

Mountains of identity

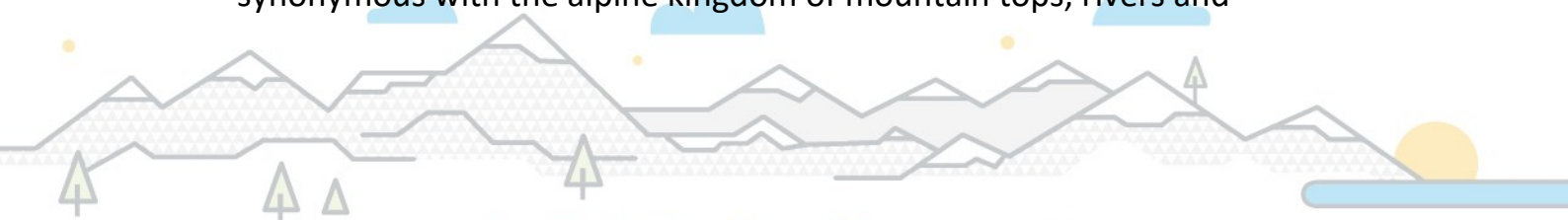
Pelion-Meteora-Tzoumerka

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Believe it or not Greece is primarily a mountainous country with more than 800 larger or smaller mountains, 53 of them with altitude exceeding the 2000m zone. The mountains, which served as natural barriers and boundaries, dictated the character of the country and have always played an important role in the life of Greeks, who incorporated them in their myths and legends as sacred places full of spiritual energy. They become "mountains of identity", tangible and towering symbolic landscapes representing a distinctive set of community and cultural ideals.

Our trip starts in Athens and our first destination is Pelion, a mountain, located on the eastern side of mainland Greece. It combines, in incredible harmony, lush vegetation, abundant waters, pristine beaches, villages with special architectural character and authentic Greek traditional cuisine. Next stop is Meteora, literally meaning "suspended in the air". Meteora are the world-famous stunning rock pillars that rise impressively above the plain of Thessaly. The monasteries built by monks six hundred years ago on the top of these rocks, create a unique synthesis of nature and man. Moving further North, entering "Epirus", we will head towards Tzoumerka, one of the prettiest parts of the region synonymous with the alpine kingdom of mountain tops, rivers and



wooded slopes. Our trip will end at Ioannina where we will wander in the cobblestone alleys of the old town.

Trip Highlights

- Discover the delights of charming mountain-top villages with panoramic vistas of the Aegean Sea at Pelion
- Explore Meteora, massive world renown, monastery-topped rock pinnacles, listed as one of UNESCO World Heritage sites
- Hike on cobblestone paths following the footsteps of locals who have walked on them for centuries at Tzoumerka
- Sleep in boutique guesthouses, built in total harmony with the architecture of the areas

Map



Tour Details

Dates: From May to October

Days/Nights: 9 days / 8 nights

Theme: Hiking & Trekking/ Cultural

Condition grading: Moderate

Itinerary

Day 1

Arrival in Athens and welcome dinner

Your trip begins in Athens. Ancient and modern, with equal measures of grunge and grace, bustling Athens is a heavy mix of history and edginess. The historic center is an open-air museum, yet the city's cultural and social life takes place amid these ancient landmarks, merging past and present. The magnificent Acropolis rises above the sprawling metropolis and has stood witness to the city's transformation.

In the afternoon we will meet at our hotel and after a brief orientation meeting, we'll set off to explore the old part of this lively city. To conclude the night, we will have our first dinner together while getting to know each other in eager anticipation of our adventure.

Overnight in Athens in a 4* hotel

Dinner included

Day 2

Drive to Pelion and hike from Damouchari to Tsagkarada

In the morning, we will depart from Athens toward Pelion. Upon reaching the mountain, we will pass through a series of picturesque villages before arriving in Tsagkarada, our base for the next three days. Later in the day, we will hike from the tiny settlement of Damouchari beach to Tsagkarada and on the way we will admire the 19th century



neoclassical houses, that are great specimens of the Pelion style, pass across many stone fountains and end up in Tsagkarada's main square, home to a thousand-year-old plane tree.

