

**A wonder of a breathtaking landscapes, a nature beyond words to seek for your soul, blue waters in a palette of all blue colors, fabulous waters so safe for the kids and adults to swim, anywhere, since no dangerous species live in.**

**Historical and ancient treasures in all islands and undersea create bonds with the past, strong alternations in landscapes beyond imagination, unforgettable moments you will experience.**

**Infinite yachting areas with different color each!**

## **THE IONIAN ITINERARY**

Embarkation in Athens. Swimming in Aegina & overnight to Epidavros ancient city. Passage through unique Corinth Canal – Galaxidi beach – Zakynthos – Fiscardo in Kefalonia – Ithaki – Lefkada – Meganisi - Preveza –Antipaxoi – Paxoi – Corfu.

**ZAKINTHOS:** The southernmost island of the Ionian, almost triangular in shape, owes its name to the son of Dardanos, the King of Troy who according to myth built the first city there (Homer's Iliad). The endangered sea turtle "Caretta - Caretta" has chosen the sandy beaches of Laganas, Vassilikos and Gerakas to lay her eggs there. It is not easy to forget the emerald sea, the pine covered hills, or the hospitable and openhearted inhabitants of Zante, as it is otherwise called. Churches are everywhere in the city of St. Dionysus, the island's patron saint. Small coffee shops and picturesque villages are to be found among the olive and almond trees, in or around fields planted with vines and vegetables. Zakynthos has many fine sandy beaches with calm and clear waters but Laganas is the most famous. At night, there's bound to be a "mandinades" session - folk songs with local accompanied by local music - underneath a typical balcony.

**KEFALONIA:** The largest of the Ionian Islands. Green rocks plunge suddenly into the deep blue waters. Kefalonia has been justly called the island of contrasts: Romans, Venetian and Byzantize ruins, side by side with famous beaches. The capital Argostoli is where the sea pours into spectacular swallow holes (Katavothres) and disappears endlessly into subterranean tunnels forming a rare geological phenomenon. The water reappears at Lake Melissani, an incredible semi-underground lake of clear turquoise and indigo water. Nearby is the Drogarati cave, a large stalagmitic cavern of rare beauty. To the north is located the small village of Fiskardo, and its pretty harbour, that has escaped the earthquakes and retains the old style buildings. On the east side of the island are Poros, Sami and Agia Efimia with its pebbled beach.

**LEFKAS:** The eastern side of the island has dense vegetation and smooth shores. On the west, the coast is steep though there are many long sandy beaches. But the sea everywhere is that deep blue. Lefkas is a distinguished island with its impressive Venetian Castle and the Monastery of Phaneromeni. The capital town is a picturesque and quiet place with its characteristic multi-coloured wooden houses. Villages built next to the sea. Excursions through the forests to the many sights, such as the ruins of the prehistoric city and the circular tombs. Scenic fishing villages on the western-pebbled shores lapped by the crystal clear sea.

**PREVEZA:** is a commercial port, which "guards" the entrance to the Amvrakic Gulf. This uniquely beautiful town is close to ancient Nikopolis (1st century B.C.) built by Octavian to commemorate his victory over Antony in the Battle of Actium. The ruins are well worth a visit: a large theatre, a villa and the city walls are well preserved and a small museum houses an interesting collection of artifacts.

**MEGANISSI:** It is 12 nautical miles southeast of Lefkas. According to historians, Meganissi has been settled since Homer's time. It has three villages, sea caves, wonderful sandy beaches and clean waters.

**ITHACA:** is known to the world as being Odysseys' homeland. Its enchanting coves turn it into paradise on earth despite its small size and mountainous nature. The west side of the island is steep and bare in contrast with the east, which is verdant and slopes gently down to the sea. The island is open to strolls and explorations: remains of the Venetian prisons, right at the entrance of the harbour and historical monuments, which survived the earthquake of 1953. The visitor can visit the medieval Monastery of the Archangels (Taxiarhon) and the wonderful caves (the cave of the Nymphs) of the island that are just begging to be explored. Green Ithaca is a much-loved place, with scenic beaches, sleepy little villages, and an ideal spot for an unforgettable vacation.

