



Greece



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Itineraries



2
WEEKS

The Grand Tour

First trip to Greece? Here's a mixed bag of the country's top sights, most beautiful beaches, cultural highs, contemporary cities and laid-back island life.

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

Depending on your time, take a ferry or a flight to **Iraklio**, Crete's vibrant capital. Explore the nearby magnificent Minoan ruins of **Knossos**. Catch the bus to **Hania** with its charming harbour and labyrinth of backstreets, then discover the island's wild side on a trek through **Samaria Gorge**, which spills out on to a beach lapped by the Libyan Sea.

Return to Iraklio and hop a flight to cultured **Thessaloniki** to lose yourself in Ottoman-style architecture, Turkish sweets and a vibrant arts scene. Scale the slopes of **Mt Olympus** (2918m), Greece's highest peak, then visit the monasteries of **Meteora**, perched high on narrow pinnacles of rock. Your last stop is **Ancient Delphi**, former home of the mysterious Delphic oracle.



3
WEEKS

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 on **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.

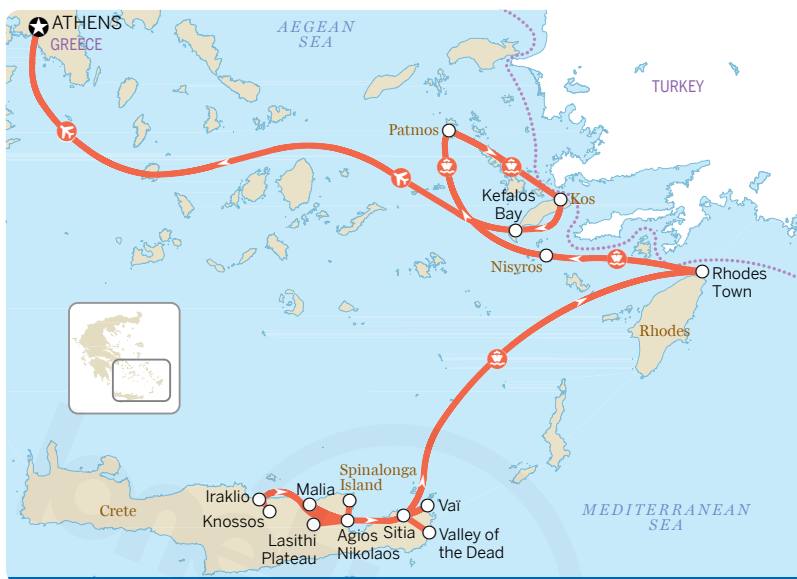
Continue south to the rugged and remote **Mani** region, to encounter villages filled with fascinating architecture and the remnants of the unique Maniot culture. This region is a haven for hikers with the dramatic Taÿgetos Mountains and tiny, isolated coves. It's also home to one of mainland Europe's 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 **Naflpio** 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 **Ancient Mycenae**. East of here is the ancient theatre of **Epidavros**, where it's well worth taking in some starlit classical performances. Then hop on a ferry from nearby Methana to end your journey in **Athens**.



Top: House of
Dionysos, Ancient
Delos (p360)

Bottom: Palace of the
Grand Master (p500)
Rhodes Old Town

4
WEEKS

Crete & the Dodecanese

Eastern Crete offers a tranquil side of the island with relaxed resorts and impressive sights. From here it's a short hop to the neighbouring Dodecanese, with their wealth of culture and speedy catamaran services that make island hopping a breeze.

Begin in **Iraklio**, taking in the excellent archaeological museum. Make a day trip to the captivating Minoan ruins of **Knossos** before sampling fine vintages in the Iraklio Wine Country, a mosaic 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 radiates charm and chilled ambience. This makes a great base for exploring the surrounding region. Explore the massive Venetian fortress on **Spinalonga Island**, a leper colony until 1957 and just a short ferry ride across the Gulf of Mirabello. Visit the surrounding Minoan ruins, such as the **Palace of Malia**, 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 Zakros to hike through the dramatic, cave-honeycombed **Valley of the Dead** to Kato Zakros and its Minoan palace.

From Sitia, get settled on a twice-weekly, 12-hour ferry ride to **Rhodes**. Spend a couple of days exploring the atmospheric, 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
- Hut/Shelter

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/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



Vesna Maric

Northern Greece Vesna has been a Lonely Planet author for more than a decade, covering places as far and wide as Bolivia, Algeria, Sicily, Cyprus, Barcelona, London and Croatia, among others. Her latest work has been updating the Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast chapters for the *West Africa* and *Africa* guides.



Craig McLachlan

Cyclades Craig has covered destinations all over the globe for Lonely Planet for two decades. Based in Queenstown, New Zealand, for half the year, he runs an outdoor activities company and a sake brewery, then moonlights overseas for the other half, leading tours and writing for Lonely Planet. Describing himself as a 'freelance anything', Craig has an MBA from the University of Hawai'i and is also a Japanese interpreter, pilot, photographer, hiking guide, tour leader, karate instructor and budding novelist. Check out www.craigmclachlan.com.



