On Foot on the Island of Evia



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Guided Walking Holidays	Greece & Greek Islands	4 & 6	1050kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

It may be Greece's second-largest island after Crete, but Evia's charms are much lesser known. Separated from the mainland by little more than a sliver of Aegean Sea, this island stunner rewards with superb archaeological finds, lovely vineyards, and glittering beaches where you may not see another soul. Walkers will love Dimosari Gorge for its waterfalls, rocky ravines, and mysterious Dragon Houses – a collection of megalithic structures buried deep in the mountains. Equally standout is the south coast town of Karystos - an ideal base for climbing the rocky slopes of the 1,398-metre-high Mount Ochi.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Exploring the historic coastal town of Karystos
- Following old tracks and cobbled mule paths
- Climbing Mount Ochi for dramatic views
- Discovering the island's unique Dragon Houses
- Admiring the waterfalls of Dimosari Gorge
- Sampling local wine

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Return flights from London Heathrow, including baggage and transfers

- A choice of 2 guided walks per day with local leaders (on walking days)
- 7 nights' 4-star accommodation in Karystos
- 7 breakfasts & 7 dinners
- All in-destination transport

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Day 1 **Arrival Day**

Welcome to Hotel Anastasia. Unpack and settle in.

Day 2 **Walking through time**

Today's walks introduce the rich history of the island. Both options are in the vicinity of Castello Rosso. The 'Red Castle' is perched on top of Montofoli Hill overlooking the Bay of Karystos. This 13th century castle was built on top of Byzantine foundations and was then developed further by the Franks, Venetians and Turks. After our walks are complete we will visit a beekeeper to learn about honey production on the island and have a chance to sample some sweet local produce and and perhaps purchase a souvenir from your trip.

Option 1 - Walking through time: Lala and Castello Rosso

Distance: 5 miles (8km)

Total ascent: 1,200 feet (360m)

In summary: The walk meanders through the villages occupying the lower slopes of the Mt Ochi Range that dominates the northern skyline. Ascending to the Castello Rosso, dating from the Byzantine period, via the pedestrian gateway of ancient times to offer extensive views back toward the Greek mainland. The route descends through the village of Lala.

Highlight: The extensive views from the Castello Rosso.

Option 2 - Ancient Quarries

Distance: 5 miles (8km)

Total ascent: 1,500 feet (450m)

In summary: The walk begins in the village of Myli, ascending to a Roman quarry to marvel at the enormous columns left behind in the 2nd century AD. Stand in the footsteps of those masons and admire the views down to the Castello below and Karystos Bay beyond.

Highlight: Spectacular views of Castello and Karystos.

Day 3 **Mt Ochi and it's Environs**

Mount Ochi (1,398m) is the highest peak in southern Evia. On its slopes is an excellent specimen of a Dragon House. Built with large slabs of inter-locking stone, these buildings are something of a mystery. It is not certain how old they are or why they were built. The other building of note here is the church of the Prophet Elias, a pretty chapel built in traditional style.

Option 1 - Mt Ochi environs and the Chestnut Forest

Distance: 4 miles (6½km)

Total ascent: 1,300 feet (390m)

In summary: Our journey, one of the longest of the week, offers not only great views, but provides an opportunity for the easier walk to reach a very remote location. Our walk follows a section of the old road, before heading eastward to ascend to a shepherd's hut. A sense of remoteness is achieved, with little evidence of human habitation to be seen. The track passes through the ancient chestnut forest of Kastanolongos, the only remaining chestnut forest in south Evia and a place for quiet contemplation before rejoining the awaiting bus at the foot of Mount Ochi.

Highlight: The ancient chestnut forest of Kastanolongos.

Option 2 - The Dragon House of Mt Ochi

Distance: 6 miles (9½km)

Total ascent: 1,400 feet (420m)

In summary: The walk begins at the road terminus below the higher slopes of Mount Ochi, soon to pass the mountain refuge. Our ascent is steady, and the final stages are on the rock slabs that surround the summit. The chapel of Profitis Ilias is discovered in the final approach to an imposing Dragon House. The summit lies beyond, and the views are ample reward for those last few steep steps. The return is to the south via open tracks with extensive views to the village of Myli encountered earlier in the week.

Highlight: Breathtaking views.

