TRAVEL

The Best Hotels in Greece to Book This Summer



BY MONICA MENDAL



A private terrace and pool at Acron Villas. Photo: Courtesy of Acron Villas

Greece is having a moment—and the best hotels in Greece are ready to meet that moment. The country was one of the first EU countries to welcome vaccinated travelers, and eager vacationers have been quick to book flights for a long-awaited summer on the Med. The excitement is poised to continue as large hotel operators are expanding in the ancient country, with One&Only Resorts announcing their <u>Athens property</u> opening next summer, and Banyan Tree Group opening its first flagship property in Europe in the <u>Greek island of Corfu</u> this month. It's no surprise Greece is growing in popularity within the travel industry: From history as old as time to a scenic Aegean coastline

(the longest stretch on the Mediterranean) and island-hopping filled with bustling tavernas and the warmth of Greek hospitality, Greece has more than enough cultural attractions to fulfill our longing for far-flung travel. Below are the best hotels—from tried-and-true favorites to newcomers—to book this summer. Happy travels, at last.

Shila, Athens



The garden retreat at Shila Photo: Anna Bonnet / Courtesy of Shila



Before heading to the islands, be sure to spend a couple of nights in <u>Athens</u>. You can tap into the city's burgeoning creative scene by booking a room at the new bohemian boutique hotel, <u>Shila</u>. Stepping inside the small six-suite residence in the city's trendy Kolonaki neighborhood, you're immediately immersed in the creative renaissance of modern Athens. It's a world where old meets new, with an airy bohemian rooftop perfect for jet lag-induced naps and suites featuring patina walls, jewel tone velvet furniture and canopy beds. The fantasy doesn't end there. A selection of clothing from local Greek designers awaits you in the bedroom upon checking in, with love notes like, "We thought you might like these. Want to take them with? We'll pack them up for you." The hotel's art and furniture is also available for purchase.

Perivolas, Santorini

Perivolas Photo: William Abranowicz / Courtesy of Perivolas

Perched atop a cliff overlooking the white-washed walls of Santorini, the family-run hotel <u>Perivolas</u> has been one of the most iconic hotels on the island since the 1980s. While the arresting views of Oia's landscape and breathtaking sunsets are inevitable, it's the cave-structured suites designed by the family at Perivolas that truly steal the show. The

22 contemporary houses inspired by the island's traditional cave architecture feature hand-woven textiles in pink and purple hues set along a stark white backdrop, many with private plunge pools and colorful gardens. While the property is intrinsically opulent, the essence of Perivolas is its simplicity. Each space has such personality and flair, there's a chance you won't want to leave the hotel. Don't say we didn't warn you.

Skinopi Lodge, Milos

If you're seeking a break from blue and white architecture and lively tavernas, book a stay at <u>Skinopi Lodge</u> on the island of Milos for a few days of escape. While it takes some off-roading to get to the property (a four-wheel drive vehicle is highly encouraged), it will have been well worth the trek. Wake up in one of the three minimalist stone homes atop grassy cliffs that overlook the breathtaking views of the Aegean sea. Then, spend a quiet afternoon reading ensconced on the lounge chairs outside your villa or take the winding stairs down the cliff to your own private watering hole. You can also ask the owner, Nausika, to draft you a localized itinerary of the best beaches according to the island's winds that day.

Kalesma, Mykonos

Kalesma Photo: Courtesy of Kalesma

New this summer to <u>Mykonos</u> is Kalesma, a design-forward hotel dreamed up by two Greek designers who aimed to create a traditional Cycladic property with a modern spin for hedonists who value privacy and being off the beaten path. Set on a hilltop overlooking Ornos Bay, the hotel's 27 luxe accommodations are spread across five acres of a lush hillside. <u>The property</u> features furniture by designer Rick Owens and one-of-a-kind decor by local Greek craftsmen. The hotel's restaurant, Pere Ubu, sits at the property's peak, a privileged vantage point where you can catch the sunrise and the sunset from the same spot.

