



ADVENTURES
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ISLAND HOPPING IN THE GREEK ISLANDS

Trip Summary

HIGHLIGHTS

- Visiting the most beautiful villages in the Aegean Sea
- Hiking winding paths past terraced hillsides and olive groves
- Savoring scrumptious Greek food, including a cooking class
- Watching amazing sunsets from craggy coasts
- Touring Athens, including visits to the Acropolis, the greatest monument in the Western world, the Parthenon, and the new Acropolis Museum

Phone: 877-439-4042

Outside the US: 970-833-3132

Email: info@goodadventure.com

TRIP AT A GLANCE

| | |
|-------------|--|
| Location: | Cyclades Islands, Greece |
| Activities: | Hiking |
| Arrive: | Plan to arrive at the Athens airport (ATH) by 3PM. for a 4PM shuttle on Day 1. |
| Depart: | You can leave any time on the last day. |

Trip Overview

Explore both the culture and the natural beauty of the Greek islands by foot. We will hike along ancient footpaths, sample Greek delicacies at local taverns, sit back to watch the street life, and swim in the azure seas. The Cycladic complex of islands is the most representative of the archetypal Greek style: fishing villages with whitewashed flat roofed houses and narrow streets, hundreds of chapels, rocky landscape contrasting with the deep blue sea, and bays with powdery white sandy beaches. On this trip we will visit the best spots as well as journey to the interior of the islands where we can experience firsthand the culture and habits of the islanders. Maximum group size: 14

Rating

This trip is a great choice for women in good physical condition who enjoy walking on a mixture of rocky paths, dirt tracks, occasional paved roads and mule paths, with occasional steep places. Suitable for both adventurous novice and experienced hikers, most days the hiking is 3 to 4 hours. The hike with the most elevation gain is climbing Mount Zeus, which is about a 1.5-hour ascent; however you can always opt out for a delightful day in town. This trip is rated both 2 and 3 because there are options. If you want to participate in the longer options, you should train for a level 3 trip: engaging in aerobic conditioning, such as walking vigorously up hills, jogging, cross country skiing or stair stepping for 30 - 45 minutes at least 3 - 4 times a week. **Rating:** 1 **[2]** **[3]** 4 5.

What's Included

- An English-speaking Greek guide (may be male) and an AGC guide (If there are fewer than 8 on the trip, there will not be an AGC guide)
- 8 nights double occupancy at 3-star hotels in Athens and local guesthouses on the islands
- All activities on itinerary, including Acropolis Museum and authentic Greek cooking class
- All breakfasts, 6 lunches, and 7 dinners (see itinerary)
- All transportation during the trip, (private buses, taxis, ferry tickets, internal flights (Santorini/Athens), transfers from port to hotels on the islands)
- Airport transfer on arrival and departure - to be arranged once all travel plans are submitted

What's not included: Travel to and from Athens, beverages (aside from bottled water at meals), 1 lunch and 1 dinner, guide gratuities, optional activities, travel insurance.

OUR ITINERARY

Below is the itinerary we have planned for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

DAY 1

Our first group meeting will be at 5:30PM at our first night's hotel in Athens. That evening we'll meet with our local guide for a short walking tour of Athens and then share a welcome dinner in a traditional Greek taverna in Plaka, the old part of Athens, overlooking the Acropolis.

Overnight: Athens (D)

DAY 2

After breakfast, a half day sightseeing tour of the Acropolis with a professional guide will introduce us to one of the crowning glories of Greek culture. At the top we learn all about the history of the glorious monuments of the Acropolis (the Parthenon, Erechthion, Propylaia, and Nike Temple) as well as the surrounding monuments (the Dionysus sanctuary, Pnyx Hill, Odeon of Herodes Atticus, and the Ancient Agora). We will spend some extra time at the Parthenon, the finest sanctuary of ancient Athens, originally dedicated to its patron the goddess Athena. We will then continue our tour with a visit to the New Acropolis Museum. The walk is 10 minutes along a beautiful pedestrian area that was created around the Hill of the Acropolis, as a way to join most of the Archaeological Sites of Athens together. Seeing the museum after our visit of the Acropolis really helps "put together" the archaeological site with the findings displayed in the various exhibition areas.

After lunch, we transfer to the Athens airport in order to catch our 40-minute flight to the beautiful island of Paros, our first island. Along the way, if time allows, we'll stop for photos at the Panathinaikon Stadium, the stadium where the first Olympic Games were held in 1896, and the Parliament. Upon arrival in Paros we transfer to our hotel and enjoy our first island dinner.

Overnight: Paros (B, L, D)

DAY 3

Today, we will begin with a visit to Lefkes village (the old capital of Paros) with its amazing marble church and its (paved) portion of the Byzantine trail with magnificent views to the Aegean Sea and the island of Naxos. Along the way, we'll see the impact of a wildfire that burned part of this area in 2021. We will stop for refreshments in the village of Prodomos and then hike towards the cultural village of Marpissa. Here, we will enjoy a traditional Parian lunch and have the opportunity to visit some of the shops operated by local women producing local products.

Late afternoon will find us learning some of the secrets of delicious Greek cooking as we participate in a Greek cooking class. We'll learn how to make several authentic Greek dishes, and once the bread is baked and the food cooked, we will enjoy our own typical Greek meal.

Overnight: Paros. Hiking/Walking: 3 - 4 hours (B, L, D)

DAY 4

This morning we'll take the ferry to the island of Naxos. Naxos is the largest of the Islands, known for its natural beauty and also its "kouros". Remnants of ancient Greece, kouros are full-sized statues of male youth which may or may not be related to the god Apollo.

