



# Free & Easy Traveler - Travel Prep Guide

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## 20 Days in Greece: Beaches Beyond Beautiful

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## The Basics

Duration: 20 Days

Start & Finish: Athens, Greece

Adventure Type: Backpackers (age 18 to 27)

Trip Size: 15 – 22 (+2 group leaders)



## Epic Experiences

### **Included in the Price**

- Visit the Parthenon
- Tour Acropolis
- Hike to the top of the ancient city of Santorini
- Bus tour; visit Red Volcanic Rock beach, grab photos at the highest point of Santorini, wine tasting at a local vineyard and watch sunset in Oia
- 1-day Road trip on Rhodes Island
- Santorini volcanic Island sunset trip (visit 3 islands in the famous Santorini Caldera)
- Party in Ios
- Athens walking tour
- Hike to a waterfall and through caves to an old Pirate booty hold
- Palace of Knossos tour

### **Optional Activities**

- Volcano and Sunset Boat Trip
- Ancient City of Hierapolis Hike and Viewpoint
- Wine Museum w/ Tasting
- Rent an ATV
- Jet Boat Snorkel and Booze Cruise
- Cliff Jumping
- Booze Cruise

## Trip Details

### **What's included?**

- All Taxes (GST, PST, Airport tax)
- Return international flights and airport transfers\*\*\*
- Accommodations for your 20-day Free & Easy experience
- Group travel between destinations
- 2 knowledgeable and fun Free & Easy leaders
- Free and Easy Travel Guidebook
- 15 years of trip leading experience

\*\*\*Land Only prices do not include your international flight, airport taxes or transfers

### **What isn't included?**

- All meals and drinks (except those mentioned above)
- Activities outside of the ones listed above
- Any Visa or Visa fees

### **Travel Budget (Canadian \$)**

Your personal spending on your Greece the trip will include your food, drinks, shopping, entertainment and any activities outside of those included your FNEZ adventure.

For the entirety of our 20 Day Greece Trip -- "Beaches Beyond Beautiful", we would recommend a budget of \$800 - \$1300. Any travel budget will fluctuate between personalities, so ask yourself: "What type of traveller are you?"

### **The Hippie**

Brings about \$800-\$1000 for the 20 days. Eats local food, bargains well at the market, finds good prices on drinks and picks, and chooses their optional activities wisely! Often likely to continue travelling after their FNEZ trip is complete.

### **The Backpacker**

\$1000-\$1200 spending money. A bit more frivolous, but is aware of their budget. Takes in most activities they are interested in, without going too extravagant. Likes to party, but always looking for a good deal.

### **The Rock Star**

\$1200 - \$1500: Not too worried about their budget, they'll do almost everything, including lavish amounts of shopping and partying often. There won't be too much holding them back from activities, as this is their trip and don't want to let anything pass them by.

To help you work out your own budget, here are some examples of prices in Greece.

### **Food and Drink**

Beer (1L): \$2-\$4.50

Wine (1L): \$3-\$7

Street Food: \$2-\$6

Restaurant Meal: \$6-\$15

Kebab: \$6

### **Entertainment & Activities:**

Ancient City of Hierapolis Hike and Viewpoint: \$4

Wine Museum w/ Tasting: \$7

ATV Rental: \$22

Jet Boat Snorkel and Booze Cruise w/ Cliff Jumping: \$44

Booze Cruise boat trip: \$31

## **Trip Leaders**

Every Free & Easy trip is accompanied by at least two leaders. We like to call them “Leaders” and not “Guides” because they are essentially your well traveled, experienced friends! We hire out guides when the situations occurs (a temple for example) who know all the history, and speaks the language of the locals. Our Leaders main goals are to ensure everyone on the trip is having the best time possible. The leaders will arrange the group transportation between destinations, sort out rooms at the accommodations, plan any group meals or activities and assist in any additional activities that anyone may wish to take part in, and ultimately show you the best that each destination has to offer. They know the trip locations well, and have great relationships with all our contacts in each destination. Not to mention they are all extremely fun and easy going people who continue to showcase the essence of what makes us Free & Easy!

## **Flying to Greece**

Upon registration you can chose between booking your own flights or requesting Free & Easy to book flights for you.