Zora O'Neill

Athens & Around A freelance writer since 2000, Zora speaks Arabic with the accent of an Egyptian soap-opera queen. She has written more than a dozen guidebooks to many of her favourite places, from Amsterdam to Yucatán. She is the author of *All Strangers Are Kin*, a travel memoir about studying Arabic in the Middle East.



Leonid Ragozin

Northeastern Aegean Islands Leonid Ragozin studied beach dynamics at Moscow State University, but for want of decent beaches in Russia, he switched to journalism and spent 12 years voyaging through different parts of the BBC, with a break for a four-year stint as a foreign correspondent for *Russian Newsweek*. Leonid is currently a freelance journalist focusing largely on the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which prompted him to leave Moscow and find a new home in Riga.



Andrea Schulte-Peevers

Crete Born and raised in Germany and educated in London and at UCLA, Andrea has travelled the distance to the moon and back in her visits to some 75 countries. She has earned her living as a professional travel writer for more than two decades and authored or contributed to nearly 100 Lonely Planet titles as well as to newspapers, magazines and websites around the world. She also works as a travel consultant, translator and editor. Andrea's destination expertise is especially strong when it comes to Germany, Dubai and the UAE, Crete and the Caribbean Islands.



Helena Smith

Evia & the Sporades Helena is an award-winning writer and photographer covering travel, outdoors and food – she has written guidebooks on destinations from Fiji to northern Norway. Helena is from Scotland but was partly brought up in Malawi, so Africa always feels like home. She also enjoys global travel in her multicultural home area of Hackney and wrote, photographed and published *Inside Hackney*, the first guide to the borough (<https://insidehackney.com>).



Greg Ward

Ionian Islands Besides covering the Ionian islands for Lonely Planet *Greece*, Greg has also written the New Mexico chapter for Lonely Planet *Southwest USA*, and has been writing for many years about other destinations including France, Spain, Japan, Australia, Hawaii and Belize. See his website, www.gregward.info, for his favourite photos and memories.



Richard Waters

Dodecanese Richard is an award-winning writer who first cut his travelling teeth in Guatemala, stumbling unprepared into the last days of the Civil War whilst trying to nurse his camper van back to life. He writes for the *Telegraph* and *Sunday Times* on subjects including wildlife and adventure travel. For Lonely Planet he's cowritten more than 25 books. He lives with his family in the Cotswolds. Greece has been in his blood since he visited Corfu as a kid in the first wave of British tourists. His spiritual home is Greece. You can read some of his stories for the *Independent* at: www.independent.co.uk/author/richard-waters



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, Dublin, 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

Curator, Greece, Greek Islands 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, an MA in Migration Studies and a diploma in Visual Arts en route. Korina has worked on nearly 60 titles for Lonely Planet and has also worked with LP.com, BBC, the *Independent*, the *Guardian*, BBC5 and CBC, covering travel, art and culture.



Kate Armstrong

Peloponnese Kate Armstrong has spent much of her adult life travelling and living around the world. A full-time freelance travel journalist, she has contributed to around 40 Lonely Planet guides and trade publications and is regularly published in Australian and worldwide publications. She is the author of several books and children's educational titles. You can read more about her on www.katearmstrongtravelwriter.com and @nomaditis.



Alexis Averbeck

Saronic Gulf Islands Alexis Averbeck has travelled and lived all over the world, from Sri Lanka to Ecuador, Zanzibar and Antarctica. In recent years she's been living on the Greek island of Hydra and exploring her adopted homeland; sampling oysters in Brittany and careening through hilltop villages in Provence; and adventuring along Iceland's surreal lava fields. A travel writer for more than two decades, Alexis has lived in Antarctica for a year, crossed the Pacific by sailboat and written books on her journeys through Asia, Europe and the Americas.



Michael Stamatios Clark

Central Greece Michael's Greek roots go back to the village of Karavostamo on the Aegean island of Ikaria, home to his maternal grandparents. He first travelled to Greece as a deckhand aboard a Greek freighter. For this journey, he drove over alpine passes, sea-kayaked in the Aegean, and walked the cobbled paths of Pelion villages, marvelling at the resiliency of Greeks in austere times. He has worked on Lonely Planet guides to Myanmar (Burma), New York, Hawaii and Japan.



Anna Kaminski

Cyclades Originally from the Soviet Union, Anna grew up in Cambridge, UK. She graduated from the University of Warwick with a degree in Comparative American Studies, a background in the history, culture and literature of the Americas and the Caribbean, and an enduring love of Latin America. Her wanderings led her to settle briefly in Oaxaca and Bangkok and her flirtation with criminal law saw her volunteering as a lawyer's assistant in the courts, ghettos and prisons of Kingston, Jamaica. Anna has contributed to almost 30 Lonely Planet titles.

OVER MORE
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