

Discover Greece in 1 week

Greece

Written by Deniz Binay

“ This itinerary leads you to discover the capital city and introduces you to the Greek islands in the Cyclades. If partying in Mykonos is not for you, then from Paros, take a boat to the island of Santorini, in the South of the Cyclades instead. ”

Summary

2 nights: **Athens** for its rich ancient history including the famous acropole.

3 nights: **Paros** island, including a day trip to **Antiparos** island for a relaxed experience, stunning beaches and traditional villages.

2 nights: **Mykonos** island, famous for its parties. Alternatively, go to **Santorini** island, the famous island known for its amazing scenery.

General information

The three most famous islands in the Cyclades are Santorini, Mykonos and Paros. As Santorini get very touristy, my personal favorite is Paros which is more relaxing and still as stunning. Therefore I will take you through Paros as well as pointing out where and how you could go to Santorini (since it is still the most famous island of the Cyclades!)

For transportation, the best is to use the ferry to travel between islands. Ferries run a few times per day but I would recommend reserving your ticket a day or two in advance, especially during peak travel season. Mykonos, Paros and Santorini have airports and I would recommend you to return home using one of these airports. If you decide to go back to Athens by ferry, bear in

mind that the traveling time is depended on sea conditions and that the traffic from one of the ports to the airport can be significantly slow.

Athens

Introduction

Athens was the heart of the Greek civilization from the 8th Century BC to the end of antiquity circa 600 AD. There is no surprise that some of the world most beautiful ruins are found here. The capital is also a great introduction to some delicious Greek food.

What to do

The top attraction is the **Parthenon** situated on the **Acropolis**, a hill overlooking Athens. Located to the northwest of the Acropolis, the **ancient Agora** was once a marketplace and civic center. It is the ancient spot of the Greek democracy.

Make sure to visit the new **Acropolis museum**. This must-see museum hosts a large collection of ancient statues and Greek architectures.

Get inspired by the Greek culture in the **Plaka District**, the old historical neighborhoods of

Athens. It is located next to the Acropolis and features labyrinthine streets and neoclassical architecture.

Other to-dos based on your interests are: the beautiful **Panathenaic Stadium** (where the first modern Olympic games in 1896 were held), the flea market in **Monastiraki** old town that will offer you plenty of shopping opportunities, the **Temple of Olympian Zeus**, and the historical and social center square of the modern Athens **Syntagma Square** with a change of guard every morning at 11am.

Athens is also notorious for its rich nightlife! Get inspired here¹ for some ideas about where to go out.

Additional tips

Don't come in Athens with big expectation for the city itself. It is definitely great for its culture, its markets and its food, but the city itself isn't known for being charming. 2 days in Athens is enough for most travelers.

Eat & drink

Greece has amazing Mediterranean cuisine. My favorite is *Tzaziki* (based on yogurt, cucumbers and spices), but make sure to also try *Souvlaki*, *feta cheese*, fresh fishes and many others specialities.

Next

Go to the Piraeus port (the biggest port of Athens, an alternative is to take a boat from Rafina port that is closer to the airport) where you can buy tickets towards most of the islands in the Cyclades. Embark for a 4-hour ferry towards Paros that will cost approx. 35 euros (depending on when you book the ticket).

Paros

Introduction

Natural beauty, beaches with crystal-clear water, Byzantine footpath connecting traditional villages is what await you in Paros. Antiparos, the relaxed island where Tom Hanks, Bruce Willis, Pierce Brosnan and several others settled their vacation homes, it is just 5 min away from Paros.

What to do

Once you arrive, rent a scooter or a quad. It will be your best friend to tour the island at your own pace as well as for your visit to Antiparos. Paros is a small island that can be circled in one day. There are not many routes and it is almost impossible to get lost if you use the map your rental company or your hotel will provide.

Ask your hotel to circle the best beaches, the best traditional villages featuring Cycladic architecture (with whitewashed sugar houses, paved streets and blue-domed churches) on your map and just go! Some spots are secluded but they are gorgeous such as the **Paros Park** (just a couple of minutes walking down the trail past the Monastiri beach, you will find my favorite place for swimming in crystal clear water!).

Plan a day-trip to Antiparos that is connected to Paros by a cheap 10-minute long ferry (your scooter or quad can and should come with you, not a problem). Visit the sumptuous **Antiparos cave**, relaxed over lunch in Antiparos Town and discover some beaches or bars right by the sea.

Next

After Paros and Antiparos, take a 2-hour speed boat towards Mykonos. Alternatively, you can take a 2-hour speed boat South towards Santorini.

¹<http://thehungrypartier.com/ultimate-guide-to-the-nightlife-in-athens/>



Conclusion

The itinerary is a great introduction to Greece!
But there is much more to visit for your next time

around, including **Crete** that is almost a country in itself, other Cyclades islands such as **Santorini**, **Naxos** or **Milos**, or learn more about the classical Greece by visiting **Olympia**, **Delphi** or the Temple of Poseidon in **Sounion**.