

## Mythical Peloponnese

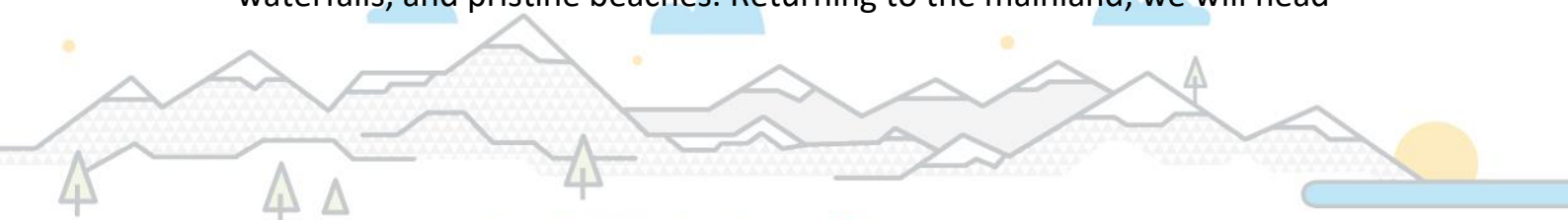
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The Peloponnese is a land of legends. This stunning yet little-explored peninsula in southwestern Greece was once the playground of ancient gods and the inspiration for Homer's epic Iliad. It is here that the Olympic Games were born, and the legendary battles of Sparta were fought. Dotted with ancient ruins and clifftop castles, the region also boasts charming guesthouses along some of the Mediterranean's most beautiful beaches.

Our journey unveils the hidden treasures of the Peloponnese. We begin in Athens and drive toward the prefecture of Arkadia – a landscape of medieval villages, remote monasteries, dramatic ravines, and winding roads that thread through the valleys of the Menalon Mountains. Here, we will hike the historic trail along the scenic Lousios River.

Next, we explore the rugged and barren landscape of Mani, which forms the southernmost tip of mainland Greece and truly feels like the end of the road. We will spend two nights in Kardamyli, where British author Patrick Leigh Fermor chose to make his home, and on our way to Kythera, one night in Monemvasia, often compared to France's Mont Saint-Michel for its enchanting medieval charm. From there, we will drive to Neapoli and board a ferry to the island of Kythera. Secluded at the southern tip of the Peloponnese, this island has preserved its cultural identity and boasts breathtaking landscapes of fertile valleys, waterfalls, and pristine beaches. Returning to the mainland, we will head

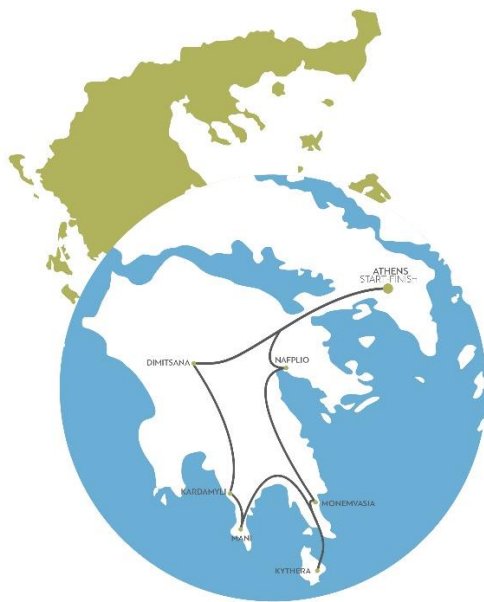


to Nafplio, a picturesque town graced with narrow streets and elegant Venetian architecture. A perfect ending to our exploration of this legendary region.

