

Local Attractions

Acropolis



The Parthenon, a monument that constitutes the symbol of Greece worldwide, has been standing on the "sacred rock" of Athens, the Acropolis, for thousands of years. The Parthenon along with the other monuments of the Acropolis, are all excellent pieces of art, reflecting the Classical period and the Golden Age of ancient Athens in the 5th and 4th centuries B.C. In this

archaeological site one can also visit the nearby Museum of Acropolis.

The New Acropolis Museum



The new Acropolis museum located in the historical area of Makryianni, south east of the Rock of the Acropolis floats on a pilotis over the archaeological excavations. The museum is directly linked to the Athens Metro by the Acropolis station and it is only 300 meters from the Acropolis.

Ancient Agora



The Ancient Agora, which means "market" in modern Greek, is situated at the foot of the Acropolis and in ancient times it served as the commercial centre of the city but also as the political, cultural and religious centre. This was the place where Athenians gathered on a daily basis, not only to buy and sell their goods but also to learn the news, criticise the government and debate on topics such as democracy, commerce, philosophy and the sciences.

National Archaeological Museum of Athens



The National Archaeological Museum of Athens with its numerous exhibits allows you to monitor the history of Ancient Greek art, which dates back from the Neolithic period to the Romans.

Byzantine Museum



The Byzantine Museum is dedicated exclusively to the art style, which flourished since the founding of the city of Constantinople (330 A.D.), the capital of the Byzantine Empire, until its fall in 1453. It has been recently restored and almost tripled in space.

Museum of Cycladic Art



Devoted to the study and promotion of ancient Greek art, the Museum of Cycladic Art houses two permanent collections. The Cycladic Collection, with marble statuettes and ceramic pots from the prehistoric period of the Cycladic islands (3200-2000 B.C.); and the Ancient Greek Collection, which exhibits objects of art from the 15th century B.C to the 4th century A.D. The museum also hosts several temporary collections in its new wing, which is housed in the magnificent neo-classical Stathatos Mansion.

National Gallery of Athens



The National Gallery showcases Greek paintings and sculptures from the 19th century to the present. There are also 16th-century art works and contemporary pieces painted by European masters, including paintings by Picasso, Marquet, Utrillo as well as four El Greco paintings.

Panathinaikon Stadium



Originally built in the 4th century B.C. for the athletic competitions of the Great Panathinaia (ancient Greek festivities), the Panathinaikon Stadion took its final form during its most recent restoration at the end of the 19th century. It is made of marble, and the Greeks also call it the "Kallimarmaron" (meaning "beautiful marble"). It was the venue of the first modern Olympic Games, in 1896.

Benaki Museum



Benaki boasts one of the most extensive collections in Greece covering several periods ranging from the Prehistoric, Ancient and Roman periods to the Byzantine and the Neo-hellenic period. Among its particularly interesting collections are those of childhood toys and games, Chinese and Islamic art.

Eating out in Athens - During the last decade, the Athenian cuisine has experienced a gourmet revolution. The traditional and world-renowned moussaka and souvlaki image has given way to a cornucopia of fine dining options. And the Athenian landscape of 19th century neoclassical buildings, ancient sites, artsy industrial and Mediterranean coastal milieus have created a canvas for alluring interiors and exteriors. Rooftop bar - restaurants in Athens can compete with some of the world's most renowned ones, but can they claim a view of the Acropolis?



Nightlife - Athens is famous for its vibrant nightlife. The Athenians like to party and will do so almost every night of the week. The choices are many and they appeal to all tastes and lifestyles. In general, things get started pretty late: after midnight for bars and clubbing and after 10:00 p.m. for dinner at the city's tavernas, restaurants and bar-restaurants. The Greeks are known for their love-of-life lifestyle; a sort of "OPA!" mentality that includes good food and good company, regardless of age. In Athens, life is for living and leaving your worries behind. The result is a good-hearted, energetic city with bars and restaurants to match. Hip areas include Gazi, Psirri, Metaxourgio, Monastiraki, Theseion and Kolonaki. Traditional Greek evenings can be spent in Plaka



Sports and recreation - The birthplace of the Olympic Games has a tradition of athletics. The great outdoors is what recreational sporting in Athens is all about - yachting, sailing, windsurfing, beach volleyball, trekking and skiing. Of course, the gorgeous summer weather is ideal for sea and sun sport enthusiasts with crystal clear waters just minutes away from the center of Athens. But the fall and winter also have their sporting charms such as trekking and hiking on mountain trails, horseback riding, mountain biking and skiing. Regimented health buffs are also accommodated by the many state-of-the art fitness centers at many leading hotels and throughout Athens in Kolonaki and around Syntagma Square.

Suggested Excursions, Visits & Tours

Visit to the National Archaeological Museum of Athens



This is the most important museum in Greece and one of the richest in the world concerning ancient Greek art. The museum is located in a central point of Athens. Participants can be guided around the museum in groups of 40-45 persons.

Excursion to Cape Sounion



You will be driven along the coastal road, past the wonderful beaches of Glyfada, Vouliagmeni and Varkiza to the most southern point of Attica, Cape Sounion, where you will visit the 5th century B.C. temple of Poseidon. This spot has one of the most breathtaking panoramic views in Greece (on a clear day you can see at least seven islands) and one of the most famous sunset settings.

