



# Greece



THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

**Korina Miller,**

**Kate Armstrong, Alexis Averbeck, Michael Stamatios Clark, Chris Deliso,  
Victoria Kyriakopoulos, Andrea Schulte-Peevers, Richard Waters**

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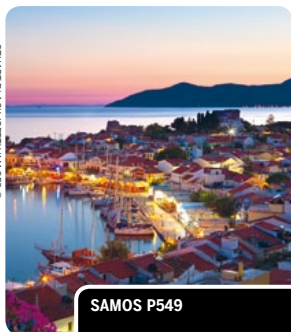
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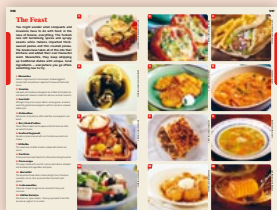
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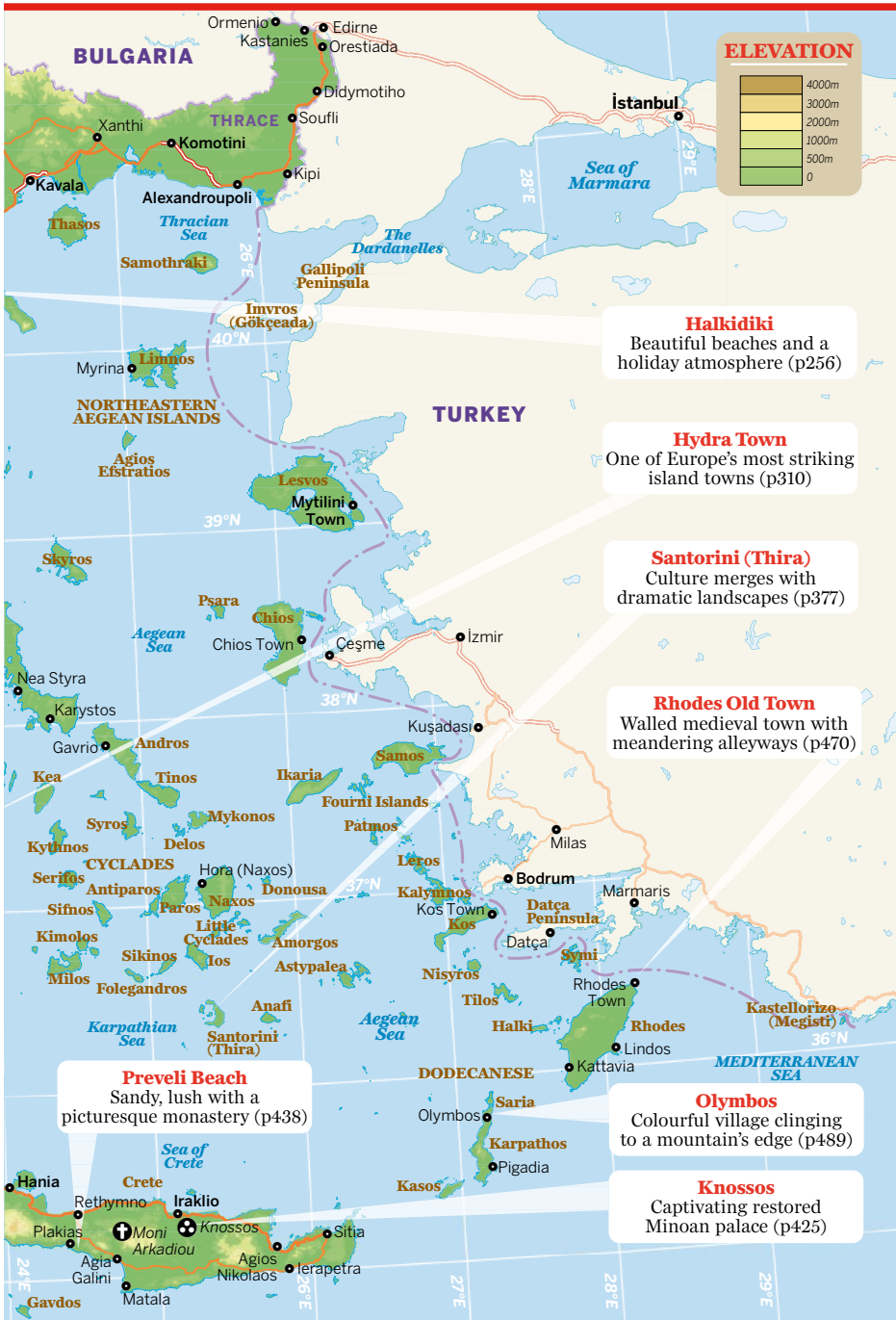


