Evia & the Sporades

Why Go?
Evia (Εύβοια) and the four Sporades islands (Οι Σποράδες) remain largely off the beaten island path, though two bridges at Halkida join Evia to the mainland. But away from its commercial hub of Halkida, the pace slows as the landscape stretches out, dotted by hilltop monasteries, small farms, vineyards and not a few curious goats.

The Sporades (‘scattered ones’) seem like extensions of the forested Pelion Peninsula, and, in fact, they were joined in prehistoric times. Skiathos, easily the most developed of the group, claims the sandiest beaches in the Aegean. Low-key Skopelos kicks back with a postcard-worthy harbour and forest meadows. Remote Alonnisos anchors the National Marine Park of the Northern Sporades. Skyros, the southernmost of the chain, is known for its culinary and artistic traditions that date from Byzantine times when these islands were home to rogues and pirates.

Best Places to Eat
- Dina’s Amfilirion Restaurant (p607)
- Taverna-Ouzerie Kabourelia (p612)
- Nastas Ouzerie (p616)
- Hayati (p622)
- Taverna Mouries (p628)

Best Places to Stay
- Hotel Nefeli (p625)
- Atrium Hotel (p614)
- Pension Sotos (p616)
- Liadromia Hotel (p620)
- Perigiali Hotel & Studios (p626)

When to Go

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Cabin &amp; Carneval</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Summer</th>
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<tr>
<td>Feb &amp; Mar</td>
<td>Carnival season keeps things warm with plenty of merrymaking.</td>
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<td>Apr &amp; May</td>
<td>Spring is in the air and Easter festivities linger long into the night.</td>
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<td>Jun &amp; Sep</td>
<td>Perfect temperatures and clear skies - ideal hiking conditions.</td>
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Evia & the Sporades Highlights

1. Swim year-round in the thermal-fed bay at Loutra Edipsou (p607), on Evia
2. Watch for dolphins and falcons while sailing around Greece’s only national marine park at Alonnisos (p620)
3. Find your favourite orchids and butterflies while hiking the inland meadows of Skopelos (p614)
4. Nuzzle up with the gentle and rare Skyrian horse on Skyros (p623)
5. Hear great bouzouki music after midnight above the kastro overlooking Skopelos Town (p615)
6. Sample the monks’ wine at Moni Evangelistrias on Skiathos (p610), where Greek independence was declared in 1807