

Frommer's

Greek Islands



Frommer's[®] Greek Islands, 7th Edition

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by John S. Bowman, Sherry Marker, & Peter Kerasiotis



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Note About Maps

This guide contains dozens of maps of varying sizes and complexity. If you find it hard to read a map on your device, use the zoom function to enlarge. You can also download and/or printout PDFs of all of the maps in this guide. Go to www.frommers.com/go/ebookmaps and click on the title of your guide.

About the Authors

John S. Bowman has been a freelance writer and editor for more than 45 years. He specializes in nonfiction ranging from archaeology to zoology, baseball to biography. He first visited Greece in 1956 and has traveled and lived there over the years. He is the author of numerous guides to various regions in Greece; for several decades, his *Travellers' Guide to Crete* was the premier guide to that island. He currently resides in Northampton, Massachusetts.

Sherry Marker majored in classical Greek at Harvard, studied archaeology at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, and did graduate work in ancient history at the University of California at Berkeley. The author of a number of guides to Greece, she has also written for the *New York Times*, *Travel + Leisure*, and *Hampshire Life*. When not in Greece, she lives in Massachusetts and London.

Peter Kerasiotis, a native Athenian, currently lives in New York City where he works as a web developer and editor. A newcomer to Frommer's, he hopes to continue a career of travel- and screenwriting.

Heidi Sarna is a freelance writer who has crisscrossed the world by ship for nearly 20 years, often with her twin sons and lucky husband in tow. Coauthor of *Frommer's Cruises & Ports of Call from US and Canadian Homeports* and *Frommer's Singapore Day by Day*, she has also contributed to several other guidebooks and writes regular travel columns for Frommers.com and *Porthole* magazine. She's written for many magazines, newspapers, and websites, including CNN.com, the *International Herald Tribune*, *Condé Nast Traveller*, *Brides*, the *Straits Times*, *Expat Living*, and *Travel Weekly*.

How to contact Us

In researching this book, we discovered many wonderful places—hotels, restaurants, shops, and more. We're sure you'll find others. Please tell us about them, so we can share the information with your fellow travelers in upcoming editions. If you were disappointed with a recommendation, we'd love to know that too. Please write to:

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Advisory & Disclaimer

Travel information can change quickly and unexpectedly, and we strongly advise you to confirm important details locally before traveling, including information on visas, health and safety, traffic and transport, accommodation, shopping and eating out. We also encourage you to stay alert while traveling and to remain aware of your surroundings. Avoid civil disturbances, and keep a close eye on cameras, purses, wallets and other valuables.

While we have endeavored to ensure that the information contained within this guide is accurate and up-to-date at the time of publication, we make no representations or warranties with respect to the accuracy or completeness of the contents of this work and specifically disclaim all warranties, including without limitation warranties of fitness for a particular purpose. We accept no responsibility or liability for any inaccuracy or errors or omissions, or for any inconvenience, loss, damage, costs or expenses of any nature whatsoever incurred or suffered by anyone as a result of any advice or information contained in this guide.


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Frommer's Star Ratings, Icons & Abbreviations

Every hotel, restaurant, and attraction listing in this guide has been ranked for quality, value, service, amenities, and special features using a **star-rating system**. In country, state, and regional guides, we also rate towns and regions to help you narrow down your choices and budget your time accordingly. Hotels and restaurants are rated on a scale of zero (recommended) to three stars (exceptional). Attractions, shopping, nightlife, towns, and regions are rated according to the following scale: zero stars (recommended), one star (highly recommended), two stars (very highly recommended), and three stars (must-see).


In addition to the star-rating system, we also use **seven feature icons** that point you to the great deals, in-the-know advice, and unique experiences that separate travelers from tourists. Throughout the book, look for:


 **special finds**—those places only insiders know about

 **fun facts**—details that make travelers more informed and their trips more fun

 **kids**—best bets for kids, and advice for the whole family

 **special moments**—those experiences that memories are made of

 **overrated**—places or experiences not worth your time or money

 **insider tips**—great ways to save time and money

 **great values**—where to get the best deals

The following **abbreviations** are used for credit cards:

AE American Express

DISC Discover

V Visa

DC Diners Club

MC MasterCard

Travel Resources at Frommers.com

Frommer's travel resources don't end with this guide. Frommer's website, www.frommers.com, has travel information on more than 4,000 destinations. We update features regularly, giving you access to the most current trip-planning information and the best airfare, lodging, and car-rental bargains. You can also listen to podcasts, connect with other Frommers.com members through our active-reader forums, share your travel photos, read blogs from guidebook editors and fellow travelers, and much more.

