

## ***Santorini the unique world ...land of lava!!***

Santorini is one of the best places on earth as far as sunset viewing is concerned. In fact few places can match the sheer beauty of Santorini's sunset views. Visitor to the island fallen in love with bewitchingly beautiful sunsets that can be savored from many vantage positions in the island, such as Imerovigli.

### **Santorini Sunsets over Caldera are the best in the world!!**



Santorini is perhaps the most fascinating and most talked about island of Greece in the Aegean. Only the name of the island is enough to unfold in mind pleasurable connotations, volcanic landscape, gray and red beaches, dazzling white houses, terraces with panoramic sea views, stunning sunsets, wild fun. All this, together with remnants of lost civilizations discovered in the volcanic ash justify the epithets with which visitors identify Santorini and fairly is called, magical, indescribable, astonishing.

The volcano is still active, and the last eruption was in 1950, causing an earthquake which destroyed many villages on the island. The island's official name is Thira and its main town, Fira, is also the capital of the Cyclades islands. Santorini became from the local "Santa Irini".

**Oia (Ia) Village** is one of the most beautiful villages of the island, carved out of the cliffs and clinging to the edge. The architecture is amazing and is highlighted by the



stark white of the buildings and the contrasting colorful doors and window shutters. It has often been compared to the eagle's nest! Enjoy the panoramic view of caldera, the volcano, Thirassia Island, and the rest of Santorini looking back toward the capital, Fira.

Oia is a traditional settlement in the north of Santorini. It is also known as 'Apano Meria' or 'Anomeria' and the inhabitants are called 'Apanomerites'. The village is approximately 150 meters above sea level. Oia was severely damaged in the 1956 earthquake and much work has been involved to implement its restoration.

The Community of Oia consists of the following settlements: Oia village, Finikia, Kolumbo, Baxedes and Paradisos to the east and Tholos to the west. Tholos is the second farming village of Apano Meria. Also included are the bays of Ammoudi and Armeni. The island of Thirassia comes under the jurisdiction of the Community of Oia.

The beauty of Oia is unsurpassed. In fact, it is almost impossible to describe in words. Small white houses tier the hillside, interspersed by splashes of rich okra colour, deep fuchsia, cobalt blue, oyster pink and earthy red. Smooth winding paths interconnect, interrupted now and then by a small church, and at every corner there is something new to discover.

Oia is one of the most photographed places in Greece, if not the world. It has inspired artists, poets and every visitor who visits Santorini. Oia is best known for breathtaking sunsets; if truth be told, sunrise in Oia is also magical.



Blue Domed Churches of Santorini: Tholos area



Oia settlement stands high above Ammoudi port

## **Architecture**

In Oia there are two types of dwellings, the cave houses dug into the volcanic rock on the Caldera cliffs, and the Captains houses. The cave houses used to be the homes of ship crews, whereas the Captains houses belonged to the affluent class of ship owners. Many of the churches in Oia were dedicated to sailors.

## **Ammoudi**

Ammoudi port can be reached by car (you have to circle round the bottom road of Oia village), by walking down the 235 steps, or by catching a ride on the back of a mule. At the bottom is a small harbour with fishing boats, waterfront taverns and restaurants, and a path that leads you around the base of the mountain to an excellent diving area. It was from Ammoudi that they used to load ships with two centuries ago. Sea trading was a way of life. Theran pumice and wine were exported, while imports included porcelain, timber and silverware, fabrics, furniture, perfumes, food supplies and hardware

## **Armeni**

Armeni port is smaller than Ammoudi. It was also used for wine trading. To get there you can catch a boat departing from Ammoudi, or walk down 291 steps to the quiet harbour below. Mules rides are also available. There is a tavern to have a quiet meal. Between Ammoudi and Armeni is 'Armenaki'. Climbing down is hard work. You can swim, but for the moment there are no shops or restaurants



## **Fira, Imerovigli and Firostefani**

Fira is the capital of the island and the most important village. It is perched on the edge of an impressive cliff 260 m high and offers a great panorama over the submerged volcano. The main square of Fira (Platia Theotokopoulou) it is where all the locals meet.

During the peak season the small narrow streets are crowded and are filled with all kinds of shops, jewelleries, café, restaurants, bars and night clubs. Immerovigli is a picturesque traditional village situated only 2 km away from the capital, Fira but is situated on a higher cliff. "VIGLA" means "day" so it got its name from this word. In front of the village is located an enormous rock called Skaros. Until 1800, Skaros was part of the land and had a castle on it where all the administrative offices of the island were located. The village was almost totally destroyed with the earthquake of 1956, and the cliff-edge houses were abandoned but a tourist trade started up again in the 1970s. Today Imerovigli is a beautiful and quiet village and very popular. Between Fira and Imerovigli, one of the spots with the best view on the island. Even if officially considered as a distinct village, Firostefani is the continuation of Fira.

It can be found on the west coast of the island, on the caldera cliffs opposite the volcano. Modern day Fira is the cultural and commercial center of the Santorini. Although geared around the tourist industry, perhaps more so than other areas on the island, there is much about Fira worth taking a look at.

Apart from the museums, galleries and cultural events, it has the island's largest shopping center and the biggest choice of dining out and entertainment. Fira heads the nightlife section - many bars and cafes are actually on the caldera, whilst others, as well as the large clubs, are tucked into the quaint cobbled streets weaving through the town.

There is so much to choose from and so many places to explore. The whole of the Fira Caldera is connected by a path at the cliff edge that starts just above the Mayor's office and finishes up on the hill at the Nomikos Conference center. The volcano can be seen from every point, as can the mesmerizing sunsets. Sunset time in Santorini seems to be the only hour of the day when everything, and everyone stops moving...



If you make your way up from the main square towards the **Elia Restaurant**, you will discover one of wonderful hillside cafe from which you can sip on a glass of wine and breathe in the sunsets and the panoramic views.

*Looking for a Gourmet Restaurant? You're Welcome to the Saltsa Santorini in Fira- Imerovigli !*

Spoil Your Senses with the magical taste of Saltsa Santorini, make a gift your self with the flavor buds, and honor them with the most delicious "Saltsa" (Sauce) you have ever tasted!

Fresh ingredients of the Santorinian land and sea inspirationally brought together for your appetizing travels. The often alterations of the menu, the daily dishes and the prices will turn you into a frequent visitor.



Visits which begin with caper, olive or tomato flavored handmade bread, continue with fresh, delicious salads on fish or meat dishes that will make your mouth water and conclude with divine sweets that no one can resist.

Even the space of the restaurant itself is a pleasant surprise for the island. It was taken care of by Daphne Kalogianni whose knowledge and experience transformed a simple veranda into a place of relaxation. This atmosphere of ease combined with the pleasure of taste, will make you forget that you are there just for dinner.



A veranda with view, paved with old tiles, decorated with beautiful, carefully selected, furniture and a garden with olive trees and aromatic plants wait to treat you to simple Greek dishes with an “opinion”.

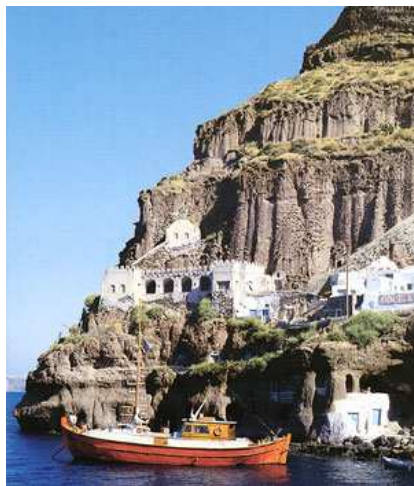
### **Firostefani**

Firostefani is an old village just north of Fira which has merged with Fira, becoming one of its suburbs. The name Firostefani means 'Crown of Fira' Stefani = crown. Predominant characteristics are traditional houses, narrow paths and views to the volcano.