Day 4 **Dragon Houses of Styra**

Styra is 25km northwest of the hotel, but soon reached via the newly constructed highway. Ships left from this city-state to aid the rescue of Helen of Troy. This region contains a number of 'Dragon' Houses; the walks explore three of these and nearby quarries before descending to Styra and its main square where there are several tavernas.

Option 1 - The Dragon Houses of Styra

Distance: 5 miles (8km)

Total ascent: 1,300 feet (390m)

In summary: The walk starts in the village of Zoodochos ascending on tracks and Kalderimi (paved mule tracks) to the Dragon houses and quarries beyond. There is time to explore this area, and add to the speculation of origin and purpose of these structures before descending on good tracks to Styra.

Highlight: Discover the ancient Dragon houses.

Option 2 - Dragon Houses and the Castle of Armena

Distance: 7 miles (11km)

Total ascent: 2,200 feet (660m)

In summary: The walk ascends from the outskirts of Styra to explore the Dragon houses before continuing upwards through the nearby quarries to the little church of Ag. Nikolas below the Mount Kliosi fortifications. Leaving the church to explore the ruins above, we then descend through the majestic limestone framed portal down to disused ancient quarries and on to the square of Styra.

Highlight: Discover the theories behind the construction of the Dragon houses.

Day 5 **Free Day**

Your free day offers the chance to explore the waterfront, shops and harbourside cafés in Karystos. Have a lazy day relaxing by the pool or walk to the main beach and have a swim and then take lunch at one of the many restaurants/ cafés in Karystos. Later this afternoon, for those wishing to join us, we will meet at the hotel and walk with our guide to the Montofoli winery to enjoy a tour and tasting, returning in time for dinner this evening.

You could also join an optional boat trip, which takes in views of Karystos Bay and the nearby Petali Islands towards Marmari. This exhilarating excursion offers a mixture of sightseeing and a short stop on a secluded beach. It may be possible to enjoy a short introduction to snorkelling too. Please ask your leader for further details

Day 6 **Petrokanalo Pass to the Sea**

The Petrokanalo Pass marks the start point of a walk through the beautiful and diverse Dimosari Gorge. This richly vegetated opening in the rocks leads downhill to the small village of Lenosei and then on to the beach. It is thought that people have been walking here since before the Middle Ages; the remains of an old cobbled surface can be seen in places.

Option 1 - Dimosari Gorge

Distance: 4½ miles (7km)

Total ascent: 250 feet (80m)

Total descent: 2,700 feet (810m)

In summary: From the Petrokanalo pass, the entrance gate to the Dimosari Gorge path is soon found. The route through the gorge was the only route from the north of the island peninsula to the port of Karystos, and today sections of the original stone cobbles can still be seen. The path descends steeply, sometimes with made steps, to meet the stream, soon to become a river. Even in the height of summer, water continues to flow. The path follows the gorge beneath chestnut and plain trees, passing majestic waterfalls through to the small hamlet of Lenosei and its church.

Highlight: One of the most beautiful trails in Greece.

Option 2 - Dimosari Gorge

Distance: 6 miles (9½km)

Total ascent: 600 feet (180m)

Total descent: 3,800 feet (1,140m)

In summary: After following the same route as the easier group, the route continues on Lenosei's access track then descends to an abandoned mill on the bankside, and follows the river bed to the sea.

Highlight: Discover the impressive Dimosari Gorge with its majestic waterfalls.

Day 7 **Bridges, Poseidon's Temple and Riverside Paths to Potami Beach**

Today we will explore the eastern shores with the chance to enjoy a communal meal at a delightful beachside tavern with stunning views.

Option 1 - Poseidon's Temple and Riverside Paths

Distance: 4 miles (6½km)

Total ascent: 500 feet (150m)

In summary: Starting in the village of Platanistos we descend to the restored packhorse bridge, featured in most postcards, crossing the stream whose source is in the ancient chestnut forests explored earlier in the week. The descent is interspersed with an exploration for the remains of Poseidon's temple, before descending through the river meadows and olive groves behind Potami beach.

Highlight: Opportunity for a swim or a wander along the seashore.

