



# Central Greece

## Includes ➔

Delphi .....	187
Nafpaktos .....	199
Karpenisi .....	201
Agios Konstantinos .	204
Larissa .....	205
Volos.....	206
Pelion Peninsula...	209
Trikala.....	219
Meteora .....	221
Kalambaka.....	225
Kastraki .....	226

## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Taverna Vakhos (p195)
- ➔ Georgaras Restaurant (p216)
- ➔ Yali Kafene (p196)
- ➔ Kerasia Tspouradiko (p207)

## Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Lost Unicorn Hotel (p215)
- ➔ Hotel Faros (p215)
- ➔ Doupiani House (p227)
- ➔ Alsos House (p225)
- ➔ Hotel Alexakis (p204)

## Why Go?

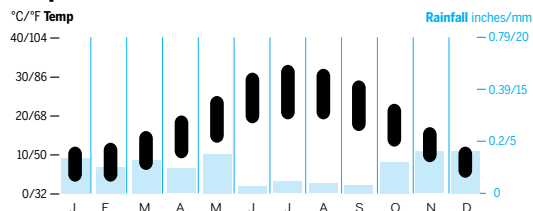
Ancient Greece's 'centre' of the earth – Delphi – is these days among Greece's most visited places for its archaeological site, ancient footpaths and vistas of the Corinthian Gulf. Delphi is rivalled in popularity only by Meteora, the breathtaking outcrops of rocky towers topped by teetering monasteries (and rock climbers).

The central Greece (κεντρική Ελλάδα) region also holds many underrated surprises. Alpine meadows and valleys cover the Evritania mountain range, making it perfect for breezy summer hikes and winter skiing. And it doesn't get much better than the beautiful Pelion Peninsula, home to Jason and the Argonauts, and criss-crossed with historic cobblestone paths linking lush mountain hamlets with coves and beaches that rival the best islands.

And speaking of 'good, better, best'... The region's good-natured people serve up hospitality, superb experiences and great cuisine. There's no better place to navel gaze.

## When to Go

### Delphi



**Apr & May** Wild herbs and flowers mingle in alpine meadows.

**Sep** Stable, sunny weather and fewer crowds.

**Orthodox Easter** Villages follow traditional customs, with parades and copious food.



## Central Greece Highlights

- 1 Wandering along former donkey paths to the sea on the **Pelion Peninsula** (p209).
- 2 Feasting on fresh trout from mountain streams near **Karpenisi** (p201).
- 3 Trying a *tsipouro* or three with the locals in **Volos** (p206).
- 4 Climbing the monastery-topped rock pinnacles at **Meteora** (p221), following ancient footpaths to hidden caves.
- 5 Meditating over the last light of day at the Sanctuary of Athena Pronea in **Ancient Delphi** (p189).
- 6 Lazing in the hot springs in **Loutra Ipatis** (p204), or hiking in nearby **Iti National Park** (p204).

## DELPHI & STEREA ELLADA

Greek mythology and history seem to mingle in the rugged and scenic landscape of Sterea Ellada (Στερεά Ελλάδα). On the slopes of Mt Parnassos sits the famous site of Ancient Delphi. The land stretches east to Attica, where the legendary King Oedipus met his fate, and west to Messolongi, where British bard Lord Byron died of fever during the Greek War of Independence. The region ac-

quired its name, meaning Mainland Greece, in 1827, as part of the newly formed Greece.

## Delphi & Ancient Delphi

Δελφοί

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If the ancient Greeks hadn't chosen Delphi (from *delphis*, womb) as their navel of the earth and built the Sanctuary of Apollo here, someone else would have thought of a good