### **Kontochori**

Kontochori is also a suburb of Fira, 15 minutes walk from the main square. It can be found on the lower road as you leave the center driving northward in the direction of Oia. Kontochori has an outdoor summer cinema.

### **Ormos: the Old Port**



The old port of Santorini is at the bottom of the Caldera cliffs in Fira. The little harbour has restaurants, taverns and small shops. To reach the old port, you can walk down the 600 stone steps, hop on a mule or take the Cable Car which leaves from the top part of the Fira caldera.

The large cruise liners drop anchor at Ormos and the passengers are ferried to shore in small boats. One can spot small fishing boats, the kaikia' as well as several pleasure boats that depart daily to the volcano 'Nea Kameni', the Hot Springs at 'Palia Kameni', Thirassia island and Oia for the sunset.

Perhaps the only way to realise what Santorini is, and where you really are, is to experience the island from the foot of the Caldera cliffs, and the best way to do that is from the sea

### **Places of Historical Interest**

There is a Naval Museum housed in a 19th century Captain's Mansion, that illustrates the island's maritime history. One can also visit the Castle of Oia, a famous sunset spot.

*Distances: Fira town: 11 kilometers*

History Oia Kasteli - one of the 5 fortified castles of Santorini

Wineries Sigalas Estate

Services ATMS, post office, shops, galleries, restaurants, cafes

Buses from Fira travelling north to Oia pass by Firostefani and Imerovigli. Oia has a bus terminal in the main square below the Caldera.

### **Kamari and Perissa**

The towns of Perissa and Kamari attract tourists to their black sand beaches. Kamari is well known for its black-sand-and-pebble beach. The car-free waterfront promenade located on a length of about one kilometers is filled, with cafes and restaurants. The tourists come mainly from Germany and England. Behind the capital, Kamari has the most lively nightlife on Santorini.

The resort is particularly suitable for tanning, bathing and sun bathing. Most tourists are families and couples spending a classic beach holiday

Perissa is a seaside village on the south east coast of Santorini with several kilometers of black sand beach. Towering over the beach on the north side is the mountain of Mesa Vouno, site of Ancient Thira. Perissa connects with Perivolos, and the collective area is longest stretch of beach on the island. Both beaches are organized. Perivolos in particular is a more up-market clubbing scene, an extension of Santorini's nightlife by day.

#### **Church of Timiou Stavrou (holly Cross)**

One of the largest churches on the island, Timiou Stavrou can be found in Perissa square. The original church, built during the period 1835 up till 1840, was destroyed by the 1956 earthquake and was later rebuilt.

#### **Early Christianity: The Basilica of Agia Irini (Santa Irene)**

At the base of the mountain of Mesa Vouno, one can find the ruins of the Basilica of Agia Irini. The building dates back to the 5th century, while evidence of a second construction period during the second half of the 6th century was discovered in 1992. The completion of the excavation of the site, whose floor reaches to a depth of two meters, will take several more years.

For many years it was thought that Santorini was given its name by the Venetians in the 13th century. Nowadays there is strong evidence that the Basilica of Agia Irini gave Santorini its name.

#### **Panagia Katefiani**

Two hundred meters up on the slopes of Mesa Vouno is the tiny chapel of the Genethlion of Theotokou otherwise known as Panagia Katefiani. The name Katefiani comes from the word 'katefio' = refuge or hideaway. The local inhabitants use to go there for protection in times of hostile attacks. Many took refuge there during the 'Time of Evil', the volcanic eruption of the Kolumbo submarine crater in 1650

Archaeological Discoveries:

There is a theory that Perissa stands on the site on the ancient city of Elevsina, referred to by Ptolemaios, geographer, mathematician and astronomer of the 2nd Century AC, as one of the cities of Santorini. The port of Ancient Elevsina is thought to be near to the Akrotiri of Exomiti. Findings proving Perissa at one time was an ancient city were discovered in 1836. During the Byzantine years, a second city of considerable riches was built over the original one. It is estimated that the city fell into a decline during the reign of the Emperor Leontas the 3rd of Isavrou.

Perissa is home to the Museum of Fossils & Minerals.

*Distances Fira town: 13 kilometers*

Services Restaurants, taverns, supermarkets, cafes, beach bars, summer 'happenings', beach volleyball, water sports, Perissa camping site

Buses: you can catch the bus from Fira, just below the main square. Return buses leaving from Perissa and Perivolos have pick up points on different corners of the side roads that run vertically to the beach area. They circle around Perissa square and take the return route back to Fira

## **Kamari**

Kamari is a cosmopolitan beach resort on the south east of Santorini, which has been awarded the Blue Flag. The long stretch of beach lies under the impressive mountain of Mesa Vouno. The water is deep and blue, the sand is black and there is a lifeguard on duty.

A stone-paved promenade for strolling that runs parallel to the beach stretches across the crescent moon shaped bay. This is closed off to traffic during the summer months. Kamari offers a wealth of cafes, bars, restaurants, shops and supermarkets, as well as a lively nightlife. The beach is organized, with sun beds, umbrellas, water sports and diving.

The Kamari area includes Agia Paraskevi, Kamari village and Kamari beach. Kamari underwent a large period of development after the earthquake of 1956, instigated by the residents of Mesa Gonia village which had been almost totally destroyed.

In 2002 an ancient Sanctuary of the legendary Achilles was discovered. Amongst the stone ruins, a chalice of the Ionic period was found, with engravings which wrote the names of the craftsman and of the Greek hero.

### **Archaeological Sites: Ancient Thira Settlement**

The second important period in the history of Santorini is linked with the city of Ancient Thira. The excavation there, begun in 1896 by Baron Hiller von Gaertringen in the area of Mesa Vouno, revealed ruins of town which bore evidence of settlement as early as 9th century BC.

*Distances Fira town: 9 kilometers*

### **History Ancient Thira Settlement - Mesa Vouno**

Cinemas Cine Villaggio - Indoor Cinema Kamari Shopping Center

Open Air Summer Cinema - just before Kamari

Buses Regular Service to Fira via Exo Gonia, Messaria & Katerados

## **Megalochori Village: Neo Classical Buildings, Vineyards and Volcano Views**

Megalochori is one of the most picturesque villages on the island. Its existence is recorded back to the 17th century.

Home to historical mansions, old traditional houses, pirate hideaways and wine canavas, it has a history of merchants and wealthy land barons exporting Vinsanto wine that the island still produces. A prominent feature of the historical homes and mansions are the high walls, inner courtyards and solid wooden door entrances, built for privacy and for safety against marauding pirates.

A great effort is been made by local residents and businessmen to preserve the characteristics and beauty of this traditional settlement, and many of the original houses that had fallen into disrepair, have been restored to their former glory.

In the center of the village, there a wonderful traditional square with taverns, restaurants and trees providing shade for a quick cup of coffee. The square is the heart and soul of Megalochori, a gathering place for the locals to play a game of cards or 'tavli' (backgammon). Spiraling out in all directions is a maze of winding cobbled streets and smooth edge pathways, just waiting to be discovered.

Predominantly vineyard country, the area of Megalochori covers a large expanse of the south western plains of Santorini, stretching towards the Caldera on the west, and

the traditional settlement built on the banks of a stream to the east. Evidence of prehistoric settlements has been found in the area covering the Early and Later Cycladic periods.

There are two remote beaches on the Caldera side, both named after churches in the area, Plaka beach and Thermi beach. They are not accessible by car.

*Distances Fira town: 9 kilometers*

Wineries Antoniou Winery, Boutari Winery, Gavalas Vineyard

Services: Tavernas, restaurants, small shops, village square

Buses can be caught on the main road going south east to Emporio, Perissa and Perivolos or back north to Fira via Pyrgos, Messaria and Karterados

### **Pyrgos Village: Panoramic Views of the Whole Island all the way to Oia**

Pyrgos can found at the highest point of Santorini, with panoramic views of the whole island all the way to the village of Oia. This hillside village was declared a protected settlement in 1995.

