



lonely planet



discover  
**GREECE**

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# DISCOVER GREECE



**Athens & Attica (p51)** A vibrant, cosmopolitan capital, surrounded by the impressive ruins of Attica



**Central Greece & the Ionian Islands (p127)** Atmospheric rural peninsula and idyllic island life of Corfu or Kefallonia



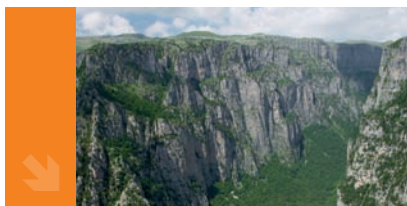
**Cyclades, Evia & the Sporades (p195)** Island paradises of Santorini and Mykonos, ancient ruins, spas and beaches



**Dodecanese (p267)** Rhodes' medieval Old Town, Nisyros volcano, Kos beaches and the spiritual atmosphere of Patmos



**Peloponnese & the Saronic Gulf Islands (p93)** Gorgeous, rugged landscapes and stunning coastal villages



**Northern Greece (p163)** Artistic, spirited Thessaloniki, traditional villages and the soaring peaks of Mt Olympus



**Crete (p233)** Idyllic Elafonisi, Hania's evocative Old Town, vineyards and the palace of Knossos

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**THESSALONIKI** p174

Greece's dynamic second city, with a heady arts and nightlife scene

**FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA**

**METEORA** p145

Monasteries atop sheer rock make for one of Greece's most stunning spiritual sites

**CORFU** p151

The garden isle of Greece, with French and Italian historical influences and great beaches

**DELPHI** p138

Navel of the ancient world and home to the oracle that influenced the course of Greek history

**DIAKOFTO** p104

Hop on the rack-and-pegion train to Kalavryta – Greece's most dramatic rail journey

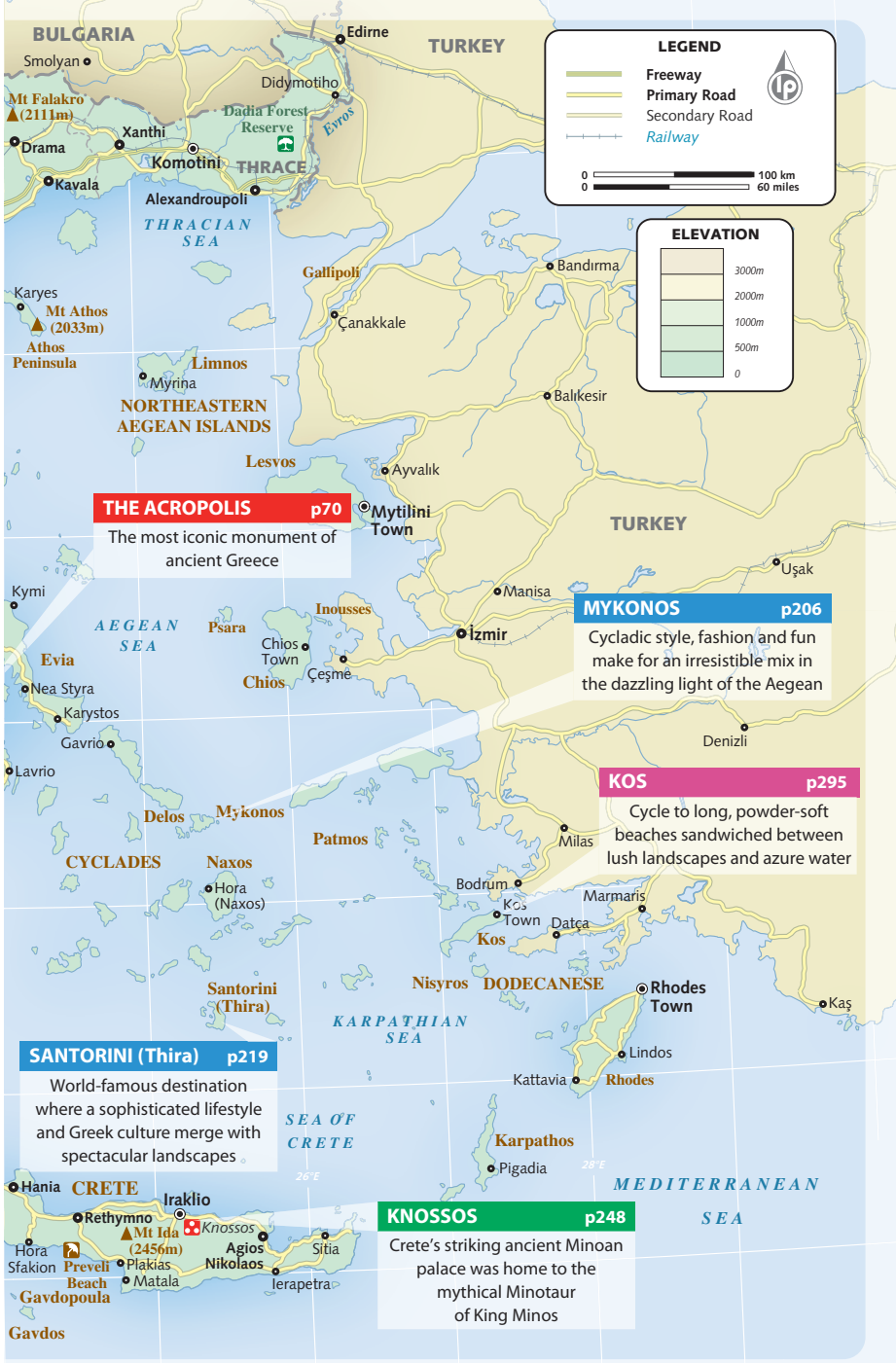
**HYDRA** p123

Shaped by generations of famous seafarers, who created one of the most beautiful island towns in Europe

