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PELOPONNESE

Agnantio Studios
Kyrimai Hotel
Rocabella Hellinikon Country Hotel
Melas, Epidaurus Olive Oil Domain
Old world sophistication and chic simplicity ensure stays at Kyrimai Hotel are once-in-a-lifetime experiences. Originally built in 1870 as a trading centre for merchants exporting wares between East and West, the extensive property recently underwent meticulous restoration which preserved its historic legacy.

The property’s romantic interior courtyards and seaside terrace transport guests far away from city life, with the pool adding the perfect touch. A restored stone jetty provides guests with an alternative sunbathing spot where the deep turquoise waters of the sea gently lap below stylish chaise lounges.

Kyrimai’s highly esteemed restaurant takes guests on a visual and gastronomical journey into the heart of Mani. Set in the trading centre’s former warehouse, diners are immersed in the past as they indulge in the succulent creations of award winning and chef. Local, organic ingredients from Mani’s soil are utilised in new, imaginative combinations and cooking techniques.

The breakfast is also impressive and features homemade marmalades from locally grown produce in addition to local cheeses, homemade pies and freshly squeezed juices enjoyed from the outdoor veranda with panoramic views to the sea. It’s the perfect way to begin a day filled with exploring the wonders of Mani.

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Fall in love with Mani!
Agnantio, which in Greek means looking from above, is the name of this superb little guesthouse with three lucky studios for 2-3 people each. Living up to its name, the stone guesthouse is built on a 1000-meter mountain with breathtaking views of the valleys below. Facing the picturesque village of Lagadia just 300 meters away, this is simply the perfect place to explore the mountains of Arkadia and all the many nature-led activities on offer. Explore the nature and beauty all around you, whether by foot or by car. A visit to the church of Panagia Gounari will unveil one of the greatest mountain sunsets you’ve seen. See fascinating abandoned windmills on Imbrina Hill to enjoy a spectacular panoramic view of the nature around you. Only 3 kilometers or a leisurely walk away lies the church of Agia Paraskevi and the freshwater Lousios springs. Many mountain hiking paths make their way among the villages and churches, with several attractions within walking distance. The cozy Agnantio is also a great winter destination, offering a hibernal retreat with modest amounts of snow. Hearty winter food and proximity to the Mainalo ski resort (about an hour away by car) make it a popular choice for ski lovers. Requests: info@ecotourism-greece.com
If you’re heading to attractions in Peloponnese like Epidaurus, Nemea, Mycenae or Nafplio, stop at this olive oil estate and factory to understand the secrets of olive oil excellence and get some fantastic organic olive oil too.

Melas only produces extra virgin olive oil that has won a protected designation of origin, as the Manaki type olive that is used comes from the immediate vicinity. You’ll be impressed by the surrounding fields filled with olive trees. Begin the tour from the noble olive trees in the field and learn about this fascinating process. The guided tours are given in English, French or Greek.

The facility’s owners or management team will explain every step of the olive oil production process, from harvesting to bottling and storing. You’ll also understand the yearly cycle of the olive tree and gain invaluable knowledge about olive oil production through a visit to this professional family-owned olive-oil factory.

A tasting session at the end of the tour will unveil the great taste of olive oil, served with feta cheese, cucumber and country bread. Take some of this amazing olive oil back home with you, along with cosmetic products such as creams and soaps made with organic olive oil!

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There’s something very magical – almost spiritual – about the region of Arcadia and its mountains. This is where the Rocabella Hellinikon Country Hotel lies, in a traditional stone-built village that will take your breath away. The gorgeous-stone-built hotel boasts a delicious gourmet restaurant that serves both lunch and dinner, preparing them with fresh local and regional ingredients.

After the good food, get active with some quality hiking, kayaking and rafting around the Lousios River and gorge. The region boasts enchanting monasteries, historic caves and breathtaking traditional villages such as Vítina, Stemnitsa and Dimitsana.

Whether you prefer chestnut picking or exploring the ruins of Ancient Gortys nearby, this place is going to put a spell on you. In the meantime, yoga and Meditation lovers will revel in the nature’s areas and could find the guesthouse a perfect place to connect with the universe.

