



Greece



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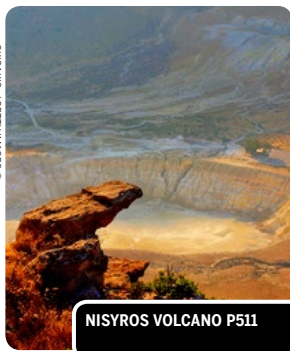
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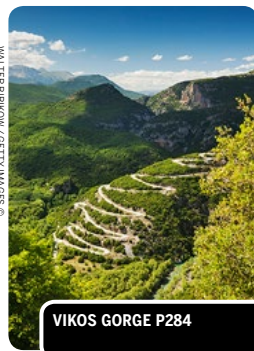
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Itineraries



2
WEEKS

The Grand Tour

First trip to Greece? Take in the country's biggest sights, best beaches and cultural highs, complemented with contemporary cities and laid-back island life.

Begin in **Athens**, visiting grand ancient sites and museums. Take in the markets, contemporary-art scene and award-winning restaurants. Catch a ferry to chic **Mykonos**, with its crowd-pleasing bars and beaches. Day-trip to the sacred island of **Delos** to explore ancient ruins. Hop a ferry to spectacular **Santorini** to watch the sun sink from the dramatic cliffs of its volcanic caldera.

It's not far from here to Crete. Rent a car and head south to stunning **Elafonisi** beach. Journey north to **Hania**, with its charming harbour and labyrinth of backstreets, then on to the capital **Iraklio** and nearby magnificent Minoan ruins of **Knossos**.

Hop a flight to cultured **Thessaloniki** for architecture, Ottoman-inspired cuisine and the vivacious arts scene. Scale the slopes of **Mt Olympus** (2918m), Greece's highest peak and first national park. Visit the monasteries of **Meteora**, perched high on narrow pinnacles of rock. Your last stop is atmospheric **Ancient Delphi**, former home of the mysterious Delphic oracle.



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 in **Corfu**, spending a couple of days wandering through the amazing blend of Italian, French and British architecture in Corfu's Old Town, indulging in gourmet cuisine, exploring picturesque coastal villages and lounging on sandy beaches. Corfu is also great for windsurfing, or biking in the mountainous interior. From Corfu, hop on a ferry to **Kefallonia** to visit the picturesque village of Fiskardo, kayak to isolated beaches and sample the island's 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**.



2
WEEKS

Crete & the Dodecanese

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 make 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, sun-baked 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 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 clear water and 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, cave-honeycombed Valley of the Dead and the red jaws of the Zakros Gorge.

From Sitia, get settled on a 10-hour ferry ride to **Rhodes**. Spend a couple of days exploring Rhodes' walled medieval Old Town and checking out its burgeoning nightlife. Visit some of the surrounding beaches and stunning Byzantine chapels. Catch a catamaran to lush **Nisyros** to explore atop the alarmingly thin crust of its 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 laid-back 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**.

Map Legend

Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours

- Body surfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping

Eating

- Eating

Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

Entertainment

- Entertainment

Shopping

- Shopping

Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- S-Bahn/S-train/Subway station
- Taxi
- T-bane/Tunnelbana station
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Tube station
- U-Bahn/Underground station
- Other Transport

Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book



Michael Stamatios Clark

Northeastern Aegean Islands, Evia & the Sporades Michael's Greek roots go back to the village of Karavostamo on the Aegean island of Ikaria, home of his maternal grandparents who emigrated to America. His first trip to Greece was as a deck-hand aboard a Greek freighter, trading English lessons for Greek over wine and backgammon. Since then, he has become a Greek citizen, visits the islands often and enjoys *rembetika* and retsina. He has also worked on Lonely Planet guides to

Burma (Myanmar), New York and Hawaii.



Anita Isalska

Northern Greece Anita is a travel journalist, editor and freelance copywriter. Formerly a digital editor at Lonely Planet's London office, she flew the coop to write the world. As well as Lonely Planet, Anita writes for CNN Travel, Rough Guides, BBC Travel, Escapism and more, especially about the Balkans and Eastern Europe, adventure and wildlife travel. She's never happier than when roaming Soviet-era ruins or researching macabre folklore. Check out more of her writing

on www.anitaaisalska.com. Anita also wrote the Outdoor Activities chapter.

Read more about Anita at:

<http://auth.lonelyplanet.com/profiles/anitatravels>



Anna Kaminski

Peloponnese The product of a Classical education and a Hellenophile since discovering *Myths and Legends of Ancient Greece* at the age of five, Anna has been coming back to Greece repeatedly since a memorable school trip back in 1997 to explore ancient ruins, hike its mountains and dive in the Aegean. She was thrilled to return to the myth-rich Peloponnese to explore its furthest corners and firmly believes that southern Mani is one of the most remarkable places on earth. Anna

also wrote the Ancient Greek Culture chapter.



Greg Ward

Dodecanese Having first visited Greece as an InterRailing teenager, Greg Ward (www.gregward.info) has been returning ever since, and honeymooned on Symi. He has written books and articles about the Greek islands for many publishers and newspapers.



Richard Waters

Ionian Islands Richard is an award-winning journalist and writes about Greece for the *Daily Telegraph*, the *Independent* and *Sunday Times Travel Magazine*. He lives with his family in the Cotswolds but his spiritual home is in the islands of Greece where he first went as a boy in 1974. Since then he has been more than 20 times, and is most at home sat in a *kafenio* talking about myths, digging into freshly caught calamari and island hopping. As ever his admiration goes out to the people

of Greece who, despite unimaginably difficult times, remain among the friendliest on the planet.



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 Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Beijing and Delhi, 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, Crete 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 an MA in Migration Studies en route. Korina has written nearly 40 titles for Lonely Planet and also works as a children's writing coach. Korina also wrote Plan Your Trip (except for Outdoor Activities), Understand Greece (except for Ancient Greek Culture) and Survival Guide.



Kate Armstrong

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 devoured kilos of seafood, several sheep, thousands of kilometres and was constantly astonished by the Aphrodite-style she received mid-Greece crisis.

Read more about Kate at:

http://auth.lonelyplanet.com/profiles/kate_armstrong



Alexis Averbuck

Athens & Around, Crete, Saronic Gulf Islands Alexis lives in Hydra, 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.alexisaverbuck.com.

Read more about Alexis at:

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Carolyn Bain

Cyclades Melbourne-born Carolyn worked on her first guidebook for Lonely Planet back in 2000, and it involved some serious island-hopping around Greece. There began two addictions: writing guidebooks, and the Greek islands. Fifteen years later, this trip fed those addictions over a glorious two-month stint, in which Carolyn visited all the Cyclades. She has now visited 50 Greek islands – and has way too many favourites. Read more at carolynbain.com.au.

OVER MORE
PAGE WRITERS

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