



# Greek Islands for Solo Travelers: Crete & Santorini

9 days | 12 days with Rome extension

In Greece, you don't just visit ancient ruins. You step back into the world of Zeus and Athena. And dinner at a taverna is more than a daily activity. It's a chance to mix and mingle with friendly locals while practicing your Greek. (Yamas, which means cheers, will get you far!) As you hop from archaeological treasures in Athens to Crete and over to sunsets on Santorini, you and your group of like-minded solo travelers will find that the best sunset is the one enjoyed with a glass of assyrtiko in hand and new friends at the table. Not ready to leave? We wouldn't want to, either. Experience the Italian art of dolce far niente—the sweetness of doing nothing. Take advantage of our two-day Rome extension and take your time over a frothy cappuccino.



## Your tour package includes

- 7 nights in a private room at handpicked hotels
- 7 breakfasts
- 4 dinners with beer or wine
- 1 wine tasting
- 3 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach
- 1 ferry transfer
- 2 on-tour flights

## Included highlights

- Acropolis
- Parthenon
- Ruins of Knossos
- Heraklion Archaeological Museum
- Santorini wine tasting
- Oia village visit
- Akrotiri excavations
- Village of Pyrgos

## Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for at least 3 hours daily across uneven terrain, including paved roads and cobblestone streets, with steep hills and stairs.

## Group size

14–20

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## Overnight Flight → 1 night

### Day 1: Travel day

Board your overnight flight to Athens today.

## Athens → 2 nights

### Day 2: Arrival in Athens

*Included meals: welcome dinner*

Welcome to Greece! Settle into your hotel. Then, gather with your Tour Director and fellow solo group members. You'll get to know each other at a mixer before enjoying a welcome dinner, served with beer or wine.

### Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Athens

*Included meals: breakfast*

Nothing can prepare you for the sheer sense of awe you'll feel when you come face-to-face with Athens—where ancient architecture and artifacts coexist with modern life. Meet up with your dedicated local guide, who will introduce you to the highlights of this bustling capital.

- Pass by the Panathenaic Stadium, built entirely out of marble—the only such stadium in the world.
- Continue to Syntagma Square—home to the neoclassical Greek Parliament building—and admire the plaza's imposing marble steps, fountain, and lush shade trees.
- Gaze upon the Arch of Hadrian, built to honor the Roman emperor, and imagine how its Pentelic marble stones were carted more than 11 miles from Mount Pentelikon in 131 A.D.
- View the remains of the sixth-century Temple of Zeus and gaze up at its 16 ornate Corinthian columns.
- Drive through Plaka. Situated at the foot of the Acropolis, this district is one of the oldest parts of Athens and is known as “the neighborhood of the gods” due to the dozens of monuments strewn throughout.
- Set off on a walking tour around the ancient Acropolis—site of the Parthenon, Temple of Athena Nike, and Erechtheion. You may have

seen these enduring icons of antiquity in books and films, but now you're stepping through the work of craftsmen who quarried and honed these marble blocks thousands of years ago.

Olive oil, feta, seafood, and fresh herbs are hallmarks of Greek cuisine. If you choose to join the Greek cooking class and dinner, you'll get acquainted with this tapestry of flavors before devouring your creations over included beer or wine. You can also use your free afternoon in Athens to explore on your own. Head back to the Plaka district or wander through Anafiotika on the northeast slope of the Acropolis. The latter neighborhood dates to the 19th century and is chock-full of charming, whitewashed cottages and vibrantly hued doors, the likes of which you might have seen—or will see soon—on Santorini.

+ Greek Cooking Class & Dinner

## Crete → 2 nights

### Day 4: Flight to Crete & sightseeing tour

*Included meals: breakfast, dinner*

Fly to Crete, the largest of the Greek islands, this afternoon. The birthplace of the ancient Minoan civilization, Crete is home to the legendary tales of King Minos, the labyrinth, and the Minotaur. Remnants of Minoan civilization can be found across the island, and its diverse landscape ranges from lush valleys and dramatic gorges to mountains, and beaches. Expect to be embraced by the locals' friendliness—perhaps alongside a shot of raki, a strong brandy made of distilled grape skins that's offered as a sign of hospitality. Board your bus and cruise past Crete's olive tree-covered terrain surrounding Heraklion—an ancient port town that was once the hub of the Minoans, Europe's first civilization—where you'll set off on a guided tour.