After a day exploring the nature and nearby villages, you’ll look forward to coming back to Ellinikon for some perfect relaxation. The 10 rooms of this hotel are furnished with an air of luxury. It is worthy to note that the hotel permits pets and sleeps them in a designated area outside the rooms.

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Revel in beautiful Arcadia!
CENTRAL GREECE

- Montanema Handmade Village
- Ammos Hotel
- Filion Eco Hotel
The Ammos hotel has taken the island’s traditional, minimalistic architecture and built a wonderful boutique hotel not far from the beach. It serves as a great base to discover the attractions of this enchanting island.

This charming hotel espouses an eco-friendly philosophy, not only through its traditional breakfast and locally inspired design, but also with the salt-water pool and the variety of ecotourism activities on offer for the guests.

One popular activity it offers in collaboration with experts on the island is a hiking tour around the gentle mountains and valleys of Skyros while discovering the best and most exotic of fauna and flora. The island has some unique attractions in this respect such as the unique Skyrian horses and endemic plants not found anywhere else on the planet.

More creative types will enjoy the 3-day pottery course in the workshop of seasoned ceramists, as well as the 4-day woodcarving course that emphasizes local wood-making traditions and designs. There are also cooking lessons on offer which unveil a whole variety of island delicacies and culinary traditions.

Lastly, if you’re interested in birdwatching, the Ammos Hotel takes pride in supporting the protection of rare bird species and welcomes birdwatching groups by extending attractive offers.

Requests: info@ecotourism-greece.com
Explore the hidden side of Evia!

Sit back and relax in this piece of heaven on the island of Evia. Tucked between sea and mountain, the Filion Eco Hotel will heal your soul. Great gastronomy, bioclimatic architecture and natural attractions not far from Athens airport! The panoramic views all the way to the sea from the terraces of the Filion Eco Hotel will put a spell on you, with 13 rooms and suites the their backs to the cool hills.

Start off your day with a rich local breakfast from freshly-baked cakes, Greek yoghurt and local cheeses to seasonal fruit, savory pies and homemade jams. For lunch or dinner this little hotel has a very good restaurant that embraces all the best of local cuisine.

The nature all around that will really impress you, with some amazing hiking routes and opportunities. Hike alone or ask the hotel to arrange a professional guide. Noteworthy is the great canyon of Dimosari with its freshwater ponds.

The friendly hosts at Filion can help arrange diving trips (include lessons in the property’s pool), cave exploration in Mount Ochi, kayaking or canoeing trips in the Manikiati River, and archeology tours to unveil some of Ancient Greece’s local secrets. If you’re the beach type, the area has some great beaches that are a short drive away.

Requests: info@ecotourism-greece.com
The Montanema Handmade Village is an award-winning ‘green’ property amid nature, offering great hospitality, delicious local food and a myriad of outdoor activities in the heart of the Greek mainland near a fantastic lake.

Its stone-built chalets, which respect the environment, represent the perfect setting to discover the best of rural Greece. Pick your own fruits and vegetables, hike around Lake Plastira, try a paragliding adventure or spend quality time with your family in the countryside... Montanema Handmade village will impress you in many ways.

Breakfast at the Montanema Handmade Village is a rare treat: village eggs, delectable local cheeses, gourmet cold cuts, homemade jams, fine Greek tahini, mountain honey and so much more. Good food also forms part of the activities at the property: help gather fresh peas, join in the cheese-making season during spring, and dig up some really tasty potatoes in fall.

In parallel, hiking the gorgeous trails in winter, crossing the nearby gorge in spring and setting out for a mountain picnic in summer next to the river are recommended. Ride horses by Lake Plastira or cycle around the trail. Paragliding and mountain climbing are also on offer in the region. The possibilities are endless!

