

VOLOS

THE COUNTRY OF CENTAURS

PRESENTATION OF THE AREA

THE REGION



Volos is one of the largest Greek cities and one of the major ports of the country. It is located in the **center of Greece** (320 km north of Athens and 219 km south of Thessaloniki) and built in the cove of Pagasitikos at the foot of Mount Pelion. It combines the charm of the sea with the mysterious beauty of the Centaurs **Mountain**. The beautiful city is connected with the famous Argonauts, one of the major epics of Greek mythological cycle.

Mount Pelion was in Greek mythology the **land of the Centaurs**, mythological creatures with the upper body of a human and the lower body of a horse. The fairest of them, Chiron trained **the sons of the gods and heroes** in a cave below the summit of Pelion. Asclepius and Achilles, the hero of the Trojan War, were among his most famous students.

The **wealth** of the region and its great **history** is reflected in every part of the city. There are a many **mansions**, public palaces, museums, industrial facilities of the 20th century and historical churches which make the visit in Volos really enjoyable.



The visitor can wander around the beautiful seafront with picturesque shops, the famous “tsipouro” places, where you can enjoy traditional tsipouro (drink produced by grapes) and tasteful seafood. The **pedestrian seaside avenue Argonauts** and the passenger port in the western end, with stunning views to the open sea, is the most popular meeting point and promenade for residents and visitors of the city.

Volos has many attractions to satisfy even the most demanding visitor. The **great industrial buildings**, vestiges of the boom of Volos in the first half of the 20th century will certainly win your attention. The large **district of Nea Ionia**, built by the refugee population from Asia Minor, has formed the physiognomy of the city. Urban mansions in the center, the port and the railway station, and the working-class districts on the outskirts form a very charming residential context.

The central streets **Iasonos, Demetriados and Ermou** create the “heart” of the historic center, where most of the commercial activities and nightlife take place. Students of the University of Thessaly keep the city alive.

During summer months, a visitor can enjoy a lot of **beautiful beaches** - many of which have been awarded Blue Flags – in the Pagasetic Gulf or in the Aegean Sea, and can also visit **Skiathos, Skopelos and Alonissos (Sporades Islands)** for a day-long getaway.



SIGHTSEEING – DESTINATIONS

In the city of Volos it is worth visiting:

- The Argonauts Boulevard, where you can see “**Argo**” (at the port), the work of sculptor Nikolas and “trademark” of the city, and the hull of modern Argo (made in the image of the ancient), an important shipbuilding achievement.
- The beautiful **Papastratos building** (1926) with its special architecture, which currently hosts services and faculties of the University of Thessaly.
- The **district “Palia”** (old city) - estimated to have been continuously inhabited from 3000 BC, and according to one version identified as ancient Iolkos - to admire the Roman baths, the ruins of the castle (mid 6th century. AD) the Ottoman gunpowder (1600), the square of St. Theodore and the former Tsalapatas factory (1925), which today houses the Brickworks Museum.
- “**Rigas Feraios**” **Square** - the largest city - with its impressive City Hall and the building of the Municipal Theatre with the greatest scene in the Balkans.
- The large **park of Saint Constantine**, the homonymous church (work of the important architect Zachos, 1936) and Anavros park with outdoor sculpture.
- The **cinema Achillion** (1925) designed by the architect K. Argyris.
- **Goritsa hill** with the church of Panagia (1892) at the top for a panoramic view of the city and the Virgin of Hole, built in a cave by the sea.



Daily excursions near Volos:

- In a close distance in the west of the city there are the **archaeological sites of Sesklo** (the settlement dates back to 6000 BC and is the oldest in Europe) and **Dimini**, which is the most famous prehistoric settlement of Greece and the most important of the younger Neolithic Period.
- To the north and east, there is the imposing mountain of Pelion, the mythical mountain of legends and Centaurs. On the mountain, there are dozens of famous **traditional villages** built with the unique architecture of Pelion (most of the 15th-16th c.). A **modern ski resort** is situated near the village of Hania.
- The steam train of Pelion, "Moutzouris-Smudgy" (works, almost continuously, from 1895 and connects Lehonia village, close to sea, with Milies village at an altitude of 400 m.) makes an unforgettable journey.



