

## Naxos island (Cyclades – Southern Aegean Sea)



Naxos is the largest and greenest island in the Cyclades with impressively high mountains and fertile valleys. There are beaches that are among the most beautiful in Greece, a few minutes' drive from villages where they still wear traditional dress, weave on old looms and live off the fruit of the land. Naxos is an island of beautiful old churches, monasteries and Venetian castles and homes. It attracts tourists who appreciate its typical Mediterranean

climate, its beaches, plant life and wild life. Guests can enjoy a slower pace of life on an island with exceptional beauty, traditional villages perched on the cliffs, monasteries, byzantine churches, Venetian castles and a variety of cultural remnants from an eventful past.

Naxos has been continuously inhabited since the 4th Millennium BC and excavations around the island bring to light ancient artifacts and buildings almost daily. Many sites and museums bear witness to its rich past. Hora is the main town and one of the must sights to visit along with its emblem, the little island that extends from its coast, Palatia, with Portara, the most famous landmark of Naxos, a massive 2,500-year-old marble doorway that used to be the Gate to Apollo's temple. A visit to Portara is advisable, especially after a swim, right during sunset time.



On the top of Hora, guests will find the Castle town called Kastropoliteia, built by Marcos Sanoudos, the Venetian conqueror. Within Naxos Town, the visitors has the chance to walk among exceptionally renovated mansions, having served as the residencies of nobles, the upper-class.



Apart from Hora, Naxos has a number of villages and small settlements to delight its visitors such as Apiranthos, Filoti and Sangri. Guests can also visit the 13th Century cathedral, the Ursulines convent, the Archaeological Museum, and Demeter's temple at Sangri, among other places. Traditional craftsmanship is to be seen throughout the island, especially weaving, but also embroidery and confectionery.

Without a doubt, Naxos is one of the most favorite summer destinations due to its numberless beaches. Ideal for families, extreme sea sports' fanatics, such as Agia Anna beach, or romantic couples looking for private beaches, the best beaches in Naxos are mostly gathered on its western side, right after Naxos Hora. The main town, Hora, contains most of the shops and restaurants frequented by visitors. A number of beach communities extend south along the coast from Hora.



Naxos is widely known for its tradition in gastronomy producing the famous Naxian potatoes, wine & Kitron liquor production and the popular Naxian cheese, graviera.

While being an island strongly recommended for family vacations, Naxos' nightlife does not come short of choices compared to the other Cyclades Islands. Most of Naxos beach bars, bar restaurants and clubs are scattered all over its western coast over viewing the endless open sea and offer a welcoming service and a vibrating ambience.

Within town, walking is the best method of transport. Bus services do operate between the towns, and car and motorbike rentals are readily available.



Like other island in the Cyclades, the most enjoyable time to visit is in late spring – the sea has warmed up to feasible swimming temperatures and guests will get to see more locals than tourists – and early autumn, when most of the tourists have departed and the sea is at its warmest. After late September, though, many facilities close down and ferry links get sparse.





Naxos is a central hub in the sea transport system and enjoys multiple connections to many directions. It is easily accessible from Athens either by normal ferry (about 5 hours) or fast boat (about 3.5 hours) or by plane (just 45 minutes). Ferry boats and high speed catamarans run daily from Piraeus, Paros, Santorini and Mykonos during high season.



**Naxos Photo Gallery:** <https://www.fantasy.gr/naxos-photo-gallery.zip>