### **Trip Highlights**

- Discover the delights of charming mountain-top villages in the Arcadia region
- Walk in the remote and rugged Mani and marvel at the Maniot tower houses
- Meander through the magical Mycenae, a World Heritage listed site
- Sample local dishes that pay tribute to the rich gastronomic tradition of the region, and gain insight to the philosophy of the fresh local products

### **Map**



## Tour Details

**Days/Nights:** 8 days / 7 nights

**Theme:** Family adventures/ Hiking & Trekking/ Cultural

**Condition grading:** Easy Active

## Itinerary

### Day 1

#### **Drive to Arcadia and hike in Lousios gorge**

In the morning we depart from Athens, and we will head towards Arcadia prefecture, where we going to hike part of the Lousios gorge. The hike starts from the isolated monastery of Prodomos, which is built into the side of a rock and looks stunning, the path unfolds in parallel with Lousios, a river with crystal clear waters that runs through an incredibly steep gorge towering up above you. The path finishes back to Dimitsana, and just before entering the village we will make a stop to visit the Open-Air Water Power Museum, a thematic museum which highlights the importance of water-power in traditional society. Focusing on the main pre-industrial techniques that take advantage of water to produce a variety of goods, it links them to the history and daily life of the local society over the ages.

#### ***Overnight in Dimitsana in a boutique hotel***

#### ***Lunch and dinner included***

***Hiking distance:*** 8 km / ***Hiking Duration:*** 4 hr

***Elevation gain & loss:*** 854 m & 455 m

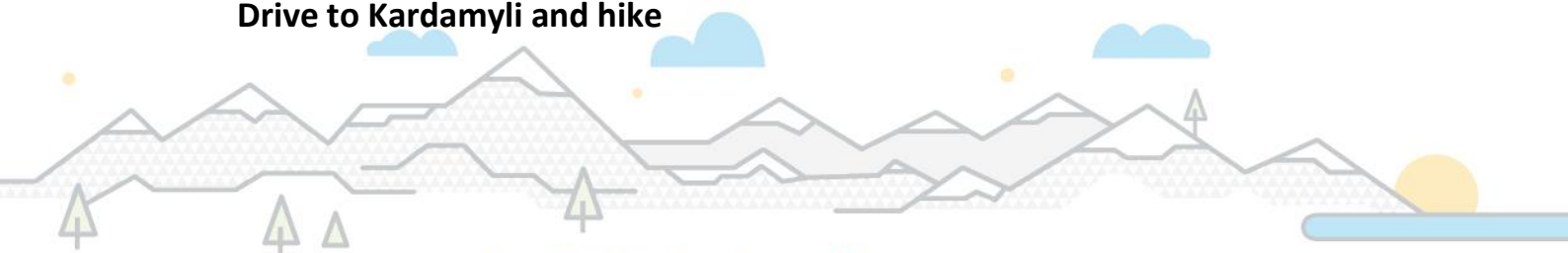
#### ***Driving distance:***

Athens to Dimitsana 210 km / 2 hr 30 min

Dimitsana to the Monastery of Prodomos 15 km / 30 min

### Day 2

#### **Drive to Kardamyli and hike**



Today we will drive towards Kardamyli. This tiny village is located in one of the prettiest settings in the Peloponnese, nestled between the blue waters of the Messinian Gulf and the Taygetos Mountains. Hiking has become Kardamyli's greatest drawcard, as the hills behind the village are crisscrossed with an extensive network of cobblestone paths, hidden among the coastal flora. Our path starts at the old quarter of Kardamyli and soon passes the so-called Tombs of the Dioscouri, the alleged burial spot of Castor and Pollux. The two rock-cut tombs are probably Mycenaean in origin. A half-hour uphill finds us by the church and the outskirts of the village of Agia Sophia. The views from here back down to Kardamyli are more than worth the effort. Walk through stunning landscapes of villages, olive groves and wild flower fields all the way down to a gulf where Patrick Leigh Fermor lived.

In the afternoon put on your bathing suits and take a refreshing swim in the turquoise waters, in one of the idyllic beaches around Kardamyli.

