



## PAROS GREECE

This is Paros, in the middle of the island group known as the Cyclades, in the middle of the beautiful blue Aegean Sea. Here it is possible to get away from the hustle and bustle of life and relax while exploring lovely traditional villages. On the other hand if its fun, excitement and a day at the beach you're looking for...you'll find that too.

Parikia is the main town on Paros. It is quaint by any standards. Whitewashed buildings set off the bright colors of the bougainvilleas. The streets are narrow yet easy to walk while shopping among the many stores or searching out a nice café.

The Island of Paros has been inhabited for thousands of years. People came to find a quiet place to live, fish, farm, and tend their groves. Over the centuries significant political and military affairs unfolded throughout this part of the world. Little Paros was frequently swept up in chaos over which the islanders had little control. Except perhaps for the thousands of Roman Empire slaves brought to work the quarries, everyone else, friend or foe, who reached the shores of Paros was probably pleased they came. The islanders, on the other hand, were probably just as pleased when uninvited visitors, like barbarous pirates, finally left.

The people of Paros are warm, welcoming and happy you're visiting. Whether you want to see and do a lot or do a lot of nothing ... you'll like it here in Paros.



### HISTORY

She originally comes from a small place on the island of Paros called Marathi. It is little more than a deeply scarred and desolate hill a couple miles east of Parikia. Despite such humble beginnings, she has been, and perhaps always will be regarded as one of the most beautiful women in the world. And through it all the beautiful woman from Paros has never once uttered a word of complaint or given voice to pity or pretention.

As is the case throughout many of the Greek islands, archeological excavations indicate that Paros may have been inhabited as far back as 3000 BC. In academic circles the first identifiable people of the islands are often referred to as the Cycladic Civilization. Evidence and logic suggest they slowly spread throughout the region by way of Anatolia, Turkey and Asia Minor. Whatever the case may be, there is precious little which remains of their culture. They were displaced by the Minoans.

The first ruler over the island of Paros seems to have been a Minoan king by the name of Alkaios. Having come north from the island of Crete, the king realized the strategic importance of Paros. The Minoans were one of the most amazing cultures of antiquity. Their sudden and nearly total disappearance remains a great mystery of the age.

Around 1000 BC the Ionians reached Paros. They in turn were followed by the Arcadians in 7th century BC. Their leader was called leader Parios, from whom the island gets its name. During the time of the Arcadians the island developed rather extensive trade and maritime connections. However, the place of Paros within Greek history and culture was secured not through commerce but by the discovery of some of the most lustrous and radiant marble deposits found anywhere in the ancient world. The locals called it "Lichnitis or Parian marble"...

So it was, during the Golden Age of Greece, much of the acclaimed art and architecture in that ancient world originated from the marble quarries of the island of Paros. Among pieces which thankfully survived into this day and age are the great Temple of Apollo on the island of Delos (470 BC), the renowned statue of Hermes of Praxiteles (400 BC) and the dramatic statue representing the Winged Victory of Samothrace (200 BC). There are classical historians who are of the opinion that as much as 75% of the marble used in the amazing buildings and statues of ancient Greece may have come from

this small island of Paros.

Yet it can all be wrapped up in that one woman from Paros. Today, as beautiful as ever, her home is in the heart of Paris, along the banks of the Seine River in the incomparable Musée du Louvre. This young woman stands again, as she has for thousands of years ... in all her glory. The classical Greeks called her Aphrodite, their goddess of beauty, desire and love. In this modern age we know her better by her Roman name ... Venus ... Venus de Milo ... daughter of Paros.



## PLACES OF INTEREST

A few kilometers from Parikia, there is the **Monastery of Jesus of the Woods**, built on top of a hill and offering a splendid view of the island of Antiparos. This convent was built in the 18th century and women only are allowed to penetrate the sanctuary.

**1** The **Church of Panagia Ekatonpiliani** (Our Lady of the Hundred Doors) dates to the 4th Century AD and is regarded as the jewel of Paros. It is one of the oldest Byzantine churches in Greece. Tradition says the church was established by Helena Augusta, mother of Roman Emperor Constantine the Great. Housed within the church is the **Byz-**

**antine Museum of Parikia**. The museum has an interesting collection of religious art and objects which date back to the Byzantine Empire (4th Century – 1453 and the fall of Constantinople to Mohammed II of the Ottoman Empire).

**2** The **Archaeological Museum of Paros** displays a collection of statues and artifacts which date back thousands of years. Many of the objects were recovered from the island's archeological sites at the temples of Apollo (Greek god of the sun) and Asklepios (Greek god of healing).