Pyrgos is a typical Fortress Settlement of the Cyclades. On the hilltop you can find ruins of Kasteli Castle, one of the five 'kastelia' on the island. It became the capital of Santorini after the abandonment of Skaros Castle in the mid 18th century, and before Fira, which is the capital of Santorini today. There is a memorial plaque near the entrance to the castle, commemorating those who died in the Second World War.

Traditional architecture, remains of neo-classical mansions, narrow winding paths leading up the hillside, small white houses, galleries, vineyards, churches, breathtaking sunsets ... Pyrgos is truly magical.

### **Pyrgos at Easter Time**

Holy Good Friday 'Megali Paraskevi', and 'Epitaphios' Lamentations:

The whole hillside is lit up with burning fire brands. The sight is spectacular.

Holy Easter Sunday 'Kyriaki tou Pascha' Celebration:

In Pyrgos Square an effigy is burnt and there are fireworks, lamb on the spit and wine.

Pyrgos offers a Wealth of History, Museums & Churches.

Near to the village of Pyrgos and crowning Mount Profitis Ilias is a monastery of the same name which was dedicated to the prophet Elijah. The monastery has an important museum - the Icons & Relics Collection. 'Vanishing Santorini' Exhibition is a look into Santorini's past.

### **Messaria Village: The Crossroad of Santorini**



Messaria village is situated the center of Santorini island. Its existence is recorded back to the middle of 17th century. During the 19th century Messaria was the center of industry in Santorini. An impressive landmark is the old Markezinis knitting factory. The original architecture of the village is interesting, a combination of stately homes and domed shape cave houses tunneled into the volcano rock. Messaria is vineyard country.

### **The Stately Homes of Messaria :**

The Argyros Mansion is one of the most distinguished recent monuments of the island of Santorini and occupies an important place within the Messaria community, as it is significant for its morphological and its architectural value. Also impressive is the Saliveros Mansion which was built in 1893. Today it is uninhabited and unavailable for viewing by the public

The center of the village can be found at a busy crossroad that connects the island in almost all directions. By turning south east, you can drive to the airport, Monolithos, Exo Gonia and Mesa Gonia and end up at Kamari. If you drive up the hill, you will be going towards Vothonas, Pyrgos, Athinios port, as well as the villages of Megalochori, Akrotiri, Emporio, Perissa and Perivolos. When going north, the next village you arrive at is Karterados, and after that Fira the capital.

### **Messaria is a Lively Neighbourhood**

Messaria has a large local population and as such is serviced by many shops, restaurants, supermarkets, chemists and the like. Everything is operational throughout the year. At the crossroad you are more than likely to spot street vendors who have parked with their small trucks, selling almost anything from fresh fish, vegetables and fruit, potted plants and even large ceramic urns.

*Distances: Fira town: 3 1/2 kilometers*

Services: Shops, supermarkets, restaurants

Buses: The bus stop is at the cross road on the corner. Buses pass by regularly going to all the destinations mentioned above

### **Imerovigli Village & Skaros Rock: 'The Balcony of Santorini'**



You can find Imerovigli by taking the road going towards Oia. It is the next village after Fira & Firostefani on the famous Santorini caldera. The name of this village belongs to the days of the pirates:

Vigla (Latin = vigilare = To Guard or to Act as a Look Out, imera (Greek) = day. Imerovigli has been declared a Traditional Settlement, and special rules and regulations have been enforced regarding building development. Its position at the highest, most central part of the caldera gave it visual command of the whole area. It also derived importance from its

proximity to Skaros Fortress. The Church of the Panagia Malteza has a marvellous carved wooden screen with icons depicting scenes from the Old Testament. There is a path from Imerovigli caldera walkway to Skaros Rock and the Chapel of Panagia Theoskepasti.

### **Imerovigli today: Traditional Settlement**

Imerovigli has views of the volcano, breathtaking sunsets and tranquility. There is a main square which leads up to the Caldera and the traditional hillside cave settlements. If you continue on the road to Oia, the lower plains of Imerovigli also have wonderful sunset east coast views. The largest part of Imerovigli was destroyed in the 1956 volcano eruption. Some of the population perished, while others moved away to the mainland. Imerovigli has since then been restored and is home to some of the most beautiful hotels and traditional cave house settlements on the island.



### **Fortified Settlements of Santorini: Skaros Rock**

Skaros was one of the five fortified settlements and the most important one. At that time it was referred to simply as 'Kastro' (castle in Greek).

The rock was inhabited in medieval times, because the fortress built there offered protection from pirates. Skaros was the capital of Santorini until the 18th century, although evacuation of Skaros started at the beginning of the 17th century. The promontory at Skaros has been shaken repeatedly by strong earthquakes, particularly the one of 1650.

*Distances: Fira town: 3 kilometers*

History: Skaros Rock - one of the 5 fortified castles of Santorini

Services: Small supermarkets, traditional restaurants & taverns

Buses: There is a bus stop in the main square which connects south to Fira and Firostefani, and north to Oia.

### **Monolithos: The Beach, Fish taverns & the Old Tomato Factory**

Monolithos is just below the airport. You can get there by driving through Karterados village all the way down to the seashore, and turning right along the dirt road below the cliffs. The more orthodox way is to get to the Messaria crossroad, drive along the airport road and keep going till you get to the sea. Monolithos has the only Tomato Canning Factory is still operational on the island. The factory belongs to the Cooperative Association of Theraic Products

*Distances: Fira town: 8 kilometers*

Services: Fish taverns, restaurants, airport

Buses leave from Fira via Karterados and Messaria to Monolithos by taking the road which runs below and parallel to Santorini International Airport

### **Akrotiri Village : Land of the Excavations, the Fortress & the Lighthouse**



In Medieval times, Akrotiri was one of the 5 fortified settlements on the island. Akrotiri is a village of great interest on the south west coast of Santorini. Apart from having some of the best views on the island which reach as far as Oia, magnificent sunsets, wonderful fish taverns, quiet undeveloped beaches, and tiny churches, it is also home to two of Santorini's jewels, the Akrotiri Excavations and Akrotiri Castle.



#### **The Lighthouse of Akrotiri**

Akrotiri lies exactly on the axis of the shipping lane from Piraeus to Alexandria. The lighthouse is one of the best in Greece. It can be found 18 kilometers from Fira at an altitude of 58 meters. The geographical coordinates are: Latitude 36° 21' 05" N. and Longitude 25° 21' 05" E.

The lighthouse was built during the Ottoman Rule in 1892 by the French company 'La Société Collas et Michel'. Initially it operated on oil, and its beams reached a distance of 23 nautical miles. In 1925 it was renovated. During the Second World War the lighthouse stopped operating and started up again in 1945. By this time the lighthouse

was manned by four persons and it had a beam visibility that reached a full 25 nautical miles, with a rotary flash every 30 seconds.  
In 1983 electricity was installed and in 1988 the lighthouse became fully automated

Akrotiri is one of the most important prehistoric settlements of the Aegean. The first habitation at the site dates from the Late Neolithic times (from 4th millennium BC). The Exhibition of the Wall Paintings of Thera is on display at the Nomikos Conference Center in Fira.

*Distances: Fira town: 15 kilometers*

History: Akrotiri excavations, Akrotiri Castle & Tower

Services: Restaurants, fish taverns, small shops

Buses: Buses from Fira depart for both Akrotiri village and Akrotiri beach

### **Karterados Village: On the Road to Fira & All the Way Down to the Beach**

The traditional village of Karterados is built beside a stream in a ravine. Its existence is recorded back to the 17th century. The original dwellings are cave houses built deep into the rock face. During the 19th century, it was one of the large sea captain villages on the island. The name of the village comes from the Greek word 'karteri' = waiting point or ambush point, probably because ambushes were set to trap marauding pirates.



