

# EXPLORE!



**BEST SELLER**

**Greek Island Wanderer**  
15 days

Greece - Trip code GW

## Greek Island Wanderer

Spend time in Greece's bustling and historic capital, Athens, before heading off to explore the gleaming waterfront harbours, beautiful coves and long sandy beaches of the Cyclades Islands. Travelling by ferry visit the islands of Syros, Paros, Santorini and Naxos. Take exploratory walks and relax in beachside taverns enjoying the local cuisine. Syros is the capital of the Cyclades and whilst here walk to the remarkable Church of Agios Stefanos, located in a cave at the sea edge. Santorini is probably the best known of the islands and is one of the most picturesque areas in the Aegean with its whitewashed churches and blue-domed roofs. It's also of particular interest to those keen on the Lost Atlantis legend. Formerly a huge volcano, its centre disappeared in an enormous explosion around 1450 BC and now forms a lagoon.

## Trip highlights

- ★ Athens - Take a walking tour of the Plaka, Athens old quarter
- ★ Syros - Capital of the Cyclades Islands; opportunity to walk to Stefanos Cave
- ★ Paros - Chance to walk along an ancient Byzantine road
- ★ Santorini - Stunning volcanic scenery and pretty villages with white washed houses
- ★ Naxos - Option to walk up Mount Zeus, the highest peak in the Cyclades
- ★ Traditional food - Enjoy local food in waterside taverns

#### ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

##### Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

#### TRIP PACE:

##### Moderate

Moderate pace tours are ideal if you want a holiday which combines exciting activities and experiences with plenty of time to relax and unwind. Typically you'll be active and busy for part of the day but then also have time to rest and recharge your batteries.

#### GROUP SIZE:

##### 12 - 18

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

## Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

### DAY 1 - Join trip in Athens

Arrive in Athens and check-in to our hotel. Athens has been the capital of Greece for less than 200 years but it has grown rapidly in size. It is part of the Plain of Attica, an area of amazingly varied scenery, from high mountains covered by pine forests to a stunningly beautiful coastline with a myriad of harbours.



**Accommodation: Hotel Evripides** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

### DAY 2 - Walking tour of Athens; chance to visit the Acropolis

This morning we take a walking orientation tour of Plaka with our local guide to soak up the atmosphere of the old town. You may choose to stroll around the shops, try the freshly caught fish and seafood or listen to bouzouki music in an outdoor cafe. You'll notice the contrast between the modern capital and the old one - the well-heeled inhabitants of Kolonaki on the one hand and the vibrant Plaka old quarter on the other.

The rest of the day is free for you to discover more of this historical and bustling city at your own pace. You might like to take a tour of the Acropolis and climb the winding path to the top of this sacred rock that has been used since Neolithic times. At the top you'll find the majestic ruins of the Athens of Pericles: the Propylaea (or marble entrance hall), the Parthenon (built by Ictinos 2500 years ago), the Temple of Athena Nike (the Wingless Victory) and - the monument most venerated by the ancient Athenians themselves - the Erechtheion. Tradition relates that the gods Athena and Poseidon quarrelled here. The sea-god struck the rock with his trident, causing salt water to gush out, while Athena hit it with her spear and brought forth an olive tree. As olives were deemed to be more useful, the other gods let her take the city under her protection.

Other attractions that you might like to visit this afternoon include the new Acropolis Museum, which is about 5-minutes walk from the main site, the National Archaeological Museum or the Olympic Stadium. For those that love to shop and like trying local food then the central market is a must with a huge variety of fruit, meat, fish and bread on sale amongst other things. You may like to walk up or take the funicular train to Likavitos which affords great views across the city below. As well as exploring on foot you could purchase a 24-hour ticket for the local trams and public transport to help you cover as much ground as possible.



**Accommodation: Hotel Evripides** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 3 - Ferry to Syros; afternoon free to explore or walk to Stefanos Cave

We transfer from our hotel to Piraeus and board the ferry for Syros. The voyage takes about four hours. We disembark at Syros harbour and transfer to our hotel in Galissas. Syros is the capital of the Cyclades and covers an area of about 35 square miles. The island produces 'loukoumi', the Greek version of Turkish Delight. Ermoupoli, the capital, is situated on the east of the island and its port is a bustling centre for inter-island commerce.

