



# The Greek Dodecanese Islands: Kos & Rhodes

11 days | 14 days with Meteora, Delphi & the Athens Riviera extension

Floating in azure waters just a stone's throw from the Asian mainland, the Dodecanese take the vibes of Greece's other islands and add impeccably preserved monuments to the mix. Want sterling sands and arresting ruins that rival those of Athens? Kos' beaches and Rhodes' walled Medieval City offer both (along with easy connections to the pristine shores of neighboring Kalymnos, Plati, Pserimos, and Symi). Spend some blissful days island-hopping, then head home with a tan and memories of paradise—or right along to Meteora and Delphi on this trip's extension.



## Your tour package includes

- 9 nights in handpicked hotels
- 9 breakfasts
- 1 lunch
- 3 dinners with beer or wine
- 1 food tasting
- 3 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach
- 1 ferry transfer
- 2 on-tour flights

## Included highlights

- Acropolis
- Acropolis Museum
- Kos honey tasting
- Kos' Sanctuary of Asklepios
- Plane Tree of Hippocrates
- Rhodes Old Town
- Palace of the Grand Master of the Knights of Rhodes

## Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for at least 2 hours daily across uneven terrain, including paved roads and cobblestone streets, with steep hills and stairs.

## Group size

15–28

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## Overnight Flight → 1 night

### Day 1: Travel day

Board your overnight flight to Athens today.

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## Athens → 2 nights

### Day 2: Arrival in Athens

*Included meals: welcome dinner*

Welcome to Greece! Transfer to your hotel, where you'll get to know your Tour Director and fellow travelers over a welcome dinner, served with your choice of beer or wine.

### Day 3: Sightseeing tour of the Acropolis & the Acropolis Museum

*Included meals: breakfast*

A local guide introduces you to the highlights of this bustling ancient capital, home to the world's first democracy.

- Drive through village-like Plaka—the historic “neighborhood of the gods” built in the shadow of the Acropolis.
- Set off on a walking tour around the Acropolis of Athens, a millennia-old, UNESCO-listed citadel and the enduring image of Greece. First properly developed by the renowned politician Pericles, it now contains the ruins of the Parthenon, Temple of Athena Nike, Erechtheion, and dozens of other archaeological sites.
- Step inside the Acropolis Museum, a 150,000-square-foot space dedicated to exhibiting every artifact recovered from the Acropolis and its foothills. First opened in 2009, it chronicles the history of Greece, from the Bronze Age to Byzantine times, through over 4,250 different items.

Enjoy a free afternoon in the city, or add an excursion to explore Athens through one of its greatest gifts: food.

+ Food of Athens Walking Tour

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## Kos → 3 nights

### Day 4: Flight to Kos & honey tasting

*Included meals: breakfast, tasting, dinner*

Board a flight to your first Dodecanese island:

Kos, a beautifully bright locale known for its Greek and Roman historical sites, as well as its picturesque beaches. Upon arriving, pay a visit to a family-owned honey business for a tour and tasting, and learn more about one of the island's most famous exports. Prized by Hippocrates—the “father of modern medicine”—and known for its purity, Koan honey is beloved in Greece and consumed around the world. (Some 50 families produce 200 tons of it each year!)

- Arrive at the facility and meet your guide, who'll walk you through traditional beekeeping methods and honey production processes.
- Indulge in a tasting of locally produced honeys—including typical variants like thyme and pine—paired expertly with delicious Greek loukoumades (sweet, fried balls of dough, drenched in honey syrup).

Continue on to your hotel and freshen up before sitting down for an included dinner, served with your choice of beer or wine.

### Day 5: Sightseeing tour of Kos

*Included meals: breakfast*

Join your Tour Director and spend the first part of your day exploring one of Greece's southernmost islands, a place influenced by over 5,000 years of Ottoman, Roman, and Venetian history.

- Begin at the ruins of the Asklepios, an ancient medical center and healing temple built in honor of one of Kos' most famous sons: Hippocrates himself.
- Head into town to see Neratzia Castle, built in the 14th century by the Knights of Saint John; the Loggia Mosque, one of two Ottoman-era mosques on the island that still hold prayers; and the Tree of Hippocrates, a plane tree under which Hippocrates taught his students.
- Enjoy free time for lunch, then see what pieces of ancient history you can find in charming Kos Town.

Take the rest of the day to explore Kos on your own, or add an exquisite excursion to another island village. (Yes, wine and dinner will be served!)

+ Kos Winery, Zia Village & Tavern Dinner

### Day 6: Free day on Kos

*Included meals: breakfast*

Enjoy a full day to yourself on this beautiful island, or add an excursion to work three more of the Dodecanese into your itinerary.

+ Kalymnos, Plati & Pserimos: Island Cruise & Lunch

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## Rhodes → 3 nights

### Day 7: Ferry to Rhodes & sightseeing tour

*Included meals: breakfast, lunch*

Head south to Rhodes, the largest of the Dodecanese islands and the former site of an ancient wonder of the world: the Colossus of Rhodes. Sit down for an included lunch at a local restaurant, then set out for a guided tour.

