



Saronic Islands

The islands of the Argo-Saronic, to give them their full title, run south from Athens and hug the sheltered shoreline of the eastern Peloponnese.

They are the easiest islands to get to from Athens as they have a frequent and fast hydrofoil/catamaran service, and as such do get busy at the weekends and in Greek holiday periods. The closest (Aegina) can take just 40 minutes to reach.

Here aromatic pine trees dominate, often running down to a rocky shoreline. There are sandy beaches but more often you will find smaller shingle beaches and coves. The sea, is sparklingly clear everywhere.

Architecture is handsome, including elegant sea captain's mansions (especially on Hydra). Red-tiled roofs predominate rather than the flat Cycladic style.

These islands work very well as a twin-centre or island hopping itinerary or in combination with Athens. Holidays can be arranged from the start of April to the end of October.

Tiny **Agistri** (55 mins from Piraeus), at just 13 sq kms in size, is the smallest of the chain and often overlooked. But the island packs a punch far greater than its size.

Agistri is heavily forested - in fact over 80% of the island is pine-covered. Easy walking is an attraction - there is nothing very steep (the highest point is 245m) and 3 walking paths have now been opened up, with more to come.

There are only three settlements, linked by a bus. Skala is where most visitors stay, thanks to its spit of sandy beach overlooked by a blue-domed church. Skala has a very wide choice

of tavernas, cafes and small shops.

The waters around Agistri are turquoise-hued and very clear, so perfect for snorkeling. Aegina can be reached in just 10 minutes by sea-taxi or hydrofoil, and you can visit Athens for the day. Horse riding, bike hire, sea kayaking, diving and boat excursions are on offer.

Agistri is very good value and prices are reasonable. Friendly, laid-back, genuine and very Greek, Agistri is a secret that you will not regret discovering.

On fashionable, upmarket **Hydra** (90 mins from Piraeus) all forms of private motorised transport are banned - the only way around is on foot, by boat or on a mule!

The main town and port is one of the most beautiful in Greece, with preserved neo-classical mansions, whitewashed village houses and narrow cobbled lanes climbing steeply up from the horse-shoe shaped harbour. The whole is preserved as a national monument. The mansions date from the 18th century and are a reminder of Hydra's prosperous past. The bustling port is at its best in the evenings, when the quayside twinkles with cafés, small shops, bars and atmospheric restaurants.

Aegina is one of the closest islands to Athens, taking just 40 minutes on one of the frequent hydrofoil services from Piraeus to reach. It is of course popular with Athenians to visit at weekends, which has the advantage of keeping taverna

standards up and prices down.

Aegina Town is colourful with a long waterfront lined with tavernas known for their fresh fish. There are neoclassical buildings, narrow back streets and shaded squares to explore. Just to the north, behind the small beach, is the site of Kolona which dates back some 5000 years. Aegina once rivalled Athens as a sea power and it is said that island introduced coins to the western world. The 6th century BC temple of Athena Aphaia is a must to visit as well as the ruined medieval village of Paleochora, with its many Byzantine churches and the nearby monastery.

There are many beaches, some organised, others still untouched. The smaller island of Agistri is just 10 minutes away by hydrofoil - an obvious day trip - and a two centre holiday is very easy to arrange.

The green island of **Poros** (80 mins from Piraeus) hugs the Peloponnese coastline and is actually two islands connected by a small bridge. The bulk is called Kalavria, covered with pine and olive trees and edged with inviting coves, rocky shores and some sandy beaches such as lovely Askeli just 2 kms from the port.

The small southern islet is Spheria - volcanic and rocky, on which Poros Town is built. The tiered town is known for its landmark clock tower at its highest point, worth climbing up to at sunset for the views. The waterfront below is always lively and its many cafes and taverna restaurants are perfect spots to watch the bustle of the port.

It is just a 5 minute water taxi or ferry ride over the strait to Galatas on the Peloponnese, and from here one can visit ancient Troezin. One of the organised day-excursions available from Poros is a mini-Classical Tour, taking in Epidavros, Nafplion and Mycenae. Another runs to the volcanic peninsula of Methana, a mysterious and atmospheric area of craters and thermal pools.