## THE CYCLADES ITINERARY

Marina in Athens - Kea – Tinos - Myconos - Delos – Paros - Ios – Santorini - Sifnos – Serifos - Kithnos - Cape of Sounion - Athens A more extensive route would include as well islands of Andros, Syros, Koufonisia complex of islands, Amorgos, Sikinos, Folegandros, Milos, Kimolos

**KEA:** This exceptionally picturesque island is very close to Athens and offers relaxing vacations and pristine beaches at Pisses, Korissia, Koundouros, Otzia bay and Poles bay. Ioulis, the town, is built on the remains of the ancient town. The picture of the island that remains is of little valleys with vineyards and orchards between mountainous masses, leading to idyllic coves. One and two storey houses with tiled roofs, stone-paved alleyways, chapels, windmills, and monasteries, the most important of which is the Kastriani Monastery.

**MYCONOS:** World famous, is the cosmopolitan centre of the Cyclades with over 700 churches according to the claims of the inhabitants. Low rocky hills slope down to enchanting golden beaches. Windmills overlook majestically the port at the town. A side of the town known as 'Small Venice' with numerous houses built on the fringe of the sea is one of the meeting points at night. White-washed cube-shaped houses are scattered about. In the narrow streets of the town chapels and picturesque taverns hide among folk art shops and stores selling jewellery and furs. Trends that will sweep the international scene are born in the intense nightlife of this modern resort.

**DELOS:** The sacred island of Delos was, in the myths, the birthplace of Apollo and Artemis. Today the island is uninhabited; it is a vast archaeological site whose superb monuments, remains of ancient temples, sanctuaries, the Market Place, the Theatre, the houses, the mosaics draw thousands of visitors in pilgrimage to what was, for a thousand years or so after the 9th century BC, the political and religious centre of the Aegean.

**IOS** (or NIOS as the locals call it) is decorated with small scenic bays, countless chapels, vineyards, and olive trees, all set under the clear bright Cycladic sky. The sites of Ios include a Hellenistic tower of Plakotos and the remains of an ancient aqueduct at Agia Theodoti, traces of an ancient temple at Psathi and ruinous Venetian castle at the spot known as Paleokastro. Lovers of the sea will be enraptured by the superb beaches of Ios such as Milopotas, Agia Theodoti, Psathi, Kalamas, Plakes and Manganari.

**SANTORINI:** One of the best known of the Cyclades differs from the other islands in the group thanks to its geological morphology, the result of action by a volcano now dormant. Bright white domed houses clinging to the cliff sides of the caldera formed by the volcano's explosion in 1500 B.C. have an incredible view of Kamenes (burnt ones) the coal coloured islets in the middle. From the landing place, Skala, we can climb up to Fira, the capital, on foot or on donkey back. There is a funicular railway for those who wish to avoid the hundreds of steps. Some of the most spectacular beaches (Monolithos, Kokkini Paralia, Perissa) can be found on Santorini: some with dark pebbles and others with black sand. A whole civilization is coming to light at the archaeological sites at Akrotiri, the prehistoric city and Messa Vouno, where the ruins of Ancient Thira lie. The missing piece of Santorini once perfect circle is Thirassia, the wounded islet that closes the caldera, which is Thira in miniature.

**SIFNOS:** Grey trails line the rocks of Sifnos and white chapels lie between them. Here green alternates with dazzling white. Rare beauty, spellbinding views. Yards, alleyways, workshops - where the famous Sifnian pottery is made - 365 churches, chapels and important monasteries. The island was famous in ancient times for the wealth, which came from its gold and silver mines. The old capital of Kastro remains an example of medieval town planning. Vivid nightlife and numerous taverns serving local delicacies, among which "revithada: - roast chick peas - is the most characteristic, guarantee the best of memories.

**KITHNOS:** It was on the small island of Kithnos, famous in antiquity for the excellence of its administration (according to Aristotle in his "Constitution of Kithnos") that recent archaeological finds have provided evidence of the earliest presence of man in the Cyclades. The shores are heavily indented and the island has radioactive thermal springs (Loutra) with great curative powers. The churches are beautiful and are graced with fine woodcarvings and with icons painted by the Cycladian painter (1700) Skordilis. The port of the island, Merihas, is on the western side of the island. Hora or Messaria, the island's capital is 8 km from Merihas and stands on a hillside plateau. A little way to the south is the island's former capital, which retains its ancient name of Driopida - a picturesque village, very typical of the islands. Some of the good beaches of the island for swimming can be found at Merihas, Episcope, Flambouria and Agios Stefanos.

