



# Greek Islands



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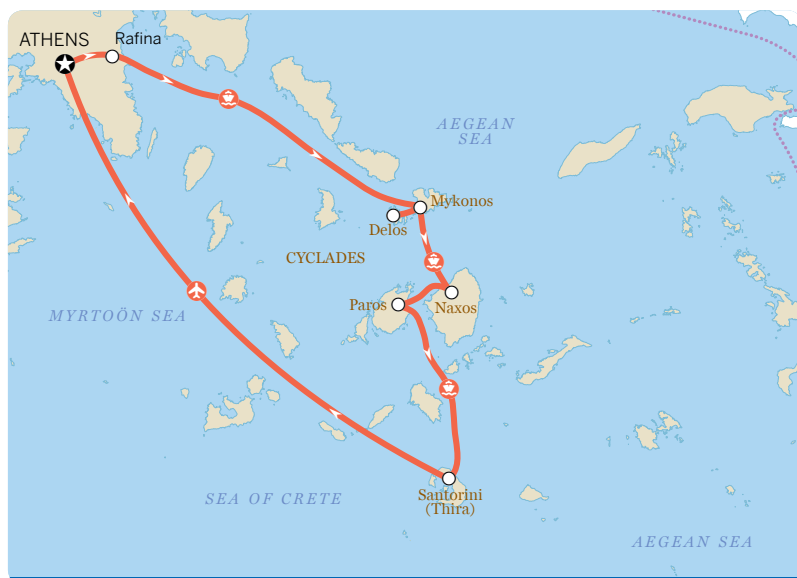
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# Itineraries



10  
DAYS

## Athens & the Cyclades

Perfect for the time-pressed, this island-hopping itinerary includes magnificent Athens, a few popular, bustling islands, and chilling out in quieter havens. Transport between these islands and the mainland is plentiful.

Spend a couple of days in **Athens**, visiting the Acropolis, exploring the Ancient Agora and wandering through the Acropolis and archaeological museums. There's also the capital's excellent contemporary art and food scenes as well as brilliant nightlife.

Catch a ferry from **Rafina** to spend a day or two on chic **Mykonos** and enjoy the colourful harbour, vibrant bars and beaches full of sun worshippers. Take a day trip to sacred **Delos** and explore ancient ruins. Hop on a ferry to **Naxos**, the greenest of the Cyclades with its hilltop, Venetian-walled Old Town, quaint villages and sugar-soft beaches. Move on to **Paros**, whose cobbled capital is filled with trendy boutiques and excellent dining. Head to the seaside village of Naoussa for excellent seafood.

Lastly, visit spectacular **Santorini**, aka Thira, for stunning sunset views. Explore excellent wineries and volcanic beaches, along with the truly impressive Minoan site of Akrotiri. From here, catch a flight back to Athens.

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 **Zakros Gorge** 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 Acropolis of Lindos. Catch a catamaran to lush **Nisyros** to explore atop the alarmingly thin crust of its caldera and then carry on to **Kos** to spend a couple of days on gorgeous, sandy **Kefalos Bay** and to sip coffee and cocktails in Kos Town's lively squares. There still may be time to squeeze in a quick trip to **Patmos** to experience its artistic and religious vibe, and to visit the cave where St John wrote the Book of Revelations, before backtracking to Kos from where you can catch onward flights to **Athens**.





Top: Corfu (p510)

Bottom: Santorini  
(p238)





## The Ionians

The Ionian Islands offer beautiful architecture, scrumptious food, flour-soft beaches and dramatic scenery. There are also plenty of outdoor activities to enjoy in this island group. Both the start and end of this itinerary are reachable by short, scenic flights from Athens.

Begin your tour in **Corfu**, where you can easily spend a couple of days wandering through the amazing blend of Italian, French and British architecture in Corfu Old Town, set between two spellbinding fortresses. The arcaded promenade is a hive of cafes, boutiques and restaurants where you can indulge in gourmet cuisine that packs a heavy Italian influence. Take in the island's world-class museums, such as the Corfu Museum of Asian Art, and its fortresses – the views from the Byzantine stronghold of Angelokastro on the west coast are unforgettable. Explore picturesque coastal villages and lounge on fantastic sandy beaches. If you want to expend a bit more energy, Corfu is also a great place for windsurfing, or try biking in the island's mountainous interior.

From Corfu, hop on a ferry to tiny **Paxi**, where ancient olive groves and windmills dot the interior while tranquil coves beckon from the coastline. Snorkel in the crystal-line water and dine on seafood in colourful, Venetian-style harbour towns that beg you to stay. Drag yourself away to the west-coast beaches of **Lefkada**, where you can take water taxis to isolated stretches of sand and turquoise water. Head to the southern tip to windsurf before carrying on to sleepy **Ithaki**, where you can walk the paths of Homer and feel inspired by ancient Byzantine churches and monasteries.

Hop over to neighbouring **Kefallonia**; overnight in the picturesque village of Fiskardo, with its top restaurants. Kayak to isolated golden beaches and sample the island's unique, well-regarded local wine. Explore the Paliki Peninsula with its red clay cliffs, hilltop villages and powdery beaches. Catch a boat south to **Zakynthos** to take in the fabulous Byzantine Museum, then head for the verdant southern cape to escape the crowds. This island is the nesting ground of the endangered loggerhead turtle. From here you can grab a flight back to Corfu or on to Athens.

