

Welcome to the Greek Islands

Lapped by brilliant blue water and sprinkled with sun-bleached ruins, the Greek islands will fill your imagination with mythical tales, your belly with local flavours and your soul with true relaxation.

Satisfy Your Appetite

Head to an island harbour to watch the daily catch tumble from the fishing nets; seafood takes pride of place in many Greek kitchens and nowhere is it fresher than on the islands. Greeks pride themselves on their cuisine and will go out of their way to ensure you are well fed. Basic ingredients such as feta and olive oil are complemented by creamy cheeses and unique, tangy greens. The Italian legacy of pasta takes on a distinct Greek slant, with rich sauces and perhaps mussels steamed in ouzo or fresh, baked garlic. Traditional dishes, including grilled peppers stuffed with rice and cheese or roasted lamb with fresh lemon and mint, will tempt you again and again.

Get Active

It's easy to understand how so many myths of gods and giants originated in this vast and varied landscape, with its wide open skies and a stunningly blue sea. The islands are like floating magnets for anyone who enjoys the great outdoors. Wander along cobbled Byzantine footpaths, hike into volcanoes, kayak with dolphins, watch for sea turtles and cycle through lush forests. Greece is also an excellent place to try new pursuits, with some of the world's top kite-surfing, diving and rock climbing locations.

Time Travel

As you stand amid the sun-bleached ruins of Delos or wander through the reconstructed Minoan palace of Knossos, you can almost sense the ancient Greeks moving alongside you. The ancient city of Akrotiri, dug out from the beneath the ash of Santorini's massive volcanic eruption, and the medieval walled city of Rhodes let you step through a window into times past. Greek ruins are as impressive as they are numerous.

Experience Island Life

You don't gingerly dip your toes into the warm Aegean; you dive in headlong. The same is true with island life. Soak up the majestic beauty of Santorini or indulge in the pulsing nightlife of Mykonos. Wander through lush wildflowers in spring or laze on isolated sandy coves in summer. Become acquainted with the melancholy throb of *rembetika* (blues songs) and the tang of home-made tzatziki. The days melt from one to the next, filled with big blue skies and endless miles of aquamarine coastline blessed with some of Europe's cleanest beaches. Many travellers simply settle down and never go home.



Why I Love the Greek Islands

By Korina Miller, Writer

I was marooned on Tilos – a speck of an island adrift in the Aegean. My ferry had been cancelled and warm rain fell in torrential sheets, drenching me to the bone. This was not my island dream. I made my way to a beach-side pub, housed in a turn-of-the-century stone building. Inside I was welcomed unceremoniously into the old boys' club with a shot of ouzo that slid down my throat like liquid sunshine. Someone picked out a tune on a guitar as singing filled the room. Island life comes in many guises but the warmth and the welcome is universal.

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