

DELPHI

KALAMBAKA

NAFPLION

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PREVEZA

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greece...



AMALIA HOTELS



Amalia Hotels is one of the oldest hotel chains in Greece. Established in 1958, it combines the best Greece has to offer: history, culture and remarkable scenery, while also providing high-level services for its guests.

The brochure you have in your hands has been produced in order for you to discover the beautiful and less known areas in the vicinity of our Hotels. Begin your journey from one of our properties and enjoy the Greek countryside.

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DELPHI

The ancient Greeks believed that Delphi was the centre of the earth. Something abiding to this day, considering that UNESCO has proclaimed the Sacred Precinct part of the World Cultural Heritage. The massive rocks of Faedriades rise above the green valley, where the largest olive grove in Greece is to be found.

Worth visiting are the monuments: the Temple of Apollo and the surrounding memorials; the Stadium; the Theatre; the Marmaria; the Castalian Spring; the Old Temple of Athena; and the renovated Museum.

For ski lovers, there are two main skiing areas available on the northwest side of Mount Parnassos. Others can enjoy a cup of hot chocolate while observing the snowy landscape. Later on you might like to visit Arachova (just 11km further) with its stone houses and enjoy the marvelous view of the valley. Arachova is renowned for its woolen weavings, its wines and gastronomy (*formaela* cheese, *trahanas* frumenty, noodles called *hilopittes*).



Itea (15km) took its name from an evergreen willow tree standing next to a spring. Seen from Delphi seawards, it is the first picturesque village built over the Gulf of Corinth.

Osios Loukas, a secluded Byzantine monastery containing the finest mosaics, frescoes and icons in the country from the eleventh century.

Galaxidi (17km southwest of Itea) was once one of Greece's major harbours, with a fleet of over four hundred ships (caiques and schooners). Nineteenth-century ship-owners' mansions embellish the town. Close to the main harbor, the Nautical and Historical Museum are situated. The eighteenth-century church of Agios Nikolaos is also worthwhile visiting.

Nafpaktos (90km) is a lively market town and resort. Its well-kept Venetian castle towers above a plane-tree-shaded seafront, overlooking the Gulf of Patra. You can enjoy a stroll through the oval-shaped old harbour with its fortifications, and climb the ramps.

Winter in this part of the country is indeed captivating, especially when Mount Parnassos is covered with snow. Skiers and excursionists from all over Greece flock here. Spring and summer also afford opportunities to sightseers and explorers, because of the ideal combination of sea and mountains.



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KALAMBAKA

The town of Kalambaka lies in the shadow of the rocks of the Meteora, on the left bank of the River Pinios, 20 kilometres distant from the Thessalian metropolis Trikala. Built on the ruins of the ancient city of Aeginion, it is a town with a rich history, dating from Byzantine times. The spectacular grandeur of this unique cluster of rocks leaves the visitor stunned, while lending an uncanny colour to this sacred spot. The Meteoran monasteries, perched on pinnacles of rock, were founded in the twelfth century. Of the twenty-four monasteries, only six are open to visitors, and in these can be found - as in all the others - rare relics, treasures and miniatures of great historical value.

Of the monasteries, the most significant are Megalou Meteorou (Grand Meteoron), Varlaam, Ayias Triadhos and Ayios Stefanos. The smallest and oldest monastery is Ayios Nikolaos Anapavsa. UNESCO has proclaimed the Meteora a Monument of Cultural Heritage.

The cave of Theopetra (3km), one of the finest in Europe, dates from the Stone Age. The findings outline Greek prehistoric times.

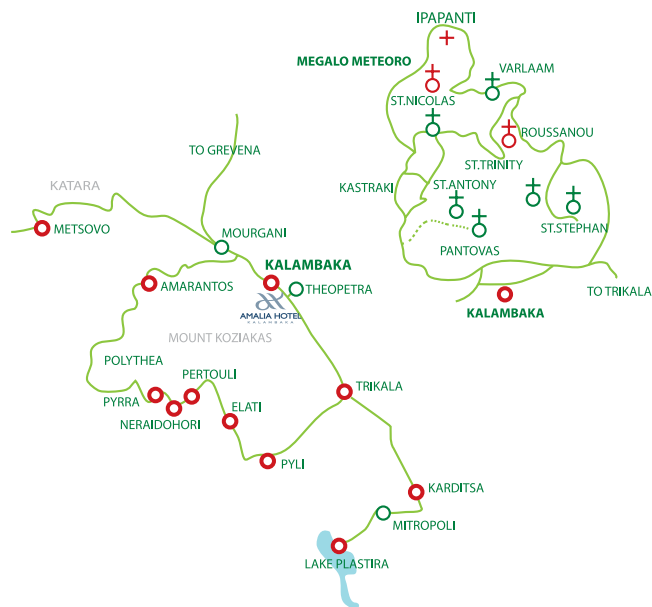
Koziakas villages. On leaving Trikala, one may climb up Mount Koziakas to visit the picturesque villages with their beautiful churches and running waters. Starting with the village Pyli or Porta (32km), with its singular Byzantine church of Porta Panaghia and its arch-shaped stone bridge, we go on to Elati (48km) and then to Pertouli (68km), a popular ski centre, and further on to Neraïdohori (62km) in a uniquely beautiful environmental setting.

