

# THE GREEK KITCHEN GETAWAYS

## ATHENS TO CRETE ADVENTURE

### FULL ITINERARY

#### DAY 1 ATHENS

**Meals included:** Dinner

**Activities:** Welcome meeting 18:00 1hr

Please arrive at the hotel before 18:00.

This is where your trip begins! Enjoy a drink as your Greek Kitchen Host goes through the itinerary with you. It's your chance to ask any questions you might have about the trip and get to know the other members of your group.

After the meeting you'll head out for an included dinner with wine at a traditional Athenian taverna.

#### Please remember:

- A copy of your passport, travel insurance with company contact details on

#### DAY 2 ATHENS

**Meals included:** Breakfast/Dinner

**Activities:** Athens orientation walk 09:00 2hrs/Cooking class 15:30 4hrs

It's time to explore Athens! Your Greek Kitchen Host will lead you on a morning orientation walk to help you get your bearings in the city, to get to the must-see sights and provide you with information on how to travel around.

In the afternoon you'll have your first cooking class at The Greek Kitchen with one of our local home cooks where you'll prepare 4 dishes of traditional family fare in a hands-on class; the menu changes seasonally in order to always use the freshest ingredients at the height of their flavor.

Once the cooking is done you'll enjoy your meal with enough time to head into the city for a good night out.

## DAY 3 ATHENS TO CHANIA NIGHT FERRY

**Meals included:** Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

**Activities:** Athens Central Market food tour 09:00 4hrs

**Transport:** Athens Metro 30mins/Night ferry 8hrs

This morning it's your chance to discover the world of Greek produce, markets and shopping on an in-depth tour of the Athens' Central Market district with your Greek Kitchen Host.

You'll taste your way through a wide variety of locally produced items from breads and pastries to seasonal fruit, nuts and herbs; discover the diversity of Greek cheeses on offer with a visit to a dairy store that also happens to sell some of the most delicious yoghurt available in the city.

Greece is also home to a rich collection of liquors and wines so it's only right to stop off at an old *kava* for a tasting: They have excellent honey as well!

In the meat market you'll have the chance to construct your own chicken or vegetable *souvlaki* sticks for grilling with your lunch back at The Greek Kitchen.

The rest of the afternoon is free for you to enjoy, head out to the cafes or visit one last museum.

Your Greek Kitchen Host will let you know the time you're meeting to catch the metro to Piraeus where you'll board the night ferry to Crete.

Accommodation is in mixed gender Greek Kitchen exclusive inside en-suite cabins of up to 4 people.

### Athens optional activities:

- **Wine Tasting at The Greek Kitchen 20:00 1.5hrs €20**  
Learn about the delicious world of Greek wines and the food they pair well with in our starter class.  
Half price for Getaway Guests
- **The Acropolis 08:00 - 20:00 €20**  
One of the most iconic monuments of Western Civilization allow at least 1hr for a visit. Be sure to enjoy a stroll around the *Plaka* and *Anafiotika* neighbourhoods that surround it.

- **Athens Monuments 08:00 - 20:00 €30**  
Valid for 5 days this ticket gives entrance to The Acropolis and 10 more sites. Our personal recommendation is to visit the ancient cemetery of Keramikos, the museum there is beautiful.
- **The Acropolis Museum 08:00 - 20:00 €5**  
Housed in a remarkable building facing the south slopes of The Acropolis this is place to learn all about the complex that's been capturing the world's imagination for centuries.
- **The National Archaeological Museum 08:00 - 20:00 €12**  
See the complete picture of Greek archaeology under one roof including beautiful bronze and marble statues as well as changing exhibitions highlighting everything from Ancient Athenian life to Victorian exploration and mythology.
- **The Acropolis 08:00 - 20:00 €20**  
One of the most iconic monuments of Western Civilization, allow at least 1hr for a visit.
- **The Panathaneic Stadium 08:00 - 20:00 €5**  
Grab an included audio-guide and head into the stadium that gave birth to the modern Olympic Games. Learn about the history of the games, pose on the winner's block and check out the collection of posters and torches that span the games from their humble beginnings in 1898 all the way up to today.

## **DAY 4 CHANIA**

**Meals included:** Breakfast/Dinner

**Activities:** Chania orientation walk 30mins/Olive oil workshop 1.5hrs/ Wine tasting 1.5hrs

**Transport:** Private transfer 25mins

Arriving with the rising sun in Souda Bay, Crete, a private transfer will take the group into the beautiful city of Chania.