***Overnight in Kardamyli in a boutique hotel***

***Breakfast and dinner included***

***Hiking distance:*** 8 km / ***Hiking Duration:*** 3 hr

***Elevation gain & loss:*** 372 m & 372 m

***Driving distance:***

Dimitsana to Kardamyli 131 km / 2 hr 30 min

**Day 3**

**Sea kayak in Kardamyli**

Sea kayak Kardamyli is about exploring the coast of the Messinian Gulf at a relaxed pace. You paddle in warm crystal-clear waters, exploring hidden coves with impressive rock formations and visiting idyllic beaches scattered along the coast. One of the top attractions of this trip is a visit to the Blue Cave. A spectacular natural phenomenon where sunlight passing through a crack in the cave reflects on the seafloor an aquamarine color



***Overnight in Kardamyli in a boutique hotel***

***Breakfast and lunch included***

***Sea kayak duration:*** 4 hr including breaks

#### **Day 4**

##### **Explore Mani, hike to Cape Tainaron and drive to Monemvasia**

Mani is as it ever was: stunning and desolate. The road down the eastern side of Mani's rugged spine is dotted with small villages notable for their Byzantine churches and clusters of stone towers – ancient mini-Manhattans built to defend against invaders and to protect citizens when local blood feuds emerged.

From Kardamyli we will drive to Cape Tainaron, and hike towards the southernmost point of mainland Greece, where a sea cave is said to be the mouth of Hades, the ancient god of the underworld.

After that, we will continue towards Monemvasia, a Gibraltar-like rock which forms a small island linked by a bridge, with a medieval village at its base. The village is enclosed within the walls of a castle, with narrow, cobbled streets, flanked by winding stairways that weave between a complex network of stone houses.

***Overnight in Monemvasia in a boutique hotel***

***Breakfast and lunch included***

***Hiking distance:*** 4 km / ***Hiking Duration:*** 2 hr

***Elevation gain & loss:*** 172 m & 172 m

***Driving distance:***

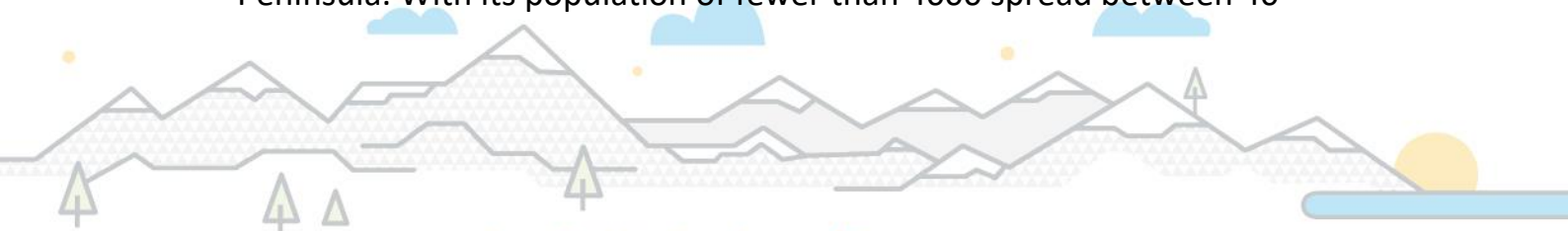
Kardamyli to Kokkinogeia 84 km / 2 hr

Kokkinogeia to Monemvasia 137 km / 3 hr

#### **Day 5**

##### **Ferry to Kythera and hike from Kapsali to Chora**

Located in the crossroad of the Aegean and Ionian seas, the island of Kythera lies just off the southern tip of the Peloponnese's Lakonian Peninsula. With its population of fewer than 4000 spread between 40



villages, Kythera it's an unspoilt island of lush valleys, deep gorges, crystal clear waters and medieval settlements.

In the afternoon, we will hike from the village of Kapsali to Chora, the capital of the island which is set on a hill above it. It is one of the most beautiful villages of the Aegean that stands out for its architectural blend of Cycladic, Venetian and Cretan architecture. Before completing the loop walk to Kapsali, we will explore its white-washed lanes up to the Venetian castle with stunning views over to Hytra, a sea-girt rock that lays claim to being the birth place of Aphrodite.

