

Places To Visit On Your Summer Vacation to Greece

What's hot in Santorini, Mykonos, and Antiparos.

By **Carole Dixon**



Thank goodness for Greece. The country has fully reopened to American tourists, so dust off your passport and plan an island-hopping adventure for late summer and into the fall, since September and October are some of the best seasonal months for a visit.

Mykonos

The anecdote to your quarantine woes.

About: While it's only starting to shed its jet-set, hedonistic party image, this is still a buzzy spot with as much action as you can handle. The island is a must for first-time visitors, and a new hotel is creating a reason for veteran travelers to make another appearance.

Stay: Almost like its own mini-village, resting on a hilltop above Ornos Bay, Kalesma aims to tell a different story of this vibrant, artistic island. With 25 suites and two villas on five acres, the hotel opened in May, introducing a luxury experience that balances both fun and privacy, just two miles from the town of Mykonos. From \$1,465; kalesmamykonos.com. Those looking for a more central locale will find refuge at Bill & Co Suites and Lounge, featuring 32 rooms and spa from Valmont. New for this season, the beloved property, which first opened in 2006 and renovated in 2018, has just added three, one-bedroom, 2,150-square-foot villas that can also be combined for a standalone villa that sleeps six. Their beachfront, adults-only sister property, Bill & Co Coast Suites, rests on a private stretch of beach and features one of the most popular restaurants on the island, Beefbar Mykonos. From \$600; bill-coo-hotel.com

Do: Head down to Ornos Beach, but first check with your hotel concierge, who can advise you before you charter a yacht to cruise around, depending on the day's winds. Inclined to seasickness? Discover local boutiques and a plethora of art galleries. You also might want to visit Agios Ioannis Beach and Katikies Villas near the famous long, sandy strip of Elia Beach, teeming with bars and tavernas. Day trips to Delos Island and

water sports are top pastimes. You can also rent a car or scooter for a windmill sightseeing trip.



Dine: Hotel restaurants here are kind of a thing. Visit the Kiku Sushi bar at Cavotagoo or enjoy a gastronomic multicourse menu by Executive Chef Ntinos Fotinakis with wine pairings at Bill & Co. Or spend all day at Scorpions, now managed by Soho House.

Santorini

An island for lovers.



About: While Mykonos visitors might love the high-octane nightlife, Santorini is a spot for lovers and romance, particularly in the northern village of Oia. Since this part of the island is elevated with cozy, cave-style accommodations built into the side of hilly terrain, this is a spot for sea gazing from your infinity pool. Also take in the famous blue domes and architecturally stunning churches dotting the landscape.



Stay: Part of The Leading Hotels of the World, Katikies has seven five-star properties spanning the two most popular islands, Mykonos and Santorini. The grounds and architecture are perfect alabaster structures that blend seamlessly into the landscape, which is picture-perfect postcard bliss whether you are in the spa for a treatment or at a magic-hour siesta by the pool. The hotel brand just launched a few new Champagne bars on both island resorts in partnership with Miraval rosé. Fleur de Miraval is the first Champagne house dedicated to rosé, for sipping after your day out on the water or exploring the rocky islands. From \$400; [katikies.com](https://www.katikies.com)

Do: The best sandy shores to visit are the red-, white-, or black-sand beaches of Vlychada with wind-sculpted cliffs, Kamari with giant rocks, Perissa, and Monolithos Beach, which features Nikki Beach Resort & Spa Santorini. This island is best explored on foot and, in most cases, to get down to the shore from your hilltop perch, you will need to walk down hundreds of steps (which will take care of your workout), but you can also rent a donkey to take you back up if you've had too many cocktails. If you love hand-crafted silver jewelry with dreamy gemstones, you're sure to find a treasure at one of dozens of jewelry stores in Oia. Other fun pursuits include a visit to Oia Castle for sunset or a helicopter tour for unobstructed views of the caldera, a volcanic crater.

Dine: Order the giant, salt-encrusted, freshwater white fish that your waiter will have to chisel open at the table for you, then liberally drizzle fresh olive oil across the catch of the day. This showstopping dish is plentiful at most ocean-view restaurants in town.

Antiparos

The place for a true escape.

About: For the more seasoned Greek Islands traveler who really wants to get away from it all, Antiparos is the spot. Away from the touristy crowds, the island embraces slow living for a wellness-focused break.



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Stay: The Rooster was the vision of one woman to create a destination retreat while preserving responsible tourism. This island embraces sustainability, organic food, wellness, education, and harmony with nature and the local community. If you're craving privacy, you can rent one of 17 individual suites or villas, each offering stunning views of the sea and private gardens. Also take in the on-site spa, The House of Healing, for a full-body massage with essential organic oils or CBD healing balm. From \$700; theroosterantiparos.com

Do: Embark on a half- or full-day boat trip to the surrounding islands, stopping along Antiparos' coves to swim and snorkel—with caves and even a nudist beach to explore. As for getting around, most places and activities are within walking distance of the major hotels, but if you'd like to visit the other side of the island, you'll need to rent a car or scooter. Take a trip to Butterfly Valley on the main island of Paros (just a seven-minute boat ride from Antiparos), where beautiful local varieties of butterflies gather between June and August.

Dine: The Rooster's restaurant features a variety of Greek and international dishes, many of which use the property's garden produce. Or, have the chef prepare a picnic basket with Greek specialties to take on an excursion around the island, where you can look for hand-crafted goods such as artisan pottery to take home.

Can't decide which island? Hit them all on a high-seas luxury cruise. The Swiss owners of Argentina's award-winning Entre Cielos Hotel + Spa in Mendoza launched a luxury boutique hospitality experience on the *S/Y Entre Cielos*, a 104-foot luxury sailing yacht, available for private weekly charters through the Greek Islands from May to October.

The yacht can accommodate up to 12 passengers in five spacious cabins with a crew of five and a personal chef. This sailing excursion will explore smaller towns, quiet lagoons, and hidden finds throughout the Greek Islands that are off the beaten path for most travelers. Islands on the journey include Paros, Naxos, and Milos. From \$34,000/week for 12 guests; entrecielos.com

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