This afternoon you may like to join your local guide for a three hour walk to Stefanos Cave. This is a moderate walk with several steep uphill sections and the terrain near to the cave is more challenging. The cave is home to the Roman Catholic Church of Agios Stefanos, which is built into the walls of the cave and located just above the sea waves below. It's a fascinating sight and well worth the walk to get there.

If you're not joining the walk then this afternoon is free for you to relax on the long beach near to our hotel with shallow waters ideal for swimming or to explore the village of Galissas. The village is a peaceful spot set around a small and pretty harbour in a scenic agricultural area.



**Accommodation: Hotel Francoise** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 4 - Chance to walk along the coast of Syros from Vari to Azolimnos

Today you may like to join an easy to moderate walk with your local guide. You'll take a local bus to Vari and begin our walk for about one to one and half hours to Azolimnos. This will give you an excellent taste of the island's scenery. Once you arrive here you can either return by bus or stay a while to enjoy a swim and relaxation on the beach and lunch in a nearby tavern before then either taking the bus back to Galissas or walking back to Vari and taking the bus back from there.

Later this afternoon you may choose to join a bus tour of the island to see more of the fantastic surrounding.



**Accommodation: Hotel Francoise** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 5 - Option to enjoy a variety of coastal walks; catch the ferry to Paros

There's the opportunity to join a further coastal walk before we transfer to Ermoupoli this afternoon. You'll have free time to discover the island's capital before we board our ferry this evening to Paros. The journey is approximately one and half hours. On arrival we'll transfer to our hotel in Drios.

Paros is one of the most attractive of all the Cycladic Islands, with an area of 64 square miles. Its capital is Paroikia, on the west coast. Dominating the interior is Mount Profitis Ilias (770 m) on the slopes of which are the famous marble quarries.



**Accommodation: Anezina Village Hotel** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 6 - Opportunity to enjoy a walk along the Byzantine road

The island was the birthplace of the poet Archilochos, the inventor of Iambic verse. Among the many places of interest are the marble quarries, the picturesque fishing villages and a Venetian Fortress. Especially interesting is the church, Ekatonapiliani (Church of 100 Doors), about which a legend says that when the 100th door is discovered the Greeks will take back Constantinople (Istanbul).

Today, you may choose to join your local guide for a walk along one of the well preserved Byzantine paths that cross the island. This is an easy walk that takes around one to one half hours. We'll use the public bus to reach the trailhead at the traditional mountain village of Lefkes. This is a very popular walk and the path is lined with wild herbs such as thyme, sage and oregano so it's a sweet scented experience too. We'll finish our walk at Prodomos where there will be the chance to stop at a local cafe to enjoy homemade ice cream and baklava. Here in the side streets you'll usually find the locals playing a game chess or backgammon. From

here we'll take the bus back to Drios or there may be the opportunity to stop in Piso Livadi for lunch or a further walk along the coast.

Once back in Drios you can relax on the Golden Beach or you may like to join a cooking lesson of traditional Greek cuisine.



**Accommodation: Anezina Village Hotel** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 7 - Free day in Paros to explore or perhaps visit Antiparos

You may choose today to take an excursion by boat to the nearby island of Antiparos. Whilst there, you can head for the southerly end of the island, to an interesting stalactite cavern. There is also the opportunity to explore the marine life of the area with local oceanographers who run diving and snorkelling trips.

If you'd before to stay on Paros then there's also the chance to snorkel from the Golden Beach.



**Accommodation: Anezina Village Hotel** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 8 - Ferry to Santorini; you may choose to partake in a wine tasting

This morning we transfer to Parikia to catch the ferry to the island of Santorini. The trip takes approximately three hours. On arrival we transfer to our hotel in the traditional village of Megalochori.

Santorini (or Thira, as the island is also known) lies some 128 nautical miles southeast of Piraeus, is the most southerly of the Cycladic Islands. It's one of the most picturesque areas in the Aegean and the familiar images of whitewashed churches with blue-domed roofs adorn this beautiful landscape. It's also an area of particular interest to those keen on the Lost Atlantis legend. Formerly a huge volcano, its centre disappeared in an enormous explosion around 1450 BC and now forms a lagoon. The eruption overwhelmed the Minoan settlements at Akrotiri as well as those on Crete.