The village square has a traditional windmill and a memorial plaque to commemorate those who died in the Second World War. On the left hand side as you leave the square, the road curves sharply to the left, and there you will discover the 'Steps of Galaos'. Barely visible from the main road is a small neighbourhood of cobbled streets, Captains houses and cave houses built into the rock.

The shops are open all year round, since Karterados also has a considerable number of permanent residents.

Karterados is 15 minutes walk from Fira the capital. Centrally situated on the island, the area starts from the main road that leads to Fira and reaches all the way down to the beach and the east coast of Santorini.

*Distances: Fira town: 1 1/2 kilometers*

Services: Restaurants, cafes, 2 bakeries, fastly developing shopping area with a large supermarket on the main road, tennis club after the square

The bus stop is on the main road that goes to Fira, with connecting buses to the capital, Messaria, Megalochori, Emporio, Perissa & Perivolos, Exo Gonia and Kamari. Buses pass by for the Aiport and the Port. There is also a bus that goes through Karterados village taking you to the beach area

## Part of the Santorini Volcanic Cluster: Thirassia Island



Thirassia, although exactly opposite the Santorini caldera, is a complete contrast from Santorini. Quiet and undeveloped, it is almost untouched by tourism. The island of Thirassia comes under the jurisdiction of the Community of Oia.

**Architecture** Narrow pathways, colourfully painted blue, yellow and green bell towers and houses, as well as flowers that have been planted everywhere. Capital Manolas the capital is on the caldera opposite Santorini. There is a pathway from Manolas up to the monastery of Koimiseos from which you can see the whole island. Villages Potamos village is built beside a ravine. Most of the homes are cave house style, built into the rock. Agrilia is the largest and oldest village, a picturesque village with cave houses and wine canavas.

**Views** Volcano, hot springs, caldera, sunsets, Santorini Island, Aspronisi

**Churches:** There are 21 churches in total: Panagia the Giatrissa, Agios Dimitrios, Panagia of Eisodion, Panagia of Lagadiou (dates back to 1887), Agios Konstantinos (dates back to 1874), Agia Irini, Monastery of Koimiseos

**Services:** Community center, Heliport, irrigation system, ATMS

**Beaches:** Sandy beach in Riva harbour

**How to get there:** Day boat trips from Santorini. You can catch the boats from Athinios Port or Ammoudi Port in Oia. The boats stop at the main harbour of Riva and at Korfos. If you get off at Korfos, you will only be able to reach Manolas on foot or by donkey

## Santorini Volcano

Don't miss the chance to visit the youngest land in the Eastern Mediterranean!



### **Palea and Nea Kameni**

Santorini Volcano is one of the most significant volcanoes in the world history because it is considered responsible for the destruction of the Minoan Crete. Santorini is probably the most extraordinary island in the Aegean Sea. It is actually a Caldera (crater), an ancient rim of a still active volcano. The beautiful white houses are scattered along the cliffside. The volcano is

what made Santorini what it is today. It continues to rule the caldera and attracts the attention of all visitors.

Here is what happened in a few words:

The two small islands in the centre of the Santorini caldera, Palea Kameni and Nea Kameni, “the volcano” according to the locals, are the youngest volcanic lands in the Eastern Mediterranean, while. These two small islands are the result of the volcano’s most recent activity.

A huge eruption around 1650 BC, one of the largest in the last 10.000 years, followed by a collapse created the caldera. It was the same eruption that destroyed the Minoan civilization. Several eruptions later formed two small islands inside the caldera called Palea Kameni (Old Burnt Island) is less than 2.000 years old and Nea Kameni Nea

Kameni (Young Burnt Island) began to form only 440 years ago and its youngest lavas 60 years old as they are today.

Caldera- Created with the big VEI 6 Minoan eruption of about 1650 BC

Palea Kameni - Formed with several eruptions during 197 BC and 1458 AD

Nea Kameni- Formed by the eruption between 1707 AD and 1950 AD

What the locals call the volcano is Nea Kameni island. Anyone can visit both Nea Kameni and Palea Kameni with one of the daily cruises sold at all travel agencies on the island, step his foot upon the youngest part of Europe (Nea Kameni last part was formed in 1939 and 1950) and swim in the hot springs of Palea Kameni.

### **Hot Springs**

Hot springs is called a location at Palia Kameni (old burnt), one of the two volcanic islands in the middle of Santorini Caldera. The water there has a temperature of about 33 Celcius and it contains sulfur that is good for the skin. It is included into most caldera excursions and visitors wishing to swim in the hot springs have to swim from their boats into the muddy-looking bay. The boat can't pull up to land since it is too shallow so instead it anchors in deeper water and you jump off the boat into some cool water!

*A swim and a mud bath can be quite refreshing after a hot walk to the volcano!*

### **Caldera Trip**

This trip is an excellent choice for those who want to visit all important sights of Santorini in one day and spend a lot of time by the sea. Starting from the Old Port of Fira, you will have your first stop to the still active crater of Nea Kameni. After the visit in volcano, you will swim at the hot waters of Palea Kameni and then Thirassia is next with traditional fish taverns and the picturesque village of Manolas. Stop on Thirassia will be long enough for lunch, swim and visit Manolas. The trip ends with a stop in Oia. There you can decide whether you shall continue your trip by the ship to the port of Fira, or stay in Oia to visit the graphical village and enjoy the famous sunset. Then you can return by using the local bus.

### **Museums**

The Archeological Site of Akrotiri

The Prehistorical Museum of Santorini (Fira)

The Archeological Site of Ancient Thira (Kamari)

The Archeological Museum of Santorini (Fira)

The Folklore Museum of Santorini

The Maritime Museum of Santorini

Megaro Gyzi

- Xeste 3

- Sector B

- West House

- Complex Delta

- House of the Ladies

Traditional Village 'Vanishing Santorini'

Wine Museum

Bellonio Cultural Foundation

Art Space Wine Museum

Petros M. Nomikos Conference Centre

Museum of Ancient, Byzantine and Post Byzantine Musical Instruments

Archontiko Argyrou

## Archaeological Sites

Two great civilizations have left their mark on Santorini: one belongs to prehistoric times and is apparent in what has been coming to light in the excavations at Akrotiri. The other is a Greek civilization represented by the ancient city located on Mesa Vouno.

### Prehistoric Thera: Akrotiri

The ancient city at Akrotiri is not just the most important archaeological site on the island. But, thanks to its excellent state of preservation and the wealth of finds it has yielded, it is also the most important prehistoric settlement found anywhere in the Eastern Mediterranean. Akrotiri could be characterised as the prehistoric Pompeii of the Aegean.

The Akrotiri archaeological site is temporarily closed to the public due to technical works that are being carried out at the new environmental shelter that covers the site.

Ancient Thera: Mesa Vouno

The strategic position of the area attracted the Lacedaemonian colonisers of the island who founded their city utilizing the limestone rock of Mesa Vouno as a natural fortress. From the 9th century B.C. until the spread of Christianity, the city of Mesa Vouno was the only urban centre of the island.

### The Museum of Prehistoric Thera



The Museum of Prehistoric Thera, located in the island's capital Fira, is not an ordinary provincial museum. Its special contents, masterpieces of art in the prehistoric Aegean, such as the famous wall-paintings and the unique gold ibex figurine, place it on a par with the Acropolis Museum of Classical Greece (Parthenon sculptures) and the Vergina Museum of Northern Greece. The Archaeological Museum

In Fira, the island's capital, stands the Archeological Museum in which are housed finds representing the island's long history. The Museum contains collections of sculpture (ranging from the Archaic to the Roman period), inscriptions (ranging from the Archaic to the Roman period) and vases and clay figurines (dating from the Geometric to the Hellenistic periods).

### The Naval Museum

Located in Oia, the Naval Museum houses all kinds of displays featuring marine objects which trace the maritime history of the island, especially during the 19th century. Priceless objects of great ship owners, rich photographic material and a library, are all recording year by year the important role of Therans in the glorious history of the Greek Navy.