Cruise to Hydra with chartered yachts



Hydra is a charming island in the Saronic Sea, just about an hour and a half away from Athens, "decorated" with superb stone mansions, atmospheric guesthouses and wonderful cafes and restaurants in the harbour. The architectural style of Hydra, reminds us of a maritime city that used to flourish in the early 19th century which has been preserved intact. Upon arrival to the island, participants will enjoy a cup of coffee by the sea or stroll around the pebbled paths (Hydra is a vehicle-free island). Escorted by a professional guide, they will visit the local Historical Archives which display the wealth and splendour of the late 18th, early 19th centuries. After lunch, participants can adore the noble mansions which amphitheatrically dot the surrounding hillsides, before embarking the yachts for their return to Athens.

Excursion to Delphi



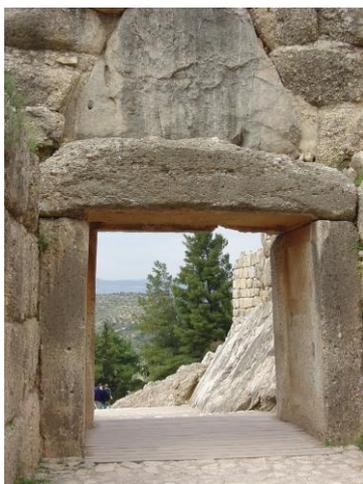
Delphi is located in Focis province and is built on the lower southern slopes of Mount Parnassos, near the Gulf of Corinth. The ancient Greeks called Delphi the navel of the Earth and this was designated by a large, round, conical stone. Delphi was sacred to God Apollo, the god of prophecy and patron of philosophy and the arts, whose famous temple and prophetic shrine were there. Today Delphi is a charming village with spectacular scenery and the dramatic ancient remains within the boundaries of the modern town.

Excursion to Olympia



The birthplace of the Olympic ideals is located in the western Peloponnese and it bears a tradition as old as history: athletes from distant lands gathered to test their mettle before enthusiastic fans. The Temple of Zeus, where the inaugural Olympic Games of 776 B.C. took place, was the largest and most important building in Olympia and one of the largest Doric temples in Greece. The archaeological site of Olympia is full of masterpieces of the early classical style.

Excursion to Mycenae



This most important archaeological site of Greece is witness of a great ancient civilization, the Mycenaean civilization, which was born in the Peloponnese region and thrived in the later Copper period (1350-1200 B.C.). Soon it spread its presence throughout Greece. The Acropolis of Mycenae is surrounded by the great Cyclopean Walls apart from the South side, which is naturally protected by a stiff gorge. Other findings include the Palace, the Hall of the Throne, the central Lions' Gate, residences and big vaulted tombs. One of the most significant and glorious vaulted tombs is the Treasure of Atreus, which was built in 1260 B.C. Parts of its decoration, acquired by Lords Sligo and Elgin, are exhibited in museums abroad, mainly in London and Paris.

SUGGESTED ISLAND TOURS

Both the Greek islands and the mainland of the country offer a vast variety of destinations for pre and post congress tours, suiting a variety of preferences and budgets. The clear blue water of the Greek seas is welcoming even in early October when the temperatures are still warm.

- Mykonos
- Santorini
- Skiathos
- Spetses

There is a large variety of activities within the city of Athens as well as nearby destinations, that can suit all budgets.



About Greece

General Information about Greece

- **Language** → The native language of the population is Modern Greek. English is widely spoken as a second language by the majority of Greeks, while French and German is also spoken at a good extent.
- **Time** → Greece is two hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time, seven hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time and an hour ahead of Central European Time. The clock is advanced one hour during summer (from the end of March to the end of October).
- **Health** → Emergency treatment is free to all – natives and visitors alike – in public hospitals. There are more doctors per person in Greece than in most other countries in the European Union.
- **Currency** → Greece is a full member of the European Union since 1981, and its currency is the Euro (€). All major credit cards are widely accepted in Greece.
- **Climate** → Athens enjoys a warm Mediterranean climate and ample sunshine (estimated to be over 3.000 hours per year). The average temperatures during the month of March in Athens range from 16° to 21° Celsius, accompanied by plenty of sunshine.
- **Visa information** → Greece follows the **Schengen Agreement** provision and the subsequent acquis concerning short term visa issues stays of up to three (3) months in the Schengen area. The citizens of these countries are not subjected to border controls within the common area (airlines or other carriers require identification – I.D. card or passport or any other piece of identification issued by a public authority). Citizens of the EU countries do not need a visa to enter Greece (and the Schengen area). They only have to produce a passport or an I.D. card at the border. For holders of regular passports of the following countries who wish to visit Greece (and the Schengen area) and stay up to 3 months (90 days) within a six (6) month period, no visa is required:

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|-------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Andorra | Canada | Israel | Panama |
| Argentina | Chile | Japan | Paraguay |
| Australia | Costa Rica | Malaysia | Romania |
| Bolivia | Croatia | Mexico | San Marino |
| Brazil | El Salvador | Monaco | Singapore |
| Brunei Darussalam | Guatemala | New Zealand | South Korea |
| Bulgaria | Honduras | Nicaragua | |

Holders of regular passports from the rest of the world need a visa in order to enter Greece (and the Schengen area).