### ***Overnight in Kythera in a boutique hotel***

***Breakfast, lunch and dinner included***

***Hiking distance:*** 5,5 km / ***Hiking Duration:*** 2 hr

***Elevation gain & loss:*** 324 m & 349 m

***Driving distance:***

Monemvasia to Neapoli 27 km / 30 min

Diakofti to Potamos 20 km / 45 min

Potamos to Kapsali 20 km / 35 min

Kapsali to Potamos 20 km / 45 min

***Ferry:***

Neapoli to Kythera 12:00-13:15

## **Day 6**

### **Hike the Mylopotamos loop**

The mountainous village of Mylopotamos, is one of the most beautiful medieval villages of the island and it is famous for its waterfall. Our path starts from the village square, and we follow the river down the gorge past the ruins of numerous mills that once ground the local wheat and numerous waterfalls. We end up in the castle of Kato Chora, one of the most significant monuments of the island, which was built by the Venetians in 1565 A.D. Inside one can admire the layout of the two-story houses and part of fortified walls, as well as a large number of Byzantine churches.





***Overnight in Kythera in a boutique hotel***

***Breakfast, lunch and dinner included***

***Hiking distance:*** 5 km / ***Hiking Duration:*** 3 hr

***Elevation gain & loss:*** 259 m & 270 m

***Driving distance:***

Potamos to Mylopotamos 10 km / 15 min

Mylopotamos to Potamos 10 km / 15 min

## **Day 7**

### **Ferry to Neapoli and drive to Nafplio**

In the morning, we will take the ferry back to Peloponnese and then we will drive towards Nafplio, the town where Greece meets Italy. Built with stepped streets overhung with balconies dripping bougainvillea, handsome neoclassical buildings and enticing shops and restaurants, it is the most charming town in the Peloponnese.

***Overnight in Nafplio in a boutique hotel***

***Breakfast and dinner included***

***Driving distance:***

Potamos to Diakofti 20 km / 45 min

Neapoli to Nafplio 250 km / 3 hr 30 min

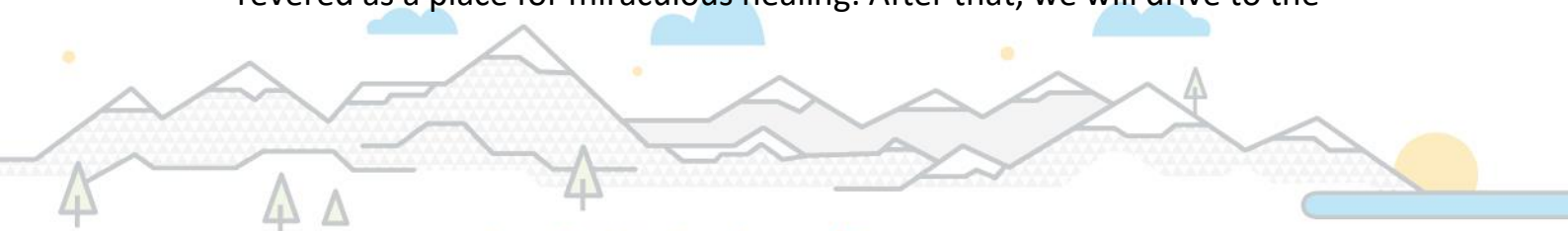
***Ferry:***

Kythera to Neapoli 12:00-13:15

## **Day 8**

### **Visit Epidaurus and Mycenae and drive back to Athens**

Epidaurus, is the best-preserved theater of Ancient Greece, and the place where Aeschylus, Euripides and Sophocles presented their tragic poets. Every single summer people still return to see the same plays, a genuine testimony of the Greek culture that it is still alive. We will spend the morning visiting the archaeological site, which was also famed and revered as a place for miraculous healing. After that, we will drive to the



World heritage-listed Mycenae, one of the most ancient places in Europe, and as you walk through the 13th-century BC Lion Gate, it's easy to sense that the ancient Greek myths have a strong connection with reality.

