

GREECE

Capital: Athens

Language: Greek

Population: 11.1 million

Time Zone: EST plus 7 hours

Currency: Euro (€ or EUR)

Electricity: 220V. 50Hz

Fun Facts

- 80 percent of Greece's landscape is comprised of mountains. Only two fifths of the country is covered by forests; the rest is barren.
- There are about 1,400 islands in Greece. However, only a few hundred of them are inhabited.
- The popular yo-yo toy, and the game of dice originated in the days of ancient Greece, around 3,000 years ago.
- Traditionally, Greeks have been known to celebrate their name days rather than their birth dates.

Greece (Hellas), a small country of approximately 51,000 square miles, is made up of over 1,400 picturesque islands (only 169 inhabited) that lie at the heart of the Mediterranean. It has a population of 11.1 million people, for whom hospitality is a "sacred obligation." For modern Greeks, the word foreigner—"xenos"—still means guest. The religion is Christian Orthodox (90%), and the language has been Hellenic/Greek for the last 4,000 years. The climate is Mediterranean with mild winters and warm summers, and it has the right balance of humidity that allows almost anything to grow.

Some of the greatest classical sites in the world are found here. In the capital, Athens, the 2,500-year-old Acropolis stands proud, in silent and mystical domination of the city. Greece is the birthplace of truce and democracy, and also the Olympic Games. The original running track still exists; and ancient Olympia is still used every Olympic year for the torch lighting relay ceremony. It is the motherland of 12 gods, the poet Homer, the philosopher Aristotle, the father of medicine Hippocrates, the philosopher Socrates, the fabler Aesop, the Renaissance painter Dominkos Theotokopoulos (El Greco), and the fathers of drama Euripides, Sophocles, and Aeschilus. In more recent times, famous citizens include Nikos Kazantzakis, author of *Zorba*; Dr. George Papanikolaou, inventor of the Pap test; Melina Mercouri, actress, singer, and spokeswoman; Maria Callas, opera diva; Miki Teodorakis, musician and composer; and George Seferis and Odysseus Elytis, who both were awarded the Nobel Prize for their writing.

Greece has a reputation for exquisite jewelry as well as gold and silver workmanship. Antique jewelry and gold articles from 16th century B.C. are displayed in the National Archaeological Museum of Athens, the new Acropolis Museum, and in museums all over the world. Copies are available in reputable shops. Delicate embroidery and lace make good purchases, as well as handmade icons depicting saints. Handicrafts of brass, wood, and alabaster can be found at reasonable prices.

The Greek diet is one of the healthiest. Some dishes well worth trying include *yemista* (tomatoes, bell peppers, zucchini, and eggplant stuffed with rice), *dolmades* (cabbage or vine leaves stuffed with beef and rice), *mousaka* (ground meat and eggplant with béchamel sauce), *briam* (for vegetarians), and *stamnaki* (beef cooked in a clay pot with cheese, tomato sauce, and potatoes). Sample *ouzo*, the national drink, with *ouzomezedes* or *ouzo* snacks, and savor wines from Crete or the Peloponnese. Finish with a cup of Greek coffee accompanied by *baklava* or *halva*; then turn over your cup and let the woman of the house tell your fortune.



VISAS, PASSPORTS, AND OTHER ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Visas to Greece are **not required** for US citizens. If you hold a passport from another country, please check with your local consulate about requirements for travel to Greece. All passengers traveling internationally are required to have a passport. Please carry proper identification (your passport) on you and do not leave it in your suitcase or hotel room.

It is advisable to carry your passport with you at all times.



COUNTRY CODES

The country code for Greece is 30. When calling to Greece from overseas, dial your international access code (011 from the US/Canada), followed by the country code, area code, and phone number. Phone numbers in Greece are 10 digits in length. Dialing from the US/Canada: 011 30+### ### ####.



CURRENCY

The official currency of Greece is the Euro.

Bank hours: 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Monday through Friday.

1 EURO (€) = 100 Cents (c)

- Banknote denominations: €5, €10, €20, €50, €100, €200, €500
- Coin denominations: 1c, 2c, 5c, 10c, 20c, 50c, €1, €2

Euro **coins** differ according to country, but they can be used in any Eurozone state. **Banknotes** are of uniform EU design (depicting European architectural styles throughout seven ages, from Classical to Modern times).

For the most current exchange rates, please go to our website at Globusjourneys.com/Currency.

We recommend asking for smaller notes when exchanging money, as notes over €50 may not be accepted.

Credit cards are widely accepted (mostly Visa and MasterCard), and you should have no problems using them in larger shops and restaurants. Smaller shops may ask you to pay in cash or have a minimum amount required to use a credit card.



