

GREECE – EVIA ISLAND NORTH OF ATHENS

8-days / 7-night one-hotel based at Karystos easy to moderate GUIDED walking tour



Off the beaten tourist track to discover 'authentic' Greece, this walking holiday is based at the picturesque town of Karystos on the enchanting Greek island of Evia. The second largest in Greece after Crete, there are walks here along ancient trails and through green valleys, archaeological sites and local culture in traditional villages.

Evia is just a short journey from Athens. Karystos lies at the southern tip of the island, in an enviable position in a wide bay beneath the slopes of Mount Ochi. The town itself offers Roman ruins, beaches and the turquoise Aegean Sea. Nearby are curious ruins known locally as Dragon Houses (*Drakospita*). These drystone buildings, made of massive slabs of limestone, may be temples to Greek gods or demi-gods built during the Neolithic era.

Cost from: **\$2385** per person (twin share) Single room supplement from \$475

Departs: 1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th May; 11th, 18th, 25th September; 2nd, 9th October, 2020

Tour includes: 7 nights in comfortable hotel accommodation with ensuite bathroom, 7 breakfasts, 7 dinners, experienced walks leader, guided walks on 5 days, local transport to/from the walks. Transfers between Athens Airport and Karystos at set times are **included** in the tour cost and we recommend you take these, due to the length of the coach/ferry journey – please ask for details when booking.

Not Included: Meals and drinks not mentioned, personal expenses, excursions on your free day.



Accommodation: The family-run 3-star **Hotel Anastasia** enjoys a beachfront location in the town of Karystos. Facilities include a pool, bar and restaurant with sea views. The 29 stylish ensuite bedrooms offer air conditioning, a balcony and WiFi. An authentic 'Greek breakfast' includes freshly-baked bread and pastries including *loukomades* (honey-soaked dumplings) and *tsoureki* (a sweet bread made with eggs), and Greek strong traditional coffee. Evening meals are 3-courses and often feature fresh, locally caught seafood.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations



Footpath and walking information:



Easier Walks: 6 to 13km on good paths, some rocky sections with up to 450m of ascent in a day.

Harder Walks: 10 to 18km on good paths, some rocky sections with up to 600m of ascent in a day.

Suggested itinerary: *Tours offer a choice of two guided walks each day, choose the option which best suits your interest and fitness. The routes are chosen by the walking guides each day and there is a free day midweek to relax or explore independently.*

Day 1: Arrival day. Plan to arrive at your Karystos hotel mid-afternoon. Arrival transfers from Athens Airport - at pre-set times only - are included in the tour cost, ask for details when making your booking.

Day 2: Castello Rosso. These walks introduce the rich history of the island. The ruins of the medieval citadel Castello Rosso dominate the foothills of Mount Ochi. Rare plants like the Karystos bellflower grow here, and many birds including kestrels nest in the cliffs. We may visit Montofoli Winery on the slopes of Castello Rosso.

Day 3: Dragon Houses of Stira. Take a short transfer to the city-state of Stira from where ships sailed to aid the rescue of Helen of Troy. This region contains a number of 'Dragon' Houses, and the walks explore these plus nearby Roman marble quarries before descending to Stira and its main square with a collection of Tavernas.

Day 4: Mt Ochi. At 1399m, Mt Ochi is the highest peak in Southern Evia. It hosts an excellent specimen of a Dragon House as well as the nearby Chapel of Profitis Ilias. Our walk takes us above Karystos, through the Kastanolongos chestnut forest, and the harder walk continues to the summit of Mt Ochi. See shepherd's huts and mountain refuges in this remote area.

Day 5: Free day. No walks are organised, leaving you free to relax at the hotel or explore the waterfront, shops and harbourside cafés in Karystos, visit the medieval Bourtzi fort, or perhaps take a boat ride to Petali Islands, once owned by the Greek royal family, Russian royal family, opera singer Maria Callas and artist Pablo Picasso.

Days 6: Petrokanalo Pass and Dimosari Gorge. The Petrokanalo Pass is to the north west of Mt Ochi and from there the Dimosari gorge runs to the Aegean Sea. The route through the gorge was the only route from the north of the island peninsula to the port of Karystos, and today sections of the original stone cobbles can still be seen. Over time, rivers have carved gorges into the limestone landscape and the cliffs descend steeply to secluded beaches and coves.

Day 7 Bridges, Poseidon's Temple and Potami beach. The final day explores the eastern shores, and the chance to enjoy a communal meal at a beachside tavern with stunning views. We start at Platanistos, one of the original Albanian villages, before descending via differing tracks to the restored packhorse bridge, featured in most postcards. On the walk down we explore the remains of Poseidon's temple before descending through the river meadows and olive groves behind Potami beach.

Day 8: Depart: Tour ends after breakfast then a group transfer to Athens Airport (at set times).

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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