Aspropotamos villages. The district of Aspropotamos is enriched with forests and widespread meadows, through which flow rivers with banks of luxuriant vegetation. Worth visiting are the quaint villages of Kastania (40km), Doliana (55km) and Krania (60km). Prominent is the Monastery of the Holy Cross in Doliana, built in 1770 but destroyed in 1943, save for the main church, a unique example of Greek monastic architecture. You may round off your trip at Tria Potamia for trekking, rafting, canoeing, mountain biking and climbing.

Lake Plastira (55km). South of Kalambaka, past Trikala and Karditsa, is Lake Plastira and the dam envisaged by the late Nikolaos Plastiras, general

and prime minister. It involves a magnificent setting, the creation of man and nature, surrounded by monasteries of the post-Byzantine period.

Metsovo (80km). The small alpine town is built on two sides of the Pindos mountains, in the midst of beeches and firs. It commands a wild scenery and a rich history. Point of interest is the Averof Gallery with its permanent collection pieces of the most important Greek painters, sculptors and engravers of the 19th and 20th centuries. You will see works of very famous Greek painters such as Gyzis, Lytras, Volanakis, Iakovidis, Parthenis, Maleas, Galanis, Hatzikyriakos-Gikas, Moralis, Tetsis and many more. The usual heavy winter is ideal for winter sports, whereas it is renowned for its folk tradition, architecture and cheese-making. Via Egnatia expressway the distance to Metsovo is significantly reduced.



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NAFPLION

The historic, beautifully sited town of Nafplio takes its name from Nafplios, son of Poseidon, and was the first capital of modern Greece. A powerful naval state during the Mycenaean age, it was conquered in turn by Byzantines, Venetians, Franks and Turks. Nafplio expands between the twin fortresses of Palamidhi and Akronafplia on the headland. There is ample pleasure in wandering along the cobbled narrow streets lined with Neoclassical buildings.

The Palamidhi, Nafplio's principal fort, Bourtzi, the third fort occupying the Ayiou Theodorou islet offshore from the harbour, and the church of Ayios Spyridon, where the first prime minister, Ioannis Kapodhistrias was assassinated, are of special interest. Platia Syndagmatos (Constitution Square), the main square of the old town, is the focus of most interest. Then there is the Archaeological Museum that occupies a Venetian mansion.



Tiryns (Tirynthos) (80km). The undeniably impressive fortress is over three thousand years old, and the site itself has been occupied for four thousand years before that. The walls formed of huge Cyclopean stones dominate the site. The German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann uncovered Tiryns in 1884.

Argos (8km). The oldest inhabited town in Greece (c.5000 years) is a must for visitors. The theatre is said to have held 20,000 spectators. Alongside are the remains of an odeion and Roman baths. Above the site looms the ancient acropolis, on the conical hill of Larissa capped by the Frankish medieval castle. In nearby Kefalari is the convent of Zoödohou Piyis hewn from rock.

Mycenae (22km). The region is one of the longest occupied in Greece, with evidence of Neolithic settlements from 3000 BC. But it is during the period from 1550 to 1200 BC that the citadel of Mycenae and its legend belong. Make sure you visit the famous Lion Gate, the Treasury of Atreus or - as officially called - Tomb of Agamemnon, with its startling tholos. The archaeological remains unearthed by Schliemann were impelled by his belief that there was a factual basis to Homer's epics.

Epidaurus (30km). Visited for its grandiose ancient theatre with a seating capacity of 13,000, built around 330-320 BC. Its extraordinary acoustics have contributed to holding the annual Athens Festival productions of Classical drama.



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OLYMPIA

Olympia, situated in northwest Peloponnesus, is the jewel of a luxuriant valley of wild olive and plane trees, spread beside the rivers of Alfios and Kladhios. From its beginnings the site was a sanctuary. The origins of the Olympic games are rooted in legends related first to the god Pelops, then to Zeus, and later to Hercules. The contests began around the eleventh century BC, and over the next two centuries from a local festival it grew to a quadrennial celebration attended by states from throughout the Greek world.

The main focus of the precinct is provided by the Temple of Zeus. The most complete building on the site is the smaller Temple of Hera. Other places of interest include the **gymnasium** and the palaestra, the hippodrome, the Vouleuterion (Council Chamber), the Prytaneion, the administrators' residence, and the Leonidaion (hostel).

The Archaeological Museum houses the famous sculpture of Hermes of Praxiteles and that of Nike of Paionios. Also exhibited are statuary and sculpture finds reassembled from the Temple of Zeus, as well as smaller objects as a Persian helmet, the helmet of Miltiades, the terracotta group of Zeus ab-

ducting Ganymede, and finds from the workshop of Pheidias.

