

Mainland

In addition to the famous Greek islands, Greek mainland offers plenty of options for a classic Mediterranean holiday. The Greek mainland is often overlooked by tourists, due to the lack of information and promotion. Travel agents outside of Greece usually get very little information about anything except for the most popular Greek islands. Greek mainland offers its guests a wealth of archaeological sites, fascinating culture, spectacular coastline with amazing beaches, unspoilt fishing villages full of tranquil charm and picture-perfect scenery.

Epidaurus (Peloponnese)

In a small valley of Argolis prefecture in Peloponnese is located the village of Epidaurus, which consists a world heritage monument famous in ancient times for being the birthplace of Apollo's son Asclepius, the god of medicine, and, thus, a place of healing. Its principal monuments, particularly the temple of Asklepios, the Tholos and the Theater - considered one of the purest masterpieces of Greek architecture – date from the 4th century. The vast site, with its temples and hospital buildings devoted to its healing gods, provides valuable insight into the healing cults of Greek and Roman times. The Ancient Theater of Epidaurus is one of its most important sights, situated within the archaeological site of the Sanctuary of Asklepios. It is the place where tragedies and comedy plays of Sophocles performed to entertain and instruct the citizens. Guests can experience the splendid acoustics achieved by this architectural ancient marvel monument. Epidaurus is an all-year-round destination and can be beautifully combined with an Athens stay and visits to Corinth, Mycenae, Olympia and Nafplio.



Delphi (Central Greece)



Delphi is both an archaeological site and a modern town in Greece on the south-western spur of Mount Parnassus in the valley of Phocis. The Delphic Oracle is the most important oracle in the Classical Greek World and a site for the worship of The God Apollo recognized as a God of Light and the Sun, son of Zeus and Leto. Blending harmoniously with the superb landscape and charged with sacred meaning, Delphi archaeological site in the 6th century B.C.

was indeed the religious center and symbol of unity of the ancient Greek world.

In myths dating to the classical period of Ancient Greece (510-323 BC), the site of Delphi was believed to be determined by Zeus when he sought to find the center of earth. He sent two eagles flying from the eastern and western extremities, and the path of the eagles crossed over Delphi where the omphalos, or navel of earth was found.

Some of the most prominent edifices on the sacred slopes of Delphi are the temple of Apollo, the ancient theater, the stadium, the sanctuary of Athena Pronaia with the Tholos, the Kastalia spring, and the various treasuries that adorn the sacred way. Carved into the temple of Apollo are the phrases : γνώθι σαυτόν (gnothi seauton = "know thyself") and μηδέν άγαν (mēdén ágan = "nothing in excess"). The archaeological museum on the site contains many important ancient Greek artifacts from the excavations at Delphi. Delphi is an all-year-round destination and can be beautifully combined with an Athens stay, a Meteora tour or a stay at the famous and traditional village of Arachova, which consist a great winter destination for Athenians and foreigners.



Meteora (North Western Thessaly)



Meteora is one of the largest and most important complexes of Greek Orthodox monasteries in Greece. In a region of almost inaccessible sandstone peaks, monks settled on these 'columns of the sky' from the 11th century onwards. Located near the towns of Kalampaka and Kastraki in northwestern Thessaly, it consists of a number of rock pinnacles. These immense, solid rocks, split by earthquakes, weathered by water and wind over millions of years, are nature's

authentic masterpieces. Twenty-four of these monasteries were built, despite incredible difficulties, at the time of the great revival of the eremitic ideal in the 15th century. Meteora offers a striking scenery, with unique ageless Monasteries perched on the top of huge rocks which seem to be suspended in mid-air, where you can see exquisite specimens of Byzantine art.

Kalambaka, a small town situated at the foot of the astonishing complex of Meteora, offers its guests some local traditional delicacies, picturesque views and beautiful accommodation. Meteora is an all-year-round destination and can be beautifully combined with an Athens stay, a Delphi tour or a stay at the famous and traditional village of Arachova, which consist a great winter destination for Athenians and foreigners.



Mycenae (North Eastern Peloponnese)



The ancient city of Mycenae, the home of King Agamemnon, consisted a major center of Greek civilization from 1600BC to 1100BC. The fortified citadel is nestled over the fertile plain of Argolis near the seashore in the northeast Peloponnese.