***Breakfast and lunch included***

***Driving distance:***

Nafplio to Epidaurus 23 km / 40 min

Epidaurus to Mycenae 40 km / 1 hr

Mycenae to Athens center to 120 km / 2 hr

**What's included**

***Price includes:***

All accommodations as listed (or similar) based on double occupancy

Hotel taxes and service charges

All transportation during the trip

All activities mentioned in the program

Ferry tickets

Entrance fees to the Mycenae, Epidaurus archaeological sites and the Open-Air Water Power Museum

Tourist guide for the archaeological sites Mycenae and Epidaurus

Services of a guide throughout the tour

Transport and handling of one reasonably sized suitcase and one carry-on per person

***Included meals:*** Breakfast, lunches and dinners as indicated in the itinerary

***Not Included:***

Domestic and/or international air fare

Medical expenses

Travel or emergency evacuation insurance

Gratuities for leader/guide or driver

Alcoholic beverages and meals other than those outlined in itinerary

Visas if needed





## **Itinerary Changes**

We are constantly updating our unique itineraries based on new information and experiences available. The walks, accommodations, and visits listed may be adjusted. The itineraries presented are subject to modification and change by Tripin Adventures. We reserve the right, without penalty, to make changes in the published itinerary whenever, in our judgment, conditions warrant, or if we deem it necessary for the comfort, convenience, or safety of participants.

## **Terrain**

This trip level is Easy Active and is suitable for most people that are in good physical condition. The itinerary includes walking tours in cities and villages, and five days with hikes of 2-4 hours and a day of Sea Kayaking with about one and half hours of paddling.

Although the paths are quite well-kept the terrain often tends to be very stony and rocky. You will mostly be walking on footpaths, mountain trails and on some tarmac roads and be prepared for few steeper passages.

## **Condition Grading**

Easy active

Trips designated “Easy Active” are perfect for first-timers, or travelers looking for a mild physical challenge. A typical day will consist of 1-3 hours of activity.

## **Starting point and getting there**

**Starting point is:** Athens.



**Getting There & Away:** Athens airport Eleftherios Venizelos, is about 27km east of Athens. Athens is connected with direct flights with various cities in Europe, North America and Asia.

**Getting around:** We can arrange for a transfer from the airport to your hotel. If you want to come by yourself, the metro and the suburban rail provide quick connections to central Athens (1 hour / 10 euro' ticket). The bus option is cheaper though it takes longer (1h 30 min / 5 euro' ticket). You can also take a taxi (1 hour / 35-50 euro').

## Food

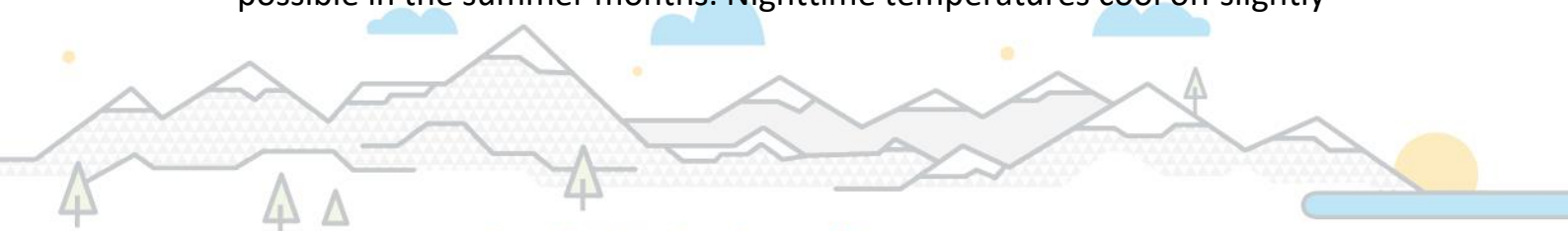
Simple, nutritious and flavorsome, the food is one of the pleasures of travel through Greece. Rustic Greek Cuisine reflects the history and bounty of its diverse regions and relies on the fresh, seasonal home-grown produce and generally simple, unfussy cooking that brings out the rich flavors of the Mediterranean.