### **The Megaron Gyzi Museum**



It is housed in one of the few 17th century old family mansions with special architectural interest and beauty, in Fira. The Museum hosts six permanent exhibitions. In particular, an exhibition of authentic engravings with maps, landscapes and dresses of the Cycladic islands from the 15th until the 19th century, an exhibition of old Theraic public and private historical manuscripts from late 16th to early 19th century, a collection of art paintings with Santorini as theme by well-known Greek artists, a collection of old photographs of scenic Santorini from 1930 until 1956 and a collection of Santorini's strata.

### **The Wall Paintings of Thera Exhibition**

Three-dimensional life-size reproductions of the wall paintings that were found in Akrotiri are exhibited at the Petros M. Nomikos Conference Centre, Firostefani. The reproductions depict almost every wall painting of Akrotiri and offer a unique opportunity to be observed in their total.

### **The Folklore Museum**

The Folklore Museum is located in Kontochori, Fira, in a cave-house built in 1861. The museum displays workshops of carpenters, barrel makers, shoemakers and blacksmiths as well as an original old winery, a gallery with works of local current artists and document archives.

### **The Wine Museum**

The Wine Museum is located on the premises of the winery "Volcan Wines" which belongs to the Koutsoyannopoulos family, on the way to Kamari beach, presenting the history of wine on Santorini from 1660 up to date. It can be found in an old canava in Pyrgos and displays pictures from the life of the people of Santorini over the past years.

### **The Museum of Minerals & Fossils**

The museum is located in the central square of Perissa and exhibits minerals and fossils from Thera and other places in Greece and abroad.



### **Argiros Mansion**

It is one of the most notable and more recently built monuments of Santorini that combines the traditional Theraic architecture with neoclassic elements, offering you an authentic sight of the Greek cultural heritage. The furnishings and the household effects of the building, as well as its exceptional ceiling paintings, are preserved until today.

### **Museum of Musical Instruments**

The Museum of Ancient, Byzantine and Post Byzantine Musical Instruments is located in Oia and presents the collection of Mr. Christodoulos Halaris. The museum houses more than 80 instruments that were used in Greece from 2800 BC to the early 20th century, and were reconstructed with the help of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. The instruments are accompanied by the artistic evidence available for each of them, like vases, figurines, sculptures, etc.

## Art Space

The Art Space, in Exo Gonia, is a contemporary visual arts center housed in the restored undercover rooms and the canavas of an old 1861 winery. For the past decade, representative works of modern painting and sculpture, made by important Greek and foreign artists have been displayed in the Canava's traditional setting.

## The Icons and Relics Collection of Pyrgos

Aghia Triada that today houses the collection, used to be a catholic church of a small convent. The collection has icons with Cretan and local hagiographies, wooden sculptures and metal art works, pottery, embroideries and other items for ecclesiastic use dated mostly from the 17th and 18th century.

## Churches

As is the case throughout the Cyclades, Santorini is abundant with more than 250 churches of all shapes and sizes. The ecclesiastical architecture of Santorini is notable for its delicacy and plasticity. Both features stem from the free creative imagination of the local folk craftsmen.



### Panagia Episkopi

Near Mesa Gonia is the church of Panagia Episkopi, founded by the Byzantine Emperor Alexius I Comnenus. The marble templon of the church is a rare example of marble-carving combined with wax decoration. The wall paintings of the church date from around 1100.



### Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral

Located in Fira center overlooking the volcano and the sea. The original church was built in 1827. It was rebuilt after the earthquake of 1956, which levelled the church. The frescoes inside were painted by Christoforos Assimis, a local artist of exceptional talent.



### Prophet Elias Monastery

Above Pyrgos village, on the homonymous mountain stands the Monastery of Prophet Elias, which was founded at the beginning of the 18th century. Apart from the carved wooden templon, the monastery houses important old books, manuscripts and a collection of ethnographic material.

### Catholic Cathedral

This baroque church with its elegant bell tower was rebuilt after the earthquake of 1956. It is dedicated to St John the Baptist and is part of the Catholic Quarter in the center of Fira.

### Dominican Convert

Located in the Catholic Quarter, in the center of Fira, with 12 nuns from different countries. The convent church, named Rozaria, is a fine example of island architecture embellished with baroque features.

### **Agios Nikolaos Monastery**

The monastery lies between Firopstefani and Imerovigli. It was founded in 1651 and is dedicated to three saints, Panteleimon, Zoodohos Pigi, and Nicholas. The monastery houses a fine Byzantine icon of Saint Nicholas

### **Hiking**

The longest hike is Fira - Firopstefani - Imerovigli - Oia. It lasts almost 3 hours and you will enjoy the magnificent view of the Caldera. An alternative route is Imerovigli



- Firopstefani - Fira that lasts about 30 minutes. You'd better start the tour in the early-morning or evening hours in order to avoid the heat. Don't forget camera!

Another route worth hiking is from the crest of the Prophet Elias to the hill, where the Ancient Thera (Mesa Vouno) used to be, and from there to Perissa.

### **Sea excursions**



You can visit by boat the two small islands in the center of the Caldera, Palea and Nea Kameni, the "volcano" according to the local people. You can combine your excursion with a visit to Thirasia and Oia. The boats sail from the old port of Fira or from Athinios, depending on the route you will choose. You can always rent a boat and plan the route of your choice. Tip: don't miss the chance to watch the sunset onboard!

### **Coach tours**

Escorted coach tours are a great means to see Santorini in an easy and affordable way. There are all day long packages that include a guided tour to the Museum of Prehistoric Thera in Fira, a visit to the monastery of Prophet Elias and to a winery for wine tasting, as well as swimming and lunch in Perissa. The "traditional bus tour" includes a visit to Prophet Elias, Pyrgos, Panagia Episkopi, wine tasting and the sunset in Oia. Do a market research amongst the tourist offices in the island and choose the tour that better suits your preferences

## Beaches



Santorini's famous beaches are spread out mainly along the eastern and the south-eastern side of the island. Each beach has special characteristics, which make it unique and outstanding. The black shining pebbles, the unique land formations, the black, white and red sand, make up an unforgettable scenery. Most beaches are well organized offering the choice of lounging chairs, umbrellas, and various water sports.

### The Red Beach

Seaside experiences

Starting from the northern part of the island, the beaches on the coastline of Oia will instantly amaze, they have a wild and remote beauty. These beaches were frequented by locals, however recently they have been discovered by few tourists, mainly by families and couples, they can easily be passed by since they cannot be seen from the main road. Coming from Oia, one will first come upon the beach of Baxedes, then follows the beach of Koloumbos and lastly we come upon Pori a small fisherman's port.



### Kamari

In the south-eastern part of the island one will find the beaches of Monolithos, Avis and Kamari. They are organized beaches, mainly preferred by families with small children. Numerous hotels, restaurants, tavernas and small shops are located along the beaches, especially in Kamari. Water sports are offered at the

beach of Avis, which attracts younger people.

We continue to the beach of Perissa and Perivolos two of the most famous beaches of Santorini. These two beaches together form the longest **black-sanded** beach on the island. Here one will find also a variety of tavernas and restaurants as well as hotels. Finally one reaches the most southern beaches of the island. Vlychada with its beautiful carved mountain, the "moonscape" landscape, sculptured by the wind through the years. The Red beach with its unique vertical cliffs, the **White beach**, which can be reached only by boat, and the unspoilt beach of Mesa Pigadia form the epilogue of an unrevealing landscape, which has been transformed through the ages.