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Visit a mountain paradise!
EPIRUS AND
NORTHERN GREECE

Orestis House
Primoula Country Hotel and Spa
Eco Cruising
Oreiades Traditional Guesthouse
In one of Zagori’s oldest villages Orestis House will surprise you with its authenticity, warmth, delicious restaurant and the opportunities for nature lovers. The property will captivate you with its two buildings erected over 150 years ago. Its delicious traditional ‘taverna’ restaurant has stayed true to the region’s age-old recipes and slow cooking methods. Starting with the generous breakfast, you’ll be delighted with the homemade jams, local honey, puffy fried bread, country eggs and delicious savory pies.

For lunch or dinner, consider starters such as eggplant with tomato and feta cheese, as well as pork bites with red peppers and graviera cheese. Herb pies, succulent meats and country-style baked beans are just some of the dishes you can enjoy.

To work off the calories, embark on fantastic hiking trips starting from Orestis House. Walk on old stone paths that connect villages together and across many gorgeous stone bridges. There are also signposted routes for hiking in nature and great nearby attractions. These include the old Secondary School, the Monastery of Evangelistria built in 1786 and the church of Achos Dimitrios which dates from 1793.

The greater area holds many other secrets, from manmade architectural wonders to unparalleled biodiversity, so prepare yourself a truly special Greek experience.

Requests: info@ecotourism-greece.com
The area of Zagori, with its stone-built houses, abundant nature and age-old traditions, is like no other place in Greece. In its midst lies the picturesque little village of Ano Pedina, home to the eco-friendly Primoula Country Hotel & Spa.

The 4-star guesthouse – restored from an old mansion – is gorgeous. Outstanding stone and wood architecture, a richly impressive Greek breakfast, a green philosophy, an intimate spa (hydromassage, jacuzzi and sauna) and the surrounding nature ensure that you can’t go wrong in staying here.

Primoula lies in an idyllic village not far from natural attractions such as the Voidomatis River, Arachthos River and Voikos Gorge. Picturesque villages such as Konitsa, Papigo, Kipi and Monodendri are waiting to be discovered with their old stone bridges, historic houses and enchanting monasteries.

The property also offers nature enthusiasts a hiking excursion that starts from the village of Vitsa to a stunning oak forest, over an old stone bridge and towards Dikofo overlooking the Vikos Gorge. Activities such as rafting, mountain biking, horseback riding, paragliding and canyoning can also be arranged.

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Go green in style!
Dolphins, rivers, wetlands, beaches, unparalleled nature, mythological sites and a national park await visitors to Preveza. Discover this part of Greece through Eco Cruising's daily river tours.

Vasilis and Venetia, both lovers of nature, will take you on a spellbinding tour of this area, featuring one of the most important wetlands in Europe. Jump on the ‘Agios Sostis’ boat for a ride that will immerse you in great Mediterranean nature and unveil the marine life, particularly the dolphins in the Amvrakikos or Ambracian Gulf.

For eco watersports lovers, let Vasilis and Venetia organize a private cruise that can be combined with snorkeling or kite surfing. Other attractions include the Byzantine Monastery of Koronisa and the medieval castle of Vonitsa.

A ‘priari’ or special boat to navigate shallower waters can take you to the forest of Lekatsa, Ziros Lake, the lagoons of the Amvrakikos wetlands National Park, the waterfalls of Vonitsa, and the springs and estuaries of the Acheron River.

Lastly, for intriguing visits by land, head to the area’s rich archeological sites such as the Nekromanteion (Oracle of the Dead) and the ancient Mycenaean acropolis of Efyra. There is also the Roman aqueduct in the valley of Kokkonopelos.

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Oreiades Traditional Guesthouse
Sithonia, Halkidiki

In what could be the prettiest village in Halkidiki, the beautiful Oreiades Guesthouse and Café at the entrance of the quiet, traditional village of Parthenonas lies peacefully among olive trees, operated by the friendly and hospitable Mrs. Katerina.

You’re going to fall in love with the cozy rooms and café of the Oreiades Guesthouse and its hearty Macedonian breakfast with homemade jams, fresh eggs, and traditional pies, as well as herbal mountain tea, fresh fruit, yoghurt and delicious omelets.