# On the Road









**ELEVATION**



**Halkidiki**

Beautiful beaches and a holiday atmosphere (p256)

**Hydra Town**

One of Europe's most striking island towns (p310)

**Santorini (Thira)**

Culture merges with dramatic landscapes (p377)

**Rhodes Old Town**

Walled medieval town with meandering alleyways (p470)

**Preveli Beach**

Sandy, lush with a picturesque monastery (p438)

**Olymbos**

Colourful village clinging to a mountain's edge (p489)

**Knossos**

Captivating restored Minoan palace (p425)



### **Chris Deliso**

**Northern Greece** Chris was drawing maps of the Aegean by age five. Twenty years later he ended up in Greece, during an Oxford MPhil in Byzantine Studies. Ever since studying Greek in Thessaloniki (1998) and spending a year in Crete, he's visited Greece frequently. For this edition, he matched wits with the tortoise guarding Platamonas' Byzantine castle, absorbed the beauty of Ioannina's lake island, and almost got beaten by Kastoria bar thugs who pegged him as an undercover Greek tax policeman. Visit his website: [www.chrisdeliso.com](http://www.chrisdeliso.com).

Read more about Chris at:  
[lonelyplanet.com/members/chrisdeliso](http://lonelyplanet.com/members/chrisdeliso)



### **Victoria Kyriakopoulos**

Victoria is a Melbourne-based writer, journalist and foodie who has lived, worked and travelled extensively in her ancestral home, feeding her passion and sharing her insight on Greece. She's written for newspapers and magazines around the globe and worked on Lonely Planet guides to Greece since 2001. Victoria wrote the Eat Like a Local, Arts, Greek Cuisine and Greek Way of Life chapters.



### **Andrea Schulte-Peevers**

**Crete** Andrea has travelled the distance to the moon and back in her visits to around 70 countries, but she'll forever cherish the memory of first setting foot on Crete some 17 years ago and being instantly charmed by its people, the rich tapestry of their traditions and their long and proud history. She has written or contributed to some 60 Lonely Planet books, including the Crete regional guide. Her current home is Berlin.



### **Richard Waters**

**Dodecanese** Richard is an award-winning journalist and works for *The Independent*, *Sunday Times*, *Wanderlust* and *National Geographic Traveller*. He lives with his fiancée and two kids in the Cotswolds. His spiritual home is Greece thanks to more than 20 visits, the first of which was as a kid in the '70s on the isles of Corfu, Rhodes and Zakynthos. He loves their myths, cuisine and, most of all, the Greeks themselves. Even in the midst of the crisis, he found them to possess their usual humour, warmth and stoicism. Richard also wrote the Greece Today, History, Ancient Greek Culture and Architecture chapters.



## OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Melbourne, London and Oakland, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

## OUR WRITERS



### Korina Miller

**Coordinating Author, Cyclades** Korina first ventured to Greece as a backpacking teenager, sleeping on ferry decks and hiking in the mountains. Since then she's found herself drawn back to soak up the timelessness of the old towns and drink coffee with locals in seaside *kafeneio*. Korina grew up on Vancouver Island and has been exploring the globe independently since she was 16, visiting or living in 36 countries and picking up a degree in Communications and Canadian Studies and a MA in Migration Studies en route. Korina has written nearly 30 titles for Lonely Planet and also works as a Commissioning Editor and a children's writing coach. Korina also wrote the Plan Your Trip section, Nature & Wildlife chapter and the Survival Guide.



### Kate Armstrong

**Peloponnese, Central Greece** Having studied history and fine arts, Kate headed to Greece aeons ago to view a *kouros*, and fell in love with the country. The *pythia* at Delphi told her she'd return; she has, frequently. For this edition she climbed rock pinnacles at Meteora and tackled donkey paths in the Pelion. She met mythical beings in the Peloponnese, devoured kilos of seafood, covered 6000km and received Aphrodite-style hospitality. See [www.katearmstrong.com.au](http://www.katearmstrong.com.au).