SARONIC ISLANDS INFORMATION

Getting to the islands

Flights from Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, Luton, Bristol, Manchester and Edinburgh to Athens. 1 hour taxi to Piraeus port for high speed cat or hydrofoil to the island (included - see descriptions for length of journey). Onward transfer to your accommodation. Transfers on Hydra are not provided as the hotels are close to the port but porters meet the boat if required. On your return the reverse applies.

Multi-Centre Options

Agistri connects with Aegina in just 10 minutes! Aegina has ferry links with Poros, and Poros, Hydra and Spetses are also easy to combine. All can be combined with Athens, or tailor-made with a wide variety of options via Athens.

Representatives

We do not employ our own representatives on these islands and transfers are unescorted. Our hotels should be able to give any information required. Our main agents in Athens can always be contacted if required.



Oasis Scala Beach Hotel Agistri

The Oasis Scala Beach Hotel is, we think, the best hotel on Agistri. Directly above Skala's sandy beach, it's just a couple of minutes' easy walk from the centre of the village with its wide choice of tavernas, cafés and small shops.

The hotel has 52 rooms, either above the pool, the beach or the small garden to the rear. They are nicely furnished and mostly double-bedded with pretty decor. In-room facilities include AC, WiFi, TV, mini-fridge, tea-making equipment,

room-safe and hairdryer. All rooms have a modern walk-in shower and good-sized covered balcony with sea, pool, garden or village/mountain views. Some ground floor rooms have direct garden access (no steps).

In addition to its Classic double rooms the hotel has spacious Suites and family maisonettes sleeping up to 4 persons. It offers room service and a laundry service on request (local charge). The hotel also has a roof terrace Spa, with jacuzzis

and a range of massage treatments. Wine tastings are arranged weekly in season.

To the front is the 90 sq m seawater pool, with a good terrace cafe-bar and restaurant to one side. On the beach sun beds can be reserved for guests free of charge, and beach towels provided.

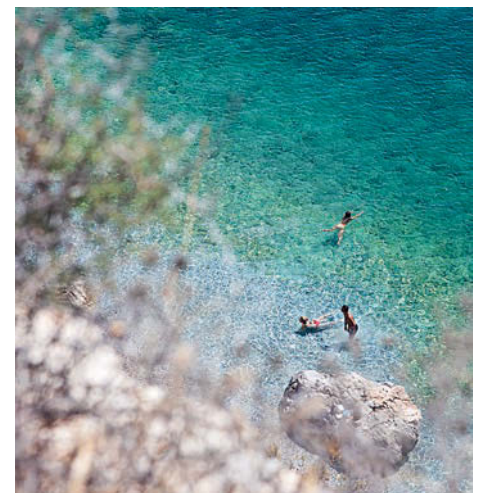
Michalis and Dorina could not be more welcoming and are always on hand to help their guests get the most from their stay on Agistri.



Beach in front of Oasis Scala Hotel

The Hotel:
3 Stars Plus
Bed & Breakfast

Air Conditioning
Swimming Pool
Free WiFi



The clear waters surrounding Agistri

Vagia Hotel Aegina

A most charming traditional hotel at the edge of the small fishing village of Vagia in Aegina's quiet north east corner. It is the only hotel in the village and is personally run by the owner Panayiotis, whose mission it is to ensure all his guests leave feeling that Vagia is their second home.

The hotel has beautifully colourful mature gardens in which are set two buildings housing the 21 rooms. The rooms have a simple traditional rustic style with stone floors and dark wood furniture. All possess AC, mini-bar/fridge, TV, WiFi,

shower room and balcony with garden, country or sea views towards Salamina and Athens.

The Vagia's pergola-shaded front terrace is the perfect place to relax with a drink or perhaps the hotel's homemade ice cream, and also the venue for a rich buffet breakfast (local charge €9). In the evenings it doubles as a restaurant offering a small but delicious choice of Greek speciality dishes. There are plenty of other shaded spots in the gardens for guests to sit.