Parthenonas is a great place to enjoy life during all four seasons. The area is perfect for hiking, biking, mountain climbing, and simply enjoying the nature. Hiking paths above the village will take you to wondrous landscapes in full view of the sea. Not far off there are options for tennis and diving as well, keeping in mind that Halkidiki’s lovely coast is only a few minutes away by car.

The village boasts a folklore museum that you can visit, along with the historic church of Agios Stefanos built in 1837. Just walking around and admiring the gardens and valleys around Parthenonas is an experience. Keep in mind the local wineries and olive presses which you could visit in the greater area.

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You’re going to fall in love with this part of Corfu and with Casa Lucia, offering an array of great activities such as horseback riding, cycling and cooking authentic Corfiot recipes. Val and her daughter Zoe have created an ‘island within an island’ in the village of Poulades near Korakiana through their eco-friendly philosophy and activities at Casa Lucia.

The property offers yoga and tai chi sessions, as well as mind-therapy combined with dance therapy and dance movement. Nearby is an interesting ceramics workshop as offers therapeutic horseback riding to children.

With respect to eco-tourism, Corfu is a true pleasure for hiking, which can be arranged in the company of a botanist if you want to learn about this green island’s rich flora. Casa Lucia also has contact with little local businesses that offer cycling and horseback riding for everyone.

Take a trip to a vineyard with a cooking demonstration by a lovely lady with a penchant for preparing delicious local food. You can also enjoy lunch in two organic farms owned by family friends. Lastly, for a real natural experience, visit Halikouma Lake for some good food and easy birdwatching.

Requests: info@ecotourism-greece.com
Kythira is a magic island in many respects, and Pyrgos House is the ultimate place to discover its beauty through hiking and other activities, thanks to Frank, the eco-friendly Dutch philhellene and owner of this magnificently authentic place.

This traditional, spacious and aristocratic village house is located in a narrow and quiet alley in the friendly and historic residential neighbourhood of Panaretianika. Its kitchen is fully equipped, and guests can use the products from the property’s organic garden nearby, with vegetables, fruit and herbs all year around. Free range chickens guarantee farm fresh eggs every morning, and in your kitchen there’s a bottle of Pyrgos’ very own olive oil.

The team at Pyrgos House are passionate about walking and hiking, which is why they opened the Pyrgos House Tourist Office in Potamos, right next to the church. They will unveil the whole network of footpaths and the many villages around Kythira that are all interconnected, sharing their insight and tips with avid hikers and nature lovers.

Pyrgos House is open all year around, with fall and spring being particularly great times to visit the island.

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Discover the best of Kythira!
Tour Zante like a local!

Discover the island’s real charms with the ‘Back to the Roots’ bus tour and ‘Panigiri’ festival tour. As the sun sets, for a bit of folklore and culture embark on the ‘Once upon a time’ enchanting theater evening!

The ‘Back to the Roots’ Zakynthos island tour takes you off the beaten track to the most traditional villages on the island away from mass tourism to an area largely untouched by time. See real ‘Greek Island’ villages and experience life in rural Zante. The view of Shipwreck Bay from above is another highlight of this excursion. Travel in small groups to interact with your guide, Jackie Boots-Gravas who will tell you about Zante’s villages.

The ‘Once upon a time’ theater evening takes you to a magical setting of the Avouris Theater, a traditional hand built Greek amphitheater styled from pebbles and stones collected from the beaches of Zakynthos. The Greek evening entertainment features a selection of Greek scenes, amusing stories and fairy tales from mythology. Great local food, music and dance guaranteed!

With the VIP Panigiri tour you can join a colourful traditional festival or religious event. The Panagiri, a traditional open-air festival held to celebrate the Holy name day of a saint, is celebrated mainly in the Zakynthian villages. These occasions always bring out the best in traditional Zakynthian food, dancing and music.

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Nefis Travel
Planos-Tzilivi, Zakynthos
There are very good reasons why Zakynthos – or Zante as it is popularly called by the Italians – is known as ‘Fiore di Levante’ or flower of the Levant. It a garden of eden in the Mediterranean that offers so much beyond mass tourism that will surprise those who go off the beaten path.

