

# Activities in Greece

Greece, the fabled birthplace of Western civilisation, transcends its image of sun-kissed beaches and ancient ruins. It's an adventurer's haven, boasting diverse landscapes and activities. We side on that of the 'not too arduous', believing in the pleasure of slow travel and experiences that create a bond between the host and their guests. It is about taking 'time', 'seeing' and 'learning'.



## Walking

Greece generally is wonderful for walking and we know that you, like us, are always curious to explore the places you are visiting. Whether the walk is self-guided or escorted, the experience takes you away from your accommodation and facilitates a deeper interaction with the local natural environment. It is also excellent exercise to help burn off the calories from all that delicious Greek food! If you are staying in an area in which we have our own resort representative they are happy to advise on local walking paths or available escorted walks. We offer self guided walking in Pelion, and escorted walking holidays on Crete and the Cycladic isles of Kythnos, Sifnos and Serifos.

Independent walkers are well served almost everywhere. Hike through Paxos's olive groves; have daily adventures on Andros's marked trails; meet local farmers and goat herders on Kythira; delight in the sheer grandeur of the Vikos and Samaria Gorges; hike the Corfu trail, the Valley of the Nightingales on Samos or the foothills of Mount Olympus. There is something for all, and whether venturing 30 minutes or 3 hours you'll discover a land of rich flora and fauna.



## Painting

Greece is known for its wonderful conditions for artists, from the quality of the light to the wide variety of subject and vibrant colours. Perhaps you have a hidden talent which you have never had the time to develop or are already a budding or accomplished artist. Whatever your level, a painting holiday (or a holiday with some painting) will add a level of interest, companionship and accomplishment to your Greek adventure.

We offer painting holidays on Crete but the beauty of Greece has inspired so many: Renoir captured Kos, Nikos Hadjikyriakos-Ghikas highlighted the contrasts of the Cyclades, Patrick Leigh-Fermor fell in love with the Mani, Edward Lear sketched the Acropolis and mainland areas, and Andreas Georgiadis continues to tell his story of life in the eastern Mediterranean.



## Scuba Diving

Whether you are a qualified diver, wish to learn to dive or are simply content to snorkel, you could not be in a better place than the crystal-clear waters off Greece. The sunken, 5,000 year old city of Pavlopetri off the Peloponnese coast lies in the shallow waters of Vatika Bay near the town of Neapoli and can only be explored by snorkel. Many of our featured islands and mainland resorts have qualified dive centres and we are happy to advise. However, the island of Alonissos, surrounded by 870 square miles of protected marine park (the biggest in Europe), stands out and a number of dive schools operate from here.

PADI dive centres can be found on Alonissos, Corfu, Crete, Lefkas, Kefalonia, Kythira, Lefkas, Naxos, Rhodes and Tolon amongst many others.



## Cooking

The growing interest in cooking and the health benefits associated with the Mediterranean diet, especially on Crete, have created a boom in local cooking classes which are available in several of our featured destinations. There is nothing like watching how it's done so effortlessly by a local mother or grandmother, with recipes passed down over generations. It's those extra little secrets that give the added taste which any budding cook would find so useful.

Our seven night foodie break on Crete is perfect for those wishing to sample local delicacies. We can also arrange for you to join food tours in Athens, taste olive oil on Lemnos, wine on Samos and be at the heart of the action at local festivities - where food brings people together. The Liotopi Hotel in Olympiada, Halkidiki is a favourite of ours for culinary lessons and local dishes cooked from the heart.



## Bird Watching

Greece has nearly 200 important bird areas and many threatened species breed in the country. Most of the sites are unexplored as not much is organised. The northern lakes of Prespa, Mikri and Kerkini are notable locations (we can arrange a visit to these areas on our mainland fly drive programme) as are the south Peloponnese areas of Mani (in the mountains behind Kardamili) and the wetland near Gialova. Skala Kalloni on the north Aegean island of Lesbos is a well known wetland on a migratory route, and the nearby north Aegean islands of Thassos, Lemnos, Chios and Samos are also known centres. Crete too, and in the Dodecanese we'd recommend the island of Tilos. Spring is the time to go.

