

# GREECE – the LAND of GODS, MYTHS and WINDS

Greek islands are grouped – Saronic, Cyclades, Dodecanese, Northeastern Aegean, Sporades and Ionian.

There are numerous options to embark upon your favourite Greek island while there are regular flights from Europe during summers. Starting your journey from Athens or one of the nearby islands via Turkey are ideal options to start the *Island Hopping* in Greece.

Lesvos, Chios, Samos, Kos, Rhodos, Castellerizo are some very close islands to Turkey with all year rounds ferry connections. Travel Atelier successfully organises either Greece and Greek islands journeys or tailors combination of Turkey and Greece packages.

While Santorini and Mykonos have worldwide fame, there are some other Greek islands which are hard to spot even on the map but they are always ready to surprise the visitors in every possible manner. All the Greek islands have their connections with Gods and have equally intriguing myths, like that of wind, sea and fertility.

The islands are well-connected via water in summers and most of them have good connection by air via Athens. Authentic food, great vistas, fun-filled evenings and nice beaches are some of the synonyms of these islands; expect Hydra where there is no beach.

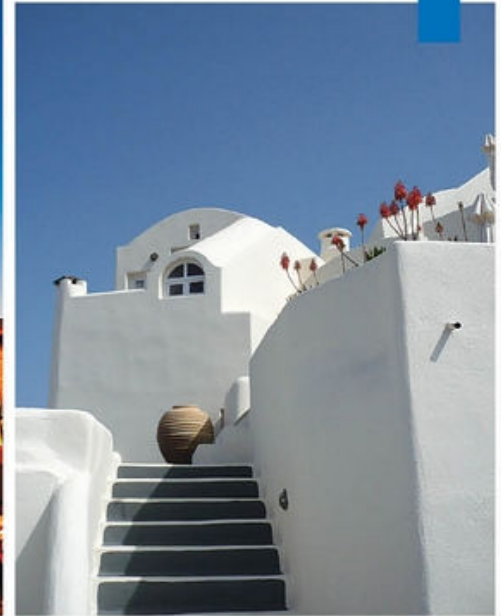
For an 8 to 10 days vacation, starting your journey from Athens shortlisting Hydra, Mykonos, Santorini, Crete would be ideal. Rhodos can be picked up as an alternative.

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**HYDRA:** The first destination from Athens, Hydra is less touristy and a getaway resort for Athenians. There are no cars but scooters and donkeys in this island. Hydra is beautifully located on a rocky hill with excellent views to Aegean.

**MYKONOS:** Famous as a party land, Mykonos has great beaches and is ideal for beach parties. However, one can also consider it as a honeymoon island with quiet and secluded corners. Small hotels offer excellent accommodation options, authentic cuisine and exclusive experiences. *Little Venice* is located by the Yacht Marina and is a good place for dining, wining and shopping. Paradise and Super paradise beaches are well known party venues of the island but even if you are not a party person walking within narrow back streets of the center, window shopping, enjoying few drinks here and there, connecting with locals will also offer a good experience. There are limited taxis so having own rental car or scooter is recommended.

**DELOS:** Located at a distance of half an hour boat ride from Mykonos, Delos is a must see island of Cyclades. An old myth says that you are neither allowed to die nor to be born here, so it is not a place for overnight stay but is ideal for day trips as it is one of the most important islands with archeological findings.

**SANTORINI:** The Pompeii of the Aegean, a group of islands of Cyclades, makes the Santorini. The present-day

crescent shape of Santorini is a result of the activity of the volcano in prehistoric times feeding the myth of the lost Atlantis.

Widely known as island of romance and great sunsets, it is an island of Love and attracts a lot of destination weddings and honeymooners. Rocky and step terrain of volcanic rocks and its caldera make the island special. Cave houses dug into the volcanic rock mansions, domed churches, cobbled streets and thousand of stairs run between the sea and the town over the cliffs. Santorini has a vast history including Venetians, Ottomans and ancient Akrotiri from 3rd millennia BC, the Bronze Age.

Being the capital of Santorini, *Thira (Fira)* has interesting parts both for exploring and basing yourself.

Firostefani, Imerovigli, Kamari and Kamari beach are some high points of the crescent shaped island. Oia is, probably, the most upscale and interesting village of all the North with the most well-known hotels, art galleries, designer shops and waterside fish restaurants.

Sunsets of Santorini give the most picturesque views from any angle and so the blue-domed churches. However, Oia is best with windmills at the background.

During summers, reaching Santorini with fast ferries takes only 3 hours from Mykonos, there are daily flights from Athens also.

2013 is Year of Gastronomy in Santorini.





**CRETE:** Biggest island of Greece, Goddess Rhea hid the newborn Zeus in a cave here. This island is divided into four prefectures, Heraklion-the capital, Rethymno, Chania and Lasithi. Crete has long sandy beaches, small mountainous villages, beach resorts, gorges and many monestries.

Each prefecture offers different atmosphere and venues. An all year around, the island offers many types of tourism activities diving to canyoning, golfing to hiking and has a special cuisine which is delightful.

Great shopping, nice restaurants cafés, calm atmosphere and famous island of Spinalonga from Venetian era are some of the important attractions reached by small boats Kaiki's.

**RHODOS:** This island is named after Rhode, the goddess of the island and wife of Helios, she was the daughter of Aphrodite and Poseidon is the largest of the Dodecanese Island complex.

While Rhodes has a long history dating back to Bronze Age, this island is most famous and known as the home of Knights of Malta or Knights of Saint John and a medieval inner city which is almost intact and is a great attraction for its visitors. Shops, cafés, restaurants,

churches mosques and the palace of Grand Vizier are few to name as special of the old town. While there are number of boutique hotels in the medieval city and resorts near by the center, a 45 min drive would get you to a unique and picturesque village called Lindos, Jewel of Rhodos. Lindos has been home to great artists, such as Chares, designer and sculptor of the Colossus of Rodos, Lysippos, Pythokritos son of Timocharios, who along with Athinodoros and Agisandros created the Nike of Samothrace and the Laocoon Group.

Rhodos has easy Access from other Greek islands and from two ports from Turkey, Fethiye and Marmaris. It only takes an hour by ferry throughout the year.

Travel Atelier executive team has been travelling to Greece for the last 15 years and has great connections with travel professionals and an extensive knowledge of the insider information of those places including excellent choice of good hotels. While collection of islands not limited those mentioned in the article, we will be happy to tailor Fusion Life Readers dream holiday in Greece, Greek Islands and Turkey.

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