### **If you book flights with Free & Easy:**

- A flight itinerary will be emailed to you approximately 2 – 3 months before your trip’s departure. (Assuming you have paid enough money on your account)
- One or both of your leaders will be at the airport in Athens to pick you up and arrange transport back to the guesthouse.
- Transportation will be arranged for you to get from the guesthouse at the end of the trip to get to the airport to catch your flight.
- You can also ask for any custom flights, and our flight team will give you a price quote for booking this for you.

### **If you don’t book flights with Free & Easy:**

- You will contacted with information on meeting up with your group for the start of the trip in Athens.

## **Meals**

The ability to experience local food, whether it’s from a street vendor, a home stay, or a restaurant, is a huge part of travelling. You’ll be able to ask your guides for great options to check out at every destination we go, but for the most part, the journey finding the food, tends to be just as good as the food itself! There will be times that meals will be provided for you, if you have any allergies or food preferences, i.e. vegetarian, please let your guides know!

## **Allergies!**

For the most part allergies in Greece wouldn’t be much different than at home. Come prepared! Bring Antihistamines for mild allergies and keep an Epipen on hand if your

allergies are severe. You can also check out [Killer Peanut](#) to get any allergy you're worried about translated into Greek.

### **Types of Transportation on this trip**

- Day Ferries: Large boats with restaurants, coffee shops and are rarely more than 2 hours.
- Night Ferries: We sleep in Private rooms of 4 people with each person in their own bed, they are very comfortable and have restaurants, bars, and in some cases pools.
- Bus or coach transports: In Santorini and Crete we use large bus transports no longer than 2 hours. We use them for day tours and travel days.
- Vans: We use vans in Rhodes for a road trip day around the island, comfortable and capable for beach hopping.

### **Accommodations**

We have a wide range of accommodations on this trip from beautiful hostels to hotels to guest houses. We have chosen each of our accommodations based on quality, location, and relationships with the establishments. Plus there is so much to do on this trip you won't be spending much time in your room anyway!

All our accommodations are based on at least two-person occupancy. If you wish to have your own room you can pay an additional fee in order to do so. Please contact [travel@fnez.com](mailto:travel@fnez.com) before your trip begins if you are interested.

### **Solo Travelers:**

Lots of solo travelers come on our trips and it's a great way to step outside your comfort zone and make lots of new friends. Since all our accommodation is based on at least two-person occupancy you will be rooming with other members of the same sex in your group.

### **Packing Suggestions:**

The shopping is cheap, so you may want to only pack half of your backpack, leaving room to buy new stuff once you arrive. Clothing is very cheap, and you can always find a good variety of stuff that is ideal for the diverse climate. Most people end up regretting how much they packed when they realize how easily they could have bought new clothes once they arrived.

It is good to properly prepare supplies for the trip, but don't stress out too much about having everything you think you might need because chances are that you will be able to find whatever it is during your trip.

In general, you want to avoid packing things that you really don't need to have. There are definitely certain luxuries that are good to have, but you don't want to lug something around for 20 days unless you are going to use it. Also, consider that the weight of your

bag will likely be INCREASING throughout the trip, and having a lighter backpack simplifies life immensely. Honestly, look at what you have and cut it in half and you're probably good to go. You're gonna buy lots of new stuff..

Here's some ideas for what you might want to pack:

### **Travel Essentials**

- Passport (digital and hard copies)
- Travel insurance (digital and hard copies)
- Airline tickets (digital and hard copies)
- Credit or debit card
- Any entry visas, additional passport photos or vaccination certificates required
- Cover for backpack/ziplock bags for travel essentials

### **Electronics/Entertainment**

- Alarm clock
- Headlamp
- iPods, tablets
- Books, eReaders
- Camera (bring a few memory cards)
- Speakers
- All chargers

### **Clothing**

- Swim wear
- Walking shoes/sport sandals
- Shorts
- Church attire (something to cover your knees and your shoulders)
- Shirts/T-shirts
- Long sleeve shirt
- Pants
- Underwear
- Sarong (travel towel)

### **First-aid kit**

- All can be purchased in Greece

### **Toiletries**

- Girls bring feminine hygiene products as they can be hard to find.