Daily excursions:

SKIATHOS: THE COSMOPOLITAN ISLAND OF SPORADES IN THE NORTHWEST AEGEAN!

Skiathos is one of the most vibrant and youthful destinations in Greece with beautiful beaches, narrow streets and bustling night life combining tranquillity, serenity and fun. The journey by catamaran or ferry is not only beautiful but also short, only a 30-nautical-mile distance from the port of Volos. The town of Skiathos, a modern resort with an excellent tourist infrastructure, is the only settlement on the island. Located in the southeastern part of the island in a gulf that separates Bourtzi island in two, the settlement is relatively new since it was built around 1829-1830 in the place of the ancient city. The great natural harbour has always been a trademark, which regulated the life of the city in past and in modern times. Nowadays, the port is predominated by yachts, which gives the island a strong cosmopolitan character. Walking through the village, the visitor is charmed by the paved footpaths, whitewashed houses with tiles, the picturesque harbor and beautiful **Bourtzi**.



SKOPELOS: ENJOY SOME HOLLYWOOD AIR!

Seductively lush landscapes, emerald waters dreamy shores, Pelion architecture, natural beauty, majestic monasteries and authentic island atmosphere compose the picture of Skopelos, one of the greenest islands in Greece since the majority is covered by virgin pine forest. Its beauty is the reason that Skopelos was chosen for the shooting of the movie “**Mamma Mia**”, thus making the island a renowned tourist destination all over the world! From the **port** of Volos is about 60 nautical miles and you can reach it by catamaran or ferry. The tour of the island begins from the beautiful amphitheatrically built **Chora** with its picturesque cobblestone streets, scattered churches and the beautiful island houses with flowery gardens surrounding the castle. The **view**



from the top of the **castle** to the village, the harbor and the chapel of the Tower Mary is naturally captivating. Experience the history and tradition of the island, making a stop at **Folk Skopelos Museum**, housed in a restored mansion of the last century.

ALONISSOS: ENJOY NATURE IN ALL ITS GLORY!

Alonissos, with **countless beautiful beaches** and small deserted islands in a fantastic natural environment is the ultimate setting for truly **relaxing holidays**. Alonissos lies 68 nautical miles from Volos and you can visit it by catamaran or ferry. When you reach the island you admire the scenic **Patitiri**, port and capital of the island, which was named by the presses of wine, when the main occupation of the locals was viticulture. Then the visitor can go to **Chora** (or Old Town), the old capital of the island, the medieval castle overlooking the sea. You will have the opportunity to wander through the cobbled streets of the village with stone houses, picturesque courtyards and beautiful **churches** (Christ, St. Athanasius, St. George) and the traditional threshing floors. Follow the path that leads to the chapel of St. Anargyroi built in a dense pine forest - an unforgettable experience in a unique landscape!

TRIKERI

In the most southern tip of Pelion and on top of the ancient cape Aianteion, Trikeri is located 81 km from Volos and at 300 mt altitude. Although the houses are densely built together on the hill, at 340 meters from the sea, Trikeri is a sea village that reveals the diversity of Pelion. The inhabitants were fishermen, sponge divers and captains. Trikeri was a flourishing village and that is evidenced by the old mansions, the luxurious and expensive female traditional costumes, which are among the most beautiful and expensive dresses in Greece, and the fishing fleet is still a large part of the fishing power of Magnesia.





METEORA

Meteora is, after Mount Athos, the second largest monastery establishment in Greece. In a region of almost inaccessible sandstone peaks, monks settled on these 'columns of the sky' from the 11th century onwards. Historical evidence suggests that the monasteries of Meteora were thirty in total. Only six are in operation today and receive many pilgrims. But there are many abandoned smaller monasteries. Meteora is a 142.9-km-drive from the city of Volos. The name Meteora is newer and is not mentioned by ancient writers. Their name was given by Saint Athanasios the Meteorite, founder of the monastery of the Transfiguration (Great Meteoron), who named it the "wide stone", which was first staged in 1344. In Meteora, there are preserved treasures, relics and many miniature works. A representative sample of miniature masterpiece is the wooden temple located in the catholic of the Monastery of St. Stephen. The Monasteries of Meteora are included in the UNESCO Monuments of world cultural Heritage.

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