

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: **\$3710** per person (twin share) Single room supplement from \$645

2024 Departures: 22, 29 April, 06, 13 May, 09, 16, 23, 30 September 2025

Tour includes: 7 nights 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, transport/excursions on your free day.

Accommodation: The 4-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.



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Trip grading: Walk moderate distances, sometimes on rugged paths with some rocky sections or over undulating or steeper terrain. Easier walks 7-13km with up to 450m ascent in a day; harder walks 10-17km with up to 690m of ascent in a day.

A typical European centre-based walking holiday offers a choice of up to two guided walks each day. You choose the walk which best suits your interest and fitness level. The routes are selected by the walk leaders and are subject to change at their discretion.

Suggested itinerary:

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 finish with a tour and tasting of local wine at Montofoli Winery.

Day 3: Mt Ochi. At 1398m, 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 4: Free day. No walks are organised, leaving you free to relax at the hotel or explore the waterfront, shops and harbourside cafés in Karystos; perhaps visit the medieval Bourtzi fort or take a boat ride to Petali Islands, owned in turn by the Greek royal family, Russian royal family, opera singer Maria Callas and artist Pablo Picasso.

Day 5: Dragon Houses of Styra. Take a short transfer to the city-state of Styra from where ships sailed to aid the rescue of Helen of Troy. This region contains several 'Dragon' Houses, and the walks explore these plus nearby Roman marble quarries before descending to Styra and its main square with a collection of tavernas.

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: Departure day. 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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