

UNEXPLORED GREECE

ATHENS TO ATHENS • SHORE EXCURSION PACKAGE





DAY 2

IKARIA

IKARIA: IKARIAN WAY OF LIFE – BLUE ZONE’ LONGEVITY- WILD NATURE

- Duration approx. 6 hours
- Incl. Bus/Guide/Winery visit with Ikarian wine & food tasting
- Per Person: Euro 122

Our tour will start from **Agios Kirikos** port with its old two-story Captain’s mansions, flower filled neighbourhoods and the endlessly ascending stone steps combining picturesque local architecture with the bustle of a modern town. Leaving this small port town behind we will discover Ikaria’s landscapes being stunningly beautiful and full of contrasts. Green slopes with rugged rocks, high mountain streams, gorges, caves and lush valleys support a rare combination of terrains and ecosystems. Hidden mountainous villages where one can still find an abundance of traditional village elements such as public fountains, an olive press or where some villagers –proud of their longevity secrets are riding on their patient donkeys.

After our scenic drive towards NW, we will arrive at a beautiful **family winery** in the mountains; here we will be learning about all the hidden secrets of the blue zone’s culture, the lifestyle health benefits, the Ikarian wine and food directly from the expert owners. We will visit the vineyard, the organic gardens while tasting traditional and authentic Ikarian mezedes cooked and presented by the owner’s wife (appetizers) with a glass of organic wine from their limited production. Those who like to stroll around (secret suggestion) have the chance to enjoy an easy (600m each way) hike to the Chapel of Theoskepasti (17th century old Monastery) through the wonderful nearby forest.



DAY 3

PATMOS

PATMOS: St. John's Monastery and Patmos Chora

- Duration approx. 3 hours
- Incl. Bus/Guide/Entry fee
- Per Person: Included in the cruise rate

Depart the picturesque harbor of Skala for a short drive to the **Grotto of the Apocalypse** and the imposing **Monastery of St. John**, built 900 years ago, exceptional in its architecture. Its thick, high walls are crowned all around with battlements and eight chapels. Visit the Treasury Museum in the Monastery with its jeweled chalices, crowns, vestments and old manuscripts dating back to 1073. We will then continue for an insight exploration in **Chora** (Patmos main town) lead by our local expert. Chora is of unique charm not only because of the dominating **Castle** and **Monastery** but for the Byzantine residences said to be the strongest ones built in the Aegean. Whitewashed houses, mansions with antique furniture and embroideries, captain's residences, narrow streets and alleyways all of which date back to the 15th century. Enjoy some time at leisure before returning to our ship.



DAY 4

KALYMNOS

KALYMNOS: Impressive Rocky Mountains, fertile valleys and heritage discoveries by the locals.

- Duration approx. 4,5 hours
- Incl. Round trip boat/Guide/Entry fee/Local treat
- Per Person: Euro 80

Leaving the port town behind we will be heading east on a pleasant trip to **Vathy**, known as the Greek island fjord. Pass through its fertile valley filled with orange and tangerine trees to reach an impressive viewpoint of **Rina port** for our photo stop: a beautiful, protected bay reminding of a small Norwegian fjord. On to the west coast passing **Panormos green valley** to reach **Myrties** and **Massouri** resorts' driving along the fantastic landscape of **Telendos isle**. Impressive Rocky Mountains and magical sea fjords are standing opposite to each other. Have a short stop before heading towards the area of Vothoni to visit a private family museum and perhaps meet Mrs Faneromeni. A woman who is passionate about Kalymnos long traditional life and customs, showing through her house how Kalymnians lived in the past. Listen to lots of sponge diving tales and stories. As a treat we might taste **Anama** the **local wine and bread**.

Not far from here we find the monastery of **Agios Savvas**, (patron saint of the island) perched on a hill above **Chora** with excellent views over the Capital. Have a short stroll in **Pothia** which boasts remarkable architectural features in its narrow streets, elegant captain houses, modest one-storey sponge harvesters' houses or outstanding buildings as the Town Hall. Our pleasant stroll will end at the old sponge factory near the port to get informed of the process of collecting and elaborating natural Mediterranean sponges and why not, to buy some.



