



GOURMET SAFARI - GREEK ISLANDS

September 2012 Sample Itinerary

Island-hopping in the Aegean

Let us introduce you to four fabulous Greek islands. We have so many great things planned for you and have spent many long days and nights brainstorming, checking, booking, confirming and reconfirming ... so the whole trip is as wonderful as we can make it for you. The itinerary is below. We'll stick as closely as we can to this plan but some things are beyond the best planning in the world, especially in Greece. We've honed the timings down so travel time is kept to a minimum and we can concentrate on exploring where we are and enjoying each day's activities.

We've tried to organize this trip so that if you have just 2 weeks off from work, you can just fit it in...for others it may be just the thing to add to seeing relatives or visiting other parts of Europe. We've noticed prices rise over the years we've been visiting Greece with groups but aim to give you the right mix of luxury and authenticity.

We aim to give you an insight into Greece, the culture and the food. We've crafted different experiences on each island —

Evia, at Prokopi (Candili estate), we stay in a grand old rustic estate at the edge of a pretty mountain village far from the tourist trail. We wake to the sounds of church bells and after a leisurely breakfast, explore the local area—the extensive pine forests, the charming village with its own embalmed saint in the beautiful Greek Orthodox Church of St John the Russian. In the late afternoon we all pop on aprons to prepare — under the guidance of our chef — some simple delicious Greek dishes that many of our guests wow their friends with on their return... this is fun — you don't need to be a good cook to have a go! Staying at our own private estate and spending time with our host Philip with some of the produce grown in the lovely big garden is a wonderful way to start the trip...you move into Greek time and get a chance to take a deep breath and relax.

Limnos — In the north-east Aegean, Limnos is off the beaten track and full of the sort of travel experiences people talk about for years to come. We have our own special entrée here as our guide Liz Kaydos comes from the island — so you can really get an insight into how people lived years ago and how village life ticks along now...including some fabulous experiences — a lovely dinner at one of the island's most beautiful private estates including the classic lamb cooked in a wood-fired oven, a perfect lunch with some hands on cooking and a visit to a secret spring, plus tastes of the acclaimed Limnian muscat, sun dried figs and a visit to a waterside taverna that's quintessentially Greek — all the locals have heard about this group from Australia so you'll be welcomed with open arms and warm smiles.

Lesvos — One of the beautiful Greek islands, scene of many Greek myths and legends, birthplace of the poet Sappho and legendary for its olive trees and ouzo, pretty untouched villages and lovely scenery. We stay in a beachside resort on the side of the picture postcard town of Molivos with its cobblestoned streets, waterfront restaurants and charming little shops. The big find here is a marvelous band of local women who have us in especially every year and cook some of the classic recipes passed on through the generations — this is stuff you'd never see in restaurants and for many guests is the highlight of the trip.

Santorini, the drop dead gorgeous location with its magic blue water and classic white buildings perched on the cliffs, we have some more food adventures including a day on a graceful catamaran cruising the Mediterranean. The grape harvest will be in full swing and we will be able to try the legendary wines of Santorini — some of the best in Greece. And about those views — you can't take your eyes off that heavenly blue that almost floats around you. We stay in 5 star luxury in suites all hollowed out from the rock face in Oia — the best place to watch those magnificent sunsets!

We recommend arriving a day or so early for the trip to acclimatize and be in good form for the days ahead. You may want to check out some of our destinations and accommodation — we give you web addresses below and there are also photos of previous Grecian safaris on our website. It's a marvelous feeling when you think you'll be standing in that picture with the incredibly blue water. And swimming in it is even better — there's a lovely buoyancy to the water.

We've been running this safari for 11 years now and treasure the relationships we have built up with many of the people you'll meet – all that adds to the special feeling of the whole trip. You'll enjoy time with locals who are so proud to show off their food and culture. Sometimes the food will seem more authentic than gourmet but you'll get the opportunity to taste regional favourites far from the madding crowd.

There's an Alice in Wonderland quality to the trip too — you will feel you've been away a lot longer than just 2 weeks because of the variety of places and experiences we offer you. Note that if we do find something we think is extraordinary along the way, we may quickly change a few things to give you those experiences, of course, with your agreement. We look forward to seeing you in Greece!