Places also worth visiting are:

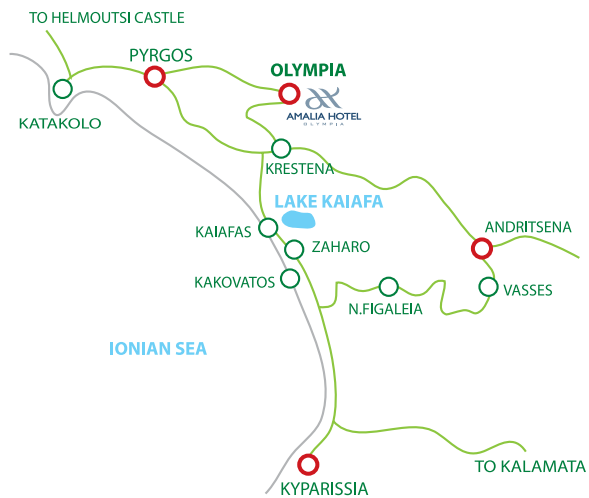
Lake Kaïafas (25km). On the way to Zaharo, the largest town between Kyparissía and Pýrgos, is to be found the beautiful Lake Kaïafas, backed by pine groves separating it from the sea.

With Olympia as a base, you have a choice to visit the spa of Loutra Kyllinis (45km). It has a long beach which gives way to sand dunes.

Andhritsena (64km) is a traditional mountain town with a rich history from Frankish times to the first century of independent Greece. Luckily, it remains in its primeval state of condition, with wooden houses, paved streets and central square with Trani Vryssi fountain, the oldest in Peloponnesus, built in 1724, and set within a plane tree. The town's library, founded in 1840, is famous for its collection of rare manuscripts dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, select Greek and foreign language books, documents from the War of Independence of 1821, and rich folk material.



A visit to the Temple of Apollo Epikourios at Bassae (78km) up in the flanks of Mount Lykeo is a must. After the Theseion in Athens it is the best-preserved Classical monument in the country, said to have been designed by Iktinos, architect of the Parthenon.



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PREVEZA



The Prefecture of Preveza is of remarkable beauty: profuse greenery, sandy beaches, crystal-clear blue seas. The modern town, at the mouth of the Amvrakikos Gulf, is a successor to the "Victory City" of Nikopolis. In the past it was invaded by the Romans, Venetians, Franks and Turks. At the delta formed by the rivers Louros and Arachthos, a flora and fauna has developed, where over two hundred and fifty species of birds find shelter. This important ecological environment is a pole of attraction for scientists and naturalists the world over.

Nikopolis (8km) was founded by the Roman emperor Octavian on the site where his army had camped prior to the Battle of Actium in 31 BC when he defeated the combined fleets of Antony and Cleopatra. Over an area of 9,000 acres the visitor can see among the ruins, remnants of the baths, sixth-century Byzantine fortified walls, the theatre, the sunken outline of the stadium, and the well-kept Roman odeion, where cultural events take place.

Ancient Kassopi (22km) is memorable for its superb location some 600m above sea level with a magnificent view of the Ionian Sea and the Amvrakikos Gulf. The site's ruins date mainly from the fourth century

BC. Rebuilding took place in the second century. Highlights include the agora, the odeion, and the hostelry for representatives of the Kassopian federation.

Zalongo (24km) is a short distance from ancient Kassopi, overlooking the lush village of Kamarina. In 1803, during the Turkish occupation when Ali Pasha's troops overrun the village, sixty-three Souliot women and children fled to the top of the cliff and danced one by one, with their children in their arms, over the edge of the precipice. This act is commemorated by a sculpture, the work of the famous sculptor Yorgos Zagolopoulos.

Lefkadha (25km). The island, accessible by ferries from the mainland, as well as by the connecting bridge, is famous for its blue-green seas and much-advertised shores. Not far from Nydhri, the island's biggest resort, is Aristotle Onassis' renowned islet of Skorpios.

Nekromanteion of Ephyra - Aherondas Gorge (48km). Above the village of Mesopotamo (ancient Ephyra) stands the sanctuary of Persephone and Hades. According to mythology, this was the spot from

where Charon rowed departed souls across the lake of Acherousia to the gates of Hades.

Parga (65km) is a picturesque seaside town with fine beaches lining several successive bays. Its arc of tiered houses is set below the Venetian kástro. The ruined walls offer excellent views of the town, its waterfront, and the Ionian islands of Paxos and Antipaxos. More elaborate, intact and arguably more interesting is the castle above Anthoussa, rebuilt in 1814 by Ali Pasha. The town is ideally situated for excursions to Paxos and Antipaxos, the Nekromanteion of Ephyra, and the Aherondas gorge at Glyki. Other convenient choices are the towns of Arta, Vonitsa and Ioannina.



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