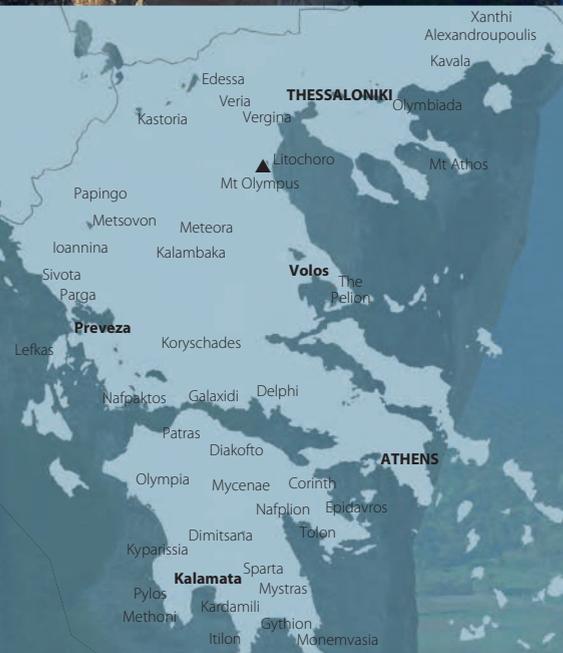




Fly Drive holidays - designed for you

While Athens, Thessaloniki, Kalamata and Preveza serve as captivating entry points, venturing beyond the cities unlocks the true diversity of mainland Greece. From ancient oracles to mystical monasteries, forested mountains to deep gorges, hillside villages to beach resorts, dramatic coastlines to vibrant cities, the variety of mainland Greece never fails to astound.

Our specialists have unrivalled knowledge of mainland Greece and will work with you to design your perfect break. Whatever your interests, budget and time-scale, we will craft your dream adventure. We can also arrange private tours with a driver from Athens. We've listed some sites of interest on these pages but there are many many more!





Delphi

Delphi was the centre of the world (omphalos) in the eyes of the ancient Greeks: according to myth, it was the meeting point of two eagles released by Zeus, one to the east and one in the west. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site with sanctuaries dedicated to Apollo and Athena.



Meteora

Suspended atop towering rock formations, the Meteora monasteries offer a unique and awe-inspiring spectacle. Another UNESCO monument.



Olympia

The birthplace of the ancient games. Run along the same track on which legendary athletes competed over two millennia ago, marvel at the majestic Temple of Zeus, and delve into the history of athletic prowess at the archaeological museum.



Mycenae

Journey back to the Bronze Age and the legend of the Trojan Wars at this archaeological treasure trove. Stand beneath the monumental Lion Gate, decipher the mysteries of Agamemnon's Tomb, and witness the impressive engineering feats of the Treasury of Atreus.



Epidavros

This UNESCO World Heritage Site is home to an amazingly well-preserved theatre; a venue that staged plays over 2300 years ago. It is one of the best preserved theatres of its age and hosts summer performances even to this day.



Vergina

Uncover the grandeur of the Macedonian kingdom at Vergina, home to the stunning Tomb of Philip II, father of Alexander the Great.



Mount Olympus

The highest peak in Greece at 2918m and mythical home of the 12 gods. Breathtaking views, diverse flora and fauna. Only experienced climbers should attempt the summit but there are some beautiful trails on the lower slopes suitable for more casual walkers.



Nafplion

Wander through the romantic streets of this Venetian town, with its charming harbour and Palamidi fortress.



Monemvasia

Step back in time at this fortified island village, with its medieval castle and charming stone houses. Explore the labyrinthine streets, visit the Church of the Metropolis, and enjoy breathtaking views of the Aegean Sea from the castle walls.



Corinth Canal

Witness the impressive feat of engineering that is the Corinth Canal, connecting the Aegean and Ionian Seas.



Mystras

Wander around the castle city, overlooking the city of Sparta. An important archaeological site listed on UNESCO's World Heritage list. Visit the Palace of the Despots, the Houses of Laskaris and Frangopoulos, the beautiful Cathedral of Saint Dimitrios and the impressive Monasteries.



Xanthi

Xanthi is one of the best preserved old cities in the country, and one of the largest, with c. 1,000 buildings classified as protected or historical monuments.

