



Early Greek history is the story of internal struggles, from the Mycenaean and Minoan cultures of the Bronze Age to the competing city-states that emerged in the 1st millennium BC. Greece also hosted Alexander the Great's empire during the Hellenistic period. With the defeat of the Macedonians by the Romans in 168 BC, Greece became the cultural centre of Rome. Greece was also one of the most important cultural and commercial centres during the Byzantine period (4th-15th century AD). Today, Greece is one of the most important travel destinations in the world with a wide collection of historical monuments, ruins, cultural and natural attractions. With more than 2,900 islands and islets, 1,431 beaches, endless blue seas and over 3,700 km of coastline, Greece offers a lot to everyone. Out of 365 days a year, Greece's sunshine and blue skies are well above 217 days... Each and every of the islands and islets offer unique beauty, charm, great nature, superb beaches, history and adventure. Travel Talk Greece tours take you to the best and most popular Hellas islands including Cyclades (Mykonos, , los, Santorini) islands in great convenience. We hope that our philosophy will exceed your expectations and the following information will help you enjoy a memorable journey in Greece.

VISAS

EU members, as well as citizens of the US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand are all automatically granted leave for a three-month stay in Greece. South Africans need a visa. Citizens of Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa, the UK and the US need valid passports to enter Greece and to re-enter their own countries.

ESSENTIALS

Before you leave your country, we recommend you to make sure you have followings with you ;

- ➔ Passport
- ➔ Airline or transportation ticket
- ➔ Tour voucher
- ➔ Insurance policy
- ➔ Visas (if necessary)
- ➔ Label on your travel bag
- ➔ Pre-departure information
- ➔ Money (cash and/or travellers cheques)
- ➔ Credit card

HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is recommended to all passengers travelling on Travel Talk tours to have personal insurance to cover all medical and repatriation costs. While there are no mandatory vaccinations for travellers to Greece it is advisable to ensure tetanus inoculations are up to date. Some travellers feel more confident with hepatitis and meningitis inoculations as well. Please consult a medical practitioner for advice. Bottled water is readily available throughout your tour and we recommend that you purchase this rather than drink the local tap water. While the local water is usually heavily chlorinated and safe, many people get upset stomachs after drinking it.

It is often difficult to find the precise medication that is available in one's home country, so we recommend that you carry all necessary medication with you.

Greece is one of the safest countries in Europe and offers European security standards, but you should always take the normal travel precautions. It is wise not to accept gifts of food or drink from any strangers for the risk of possibly being a victim of theft by drugging.

WHAT TO WEAR...

Greece is a hot summer destination. So bikinis and beach wear are very much the dress for the day time. For odd cool evenings you might need something to keep you warm. A smart-casual look will work well at the local restaurants.

MONEY

The Greek currency is the Euro (£1 is equivalent to € 1.30). It is cheaper to convert money in Greece than at home. Most towns and islands in Greece have ATMs that are linked into major international networks. Credit cards (Visa and Master Card are the most recognised) are accepted in most tourist areas, but if you are travelling off the beaten path, be prepared to use other forms of payment.

WEATHER

Greece has a wide range of climate types, ranging from the semi-arid, semi-desert climate of south-eastern Crete to the cold, humid continental climate of Rhodope. The dominant condition of Greece's climate is the alternation between hot, dry summers and cold, damp winters typical of the Mediterranean. Considerable local variation results from elevation and distance from the sea. Generally, continental influences are felt farther north and in the centre of the mainland.

The main climatic regions of Greece are the mainland mountains, Attica (the south-easternmost part of the mainland) and the Aegean, the west including the Ionian Islands, and the continental north-east.

EATING & DRINKING

To speak of Greek cuisine will awaken any tastebuds. There need not be anything overcomplicated here, as the local cuisine is as fresh and exquisite as anywhere, sharing many characteristics with other cuisines of the region. Greek cuisine makes good use of olive oil, vegetables, herbs, wine, fish and various meats including lamb, poultry, rabbit and pork. Also important are olives, cheese, eggplant, zucchini and yogurt. You can start your day with a "Greek Breakfast": toast with marmalades and an omelette filled with tomato, mushrooms and cheese. Lunch is generally a hearty and leisurely meal which can be served as early as noon, but most take it between 2 and 5pm after a day spent meandering or lying on the beach. Dinner is a drawn out and relaxed open air dining experience served until late (between 9pm and midnight). Mezés is a collective name for a variety of small dishes; great fun to share as a group and are typically served with wines or anise-flavoured liqueurs as ouzo or homemade tsipouro. Orektika is the formal name for appetizers and is often used as a reference to eating a first course of a cuisine other than Greek cuisine; dips like "Tzatziki" are served with bread loaf or pita bread. Moussaka is an oven-baked layer dish: ground meat and eggplant casserole, topped with a savoury custard which is then browned in the oven. There are other variations besides eggplant, such as zucchini or rice, but the eggplant version, melitzánes moussaká is by far the most popular. The papoutsákia ("little shoes") variant is essentially the same dish, with the meat and custard layered inside hollowed, sautéed eggplants. Gyros is a name that most tourists know, it is usually pork meat roasted on a vertically turning spit and served with sauce (often Tzatziki) and garnishes on pita bread. Greek alcoholic beverages include the anise-flavored ouzo, tsipouro (whose Cretan variation is called tsikoudia), kitron, a citrus flavoured liquor from Naxos and tentura, a cinnamon flavored liquor from Patras. Local dessert and fortified wines include muscats (with the Muscat of Samos being the most well-known).