Greece's relaxed and hospitable dining culture makes it easy to get into the local spirit. Greeks love to eat out and share impossibly big meals family style. Given the long summers and mild winters, alfresco dining is central to the dining experience. Service could be slow by Western standards, but why be in a rush either way.

As a rule our groups tend to eat together to enable you to taste a larger variety of dishes and enjoy each other's company. There's no obligation to do this though. Wherever possible we will cater for dietary needs for any included meals, but there may be times when those with special requirements may need to provide their own. Note that alcohol and soft drinks are not included.

## Weather

Spring, summer and fall in Greece are sunny and warm. The daytime temperatures average 25-30 C though temperatures in the 35s are possible in the summer months. Nighttime temperatures cool off slightly



to 20° C. Rain showers are rare in the islands, but it's often breezy and rainy on the coast.

### **Gear Checklist**

Greece has a temperate climate. Base your clothing on the “layering system”, if it is hot you can “peel off” layers quickly, if it is cooler and windy you can quickly “dress up”. The lighter you travel, the easier you travel. Use your best judgement and pack as lightly as possible. You will appreciate light luggage towards the end of your trip. Please consider taking along the following items on your trip.

#### **Official Papers**

- ✓ Valid passport
- ✓ Airline tickets

#### **Luggage**

- ✓ Duffel bag or rolling luggage
- ✓ Daypack to carry camera, water bottle and snacks etc.
- ✓ Luggage locks and tags

#### **Outerwear**

- ✓ Midweight polar fleece sweater
- ✓ Rain jacket and rain pants, or poncho

#### **Clothing**

- ✓ Hiking shorts
- ✓ Casual clothing made of light-weight fabrics
- ✓ T-shirts
- ✓ Long-sleeve shirt
- ✓ Hiking pants, loose and easy to move in
- ✓ Underwear
- ✓ Swimsuit



### Clothing Accessories

- ✓ Sun hat or baseball cap

### Footwear

- ✓ Lightweight and supportive hiking boots, broken-in with good ankle support
- ✓ Beach sandals
- ✓ Casual, comfortable shoes for evening

### Accessories

- ✓ Sunscreen and lip protection
- ✓ Sunglasses and retainer strap
- ✓ Beach towel

### Optional Accessories

- ✓ Security pouch or money belt
- ✓ Trekking poles or walking staff
- ✓ Camera, memory and batteries
- ✓ Reading and writing materials
- ✓ Watch with alarm or travel alarm
- ✓ Travel pillow
- ✓ Motion sickness remedies
- ✓ Personal first-aid kit
- ✓ Insect repellent (lowrisk)
- ✓ Electric adapter plug/converter

This is not a fixed list, but more of a guideline, so feel free to add and remove items as you see fit.

### Currency & Banking

Greece has adopted the Euro as its currency. The easiest way to obtain local cash is from an ATM. Greek ATMs accept cards bearing the Cirrus, EC, Euro card, Visa and Plus symbols. If you take cash, US or Canadian Dollars can be easily exchanged at banks. Most major credit cards, Visa, MasterCard and American Express are accepted.



It is advisable to have some Euro with you upon arrival to be used for a taxi if necessary.

You may want to check the website [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) for current exchange rates.

## **Passports**

You must have a passport valid for at least 6 months beyond the conclusion of your trip. Please make sure that you have blank pages in your passport for your visa (if required), entry and exit stamps (one for each). Please make a copy to take with you in the event yours is lost or stolen and keep it separate from your actual passport.

## **Visas**

Currently a Greek Tourist Visa is not required for citizens of Canada, United States, Britain and Australia. If you hold another passport, please check online <http://visacentral.com/visas.php>