## THE DODECANESE ISLANDS

**Rhodes-Symi-Nissiros-Cos-Kalymnos-Leros-Lipsi-Patmos-Fournoi-Samos. Cruising to North Aegean Islands, beautiful Chios & Lesvos, or return to Athens after visiting Andros island and South Evia island.**

**RHODES:** The largest island in the group of "Dodecanese", also known as the island of the Sun. The capital, City of Rhodes, is like a valuable coin with two faces. One face, "heads", is the old town, a fairy-tale place surrounded by medieval wall and traversed by the Street of the Knights of St. John. On either side of the road is the old town with the "Inns", the Hospital of the Knights and the palace of the Grand Master. The other face "tails", is the modern city with an intense nightlife, broad

streets, beautiful buildings, large hotels and hundreds of shops where anything can be found. The entire island is crammed with sights worth seeing, from the archaeological sites to the fabulous beaches, from the valley with the butterflies to the ruins of ancient Rhodes, from the Acropolis of Lindos to the archaeological sites at Kameiros and Ialysos.

**SYMI:** A small mountainous island renowned for its sponge divers and also for its shipbuilders was reputed to be the birthplace of the Three Graces. While its interior is punctuated with small valleys, its coastline alternates between being steep and rocky or sandy and indented with little coves. In antiquity it bore the names "Aigli" and "Metapontis" It took its present name from the nymph "Syme" who was Poseidon's wife. After its conquest by the Knights of St. John in 1373, commerce and shipping flourished until steam replaced sail. The stately mansions in the main town date from this period, which reached its peak in the 19th century.

**NISSIROS:** The volcano, dormant since 1888. The white crater with the streams of evading sulphur, the spas, colours ranging from yellow and mauve to dark red and black, olive trees, almond trees, vineyards and oaks. Elements, which will help you, feel rather ... helpless under nature's evident superiority. The inhabitants though seem to have got used to the idea: they are famous throughout the area for their lively feasts, which in most cases last for a few days! After a dive in the water - watch out for the strong currents - nibble on the local moussaka.

**FOURNI:** At the top of the "triangle" formed by the islands of Samos, Icaria and Patmos, these tiny islands - with merely total 1.400 inhabitants most of whom preoccupy themselves with fishing - are the next stop of our cruise. Everything is within walking proximity: the secluded beaches, the new as well as the restored houses all with plenty of flowers, the two windmills on top of the hills, the spacious square under the shadow of plane trees...

**KOS:** Once in the picturesque, well-sheltered harbour of Kos, the charms of the island become immediately evident. Palm-lined streets lead to many Classical and Hellenistic sites (early Christian Churches with their noteworthy frescoes), graceful minarets mingle with Roman remains, and the great medieval castle, which was defended by the Knights of St. John flanks the harbour. Hippocrates, the father of ancient medicine, by tradition taught under a colossal plane tree nearby. About 4 km out of town is the great Doric Temple of Asklepios and the Asklepeion (Medicine School) 400 BC, a major center of healing in ancient times. The busy waterfront is lined with cafes and taverns, many hotels are on further beaches. Not surprisingly, thousands visit Kos, every season.

**KALYMNOS:** Closely related to sponge fishermen, legend, harsh mountainous regions, austere rock formations, caves. Traces of her history are visible on each and every step: castles, monasteries, remains or sanctuaries, caves with prehistoric findings, geological changes. The town with impressive monuments and buildings e.g. the Municipality and the Library, seems like a painting, which ever changing colours and scenery clinging on the surrounding hard slopes. Coves and bays are available for exploration, by the most adventurous. The local shops offer a wide variety of excellent quality sponges while the stuffed lamb - a local delicacy - awaits the most daring.

**LEROS:** Platanos, Agia Marina and Pandeli are the names of the three separate areas, which uniformly compose the main town of the island that has nothing to envy from all previous ports of call in terms of history, natural surroundings, overwhelming views, evergreen slopes and contrasts. Fragments of the Roman Castle - "Braze" - will welcome you in port on arrival. The town itself with large winding streets, alleys with eucalyptus trees on their sides, the parks, the mansions, as well as

the Castle overlooking the town, are only examples of what will surprise you, the first time visitor. Fish marinated in rosemary, roast octopus, and "gavathes" - tropical fruit available only in Leros - are more examples of what will astound you!

