

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. The closest (Aegina) can take just 40 minutes to reach; the furthest (Spetses) 2 hrs 15 mins.

Although all the Saronics are different they do have certain common characteristics. 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.



Agistri coastline

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.

Spetses (2hrs 15mins from Piraeus) is known as a retreat for the well-heeled Greeks, as evidenced by the discreet walled villas and glitzy yachts in the marina. Spetses Town is most attractive, with whitewashed bougainvillea-strewn mansions, wide piazzas and a pretty old harbour called Dapia.

As on Hydra cars are banned, so transportation is provided by horse-drawn carriage, bicycles, water-taxis and many buzzing mopeds. Taxis and two local buses also run.

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 of Agios Nektarios.

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 from which to watch the bustle of the port.

It is just a 5 minute water taxi or ferry ride over the strait from Poros Town 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 Agistri, Hydra and Spetses

Flights from Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted, 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! Poros, Hydra and Spetses are also easy to combine. Hydra and Spetses are neighbours so combine very easily - there is a minimum stay of 3 nights on each. 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 Hotel Agistri

The Oasis must be the best located hotel on Agistri. It is directly on Skala's sandy beach, and just a couple of minutes' easy walk from the centre of the village and a wide choice of tavernas, cafes and small shops.

The hotel has 25 rooms, either above the pool or the small garden to the rear. They are furnished in a classic style with iron beds (mostly doubles) and 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.



Skala, Agistri

The hotel has a spacious Suite, family maisonettes and rooms with garden access (no steps). It offers room service and a laundry service. The hotel also has a roof terrace spa with jacuzzis and a range of massage treatments. Wine tastings are arranged regularly, free of charge for guests.

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. Recommended.

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



Akrogiali Hotel Agistri

At the entrance to Skala, this small and friendly family-run hotel is set 20m back from the beach. It offers 16 rooms on its upper two floors (please note there is no lift).

The rooms have a very pretty light decor and simple but attractive furnishings. They are twin or double bedded and all possess AC, WiFi, tea-making facilities, mini-fridge, TV, shower room and balcony with sunblind - views are mainly mountain or garden, some have a side sea view.

There is a garden to the rear with tables and chairs, and here breakfast is available at a local charge (€7).

On the sand/shingle beach to the front sun beds are free of charge for patrons of the cafe-bar there. There is a wide choice of other cafes, tavernas and small shops within a few minutes' walk.

The Hotel: 2 Stars
Room Only
Air Conditioning
Free WiFi



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: **2 Stars**
Room Only
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: **3 Stars plus**
Bed & Breakfast
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: £112 per week

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



Poros Town



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.



Poros Town clock tower

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

Hydroussa Hotel Hydra

The Hydroussa enjoys a very convenient location an easy 2-3 minute walk back from the harbour with no hills to climb. It is a 3-storey building designed in the attractive island style and looks over Votsi square to the front.

The 40 rooms here are all twin-bedded and possess AC, TV, mini-fridge and shower room. Furnishings are simple and traditional in flavour. Due to the age of this large former mansion rooms do not have balcony but most are spacious.

The lovely courtyard garden to the front has tables and chairs, and

breakfast can be taken here. WiFi is available in public areas.

A very well-priced hotel for Hydra, a little dated in places but comfortable, well kept with some character and in a great location.

We can also arrange stays in an upmarket mansion hotel - see website for details.

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



Spetses Town



Economou Mansion Spetses

Standing above the narrow seafront road, this restored sea captain's mansion dates from 1851 and has just six cosily furnished rooms. Carefully converted to preserve its character the hotel is a 10 minute walk above the sea from the centre and Dapia harbour.

All rooms possess traditional iron double bed, high wooden ceiling, AC, WiFi, mini-fridge, safety deposit box, tea-making facilities and a walk-in shower. The studios also have light cooking facilities. Due to the age of the building there are no balconies, but most have sea views through their window and one studio has an outdoor sea view patio in the garden to one side.

There is a delightfully furnished lounge, and a swimming pool (8m x 5m) in a walled garden area.

You will find a number of restaurants nearby, and it is a 10-15 minute walk to Kaiki beach as you go away from the town.

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



Spetses Town



Skala, Agistri



The clear waters surrounding Agistri



Aegina Town



Poros Town



Hydra



Askeli Beach, Poros

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	
		1 Wk	2 Wks	1 Wk	2 Wks	1 Wk	2 Wks	1 Wk	2 Wk
Agistri									
Akrogiali Hotel Standard Room	2 BB	824	985	926	1162	968	1216	1028	1314
Oasis Scala Classic Mountain View	2 BB	840	1018	1040	1376	1057	1393	1209	1676
Classic Sea View	2 BB	928	1194	1098	1494	1116	1510	1275	1808
Maisonette	2 BB	1011	1360	1320	1936	1336	1952	1472	2203
	3 BB	868	1103	1087	1500	1104	1517	1202	1691
	4 BB	839	1018	1014	1326	1032	1343	1110	1479
Suite	2 BB	1044	1428	1424	2143	1440	2160	1573	2404
	3 BB	890	1148	1157	1639	1174	1656	1269	1826
	4 BB	856	1051	1066	1430	1084	1447	1160	1580
Aegina									
Rastoni Hotel Standard Room	2 BB	978	1272	1052	1393	1090	1454	1120	1478
Superior Room	2 BB	1022	1360	1095	1480	1134	1541	1164	1565
Bamboo Suite	2 BB	1022	1360	1095	1480	1134	1541	1164	1565
Jasmine Suite	2 BB	1044	1404	1117	1524	1156	1585	1186	1609
Junior Suite	2 BB	1050	1416	1139	1568	1178	1628	1208	1652
Superior Suite	2 BB	1088	1492	1161	1612	1200	1672	1230	1696
Vagia Hotel Standard Room	2 BB	852	1017	890	1062	916	1120	1026	1274
Poros									
Golden View Hotel Standard Room	2 BB	936	1201	978	1298	1050	1371	1142	1536
Junior Suite	2 BB	1038	1408	1080	1549	1197	1666	1270	1790
Suite	2 BB	1094	1519	1136	1672	1264	1800	1373	1996
	3 BB	926	1211	968	1328	1059	1419	1138	1556
Dimitra Boutique Standard Room	2 BB	RQ	RQ	RQ	RQ	RQ	RQ	RQ	RQ

ACCOMMODATION

ACCOMMODATION	PERSONS BASIS	Low Season (May - end Jun & mid Sep - Oct)				High Season (early Jul - early Sep)			
		From		To		From		To	
		1 Wk	2 Wks	1 Wk	2 Wks	1 Wk	2 Wks	1 Wk	2 Wk
Hydra									
Hydroussa Hotel Standard Room	2 BB	1586	2495	1735	2862	1862	3072	1365	2231
Spetses									
Economou Mansion Standard Garden View	2 BB	1098	1479	1372	1984	1388	2002	1410	2022
Standard Sea View	2 BB	1152	1586	1482	2204	1498	2221	1520	2242
Studio	2 BB	1240	1764	1594	2430	1612	2447	1632	2468

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 2018 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).