Start the day with an early morning orientation walk to get a feel for this charming city. Ottoman and Venetian houses line the winding streets where shops heave with local products, food, fashion and gifts.

Breakfast is included at a café in the historical harbor.

Chania is the perfect place to spend a day. Visit the fine museums, hang out in cafes, wander winding streets browsing the craft stores; Chania is renowned for its fine leather and metalwork.

With beaches just a short walk from the city center there is always the option to head to the sea and get some sunshine.

Afternoon activities include a guided culture and food tour of Chania old town with an olive oil tasting so that you can learn more about the liquid gold of Greece. As well as olive oil there will be other products like tapenades, olives and even cosmetics.

The tasting continues with a wine experience at a fantastic local bar that specializes in Cretan wines.

Cretan cuisine holds a special place in Greece with many locals citing it as the best the country has to offer. Our first full meal on the island will introduce you to a range of Cretan dishes complimented with local wine and spirits. Sit back, listen to the live music and enjoy the food.

### Chania optional activities:

- **Archaeological Museum 08:00 - 18:00 €2.50**  
Housed in the former monastery of San Francisco the Archaeological Museum is home to a huge collection of ceramic bulls and a lovely courtyard. Perfect place to escape the afternoon heat.
- **Maritime Museum 08:00 - 18:00 €3.00**  
This imposing building at the entrance to the harbor has a collection of items from flags and uniforms to strange items left by the Germans at the end of WW2. The collection is as much about the history of Modern Greece as it is about the Navy.
- **El Hammam 10:00 - 22:00 from €30**  
Feel fabulous and super relaxed with a Turkish sauna, massage and many other relaxation and beauty treatments.
- **The Leather District 10:00 - 22:00**  
For centuries Chania has been renowned for the high quality leather goods that are produced in the city. The name of the street is *Stivanadika* with an astounding array of goods at some unbelievable prices. The area is also a great place to pick up linen garments, perfect for the hot temperatures on the island.

- **Beaches**  
Both *Nea Chora* and *Koum Kapi* beaches are within easy walking distance of the city center.
- **The Old Venetian Harbor**  
Take a stroll through the grand old buildings of the Venetian Harbor, there 's a museum there housing a replica of an Ancient Greek battleship.

## **DAY 5 AGIA ROUMELI**

**Meals included:** Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

**Activities:** Hiking the Samaria Gorge or Agia Irini Gorge

**Transport:** Public bus 2hrs/Local ferry 1hr (from Sougia to Agia Roumeli)

The south coast of Crete is a hiker's paradise, filled with hills and gorges, coastal paths and trails; people come here from around the world for the fresh air, fantastic views and wonderful walks.

Just a few hours by public bus from Chania, the group will be departing early to beat the crowds and the intense afternoon heat.

With two hiking options, Getaway Guests can select the route that best suits their needs.

Please note that all luggage will be collected from the hotel in Chania and delivered to the hotel in Agia Roumeli.

### **Option 1: The Samaria Gorge 5-7hrs**

Departing Chania bus station early in the morning and reaching the final stop after the village of Omalos at the entrance to the Samaria Gorge around 2 hours later. Here you will find a cafeteria and toilets.

Although the hike isn't difficult it can still be taxing due to the starting elevation of 1230m, total length of 13km (plus 3 to the village) and series of switchbacks on sometimes rocky, uneven ground. Once at the gorge floor there are paths however some of the route is on dry riverbed and over rocks.

Hiking the Samaria Gorge is a wonderful experience, the air is thick with the scent of pine and there are moments of complete, pure silence as well as spectacular views. Along the trail there are basic facilities and springs of fresh mountain water that tastes amazing and is the perfect hydrator for the trip.

Rangers are stationed throughout the gorge and at just past the midway point at the ruins of the old Samaria village there is a first aid station.

As the longest gorge in Europe, the Samaria Gorge is incredibly popular and in the peak season feels over-crowded. However if you are looking for a good walk in a place of exceptional beauty then this is the hike for you.

Hikers in the Samaria Gorge will be accompanied by their Greek Kitchen Host and treated to a ginormous, cold lager or fresh orange juice at the end before heading the final 3km to the hotel in Agia Roumeli.