### **Laundry**

Laundry facilities are offered by some of the places we stay. Ask your leaders to point out the best places to get laundry done. There will be times when there are no laundry facilities, however your guides will tell you this in advance.

## Travel Essentials

There is nothing more important than your health and safety so make sure you read this carefully!

### **Passports**

Everyone **MUST** have a passport for international travel. If you already have a passport, double check to make sure that it is still valid for at least 6 months from the return date of your trip. If it is not valid for a full 6 months from the day you plan on returning to your passport issuing country, you'll have to apply for a new passport before you leave.

The application process for getting a passport may seem simple, but for most people it ends up taking longer than it first appears. Sometimes it can take a few weeks to complete the entire process, so we definitely recommend not leaving it to the last minute.

### **Insurance**

Everyone **MUST** have Travel Medical Insurance of some kind and bring proof with you for this trip. You might not need to purchase a medical insurance policy though because you may already be covered through some other way:

- Your parent's work health plan.
- With a credit card.
- Through a student or work health plan.
- Through private insurance.

While you are away traveling with us, if you decide to extend your plane ticket, you also have the ability to purchase an extension to your insurance policy. **PLEASE NOTE:** It is your own responsibility to be making any extension to your insurance so you cannot expect this will automatically happen when you extend your plane ticket.

If you need to extend your TIC insurance please call 1-800-670-4426

Please Note: At this time we only provide Travel Medical Insurance for those with valid Canadian Citizenship.

### **Immunizations**

There are no immunizations 'required' for entry into Greece. For your own safety, there are some shots that are always recommended for travel to the Mediterranean.

- Hepatitis A.
- Hepatitis B.
- Tetanus.



- Up to date on ordinary Flu shots.

We also want to warn you that sometimes travel clinics are over cautious to the extreme and try to sell you everything under the sun. If you want a second opinion about something, do some more research online or contact us. Since we are not medical professionals we urge you to do your own research and make your own informed decision.

### **Banking & Money**

The easiest way of getting and carrying your money is to simply use the bank machines in the country you are travelling. You can use your regular bank card, using your regular pin number, and the money will come out in the local currency (You need to make sure that you have “cirrus” or “plus” written on the back of your card). At nearly every destination on our trips, you’ll have easy access to a bank machine. This also means you won’t have to get local currency before you leave. Once you arrive, you can just use a bank machine right there at the airport.

Every time you need to make a transaction your account will be charged approx. \$5 fee from your bank and then a possible fee from the local bank. It can get a bit pricey if you’re making withdrawals every few days—so it makes more sense to take out a large sum and then just watch your spending! Although theft does happen sometimes we have found that it is quite rare. So we, ourselves, practice this method.

Be aware that if you are pulling money out on your credit card that this counts as a “cash advance” and you will immediately be charged interest on this amount and not have a grace period or get reward points like you typically would with other credit card purchases. Additionally, you will still be charged those \$5 fees from your bank and the local bank. With this in mind the best option is always to pull out money using your debit card instead of your credit card.

Another suggestion we would like to reinforce is that we highly recommend that you have online banking during the trip. It allows you to check your balances, transfer money, and monitor your transactions from any internet café. In case of any issue with your bank card, online banking always simplifies a situation since you can easily transfer money to another traveler in your group who could then pull out money for you.

Another little helpful hint is signing over power of attorney to someone you trust (i.e., a parent). This means that they can have access to your accounts while you are away. This can help if you lose your bankcard, or there is a problem with it while overseas. It is also useful if you need someone to pay your bills, or make money transfers while you are away.

## **Greece Visas**

Most countries are given a Visa on arrival. Your travel visa is free and will be issued to you on entry into Greece and is valid for 90 days (applies to Canada, Australia, United Kingdom and the United States).

You must have 6 months validity on your passport from your arrival in the country right through your planned departure back to Canada, as well as blank Visa pages.

Please visit <http://greece.visahq.ca/> to check if a Visa is required.

## **Communication + Payment**

### **Questions**

Contact us at any of the below methods!