This evening you can choose to join a local wine tasting at Gavalas Winery in Megalochori. The island is best known for its delicious white wines.



**Accommodation: Hotel Nikolas** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 9 - Option to walk up an active volcano and cruise to Thirassia

Today is free for you to enjoy relaxing or exploring this beautiful island or you may like to join a cruise to an active volcano. For those who wish, there is the opportunity to take the dramatic path to the peak of the volcano and to stand in the centre of the Caldera. The climb takes around 2 hours and the ascent is steep in places. There'll also be the chance to enjoy a swim in the sea to warm springs. The last stop on the cruise is the tiny island of Thirassia. You'll have a couple of hours to relax in the bay here with views of the volcano out to sea. There's time for lunch here or to climb up through the hillside village and walk around the surrounding vineyards.



**Accommodation: Hotel Nikolas** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 10 - Chance to walk from Fira to Oia

This morning you have the opportunity to join our local guide for a coastal walk from Fira to Oia. This is a moderate walk and takes approximately four hours. It offers some great views along the way out to sea and of the surrounding countryside.

This afternoon you may choose to visit the Museum of Ancient Thira, head for the Red Beach to swim and relax by the sea or visit the ancient Minoan site at Akrotiri.



**Accommodation: Hotel Nikolas** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 11 - Opportunity to walk to the ruins of ancient Thira; ferry to Naxos

There will be an opportunity to walk to the ruins of the former capital of Thira from Perissa today. This interesting site dates back to 6th century BC. You can see the temple ruins here and also take in the spectacular sea views. The walk to Thira is moderate to challenging as it's quite a steep climb over an uneven path; it takes around one hour each way. Following our visit we'll walk back to the black sand beach at Perissa where you have the chance to swim and enjoy lunch before taking the public bus back to Megalochori.

Later this afternoon we'll transfer to the port and take the ferry to Naxos. The crossing takes around two hours and we disembark at Naxos harbour and walk to our hotel in Naxos town.

The island of Naxos is the largest and some would argue the most beautiful of the Cyclades. The god Dionysus is believed to have lived on the island and taught the inhabitants to cultivate wine. Indeed, Naxos white wine today has a very good reputation.



**Accommodation: Naxos Holidays** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 12 - Free day in Naxos with the option to visit Delos and Mykonos

Over the years, Naxos Island has been subjugated by many nations including the Ottoman corsair, Heyreddin Barbarossa, in 1537. The interior is divided by fertile and well-watered valleys. There are many places of interest on the island, linked by a good road network. Naxos town is not architecturally recommended, but the Kastro, just above and behind the town, encloses an area of picturesque though decaying houses, Venetian in style and marked with coats of arms. Besides wine, the island also exports olive oil, corn, fruits of many kinds and marble which is comparable in quality to that of Paros.

Today you may like to join our excursion to Delos and Mykonos. We depart by ferry to Delos, which takes approximately one and half hours. Delos is an entire island covered with ancient ruins and amongst the highlights are the Temple of Apollo, Terrace of Lions, 3rd century BC theatre, ancient town and Mount Kynthos (113 m). Following time here to explore we take the ferry on to Mykonos (takes around 30 minutes). This island is frequented by the rich and famous. Whilst here you can explore its winding streets with its boutique and exclusive shops and another highlight are the windmills. We then return to Naxos by ferry (takes around one and a half hours).



**Accommodation: Naxos Holidays** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 13 - Opportunity to walk to the summit of Mount Zeus

Today there's the option to walk to the summit of Mount Zeus (1001 m), the highest peak on the Cyclades. Taking a taxi inland we shall walk for about one to two hours to reach the peak, which offers excellent views back over the island. This is a moderate to challenging walk and the path taken is good but gets rocky towards the summit, so walking boots or shoes with good ankle support are recommended. There's the chance of spotting griffon vultures along the way. After walking back down the mountain there is the option to continue walking to Filoti to have lunch here before returning to Naxos by public bus or to return to the hotel straightaway by taxi.