Classical Highlights 7 Nights Fly Drive

This short 7 day fly-drive incorporates Greece's most iconic classical sites, including Delphi, Olympia, Epidavros and ancient Mycenae, as well as Athens and the historic town of Nafplion.

Students of the Olympic Games will find it especially interesting, Dating from 776 BC the games of old were dedicated to the Olympian gods and were staged at the ancient site of Olympia in the western Peloponnese. Events such as running, wrestling, boxing, the pentathlon and equestrian competitions took place. Olympia was one of four venues of the original Panhellenic Games which rotated annually between them (hence why the Olympics are held every four years) and this itinerary enables visits to three of them.

As with all our fly drives we offer complete flexibility and the itinerary can be amended to suit personal tastes and interests. It may also be extended to include some R&R at the end in a resort area or on an island easily reached from Athens.

Day 1 - Day of arrival

On arrival at Athens Airport, you will be transferred to your hotel.

Overnight in Athens.

Day 2 - Explore Athens

Day at leisure in Athens, one of the world's treasure-houses. There are so many sites of interest to visit in Athens that even the longest stay is never enough. We highly recommend the Acropolis Museum; the ancient site of the Acropolis crowned by the Parthenon; the Temple of Zeus; the National Archaeological Museum and the Plaka neighbourhood. You should also allow time to visit the modern Olympic Stadium which is the finishing point of the original marathon in 1896.



Athens

Overnight in Athens.

Day 3 - Delphi

After breakfast, your car will be delivered to your hotel. The drive today will take you to the ancient site of Delphi, one of the venues of the Panhellenic Games of which the Olympics were part. The drive will take c.2 1/2 hours. In Delphi, take time to visit the archaeological sites which include the Sanctuary of Apollo and a well-preserved amphitheatre.

Overnight in Delphi.

Day 4 - Olympia

Today, your journey will take you over the Rio bridge to the historical site of Olympia. The drive will take c.3 1/2 hours. Olympia is the most celebrated Sanctuary of Ancient Greece and, as its names suggests, the birthplace of the Olympics. Visitors here can explore the ruins of the stadium. There is also a museum dedicated to the Olympic Games as well as one to the archaeological finds of the area.

Overnight in Olympia.



Nafplion

Day 5 - Nafplion

After breakfast, drive east towards Nafplion (c. 3 hours), the first capital of modern Greece. Nafplion is one of the best-preserved and most beautiful towns in Greece. The Venetian architecture, narrow lanes and the hilltop fortifications are the perfect setting for a late afternoon stroll.

Overnight in Nafplion.

Days 6 and 7 - Explore Nafplion

Relax in one of the many cafés located in the old town square and or along the seafront, or head to ancient Nemea (one of the four sites of the historic Panhellenic Games), Epidavros Theatre or Ancient Mycenae. You can do all three in one day, distances are not great.

Overnight in Nafplion.

Day 8 - Day of departure

Drive to Athens Airport (c. 2 hours) for your return flight to the UK.

Delphi



Duration

7 nights

Itinerary includes:

- Return flights to Athens
- 2 nights Athens – Bed and Breakfast
- 1 Night Delphi - Bed and Breakfast
- 1 Nights Olympia - Bed and Breakfast
- 3 Nights Nafplion - Bed and Breakfast
- Transfer on arrival
- 6 days' car hire

Guide price

Based on 2 sharing from **£1269 per person**

Discover the South Peloponnese

10 Nights Fly Drive

In our book the south Peloponnese is one of the most beautiful (and overlooked) areas of mainland Greece. It is historic - there are archaeological sites dating back to the Trojan War, castles, medieval towns, Byzantine chapels, monasteries and traditional villages to explore; plus the most wonderful scenery, from high peaks to dizzy coastal drives. And of course fabulous beaches (not to mention the food!) and a lack of crowds in all but a few places. Flying directly into Kalamata takes you to the heart of the region from Day One.

Days 1, 2 & 3 - Explore Methoni

On arrival at Kalamata Airport, collect your hire car and drive to the town of Methoni (1 hour), a characterful small town in the south western tip, known for its medieval fortifications stretching out into the sea.

Overnight in Methoni.

Day 4 - Explore Mystras

Today, take a leisurely drive through the stunning mountain scenery to Mystras, close to Sparta (2-3 hours depending if you go the scenic route or not - scenic recommended!). Mystras is a remarkably preserved and very important Byzantine City on the slopes of Mount Taygetus, Mystras really should not be missed and is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Overnight in Mystras.