Option 2 - Waterfalls, Bridges, and Artefacts

Distance: 5 miles (8km)

Total ascent: 600 feet (190m)

Total descent: 1,300 feet (400m)

In summary: From Platanistos we continue inland to visit one of the few waterfalls of the area, before continuing downstream to join the route of the easier walk from the packhorse bridge.

Highlight: Picture-postcard scenery on our route.

Day 8 **Departure Day**

We hope to see you again soon.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Gentle walking grade 4

The most active Gentle grade, with longer walks, some ascent, and possible steps, stiles, or off-path uneven ground. Typically, 6-7 miles (10-12km) with around 1,000ft (300m) of ascent.



Moderate walking grade 6

Longer full day walks with more ascent and varied terrain. Good fitness and agility are needed. Typically, 9-10 miles (15-16km) with around 1,500ft (460m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

4-star Hotel Anastasia - Evia

The 4-star Hotel Anastasia enjoys a beachfront location in the charming coastal town of Karystos and is a winner of several HF Holidays Hotel Awards for its fantastic staff, abundant breakfast and mouth-watering evening meals. It's conveniently situated just 300m from the town centre, allowing you to explore the local shops and culture, enjoy the harbourside cafés, or hire a bicycle to explore deserted nearby bays.

Your evenings

The friendly atmosphere of our Guided Walking holidays continue into the evening.

Enjoy a glass of wine or local beer whilst listening to our leaders outlining the next day's walks.

After dinner, you can join your group in a walk into the resort for a coffee or just have a relaxed conversation with your fellow guests.

Your leaders will be checking for local events going on nearby.

FOOD & DRINK

Dining at the Hotel Anastasia

Holidays on Evia are half-board and the hotel is proud to serve a specially recognised 'Greek Breakfast' as well as a 3-course evening meal.

Breakfast

This hotel offers a self-service buffet that includes fruit juices, cereals, fruit, cold meat and cheeses, home-made preserves, some traditional Greek items and Greek coffee and teas are available.

Lunch (payable locally)

This hotel offers picnic lunches at a small additional cost. Alternatively, ingredients can be purchased from the local shops and on certain days it may be possible to eat in local cafés, your leaders will advise you of these options.

Evening meal

A 3-course evening meal is served with a combination of local specialitites and international cuisine. Vegetarian and special diets are catered for, we ask you to speak to the management of the hotel on arrival. One evening, we will also dine externally at a local restaurant to experience traditional cuisine, which will be a set menu.

Drinks

The hotel has a well-stocked bar serving beer, wine and spirits.

ROOMS

Your room at the Hotel Anastasia

There are 29 stylish and spacious en-suites bedrooms all with:

- King size or twin beds
- Air conditioning
- Private balcony
- TV
- Wi-Fi (free of charge)
- Hairdryer
- Room safe
- Mini-bar
- Non-smoking rooms available

ABOUT YOUR STAY

Facilities at the Hotel Anastasia

This hotel has:

- Outdoor pool
- Pool/Lounge bar
- Restaurant with delightful Aegean Sea views

Beauty and massage facilities are also on offer for guests.

TRAVEL DETAILS

Address

Anastasia Hotel
West Beach
Karystos,
34001, Greece

Tel: 0030 22 2402 7222

LOCAL AREA

There are a number of local shops within a short walking distance of the hotel where you can obtain the basic necessities, ingredients for a packed lunch and plenty of gift shopping.

TRIP INFORMATION

EU Walking Safety

We are committed to running our Guided Walking holidays in a safe manner and your co-operation with this is much appreciated. No outdoor activity can be 100% risk free; however, if you take sensible precautions and adhere to your leaders' instructions, your holiday will be both safe and enjoyable. On the first evening of your holiday (dependent on arrival time), the leaders will give a short talk about safety on the walks – we would ask everyone to attend.

Walking as a group: Our leaders always consider the safety of the group as a whole, and will show more caution over potential risks (such as bad or exceptionally hot weather) than an individual or couple might make on a private outing. Walks may be modified or cancelled following the leaders' assessment of the day-to-day situation. Your leaders will refuse to accept any guest whose clothing, equipment, behaviour or walking ability is considered unsuitable, and where it could affect the safety and enjoyment of other guests on the proposed walk. It is your responsibility to follow the leader's guidelines, for the benefit and safety of the group as a whole. If you leave the group, then your leader will no longer have responsibility for you. For safety reasons, we stipulate a minimum party size of two guests in addition to the leader. First aid: In line with current practice, each leader carries a group first aid kit but is not able to supply any 'medication', including aspirin, paracetamol, antihistamines and antiseptic cream.