Read more about Kate at:  
[lonelyplanet.com/members/kate\\_armstrong](http://lonelyplanet.com/members/kate_armstrong)



### Alexis Averbeck

**Athens & Around, Saronic Gulf Islands, Cyclades, Ionian Islands** Alexis lives in Hydra, Greece, takes regular reverse R&R in Athens, and makes any excuse she can to travel the isolated back roads of her adopted land. She is committed to dispelling the stereotype that Greece is simply a string of sandy beaches. A travel writer for two decades, Alexis has lived in Antarctica for a year, crossed the Pacific by sailboat and written books on her journeys through Asia and the Americas. She's also a painter – visit [www.alexisaverbeck.com](http://www.alexisaverbeck.com).

Read more about Alexis at:  
[lonelyplanet.com/members/alexisaverbeck](http://lonelyplanet.com/members/alexisaverbeck)



### Michael Stamatios Clark

**Northeastern Aegean Islands, Evia & the Sporades** Michael's Greek roots go back to the village of Karavostamo on the island of Ikaria, home of his maternal grandparents, and one of his destinations for this guide. His first trip to the islands was as a deckhand aboard a Greek freighter, trading Greek lessons for English over backgammon. For this edition, Michael chewed mastic on Chios, listened to *rembetika* music on Skyros and tested the thermal sea waters of Ikaria, sampling Greek coffee and *retsina* along the way.

## OVER MORE PAGE WRITERS

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## Plan Your Trip

# Itineraries



2  
WEEKS

### The Grand Tour

First trip to Greece? This tour takes in some of the country's biggest sights, best beaches and cultural highs. You'll also treat your appetite to the full array of Greek cuisine, from contemporary Athens restaurants to regional island cheese and herbs and northern, Ottoman-inspired dishes. (Not to mention Santorini's wine and beer scene.) If you want a more leisurely pace, choose just one of the islands and spend a bit longer stretched out on a beach.

Begin with a couple of days in **Athens**, home to some of the world's most important ancient sites and museums. Take in the markets, contemporary art scene and brilliant nightlife. From here catch a ferry to chic **Mykonos**, famous for its colourful harbour, bars and beaches. Visit the tiny, sacred island of Delos on a day trip to explore its ancient ruins. Hop on another ferry to spectacular **Santorini**. The dramatic, sheer cliffs of its volcanic caldera offer an amazing perch for watching the sun sink into the sea. There are also excellent local wineries, fascinating ruins and volcanic sand lapped by the Aegean.





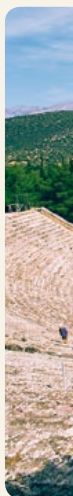


Hora (p337), Mykonos

It's not far from here to Crete, where you should rent a car and before you do anything else, head south to **Elafonisi** beach – Crete's most stunning stretch of sand. From there, journey back up along the northern coast to charming **Hania**, with its beautiful harbour and labyrinth of backstreets and then on to the capital **Iraklio** and the nearby magnificent Minoan ruins of **Knossos**.

From Iraklio hop on a flight to cool, cultured **Thessaloniki** in northern Greece. Check out the impressive Roman and Byzantine architecture, sample some Ottoman-inspired cuisine (particularly

the pastries!) and enjoy the vivacious arts scene. From here, work off the pastries on the nearby slopes of **Mt Olympus** (2918m), Greece's highest peak and first national park. You'll encounter a huge diversity of plant and bird life along these ancient trails. Next visit the mesmerising monasteries of **Meteora**, perched high on narrow pinnacles of rock and once the home of hermit monks. Your last stop is at unforgettable **ancient Delphi**, former home of the mysterious Delphic oracle and steeped in atmosphere. From Delphi it's a short trip back to Athens.



3  
WEEKS

## Ionians & the Peloponnese

If you've a hankering for island life along with beautiful medieval towns, ancient historic sights and dramatic scenery, a tour of the Ionian Islands and the neighbouring Peloponnesian peninsula will more than satisfy you. This is doubly true if you're keen to toss some outdoor activities into your trip.