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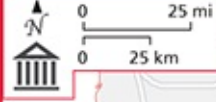
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Chapter 1: The Best of The Greek Islands

Greece is, of course, the land of ancient sites and architectural treasures—the Acropolis in Athens, the amphitheater of Epidaurus, and the reconstructed palace at Knossos among the best known. But Greece is much more: It offers age-old spectacular natural sights, for instance—from Santorini's caldera to the great pinnacles of rock of the Meteora—and modern diversions ranging from elegant museums to luxury resorts.

It can be bewildering to plan your trip with so many options vying for your attention. Take us along and we'll do the work for you. We've traveled the country extensively and have chosen the very best that Greece has to offer. We've explored the archaeological sites, visited the museums, inspected the hotels, reviewed the tavernas and ouzeries, and scoped out the beaches. Here's what we consider the best of the best.

Greece





The best Islands

- **Hydra** (Saronic Gulf Islands): Old-timers keep waiting for Hydra, with its handsome stone mansions overlooking a picture-postcard harbor, to be spoiled. After all, even before Mykonos and Santorini, Hydra was one of the first Greek islands to be “discovered.” So far so good: Donkeys still outnumber motorcycles, and the day-trippers who blitz through the appealing harborside shops leave at twilight. That means that except in August you can

almost always find the table you want at one of Hydra's pleasant small restaurants. See chapter 6.

- **Crete:** Whether for its rugged mountains or its countless beaches, its ancient remains or its ultramodern hotels, its layered history or its intense people, Crete cannot be denied. It is not just a distinctive Greek island—it is a world unto itself. See chapter 7.
- **Santorini (Cyclades):** This is undoubtedly one of the most spectacular islands in the world. The streets of **Fira** and **Ia** are carved into the face of a high cliff, overlooking the circular caldera left by an ancient volcanic eruption and now filled with the deep-blue waters of the Aegean. The site of **Akrotiri** offers a unique glimpse into life in a Minoan city, frozen in time by the eruption 3,600 years ago. Be sure to find out if this spectacular site, which was partly closed to the public at press time, has completely reopened when you visit. Add to this the Fira nightlife scene, and you'll see why this is one of the most popular (and overcrowded) summer vacation spots in the Aegean. See chapter 8.
- **Siros (Cyclades):** This tiny island has it all: a vivacious, cosmopolitan capital town; thriving beach resorts; and a starkly beautiful region of farming communities, archaeological remains, and remote beaches to the north. Siros is also one of the centers of *rembetika*, a form of Greek traditional music with roots in Asia Minor. The "Fragosiriani," a classic known throughout Greece, was composed by the Siritiot Markos Vamvakaris, and you're sure to hear its simple and infectious rhythms many times during your stay here. See chapter 8.
- **Tinos (Cyclades):** The island often called the "Lourdes of Greece," because of the church of **Panagia Evangelistria** (Our Lady of Good Tidings) with its healing icon, also has Venetian dovecotes; farm fields set off with handsome stone boundary walls; fine sand beaches; and **Pirgos**, the village of marble with a superb Museum of Marble Crafts. See chapter 8.
- **Rhodes (Dodecanese):** The island of Rhodes has everything a visitor could want—dazzling ancient and medieval ruins, great food, spectacular beaches, and some of the hottest nightlife outside of Athens—the one drawback being that everyone knows it. See chapter 9.
- **Hios (Northeastern Aegean):** You'd think that an island with such gorgeous beaches, exquisite medieval towns, and remarkable scenery wouldn't remain a secret for long. Despite the qualities that attract a small group of devotees year after year, Hios remains surprisingly quiet. If you like the idea of getting away from the tour buses, being alone on a beach to rival any in the Cyclades, and exploring towns that preserve the contours of medieval life, Hios is for you. Local hospitality hasn't worn thin here, as it has on many of the more heavily toured islands. See chapter 10.
- **Skyros (Sporades):** Winding roads and remote beaches, one main town and a few villages, some ancient legends and 20th-century tales: Skyros's charms remain perhaps the most elusive of the four northern Sporades. But though the island remains a bit difficult to access and not overstocked with touristy amenities, Skyros also offers both a living local culture and some natural wildness. See chapter 11.
- **Corfu (Ionian Islands):** With lush vegetation, some still-undeveloped interior and an unspoiled coast, ancient sites and a 19th-century presence, a dash of Italy and a dose of the cosmopolitan, Corfu is a Greek island like no other. Tourism may be rampant, but Corfu's attractions have survived worse. See chapter 12.
- **Sifnos (Cyclades):** Sifnos is a green island of ravines, mountaintops, and pristine beaches

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