Tour Leaders

Liz Kaydos – her family is from Limnos (just above Lesvos close to the Turkish coast). Liz grew up in a very traditional family. Her mother taught her how to make good Greek coffee and all the things that are important for a good Greek girl to know. Many of you will know that Liz is the guide to Greek Marrickville and researcher for some of the top TV shows including the internationally awarded Food Lovers Guide to Australia. Fluent in Greek and keen to share customs as well as some pointers on dancing Greek style, Liz is a gift. We know she will look after each and every one of you.

Itinerary - B, L, D, denotes meals provided.

DAY 1: - Tuesday 4 September - Evia

Transfer by coach from Athens to the village of Prokopi on the island of Evia. (See below for details on this connection.) We stay at the charming rustic Candili estate (www.candili.gr). It has thirteen bedrooms with twenty-eight beds. There are dining and sitting rooms, a library/conference room, two swimming pools, and lovely grounds.

IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING OUR CONNECTION: We will depart Athens at **11.00am**. Please meet at the **ELECTRA PALACE HOTEL** – 18 - 20 N NIKODIMOY STREET ATHENS GR 10557. PHONE-30-210-3370000 / FAX- 30-210-3241875. Please arrive no later than 10.45am. Look out for the Gourmet Safaris sign. Liz Kaydos will be there from 10.30am wearing a Gourmet Safaris t-shirt.

When we arrive we'll have a cool drink then settle you into rooms and then meet estate owner Philip Noel Baker for ouzo and mezedes on the front lawn, which looks out over the church spire to the mountains. We will then have dinner and tuck you into bed. **D**

DAY 2: - Wednesday 5 September - Evia

Your first glorious breakfast – enjoy the yoghurt set in terracotta bowls, fresh fruit, the wonderful bread still warm from the local bakery. Prepare yourselves for a morning of the sublime - stroll down to the village and explore the beautiful Greek Orthodox place of pilgrimage – the Church of St John the Russian, where you can actually see the remarkably intact body of St John, famous for his miracles... we've also arranged a special visit to a wonderful 10th century monastery built over the ancient Temple of Poseidon. Suitably uplifted, we'll have a glorious lunch at a seaside taverna then return to the estate so you can relax by one of the two pools...or slip into Greek summer mode and have a siesta. Cooking class is on late afternoon which will be our dinner. **B L D**

DAY 3: - Thursday 6 September - Evia

This morning we visit the local farmers markets at Mandoudi, which are filled with the best local fruit and vegetables at the height of the season including ingredients we don't often see in Australia – like wild horta (a leafy salad green) and mountain herbs. If you love fresh figs, you're in for a treat because they're at their luscious best. Lunch is up high in an olive grove – a Greek Australian barbecue. Dinner cooking class begins after a nice siesta. **B L D**

DAY 4: - Friday 7 September - Evia/Limnos

We leave Candili after breakfast to fly to Limnos, we will check in to lovely beachside hotel then enjoy sunset drinks with our hosts Rena and Stasios Laskaridis who open their estate to us and have spent the day preparing a perfect woodfired oven baked lamb and many other delicacies.

Settle into Limnos Village Resort, right on the beach. **B D**

DAY 5: - Saturday 8 September - Limnos

We explore the delights of the island's best boutique winery Savoglou Wines - full of history and sensational wines; visit some of our favourite places in the main town of Myrina including lovely little jewellery shop, and a pastry "find" – a shop that makes only one delicious thing – crunchy golden bougatsa – which comes sweet with creamy custard, or savoury filled with crumbled feta. Walk to the romaiko area – the historical area of the town where you can sip frappes by the water...then stroll to lunch at an outdoor taverna under a big spreading sycamore tree. Free afternoon for siesta or swimming. In the late afternoon we set off to explore our guide Liz's village Plati. Visit her family house and see how many Greeks used to live. We'll have coffee with the locals and if you're in the mood, catch sunset at our favourite funky cocktail bar and move onto mezedes. **B L mezedes**