If you aren't going on the Mount Zeus excursion then there are regular buses and taxis available for exploring nearby on your own

steam. Good nearby beaches include Saint George, Saint Prokopios and Saint Anna.



### Accommodation: Naxos Holidays (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 14 - Ferry back to Athens; evening at leisure

This morning we take the ferry via Paros back to Athens on the mainland. The journey takes approximately five and a half hours and takes us through the Cyclades Islands to Piraeus Harbour. On arrival we'll transfer to our hotel to enjoy our last evening in Greece's bustling capital.



### Accommodation: Hotel Evripides (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 15 - Trip ends in Athens

Our trip ends this morning after breakfast at our hotel in Athens.



Meals Provided: Breakfast





## What's included?



### Included meals

Breakfast: 14



### Transport

Bus  
Ferry  
Taxi



### Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader  
Driver(s)



### Accommodation

14 nights standard hotel

## Trip information

### Country information

#### Greece

##### Climate

Greece has predominantly hot, dry summers, May - October with temperatures reaching into the mid thirties in July and August. May and October themselves can be less predictable and may have some rain and cooler evenings. Wild flowers bloom in April and May adding much colour to the trails. At the beginning and end of the season the villages tend to be very quiet. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable. Up to date information on the weather worldwide can be found by following the BBC weather link on this page.

##### Time difference to GMT

+2

##### Plugs

2 Pin Round

##### Religion

Orthodox

## Language

Greek

# Budgeting and packing

## Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Athens - Acropolis entrance fee €20.00. Acropolis Museum entrance fee €5.00. Combination ticket €30.00

Syros - Island tour €22.00

Paros - Antiparos cave by local bus/ferry €16.00; all day boat trip of Anti Paros with BBQ on beach €62.00

Santorini - Excursion to Therassia and the volcano. Volcano afternoon excursion (Including transfers, dinner & sunset onboard) €70,00 plus € 2,50 additional entrance fee for the volcano or all day Volcano excursion €37,00 (No lunch or dinner incl)

Naxos - Full day boat trip to Delos and Mykonos €50.00 + € 12,00 entrance fee or full day bus tour of the island €35.00

Local buses and taxis - For island walks please allow €25.00 to €30.00

## Clothing

July and August are the hottest months though the islands are freshened by cooling sea breezes. Early and late in the season, bring a light plastic raincoat and a thick warm sweater to help fend off the unexpected chilling wind that races across the open deck of a ferryboat between the islands.

## Footwear

Lightweight walking boots (especially for volcanoes as flip flops melt) or stout shoes with good ankle support for island walks and sandals/trainers for relaxing.

## Luggage

20kg

## Luggage: On tour

One main piece of luggage and a daypack. You will have to carry your own luggage on and off ferries. Not many hotels have lifts, and porters are not always available so don't overload yourself.

## Equipment

We recommend taking a water bottle, sunhat, torch (in case of emergencies), suncream and insect repellent with you. You may also find walking poles useful for our included and optional walking excursions as the terrain can be uneven underfoot. In Greece sink plugs aren't always provided in hotel rooms, so we would suggest bringing your own.

## Tipping

### Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Explore Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

### Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Please allow €10.00 per person for tipping.

In order to make things easier for you, the Explore Leader may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.

## Country Information

# Greece

## Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

### Dinner price

£12.00 - 16.00

### Beer price

£3.5

### Water price

£0.9

## Foreign Exchange

### Local currency

Euro

### Recommended Currency For Exchange

GBP Sterling or US Dollars, cash.

### Where To Exchange

We recommend that you change any currency into Euros prior to arrival. Bureau de Change are generally only found in major cities and large airports

### ATM Availability

Cash can be drawn from ATMs from all types of cards in most areas in Greece, including the islands.

### Credit Card Acceptance

In major restaurants.

### Travellers Cheques

Banking hours may make exchanging Travellers Cheques more difficult.

## Transport, Accommodation & Meals

### Transport Information

Bus, Ferry, Taxi

## Essential Information

### FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice click [here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, click [here](#)

### Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

### Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

### Visa and Passport Information

Greece: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

## Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

## Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

## Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

## Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## Non refundable permits

### Greece

#### Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory but we recommend protection against tetanus and polio. Please check the latest requirements with your travel

clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

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