Perivolos



Vlychada



## Santorini Beaches on the North Coast:

### Oia

The beaches in the northern part of Santorini are harder to find and have a distinctive beauty. In the past they were known and frequented only by local residents. In recent days they have also been discovered by visitors to the island

### Katharos Beach

Katharos beach can be found by driving towards Ammoudi Port. It is quiet, with black pebbles & stones. An unusual feature are the two rocks that stand in the middle. It will take you about 3 to 5 minutes to walk to the beach from the parking place

### Ammoudi Port



Ammoudi port can be reached by car (you have to circle round the bottom road of Oia village), by walking down the 235 steps, or by catching a ride on the back of a mule. It is possible to swim in the harbour, but the best place is to go is along the path past the taverns on the waterfront, where you will find an excellent place for diving off the rocks. Recommended for strong swimmers.



### Armeni Harbour

Armeni has a small beach. There are 2 ways to get there. You can either go on foot or by mule and descend 291 steps, or opt for the easier solution which is to get a ride in one of the small boats leaving from Ammoudi port. There is a small tavern for quiet meals. Between Ammoudi and Armeni is 'Armenaki'. Climbing down is hard work. You can

swim, but for the moment there are no shops or restaurants



## **Santorini Beaches on the North East Coast:**



### **Oia - Baxedes and Paradisos Beach**

Baxedes - Paradisos Beach is a short drive from Oia. If you haven't already rented a car, you can always catch the bus from Oia bus depot. The beach is recommended for families with children since the waters are shallow, (unusual for Santorini), plus there are several restaurants and taverns, a beach canteen, as well as sun beds and umbrellas on hire.

There is also a parking area



### **Pori Beach (Imerovigli east coast)**

Pori is famous for its beaches, vineyards, sweeping views of the bay, tranquility & beauty. Pori has small harbour with fishing boats.

The beach is small, quiet and undisturbed with some nice fish taverns, one right on the beach and the other just above with views of the bay. On the hillside are a series of traditional windmills.

Recommended for strong swimmers.



### **Koloumbo Beach**

Koloumbo until present day is one of the more unspoiled beaches on the island. It is not organized so take the essentials with you (water, sandwiches etc).

If you want to get away from the up-market beach scene in other areas, and opt for peace and quiet, Koloumbo is the place to go.

Don't get put off by the walk from the nearest parking place, it is worth the effort.

## Santorini Beaches on the East Coast :

### Karterados Beach

If you drive through the village of Karterados all the way down to the coastline you will come to Karterados beach. There is long stretch of black sand with a couple of good fish taverns. The beach is not organized. A dirt road runs parallel to the beach, backed by tall cliffs that takes you all the way to Monolithos



### Monolithos Beach

Monolithos is a long stretch of quiet beach with shallow waters making it good for families. It is organized in places with beach volley, basketball, football and a playground that are all part of the Monolithos scene.

A life guard is on duty. You will find fish restaurant, traditional taverns, changing rooms, showers and public toilets

### Avis Beach

You can find the fine black pebbled beach below Exo Gonia. Although quiet, Avis beach offers a couple of places to eat or have a coffee and a snack. There are umbrellas & sun beds and a mini market.



### Xiropigado Beach

Xiropigado beach is the first beach you arrive at when driving along the east coast of Santorini. There is a drivable dirt road leading to the beach.

### Vourvoulos Beach

Vourvoulos has a little harbour, umbrellas, changing rooms and a restaurant. The road is lined with beech trees.

### Kanakari Beach

Kanakari Beach is named after the owner of the abandoned tomato paste factory.

### Exo Gialos Beach.

Exo Gialos beach is quiet and relaxing with black sand and pebbles. An interesting feature are the storage areas, known as 'syrmata', built into or under the volcanic rock. They are used for housing boats during the winter months. The

beach is organized and one can rent sunbeds and umbrellas. There is also a small canteen for snacks.

## Santorini Beaches on the South East Coast:

### Kamari Beach



Kamari is a cosmopolitan beach resort that has been awarded the Blue Flag. The long stretch of beach lies under the impressive mountain of Mesa Vouno and the settlement of Ancient Thira. The water is deep and blue, the sand is black and there is a lifeguard on duty. There is a long paved promenade for strolling that runs parallel to the beach right across the bay. This is closed off to traffic during the summer months.

Kamari offers a wealth of cafes, bars, restaurants, shops and supermarkets, as well as a lively nightlife. The beach is organized, with sunbeds, umbrellas, water sports and diving

Blue Flag Award



### Perissa & Perivolos - Agios Georgios Beach

This area offers is the longest stretch of beach on the island. There are no boundaries or markers to distinguish where one beach finishes and the other starts. The beaches are very popular, with a sandy sea bottom for the most part, although here and there one will find pebbles and submerged rock.

Perissa beach has been awarded the coveted Blue Flag and has 2 diving centers.

Both Perissa and Perivolos are well organized with life guards, sunbeds, umbrellas, restaurants, taverns, cafes, bars, supermarkets, showers, public toilets and a playground.

Perivolos in particular is a more up-market clubbing scene, an extension of Santorini's nightlife by day, with beach bars playing club music, DJ guest appearances, volley ball tournaments and special events.

There are lots of water sports to choose from such as jet ski, parasailing, wind surfing etc.

Blue Flag Award





## Santorini Beaches on the South Coast:



### **Vlichada Beach**

Vlichada combines a dark sanded beach with a marina for mooring private yachts. Vlichada is also home to Santorini's Sailing & Yachting Center.

The landscape has been manipulated by salt and winds over the years, with beach cliffs resembling the surface of the moon. Carved tombs were found in the limestone rock dating back to Hellenistic times. The beach is organized, with umbrellas, sunbeds and a canteen

### **Almyra Beach**

Almyra (the name implies sea salt) lies near to Vlichada. The beach is quiet and scenic with 'moon cliffs'. It is rather hard to reach by car

## Santorini Beaches on the South West Coast:



### **Akrotiri Caldera Beach**

Akrotiri is famous for the lighthouse, the sunsets and the staggering views.

You can find the beach below the Caldera by turning off before you reach the center of Akrotiri village. The beach is small and quiet, with deep cool waters, black sand with fantastic views of the volcano and the whole island. Akrotiri has wonderful taverns

### **Gialos Beach**

There is another beach in the area that also offers views of the Volcano and Caldera, Gialos beach, but it is really hard to get to. Once you navigate the half kilometer track, you will arrive at a beach with red rocks and black pebbles.

A jeep is recommended.



### **Red Beach - 'Kokkini Paralia'**

Red Beach 'Kokkini Paralia' was christened because of the steep red rock faced cliffs backing the beach.

You have to park and walk for a few minutes to arrive at the beach.



### **White Beach - 'Aspri Paralia'**

Further west you will come upon a white pebbled beach, the 'Aspri Paralia'. There are two ways to get to the beach, by boat or on foot.

### **Kambia Beach**

If you go towards the lighthouse, you will find a signpost pointing to a dirt road and of course Kambia beach. The beach has large pebbles and some umbrellas.

### **Mesa Pigadia Beach**

Mesa Pigadia can be approached by following the dirt road going towards the lighthouse. There a couple of caves, very unusual rock formations and crystal clear water.

## **Entertainment**

Whatever entertainment means to you, it is certain that in Santorini you will find what you are looking for. The island provides many choices for all tastes, enabling you to have both a cosmopolitan as well as an intense life, like in no other place in the world.



*A wide variety of options for day and night!*

Fira is the centre of the island as far as nightlife is concerned, offering a wide range of choices for every age and taste. Cocktail bars with a view to the fascinating Caldera are ideal to begin your night in a more relaxed way.

The heart of entertainment is in Erythrou Stavrou street, also called the bar street, where bars and clubs will lead you to a wild party with mainstream, pop, rock, R&B and of course Greek music sounds. Continue by following the crowd to the biggest clubs of the island and have fun until the morning comes! As time passes, Greek hits prevail, the high spirits are at the peak, while the people are dancing on the tables and bars, giving to the tourists a first taste of what Greek entertainment means.