### Option 2: The Agia Irini Gorge 3-4hrs

This hike starts at an elevation of just 500m and has a total length of 7.5km on a shady, well-maintained path that runs along the edge of the White Mountains down to the coastal village of Sougia.

This pleasant hike is good walk that everyone can easily enjoy. The hike is generally flat on well-maintained paths and beautiful, the tree coverage makes it enjoyable on a hot day and takes considerably less time than the Samaria Gorge.

Fewer people visit Agia Irini Gorge than the Samaria so if you're looking for something potentially less crowded then this could be the option for you.

At the end of the hike you will take the public ferry to the village of Agia Roumeli where accommodation is that night and a welcome drink will be waiting for you at the hotel.

The Agia Irini hike is unaccompanied and your Greek Kitchen Host will provide you with everything you need and clear information on where to go and what to do.

At the hotel in Agia Roumeli there is time to shower and relax, visit the beach before a pre-dinner drink. Everything you eat this evening is locally sourced with the option of fresh fried fish from today's catch.

## Gorge Hiking Checklist:

- Bring a daypack containing a refillable water bottle and to carry your included packed lunch
- Wear sunglasses, a hat and sturdy, worn-in hiking boots or good sneakers. No flip-flops, sandals or light tennis/baseball shoes
- If you need them, bring hiking poles

## DAY 6 LIKOS

**Meals included:** Breakfast/Dinner

**Activities:** Short hike through Venetian ruins 30mins/Moussaka cooking class 4hrs

**Transport:** Local ferry 1hr

The first boat of the day is at 10:30 am; take advantage of the late start and head to the beach for a morning swim.

The short ferry journey of around 1hr brings you to Loutro, a hidden village in a cove on the Libyan Sea. Here crystal clear water sparkles like nowhere else, if you're lucky there'll be a dolphin or some sea turtles in the bay.

Luggage will be collected on arrival and taken to the hotel leaving you to enjoy time in this charming village; relax on the beach, grab a kayak or just sit in one of the many cafes and restaurants to enjoy some lunch.

Later in the afternoon your Greek Kitchen Host will lead you on a short hike through a Venetian settlement ruins to a secluded beach and the family-run taverna, home for the night.

The family are wonderful, welcoming people living in one of the prettiest places on earth. In this special place your Greek Kitchen Host will lead the relaxed cooking class where together you will prepare Moussaka, the signature dish of Greece.

Relax in the evening, appreciate the view and play some backgammon - there's always someone to teach you.

## Loutro and Likos optional activities:

- **Kayak Hire €10 per 2 hours**  
The Hotel Porto Loutro has a rental office right on the beach
- **Sun Lounger Loutro Hire €5 per day**  
Per two loungers and one parasol.
- **Night Time Boat Ride 1hr €15 per person**  
Join Pavlos for a trip out under the stars and over the glowing sea.

## DAY 7 HERAKLION

**Meals included:** Breakfast/Dinner

**Activities:** Guided Heraklion food tour 4hrs

**Transport:** Motorboat 10mins/Local ferry 35mins /Private bus 2hrs

A ride in a motorboat will return you to Loutro in the morning to meet your ferry and the last journey of the trip. At the final port on this stretch of southern Crete a private transfer will take you to Heraklion, the third largest city in Greece and the capitol of Crete.

With more than 5000 years of history, Heraklion is a fascinating place filled with excellent museums, lively squares and beautiful architecture including a Venetian fortress in the harbor.

This afternoon's activity is a guided tour of Heraklion; that will combine the historical life of the city as well as the culinary. Visit the market street where modern cafes and shops selling souvenirs are crammed in with fresh produce sellers, butchers and dairy shops that have been open for generations while learning about the lengthy history of the city that has been influenced by the Ottomans, the Franks and the Venetians.

Experience the fresh flavors of Crete as you move about the city's quarters; taste specialty cheeses and yoghurt, endemic teas and herbs, delicious *bougatsa*; a custard-filled pie that the city is famous for and plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts and Cretan dishes served with local alcohol or cinnamon soda: All produced on the island by people who are incredibly proud of their island's culinary heritage.

After the food tour, you could opt to visit Knossos, the ruins of a huge Minoan palace complex and home of the legend of the Minotaur, combine it with a visit to the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion, one of the best museums in Greece, where the collections include Minoan weaponry, frescos, jewelry like the pretty Malian Bee and the famous Phaistos Disk.