Our partnership with Wildlife Travel ([www.wildlife-travel.co.uk](http://www.wildlife-travel.co.uk)) offers expert-led natural tours in Greece.

# Walking on Kythnos, Sifnos and Serifos

Lace up your walking shoes and set foot on a journey along the scenic trails of the Cyclades, winding through charming villages, past ancient ruins and neighbouring breathtaking coastlines. Each tour is led by a local guide and numbers are limited to 'small group' size, with plenty of time allowed for relaxation, independent exploration and swimming.



## Kythnos walking holiday

Kythnos, Cyclades

Kythnos has a history dating back to prehistoric times, hot springs, one of the largest caves in Greece, countless chapels scattered across its landscape, ruined castles, an ancient city and strong traditions, with still-working donkeys and colourful festivals.

It also has a network of walking paths, and we therefore propose our one week walking holidays as the best way to really get under the skin of this undiscovered, beautiful and charming island. Four guided, intermediate walks ranging from 11 kms to 14 kms - walking time (without breaks) is usually 4 1/2 to 5 hours - are included plus one shorter 2 hour walk, and accommodation is offered on a half board basis on walking days, with 6 dinners taken in local tavernas.

This is more than a walking holiday, your trip will open your eyes to the heritage and beauty of this lesser-known Cyclades island. Highlights include wandering through the whitewashed villages of Chora and Driopida, where the population is small, but warm 'filoxenia' from the locals is in abundance.

The package price includes flights to Athens, all transfers and ferry tickets, and 7 nights accommodation. A full itinerary is available on our website.

**Board Basis:** Half Board (except 1 day BB only)

Prices from: **£1395 per person** (twin share - single price on request)



## Serifos walking holiday

Serifos, Cyclades

Paths of Greece have developed, and maintain, some 28km of walking trails on Serifos, under the title "Paths of Iron and Stone"; highlighting the island's geology as well as its mythology. It is said that it is on Serifos island that Perseus petrified with the head of Medusa.

Our 4 night/5 day walking holiday is based in the seaside village of Livadi and includes three main, intermediate walks of c 10 kms each and a shorter introductory walk. The routes followed lead to: the hilltop Chora - an archetypal old capital with whitewashed houses and chapels in its narrow lanes (the views from the summit are spectacular); along the coast to churches and a fortified 16th century monastery; through the fruit-laden valleys to the beach; and the trail of the Iron ore miners until the 1960s.

There are some 60 beaches on Serifos, nearly all of them sandy and many with natural shade. For walkers beaches such as Vaya, Ganema and Psili Ammos are within reach of Livadi, so why not extend your stay.

This holiday is normally booked in conjunction with a shortened Kythnos itinerary to make a 10-day twin-island tour.

**Board Basis:** Half Board

Prices on request



## Sifnos walking holiday

Sifnos, Cyclades

Sifnos affords a sense of traditional elegance amidst the narrow streets and whitewashed houses of the classically Cycladic villages dotted around the island. An island of fertile valleys and lofty mountains, a network of walking trails enable you to explore its many beaches, and can also take you past some of the 227 individual churches, which are overlooked dramatically by several hilltop monasteries.

Our walking holiday on Sifnos includes three intermediate 10-11 kms hike alongside two shorter walks. Accommodation is offered on a half board basis with 6 evening meals in local tavernas. Our package price is for 1 week with an overnight in Athens on arrival, 6 nights on Sifnos, and all transfers / ferries included.

With your local guide, you will visit the ruins of a Mycenae city site, the Profitis Ilias monastery and the Venetian Kastro village. Discerning "foodies" will also appreciate the island's soups, stews and casseroles, with ingredients supplied locally - the island's signature dish is chickpea soup. There is a gastronomy festival held annually on the first weekend of September.

