

## **Greece**

**Population:** 10,668,000

**Time zone GMT:** +2

**Capital city:** Athens

**Leader name:** Karolos Papoulias

**Leader title:** President

**Leader name:** Kostas Karamanlis

**Leader title:** Prime Minister

**Languages:** Greek

**Religions:** 98% Greek Orthodox, 1.3% Muslim, 0.7% other

**Dialing code:** 30

**Currency code:** EUR

**Currency name:** Euro

**Weather:** Greece generally has mild wet winters and hot dry summers.

Winter temperatures can be severe in the mountains and even Athens can get viciously cold. Maximum temperatures on the islands hover around 30°C (87°F) in summer, but the heat is often tempered by the northerly wind known as the *meltemi*.

## **Day 7 - Arrive in Patras**

Patras or Patra, as known to the locals, is one of the largest working towns in the **Peloponnese**, and after Pireaus, **the second major port in Greece**. Patras is also the capital of the **Archaia** prefecture and owes its name to Patreas, the ancient chief of the Archaians.

Modern Patras is one of the most important port-cities in Greece and largest of the Peloponnese. It also acts as a major transportation hub now, linking the country with Italy and the Peloponnese with the Ionian islands. The city extends from its shores up to the old Castle area and is divided into two parts: the upper castle area, and the lower with small parks and plazas that give the town a definite



distinction. **The Cathedral of St. Andrew is the city's patron** and rises majestically above the lower city. To the left of it stands an older church built on the site of a Byzantine church that was destroyed by the Turks.

## **Travel to Delphi**



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6uO20fP5KJU>

## **Day 8 - Take a guided tour of Delphi Visit The Delphi Museum**



## Travel to Athens

### *Optional: Greek Evening*



### **Day 9 - Take a guided tour of Athens:**

#### **Olympic Stadium**

In the ancient times, every four years in the summer period, a major event, which lasted seven days, was held in Olympia, a city in Ancient Greece. Officially established as a pan-Hellenic celebration at the beginning of the 9th century BC with a law, it included religious rituals and athletic games. With the same law, the area of Olympia was considered a sacred place while a truce- ekehiria- was initiated: during the Olympics, all the conflicts among the ancient Greek cities-states stopped.



## Visit The Acropolis

The **Acropolis** has been in continuous use by the inhabitants of Athens, as a religious center, from the *Mycenaean era* until the end of the *Byzantine period*. Athenians still refer to the **Acropolis** as the "holy rock". The buildings which one brings to mind when talking about the **Acropolis**, are the most recent and most majestic in a succession of buildings. Having these edifices constructed was conceived by Perikles, the leader of the democratic faction and a friend of *Sophocles* and *Anaxagoras*. He dreamt of Athens as the leader of a panhellenic confederacy, as an ideal democracy, and above all as a city with magnificent edifices, temples and public buildings, theatres and odeia.

Certainly the most significant and ambitious project of Perikles involved the construction of the Acropolis. With Pheidias as adviser, the plans were soon laid. First and foremost would be a new large temple to goddess Athena Parthenos, the *Parthenon*, then would follow the monumental entrance to the sacred rock, the *Propylaea*. Third in order would be the small temple of *Athena Nike*, the plans of which had already been prepared before the Periklean works. And finally would come the temple to Athena Polias, the *Erechtheion*. This would replace the "Old Temple", burned down by the Persians.



Parthenon is a temple in the Athenian Acropolis, Greece, dedicated to the Greek goddess Athena, whom the people of Athens considered their protector. Its construction began in 447 BC and was completed in 438 BC, although decorations of the Parthenon continued until 432 BC. It is the most important surviving building of Classical Greece, generally considered to be the culmination of the development of the Doric order. Its decorative sculptures are considered some of the high points of Greek art. The Parthenon is regarded as an enduring symbol of Ancient Greece and of Athenian democracy and one of the world's greatest cultural monuments.

Virtual Tour: <http://www.mygreka.com/athens/attractions/parthenon-virtual.php>

## Temple of Athena Nike



The Temple of Athena Nike (Featherless Victory) is situated southwest of the Entrance, on a rampart protecting the main entrance of the Acropolis. It was constructed in ca. 420 B.C. by the architect Kallikrates. It is built in the Ionic order, and it is amphiprostyle with a row of four columns in front of each of its narrow sides. The relief frieze on the upper section of the walls depicts the conference of gods on the east side, and scenes from battles on the other three. A marble parapet decorated with the relief representation of Nikae (Victories), protected the edge of the Bastion on which the temple was erected.

## Take a walking tour of Athens:

**Plaka District** - in the shadow of the Acropolis, the Plaka is like a village within the city

The Plaka is full of street musicians, flower sellers, photographers and people who sell beads or will write your name on a grain of rice. The Plaka is the oldest section of Athens. Most of the streets have been closed to automobile traffic, though you should still keep a watchful eye for a speeding motorcycle or delivery truck. At one time it was the nightclub district, but most of these closed down when the government out-lawed amplified music in the area in the seventies in an effort to get rid of undesirables. The strategy was very successful and it is now an area of restaurants, Jewelry stores tourist shops, and cafes. Though it is quite commercialized it is still a neighborhood and arguably the nicest neighborhood in central Athens. Most of the restaurants are typical tourist places but the quality of food is not bad in many of them. The tourist shops they are crammed full of stuff, some of it junk but plenty of interesting items if you feel

compelled to bring back gifts to everyone you know. Most of the shops have pretty much the same stuff for pretty much the same prices but there are some that are more eclectic than others (like Coral on the corner of Voullis and Apollonos) that sell antiques, hand painted icons, wood carvings and paintings.



## **Day 10**

**Eleftherios Venizelos International Airport – leave for home**