After lunch, our hike literally starts in the backyard of a Greek family, at the site of Kouros of Melanes statue. Our hike along an old footpath gradually descends to the picturesque village of Ano Potamia. We'll pass by a rural stone church and gaze up at the Apano Kastro (Upper Castle). Built in a very strategic position, it commands expansive views of Naxos town and port and surrounding towns. Our hike finishes with an easy walk to the village of Halki and if time allows, a visit to a small distillery that produces Kitron, the local specialty liquor.

Overnight: Naxos. Hiking: 3 - 4 hours, with stops (B, L, D)

DAY 5

We start today with a drive to the little chapel at Santa Marina, where our hike to the summit of Mount Zeus. Known as Zas in Greek, the peak is the highest point in the Cyclades with incredible panoramic views from the summit. The ascent and descent take about 3.5 - 5 hours, including ample time for lunch on the trail, pictures and stories about Zeus' childhood home.

After returning to our hotel, we'll have the rest of the afternoon free for swimming or visiting the old part of Naxos town. If you prefer not to hike, spending the day relaxing and wandering through town or swimming are excellent options. Dinner is on our own tonight and our Greek guide can suggest a favorite, or you can choose one of the many quaint taverns as you wander the narrow streets of the town.

Overnight: Naxos. Hiking: 4 - 5 hours (B, L)

DAY 6

Time for a relaxed morning and lingering over breakfast. Today we take a ferry to the fairest island of the Cyclades, Santorini. Santorini, probably the best known of the Cyclades, was shaped by a huge volcanic eruption in 2000 B.C. that destroyed the town in the central part of the island and left a huge crater behind. Upon arrival we'll have time to settle into our hotel before visiting Acrotiri, a Bronze Age Minoan settlement also called the "Greek Pompeii". Dinner tonight will feature a spectacular sunset over the volcano, islands and the sea while sampling some of the local foods of Santorini.

Overnight: Santorini. (B, D)

DAY 7

Today we hike to the picturesque village of Oia. The hike goes along the rim of Caldera (the collapsed crater) where the picture opportunities are legion. We end up in the village of Oia where we have time to explore its narrow passageways and quaint shops before having lunch and returning to Fira. There may be some free time in the afternoon to visit one of its famous wineries or just wander in its picturesque alleys and do some shopping.

Tonight, we'll all celebrate our island-hopping tour and our new understanding of Greek life at our final meal all together with another sunset overlooking the caldera and wonderful food. Note: this is our last dinner all together. After our morning activities tomorrow, some people will continue on the Crete Extension, and others will return to Athens and home.

Overnight: Santorini. Hiking: 3.5 - 4.5 hours (B, L, D)

DAY 8

Today we'll see Santorini from a completely different perspective: the cockpit of a kayak! With the freedom of kayaking, we can enjoy views from the sea of spectacular rock formations and crystal blue water. We'll stop at a beautiful beach for swimming and a picnic lunch, kayaking for a total of about 3 hours. No previous kayaking experience is needed, you'll get taught what you need to know to be comfortable in your boat. If you choose not to kayak, you can explore the shops and museums of Santorini on your own.

The late afternoon plan will depend on the time of the flight back to Athens and/or the ferry to Crete (for those of you doing the Crete Extension). Those of you returning to Athens will share a final dinner in this beautiful Greek city.

If you are continuing on to the Crete Extension, we will arrive in Heraklion and transfer to your hotel for your first dinner in Crete.

Overnight: Athens (or Crete if you are continuing on the extension). (B, L, D)

DAY 9

If this is the end of your trip, you're free to leave anytime today. (B)

For a full overview of our optional Crete Extension, please see:
https://adventuresingoodcompany.com/images/uploaded/CREX_Trip_Extension.pdf

ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION

Getting There

Plan to arrive at Athens International Airport by 3PM for a 4PM shuttle on Day 1. If you are coming from the United States or Canada, you will need to leave the day before by 3PM.

If you would like assistance with airfare, we recommend contacting our AirDesk Partner, [Exito Travel](#). Start by submitting this [form](#). Just fill in your dates and destinations, including any additional notes about preferred carriers, class of service, possible stopovers, etc., and an agent will typically respond via email within a few hours. If you prefer to call, the number is 800-655-4053; be sure to tell them you are traveling with Adventures in Good Company.

Please note: Most of the international airlines are in-network for Exito, so they do not charge extra for their services (and often have access to discounted rates). When necessary, processing fees out-of-network carriers are minimal at around \$35-\$50 per ticket.

Accommodations

We will be staying in a 3-star hotel in Athens and 3 local guesthouses on the islands, as specified in the itinerary.

Travel Insurance

We recommend that you purchase a travel protection plan to help protect you and your travel investment against the unexpected. For your convenience, we offer travel protection through Travelex Insurance Services. For more information on the available plans or to enroll, visit www.travelexinsurance.com or call 1-800-228-9792 and reference location number 06-0331.

Travelex Insurance Services, Inc CA Agency License #0D10209. All products listed are underwritten by, Berkshire Hathaway Specialty Insurance Company, NAIC #22276.

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Cancellation charges reflect the many expenses Adventures in Good Company cannot recover if you cancel, even if you must do so due to illness, injury, or personal emergencies. These fees are not meant to be punitive. The charges made reflect the expenses Adventures in Good Company has incurred in administering your reservation and planning for your participation. We recognize that the majority of those who cancel their reservations do so out of necessity. Please note that we do not make any refunds for any unused portion of your trip, not arriving, arriving late, or leaving the trip early.

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