Parilio Hotel, Paros

Parilio Hotel Photo: Courtesy of Parilio Hotel

Designed by the same team as the Mystique and Istoria hotels in Santorini, <u>Parilio Hotel</u> is the first luxury property in Paros, an island some locals refer to as the "Mykonos for insiders." Featuring 33 suites, a Cycladic-inspired pool, a restaurant and bar (among the best on the island) and a spa, you'll have very little reason to leave the hotel. Its wooden shutters, oversized urns and earthy tones set the scene for a highly authentic Cycladic experience mixed with a touch of Palm Springs cool.

The Rooster, Antiparos

An open-air shower at The Rooster Photo: Yannis Rizomarkos / Courtesy of The Rooster

The island of Antiparos's low profile affords travelers a more exclusive getaway than its busier neighbor, Paros. With its guarantee of seclusion and privacy, the island has become a celebrity haven (so much so that Tom Hanks and Rita Wilson bought a home there). The island is sure to get more buzzy with the opening of the new boutique hotel, <u>The Rooster</u>. The hotel, opened on June 1st, was designed to exist in harmony with its surroundings. It puts an emphasis on respectful tourism by way of wellness, sustainability and organic food. Guests have 17 individual houses to choose from, each with its own private sundeck providing the best sunset views on the island. Using natural materials, lime-wash walls and earth-tone decor, The Rooster offers a laid-back approach to a very high-end stay. In this spirit, if it's a beach day you're craving, have the staff pack up a picnic basket for you to take down to their rustic and service-free beach for a blissful afternoon.

Mystique, Santorini

Mystique Photo: Courtesy of Mystique

The white-washed walls of Oia's timeless backdrop is disrupted-though rather seamlessly-by the cream-colored ones of <u>Mystique</u>, but the hotel still follows the island's emblematic architecture with its Cycladic-inspired suites, restaurants and infinity pools. High-end service, sea-views (easily mistaken for green screens), suites, and villas featuring gyms are just a few of the perks at Mystique. Plus, the hotel is perfectly located in close proximity to all of the shops, tavernas and dreamy streets of Oia.

Acron Villas, Paros

A bedroom at Acron Villas Photo: Courtesy of Acron Villas

Overlooking the charming fishing village of Naoussa sits <u>Acron Villas</u>, a farmhouse-style hamlet featuring several villas that span two to five bedrooms, each with its own private pool, garden, and uninterrupted views of Naoussa Bay. Secluded enough to relax and revitalize, but close enough to the heart of Paros's bustling tavernas, shops and beaches, Acron Villas is the perfect escape for the traveler who wants it all—save for room service or hotel amenities. The villas are meant to feel like your own private home in Paros, so are designed as such, with full kitchens and washing machines, perfect for family holidays. The property's design ethos is rooted in traditional architecture and chic minimalist interior, so as not to distract from the beauty of its surroundings.

Verina Astra, Sifnos

The view from Verina Astra Photo: Courtesy of Verina Astra

Foodies won't want to miss visiting the tiny island of Sifnos, arguably the best gastronomic destination in the Cyclades. Staying at <u>Verina Astra</u> is what farm-to-table dreams are made of. Tucked on a quiet hill in Poulati overlooking the castle, it's a short two-mile drive from Artemonas, the most beautiful village on the island. At Verina Astra, you'll have all the local must-sees of Sifnos at your fingertips. The property is adorned with local pottery (a heritage craft on the island that dates back to 3000 BC) and features a restaurant that serves as the perfect introduction to Sifnos cuisine with locally-grown produce, most of which comes from their own orchard.

Katikies, Mykonos



Katikies Photo: Courtesy of Katikies

Similar to its sister property in Santorini, <u>Katikies Mykonos</u> is the perfect escape for a traditional Mykonos experience spared from the party crowds. Set atop Agios Ioannis, which some locals deem the most beautiful beach on Mykonos's southwest coast, Katikies's 35 luxury suites, two restaurants, two pools and spa are swathed in white and cobalt blue, exuding a modern, coastal elegance that sets the property apart from many of the more rustic and bohemian-style hotels on the island. Katikies ensures a tasteful refuge from the Mykonos *scene*, while still revealing the traditional and timeless allure of the island.

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