BUDGETING AND SHOPPING

The following budget guidelines are just approximate values or starting values for meals and are per person. Actual prices will vary widely by restaurant and city within a country but below are some averages as provided by our experienced personnel.

- The approximate cost of a soft drink/mineral water/coffee is €2-2.50.
- An average lunch consisting of a salad or sandwich and a soda or water starts at approximately €6-10.
- Dinner at a mid-range restaurant with dessert and a non-alcoholic beverage starts at approximately €15-20 (*seafood will be slightly more expensive*).

Please note that soft drinks and mineral water are often as expensive, if not more expensive than wine or beer.

Shopping specialties: gold and silver jewelry, fur jackets, leatherware, woolen and cotton goods (rugs etc.), pottery, white marble statues.



TIPPING

A service charge is automatically figured into the price of your meal in Greek restaurants, but it is customary to leave an additional 10%.

- During the Christmas and Easter holidays, an obligatory 18% holiday bonus is added to your check/bill for the waiters.
- Tipping taxi drivers is uncommon in Greece. If you would like to tip, round up the fare to the nearest whole Euro as an acceptable amount.
- Tip hotel staff €1 for room service.
- A few coins will be needed for public restrooms.

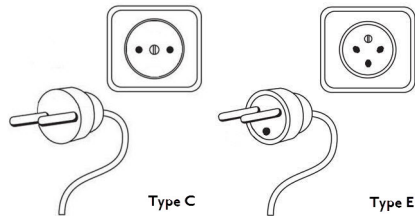


ELECTRICITY AND ELECTRICAL OUTLETS

Outlets

Voltage for outlets is 220V. North American voltage is generally 110V. Therefore, you will need a converter for your travels. Adapters will be necessary to adapt your plug into the outlet, but these may not convert the voltage, so both devices are necessary.

Greece uses a round, 2-prong plug that looks like:



TEMPERATURES

Greece enjoys warm weather almost all year round. Summers can be especially hot, June – August.

To help you plan, below are average low and high temperatures for Greece.

Athens

January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December
43/56°F	43/57°F	47/61°F	52/68°F	60/77°F	69/86°F	74/91°F	74/92°F	67/83°F	60/75°F	53/65°F	47/58°F

To convert to Celsius, subtract 30, then divide by 2. While not exact, this simple formula will give a close estimation.



FOOD SPECIALTIES

Mezè (starters with olives, anchovies, and more), *Brik* (red caviar), *Taramosalata* (fish-egg salad), vegetable dishes (with aubergines/eggplants, tomatoes, peppers, and black olives), Feta cheese, Mousaka (ground meat and egg-plant with béchamel sauce), *Dolmades* (vine leaves or cabbage filled with rice and minced meat), *Stamnaki* (beef cooked in a clay pot with cheese, tomato sauce and potatoes), *Souvlakia* (lamb or pork kebabs), and *Ouzo* (aniseed liquor).



A FEW WORDS OF THE LOCAL LANGUAGE

Greek:

Good morning: Kalee-mera, **Good evening:** Kalee-spera, **Good night:** Kalee-nikta, **Hello:** Yiassou, **Goodbye:** Andio, **Please:** Pa-ra-ka-lo, **Thank you:** Ef-harry-sto, **Yes:** Ne, **No:** Ohee, **OK:** Ka-Ila, **Excuse me:** Signomi, **Do you speak English?:** Milas anglika?, **I don't understand:** Then katalaveno, **How much?:** Posso kanie?, **Today:** Seemera, **Tomorrow:** Avreeo, **1:** Ena, **2:** Dyo, **3:** Tree-a, **4:** Tessera, **5:** Pende, **6:** Exy, **7:** Epta, **8:** Octo, **9:** Ennea, **10:** Deca, **Where is...?:** Pou enee...?, **Telephone:** Tilefono, **Bathroom:** Toualetta, **Tea:** Tsai, **Coffee:** Caffè, **Sugar:** Zaharee, **Milk:** Ghala, **Bottled water:** Bookali nero, **Ice:** Pagos, **Wine:** Krasee, **Restaurant check/bill:** Logariasmós, **Cheers!:** Stin iyassou!

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE COUNTRY INFORMATION

Additional country-specific information for US citizens can be found on the US Government's website www.travel.state.gov. Here, you can find the most up-to-date information about destination descriptions, passports/visas, safety and security, transportation, travel local laws, alerts/warnings, vaccinations, and more. For citizens of other nations, we recommend you consult your local consulate for travel information, regulations, and requirements.

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