- Visit the ruins of the Bronze Age palace of Knossos. Part administrative center, part place of worship, it held a special place at the heart of Minoan culture (and was where, according to myth, King Minos imprisoned the Minotaur in the heart of a labyrinth).

- See the Heraklion Archaeological Museum, home of the world's preeminent collection of Minoan art and many artifacts taken from the excavation of Knossos and other dig sites around Crete.

Sit down for an included dinner this evening, served with beer or wine.

### Day 5: Free day in Crete

*Included meals: breakfast*

Looking to experience centuries of cultural diversity? Join the excursion to Chania, a coastal city on Crete's northwestern shore that has passed between Greek, Venetian, and Ottoman hands through the years. Embark on a walking tour of Chania's Old Town, a historic quarter tinged by Venetian heritage that also happens to boast a thriving Jewish community.

You can also use your free day to enjoy Cretan cuisine—grilled seafood and local cheeses like mizithra—at one of the island's many seaside tavernas or stroll along the warm sands of a beach or three.

+ Chania

## Santorini → 2 nights

### Day 6: Ferry to Santorini, wine tasting & Oia village visit

*Included meals: breakfast, wine tasting, light dinner*

You've seen the photos—now get ready to star in them yourself. Your scene-stealing backdrop? Steep cliffs that plunge into the Aegean and Santorini's iconic caldera, dotted with whitewashed buildings. Take a ferry to Santorini and spend the evening under the winding vines of a local winery.

Santorini's nutrient-rich volcanic soil lends itself perfectly to growing wine grapes. Get to know the island's unique vineyards during an excursion to a local winery.

- Tour the winery and learn how its grapevines are trained to grow close to the ground to protect themselves from the strong ocean winds.
- Sit down for a light dinner in the vineyard and sip your way through a sommelier-guided tasting featuring locally produced wines, including assyrtiko and vinsanto.

After dinner, pay a visit to the picturesque village of Oia, perched atop the cliffs of the Santorini caldera. You might just catch a glimpse of the evening sun melting into the Aegean in fiery bursts of pink, orange, and red as you stroll between whitewashed buildings stacked with colorful rooftops.

**Day 7: Sightseeing tour of Santorini**

*Included meals: breakfast*

Your guided tour of Santorini will take you from dramatic black-sand beaches to jagged cliff-lined shores and back—a stark contrast to the island’s beloved whitewashed buildings and sprays of bright fuchsia bougainvillea vines.

- Visit the archaeological excavations at Akrotiri, a settlement buried in volcanic ash, where richly pigmented Bronze Age frescoes and other Minoan artifacts survived a devastating volcanic eruption in the 16th century B.C.
- Ride to the top of Mount Profitis Ilias for panoramic views of Santorini, neighboring island chains, and the blue waters kissing the horizon.
- Stop in small, picturesque Pyrgos, where you’ll weave through the steep streets of this slightly off-the-beaten-path village. The ancient capital of Santorini enjoys a more laid-back atmosphere and views for days.

Choose to hop on a catamaran for a steal-your-breath-away dinner cruise starring the cliffside village of Oia—Santorini’s calling card. You can also spend your free afternoon poking around authentic shops and sampling the local wine if you’re craving time to explore on your own.

+ Santorini Caldera Cruise & Dinner

**Athens → 1 night**

**Day 8: Flight to Athens**

*Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner*

Spend a final morning in Santorini before flying back to Athens—perhaps enjoying a sunrise stroll to memorialize your bold, brave solo adventure or indulging in some shopping to pick up a few mementos to take home.

This evening, enjoy a farewell dinner at a local restaurant, served with beer or wine, as you celebrate your trip with your fellow group members.

**Flight Home**

**Day 9: Departure**

*Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)*

Transfer to the airport for your flight home or extend your stay to explore the Eternal City—Rome. You’ll spend two days falling in love with a city that’s older than Italy itself. Your itinerary gives you plenty of opportunities to enjoy Rome as an epicenter of food and faith, or free time to weave through the city on your own.

**+ Rome extension**

Have your sights (and taste buds) set on more art, history, and food? Rome is sure to deliver. Whether you play time-traveler while hopping between historic sites or try to check as many items off your foodie bucket list as you can, the days are yours to seize, and we’re here to help. Soak in the scenery and admire the highlights during guided tours and free time to do as you please.