If you wish to enjoy your drink in a more relaxed environment, away from the crowded clubs, you should prefer the Caldera's side. There you will find less crowded places with interesting decoration and a breathtaking view, for unique moments of relaxation and chat. For the romantic ones and those who avoid intense entertainment,



Oia is another good choice. There you will find small bars with lounge music, comfortable couches and view to the Caldera in order to have a memorable evening.

Alternative ways of entertainment are the groups that from time to time play live music, including soul, funk and ethnic sounds, in many entertainment centers of the island. Moreover, famous DJs from all over the world are hosted in Santorini for limited appearances stirring up the

audience. If you are lucky, you may also hit upon some of the special nights organized by big entertainment centers of the island, with live Greek music.

Santorini may never sleep at nights, but even during the daylight the high spirits are unabated. At the beach bars in Perivolos, Perissa and Kamari you can enjoy cool cocktails accompanied by loud music sounds, which easily create a party atmosphere



that lasts until the sunset. For those of you who can't leave the beautiful beaches at night, in Kamari and Perissa there are bars next to the sea where you can either chill out or dance and party until the morning comes.

*Whatever is your mood, it is certain that Santorini's night life will thrill you!*

## Shopping

Even if you are not a keen consumer, the shop windows in Santorini will definitely catch your attention.



*A wonderland of shopping opportunities!*

Fira is the central market of the island, with its crowded alleys being full of shops that satisfy even the most fastidious tastes. In Fira you will find the gold street, or as the real name is Ypapantis street, that is considered one of the biggest gold markets in Greece. In the shops of gold street you will find the latest design jewelry collections of famous Greek and foreign houses, and you will come up with ideas for presents both for yourself and for your beloved ones. In Fira you can find many shops with handmade jewelry made of silver and other precious materials, in definitely more budget prices. In every shopping street of the island's capital, you will find the latest trends of international fashion as far as clothes, shoes and accessories is concerned, coming from great fashion houses. In the center of Fira there is also a big cosmetics store offering a wide variety of perfumes and sun creams.



It would be an omission not to mention the art-loving side of Santorini's market, since in Fira, as well as in the rest of the island, there are numerous shops that have works of art made by great artists. In the "Fabrica" shopping center in Fira you will find the gallery of the famous artist Yiorgos Kypris, with modern sculptures made of glass and metal, as well as unique handmade lawyerly. In the same shopping center you can also buy paintings by the Theran artist Christoforos Asimis. Besides Fira, creations of plastic art are being sold in other areas of the island. In Messaria, you will find marble sculptures by Grigoris Kouskouris. At the crossroad to Akrotiri and in Firotstefani you can find pottery by Andreas Makaris and Andreas Alifragis respectively; and, in a traditional building of the 18th century in Megalochori works of art by Ioanna Babaris.



The market of Oia is equally important, even though less shiny and more ethnic compared to that of Fira. In the picturesque little shops of the village you may find objects and works of art coming from different cultures; you won't be indifferent to these. You can stop at Dimitris Koliousis' religious paintings workshop and at the art galleries of Vassilis Kyrkos and Stavros Galanopoulos along Oia's main pedestrian street. Finally, in Finikia you may find paintings by Frederica Nomikou.

Furthermore, in Oia, as well as in every part of the island, you can buy textiles from the traditional weaving mill and all kinds of souvenirs, which will remind you of your visit to Santorini.

## Wineries

Since vineyards and wine play the first role for many years in Santorini, it is worth spending some of your time in order to visit some, if not all the wineries that run in the island today; or maybe the vineyards that are spread along the slopes and the lowlands of Santorini. Make a tour of the wineries (most of them offer an organized tour), discover the history of wine on the island and taste the exceptional wines produced.

The cultivation of vine in Santorini goes back 3.500 years ago. Findings from the excavations of the prehistoric town of Akrotiri show that vine cultivation, wine making and wine trade were the habitants' important activities...



### Wineries

Sigalas Winery

Boutari Winery of Santorini

Canava Roussos

Hatzidakis Winery

Domaine Sigalas

Gavalas Winery

Santo Wines

Koutsoyannopoulos Winery-Volcan Wines

Estate Argyros

Gaia Wines

Antonis Argyros Winery - Art Space

### Santorini Vineyard



Indications tell us that viticulture and vine processes on the island of Santorini have a history of 3500 years although historical evidence commenced from 1700 B.C. in the form of pips that were found during excavations at Akrotiri and also pot engravings depicting grapes.



The Santorini vineyard is therefore extremely old and its uniqueness can be found in the fact that it is one of the very few vineyards worldwide that has not been affected by vine louse and has, therefore, not been planted with American characteristics, as was the case all over the world. Over the years, natural renewal has taken place and so age no longer applies to the vines. Bearing in mind that as long as the vine grows larger, its produce decreases whilst

the quality of its grapes increases, it becomes clear that we are dealing with a unique product.

Apart from this, the factor that makes Santorini so different giving the varieties their unique character is, together with the microclimate (limited rainfall), the porous terrain of the island which is rich in pumice stone and lava.

*A journey to the island of wine!*

Before you begin your tour of the wineries in Santorini, it would be a good idea to know some things about ventema and canava, two concepts that are directly related to the vinification tradition of the island.

## **Sigalas Winery**

*A journey into feelings!*

Domaine Sigalas was founded in 1991 by Paris Sigalas, Christos Markozane and Yiannis Toundas. Initially, Sigalas made his wine at the converted Sigalas family home. In 1998 a new vinification, bottling and aging unit was built in a privately owned area of beautiful Oia, on the northern part of Santorini in Baxedes area.

***The Sigalas Estate produces excellent wines of a very high quality!***

Here, the most vibrant and variety of the Mediterranean zone, the Santorini's **Assyrtiko** as well as the **Aidani**, **Athiri**, **Mandilaria** and the **Mavrotragano** are put to the best use possible, and with the proper respect to their organoleptic characteristics, the quality wines are produced which receive acclaim in international competitions, both in Greece and abroad.

The winery is open to the public from April to October, seven days a week from 11.00am -7.00 pm. A guided tour of the winery is completed with wine tasting served with local traditional snacks (mezedes) of local cheese, double baked barley rusks dipped in olive oil and fresh tomatoes.





Time your visit just right and you could be admiring the spectacular sunset view from the Sigalas winery patio enjoying the finest wines Santorini produces.

### Ventema



For Santorini, ventema means singing, dancing, and merrymaking in all over the island. Before the dawn, the big bell of Panagia church rung 36 times giving signal to the harvesters to stream

into the plains and collect the grapes. After harvesting the grapes, musicians arrived at the canavas and excited everyone, while at the same time men with their trousers rolled up and their feet cleaned up got into the wine-press. The day the wine pressing was completed, it was the biggest festival and an excuse for a great party. It is said that whoever experienced ventema in the old days, will never forget it.

### Canava

In the old days, canava was an integral part of every captain's house. Canavas had a specific architecture and various agricultural activities, especially wine making, were performed there. Vine harvesting took place in the morning and the grapes were brought to the canava in order to obtain a stable temperature; afterwards they were made into wine. The grapes were put inside the canava, in the dark wine-press, where the must was running into the wring that was also built under cover. The same process applies for the production of red as well as white wine. Finally, the wine was transferred directly into the "amphoras" (barrels), through the use of wooden buckets. The first part of the canava is open and shorter. It has two windows, one facing the North and the other facing the South, in order for the place to be ventilated from strong odours and exhalations.

On the column on your left you will find information about Santorini's wineries. After finishing your visits, don't forget to buy your favourite wines from the wineries' shops or the wine stores of the island!



## Santorini food - from and for Gods!



Traditional Santorini food is mainly based on locally grown products. The combination of the highly fertile volcanic soil, plenty of sunshine, and a high local humidity packs the produce with extraordinarily tasteful flavors.

Some of the more important are grapes, cherry tomatoes, fava lentils, white eggplant and wild capers.

By far the most common produce on the island is the grape, which is almost exclusively used for winemaking. You cannot avoid seeing the typical grapevine fields anytime you venture outside the villages.



