross at its base which came from Constantinople). There your private guide will provide you with all the key pieces of information about the history and myths of this ancient land.

Then you will be taken to the village of Argyroupoli (ancient city of Lappa) where you will enjoy a delicious lunch under the shade of the ancient plane trees, surrounded by lush green, numerous fresh-water springs, and small breezy waterfalls. There you will savor many local specialties (Ofto Antikristo is one of them) by deeply engaging with the meaning of Cretan "philoxenia" (hospitality) and realizing why the locals have no idea about industrial junk food.

On the way back, you will visit the Venetian city of Rethymno to enjoy an evening guided walk. Your local guide will make you familiar with the rich history of Rethymno by guiding you along the main streets, where you will explore the medieval ports, temples, and unique city markets. Not to mention that you will have the opportunity for the finest local product and wine tasting!



## Depart Chania

### Transfer from Chania to Chania Int. Airport

Your driver will pick you up at your accommodation in Chania and drive you to the Chania Int. Airport (CHQ) in time for your flight.



Angela

Catch a flight to Athens which is one hour duration and from there your international flight out.



Photo taken by Victoria P

## What's Included

### Activities

- Day 2: Athens Highlights Mythology Tour (small group)
- Day 3: A Dazzling Day Trip to Hydra Island from Athens (private group)
- Day 4: The Millenia Tour: Nafplio, Mycenae, Olympia Day 1 (private group)
- Day 5: The Millenia Tour: Ancient Olympia & Galaxidi Day 2 (private group)
- Day 6: The Millenia Tour: Delphi & Amfissa Day 3 (private group)
- Day 7: The Millenia Tour: Meteora Day 4 (private group)
- Day 8: The Millenia Tour: Greek mountain scenery Day 5 (private group)
- Day 10: Picturesque Lava Experience (small group)
- Day 12: Knossos Palace & Heraklion Museum with Local Food & Wine Tasting (private group)
- Day 14: Elafonissi Beach Idyllic Escape & Spirit of West Crete (private group)

### Transportation

- Day 1: Private Athens Airport transfer
- Day 9: Transfer Athens, ferry to Santorini and transfer to hotel in Santorini
- Day 11: Santorini to Heraklion Crete transfers & ferry
- Day 13: Private Transport from Heraklion to Chania
- Day 15: Transfer from Chania to Chania Int. Airport

### Accommodations

Your specialist has not yet selected any hotels for you.

Please ask your specialist to select hotels with availability for your travel dates.

## Excludes

- International flights
- The meals not mentioned in the trip plan
- Personal expenses
- Travel insurance, and repatriation insurance
- Optional excursions, activities, and optional tours
- Reservations marked as "reserved by traveler" are reservations that the traveler is responsible for directly. These items are not reserved or supported by kimkim and are included in the trip plan just for completeness.

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## About your local specialist



We are a leading Greece destination management company (DMC).

A professional services company with in-depth local knowledge, expertise, and resources, working in the design and implementation of events, activities, tours, transportation, and travel packages covering each and every corner of this amazing country named Greece.

Here at Greece Adventure Trips (G.A.T.) we organize and implement travel packages and one day tours in selected areas of Epirus, from the dreamed Zagorohoria to the imposing Tzoumerka and the unique beauty of Thesprotia (Acheron River), Western Macedonia, from the magical Prespes to the unique national park of Pindos, of the Peloponnese, a huge outdoor museum, of the Ionian Islands with the crystal clear turquoise waters, the dazzling Mykonos and Santorini, the cater of western civilization and vibrant Athens, Crete that simply has it all, but also in "hidden gems" all over Greece.

Our network of guides and partners around the country excels at "introducing" their region and its people through a dynamic program tailored to the natural environment, culture, history, and gastronomic products of each region.

From one-day excursions to multi-day explorations we provide participants with a unique opportunity to open "closed doors" and experience "hidden secrets" in the land of Gods and people.

We promote Greece's nature & culture through adventure activities, organized trips & tours, that will give the real feeling of what Greece is all about.



**Angela**

Based in Athens, Lefkada and Kalamata

Hi everyone! I am Angela (or as my Greek friends call me, Aggeliki). Let me introduce myself: I am a travel and adventure lover just like you! I work in the travel industry, for a quiet few years now, and I love creating new exciting trips, tours, and above all,...

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# Why travelers love kimkim

Custom trips for independent travelers who are too busy to plan



## Customize your trip with the help of a local travel specialist

Kimkim has handpicked the world's top local travel specialists so you will have peace of mind and an unforgettable trip that meets your exact requirements.



## Authentic travel experiences

Kimkim's local specialists ensure that you will have the best experience based on up-to-date local insights. On top of that, the vast majority of your money will go straight to support and grow local economies.



## Secure & easy booking

Once you are happy with the trip, you can easily book via kimkim's secure payment platform.



## Local support during your trip

You can always reach your local specialist with a quick message or call in case you hit a snag during your trip, or simply want some great local recommendations.

Kimkim offers a 100% satisfaction guarantee. If you are not fully satisfied with us, we'll work with you to make it right.

All kimkim trips are 100% climate neutral.

Kimkim is accredited by the Better Business Bureau with an A+ rating.

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