Phone: 1-800-403-5208

Email: [travel@fnez.com](mailto:travel@fnez.com)

### **Communication**

So you have signed up for a Free & Easy adventure and we hope to help make this the easiest travel experience of your life. We want to help you out with anything you need help with. However, there are always things that you will need to take care of yourself and we will make it as easy as possible to explain these things. So we need to have a bit of cooperation from your part and it start with actually **READING** our emails :). Please, make sure you read the emails we send leading up to your trip because we are sending them to make sure that you are as ready as you can possibly be for this travel adventure.

Most of the information we send will be coming through your “Your Trip” account. Please make sure that you have all of the requirements taken care of prior to your trip as well you can also view your account and balance owing and a place for us to give you your downloads and hear news of the upcoming trip. You should receive an email in your inbox notifying you when we do post something on there. Please notify us if you find that you’re not getting the notifications.

### **Making Payments**

Follow this link for a full outline of our payment options.

Check [here](#) for the payment schedules for all our trips.

The \$200 deposit reserves your placement on a trip. For all the trips, we have arranged the payment dates to allow you the maximum time to pay for your trip. If you would prefer to pay for the entire trip all at one time, that is no problem. You can also make larger payments earlier whenever it is convenient for you. The payment dates that we have

listed are just guidelines that state the last possible date by which payments should be made.

We would greatly appreciate that all payments be made on time. Meeting this simple request makes our job much easier because it allows us to always be looking forward and preparing for the trips, rather than figuring out who and where we need to collect money from. If you expect that a payment will be late, please email us to explain when we can expect the payment. Payment schedules for each of the trips can be reached by clicking the link above.

PLEASE NOTE: All additional costs (for flights, insurance, fees & extras) will be added to your statement of account on the 'your trip' page. Please, ensure that you add any additional charges to your final payment unless we require it sooner.

## Cultural

### **Quick Facts on Greece**

- Greece is considered to be part of Southern Europe; it is also included as a Western European nation.
- Greece has an area of 1,140 square kilometres of water and 130,800 square kilometres of land.
- Estimated Population: 11,237,068 people
- The Greek flag is blue and white, with an equal-armed cross in the upper corner and nine alternating blue and white stripes
- The average Greek enjoys a long life expectancy:
- Male: 76.32 years
- Female: 81.65 years (2003 est.)
- The Euro is the currency of Greece since 2002. Before that, it was the drachma.
- The Greek government is a parliamentary republic.
- Greece joined the European Economic Community, the predecessor of the EU, in 1981.
- Greece became a member of the European Union in January 1999, and met the requirements to become a member of the European Monetary Union, using the Euro as currency, in 2001. The Euro went into circulation in Greece in 2002, replacing the drachma. At the time of writing...Greece's status in the EU is unpredictable.
- There are about 140 inhabited islands in Greece, but if you count every rocky outcrop, the total surges to about 3,000.
- What we call Greece is known to its inhabitants as Hellas. The name "Greece" comes from the name the
- Romans applied to Hellas -- Graecia. While the people of ancient Hellas thought of themselves as Hellenes, the ancient Romans called them by the Latin word "Graeci" from which we get the word "Greek."
- Greece has land borders with Albania, the Republic of Macedonia and Bulgaria to the north, and Turkey to the east.

- The Aegean Sea lies to the east of mainland Greece, the Ionian Sea to the west, and the Mediterranean Sea to the south.
- Greece primarily has a Mediterranean climate, featuring mild, wet winters and hot, dry summers. This climate occurs at all coastal locations.
- Greece currently has universal compulsory military service for males, while females (who may serve in the military) are exempted from conscription. As of 2009, Greece has mandatory military service of 9 months for male citizens between the ages of 19 and 45. However, as the Armed forces had been gearing towards a complete professional army system, the government had promised that the mandatory military service would be cut or even abolished completely.
- The tourism industry is a major source of foreign exchange earnings and revenue accounting for 15% of Greece's total GDP[45] and employing, directly or indirectly, 16.5% of the total workforce.
- Estimated average per capita income of \$29,882 for the year 2009
- In 2004 Greece welcomed 16.5 million tourists
- The constitution of Greece recognizes the Orthodox faith as the "prevailing" of the country, while guaranteeing freedom of religious belief for all, an estimated 97% of Greek citizens identify themselves as Orthodox Christians
- Compulsory education in Greece includes Kindergarden (around 4 years old), primary school, and high school. Higher education is available afterwards if desired. !e Greek education system also provides special kindergartens, primary and secondary schools for people with special needs or difficulties in learning.
- Greek's have been very successful at Basketball and Football but also does well at Volleyball and Water polo.

