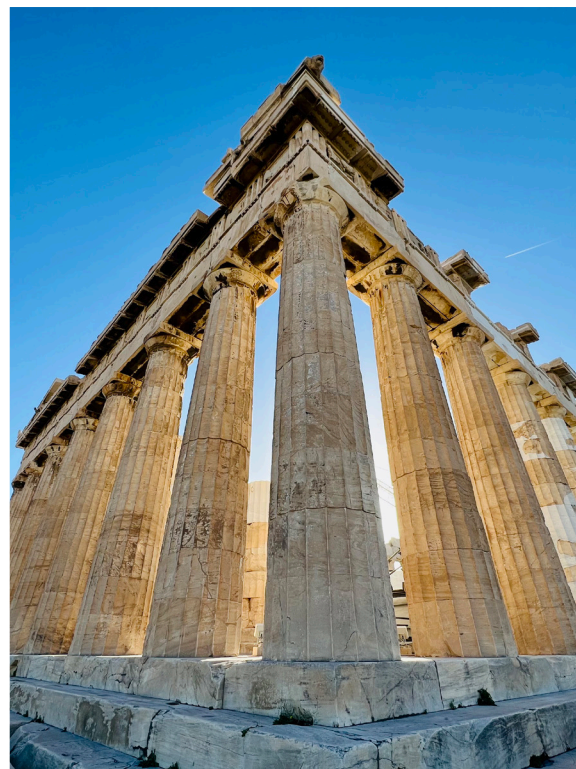


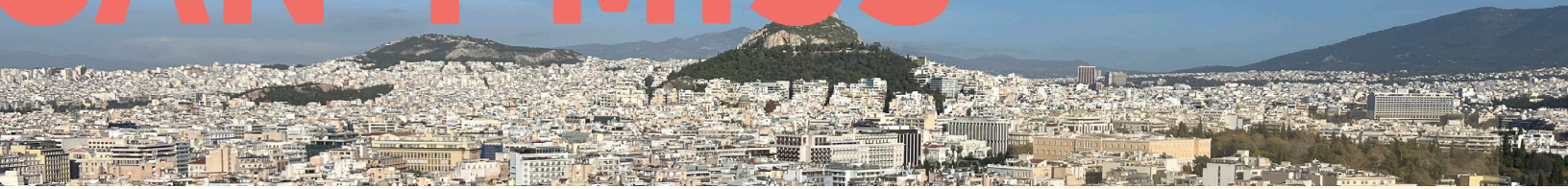
*Lauren*  
PLUS 03

## ATHENS & SANTORINI GREECE

Greece offers sunshine, whitewashed houses with bright-blue shutters, fascinating archaeological sites, delicious food, and a relaxed lifestyle. Greece is really a great place for family travel but can be challenging to plan a family itinerary with so many great options! How long you plan to stay in Greece will play a big part in determining how many places you can visit. We visited during the winter holiday of 2022, 3 days in Athens and 3 days in Santorini. We had initially planned on 2 weeks in Greece visiting more of the Greek Islands, but travel in the winter can be uncertain. There are very limited hotels and restaurants on the islands, the weather factors (cool and crisp or rainy and cold) and the infrequent and non direct island to island flights, we didn't want to take the chance. We decided to spend a week in Greece and a week in Turkey!



# CAN'T MISS ATHENS, GREECE



## PLACES TO EAT

The further away from the popular tourist spots is always better food and more reasonably priced! Greeks typically eat late. Lunch time is between 1:30 and 3:00 p.m. and dinner is usually around 9:00 or 10:00 p.m.

**Old Ithaki** - not far from the acropolis and delicious! Highly recommend.

**Little Kook** - a fairytale themed café that is very over-the-top as far as decor, it's definitely worth checking out and is a great instagram photo op if nothing else! We were there for Christmas time and it did not disappoint.

**Acropolis Museum Restaurant** - The scenery is breathtaking, the panoramic view on the Acropolis is one of the best in the city.

**Hans & Gretel** - magical and delicious desserts!

**"koulouri tou Psyri"** - Athens top street food, found on almost every corner

**Fairytale Athens** - Pastry Boutique with pink overload!

## WHERE WE STAYED

### **Moxy Athens City**

Stadiou 65, Athina 105, 51, Greece  
\*Brand new hotel, comfortable and in walking distance to the most popular sites! Another area I would recommend staying is the Historic Syntagma Square.

## THINGS TO DO

**Psyri neighborhood** - a traditional neighborhood famous for its popular tavernas and picturesque alleyways

## THINGS TO DO

### **Historic Syntagma Square**

The Changing of the Guard: Every hour, Evzones perform "the change of the guard" at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

### **Odeon of Herodes Atticus**

Roman theatre stone structure located on SW slope of the Acropolis

### **Parthenon** - *Must do!*

Constructed entirely of Penteli marble, the Parthenon represents architectural perfection—a pinnacle of human achievement.