This evening you'll dine Heraklion style. Meet your group and Host for a night in a traditional Heraklion Mezze Taverna with flowing wine, delicious food and live music; you might even get to learn a few Greek dances...

## DAY 8 HERAKLION

**Meals included:** Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner

**Activities:** Winery visit with tasting 2hrs/Cooking demonstration 1hr

**Transport:** Private transfer 30mins

Winding things down for the last day of the trip, head into the pretty Cretan farmland just outside the city to a winery where for generations fantastic Cretan wines have been produced using some of the oldest grape varieties in Europe; take a tour of the winery and enjoy a tasting and food pairing before a cooking demonstration from the family who own the winery and lunch.

Back in Heraklion make the most of a free afternoon for any last-minute shopping; it's a great place to pick up high quality items at great prices like olive oil, honey and *raki* as well as olive wood products, natural organic cosmetics, herbs and tea.

Tonight is the final group meal and your host will take you to a lively taverna with an amazing menu, flowing wine and a fantastic atmosphere making sure that your final impression of Crete is a great one.

### Heraklion optional activities:

- **Knossos 08:00 - 20:00 €15/€8 reduced**

Explore the sprawling ruins of the Minoan Palace complex of Knossos, home to the mythical labyrinth and minotaur. For just €1 extra your ticket can include entry to the excellent Archaeological Museum of Heraklion in the city center as well. The palace is located a 15min bus ride from the center.

- **Koules Fortress 08:00 - 20:00 €2/€1 reduced**

Built by the Venetians more than 500 years ago, Koules Fortress is perfectly placed in the harbor to provide amazing views of the city and out to sea. The interior has undergone a massive renovation and is now complete with excellent visitor exhibits. The walk along the harbor walls is an excellent way to stretch your legs as well!

## **DAY 9 DEPARTURE DAY**

**Meals included:** Breakfast

Depart at any time. Your Greek Kitchen Host will be available to help book taxis and provide information on buses to Heraklion International Airport.

## **TOUR INFORMATION**

**ACCOMMODATION:** All of our hotels are comfortable standard tourist class with en-suite bathrooms, safe boxes in either the room or at reception and Wi-Fi.

**NIGHT FERRY:** All Getaway Guests will be accommodated in mix gender 4-berth inside cabins with en-suite facilities. There is no private room option for this. Families/couples/companions will be roomed together.

**TRANSPORT:** By using the Greek public transport system where possible we are able to pass the savings on to our Getaway Guests with more cost-conscious trip prices.

All private transfers are operated by licensed, insured, tested and reviewed companies that meet the high standards of The Greek Kitchen.

**SINGLE TRAVELLERS:** Being single can be expensive and we don't believe in penalizing single travellers so anyone travelling independently on a Greek Kitchen Getaway will be automatically be roomed with another single traveller of the same gender identification; unless they choose to purchase a private room at the time of booking.

**PRIVATE ROOM:** For those who prefer their privacy, the option to have your own room throughout the trip is available for an extra fee that is displayed in the booking details for the Getaway booked. The private room option is not included in the cabins on night ferries.

**SAFETY:** While Greece is blessed with one of the lowest crime rates in Europe there are teams of professional pickpockets out and about like in most major cities. Paying attention to your belongings and exercising common sense should give you a stress-free trip.

**YOUR GREEK KITCHEN HOST:** Our Hosts are the face of The Greek Kitchen and we are so proud of them. All are native to Greece and have come together to share their passion and expert local knowledge for their homeland to make sure that you, our Getaway Guest has the best experience possible. They are trained in first aid and competent in dealing with any situation. Your Greek Kitchen Host is here to lead you through the country and introduce you to unique, fun and fascinating experiences that will enrich your time with us. They know all the best places to visit, eat and see and will surprise you throughout the journey. Your Greek Kitchen Host isn't here to hold your hand or carry your luggage but they will take care of you.

**FOOD:** Throughout the Getaway the Guest will have the possibility to eat a wide range of local dishes. The Getaway Team at The Greek Kitchen have found an extensive amount of tavernas, cafes, restaurants and experiences to ensure that you experience this range. We also want to support our Guests who have dietary requirements outside of the "normal sphere" of dining and are pleased to cater for people who cannot or choose not to eat certain ingredients.