DAY 6

AMORGOS

AMORGOS: Endless blue Aegean, Hozoviotissa Monastery and the whitewashed Chora Capital

- Duration approx. 4 hours
- Incl. Bus/Guide/Entry fee
- Per Person: Euro 82

Starting from **Katapola** bustling port we will arrive after a short drive at the imposing- 1000-year-old landmark of the island, the **Monastery of Hozoviotissa**. It is literally hanging on the cliff side about 100 m above the sea with breathtaking views. It was built around 1017, renovated in 1080 built by Alexius Comnenus I as an ode (poem) to the Grace of Panagia, known as the Virgin Mary, which is the patron saint of the island. Every year the holy icon is carried around to all villages. We will be climbing uphill in an easy pace to marvel a perfect blend of nature and the beauty of man's creation which is with no doubt, the pride of Amorgos.

Our next stop is **Amorgos Capital, Chora**: A medieval mountain village surrounded by windmills, dominated by a 13th century Venetian castle. Taking our easy walk here with our expert guide is like stepping in the dream of the perfect Greek village with its narrow winding alleys, whitewashed houses with friendly locals, charming squares and tiny churches holding centuries of stories. Have some time at leisure or a coffee break at a traditional kafenio before boarding our vehicle towards Katapola port.



DAY 6 – AFTERNOON AMORGOS

AMORGOS: Afternoon walking tour in Katapola

- Duration approx. 4 hours
- Incl. Guide/Baked raki/1 small bottle of water
- Per Person: Included in the cruise fare

We will start from the port of Katapola, which is the ancient port of Amorgos and remains a main port, but also a tourist resort. We will walk on the coastal road to the settlement of Xylokeratidi, which still retains its naval and island element, as it was the center of shipbuilding and mooring of the sailing ships of the island. Then, we will walk to the settlement of Rahidi, where we will see the old church of Agios Georgios.

Finally, in the settlement of Katapola we will visit the church of Panagia Katapoliani, which is one of the renovated Christian monuments of the island. Then we can visit the Botanical Park of Katapola. It is a manicured garden full of aromatic Amorgian herbs and a small cistern with water from the ancient aqueduct of Minoa.

Our walk will end at the traditional cafe of Prekas, where we will have the opportunity to relax and enjoy the traditional drink of Amorgos, baked raki.



DAY 7

SERIFOS

SERIFOS: Organic Serifiotiko wines and vistas, hidden villages and a hike in the Chora

- Duration approx. 4,5 hours
- Incl. Bus/Guide/Winery visit and tasting
- Per Person: Euro 156

Not far from **Livadi** port by bus on the northern part we will meet **Panagia**, a tiny village built on the hill around the homonymous byzantine church, one of the oldest of the island (end of 10th century). Further up en-route lies the small church of **Zoodochos Pigi** (life giving Holy Virgin) with a small cemetery and opposite to it stands the male **Castle-like Monastery of Taxiarches** (Archangels, patrons of Serifos) constructed around the end of the 16h century. Nearby-on foot- is a small modern local winery built on the slopes between rocks and vineyards with an impressive view of the Aegean.

Chrisoloras biological vineyards grow here and the whole holding is exclusively organic and waterless. Spend some rewarding time with a visit and a wine tasting and learn about the **Serifiotiko grape variety** which is cultivated on the island since ancient times.

Boarding our bus, we will reach after a short drive the **picturesque Capital**. At the highest point we see ruins of a **medieval Castle** offering unique uninterrupted views of nearby islands. Walk through labyrinthine alleys descending between the whitewashed houses to meet the upper Piazza along the way, the neoclassical building of the Town Hall (built in 1908) and the Cathedral. The Windmills square with three traditional windmills overshadowing the ruins of the rest. See the beautiful **Evangelistria Church** (1907) standing imposingly in the central square of **Kato Chora**, adding vivid color to the whitewashed landscape. Wider streets lead to the central path with big steps which goes down to the base of Chora. Its route passes in front of **small chapels**, the **Memorial of the Fallen** and a **tiny folklore museum**. Should this be open depending on day and time we won't miss visiting its small collections coming mainly from Serifians' donations, and to learn about the great commercial and mining activity of the past centuries, used to attract hundreds of people for work.



REMARKS:

The tours are exclusively run for our Variety small groups and require a minimum of 14 guests.

Our tours do perfectly match with our cruise itinerary timings and are led by local certified English-speaking guides to the “must see” sites and hidden spots.

They are subject to changes due to site restorations, weather, heavy traffic or other conditions. Should sites or museums be closed on our visiting days, alternative visits will be offered instead.

The tours are quite active and require good physical condition. Due to slippery sites, we recommend comfortable shoes, sun tan lotion, a hat and water. Dress code for Church and Monastery visits.

Gratuities for drivers and guides are not included.

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