It is a 5 minute walk to the sandy beach, which has sun beds, and a number of small coves can be found within a further short walk. Although the village is small it has 7 tavernas. Boat trips can be arranged and walking possibilities include the Temple of Aphaia in around 45 minutes. The bus service is limited so for further exploration car hire would be an idea.



The Hotel: Room Only
2 Stars Air Conditioning
Free WiFi



Rastoni Hotel Aegina

The Rastoni Hotel is built on what was a pistachio farm in a quiet residential neighbourhood a 15 minute walk from Aegina Town and harbour. Ferries, shops, restaurants and cafes are therefore all accessible, as is the beach and the archaeological site of Kolona.

The hotel has a colonial style and is surrounded by a shady, well tended garden where breakfast can be taken. There are many small fountains, nooks and crannies, benches, chairs and tables within the gardens - ideal for a quiet read or snooze. Pistachio trees are everywhere!

The 14 rooms are individually decorated so no two are the same. All have a fridge and tea and coffee-making facilities. There is a mixture

of twin beds and queen size doubles and all rooms possess TV, air conditioning, fridge, tea-making facilities, room safe, ceiling fan and bathroom with shower.

Standard rooms are ground floor and their room terraces lead into the garden. Superior rooms have a sea view balcony. The sea view suites are larger and have balcony views to the sea and Kolona archaeological site. The secluded Jasmine and Bamboo suites are set in the hotel's leafy garden, perfect for relaxation.

The staff at the Rastoni are helpful and discreet and have a wealth of knowledge about what to do and when, including advice on hiking trails.

A highly recommended and most comfortable base from which to explore Aegina, or to simply recharge batteries in glorious, peaceful surroundings.



Temple of Aphaia

The Hotel: Bed & Breakfast
3 Stars plus Air Conditioning
Free WiFi

Golden View Hotel Poros

A long established hotel of 55 rooms occupying a prime location directly on Askeli beach 2 kms from Poros Town.

Rooms have double or twin beds and all have AC, WiFi, room safe, mini-fridge, bathroom (most with bath and shower above), hairdryer and balcony - ours are front sea facing and enjoy lovely views over the bay. Simple and comfortable, decor is a traditional island style with dark wood furniture. There are also open plan Junior Suites for 2-3 persons and 2-room Family Suites for up to 4. Please note there is no lift.

Askeli beach is beautifully sandy and boasts a Blue Flag (2018). The hotel is at the start of the beach and has

its own corner with sun beds and umbrellas free to guests. Above is the freshwater pool, measuring some 100 sq m (depth 1.30m-2.10m) and the hotel operates a beach taverna. Four or five other restaurants and cafes can be found within a short stroll.

It is a 25 minute walk to town, which can also be reached by bus (hourly in season) or taxi, which should cost no more than €4-€5.

Half Board: £117 per week

The Hotel:	Swimming Pool
3 Stars	Air Conditioning
Bed & Breakfast	Free WiFi



Askeli Beach



View from roof terrace

Dimitra Boutique Hotel Poros

This charming small hotel is in a quiet residential part of Poros Town, a 6-7 minute walk from the centre of the port and 12 minutes from Kanali beach. Its slightly elevated position enables great views over the bay to the mountains of the mainland Peloponnese.

The hotel has only 10 rooms on 3 floors, served by a lift. They are very nicely done in a chic modern style. All can be double or twin bedded and possess AC, WiFi, tea-making facilities, mini-fridge and a nice shower room. Standard room balconies have town views, Superior rooms have sea or side-sea views.

There is one open plan double Suite (town views).

On the roof there is a furnished part-covered terrace boasting fabulous views where breakfast is taken.

Due to the location - there are 20 steps up from the street - we would not recommend a stay here to those with walking difficulties.

The Hotel:	Air Conditioning
3 Stars plus	Free WiFi
Bed & Breakfast	



Poros Town

Hydroussa Hotel Hydra

The 3 Star Hydroussa Hotel enjoys a peaceful yet very convenient location an easy 2-3 minute walk (180m) back from the harbour walk with no hills to climb. A conversion of one of Hydra's most impressive 18th century mansions (Leousis), the 3-storey building overlooks pretty Votsi square, known for its lemon trees.