Overnight in Tsagkarada in a boutique hotel

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

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

Elevation gain: 480 m

Driving distance:

Athens to Tsagkarada 371 km / 4 hr 30 min

Day 3

Hike Milies loop

Our hike begins in the picturesque settlement of Milies. Following a cobblestone path, we descend with stunning views of the sea toward the coastal area where the village of Kala Nera is located. From there, we continue hiking upwards toward the village of Vyzitsa, a living monument to Pelion architecture. Its beautifully restored mansions, ecclesiastical monuments, cobbled streets, small square, and stone fountains make it one of the best-preserved examples of traditional architecture in Greece.

Overnight in Tsagkarada in a boutique hotel

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Hiking distance: 12 km / ***Hiking Duration:*** 5 hr

Elevation gain & loss: 660 m & 660 m

Driving distance:

Tsagkarada to Milies 23 km / 30 min

Milies to Tsagkarada 23 km / 30 min

Day 4

Hike from Milies to Tsagkarada

Today, we will hike from Milies to Tsagkarada, following the old path



that once connected the two villages. This route was historically used by locals to transport agricultural products from northern Pelion to the Milies train station, which linked the village to the town of Volos. The hike begins on a cobblestone path and then continues through the dense forest of the mountain, which is mostly composed of pine, oak, apple, and chestnut trees.

Overnight in Tsagkarada in a boutique hotel

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Hiking distance: 11 km / ***Hiking Duration:*** 5 hr

Elevation gain & loss: 600 m & 480 m

Driving distance:

Tsagkarada to Milies 23 km / 30 min

Day 5

Drive to Meteora, visit one of the monasteries and hike

The world Heritage listed Meteora is an extraordinary place, a testament to the harmonious coexistence of man and nature. By far, the best way to appreciate the power of the natural forces that shaped this breathtaking landscape is walking right into it. Fantastic manifestations of geological history and current processes of nature await you around every bend or rise in the trail

We will start from the village of Kastraki, which lies at the bottom of the rocks and hike up for a visit in the monasteries. They represent a unique artistic achievement and are one of the most powerful examples of the architectural transformation of a site into a place of retreat, meditation and prayer.

Overnight in Kastraki in a boutique hotel

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

Elevation gain & loss: 580 m & 580 m

Driving distance:

Tsagkarada to Kastraki 190 km / 2 hr 45 min



Day 6

Drive through Baros Pass to Pramanta and hike towards Melissourgoi

Our journey towards Pramanta, begins with a scenic drive through the breathtaking Baros Pass, one of the highest mountain passes in Greece, offering dramatic views of the Tzoumerka range.

Aside from its villages and stone bridges, what sets the region of Tzoumerka apart is its natural beauty, with its razor-sharp mountain peaks, freezing waterfalls, rivers tumbling through gorges and lush green hiking trails. In the afternoon, we will follow the path which connects the two mountain huts of Pramanta and Melissourgoi and along the route we will pass through dense fir forests, we will find streams and waterfalls and we will admire the power of the natural forces that shaped this unique landscape.