### **Anafiotika** - *My Favorite!*

Located on the northern slope of Acropolis and right above the popular neighborhood of Plaka — a must see with tons of great restaurants and local shops. Anafiotika is a car-free area. The best and only way to see Anafiotika is on foot. Biking isn't recommended since the alleys are cobblestoned and in some parts, you'll have to walk up the stairs.

### **Plaka** - *Love it here!*

Plaka is a quaint neighborhood of traditional houses and cobbled streets strewn with cafes, shops, and ancient ruins. Tons of souvenir shops but the ones you actually want to see!

### **Pittaki Street** - *umbrella street*

**Monastiraki Square** - famous for its square with fruit stalls, flea market, and vintage stores

**Lykavittos Hill** - one of the best Instagram spots in Athens if you want to take photos of the sunset. You can either hike up there or take a cable car.

## ATHENS IN MY EYES

I had heard a lot of mixed reviews about Athens before our trip and so I didn't really know what to expect. Some had loved it and others had commented that it was dirty, unsafe and only worthy of a couple of days. What did we think? We thought it was a fantastic city and really enjoyed our three days there. You can honestly do the essentials in 1 days but I would recommend 2 -3 days with a family especially if travelling from overseas and have to take into consideration the dreaded, jet-lag!

Greece is also a very safe destination. Of course, places such as Athens or Thessaloniki pose the same usual risks you can run in every important city, but in general, the atmosphere is quite and there aren't any major risks to be aware of.

Greece's capital, featuring the ancient world's most magnificent sight — the Parthenon atop the Acropolis hill — plus excellent museums, an atmospheric old town, the lively Central Market, and funky neighborhoods bursting with avant-garde nightlife.

If you get off the beaten path, you'll discover that there are countless hidden gems to be found in Athens like uncommon museums, tiny cozy cafes, charming pubs, exclusive high-end restaurants, hiking trails, fascinating vantage points, lesser-known monuments, and much more.

## FUN FAMILY ACTIVITY

**Doctor Fish Athens Day Spa** - Garra rufa eat away dead skin on the feet, it's a wierd sensation but cool to do!

**Evil Eye Shopping** - a souvenir that is quintessentially Greek.



THE VIEWS FROM OIA ARE ABSOLUTELY STUNNING!

# SANTORINI

## WINTER IN OIA, SANTORINI

Exploring Santorini without a crowd was amazing! About 90% of stores, restaurants and hotels are closed for the season, boarded up and shut down. It was quiet. Very quiet. But I was so relaxed and so happy to not be sharing the island with tourists. We had cool and very windy weather, but no rain! There are no boats to go island hopping and no sunset cruises meaning we had the most amazing sunsets without a crowd. A photographers dream come true!

When you travel during off-season, there isn't a crowd, and you can focus on intricate design, architecture and history of a place or monument. We also did a one-day car rental and explored the entire island and it was one of our favorite days in Greece!

Oh and for cat lovers, it's a dream come true! Santorini is home to an unbelievable number of stray cats that are cared for by the island's residents and celebrated by visitors. There are now several charitable organizations dedicated to the health and well-being (including spay/neuter services) for the island's stray cat population.

Great scenery. Amazing sunsets. Beautiful weather. And CATS!!! What's not to love!

## WHERE WE STAYED

### Dionyssos Cave House

Located in Oia, partly carved in the volcanic rock face and offering unobstructed views of the caldera and the volcanoes. on the cliff peak close to the Venetian castle. It is near the spot where everybody gathers to watch Oia's famous sunsets and you don't even have to leave your Airbnb!

\*Cave Hotels in Santorini: they are stunning but they come at a very high price, especially during summer (June-July-August-September). Another benefit of off-season travel is better pricing and availability.



## OUR FAVORITE THINGS TO SEE AND DO

- Oia sunset
- Photograph the Blue Domes!
- PELICAN KIPOS - cafe and wine restaurant in the town of Fira. They have wine tasting in their cellar below the restaurant or ask for a tour (it's so neat!)
- Perissa Beach - Santorini's largest black sand beach stretching more than four miles at the base of Mesa Vouno Mountain. There are lounge chairs, umbrellas, lifeguards, showers, seaside cafes, restaurants, and a playground! Although they were all closed except for a few restaurants it shows to be an amazing summer destination
- Windmills in Santorini - my favorites are in Oia
- Red Beach In Akrotiri - a great place to snorkle with rich marine life, no chairs, no lifeguards and small stands available for souvenirs and snacks.
- Lighthouse of Akrotiri
- Rent a car and explore the island!

## BLUE DOMES

Finding blue domes on Santorini is easy.

Finding the perfect place to take a photo of several blue domes in Oia is NOT!

*Where are the three famously photographed blue domes in Santorini?*

1. Get to Oia.
2. Find the Church of Panagia Akathistos Hymn or Oia Central Plaza.
3. Face toward the sea and walk right on Nik. Nomikou for 200 feet.
4. Turn left immediately after the big church with the blue dome and three bells. The church's courtyard will be on your left.
5. Follow that path to the brown door and turn right.
6. Enjoy the view!