- Visit the harbor to view the site of the Colossus of Rhodes. Originally built in 290 B.C., this hulking bronze-and-iron statue of the Greek sun god Helios stood until an earthquake felled it just 54 years after it was first erected. It laid in disrepair, in fulfillment of an oracle, for centuries until invading forces melted it down.
- See the traditional windmills of the Old Town before walking to the UNESCO-listed Medieval City, where Gothic and Ottoman architecture beautifully coexist. Learn how the walled city was built by order of Saint John of Jerusalem and how various groups, from Italians to Ottomans, have called it home over the centuries.
- Walk up the cobbled Street of the Knights to the Palace of the Grand Masters: an enormous structure adorned with towers, arched gates, and statues. Hear how it was restored during the 20th century by the Italians, and how it became the holiday home of politicians like King Victor Emmanuel III and Benito Mussolini.

### Day 8: Free day on Rhodes

*Included meals: breakfast*

Enjoy a free day to explore Rhodes on your own, or add an excursion to one of Greece's most scenic historic sights.

+ Acropolis of Lindos

### Day 9: Free day on Rhodes

*Included meals: breakfast*

Spend one last day getting to know Rhodes at your leisure, or add an excursion to the island of Symi—the “jewel of the Dodecanese.”

+ A Day on Symi Island

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## Athens → 1 night

### Day 10: Flight to Athens

*Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner*

Today, fly to Athens and celebrate your trip with your group over a farewell dinner, served with your choice of beer or wine.

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## Flight Home

### Day 11: Departure

*Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)*

Transfer to the airport for your flight home or extend your stay to explore the mythic regions of Meteora and Delphi.

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## + Meteora, Delphi & the Athens Riviera extension

Throughout epochs and across religions, mainland Greece has been considered a holy land. On this three-night extension, you'll two of its most influential sites. Begin by transferring to the Meteora—home to one of the most important clusters of Eastern Orthodox monasteries in the country—and entering some of its precipitous hermitages. Then, go to Delphi, the center of the Ancient Greeks' spiritual world, before winding down on the Athens Riviera.

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## Meteora Region → 1 night

### Day 11: Transfer to Meteora Region & sightseeing tour

*Included meals: breakfast*

Today, travel to the Pindus mountain range—the “spine of Greece”—and arrive in the remote village of Kalambaka. Then, take a guided walking tour of the Meteora monasteries, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Perched in isolation atop towering, sandstone cliffs, the six surviving monasteries date back to the 14th century, when they were established by Orthodox Christian hermit monks.

- Enter two monasteries, such as the Monastery of Roussanou, the Monastery of Agios Stefanos, or the Monastery of Varlaam.
  - Hike up the Meteora to admire views of the Plain of Thessaly from atop 1,000-foot-high pinnacle rocks.
  - Meet with local nuns for a chat about the traditions and faith of the Eastern Orthodox Church.
  - Learn more about this branch of Christianity, the nuns' lives, and the work they do at the monasteries.
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## Delphi Region → 1 night

### Day 12: Transfer to Delphi & sightseeing tour

*Included meals: breakfast*

Journey to the slopes of Mount Parnassus and visit the Archaeological Site of Delphi. Now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, this spiritual focal point was believed by Ancient Greeks to be the “Navel of the Earth,” the center of our world.

- Embark on a guided tour featuring the Temple of Apollo, where, according to legend, the god Apollo once spoke in prophecy to mortals through the voice of the oracle and high priestess Pythia.
- Take time to explore the ancient treasures at the Delphi Museum, including the life-size bronze statue named the “Charioteer of Delphi.”

Spend a free evening in Delphi or add an excursion to the lovely mountain village of Arachova.

+ Arachova Village & Greek Dinner

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## Athens Riviera → 1 night

### Day 13: Athens Riviera via Hosios Loukas

*Included meals: breakfast*

Head to the country surrounding the Boeotian town of Distomo for a guided tour of Hosios Loukas, a UNESCO-listed monastery that is treasured as a prime example of Middle Byzantine architecture and art.

Continue to your hotel in the Athens Riviera, then raise a glass and toast to your trip with a farewell drink this evening.

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## Flight Home

### Day 14: Departure

*Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)*

Transfer to the airport for your flight home.

# Customize your experience

Customize your tour by adding excursion options. Excursions offered on the same day will occur at different times, so there's no need to choose. Save \$10 when you book your excursion up to three days before your tour departs.\* Excursions requiring advance reservation only list this discounted price. Call or go online to customize your tour: [goaheadtours.com/DRE](https://goaheadtours.com/DRE) | 1-800-597-0350

## Day 3: Food of Athens Walking Tour

\$95/\$105\* (4 hours, departs in the afternoon)

Spend the afternoon in the vibrant Psyrri neighborhood, which is known for its galleries, boutiques, and delicious foods from all over the country. Join your local guide in Monastiraki Square for an introduction to the neighborhood, which is often considered the city's melting pot thanks to its variety of cultures. Visit a historic Athenian bakery that's famous for its koulouri—bagel-like baked goods sprinkled with sesame seeds—and learn about the health benefits of the tiny, tasty, nutty-flavored seeds. Then, sit down at a classic Greek cafe, where you'll learn about local eating and drinking customs as you share plates of local specialties with your fellow travelers. Next, enjoy a little caffeine jolt with a coffee or iced cappuccino before picking up a box of fresh loukoumades, or donut balls coated with honey and nutella. Wrap up the afternoon at the Metropolitan Cathedral, where you'll enjoy tastings of olive oil, balsamic vinegar, ouzo, mastiha, loukoumi, and—of course—baklava. You'll be sure to leave with a stomach full of Greek goodies.