DAY 6: - Sunday 9 September - Limnos

After waking to the sound of church bells, we'll have a lazy morning then head off to enjoy the ultimate long Sunday lunch with one of the island's fabulous women Sophia Hapsis who is having us into her rustic house overlooking Barounia Bay at Kotsinas. Pick ingredients from her garden and cook up a storm. Free night. Liz will take you to a special spot in the afternoon that is as significant as Gallipoli to many Australians ... Liz has also discovered a marvelous old hammam (Turkish steam bath), which does great massages and treatments – very popular last trip! Later if you like, head to one of the island's tavernas for some local music and dancing. **B L**

DAY 7: - Monday 10 September - Lesvos

We fly from Limnos to Lesvos and explore the pretty town of Mytilini and depending on time, the fascinating Theophilos Museum, then enjoy lunch at the island's oldest ouzerie. Lesvos is the key ouzo producing island and this classic ouzerie is full of atmosphere - and the mezedes dishes are superb. We drive north to the picture postcard town of Molivos set on a sweet little circular harbour with picture postcard fishing boats. This ancient town with its rambling streets looks across to the Turkish mainland. Settle into our accommodation Sunset Villas which looks over to the Turkish mainland. We will show you the pretty town with its cobblestoned streets and many great shops. Free evening. **B L**

DAY 8: – Tuesday 11 September - Lesvos

A wonderful day of exploring and eating on Lesvos. We aim to have a lazy breakfast and head off to make olive bread with our favourite band of Greek girls from one of Lesvos' women's co-operatives – a Greek version of the CWA – where age old techniques are put to use to make some beautiful and delicious food that you'd never find in a restaurant – regional recipes at their best! Free afternoon then come and join us for a drink and a snack at the Octopus Restaurant right on the waterfront. **B L mezedes**

DAY 9: - Wednesday 12 September - Lesvos to Santorini

Early morning flight to Athens and quickly on to Santorini. We are picked up and head straight to lunch at our cliff-top hotel Fanari villas in Oia. You may want to flop by the pool and gaze into the beautiful blue or explore some of the lovely boutiques which at this time of year are selling at very good discounts. Dinner tonight is simple and delightful at Ginger - one of the island's newer restaurants owned by our friend Ted Stathis. **B L D**

DAY 10: - Thursday 13 September - Santorini

This is the day we really step into the picture postcard — a sailing adventure complete with some great food. We have hired an amazing new catamaran to sail around the caldera — the remains of the active volcano that created Santorini — a fun, relaxing day. We head out from Fanari at midmorning to meet the boat. We sail and visit many of Santorini's sites, swim in volcanic hot springs, swim and eat some simple fresh local delicacies. Have a look at www.santorinisailing.com and get excited! We meet for dinner at the absolute waterfront restaurant for some lovely seafood and some of the delicious local wines. **B L D**

DAY 11: - Friday 14 September - Santorini

You can either have a supremely lazy day to soak in that incredible view and relax. There are beautiful shops close by and if you're feeling energetic, a walk along the ridge of the caldera with that sparkling water stretching out before you, the hills dotted with tiny whitewashed chapels. We will check whether the archeological site at Akrotiri – the preserved ruins of an ancient civilization at the other end of the island are open this year. (Truly inspiring but closed last year) Back to our beautiful hotel to relax before our final night dinner – very delicious, very special and very nice not to have to move away from our lovely cliff-top home!

B D**DAY 12: - Saturday 15 September - Santorini/Athens**

A quick shop, pack and get organised for your flight to Athens international airport for overseas connections. We depart Aegean A3 355 at 12.20pm, arrive Athens 13.05pm. Coach will depart midmorning from Fanari. **B**

Costs:

\$7950.00 per person, twin share. Land content only – includes domestic flights within Greece
 Single Supplement: \$1050.00

Bookings & Information:

Initial bookings and information: Gourmet Safaris P O Box 326 Mosman NSW 2088 Australia ph : +61 2 89696555 fax: +61 2 89696222 email : info@gourmetsafaris.com.au www.gourmetsafaris.com.au	Recommended Travel Agency for Airline Tickets and Trip Bookings: David Vuong Travel – license number 2TA 5524 PO BOX 5296 MARRICKVILLE NSW 1475 Suite 4, Level 1, 333 King St, Newtown NSW 2042 Ph: 02 95162990 / FAX:02 95163990 email: dvtravel@bigpond.net.au /web: www.davidvuongtravel.com
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Terms & Conditions:

Deposit & Payment: A non-refundable deposit of \$800.00 per person is required on confirmation in order to secure your reservation. Final payment is due before 90 days before your departure date.