Days 5 & 6 - Explore Monemvasia

Monemvasia is today's destination (1hr 30). Another medieval gem, sometimes called Greece's Gibraltar because this heavily fortified walled town is built on a huge rock, surrounded by sea on



three sides and only accessed via a causeway. Very pretty and popular with Greek honeymooners!

Overnight in Monemvasia.

Day 7 - Explore Gythion

Depending on your route (1hr 30) today's drive will take you to Gythion, a small seaside town known for its fish restaurants. Legend has it that the islet of Kranai just off shore, now linked by a causeway, is where Helen and Paris eloped to before setting sail for Troy.

Overnight in Gythion.

Days 8, 9 & 10 - Explore Kardamili

At leisure in Kardamili (1hr 30). This small sophisticated village in the Outer Mani has a stunning mountain backdrop. It remains defiantly upmarket and favoured by writers, artists and walkers of all ages and nationalities. One of our favourite spots in all Greece!

Overnights in Kardamili.



Day 11 - Day of departure

After breakfast, drive to Kalamata Airport (1 hour) for your return flight to the UK.

This can be adapted to combine with our Classical Highlights itinerary to create a longer itinerary (14 nights plus) covering the whole of the Peloponnese (including Olympia, Nafplion plus the mountain village of Dimitsana in the beautiful region of Arcadia in the central Peloponnese) and Delphi. It could also be done through Athens with some nights in the city if desired.

Duration

10 nights

Itinerary includes:

- Return flights to Kalamata
- 3 nights Methoni – Bed and Breakfast
- 1 night Mystras - Bed and Breakfast
- 2 nights Monemvasia - Bed and Breakfast
- 1 night Gythion - Bed and Breakfast
- 3 nights Kardamili - Bed and Breakfast
- Transfer on arrival
- 10 days' car hire

Guide price

Based on 2 sharing from **£1397 per person**

Monemvasia



Highlights of Central Greece

14 Nights Fly Drive

Central Greece is a heady mix of mountains and plains spreading from the Ionian Sea in the west to the Aegean in the east, via the mighty peaks of the Pindus.

Day 1 - Explore Preveza

On arrival at the airport, collect your hire car and drive (20 mins) to Preveza, a small historic town close to the airport and a very good overnight base from which to start your adventure.

Overnight in Preveza.

Day 2 - Explore Delphi

Today, you will drive from Preveza (3 hours 30 - recommend a stop at Nafpaktos for lunch) to Delphi. This ancient Greek sacred place is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, a place with a long history and beautiful natural surroundings. Once believed to be the centre of the world, Delphi is one of Greece's 'big three' sites to see.

Overnight in Delphi.

Days 3, 4 & 5 - Explore Pelion

From Delphi, drive to Pelion on the east coast (3 hours). Spend the next three days exploring the 23 mile-long peninsula. It is truly 'old style' Greece with small seaside villages below and beautiful preserved villages up in the mountains. A heady mix of thickly forested mountains and wonderful beaches.

Overnights in Pelion.

Day 6 - Explore Kalambaka and Meteora

Your holiday continues to Kalambaka (2 hours 30). Visit the medieval Meteora monasteries, built atop pinnacles of rock. These are some of the most spectacular monuments of Greece, protected by UNESCO, and not to be missed.

Overnight in Kastraki or Kalambaka.

Day 7 - Explore Metsovo

Today, you will drive to Metsovo (1 hour 30). At an elevation of 1160m this large traditional village is set amidst beautiful mountain scenery. Metsovo is famous amongst Greeks so always has plenty of visitors and life. It is known for its weaving, wine, smoked cheese and hearty lamb dishes and has plenty of restaurants. It's the centre of the local Vlach population and has an interesting Folk Museum.

Alternatively you could have an extra day at Meteora and just have a lunch stop here as your next stop, Ioannina, is not a long drive.

Overnight in Metsovo.

Day 8 - Explore Ioannina

From Metsovo head to Ioannina (50 mins). Set on the western shore of Lake Pamvotis, Ioannina is one of northwestern Greece's most atmospheric cities, and one of its more cultured and wealthy, as it was famous throughout the Ottoman Empire for its silver artisans. The walls of its old fortified city, the Kastro, enclose a tranquil quarter, spiked with minarets, and an island in the lake is a quiet, car-free escape. At sunset the lake turns silver and the impressive mountains behind turn lilac.