# Behind the Scenes

## SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK

We love to hear from travellers – your comments keep us on our toes and help make our books better. Our well-travelled team reads every word on what you loved or loathed about this book. Although we cannot reply individually to your submissions, we always guarantee that your feedback goes straight to the appropriate authors, in time for the next edition. Each person who sends us information is thanked in the next edition – the most useful submissions are rewarded with a selection of digital PDF chapters.

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## 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
- 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





### **Kevin Raub**

**Crete** Atlanta native Kevin started his career as a music journalist in New York, working for *Men's Journal* and *Rolling Stone* magazines. He ditched the rock 'n' roll lifestyle for travel writing and has written more than 95 Lonely Planet guides, focused mainly on Brazil, Chile, Colombia, USA, India, Italy and Portugal. Raub also contributes to a variety of travel magazines in both the USA and UK. Along the way, the self-confessed hophead is in constant search of wildly high IBUs in local beers. Find him at [www.kevinraub.net](http://www.kevinraub.net) or follow him on Twitter and Instagram (@RaubOnTheRoad).



### **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 over 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. She makes her home in Berlin.



### **Greg Ward**

**Rhodes** Since his youthful adventures on the hippy trail to India, and living in northern Spain, Greg has written guides to destinations all over the world. As well as covering the USA from the Southwest to Hawaii, he has ranged on recent assignments from Corsica to the Cotswolds, and Dallas to Delphi. Visit his website, [www.gregward.info](http://www.gregward.info), to see his favourite photos and memories.



### **Trent Holden**

**Crete** A Geelong-based writer, located just outside Melbourne, Trent has worked for Lonely Planet since 2005. He's covered 30-plus guidebooks across Asia, Africa and Australia. With a penchant for megacities, Trent's in his element when assigned to cover a nation's capital – the more chaotic the better – to unearth cool bars, art, street food and underground subculture. On the flipside he also writes books to idyllic tropical islands across Asia, in between going on safari to national parks in Africa and the subcontinent. When not travelling, Trent works as a freelance editor, reviewer and spends all his money catching live gigs. You can catch him on Twitter @hombreholden.



### **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 restless 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.



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### **Kate Morgan**

**Crete** Having worked for Lonely Planet for over a decade now, Kate has been fortunate enough to cover plenty of ground working as a travel writer on destinations such as Shanghai, Japan, India, Russia, Zimbabwe, the Philippines and Phuket. She has done stints living in London, Paris and Osaka but these days is based in one of her favourite regions in the world – Victoria, Australia. In between travelling the world and writing about it, Kate enjoys spending time at home working as a freelance editor.



### **Isabella Noble**

**Evia & Sporades** English-Australian on paper but Spanish at heart, Isabella has been wandering the globe since her first round-the-world trip as a one-year-old. Having grown up in a whitewashed Andalusian village, she is a Spain specialist travel journalist, but also writes extensively about India, Thailand, the UK and beyond for Lonely Planet, the *Daily Telegraph* and others. Isabella has co-written Lonely Planet guides to Spain and Andalucía, and is a *Daily Telegraph* Spain expert. She has also contributed to Lonely Planet *India*, *South India*, *Thailand*, *Thailand's Islands & Beaches*, *Southeast Asia on a Shoestring* and *Great Britain*, and authored *Pocket Phuket*. Find Isabella on Twitter and Instagram (@isabellamnoble).



### **Leonid Ragozin**

**Northeastern Aegean Islands** Leonid studied beach dynamics at the 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 the Russian Newsweek. Leonid is currently a freelance journalist focusing largely on the conflict between Russia and Ukraine (both his Lonely Planet destinations), which prompted him to leave Moscow and find a new home in Riga.





## 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



### Simon Richmond

**Athens** Journalist and photographer Simon Richmond has specialised as a travel writer since the early 1990s and first worked for Lonely Planet in 1999 on their Central Asia guide. He's long since stopped counting the number of guidebooks he's researched and written for the company, but countries covered include Australia, China, Greece, India, Indonesia, Iran, Poland, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar (Burma), Russia, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea and

Turkey and the USA. For Lonely Planet's website he's penned features on topics from the world's best swimming pools to the joys of Urban Sketching – follow him on Instagram ([simonrichmond](#)) to see some of his photos and sketches. Simon also wrote the Plan Your Trip, Understand and Survival Guide chapters.



### Kate Armstrong

**Dodecanese** 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 more than 50 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.



### Stuart Butler

**Ionian Islands** Stuart has been writing for Lonely Planet for a decade and during this time he's come eye to eye with gorillas in the Congolese jungles, met a man with horns on his head who could lie in fire, huffed and puffed over snow bound Himalayan mountain passes, interviewed a king who could turn into a tree, and had his fortune told by a parrot. Oh, and he's met more than his fair share of self-proclaimed gods. When not on the road for Lonely Planet he lives on the

beautiful beaches of southwest France with his wife and two young children.



### Peter Dragicevich

**Cyclades** After a successful career in niche newspaper and magazine publishing, both in his native New Zealand and in Australia, Peter finally gave in to Kiwi wanderlust, giving up staff jobs to chase his diverse roots around much of Europe. Over the last decade he's written literally dozens of guidebooks for Lonely Planet on an oddly disparate collection of countries, all of which he's come to love. He once again calls Auckland, New Zealand his home – although his current nomadic existence means he's often elsewhere.

## OVER MORE PAGE WRITERS

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