**3** The **Frankish Castle of Paros** was built in the mid 13th Century by Venetian commander Marcos Sanoudos. Within the compound are the ruins of a temple which dates

back hundreds of years BC. A panoramic view unfolds from atop the castle bastions.

**4** The **Asclepius Temple Ruins** were once a thriving complex dedicated to the Greek god of healing. Here the temple priests diagnosed and prescribed cures for the ill and infirmed who made pilgrimages to Paros. Many objects and artifacts from the temple site have been placed on permanent display in the **Archaeological Museum of Paros**. A site dedicated to the Greek god Apollo is located nearby.

### Beyond Parikia

**5** **Naoussa** is the 2nd largest town on the island. This is a great place to stroll along the waterfront and then step into a local café and enjoy the catch-of-the-day ... fresh off the boat.

**6** **Christou to Dasos** (Jesus of the Woods) is a convent which dates to the 1700s. The grounds of the cloister allow for a wonderful view of the Aegean Sea. The convent is not a "tourist attraction" however visitors are usually welcomed by the nuns. Conservative and respectful attire is required.

**7** **Petaloudes Park** (Butterfly Valley) is close to the Christos to Dasos Convent. During mating season (July & August) the beautiful valley is filled with countless thousands of Jersey Tiger Moths. Visitors always enjoy the park's shaded walking paths and later taking time to relax with refreshments at the small café.

**8** The **Longovarda Monastery** was built in the early 1638. It is the largest monastery on Paros. Visitors enjoy having the opportunity to admire the frescoes and religious icons.

### SHORE EXCURSIONS

To make the most of your visit to Parikia and the surrounding island we suggest you take one of our organized shore excursions. For information concerning tour content and pricing, consult your Shore Excursion Order Form or contact the Shore Excursion Desk. When going ashore, be advised to take only necessary items and secure any valuables onboard.

### LOCAL CUSTOMS

Bargaining: Prices are usually set.

Tipping: Cafés and restaurants often add an automatic 15% service charge. It is customary to tip the waiter a couple extra euros.

### LOCAL CUISINE AND DRINK SPECIALTIES

The foundation of Greek cooking is the wonderful olive oil. Some of the favorite and most popular dishes include: Mezedes are numerous small selections of a variety of foods, similar to tapas. Dolmades are a mixture of rice, vegetables, golden raisins and olive oil wrapped with grape leaves and steamed. Chtapodi psito is grilled octopus. Paidakia are grilled lamb chops. Yemista are green peppers & tomatoes stuffed with a mixture of rice and herbs and olive oil then baked. Sometimes minced meat is added. Gyros are pita bread stuffed with roasted meat, covered with tzatziki and sprinkled with

chopped tomatoes and onions. Baklava is the always popular dessert which uses a mixture of honey, cloves, nuts and syrup wrapped in phyllo dough and baked till golden brown.

Some favorite beverages include ouzo, Mythos Beer, retsina (a Greek wine of acquired taste) and raki, a very strong distilled spirit first made popular in Crete. Suma is another (very strong) popular drink on Paros. When mixed with honey it is called rakomelo.

### SHOPPING

Shops and galleries can be found throughout Parikia. Clothing, jewelry and decorative works of art are among the most popular items. Near the Frankish Castle is the Old Agora market. Visitors will find souvenir shops and some old traditional stores with local products such as traditional cheese, thyme honey (one of the best in Greece), local wines, suma and herbs.

### LOCAL CURRENCY

The unit of currency in is the euro. All euro notes and coins are legal tender in all countries of the EU. Most stores accept major credit cards and debit cards. ATM's are commonly available. Local banks are the best location to convert your currency to euros.

### POST OFFICE AND TELEPHONE

The main Post Office of Paros is a short walk from the port, close to the ancient cemetery.

Dial the following access numbers to use a personal calling card:

AT&T: 00.800.1311

MCI: 00.800.1211

### TOURIST INFORMATION

You can't miss the windmill of Paros. Built in the 18th century, today it serves as the Greek Tourist Organization Information Center.

### TRANSPORTATION

EU driving licenses are accepted for car rentals. All other visitors may be required to show an International Driving License. Taxis are metered and have fixed rates which should be posted. They are reasonably priced especially when compared to many other EU countries.

**USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES** The Greek translation used here is spelled phonetically.

Hello - Yia sou

How are you? - Ti kanis

I'm fine - Ime kala

Please - Parakalo

Thank you - Efaristo

Yes - Ne

No - Ohi