Hydration: In warm weather it is very important to keep hydrated. You will need to carry a minimum of two litres of water with you on walks, more during hot weather or on more demanding walks. One good way of hydrating is to use a two litre hydration pack which allows drinking without constant stopping. This can then be filled up from additional water sources as required. Your leader will inform you of the possibilities for replenishing your water during the walks.

Your health: It is essential that you describe on your guest registration form any health condition or disability you may have. The leaders will treat this confidentially and may be able to take it into account on the walks; for example, by not delaying lunch if they know they have someone with diabetes in their party.

VACCINATIONS & HEALTH

Vaccinations & health information

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see whether any health precautions are needed for your trip. Health advice and requirements can change, so we recommend doing this in good time before travel.

As a general rule, travellers should ensure they are up to date with routine UK vaccinations and boosters, including, for example, MMR and diphtheria, tetanus and polio. Some countries may require you to have specific vaccinations such as Malaria, Rabies and Yellow Fever. Please check with your GP if you are unsure.

Please note that the use or possession of some common prescription or over-the-counter medicines is restricted or banned in certain countries. If you will be carrying medication, you should check with the relevant embassy or consulate before travelling. As an extra precaution, we recommend keeping medication in its original packaging, carrying a copy of your prescription, and, where possible, asking your pharmacist to provide the medication name in the language of the country you are visiting.

For further country-specific health advice, visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.traveldoctor.co.uk. If you are travelling from outside the UK, please consult your own doctor and check local entry requirements.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Passport & Visa information

This information is for those travelling with a full 'British Citizen' passport; for all other nationalities or passport holders, please check with your local consulate for advice.

Passport Requirements

This information applies to travellers holding a full British Citizen passport. Entry requirements vary by destination and can change at short notice. For most EU and worldwide destinations, passports must be valid for the entire duration of your stay. Some countries also require a minimum period of validity remaining on your passport (often up to 6 months beyond your return date), even if you are not staying that long.
We strongly recommend ensuring your passport has at least six months' validity remaining at the time of travel to avoid any issues.

If you hold a different type of British passport or a passport issued by another country, you must check the requirements with the relevant embassy, consulate, or official government website.

Visa Requirements

Visa rules depend on your nationality, destination, length of stay, and purpose of travel, and they can change frequently. It is your responsibility to check whether you require a visa before travelling.
British passport holders should check the latest entry, passport validity and visa requirements for their destination on the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) website:
https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Swimcap (compulsory in Itialian resorts)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags

- Rubbish bags
- Insect repellent

Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device (excluding Bhutan, Georgia and India)

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITHOUT FLIGHTS)

Without flights

If you are booking on a land-only basis, you can join the group transfer at an additional cost. To do so, your arrival and departure times must be in line with the scheduled group flight timings. Guests travelling at different times will need to arrange their own transfers. Please contact us before booking to discuss the available options and costs.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so before you travel.

For more information about healthcare and its costs, please visit: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/

Drinking Water

Drinking Water

Standards for drinking water vary widely around the world. In many destinations, tap water may not be safe to drink, brush your teeth with, or use for making ice. Where advised, you should drink only bottled or treated water and ensure that bottle seals are intact before use. If bottled water is unavailable, water should be boiled or filtered.

Staying well hydrated is particularly important in hot climates and during active holidays. Carry water with you and drink regularly.

If you are unsure about local water safety, check official country-specific health advice before travel, or ask your accommodation or local guides for guidance once you arrive.

Telephone Code for Evia

If the international number you wish to call starts with a 0, you must drop the starting digit when dialling the number.
To dial a UK number 0044
To dial a Greek number 0030

Language Information for Evia

The local language is Greek.

LOCAL CURRENCY

The local currency is the Euro (€)

ELECTRICITY

Electricity information for Evia

220 Volt AC with round two pin plugs; you will need an adaptor for any appliances brought from the UK.

ATM AVAILABILITY

ATM availability for Evia

There are several ATM machines in Karystos where you can obtain money.

TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

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