Please check the "Included Meals" level on the "Good To Know" section of the website page for your Getaway to see how many meals are included. Be sure to have budgeted for meals not included. Where a meal isn't included your Host will be able to provide you with a selection of places to eat that suit a variety of budgets and needs. Where meals are not included on the Getaway it is the responsibility of the guest to provide food, on long journeys it isn't always possible to stop somewhere to eat and in this case it is the responsibility of the guest to have brought food with them.

**WATER:** Greece has very good drinking water and water bottles can be refilled in hotels and restaurants where a bottle of tap water is usually provided at the table. We ask that Guests refrain from purchasing one-use plastic disposable water bottles and any similar items in order to reduce plastic waste that is reaching critical levels around the world.

**MONEY:** In Greece we use the Euro and almost everywhere takes credit/debit cards however it's always advisable to have cash with you for smaller purchases. Bargaining isn't common on small items and is seen as rude. There are plenty of places to change foreign currency into Euros with the best rates of exchange given at banks. For purchases of larger items shipping can be arranged easily through the incredibly reliable Greek postal service.

**TIPPING:** Tipping your Greek Kitchen Host isn't included in the price of your Getaway and while it's not mandatory it's always nice to have your hard work appreciated and we recommend €3-5 per person per day. For local guides and driver we recommend €2-3 per day and in restaurants, cafes and bars it's common to round up the bill with 10% on top.

**INSURANCE:** It is the responsibility of the Getaway Guest to provide their own travel insurance and a copy of the documentation including the company contact details and policy information must be given to the Greek Kitchen Host at the welcome meeting on Day 1 of the trip. The insurance must be valid, cover full health and repatriation. Failure to produce this will mean cancellation of the trip without refund. Although not mandatory we do recommend insurance covering your personal belongings, The Greek Kitchen holds no responsibility for any lost, stolen or damaged items at any point during the trip.

**MEDICATION/MEDICAL CONDITIONS:** Please let your Greek Kitchen Host know about any medical conditions or medication you are on for the duration of your trip.

**LUGGAGE:** Generally with Greek Kitchen Getaways we suggest one easy to manage suitcase or backpack and one item of hand luggage with a daypack that can be used for any hiking trips or excursions. All luggage brought by the guest is their personal responsibility for care and transportation. Most Greek Kitchen Getaways use public transport and accommodation that might only have stair access to rooms: The lighter you travel, the better your experience.

**CLOTHING:** The Greek weather is reliably warm and sunny from April to November however it can change and preparation should be made for any adverse weather conditions such as strong winds, rainfall and heat waves. Pack light, breathable clothing that is comfortable to wear in hot weather with footwear that is suitable for the city and the countryside. Wear a hat to protect your from the sun.

Please bear in mind that Greece is a conservative country and that dress codes exist in places such as museums, archaeological sites and centers of religion where shoulders, arms and legs down to below the knee must be covered. Nude or topless sunbathing is not considered acceptable outside of designated areas.

**BEHAVIOUR:** The team at The Greek Kitchen want you to enjoy your Getaway however anything deemed as "bad behavior" will not be tolerated, this includes but is not limited to the following: violence or any kind, unruly drunkenness, the use of any illegal or illicit drug, engaging with prostitutes, bring people into the tour who are not a paid member of the group, any behavior deemed racist/misogynistic/homophobic/transphobic or belittling to anyone regarding religious beliefs and is respectful of other Guests lifestyles and culture as well as respecting the local culture and traditions of Greece and the Greek people.

Theft and vandalism are taken very seriously in Greece and can be punished with prison sentences. The Greek Kitchen is not liable to assist anyone in the case that they are arrested while on a Getaway

It is also important that while on the Getaway that each Guest maintains a decent level of personal hygiene.

Breaches of any of these listed items plus any that the Greek Kitchen Host believes to come under the label of unacceptable behavior will be put forward for immediate consultation with senior Greek Kitchen Management and could result in the aggressor having the rest of their transport, accommodation and activities cancelled and being removed from the trip.

**FEEDBACK:** We are a growing company and your feedback can help us with this. At the end of each Getaway our Guests will be asked to fill in a feedback form that will be emailed to them.

If a guest as a complaint of a serious nature we request contacting us as soon as possible using the contact details provided on the welcome pack received after booking.