In this spirit, a group of local tourism business owners came together to form Eco Zakynthos, a network of 12 charming traditional guesthouses, 6 restaurants, several and local businesses. The network does its best to showcase the best of Zakynthos and its fascinating inner circle.
Experience Zante's best of the best!

Two small wineries, an olive mill, a cheese factory with amazing cheeses, organic shops and even an artisanal furniture factory are all part of this enchanting group of local businesses. Get to know the authentic side of Zakynthos through this network of locals.

ecozakynthos.com

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PELION AND SPORADES

- Hotel des Roses
- Orchard Guesthouse
- Kritsa Gastronomy Hotel
- Ikion Eco Boutique Hotel
- Skopelos Trails
Orchard Guesthouse

Marrying sea and mountain beautifully, Pelion is one of the most gorgeous places in Greece, and the Orchard Guesthouse outside the town of Volos and near the coast is a jewel of a place to explore this blessed land. Run by a friendly and creative Greek-Welsh couple who have renovated this old property with love, the Orchard boasts four of the coziest and most charming quarters to enjoy a Greek vacation with an eco-friendly twist.

Just a short walk from the Orchard is the Pelion Steam Train Station which will take you on one of the most picturesque rides to a stunning little mountain village called Milies. You can also go from village to beach to village by car and dine in some of the homeliest local places.

Beyond hiking and discovering the villages, the friendly folks at the Orchard can help you plan a number of activities. Ask Leda and her husband to arrange a horseback riding adventure or when the next local carnival or festival is. Take a boat around the coast and stop by magical little coves or dine in a seafood ‘taverna’ by the sea. A great place to stay!

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Ikion Eco Boutique Hotel
Patitiri, Alonissos

The most eco-friendly hotel on Alonissos island is undoubtedly the Ikion Eco Boutique Hotel. The owner Ioanna Athanasiou has gone to great lengths to ensure comfort and environmental friendliness in this delightful cosy property, which was completely renovated just recently.

The property is set in a lush area surrounded by greenery and has a delightful garden in the back where you can have your breakfast. The optional breakfast is a la carte, made from local ingredients, including delicious local favourites such as apricot marmalade, country omelettes and freshly baked croissants.

The charming hotel lies a few meters away from the port of Patitiri and offers 13 luxurious rooms, four of which are suites with relaxed dining areas. The hotel is a short walk to the lovely little Rousoum beach, local tavernas, the must-try women’s cooperative for traditional products and the charming portside shops of Patitiri.

If you want to encourage green holidaymaking in one of the most environmentally conscious islands in the Mediterranean, the Ikion Eco Boutique Hotel should be your first choice. Keep in mind that the island is perfect for hiking, as even in summer the trees shade some of the hiking paths.

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Go green on Alonissos!
Enjoy the best of South Pelion!

Hotel des Roses
Platanias Village, South Pelion

Life in Greece as it should be, complete with its traditions, warm hospitality and nature, can truly be experienced at the Pelion des Roses Hotel in the Southern Pelion peninsula, one of Greece’s most beautiful regions.

The property’s location in Platanias, an attractive fishing village, lies near ancient sites, gorgeous beaches, sea caves, old churches, traditional restaurants and numerous hiking paths.

Head out on a fascinating cultural and mythological tour of discovery in the land of the Centaurs, and Argonauts, as well as ancient Greek personalities such as Hippocrates, father of Medicine. Appreciate mosaic art that is over 3,000 years old, visit a tiny 18th century church and stop by Mourtias Beach, considered one of the most beautiful in Greece.

Refresh yourself in South Pelion’s natural water springs and visit the 18th-century monastery of Saint Spiridon. Hike across the fields among shady olive trees, orange groves, and chestnut trees. Marvel at the different aromatic herbs such as laurel, oregano, thyme and mint. Learn how the locals cultivate their land.

Tour the soap-making workshop at the Pelion des Roses Hotel. Watch how organic soaps are made using cold-process soap making with pure local olive oil and aromatic herbs. This place is medicine for the soul!

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Kritsa Gastronomy Hotel
Portaria, Pelion

The gateway to Pelion is the stone-built village of Portaria, and one of the best ways to discover its riches and culinary delights is through the charming Kritsa hotel and its popular traditional restaurant.

