

# Greece – The Island of Evia - no single supplement

8 days from £1049 March & November 2020, March 2021



Although only an hour's drive from Athens, much of the island of Evia is largely untouched by mass development. On three guided walks, you'll discover the varied landscapes with which Evia is blessed. Near your holiday hotel is the resort of Eretria which has a fine Archaeological Museum and a ferry service to the mainland. Inland from Eretria is Dirfys, Evia's highest mountain and site of the beautiful Xerovouni plateau. In the green, pastoral north of the island, the village of Prokopi is a popular place of pilgrimage. Your holiday base is the Hotel Miramare, three miles from Eretria.

• 7 nights hb in double rooms for sole use near Eretria • Three guided walks in different parts of Evia • Optional excursion to Delphi

## PROGRAMME

**DAY ONE:** Flight to Athens and transfer to your hotel near Eretria on Evia for seven nights' half-board accommodation. Transfer time is around 75 minutes.

Although Evia is an island, it is only 45 yards away from the mainland at its closest point at Chalkida. However, roads on Evia are few and far between and the island has largely retained its distinct rural and remote character, escaping major tourist development, despite its proximity to Athens. Your hotel is three miles from the centre of Eretria, a small port twelve miles down the coast from Chalkida. Eretria was a strong military power and had colonies in Italy and Corfu. Evidence of its rich past has been revealed by excavations starting in the 1890's including a theatre, temple of Dionysus, and mosaics. Eretria's Archaeological Museum has a fine collection of ancient pottery and sculpture.

**DAYS TWO TO SEVEN:** At leisure in resort with three guided walks.

**Walk 1:** In and around Eretria. This is an easy 3-hour walk which takes you to the top of Kastelli hill, the ancient acropolis of

Eretria, where you can see the remains of the 4th-century BC city walls. There are wonderful views down to the harbour, over the Island of Dreams, and across the bay to Attica. At the end of the walk you can walk across the causeway to explore the Island of Dreams, or take an afternoon ferry to the mainland.

**Walk 2:** Scenic drive to the wooded north of the island (44 miles) through the Derveni pass towards the village of Prokopi. Your 6-mile walk (ascent 120m and descent 350m) leads through the shady, plane tree-filled Kireas valley and then through oak and pine forests. After the walk there is free time to explore Prokopi. The area is rich in history with a combination of Greek and British heritage. Prokopi is home to the church of St. John the Russian whose relics were brought here from Turkey during the 1924 population exchange, and the land around was part of the Noel-Baker estate.

**Walk 3:** Mount Dirfys and the Xerovouni Plateau. This semi-circular walk starts and ends in Steni, a pretty mountain village, twenty miles from the hotel. Some steep

walking through chestnut woods, fir-tree forests and up to alpine rock formations is rewarded by amazing views at every turn. At the end of the walk, there will be free time to relax in Steni which has become a popular year-round activity centre with plenty of local tavernas. (6 ½ miles, ascents/descents of 600m).

In your free time, you can relax and enjoy your surroundings at the hotel. As well as having pleasant gardens, the hotel has an underground walkway to the sea. You can hop on the local bus from outside the hotel for the short trip to Eretria. Or maybe go to the port and take the 20-minute ferry ride for a couple of euros to Oropos on the mainland. Staying on the bus for another twenty minutes brings you to Chalkida, the island's lively capital where there are good shops in the pedestrian area, a Roman aqueduct, a former mosque dating back to the 15th century, and an impressive castle. Going in the other direction on the bus from the hotel three miles down the coast, you can admire the Byzantine churches in the town of Amarynthos.

There will also be optional excursions on offer (subject to minimum numbers as always) including a full-day to Delphi, and another to the capital, Chalkida, with its unique tidal phenomenon.

**DAY 8:** Departure transfer to the airport for your flight home.

## YOUR HOTEL

**HOTEL MIRAMARE** ★★★★★, (seven nights)

A family-owned hotel on the coast three miles from Eretria surrounded by groves and orchards. The hotel has extensive, lush gardens, two outdoor pools (not heated), restaurant with panoramic view over the sea, tennis court, basketball court, and a well-equipped fitness room. Standard bedrooms are in one of three annexes and have balcony or terrace, satellite tv, free wifi, safe, fridge, bath/shower, and hairdryer. Deluxe bedrooms in the main building or in the new Green annexe are available at a supplement. The picturesque bay in front is only 130 metres away and has easy access via an underground passage. The local bus service stops in front of the hotel entrance and goes to Eretria (3miles) and then on to Chalkida (12 miles). There is also an inexpensive taxi service available from the hotel. The frequent ferry service from Eretria to Oropos on the mainland operates several times daily. ([www.miramare-eretria.gr](http://www.miramare-eretria.gr))

**If you have friends who are not walkers interested in this itinerary, it is featured in our Escorted Holidays brochure with a touring programme.**