**Rome → 3 nights**

**Day 9: Flight to Rome**

*Included meals: breakfast*

Have your sights (and taste buds) set on more art, history, and food? Rome is sure to deliver. Whether you play time-traveler while hopping between historic sites or try to check as many items off your foodie bucket list as you can, the days are yours to seize, and we’re here to help. Soak in the scenery and admire the highlights during guided tours and free time to do as you please.

+ Food of Rome: Walking Tour of Trastevere

**Day 10: Sightseeing tour of Rome**

*Included meals: breakfast*

Follow in the footsteps of the ancient Romans on a guided walking tour to discover its beautiful, Meet a local guide for a morning walk through central Rome, visiting the Eternal City’s bewitching squares and fountains.

- Start at the Spanish Steps to view the Fontana della Barcaccia, a sculptural fountain in the shape of a sunken ship overflowing with water, commemorating the flooding of the Tiber River in 1598.
- Continue to the iconic Trevi Fountain, built in the 18th century to celebrate water and the god Oceanus, dripping with Baroque glamor, statues, and intricate carvings.
- Pause for a gelato break—pistachio?

Chocolate? Better get both—and continue to the Pantheon to enter the best preserved ancient Roman temple dating to the second century. Feast your eyes on its perfect symmetry and engineering brilliance.

- Finish at the sumptuous Piazza Navona, site of Bernini’s Fountain of the Four Rivers. We especially love it illuminated after nightfall if you’d like to return.

Later, you won’t want to skip the guided tour of St. Paul’s Basilica—one of Rome’s four major papal basilicas. You can also choose to spend your free afternoon in Rome exploring on your own. Be sure to ask your Tour Guide for recommendations.

*(Please note: On some departures, the Rome sightseeing tour and the Ancient Rome: St. Paul’s Basilica & the Catacombs excursion may take place on day 11 and the Iconic Sights: Vatican City excursion may take place on day 10.)*

*(Please note: Entrance to the Pantheon may not be possible on certain days, your tour will explore the Pantheon’s exterior instead.)*

+ Ancient Rome: St. Paul’s Basilica & the Catacombs

**Day 11: Free day in Rome**

*Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner*

It’s your final full day in Rome. Whether you want to take it easy over a morning cappuccino or admire the exquisite art and architecture of the Galleria Borghese, use your free day at your leisure. Add an excursion to the sacred walls of Vatican City, where the Sistine Chapel’s venerated ceiling fresco, St. Peter’s Basilica, and countless masterpieces await.

Looking for something off the beaten path? Use your free day to descend into the eerie underground chambers of the Capuchin Crypt—also known as the bone chapel, adorned with skeletal remains in a unique display of artistic macabre.

This evening, enjoy a farewell dinner, served with beer or wine, as you celebrate your trip with your fellow group members.

*(Please note: On some departures, the Iconic Sights: Vatican City excursion may take place on day 10 and the Rome sightseeing tour and the Ancient Rome: St. Paul’s Basilica & the Catacombs excursion may take place on day 11.*

+ Iconic Sights: Vatican City

**Flight Home**

**Day 12: Departure**

*Included meals: breakfast (excluding early*

*morning departures)*

Transfer to the airport for your flight home.

# Customize your experience

Customize your tour by adding excursion options. Excursions offered on the same day will occur at different times, so there's no need to choose. Save \$10 when you book your excursion up to three days before your tour departs.\* Excursions requiring advance reservation only list this discounted price. Call or go online to customize your tour: [goaheadtours.ca/GI6](https://goaheadtours.ca/GI6) | 1-800-754-5066

## Day 3: Greek Cooking Class & Dinner

\$185CAD/\$195CAD\* (3.5 hours, departs in the evening, dinner included)

Learn the ins and outs of the Greek culinary tradition during tonight's cooking class. Join local chefs in the kitchen to prep three dishes. Then, head upstairs to the dining area where you'll sit down to enjoy the meal you've made along with beer or wine.

## Day 5: Chania

\$149CAD/\$159CAD\* (8 hours, departs in the morning, lunch included)

Travel to historic Chania, where a local guide introduces you to the city's Old Town. You'll visit Chania's cathedral before a walk through the Venetian quarter, where you'll step inside Etz Hayyim, the only synagogue on the island of Crete and a symbol of the city's enduring Jewish community. After exploring the synagogue, your guided tour ends at the port, where you'll visit an ancient Turkish Ottoman mosque. Lunch is included on this excursion, as is free time to get to know this beautiful city at your own pace. Please note: Etz Hayyim is closed on Sundays.