GREECE

PRE DEPARTURE GUIDE



SHOPPING

No holiday is complete without a little shopping, like many other Mediterranean destinations you will find that there is some great shopping and purchases to be made in Greece. From the standard tourist souvenirs to fine boutique jewellery and clothing shops, you are bound to find something to satisfy the shopping itch. Since the antiquity, the wines of the Cycladic isles were highly esteemed. Santorini has uniquely flavoured wines, which today enjoy a widespread recognition and constitute a significant source of income for the islands. The crushed almond and marzipan confectionaries called "amygdalota", are popular all over the Cyclades.

OPENING HOURS

The opening hours are not regulated in Greece, but banks and main post offices generally open from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm Monday to Friday. Shops are generally open from around 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, then 5:00pm to 8:00pm. Shops in touristy areas are open everyday from morning till late night..

ELECTRICITY

All appliances require a double round pin type plug for 220 volts AC, 50-hertz.

TIPPING

In principle prices are net, but it is usual to round up (taxi, restaurants, bars) and to give a few Euros to waiters and porters.

FERRY TIMETABLE

Please find the timetable of ferries scheduled below. Please note that, timetable schedules may change due to heavy weather conditions and other circumstances.

From	To	Departure	Arrival
Athens	Mykonos	07:30	12:45
Mykonos	Santorini	09:50	11:40
Santorini	Ios	11:20	12:05
Santorini	Kos	00:50	05:45
Ios	Athens	18:00	23:15
Kos	Bodrum	09:00	10:00

ACCOMMODATION

The hotel selection on Travel Talk tours is 2 and 3 star locally rated and the main criteria in the hotel selection process is cleanliness, private bathroom facilities, usually but not always centrally located. If you are travelling on your own, you'll be allocated a twin or triple room with other group members of the same gender. Travellers who have paid a single supplement will stay in single rooms. We can not guarantee the availability of double beds for couple travellers. Your Tour Leader will organise the rooming arrangements when checking into the hotels according to the rooming lists. Therefore we can also not guarantee any last minute changes to suit personal requirements of our passengers.

AIRPORT TRANSFER

There is not an airport transfer provided by Travel Talk. You need to make your own way to the arrival hotel or boat. Please check arrival details to find your boat or hotel.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Your tour Leader will inform you about optional activities and detailed information in every island such as places to visit, beautiful beaches to swim, places where you can hire bikes and ATVs in reasonable prices, water sports, restaurants with good Greek traditional food etc.

THE TOUR PRICE AND LOCAL PAYMENT

We ease your cash needs by dividing the tour cost into two payments: tour price and local fund. You just need to pay the tour price to purchase your travel. The compulsory local payment will be done when you join the trip. The local payment is a part of the tour cost (a tool to ease your cash need on booking date) and it does not cover any extra costs like meals, entry fees, drinks, tips, personal expenses or other type of travel costs. Please remember that the tour price covers specific services offered during your trip, not your entire travel cost, therefore your expenses will vary depending on your interests and budget.

ABOUT THE TOUR

Greece tours are a mixture of independent travel and a structured trip. While providing you with the necessary arrangements like accommodation and sight seeing, it allows you loads of free time to do your own thing and to plan your own day.

LANGUAGE

The Greek alphabet is a set of twenty-four letters that has been used to write the Greek language since the late 9th or early 8th century BCE. It is the first and oldest alphabet in the narrow sense that it notes each vowel and consonant with a separate symbol. Below you'll find some important phrases

- Hello, goodbye: Yah-sas (polite); Yah-soo (familiar)
- Good morning: Kah-lee-meh-rah
- Good evening: Kah-lee-spe-rah
- Good night: Kah-lee-nee-khtah
- Yes: Neh
- No: Oh-hee
- Maybe: Toh-skep-to-meh
- Please: Pah-rah-kah-lou
- Thank you: Ef-khah-ree-sto
- Pardon me: Sig-no-mee
- Who: Pyos
- When: Poh-teh
- Today: See-mer-a
- Yesterday: Kthes
- Tomorrow: Av-ree-o
- Help: Vo-ee-thee-ah
- How much: Po-so kah-nee
- Do you speak English: Mee-lahs ahn-glee-kah
- I don't speak Greek: Dhen mee-laho el-leenee-kah
- I don't understand: Dhen-kah-tah-lah-veh-no
- Bill, please: Lo-gahr-yah-smo
- Doctor: yah-tros
- Police: As-tee-no-mee-a
- Open: Ah-nee-kto
- Closed: Klee-sto
- Good: Kah-lo
- Cheap: Ftee-no
- Expensive: Ah-kree-vo