The hotel is known for its quality cuisine and has even won awards for its dishes, presenting the best of regional gastronomy and local flavors to visitors. It is also a member of the official Greek Breakfast initiative, meaning that you’re going to have a fantastic breakfast every morning!

Take a bit of Pelion home with you by learning how to cook regional cuisine. The Kritsa hotel and restaurant organizes Greek cooking classes in small groups. It uses recipes from ‘the blessed Land of Pelion’ as the locals like to call it. Local herbs, vegetables and meats are used to create mouthwatering dishes.

Pelion is one of the best places in Greece to hike in. Fall and spring are amazing times to visit Pelion, so is winter as the village is close to the ski resort of Hania. In good weather you can hike to Hania, as well as to another area called Stagiates. Your hosts will be very happy to help.

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Go on a great culinary journey!
Skopelos Island is the greenest island in Greece, that’s official! It is covered in a network of ancient cobbled trails that for many years fell into disuse until English resident, Heather Parsons, decided to find, clear, reinstate and mark them with the aid of volunteers from the eco-website Workaway.info.

For lovers of flora and fauna, Skopelos is a must. There are kilometers of trails to explore, either self-guided with the aid of Heather’s Skopelos Trails guide book or by participating in a guided hike that takes place during the months of April, May, June and September, October. The nearest airport is Skiathos (45 minutes away) or there are regular ferry services from Evia, Agios Konstantinos and Volos. There are also Flying Cats from Thessaloniki that reach the Sporades Islands.

This noble initiative is supported by the Skopelos Hotel Association, providing an official eco-friendly push to ecotourism on this magnificent island, a true gem for hiking.

Requests: info@ecotourism-greece.com
Here’s a magical island in the Mediterranean that not many people know about, and one of the best ways to discover it is through the charming Kallichoron hotel in full view of the gorgeous town.

Wake up to the award-winning “Grandma’s Breakfast” with fresh country eggs, island honey, excellent bread from the local baker and freshly squeezed orange juice. The fully equipped kitchenettes in the apartments will also invite you to prepare your own meals with goodies from the town’s little markets.

The island opens up its natural beauty to explorers, eco-tourists and simple beachgoers. There are great beaches to visit, such as the double-sided Kounoupi, the sandy Koutsomytis and Agios Konstantinos beach with its little church.

As you hike across the island, you will pass by old windmills and wild scenery, best done during any month but August where the sun is at its hottest. There’s a rock-climbing field called Fthera just 20 minutes away by car from town. The management organizes fabulous hiking excursions and theme weekends that enable visitors to see the true side of the island. Both Kallichoron and Astypalea will not disappoint you.

Requests: info@ecotourism-greece.com

Experience true cycladic traditions!
Kimolos is a hiker’s and ecotourist’s paradise, with an enchantingly quiet village life. If you check into Sophia’s apartments you can live like one of the locals right in the heart of town.

While the classical blue-and-white Cycladic architecture of these four apartments makes them fit perfectly with the rest of the traditional village surroundings, on the inside the rooms are spacious, modern and convenient, complete with a kitchenette.

Aspasia will be more than happy to help you discover the best of the island, from the Madonna de Rosario church right next to the property to the strange mushroom rock formation that’s considered one of Kimolos’ key attractions. Go on a guided tour of Kimolos and the nearby little island of Polyagos, where you might spot protected species such as the Monachus Monachus seal, as well as rare turtles and reptiles.

Visit the natural thermal baths on the island to sit in the curative waters and trek around Kimolos which boasts several decent hiking paths. A little shop by the port rents bicycles, which is a great way to discover the landscape and spot some of the wild herbs or local flowers. Check out the small archeological museum too.

Requests: info@ecotourism-greece.com
Do you feel like snorkeling in crystal waters or riding a donkey, would you like to sail to deserted islets or cook a Mediterranean meal in a Greek kitchen? Are you in for some kitesurfing or stargazing? Hiking, scuba diving and mountain biking are all part of Pandora Travel’s surprises.