Overnight in Pramanta in a boutique hotel

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Hiking distance: 7 km / ***Hiking Duration:*** 3 hr

Elevation gain & loss: 481 m & 485 m

Driving distance:

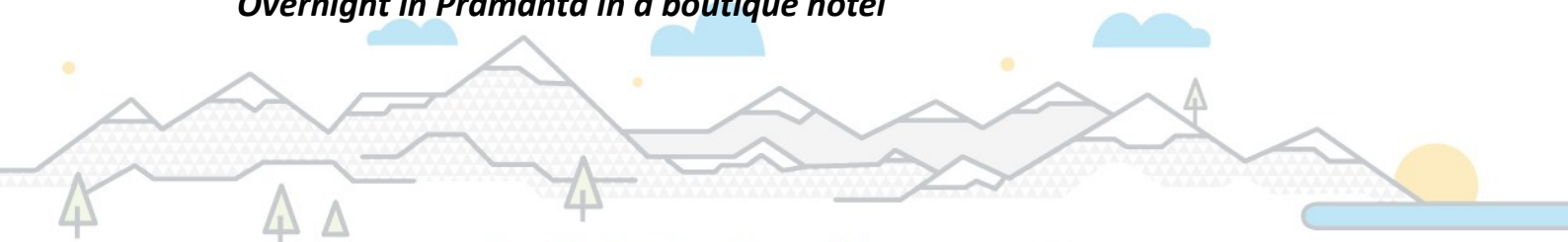
Kastraki to Pramanta 107 km / 3 hr

Day 7

Kalarytes to Syrrako hike

After enjoying our breakfast, we will drive towards Kalarytes, which alongside Syrrako are the true Jewels of Epirus. Both are genuine masterpieces, built from expert craftsmen, distinguish with their traditional character their arched bridges and their stone houses. We will hike the path that connects these two villages and it is certain that the spectacular vistas to the Tzoumerka mountains will take your breath away.

Overnight in Pramanta in a boutique hotel



Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Hiking distance: 11,2 km / ***Hiking Duration:*** 5 hr

Elevation gain & loss 692 m

Driving distance:

Pramanta to Kalarytes 20 km / 40 min

Kalarytes to Pramanta 20 km / 40 min

Day 8

Drive from Pramanta to Ioannina and visit the city

Ioannina the beautiful capital of the prefecture, is a city where history and tradition blend together in a mysterious way. Ioannina was under the Ottoman rule for almost 500 years, and Turkish influence has survived here more strongly than anywhere. Under the Turks the city flourished as a center of arts and crafts and no one had more impact on the town than the ruler Ali Pasha. In the morning, drive to Ioannina and discover the living history through a walking tour in the city's old citadel. After lunch we will depart to Athens, where your trip with Tripin Adventures in Greece concludes.

Overnight in Ioannina in a boutique hotel

Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Driving distance:

Pramanta to Ioannina 55 km / 1 hr 30 min

Day 9

Say farewell to Greece or continue on your own

Today there will be a morning transfer to the airport of Ioannina where you can catch a morning flight to the international airport of Athens for return flights home or continue exploring one of Europe's oldest cities.

Breakfast included

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
Entrance fee to one monastery in Meteora
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
Transfer to and from the airport/port
Other items of a personal nature
Anything not mentioned in above program

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.

Grade and Terrain



This trip level is Moderate and is suitable for most people that are in fairly good physical condition. Although the daily distances are not that far, it has been rated moderate as there are quite significant elevation gains and losses. The itinerary includes walking tours in cities and villages, and six days with moderate hikes of 2-5 hours. 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

Moderate

Trips designated “Moderate” are more active and require a bit more endurance. Hikes and treks include occasional steep ascents. Trip members should be experienced hikers in good physical condition, capable of walking 3-5 hours

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.