**Board Basis:** Half Board

Prices from: **£1645 per person** (twin share - single price on request)

# Walking, Painting and Cultural Holidays to Western Crete

Kissamos in western Crete is part of the European Programme Natura 2000, which aims to protect the island's rich natural heritage and promote eco-tourism. The area is perfect for walking and painting and we are very pleased to offer these options here as well as a Cultural Holiday for those wishing to get under the skin of Cretan culture and enjoy some hands-on experiences. All holidays include a group Welcome Dinner on the first night. Please see our website for departure dates and further information.



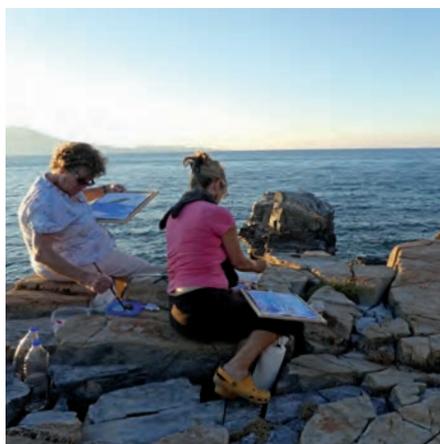
## Walking and Easy Walking Holiday Kissamos, Crete

The 7 night itinerary consists of five mornings of long walks of medium difficulty lasting approximately 4.5-5.5 hours. Led by Yakovos, a walker all his life and born and raised in Kissamos, you will receive a great insight into the local fauna and flora and where to find the endemic plants. Walks take place in the hills, the valleys, the beaches, the town of Kissamos and the surrounding area, as well as going through traditional villages and little known Ancient sites. They are particularly beautiful in the Spring and Autumn with the abundance of flowers and plants. Each walk has regular rest stops. There are also Easy Walking weeks with shorter and easier walks.

We also offer a combined Painting and Walking Holiday.

**Board Basis:** Bed & Breakfast

Prices from: **£1745 per person\***



## Painting Holiday Kissamos, Crete

Our Painting Holiday offers you the opportunity to relax in one of the most beautiful locations in the Mediterranean through painting but also making available enough time for other self chosen activities - swimming in the sea, reading a book by the pool and anything else you wish to do!

The 7 night itinerary enables you to enjoy painting and sketching a variety of subjects in the beautiful Cretan landscape. The painting workshops are hosted by Camille Marquand, an English artist who has had several solo shows and taken part in many group exhibitions. This is a chance to paint outdoors, compose your own paintings, share insights, see life afresh and, above all, to have a wonderful, relaxing holiday. Seven workshops are included, but all are optional. Basic materials and stools are available but artists are encouraged to bring their own mediums.

We also offer a combined Painting and Walking Holiday.

**Board Basis:** Bed & Breakfast

Prices from: **£1745 per person\***



## Cultural Crete Holiday Kissamos, Crete

Our 7 night cultural holiday is designed for those looking to gain more than a superficial insight into life on Crete. You'll have the opportunity to explore the Cretan countryside on foot; enjoy excursions by bus to Chania Town and Botanical Gardens, as well as a monastery; don your apron and cook some local dishes (and enjoy the results!); learn about the olive oil and wine production on the island and take a short boat trip to the little island of Gramvousa and to the famous Balos beach. All activities are, of course, optional.

**Board Basis:** Bed & Breakfast

Prices from: **£1993 per person\***

# Walking on Lefkas, Alonissos, Kythira and in Pelion

## Lefkas Walking Week

### The Ionian Islands

Immerse yourself in the beauty of Lefkas and Meganissi on our 7-night walking holiday. Starting from the vibrant harbour village of Nidri, this journey takes you to the interior of the island, traversing picturesque landscapes, quaint villages, and ancient ruins. As you journey deeper into the heart of Lefkas, the scenery transforms, revealing hidden gems and panoramic vistas at every turn. This walking itinerary is mainly easy to moderate walking broken down into 5 walks (one day allows for a visit to the nearby gentle island of Meganissi) and covers some 50 km in total.

