

Forget Mykonos – These Are the Islands to Visit for an Authentic Greek Getaway

Planning a trip to Greece? Read this first.

BY VICKI DENIG | October 31, 2025 10:01 am EDT



Home to soulful cuisine, immaculate beaches and a seemingly limitless supply of world-class wine, it's no surprise that the islands of Greece have captured the hearts of many. However, the country's sun-drenched treasures are far from secret, and in recent years, their homes have become more like adult Disneyland than an authentic place to enjoy the local culture (we're looking at you, Mykonos). Quaint streets dotted with signature blue and white hues have morphed into a sea of designer logos and celebrity-owned hotels, stripping away much of the area's innate magic — though worry not, a myriad of island charm is still to be found. It's simply a matter of knowing where to look.

Contrary to the clubby vibes and overpriced nature of Mykonos, a handful of nearby islands remain off the beaten path and are perfect for those seeking out secluded beaches and unforgettable Greek cuisine. Not sure where to begin? Head below for an authentic jaunt through Greece's breathtaking Aegean islands.

Pro tip: Traveling between Greece's islands is quite easy, thanks to the country's ferry system — no flights required. Simply check out the map to see which islands are serviced by Seajets [here](#), and be sure to book your tickets in advance. While splurging for the premium tier isn't necessarily worth it, we recommend spending the extra few dollars to book in business versus economy, as these seats are larger, more comfortable and almost always located in a quieter part of the boat.



Paros

Located in the central Aegean Sea, Paros is an island that's become more popular in recent years, yet still maintains its small-town feel. Located due west of Naxos (another Cycladic island worth exploring), Paros is known for its turquoise beaches and quaint villages. Additionally, the island is also known for its production of white marble, and small, family-owned factories can still be found producing it today. Beyond marble, windsurfing is also popular here, as the consistently strong breeze from the strait located between the island and Naxos makes it an ideal destination for the sport.

From a tourist perspective, there are a few things to know about Paros. First and foremost, the island's capital of Parikia is where ferry boats drop off and leave from, and is also home to most of the island's nightlife. Here, you'll find an abundance of seafood restaurants and snack shacks, though the beaches are a bit crowded. To take in the island's beauty and venture a bit off the beaten path, Andronis Minois is a great home base. Located just 10 to 15 minutes by car from Parikia, the hotel's remote location ensures peace and solitude, while also offering breathtaking views of the rugged seaside landscape.

In addition to the hotel's on-site restaurant, Olvo, what I loved most about **Andronis Minois** was its daily (and free) shuttle bus offering to and from Parikia and Naousa, the latter of which is frequently deemed the crown jewel of the island. Here, small boutiques and authentic restaurants are complemented by a handful of cocktail bars and souvenir shops, though the vibe screams more local than tourist. My partner and I had one of our favorite dinners in Naousa at a restaurant called **Taverna Glafkos**. Order the catch of the day, pair it with a bottle of locally-produced Assyrtiko (white wine) from the island and thank me later. Back at the hotel, we enjoyed pre-dinner and post-meal nightcaps at the bar at Olvo. If you're curious about local spirits that pack a punch, ask the bartender for a pour of Dark Cave, a 5-year-old, oak-aged Greek Tsipouro (grape brandy).



Santorini

I know what you're thinking: Santorini is definitely *not* off the beaten path, and while I agree with you, hear me out. I visited both Santorini and Mykonos this past summer, and while the two frequently get lumped into the same style of island, the vibes couldn't be more different, especially outside of Santorini's main town of Thira, which is essentially the dumping ground for cruise visitors, excursions and more. For those seeking a bit of those signature blue and white island vibes without the clubs and crowds of Mykonos, a night or two in Santorini's town of Oia is where it's at.

While Oia can certainly get busy, the crowds are nothing compared to those found in Thira or Mykonos, and the right hotel can actually make it seem like a secluded island. While Andronis has a handful of properties across the island, its [**Luxury Suites**](#) in Santorini are perfect for those looking for a low-key Santorini experience that offers all of the views and none of the noise. Each suite comes with its own private pool and breathtaking seaside views, and with just 39 suites in total, nothing about the property ever feels packed.

Additionally, the Andronis Luxury Suites are located within walking distance of all of the action, as well as a bunch of local restaurants for those looking to venture out. We ended up having lunch at the same place, [**Thalami**](#), both days, as the fresh octopus and ice-cold Mythos beers kept us coming back for more. Our dinner at Miltos' Greek Table, the restaurant associated with the hotel, was actually where I had my favorite tzatziki of the whole trip, and the a la carte breakfast options are great for those looking to fill up before a long day of exploring (or let's face it, not moving from your lounge chair). For wine lovers looking to explore the island's viticultural scene, [**Domaine Sigalas**](#) and [**Hatzidakis Winery**](#) are two benchmark estates that offer guided tastings, and for beer lovers, a visit to [**Ftelos Brewery**](#) is an absolute must.