## Day 7: Santorini Caldera Cruise & Dinner

\$205CAD (5 hours, departs in the afternoon, dinner included)

Board a catamaran and sail in comfort through Santorini's awe-inspiring caldera on this scenic excursion. You'll cruise around the volcanic island of Nea Kameni for views of the picture-perfect cliffside village of Oia (pronounced "EE-ah"). Situated on the western end of the island, Oia was once a maritime center, and stately captains' houses still sit on its high ridges. Spend the afternoon on the open waters as you snorkel in the ocean, sunbathe on the deck of the catamaran, and swim in a natural hot spring that was once the crater of a volcano. You'll enjoy unlimited wine, water, and soft drinks, as well as a buffet-style dinner of home-cooked Greek specialties, on board the boat as you take in the beautiful scenery. Please note: We recommend packing a bathing suit. This excursion is seasonal and runs from April through mid-October only. It is also weather-dependent. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 20 days prior to departure.

## Extension excursion options

### Day 9: Food of Rome: Walking Tour of Trastevere

\$189CAD/\$199CAD\* (3.5 hours, departs in the afternoon)

Meet up with a local guide for a culinary-themed walking tour of Trastevere. This historic neighborhood is located across the Tiber River and is home to some of the Rome's best shops, bars, and restaurants. Step inside four handpicked eateries, each of which showcases the area's rich culinary traditions. You'll enjoy tastings of aperitivi, pasta, pastries, and gelato—all quintessential Italian foods. Over an aperitivo and a

glass of wine, your guide will talk about the various flavors and cooking techniques that have come to define the local cuisine. Watch locals go about their daily lives as you stroll along the charming trattoria-lined streets during your tour.

### Day 10: Ancient Rome: St. Paul's Basilica & the Catacombs

\$125CAD/\$135CAD\* (4 hours, departure time varies)

Descend into Rome's ancient catacombs, where early Christians buried saints and popes alongside commoners. A local guide will lead you through the burial chambers before your visit to St. Paul's Basilica, one of the four most important basilicas of Rome. Originally founded by Constantine the Great, the Basilica also houses the tomb of St. Paul.

Please note: Shorts and sleeveless shirts are not permitted within the Basilica. Also, this excursion involves extensive walking and may be challenging for claustrophobic travelers.

### Day 11: Iconic Sights: Vatican City

\$175CAD (3.5 hours, departure time varies)

This guided tour takes you inside Vatican City—a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most sacred places in Christendom. This independent city-state within Rome serves as the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church and is home to the Pope. Upon arrival, turn on your pre-distributed headset and dive into the Vatican's rich history with your local guide. First, visit the Vatican Museums, which are more than 500 years old and house many of the world's most important Classical- and Renaissance-era sculptures. Next, step inside the Sistine Chapel, whose frescoed ceiling is arguably Michelangelo's greatest masterpiece. Finally, pay a visit to the enormous St. Peter's Basilica, the epicenter of the Roman Catholic faith. The artists who have contributed to its glory are some of the best Italy has ever known: Bramante, Peruzzi, Raphael, and Michelangelo. Masterpieces await at every turn, from Bernini's magnificent bronze canopy to Michelangelo's Pietà.

Please note: Should this excursion fall on a Sunday, it'll be moved to another day of the tour. Backpacks aren't allowed in the Vatican, and shorts and sleeveless shirts are strictly prohibited. Due to closures of certain entrances and pathways, wait times may extend to several hours during busy travel months. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 70 days prior to departure.

\*Optional excursions may be purchased up to three days prior to departure or while on tour. Pre-purchased optional excursions cannot be canceled within three days prior to departure or while on tour. Select optional excursions require advance booking and cannot be purchased or canceled after the advanced reservation deadline. GAT accepts payment by cash, Visa or MasterCard for optional excursions purchased on tour. Additional fees may apply for optional excursions purchased on tour. Excursions require a minimum number of participants to operate. Details and prices are subject to change. Due to seasonal hours of operation and availability, some excursions may not operate. If this occurs, you will be refunded any payments made for that excursion post-tour. Learn more at [goaheadtours.ca/terms](https://goaheadtours.ca/terms)