

Thessaloniki

We'd highly recommend a few nights in Thessaloniki at the beginning or end of your holiday to Halkidiki, which is very easy for us to arrange.

In many ways Thessaloniki feels like a big, modern, waterfront city, the second largest in Greece and with a far more cosmopolitan vibe than Athens. There are major shopping streets, lively laneways, a university with 150,000 students and a vast selection of restaurants and cafes. It is also a city with a turbulent past, a profound history of intertwined cultures, and a lasting legacy from its place at the very crossroads between East and West. Founded in 315 B.C. Thessaloniki was named after a half-sister of Alexander the Great. Since then, the city has been dominated by whichever empire was in power, from Byzantium to Ottoman. You can explore several Paleochristian sites, the remains of a Roman market and theatre, Byzantine city walls and an 8th century copy of the Agia Sophia in

Constantinople, the emblematic White Tower, and crowded alleyways and hamams (bath houses).

This mix of cultures comes alive in regards to food. Thessaloniki is renowned as the gourmet capital of Greece, with a cuisine that fuses Mediterranean, Balkan and Turkish sensibilities.

Thessaloniki is a city made for walking. Take an evening stroll (volta) along the waterfront, perhaps ending up in the narrow alleys of old Ladadika, home to a buzzing nightlife of authentic street restaurants and bars; visit one of the city's thirty (30!) museums; take the bus to the Ano Poli (Old City) and from the very top look down upon the bustling city and glimpse, in the distance, across the sea, Mount Olympus itself.



Central Thessaloniki Hotels

We have hand-picked a small number of hotels for their combination of good modern standards and a handy central location with value for money. They are suitable for short or long stays.

The **Excelsior Hotel** - boutique 5 Star of 34 rooms in a wonderfully restored building close to the central Aristotelous Square. The rooms manage to perfectly combine modernity and proper 5 star comfort with neoclassical features and the original design.

The **Bristol**, a member of Yades Historic Hotels and also 5 stars, is in the historical Ladadika district a 10 minute walk from the centre. Converted from a beautiful neoclassical building, the rooms are very spacious and richly furnished in a Classic style. The hotel supplies vintage bicycles for free use on the nearby seafront promenade.

The **Olympia Hotel** is a 3 Star which has been renovated to a modern minimalist style. The hotel has an enviable location overlooking the old Roman Agora. Although quiet here away from the main roads you are just a short 5 minute walk away from Aristotelous Square.

The **Park Hotel** is 3 minutes walk further along the same street and

also 3 stars. It too has a Roman site (part excavated) to the front. Its 56 rooms have a clean modern style. Good location and well priced.

We can arrange short or long stays with taxi transfers. As flight prices vary so much please ask us for a quote.

Private Walking Tour

There is no better way to get under the skin of a city than on foot, and Thessaloniki is perfect as most of its major historical attractions are contained within a relatively small area. A walking tour can be pre-booked from any of our city hotels.

Your personal guide will meet you at your hotel and the tour will include all the main monuments (many of them listed by UNESCO) including The White Tower, the Roman forum, the Rotunda, Galerius Arch, palace ruins, medieval towers and modest Byzantine churches hiding rare treasures - all of which will give you an insight into this fascinating melting-pot of a city that once belonged almost equally to Jews, Greeks, Ottomans and refugees from Asia Minor to name a few.

Cost: £65 per person (minimum 2)

Duration: 3 hours

Included: English speaking guide

Not included: Entrance fees (namely The White Tower Museum €4 pp), shoe leather



Excelsior Hotel



Arch of Galerius

Park Hotel