If you don’t know what to choose, Pandora offers a 7-day experience that combines it almost all, plus some sailing and mountain biking. Lesvos will unveil its beauty bit by bit as you take it all its splendor, and Sigrid will show you how to get the best of this island in an eco-friendly way. Take a look at some of her popular excursions:

• Joining a local fisherman
• Birdwatching across the island
• Nature tours
• Scuba diving in Petra
• Discovering Lesvos by foot
• Toumba eco farm
• Cooking on the farm
• Going on an orchid expedition
• Sailing to Tokmakia
• Rock climbing
• Taking a trip by donkey or horse

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See the real Lesvos!
Here's a gorgeous little seaside hotel on the beach of Rethymnon, one of Greece's most charming towns. The renovated eco-friendly Steris Hotel offers numerous adventures in the region from cooking lessons and diving to hiking and exploring. At the helm of the Steris is Mrs. Manolakaki who runs the property meticulously and strives to make sure that every guest is happy.

Wake up to a generous breakfast buffet that offers local delicacies such as Greek yogurt, authentic feta cheese, Cretan tomatoes, Kalamata olives, crunchy rusk breads, savory cheese and spinach pies, mountain honey, herbal teas and delicious homemade jams that use Greek fruits in season. Cheeses, cold cuts, pickles, cake and cereals also form part of this buffet that will get you off to a good start.

The property is known for its eco-friendly philosophy, participating in green events and promoting ecotourism activities and trips to guests. There's so much to do beyond enjoying the good food and swimming in Rethymnon's clean and lovely beach. Whether it's hiking, diving, biking, wind surfing or mountain climbing, Mrs. Manolakaki can put you in touch with one of several little companies that specialize in outdoor activities.

Requests: info@ecotourism-greece.com
In the hidden valleys of Crete just beside a protected oak forest lies an enchanting eco-friendly property called Country Hotel Velani, named after the acorn of the Kermes oak tree.

As you arrive to this little property of 12 large rooms, you’ll likely be greeted by the friendly Greek-Dutch couple, Manolis and Sabine, who run this gorgeous place. It comes complete with the Odyssea horseback riding stables and a deliciously traditional Cretan restaurant, as well as spectacular views of nature from the terrace.

A garden full of herbs, vegetable patches, fruit trees and flowers will delight visitors, while the pool and equestrian center offer unparalleled recreation under the Mediterranean sun. There are plenty of hiking and biking opportunities, as well as paragliding for experienced paragliders who have their own equipment. The valley below the hotel is an ideal spot for takeoff and landing, free to use by anybody.

Closer to home, owner Manolis who’s also as a talented chef, can organize some mouthwatering cooking lessons and show you the best of Cretan cuisine. The Velani restaurant uses organically-grown produce from its own garden, as well as the best cheeses, meats and vegetarian fare you’ve tasted in a long time.

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Ride horses in the garden of Eden!
The essence of the rural Mediterranean is about enjoying the finer things in life amidst rolling green hills, stunning sea views, unparalleled sunsets and amazing nature. One of the best places to enjoy such an idyllic experience is at the Mourtzanakis Residence in the heart of Crete.

Half an hour away from the town of Heraklion, the property of four villas with an organic garden and a few minutes away from the beach by car offers visitors exceptional opportunities for hiking, climbing, mountain biking, kayaking, scuba diving, horseback riding and exploring the Medieval ruins such as the Fodele Castle.

To truly involve yourself in the Cretan lifestyle, let your hosts prepare one of their delicious breakfasts with homemade jams, fresh country bread, excellent honey, local cheeses, sun-ripened tomatoes and organic olive oil.

There are also superb attractions in the region such as the medieval Savathiana convent and the Byzantine churches in the village of the world-famous painter, El Greco, not far away. The Mourtzanakis family itself boasts a history of many centuries on the island and will share with you some fascinating knowledge about their beloved Crete, including nature-filled activities and the best places to visit.

Requests: info@ecotourism-greece.com
Welcome to the southern side of Crete, definitely calmer and more authentic than the northern coast. This is where several breathtaking villas around two lovely traditional villages of Siva and Kamilari offer great bases to discover the area!