The 40 rooms here are mostly twin bedded and possess AC, TV, mini-fridge, hairdryer, WiFi and renovated modern shower room (some with bathtub also). Furnishings and decor are attractive and traditional. Due to the age of this large former mansion rooms do not have balcony but the hotel has a lovely paved courtyard garden to the front with plenty of seating for guests and shade provided by lemon trees.

A good buffet breakfast is provided each day in the spacious breakfast room (although most guests take it in the courtyard garden) and there is a charming lounge with traditional furniture, local objets d'art and pictures reflecting the island's nautical past.

A very well priced hotel for Hydra, comfortable, well kept with character and in a great location. The Hydroussa has in the past been used as a location for films including 'Boy on a Dolphin' starring Sophia Loren.

The Hotel: 3 Stars
 Bed & Breakfast
 Air Conditioning
 Free WiFi



Hydra



Skala, Agistri



Aegina Town



Hydra

SARONIC ISLANDS		Guide prices per person in £s departing during									
ACCOMMODATION	PERSONS BASIS	Low Season (May - end Jun & mid Sep - Oct)				High Season (early Jul - early Sep)					
		From		To		From		To			
Agistri											
Oasis Scala	Classic Mountain View	2	BB	732	940	872	1228	906	1282	1116	1604
	Classic Sea View	2	BB	808	1087	918	1322	952	1374	1157	1686
	Maisonette	2	BB	930	1346	1156	1798	1190	1850	1400	2173
		3	BB	806	1086	945	1375	979	1421	1145	1663
		4	BB	744	955	839	1163	873	1206	1018	1407
	Suite	2	BB	952	1402	1266	2016	1300	2066	1488	2348
	3	BB	820	1123	1018	1520	1052	1565	1204	1779	
	4	BB	754	983	894	1272	928	1314	1061	1495	
Aegina											
Rastoni Hotel	Standard Room	2	BB	974	1319	986	1361	1030	1418	1127	1512
Vagia Hotel	Standard Room	2	RO	822	986	792	965	828	1026	998	1214
Poros											
Dimitra Boutique	Standard Room	2	BB	954	1293	996	1364	1036	1430	1126	1519
	Superior Room	2	BB	998	1394	1060	1484	1091	1528	1168	1605

ACCOMMODATION		PERSONS BASIS	Low Season (May - end Jun & mid Sep - Oct)				High Season (early Jul - early Sep)				
			From		To		From		To		
Golden View Hotel	Sea View	2	BB	912	1176	966	1286	988	1308	1134	1478
	Junior Suite	2	BB	1014	1382	1112	1578	1134	1600	1276	1764
	Suite	2	BB	1070	1494	1180	1716	1202	1738	1362	1924
		3	BB	902	1187	975	1334	997	1356	1125	1502
		4	BB	862	1077	915	1186	937	1208	1050	1334
Hydra											
Hydroussa Hotel	Standard Room	2	BB	1130	1642	1217	1904	1342	2029	1429	2116

Prices shown are indicative only and variable due to offers, changing flight prices and seasonal supplements. Please call or check online for a confirmed costing (note: not all holidays can be checked online). Prices based on Gatwick flights as sourced from Easyjet in November and are likely to increase as time passes. Prices include transfers or car hire (see text); accommodation as described; and all airport/fuel charges & taxes known at the time of printing - for our surcharge policy see booking conditions at the back of this brochure. To add: regional price supplements, room and board supplements (see text) - single room prices on request. Not all our accommodation is suitable for guests with reduced mobility. Please contact us to answer any questions you may have regarding our properties and to advise their suitability for people with health conditions or impairments.

Not included: Overnight Stay Tax of €0.50 to €4 per room, apartment or villa per night payable locally - the amount varies according to the category of the accommodation (i.e. most self catering and 1-2 star hotels = €0.50, 5 star hotels = €4).