**LIPSI:** Gentle, low hills covered wholly covered with bushes, slopes ending in lace like beaches, small valleys with olive groves, fields and vineyards which form sandy or pebbled beaches are all "trademarks" of the island. She seems to have been designed by nature in order to provide tranquillity and holiday relaxation amidst kind and openhearted inhabitants who keep tradition alive. Small distances, ideal for walks through nature, paths and shortcuts all lead to the nearby castle, the chapels, the ever-clean beaches.

**PATMOS:** Rising sharply from the sea, Patmos is composed of three masses of volcanic rock connected by narrow strips of land. The approach to the harbour and village of Skala is up a long, narrow inlet watched over by the great medieval monastery of St. John the Divine, visible from all points at sea, and which draws thousands to Patmos every year. The monastery houses the body and shrine of the founder, the XI Century Saint Christodoulos and a magnificent library of ancient manuscripts. Below, on the hillside, and marking the site where by tradition St. John received the word of God, is the Church of the Apocalypse (Revelation). From the monastery roof, dramatic views range far into the Aegean and over Asia Minor. Patmos is one of the most remarkable medieval sites in all Greece and not to be missed by the traveller in the Dodecanese.

**SAMOS:** The easternmost island of the Aegean is within swimming distance of Asia Minor. Images of the island are framed by bunches of Samian grapes, vine leaves and vineyards. The capital, Samos, is built like an amphitheater at the end of a deep bay, next to the harbour of Vathi. Plane trees, springs, and neoclassical buildings coexist harmoniously with modern elements at Karlovassi. Gorgeous beaches at Kokari, pebbled ones at Potami, busy ones at Tsamadou and the best one on the island at Chrissi. There are many monasteries on the Samos, such as Megali Panagia, Agia Zoni, Vronta, Panagia Spiliani, Zoodohos Pigi. Finally, to the south is the Pithagorio or Tigani with the ruins of the ancient acropolis and Eupalineio aqueduct, and further south still is the Heraio, dedicated to the worship of Hera.

## THE SPORADES ITINERARY

**Skiathos – Alonissos – Peristera – Kyra Panagia – Skyros – Skatzoura – Skopelos – Skiathos**

**SKIATHOS:** is a verdant idyllic paradise with more than 70 bays and coves and three harbours. Nine small islands orbit Skiathos as if mesmerized by the island's beauty. The principal town, also called Skiathos, was built in 1830 on two low hills. History has left impressive landmarks on the island, be it the Castle remains, on the top of the modern town, Monasteries dating back to the 17th century, local museums with post Byzantine Icons, guns, precious glass and porcelain objects. The island is richly endowed by nature with numerous, seemingly endless sand beaches and conifers reaching the fringe of the sea. The nights in Skiathos are especially lively.

**PERISTERA:** is the island lying roughly parallel to and just to the east of Alonissos whereas further north is the island of Pelagos with the bay of KYRA PANAGIA. All these spots offer unrivalled beauty

with crystal clear water.

**ALONISSOS:** is long and thin and surrounded by scattered islets. These islets and the area around them are the Marine Park which is the last refuge of the Mediterranean seal "Monachus-Monachus". The ruins of an ancient city can be found on Psathoura and a cave decorated with multi-hued stalactites and stalagmites is the famous cave of Cyclops. Rich vegetation covers the island, and in some cases, the pines actually touch the deserted beaches while fresh lobster, and local cheese pies are there for you to taste.

**SKYROS:** is low hills, good underwater fishing and diving, crystal clear water, sandy beaches, little seaside taverns, sea caves, and the unique Skyrian ponies. From the castle above the Hora, which combines Byzantine and Venetian ruins with older fortifications, the town spreads out below you in a cubists dream. Each of the houses has an interior that reminds one of a folk art museum, and much of the handmade folk art is sold in little shops.

**SKOPELOS:** is exceptionally beautiful with scenic coves, bright white churches and monasteries among picturesque farm-house glimpsed through the gold-green of the olive groves on even slopes, under the brilliant light of the sun. Moreover, the Venetian Castle and the 123 chapels - most of which act as bulwarks for Orthodoxy - present throughout the island are sure to produce a profound effect on the beholder. In the few scattered villages and the picturesque sites we are sure that you will re-discover peace and tranquillity.