Begin your tour in **Corfu**, where you can easily spend a couple of days wandering through the amazing blend of Italian, French and British architecture in Corfu Old Town, indulging in gourmet cuisine, exploring picturesque coastal villages and lounging on fantastic sandy beaches. If you want to expend a bit more energy, Corfu is also a great place for windsurfing, or try biking in the island's mountainous interior. From Corfu, hop on a ferry to **Kefallonia**. Stay overnight in the picturesque village of Fiskardo, kayak to isolated golden beaches and sample the island's well-reputed local wine.

From Kefallonia, it's a short ferry ride to **Kyllini** on the Peloponnesian peninsula. Visit the sanctuary of **Ancient Olympia**, and stand in the stadium that hosted the first Olympic Games. Stay overnight in the town and take in some of the excellent museums. Head south to the captivating, World Heritage-listed ruins of **Mystras**. This massive ancient fortress town was the last stronghold of the Byzantine Empire.

Continue south to the rugged and remote **Mani**, to encounter villages filled with fascinating architecture and the remnants of the unique Maniot culture. This region is a haven for hikers with the dramatic Taygetos Mountains and tiny, isolated coves. It's also home to one of mainland Europe's most southerly points at **Cape Tenaro**, made famous in Homer's *Iliad*. Follow the coast east to spectacular **Monemvasia** and spend at least a day exploring the medieval cobbled alleyways and a night staying in atmospheric lodgings within the walls of its medieval town.

Next head north to graceful **Nafplio** with its mansions, museums and lively port. From here, it's easy to do day trips to the impressive acropolis at **Tiryns** and the citadel of **Mycenae**. East of here is the ancient theatre of **Epidavros**, where it's well worth taking in some star-lit classical performances. Then hop on ferry from nearby **Methana** to end your journey in **Athens**.



Top: Lourdata (p653), Kefallonia  
Bottom: Theatre of Epidavros (p146)



2  
WEEKSCrete & the  
Dodecanese

PLAN YOUR TRIP ITINERARIES

Once considered out-of-the-way, Crete's eastern half has some fantastic sights and excellent towns that are making it an increasingly magnetic region. From here it's a short hop to the neighbouring Dodecanese, with their wealth of diversity and speedy catamaran services that makes island hopping a joy.

Begin in **Iraklio**, taking in the excellent archaeological museum and making a day trip to the impressive Minoan ruins of **Knossos**. En route take in the surrounding **Peza** wine region, which is nestled amid a landscape of shapely hills, sunbaked slopes and lush valleys. From Iraklio head east along the northern coast to the relaxed resort-town of **Agios Nikolaos**, which dishes out charm and hip ambience in equal portions. This makes a great base for exploring the surrounding region. Check out **Golden Beach** (Voulisma Beach) and **Istron Bay** for long stretches of sand, and the massive fortress on **Spinalonga Island**, a fascinating spot that's just a short ferry ride across the Gulf of Mirabello. Visit the surrounding Minoan ruins, such as **Malia**, a palace still filled with mysteries, and rent a bike to explore the tranquil villages of the fertile **Lasithi Plateau**, lying snugly between mountain ranges and home to Zeus' birthplace.

Continue on to **Sitia** from where you can head for the white sand of **Vai**, Europe's only natural palm-forest beach. You can also head south from here to **Kato Zakros** to hike through the dramatic Valley of the Dead.

From Sitia, get settled on a 10-hour ferry ride to **Rhodes**. Spend a couple of days exploring Rhodes Town's walled medieval Old Town and checking out its burgeoning nightlife. Visit some of the surrounding beaches and stunning Byzantine chapels. Catch one of the daily catamarans to lush **Nisyros** to explore deep within its bubbling caldera and then carry on to **Patmos** to experience its artistic and religious vibe and to visit the cave where St John wrote the Book of Revelations. There are also some laidback beaches here and excellent restaurants. Backtrack to **Kos** to spend a final couple of days on gorgeous, sandy **Kefalos Bay** and to sip coffee and cocktails in Kos Town's lively squares. From Kos Town you can catch onward flights to **Athens**.

TOM PEIFFER/VOLCANODISCOVERY/GETTY IMAGES ©



ALBERTO COLO/GETTY IMAGES ©



**Top:** Stefanos volcano crater (p504), Nisyros  
**Bottom:** Vai beach (p460), Crete



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