

## Greek Islands

Home to ancient Gods, myths and legends, Greece draws travellers from all over the world time and time again. The Greek Islands offer so many cruising options that any trip is likely to leave you with the feeling that there is so much more to see. There are actually more than a thousand Greek islands dotted about the azure blue waters of six different seas. Only about 10 percent of the islands are continuously inhabited. Enjoy the spectacular scenery from the lush subtropical green of the Ionian and the Sporades to the marvellous Cyclades or the Dodecanese, where yachts and boats can sail forever and never reach the port they are looking for. Walk through the ruins of great ancient civilizations, take a swim in a secluded bay and indulge in the culinary delights of Greek cuisine. From island to island, cruise to some of the breathtaking areas such as Crete, Mykonos and Corfù, and discover colourful harbours and charming villages. Greece is just not a country, it is an endless destination that promise infinite charter appeal.

### SUGGESTED ITINERARY

#### Greek islands : 7 days

The seven-day trip suggested here is “offwind” and aims to offer a diverse taste of Greece as varied as a plate of Mezze. It incorporates the hustle and bustle of Athens and the splendid isolation of Lyndos’s harbor. The underlying theme is the Greek Islands’ historical maritime heritage, setting the scene for a cruise among the dramatic backdrop of history itself.

#### **DAY 1: {ATHENS}**

Athens is the obvious choice to embark your yacht. Avoid the Kalamaki Marina. Instead, dock in the smaller but atmospheric and far more central Marina Zea. From here it is a short taxi ride to the downtown Plaka area and the Parthenon, (which after thousands of years is still, uncannily, under construction). Excellent guides are available who offer tours around the historical sights and throughout the summer there are a number of open air concerts in the amphitheatre.

#### **DAY 2: {HYDRA}**

Hydra is a short cruise from Athens, which negates the need for an early start to the day. The only transport available here is the horse or donkey. Hydra is a picturesque town that offers great walks and exclusive resorts. Its history is relatively short, first existing as a fishing port in the 16th and 17th centuries before its full potential for tourism was realized after WWII. You can find good dining here as Hydra capitalizes on its fishing heritage.

#### **DAY 3: {MYKONOS}**

The island itself may be dry and rather barren but Mykonos offers great beaches and nightlife that is made for dancing chic to chic. The very photogenic Mykonos town is a maze of narrow alleys bordered by traditional white cubic houses and is popular with the jet set and backpackers alike. The dining here is as good as anywhere in Greece and the glitzy boutiques are second to none.

#### **DAY 4: {MANDRAKI}**

In stark contrast to Mykonos, Mandraki on the volcanic island of Nisyros offers a village-like charm. Explore the yellow moonscape of the volcanic crater and enjoy the view. There is also an ancient monastery the “Moni Panagias Spillianis” dating from the 15th century. The monastery boasts a library housing several ecclesiastically significant works. The afternoon quiet of Mandraki is punctuated by the evening bustle when the small port town with its colorful architecture springs into life. Bars, tavernas and shops open up and the atmosphere erupts into a festival of authentic Greek noise and light.

#### **DAY 5: {TILOS}**

Tilos is one of the few remaining islands that has managed to avoid the ravages of overt tourism. One can still find deserted beaches and admire the serenity of Greek island life. Once inhabited by small elephants whose remains can be seen at the Harkadia cave between Livadia and Megalo, Tilos’ early Stone Age history was intertwined with the movements of these animals. Tilos is particularly suited to walkers as a stroll is perhaps the best way to enjoy its scenic charms and birdlife. If walking isn’t your thing, mopeds can be hired to explore the island and traffic is unlikely to interfere with your plans. Livadia is a sleepy bay offering a good anchorage bordered by a pebble beach.

#### **DAY 6: {LINDOS}**

The town of Lindos perched atop the hillside overlooks a small natural harbour. A short tender run ashore is followed by a climb uphill to the town on foot. Unchanged in character since the days of the Knights of St John, the site of present-day Lindos is much older. The small town has plenty of bars and tavernas but its charm lies in its traditional narrow cobbled streets’ authentic atmosphere. High above the town is the Doric Acropolis, which is worth the climb if only for the view. The acropolis dating from the 5th century B.C. provides access to the temple of Athena overlooking the sea.



**DAY 7: {RHODES}**

About 30 miles north of Lindos on the Island of Rhodes is the main city of Rhodes. The city is perhaps most famous as the place where the Colossus is said to have stood astride the harbor entrance. The most significant feature of Rhodes now is the Citadel built by the Knights of St. John on the sight of an ancient acropolis. Although the citadel has benefited from a little modern cosmetic surgery it still has astounding presence. It is best seen at night when the town is lit in a most flattering manner.