These traditional villas, some built over 100 years ago, have been totally renovated into dreamy Mediterranean homes. Close to the seaside town of Matala, once known as a hangout for hippies in the 60s and 70s, the villas hide serenely around the picturesque villages of Siva and Kamilari.

Some are just a few minutes’ walk from the sea while others captivate 100-year-old charm. All were renovated in recent years and offer all of today’s comforts from Wi-Fi internet to swimming pool. The nearby beach of Komo near the church has a delightful ‘taverna’ to experience good Cretan cuisine. Also noteworthy in the area is the quiet beach of Kokkinos Pyrgos which is popular with surfers and has a couple of good fish taverns, not known by mass tourism.

More inland, on the gentle slopes of Asterousia Mountains, the traditional village of Sivas – where some of the villas are – will enthral you with its 1000 years of history. The historic houses are well preserved, and there are some archeological tombs that date over 4000 years not far from the village.

Requests: info@ecotourism-greece.com
In the heart of Crete, among the olive groves, lies the picturesque village of Lyttos near the site of an ancient city by the same name. In this traditional village there are two lovely stone-built apartments that represent the perfect eco-holiday escape.

Revel in the quiet village life and the nature around you. Mrs. Dora Loulakaki, the friendly owner of these two apartments, is eager to welcome guests and show them around.

Go on an organized bike tour or a hike on the hills through age-old walking paths, as well as fishing, mountain biking and discovering the biodiversity around, in addition to discovering some hidden caves with their mystical energy. There are so many surprises in the area that hikers and bikers will come across, starting with the spring fountain in the village with therapeutic waters.

Move outside the village and you’ll find archeological remains of Ancient Lyttos (or Lykto) from a civilization that joined in the Trojan wars. If you like archeology you must visit the Palace of Knossos too.

Lastly, there’s a great garden with vegetable patches and fruit trees that belongs to the Oikies Lyttos houses. Ask Mrs. Dora to visit if you want to pick your own vegetables to make a Mediterranean meal, or let the family to cook a delicious Cretan meal for you.

Requests: info@ecotourism-greece.com

Make yourself at home in Crete!
PARTNERS
Paths of Greece is a social enterprise that designs, implements, and promotes hiking destinations. Its team specializes in hiking tourism and has vast experience on the topic. Paths of Greece works in close collaboration with local communities in order to jointly organize the development and promotion of new hiking destinations.

At a glance:
• design of path networks that meet the hiker’s standards and expectations
• sign-posting according to international standards
• environmental and historical research
• promotion (design, branding, applications, flyers, maps, contacts with journalists)
Aiming to achieve a richly biodiverse Mediterranean Sea in which sea turtles thrive, MEDASSET has reached out to Greece’s hotels to join in the effort. It recently launched the “Clean Seas: Swear to Care” campaign which encourages beach visitors in Greece to protect marine life with the simple yet powerful act of making a promise on www.katharesthalasses.gr.

Under the motto “We care for our host destinations”, the campaign places particular emphasis on the protection of tourist destinations in the country, inviting businesses active in the tourism sector near the sea to join its network with a small donation.

www.ecotourism-greece.com is very committed in supporting and communicating this noble initiative.
WE CARE ABOUT OUR HOST DESTINATIONS

WILL YOU JOIN US?

#SWEARTOCARE

ADD YOUR PROMISE TODAY
WWW.KATHARESTHALASSES.GR
Ecotourism is defined as responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education.

NCC specializes in issues related to nature conservation and supports bodies in ecotourism promotion and development of areas, taking into account all aspects of ecotourism.

The company collects information on biodiversity and traditional human activities that are related to nature and identifies opportunities for their utilization in ecotourism activities.

NCC also prepares ecotourism development plans that involve minimizing the impact to nature, involving local communities and professionals, promoting local products and activities, producing informative and environmental interpretation material, including documentaries, and educating bodies and persons in implementation of ecotourism activities.
Get in touch, and we'll arrange bookings for any of these wonderful places and tours.
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