**AZOGIRES** p260

A tranquil mountain hamlet with a beautiful setting and remarkable local legends





**LEGEND**

- Freeway
- Primary Road
- Secondary Road
- Railway

0 100 km  
0 60 miles

**ELEVATION**

- 3000m
- 2000m
- 1000m
- 500m
- 0

**THE ACROPOLIS** p70

The most iconic monument of ancient Greece

**MYKONOS** p206

Cycladic style, fashion and fun make for an irresistible mix in the dazzling light of the Aegean

**KOS** p295

Cycle to long, powder-soft beaches sandwiched between lush landscapes and azure water

**SANTORINI (Thira)** p219

World-famous destination where a sophisticated lifestyle and Greek culture merge with spectacular landscapes

**KNOSSOS** p248

Crete's striking ancient Minoan palace was home to the mythical Minotaur of King Minos

**CRETE**

Hania, Rethymno, Iraklio, Knossos, Agios Nikolaos, Sifia, Ierapetra, Gavdos

▲ Mt Ida (2456m)

Preveli Beach, Gavdopoula

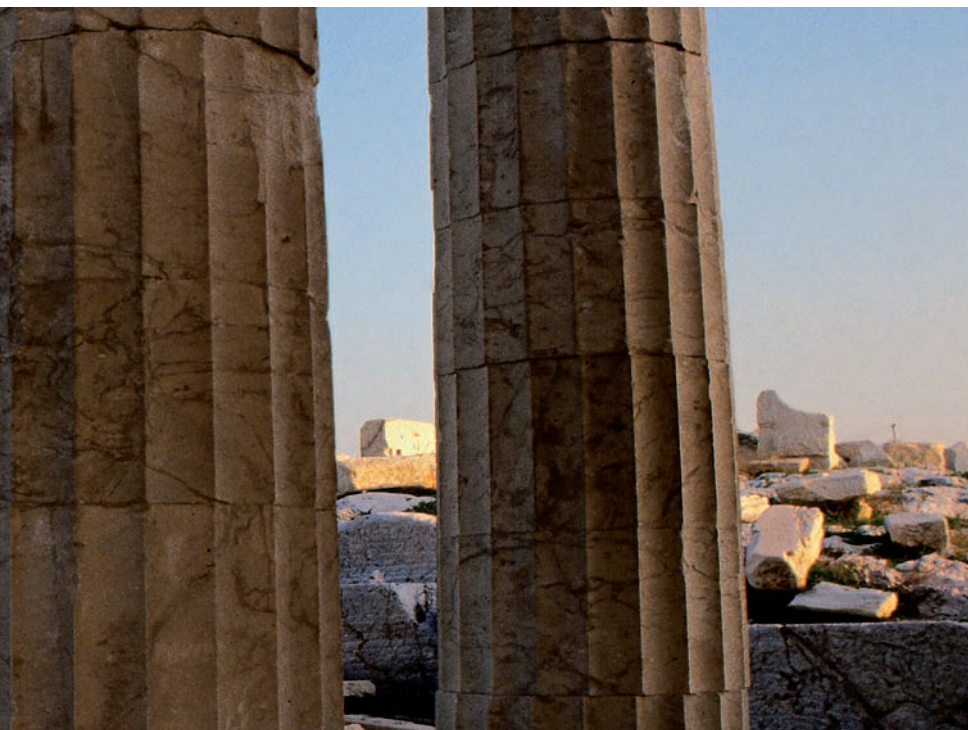
# ↘ THIS IS GREECE



**It's easy to understand how so many myths of gods and giants originated in this varied landscape. Greece beckons with its wide open skies and endless miles of aquamarine coastline; and then it draws you in with its infamous ancient sights, slow-paced island life and vibrant cities.**

As the birthplace of drama, democracy, Western science and medicine, Greece offers a welcome balance of traditional and contemporary life. Ancient sights often take the limelight and while it's easy to find traditional villages with brilliant white buildings and roaming donkeys, Athens' firm grip on style and sophistication rivals that of any European capital. The Greek modern art scene is fresh and vibrant, fashionable clubs and cafes buzz with life and society is increasingly multicultural. There are few cultures that embrace the past so passionately while simultaneously welcoming the future with open arms.

Once you arrive, it's not difficult to find the Greece you were hoping for, whether it's the pulsing nightclubs of Mykonos, the solemnity of Meteora, or the grandeur of Delphi.



You'll quickly become acquainted with the throbbing melancholy of *rembetika* (blues songs) and the tang of homemade tzatziki, and Greece's ancient sights will unleash your imagination.

Not surprisingly, such drawcards haven't gone unnoticed. This means you need to do some preplanning and booking if you're heading for a popular city or island in the summer. Nevertheless, the sheer quantity of destinations means that most places absorb the influx of visitors with grace and ease.

Greece is essentially a laid-back place. Lounge endlessly at a cafe over a coffee, stroll along the seafront, park yourself on the beach and take your time over meals and you'll fit right in. Greeks know how to enjoy life and are renowned as some of the most hospitable people on the globe. Their generosity and warmth is as genuine as the soft sand between your toes and the warmth of the Aegean sun.

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**'few cultures embrace the past so passionately while simultaneously welcoming the future with open arms'**

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