Overnight in Ioannina.

Days 9, 10 & 11 - Explore Zagoria

Spend the next three days exploring Zagoria in the Epirus region (1 hour 30). Zagoria is a national park of 1,000 sq km which houses over 40 preserved, traditional mountain villages. The area is famous for its natural beauty and is a popular destination for walking and hiking. In recent years, the area has developed in active ecotourism. The most impressive sight in Zagoria is the Vikos Gorge, the second deepest in the world.

Overnight in Megalo Papingo.



Days 12, 13 & 14 - Explore Sivota

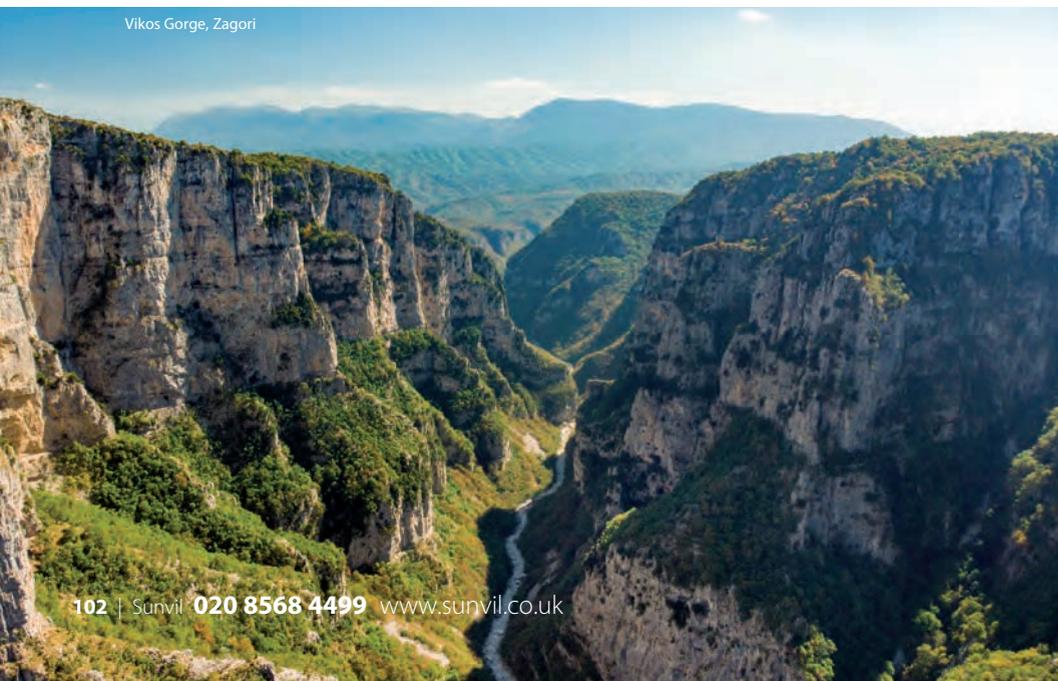
End your holiday with a few days of relaxation in the pretty harbour village of Sivota (1 hour 30). Located in an area of outstanding natural beauty and surrounded by lush wooded hills. The harbour remains the focal point of the village, with plenty of tavernas and restaurants. The surrounding coastline offers rocky coves and stretches of coarse near-white sand. Just off-shore are 3 islets where sometimes deserted beaches can be found – hire a boat, take a picnic and explore!

Overnight in Sivota.

Day 15

After breakfast, drive to Preveza Airport (1 hour 30) for your return flight to the UK.

Vikos Gorge, Zagori



Duration

14 nights

Itinerary includes:

- Return flights to Preveza
- 1 Night Preveza – Bed and Breakfast
- 1 Night Delphi - Bed and Breakfast
- 3 Nights Pelion - Bed and Breakfast
- 1 Night Kastraki or Kalambaka - B&B
- 1 Night Metsovo – Bed and Breakfast
- 1 Night Ioannina – Bed and Breakfast
- 3 Nights Megalo Papingo - B&B
- 3 Nights Sivota – Bed and Breakfast
- 14 days' car hire

Guide price

Based on 2 sharing from **£1689 per person**

Thessaloniki and North Western Greece

10 Nights Fly Drive

Thessaloniki is the liveliest and most vibrant city in Greece. It is also the focal point of Macedonia, one of the least known yet very interesting regions of Greece. This fly-drive, which includes a city stay in Thessaloniki, followed by an itinerary around some of the north-western regions of Greece is an introduction to these fascinating areas of the mainland.