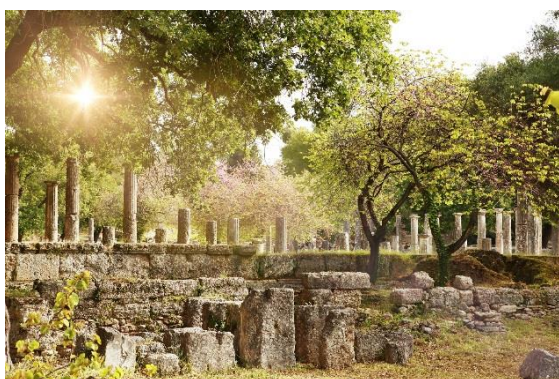
Mycenae is the largest and most important center of the civilization that was named "Mycenaean" after this very citadel. Mycenaean is the culture that dominated

mainland Greece, the Aegean islands, and the shores of Asia Minor during the late Bronze Age era (circa 1600-1100 BCE).

Some of the most important sights at Mycenae include the Lion Gate, which guards and provides the main access to the citadel, the Cyclopean Walls, ancient Graves, the Palace of Mycenae, the Treasury of Atreus which was the tomb of Atreus, the father of Agamemnon, and several ancient Tombs. Mycenae is an all-year-round destination and can be beautifully combined with an Athens stay and visits to Corinth, Epidauros, Olympia and Nafplio.



Olympia (North Western Peloponnese)



In the western Peloponnese, in the "Valley of Gods", lies the most celebrated sanctuary of ancient Greece, and the birthplace of the most important athletic mega-event of all times; the Olympic Games. The ancient Olympic Games were held there every four years throughout Classical Antiquity, at the sanctuary of Zeus.

The sanctuary, known as the Altis, consists of an unordered arrangement of various buildings. Enclosed within the temenos (sacred enclosure) are the Temple of Hera, the Temple of Zeus, the Pelopion, and the area of the altar, where the sacrifices were made.

Olympia was also known for the gigantic ivory and gold statue of Zeus that used to stand there, sculpted by Pheidias, which was named one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World by Antipater of Sidon. The site includes the classic ancient Olympic Stadium and the Museum. Olympia is an all-year-round destination and can be beautifully combined with an Athens stay and visits to Corinth, Epidauros, Mycenae and Nafplio.



Nafplio (North Eastern Peloponnese)



Nafplio is a seaport town and one of the most beautiful towns in the area of Argolis (in eastern Peloponnese) as well as one of the most romantic cities all over Greece. Nafplio consisted the first capital of the newly born Greek state between 1823 and 1834. The most photographed spot of Nafplio – and its point of reference as well– is Bourtzi, the Venetian small fortress standing on the rocky islet of Agioi Theodoroi. In the summer you can reach the fortress by boat departing regularly from the port.

A relaxing stroll in the narrow cobblestone alleys of Nafplio will reveal to its guests many unique sights such as the medieval Old Town the neoclassical well preserved mansions with the Bougainvillea trees adorning their yards and balconies and the Turkish fountains. In the very heart of the city stands the Italianate Syntagma Square where guests can admire important historic buildings and monuments.

Next comes the Palamidi Castle, which proudly stands 216 m above sea level. In order to reach it guests have to climb all of its 999 steps carved into the rock, but the view from above is totally rewarding. Akronafplia is the historic rock at the foot of Palamidi hill, also known by its Turkish name “Its Kale” (meaning inner castle). Inhabited since prehistoric times, the peninsula consists of three levels, among which stand three independent castles, the oldest being the western one. Nafplio is an all-year-round destination and can be beautifully combined with an Athens stay and visits to Corinth, Epidaurus, Mycenae and Olympia.



Corinth (North Eastern Peloponnese)



Corinth is on the narrow isthmus between the Saronic and Corinthian gulfs connecting the Peloponnese to the rest of Greece, although now it is split by the Corinth Canal.

The modern town of Corinth isn't really worth visiting, but to the south of the town is ancient Corinth a huge well preserved archeological site.

Looming over ancient Corinth is Acrocorinth. A huge fortress citadel that towers over the town and nearby countryside.

Nearby you can find the ancient port of Kehries, where St. Paul disembarked. Ancient Corinth is easy to reach from Athens and is on the way to other aforementioned important sites such as Mycenae, Epidavros, Nafplio and Olympia.