Special Requirements: Please advise Gourmet Safaris or David Vuong Travel of any special requirements such as Special Meals, Medical Requirements etc., as soon as possible. If you get motion sickness it is imperative that you bring with you motion sickness pills as we travel by boat and coach through sometimes mountainous roads. Many of the sites in Greece are open-air and necessitate a reasonable amount of walking. Normally the walking is quite easy but the heat and uneven paths can sometimes make it a bit tiring.

Accommodation: Accommodation standards vary quite dramatically throughout the region and hotels should not be compared to Australia or Western Europe. Our accommodations are selected for location and facilities. In some areas such as Evia and Lesbos our accommodations can sometimes be more "basic", but this is the best available. Expect a bit smaller rooms than normal. At Candili estate some may have to share a bathroom. As Candili is an "estate home" we find the charm of this estate and picturesque village atmosphere more than makes up for a few minor inconveniences. Please remember payment of a single room does not automatically guarantee better accommodations, only privacy. Tea and coffee making facilities in the rooms are the exception rather than the rule. Expect breathtaking and much more luxurious accommodation in Santorini.

Travel Insurance: We strongly recommend you purchase a comprehensive travel insurance policy of your choice at the time of booking. Insurance covers cancellation fees payable for airline tickets, accommodation, loss of deposit, luggage etc. Normal travel insurance conditions apply. (Insurance may not cover trip cancellation due to pre-existing medical conditions.) Please read your policy carefully.

Cancellation: If cancelling prior to final payment the deposit is non-refundable. After final payment is received a cancellation fee of approximately 75% applies. This percentage may be less depending on the date of cancellation. A cancellation fee of 100% is applicable within 14 days of travel. If cancellation is not due to pre-existing illnesses, travel insurance will cover most or all of the cancellation fee. Please read your policy carefully.

Pricing: All prices are shown in Australian dollars and are current as the date of printing this itinerary. If there is dramatic fluctuation in the exchange rate or the price of services provided which are beyond the control of Gourmet Safari, Gourmet Safaris reserves the right to adjust tour prices accordingly, even though the balance of payment may have been made. This would only happen in very unusual circumstances.

Exclusions: Visas, insurance, excess baggage, extra meals, laundry, drinks, items of a personal nature, tips, and international departure taxes.

Itinerary Validity and Content: This itinerary is valid for the period of **2012** unless otherwise specified. Every effort has been made to ensure accuracy. Gourmet Safaris shall not be liable for any injury, damage or loss caused by any inaccuracy. Gourmet Safaris reserves the right to change tour arrangements or accommodations due to safety or security reasons, and will endeavour to provide alternative arrangements of the same standard as that originally booked.

Disclaimer: Gourmet Safaris is not a carrier or hotelier, nor do we own aircraft, hotels or coaches. The services Gourmet Safaris supplies consist of arranging and co-ordinating accommodation, tours and transfers, making bookings and issuing vouchers to be redeemed by suppliers if necessary. We exercise every care in the selection of reputable airlines, tour operators, coach operators, hotels and other suppliers of the various travel services which are used in these tours. It is important to note, therefore, all bookings with Gourmet Safaris are subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of liability imposed by the service providers whose services we utilise, some of which limit or exclude liability in respect of death, personal injury, delay and loss or damage of baggage. Because of this Gourmet Safaris does not accept liability for events beyond our control nor liability for accidents incurred due to actions taken at your own risk.

Clients' Responsibilities: It is your responsibility to obtain visas, passports, health certificates or other travel documents where required for the tour. It remains your responsibility to ensure that these documents are in order and to meet any additional costs incurred as a result of failure to comply with such requirements. It is also your responsibility to book your own airline tickets to meet the tour at the designated place where tour begins.