Day 1 - Day of arrival

On arrival at Thessaloniki Airport you will be transferred to your hotel in the centre of the city. Overnight in Thessaloniki.

Days 2 and 3 - Thessaloniki

Enjoy time at leisure discovering this multi-faceted city. Take your exploration at leisure and allow yourself time to connect with the history, culture and geography of the city. Do not miss the Archaeological Museum, the Museum of Byzantine Culture, the White Tower Museum and, in the evening, perhaps attend a performance at an ancient open air Greek theatre or in what is one of the largest and most modern concert halls in Greece.

Overnight in Thessaloniki.

Day 4 - Veria

After breakfast, your car will be delivered to your hotel and you are able to set off for Veria, a drive of 72km (1 hour). Veria is now a fairly prosperous agricultural town but dates from as early as 1,000 BC. It was an important town for Philip II of Macedon and also subsequently for the Romans. St Paul preached there and under the Ottomans and Byzantium the town was a centre of learning. During World War II it was an important resistance

centre against the Nazis. Ancient Aegae (Vergina), the summer capital of Philip II of Macedon, father of Alexander The Great, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site is only a 12km drive away. The site contains the tomb of Philip II and is one of the very famous archaeological sites in Greece.

Overnight in Veria.

Day 5 - Kastraki

After breakfast, continue south to Kalambaka or Kastraki in Thessaly, a drive of 164km (2 hours). Either is a good base from which to view the cliff-top monasteries of Meteora, one of the most spectacular sights in Greece with monasteries seemingly impossibly perched on monolith shaped pillars of rock. Needless to say the monasteries of Meteora are a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Out of the 20 monasteries built at the beginning of the 14th century in order for the hermit monks to escape from the Turkish occupation, only 6 remain today.

Overnight in Kastraki.

Day 6, 7 and 8 - Epirus and Zagori

After breakfast, the drive is to the west through the mountain village of Metsovo (worth a stop for coffee and a wander) and then on through the Pindus Mountains and the municipality of Zagoria to Papingo. The total drive is 122km (1 hour 45 minutes).

With wild rivers, 18th century bridges, some 46 grey stone villages and spectacular mountains this is an area for walkers and nature lovers. The jewel in the crown of the Pindus Mountains is, of course, the Vicos gorge, the deepest in the world. Head for the viewing point at Oxia, near the village of Monodendri, for the most spectacular view in Greece.

Overnight in Megalo Papingo.

Day 9 - Florina

Today you will complete the longest drive of the itinerary. Florina is 282km (3 hours 20 minutes) almost on the Albanian border.

Florina, in mountainous north-western Macedonia is the gateway to the famous Prespa Lakes bordering Greece, Macedonia and Albania. This is a market, agricultural town. The Prespa lakes (there are two) are set amongst wooded mountains and are one of the most important wetlands in Europe and of considerable beauty. Hundreds of bird species migrate through the area and nest and breed here with many very rare species.

Overnight in Florina.

Day 10 - Edessa

From Florina to Edessa (77km). Edessa is a city at the crossroads of history and traditionally controlled the Via Egnatia, the most famous of Roman roads. The city has been occupied by Parthians, Armenians, Romans, Persians, Normans, Ottomans, Serbs and Byzantines. Known for its waterfalls and the site of ancient Edessa, the ancient city of Pella is a short drive away. A good base for your final night in Macedonia, the home of Alexander the Great.

Overnight in Edessa.

Day 11 Day of departure

After breakfast, set off for Thessaloniki Airport, an hour and a half's drive (109km) for your flight home.

Duration

10 nights

Itinerary includes:

- Return flights to Thessaloniki
- 3 nights Thessaloniki – Bed and Breakfast
- 1 Night Veria - Bed and Breakfast
- 1 Night Kastraki - Bed and Breakfast
- 3 Nights Papingo - Bed and Breakfast
- 1 Night Florina - Bed and Breakfast
- 1 Night Edessa
- Transfer on arrival
- 8 days' car hire

Guide price

Based on 2 sharing from **£1484 per person**

Edessa