## Fun Stuff

### **Scuba Diving**

If you are interested in Scuba diving on the trip there will be opportunities in Ios and in Santorini to go diving. If you are interested in doing a full Open Water Dive certification program you would have to do that in Ios as it usually takes 3 days to complete and would cost about 380 Euros. You can expect to pay about 55 Euro for a single dive if you are certified and doing a fun dive or wanting to do a discover try dive.

Dive Shop in Ios: [link](#)

Dive Shop in Santorini: [link](#)

Diving in Greece is quite expensive so many people prefer to explore the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea using a simple snorkel and mask which are easy to rent or buy in most places on the trip.

Etc.

Most of the other fun things aren't really things you need to prepare for other than saving your pennies because it can add up. But it's also fun to go crazy and just indulge in everything!

One last tip. If you have a student ID bring it along because it can sometimes save you some money. And lastly if you have a motorcycle license and think you're going to want to rent a scooter then you should bring that as well.

### **Ideas for Reading**

Buying some sort of guidebook on Greece would be a good idea, it will have lots of info on things like culture, history, and geography. It'll have maps and in-depth info on traveling the country. Books like the Lonely Planet or the Rough Guide are especially good if you are planning to travel on your own after the trip because they have all sorts of info on how to get around, where to stay, what to do, and how much things cost. There are also other books like National Geographic and the Insider Guide that have lots of pictures and are better for giving a more in-depth- background on Greece in general. If you don't need the practical travel information, a book like this might be better.

A good place to start is Amazon, Chapters-Indigo or your favourite local book store

### Trip Locations

**Day 1&2: Athens**

**Day 3-5: Crete**

**Day 6: Heraklion**

**Day 7-10: Santorini**

**Day 11-14: Ios**

**Day 15: Night Ferry**

**Day 16-20 Rhodes**

PLEASE NOTE: The above itinerary is tentative. You will receive your confirmed Free & Easy Traveler trip itinerary with the exact routing at least 30 days prior to your departure.

Please be advised we are constantly keeping an eye out for warnings and are well informed on the happenings in the places we go. Our ground team is frequently sending us first hand updates, ensuring the destinations we bring our groups to are safe!

## Community Forests International (CFI)

Free & Easy Traveler has joined forces with Community Forests International (CFI) to turn the joy of world travel into an act of global conservation. Travel is an extremely important part of our lives, getting to see and experience the world is what keeps us all connected and reminds us that we all live in the same world and deal with the same problems. But traveling around the world comes at a price and we are well aware of the many buses, planes, ships, etc. that we use to travel that harm the environment. Greenhouse gas emissions are driving increasingly dangerous climate change to the point that some of the places we love most are under threat and we don't want to contribute to the continuing destruction. So we decided to take action.

### **We Travel Carbon-Free**

By tracking the flights of our staff members and calculating the resulting greenhouse gasses, we support CFI to go out and protect and manage a forest in Canada to pull those gasses back out. These emissions become securely stored at CFI's Whaelghinbran Farm. Read more about how CFI offsets our carbon here.

### **One Traveler, One Tree**

But we didn't stop there. Much of the work that CFI does supports community tree planting efforts in Africa and Canada. This work is having incredible results, and we wanted to strengthen their efforts so we decided that for each traveler that comes on a trip with us, we'll provide CFI with the support to plant a tree to help offset that traveler's carbon emissions.

These trees are being used as tools of environmental and social restoration. In Canada, some of these trees were planted along a degraded watercourse and will go on to provide habitat for salmon, trout, hawks and king fisher, just to name a few. In Africa, where CFI was born, these trees were planted as a part of ongoing restoration of degraded lands on the island of Pemba, Tanzania. These trees rebuild the soil that was too poor to grow crops, allowing for trees like mangoes and cassava to thrive and produce food.

We look forward to continuing our relationship with CFI and, along with your help, making the world a greener place to live and travel in! If you want to offset your travel emissions with CFI, or want to support tree planting around the world, find out how here.