### Cherry tomatoes

Probably the best known of the local produce, besides grapes for winemaking, is the cherry tomato.

The Santorini cherry tomato gets its unique character and taste from a hard and thick skin and its high sugar content.

For hundreds of years the cherry tomato was the leading agricultural product with up to as many as 13 factories operating simultaneously in the 1950's.

Today, more economically rewarding growing of grapes for winemaking has almost completely superseded production of those delicious cherry tomatoes.

Don't fret though. There is still enough grown around the island to satisfy locals and visitors needs.

You can get local cherry tomatoes at most restaurants or buy them in shops all across the island.



### Fava

The most important local produce after grapes and cherry tomatoes is fava. It is a yellow lentil, although often erroneously referred to as fava bean.

The name confusion has a historical origin as the ancient Santorini fava dish was made from fava beans (also known as 'broad beans'), a different legume altogether.

Santorini yellow lentil fava has become famous due to its distinctive taste compared to fava from other regions, again owing to the special soil and microclimate of the island. You may find fava to be more expensive than what you would expect for a simple lentil. This is due to its limited production on the island.

Fava can be prepared in various ways, and for the locals it really is a basic food, much like pasta, rice or potatoes. This dish has always represented the main food for all islanders and it is cooked differently according to the season. In the summer it is

cooked with a red sauce and capers; in the winter, it is pan-fried with 'kabourma' (smoked pork)

When out at a restaurant and looking for that genuine Santorini food experience, try ordering the fava dip, a smooth paste of boiled fava lentils, onion and olive oil. Delicious!



#### **White eggplant**

Here's another delicious Santorini food specialty that you will have a hard time finding anywhere else. Sometimes referred to as 'the apple of love', because of its suggested effect as an aphrodisiac, the Santorini white eggplant has a sweet and juicy character.

Don't miss out on the fried white eggplant while you're here.



#### **Wild capers**

Wild caper shrubs grow in volcanic ash soil on the steep cliffsides of Santorini and are famous for their excellent quality of both fruits and leaves. The Greeks are actually quite unique in that they harvest not only the fruit, but also the caper leaves.

The caper leaves are either pickled or boiled and used as a tasty addition to salads and fish dishes.

#### **Chloro**

The island of Santorini also produces a cheese made from goat's milk which is called "chloro". Due to the volcanic past of the island, Santorini also sales products related to the lava such as the pumice stone

As one of the most popular islands in Greece, Santorini proposes a great variety of restaurants of taverns. The best advice we can give concerning the Greek food is to stay away from the commercial restaurants which proposes a more european cuisine and try to find a traditional family tavern where the food is of better quality and much cheaper. In Santorini, the food specialties is the "Tomatokeftedes", a sort of tomatoes balls.

## Dream come true ... Weddings in Santorini

.....because you can meet there all treasures of the world!



If you imagine a dreamy wedding ceremony that you will remember for the rest of your life, then Santorini is the right destination. The wild beauty, snow white, red, black sand, the fascinating Caldera, the gold sunset and the very good weather conditions are some the elements that have made Santorini one of the most ideal wedding destinations worldwide.



### **Already married?**

Then Santorini may inspire you to re-live your special day by renewing your love vows. Making new vows or using the original vows you had on your wedding day, can be a very romantic way to strengthen the love, respect and devotion you have for one another.



### *Live your dream wedding in Santorini!*

You can choose the location depending on the type of ceremony you prefer. Besides, the romantic and famous island of Santorini provides such a great variety of choices to satisfy all kinds of tastes.

The ceremony can be held in almost any location of your choice, such as one of the famous restaurants, wineries, old factories, private museums, sailboats, chapel yards, beaches, and old mansions.



### **Orthodox weddings**

The Orthodox ceremony in Santorini can be held at the Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, located in the center of Fira (the island's capital) overlooking the volcano and the sea, or in another one of the Orthodox churches located in one of the various picturesque traditional villages around the island.

### **Catholic weddings**

The Catholic ceremony in Santorini is held at the Catholic Cathedral, a baroque church with an elegant bell tower. The Cathedral is dedicated to St John the Baptist and is part of the Catholic Quarter in the center of Fira.

## Santorini Cable Car in Fira

### Did You Know?

.. that the cable car travels up the path and in three minutes time you're comfortably in the beautiful town of Fira, Santorini's capital, which is at the altitude of 220 meters.

## How to reach

You look forward to setting off to Santorini? Sure you do! Check bellow your options for getting to the island.

### By plane

Santorini can be reached from most international airports via Athens. The flying time from Athens to Santorini is approximately 40 minutes.

Nearly all international scheduled flights arriving in Athens allow adequate time for making the connecting flight to Santorini. Numerous charter flights from different European Cities fly directly to the island during the summer period. During the same period Santorini is also connected with flights to and from Thessaloniki.

### Santorini Airport - Airlines

Regular flights from Athens city (Athens Airport) by Olympic Airways, Aegean Airlines and Air Sea Lines (a new seaplane airline). Flight duration from Athens to Santorini is about 30 minutes. During summer, Sky Express connects Santorini with other popular islands such as Rhodes (Rhodes Diagoras airport), Heraklion crete (Heraklion Nikos Kazantzakis airport) and Mykonos. Seasonal domestic flights are also operated from Thessaloniki (Thessaloniki airport).

From May till October many charter airlines fly directly to Santorini airport from many European cities.

Air Berlin flies from Berlin Tegel (TXL), Dusseldorf (DUS) , Hamburg (HAM), Hannover (HAJ), Nuremberg (NUE), Vienna (VIE) and Zurich (ZRH)

EasyJet flies from London Gatwick (LGW) and Milan Malpensa (MXP)

Edelweiss Air flies from Zurich (ZRH)

Germanwings flies from Cologne / Bonn (CGN), Munich (MUC) and Stuttgart (STR)

Condor flies from Dusseldorf (DUS), Stuttgart (STR), Frankfurt (FRA), Munich (MUC), Hamburg (HAM);

Meridiana flies from Milan Malpensa (MXP)

Thomas Cook and Jetairfly fly from Brussels (BRU)

Transavia flies from Amsterdam (AMS).

Flights to Santorini from Athens Airport "Eleftherios Venizelos" and "Macedonia"

Athens Airport "Eleftherios Venizelos": Tel.+30 210 353-1000

Olympic Air Athens: Tel. +30 210 355-0500 or 801-801-0101

Aegean Airlines Athens: Tel. +30 210 626-1000 or 801-11-20000

Macedonia" Thessaloniki Airport: Tel. +30 2310 473-212

Aegean Airlines Thessaloniki: Tel. +30 2310 280-050

### AEGEAN FLIGHTS / WINTER

FROM ATHENS (ATH) TO SANTORINI (JTR)

TO SANTORINI (JTR)

A3-354 10:00 10:50 1 - - - - 6 - 02/11-27/03 - A3

A3-354 11:00 11:45 - 2 3 4 5 - 7 25/10-27/03 - A3

A3-354 12:35 13:25 1 - - - - 6 - 26/10-31/10 - A3



FROM SANTORINI (JTR) TO ATHENS (ATH)  
TO ATHENS (ATH)  
A3-355 11:20 12:10 1 - - - - 6 - 02/11-27/03 - A3  
A3-355 12:30 13:15 - 2 3 4 5 - 7 25/10-27/03 - A3  
A3-355 13:55 14:45 1 - - - - 6 - 26/10-31/10 - A3

**By ferry boat**

Another way to reach the island is by a regular ferry boat service from the port of Piraeus, Thessaloniki or Crete and almost all the Cycladic islands. The boat trip takes approximately 5 - 9 hours depending on the ferry and the ports of call.

Daily high speed boats are also available only during the summer period leaving from the port of Piraeus and from numerous other Cycladic islands and Crete. The trip lasts about 4 - 5 hours

*A lot of choices to choose from...*