This holiday takes place during the last week of May and is led by our longstanding representative on Lefkas, Julie Norton. Guests will stay at the popular Palm Trees Hotel in a sea view room - the hotel is directly on Nidri beach, perfect for a refreshing dip after the day's walk.

Please see our website for full details.

**Board Basis:** Bed & Breakfast

Prices from: **£1466 per person\***



## Walking on Alonissos

### The Sporades Islands

Serene Alonissos offers an unhurried holiday in natural surroundings, fine views, good swimming and walking. Its hilly terrain, softened by oak and pine, hides charming villages and superb vistas.

Whether a gentle amble through the countryside or a more strenuous hike, there are many marked trails from which to choose - our favourites end on the beach, where you bathe in the crystal-clear waters.

Guided walks can be arranged locally with transfers provided to or from the start/end point. Walking guidebooks are also available via our website.

## Walking on Kythira

### The Ionian Islands

Kythira is our fantasy island, hidden away. It is ideal for walking.

There are now over 32 kms of trails and 8 footpaths which have been developed. Trails cover forgotten agricultural landscapes, follow the footsteps of fishermen, target architectural heritage and aim to introduce the walker to the island. Our local agent on the island, Frank, guides walks and can give full information locally.

## The South Pelion Trail

### Pelion

The South Pelion Trail, snaking through Greece's verdant Pelion peninsula, offers a journey for all. Walk amidst stunning scenery as the trail weaves through ancient olive groves and skirts vibrant meadows bursting with wildflowers. Hike beneath the shade of towering chestnut trees and pause at traditional stone villages.

Our 7 night self-guided walking holiday is based at the Lagou Raxi Country Hotel and transfers are included to/from the walks each day (five days of walking is required to complete the whole trail).

**Board Basis:** Half Board and packed lunches

Prices from: **£1785 per person\*** based on 2 sharing

# Lemnos Activity Week

Our experienced local representative, Annette, has been introducing our guests to the delights of Lemnos for many years. Using her extensive island knowledge and insider tips, our seven night activity and experience holiday on Lemnos has been designed by Annette.

**The holiday includes the following activities, aimed to give you a greater insight into the island's history, culture and landscape than most visitors are likely to see. There is also plenty of time for relaxation and swimming.**

- Visit to a traditional Lemnian vineyard and wine tasting
- Half day walking excursion
- Full day island tour
- Sunset cruise
- Cookery lesson and tasting with Rena

The Activity Week will operate during the last weeks of May and September and is based on our direct flight from Gatwick to Lemnos staying at the Sotiris Apartments. Please see our website for further information.

**Board Basis:** Self Catering

**Guide price:** Based on 2 sharing from **£1295 per person**



# Best of Lefkas Week

The Ionian island of Lefkas offers a rich and diverse holiday experience. On our 7 night 'Best of Lefkas' itinerary you will have the opportunity to indulge in wine tasting at local wineries, see the traditional methods of honey making, and explore the scenic Cape Doukato.

Embark on a boat trip to the neighbouring islands of Kastos and Kalamos, discovering hidden coves and pristine beaches. Take a leisurely walking tour of Lefkas Town, admiring the Venetian architecture and vibrant atmosphere. Immerse yourself in the beauty of Agios Nikitas, a picturesque village surrounded by lush olive groves and turquoise waters.

Lefkas provides an unforgettable blend of culinary delights, cultural heritage, and breathtaking landscapes, making it the perfect holiday destination to experience the real Greece.

This holiday takes place during the last week of September and is led by our longstanding representative on Lefkas, Julie Norton. Guests will stay at the popular Palm Trees Hotel in a sea view room - the hotel is directly on Nidri beach, perfect for a refreshing dip after the day's activities.

Please see our website for full details.

**Board Basis:** Bed & Breakfast

Guide price from **£1535 per person\***