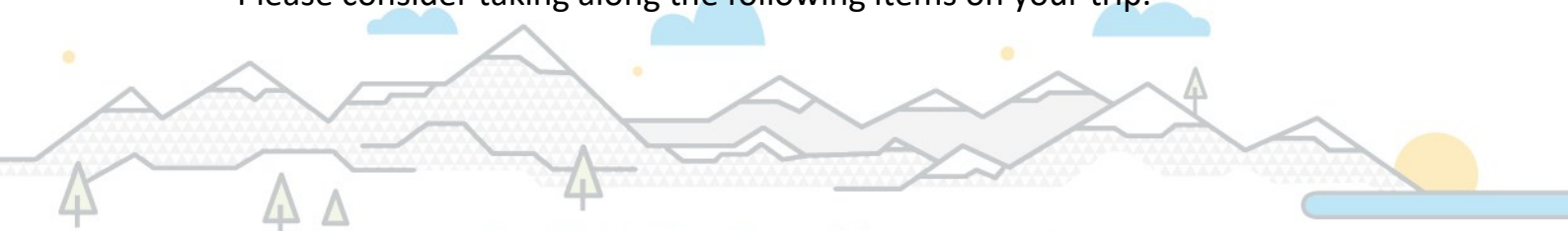
As a rule our groups tend to eat together to enable you to taste a larger variety of dishes and enjoy each other's company. There's no obligation to do this though. Wherever possible we will cater for dietary needs for any included meals, but there may be times when those with special requirements may 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 on 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

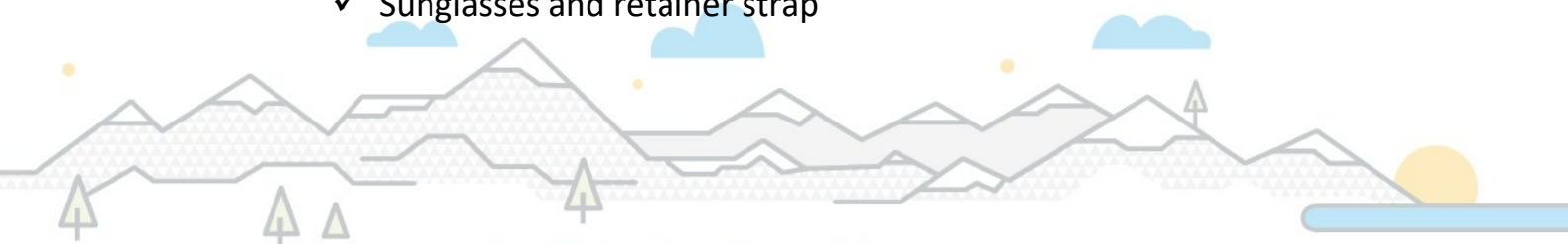
- ✓ Sun hat or baseball cap

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

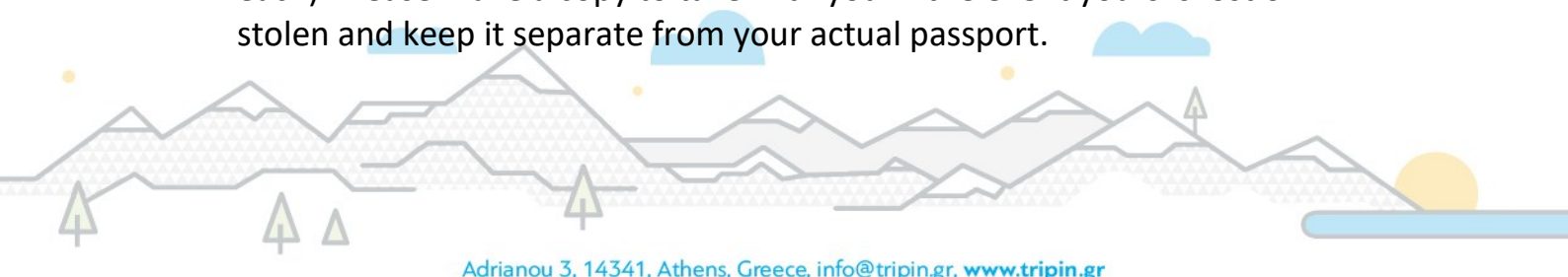
Greece has adopted the Euro as its currency. The easiest way to obtain local cash is from an ATM. Greek ATMs accept cards bearing the Cirrus, EC, Euro card, Visa and Plus symbols. If you take cash, US or Canadian Dollars can be easily exchanged at banks. Most major credit cards, Visa, MasterCard and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