## Day 5: Kos Winery, Zia Village & Tavern Dinner

\$139/\$149\* (7 hours, departs in the evening, includes dinner)

Spend an evening indulging in the food, wine, and village life that make the island of Kos truly special. Begin with a visit to a local winery, where you'll meet up with a guide for a tour of its facilities. Walk through production rooms and aging cellars, then enjoy a tasting of local wines paired with typical island bites. Afterward, set out for the enchanting hilltop village of Zia and sit down for a delicious tavern dinner. Admire panoramic views of the surrounding landscape while savoring your meal, then wrap up and head back to your hotel.

## Day 6: Kalymnos, Plati & Pserimos: Island Cruise & Lunch

\$79 (7 hours, departs in the morning, includes lunch)

Enjoy a day of island-hopping around some of the lesser-traveled Dodecanese—complete with relaxing vibes, delicious food, and plenty of picture-perfect scenery. Begin by boarding a ferry, cruising through the fjord-like Vathy valley, and docking on the sponge-farming island of Kalymnos. Disembark and enjoy free time in Vathy's port village. (We recommend sampling the local orange juice and visiting the sponge factory.) Later, head back to your boat and sit down to an included buffet lunch as you sail to the uninhabited island of Plati. Here, you'll have time to go for a swim before continuing on to Pserimos. With a population of fewer than 100 permanent inhabitants, this little slice of paradise lays claim to pristine beaches, walking paths, and lively tavernas. Kick back and relax, then weigh anchor for the return trip to Kos. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 20 days prior to departure.

## Day 8: Acropolis of Lindos

\$85/\$95\* (5.5 hours, departs in the morning)

Sitting atop a cliff over 350 feet above the Mediterranean Sea, the Acropolis of Lindos has watched over its namesake town since the fourth century B.C. Today, take a scenic drive down the Rhodian coast to Lindos village, then meet up with a local guide to learn more about its long history. Climb up to the Acropolis, where you'll enjoy free time to explore an abundance of Classical and Hellenistic ruins—like the 2,300-year-old remains of the Temple of Athena Lindia. On your way back to Rhodes Town, stop at Saint Paul's Bay (where the Apostle preached in the first century) before visiting the Apolloniatis. At this agrotouristic women's cooperative, you'll sample melekouni and other traditional sweets prepared on-site, and have the opportunity to support their work by purchasing handmade goods.

Please note: You should prepare for lots of walking and be comfortable climbing 100 steps up to and down from the Acropolis. In the event the women's cooperative is closed, you'll participate in an olive oil tasting instead.

## Day 9: A Day on Symi Island

\$89/\$99\* (9 hours, departs in the morning)

This morning, board an express ferry from Rhodes to the small island of Symi: the “jewel of the Dodecanese” known for its colorful villages, panoramic viewpoints, cliffside beaches, and unique atmosphere. Make your way to the village of Panormitis, where you'll have time to enter its 18th-century monastery. Dedicated to the Archangel Michael and visited by many who pray for health, the abbey has peaceful courtyards, a small museum, and elaborate frescoes around its grounds. After your visit, continue back to the main town of Ano Symi and enjoy some free time to explore at your own pace.

Please note: On select days, your ferry will stop at St. George Bay for swimming. Please check with your Tour Director prior to this excursion to properly prepare.

## Extension excursion options

### Day 12: Arachova Village & Greek Dinner

\$79/\$89\* (4 hours, departs in the evening, dinner included)

This evening, visit Arachova, a picturesque town at the foot of Mount Parnassus. Begin with a visit to the Convent of the Prophet Elias, an abbey that dates back to the 11th century. Examine its ornate Greek ecclesiastical wood carvings, then head back into town. The evening is yours to explore Arachova, stroll its cobblestone streets, and admire its Byzantine churches before capping the day with a traditional Greek dinner at a village restaurant.

\*Optional excursions may be purchased up to three days prior to departure or while on tour. Pre-purchased optional excursions cannot be canceled within three days prior to departure or while on tour. Select optional excursions require advance booking and cannot be purchased or canceled after the advanced reservation deadline. GAT accepts payment by cash, Visa or MasterCard for optional excursions purchased on tour. Additional fees may apply for optional excursions purchased on tour. Excursions require a minimum number of participants to operate. Details and prices are subject to change. Due to seasonal hours of operation and availability, some excursions may not operate. If this occurs, you will be refunded any payments made for that excursion post-tour. Learn more at [goaheadtours.com/terms](https://goaheadtours.com/terms)