



Athens & Around

Includes →

Sights	70
Activities.....	92
Courses	92
Tours.....	92
Festivals & Events	95
Sleeping.....	95
Eating	105
Drinking & Nightlife	111
Entertainment.....	116
Shopping	118
Athens Ports.....	124

Best Places to Eat

- Café Avyssia (p107)
- Spondi (p111)
- Mani Mani (p109)
- Tzitzikas & Mermingas (p105)
- Funky Gourmet (p108)

Best Places to Stay

- Magna Grecia (p100)
- Athens Gate (p104)
- Hotel Grande Bretagne (p143)
- Electra Palace (p98)
- NEW Hotel (p96)

Why Go?

Ancient and modern, with equal measures of grunge and grace, bustling Athens (Αθήνα) is a heady mix of history and edginess. Iconic monuments mingle with first-rate museums, lively cafes and al fresco dining, and it's downright fun.

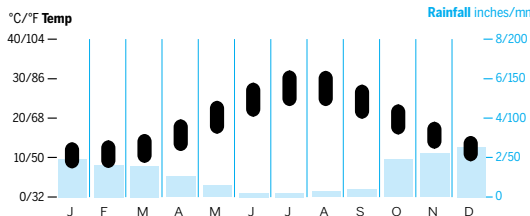
The historic centre is an open-air museum, yet the city's cultural and social life takes place amid these ancient landmarks, merging past and present. The magnificent Acropolis rises above the sprawling metropolis and has stood witness to the city's many transformations.

Post-Olympics Athens, even in the face of current financial issues, is conspicuously more sophisticated and cosmopolitan than ever before. Stylish restaurants, shops and hip hotels, and artsy-industrial neighbourhoods and entertainment quarters such as Gazi, show Athens' modern face.

The surrounding region of Attiki holds some spectacular antiquities as well, like the Temple of Poseidon at Sounion, and lovely beaches like those near historic Marathon.

When to Go

Athens



Jun Soak up the city's ancient history before jumping out to the islands to soak up the sun.

Late May-Oct The Hellenic Festival lights up venues throughout the city with drama and music.

Sep Weather cools and the social scene heats up as residents return from the islands.



Athens Highlights

- 1 Climb to the awe-inspiring **Acropolis** (p71)
- 2 Promenade around Plaka, Monastiraki and Thessio in **Athens' historic centre** (p81)
- 3 Live it up with Athens' hot **nightlife** (p111): lively bars, jamming discos, chic beach clubs and moonlit cinemas
- 4 Compare superb antiquities and contemporary art at the **National Archaeological Museum** (p88), the **Museum of Cycladic Art** (p89), the **Benaki Museum** (p88) and Athens' multicultural centres
- 5 Catch an **Athens Festival** (p95) show at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus
- 6 Shop till you drop in the **Monastiraki Flea Market** (p118), or any of the boutiques
- 7 Enjoy the majesty of the Parthenon sculptures at the **Acropolis Museum** (p78)
- 8 Dine out in **Thessio** (p107), **Keramikos** (p107) or **Makrygianni** (p109) with a view of the floodlit Acropolis