



## DESTINATION KOS

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# Island overview

## Introduction

Kos Island is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest island in the Dodecanese (Rhodes holds the 1<sup>st</sup> place and Karpathos the 2<sup>nd</sup> one) and the 2<sup>nd</sup> one in terms of population (Rhodes keeps the 1<sup>st</sup> place even in this category). Situated in the Southeastern Aegean Sea, is 200 nautical miles away from Piraeus, the major Greek port. Ferries depart on a daily basis from Piraeus port to Kos, offering a distinctive trip with a unique view to the deep-blue Aegean Sea waters. Kos can also be accessed by airplane; the flight lasts less than an hour.



## Get familiarized to Kos Island

Kos is renowned as the birthplace of Hippocrates, the Father of Western Medicine, but apart from the first doctor in history, Kos is also proud of being the homeland of significant poets and notable philosophers. Kos reflects the outcome of the ideal combination between impressive cultural tradition and outstanding natural beauty. Consequently, it seems to be a really blessed place.

Kos covers 287.2km and has a coastline of 112km, so it is neither too big to make you feel tired nor too small to make you feel bored. Kos offers a great variety of accommodation, sports and leisure, entertainment, sightseeing, and excursions options. What makes Kos unique in comparison to the other islands of Dodecanese is the moderate climatic conditions. Kos climate ensures nice and hot summers, and mild winters. Humidity levels are low and the refreshing breeze revives the senses.

## A glance at the history

Kos has a rich historical tradition. The first historically known inhabitant of Kos was the so-called tribe of "Pelasgians". Since the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium B.C., Kos has shown interesting agricultural activities along with remarkable development of arts.

Archeological findings witness that throughout its history, Kos has changed several names. This used to happen because whenever a new dynasty exercised its power, considered as appropriate to re-name the island. Indicatively, Kos has taken names such as "Meropis" and "Karis".

Nowadays, Kos seems more fascinating than ever before. The multicultural character, the historical and cultural monuments, the variety of cultural and social scenes, along with the incomparable natural beauty Kos are promoted through an integrated tourism plan which focuses in the emergence of Kos competitive advantages. Consequently, visitors enjoy this fruitful attempt.

Kos is a "vivid museum" with a great variety of differentiated images of natural beauty. Exotic beaches and cozy mountain villages compose an interestingly contradictory puzzle. Furthermore, Kos, located just 3 nautical miles from Asia Minor coast, gives you the chance to depart to Turkey and in less than one hour to start the exploration of mysterious and exotic East.

By offering services that meet the highest of the standards and can fulfill the most demanding criteria, Kos should be top priority for anyone seeking to add a memorable and incomparable chapter to his/her travelling agenda.

## What to see

### Sightseeing / Things to see and do in Kos

This is an index of Kos most popular sightseeing and monuments. There is no doubt that you will remember all the proposed activities for lifelong.



### Asclipeion / The Sanctuary of Asclepius

Asclipeion is the most well-known archeological sight in Kos. It was the place where Hippocrates used to act, and also a place of worship of Asclepius. Asclipeion is situated within a 5-minute distance from the town of Kos. Monuments, temples, and sanctuaries of Classic and Roman Times are still preserved nowadays. (Platani, tel. +30 22420 28763. Admission: €4. Opening hours: Tuesday – Sunday, 08:00-15:00).

### **International Hippocratic Foundation of Kos**

IHFk, a non-profit organization dedicated to Hippocrates (the so-called Father of Western Medicine) built in 1960, is located 0,5km east from Asclipeion and 3,5km south-west from Kos city centre. IHFK "embraces" an impressive hillside (670 meters above sea level) offering a unique view. The location is idyllic especially from March to August, when various kind of flowers blossom setting an unrepeatably scenery. IHFK's gardens host 100 from the totally 256 therapeutical plants that Hippocrates was cultivating in order to use them to his medical treatments.

(Platani, tel. +30 22420 22131, [www.ihfk.gr](http://www.ihfk.gr). Admission: free. Opening hours: Monday – Sunday, 09:00-13:00).

### **Hippocrates Garden**

This is a renowned cultural center dedicated to the Father of Western Medicine, Hippocrates. It is located on Mastichari village, 22km west from the town of Kos, and it depicts a typical ancient Greek village, in order to highlight the ancient Greek lifestyle. One has the opportunity to visit a typical ancient Greek residence and to be familiarized to ancient medical techniques. Perimetrical of Hippocrates Garden organic farming activities are developed, so as to, along with interesting seminars that take place indoors, motivate people to rearrange their priorities and put nature's preservation in the epicenter of their interests.

(Mastichari, tel. +30 22420 59294, [www.hippocratesgarden.gr](http://www.hippocratesgarden.gr))

### **Hippocrates Square (Platanos Square)**

The most popular spot in town is located on the edge of Akti Kountourioti, behind the Commandery. The trunk of the 2.400-year-old tree, actually the most ancient tree in Europe –it is said that the Father of Medicine used to teach under its shadow- is 10m long. Around the square, one can admire the Roman fountain and the mosque of Lotzia, built in 1786 (Italian used the mosque as a salt store), while can also go shopping at the nearby shops.

### **Castle of Neratzia**

This is the most well-preserved knights' fort in Kos, built in 1445 on an islet attached to the Island of Kos, where the small port is. The building material that was used for its construction, was taken from the ancient town, while along with the castle of Bodrum, was the checking point for the sea passage towards the Holly Land during the Crusades.

(Admission, €3. Opening hours: Monday – Sunday, 09:00-15:00).

### **Castle of the Knights (Antimacheia)**

This castle, built in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, is not as renowned as the abovementioned. However its history is with no doubt remarkable. Situated in the area of

Antimacheia, it was used by the Knights of Saint John who wanted to enhance the defensive capacity of Kos. Nowadays, in the Castle one can find the church of Agia Paraskevi, the one of Agios Nikolaos, and the ruins of Panagia e Eleimonitra Orthodox Church.

### **Western Archeological Area & the Casa Romana**

On the west side of the town, roads, a gymnasium, Nimfeo, thermal springs, residences and the renowned Casa Romana (the residence of a Roman commandant), with its very preserved mosaics, have come to light. Roman Conservatory, which still hosts music performances, is situated in a very short distance from there.

(Town of Kos, tel. +30 22420 23234)

### **Archeological Museum of Kos**

The Archeological Museum, housed in a preserved Italian building (built in 1933), includes exhibits from the Neolithic Times to the Roman ones. Among the exhibits, the classic statues and the elaborate mosaics stand out.

(Eleftherias sq., tel. +30 22420 28326. Admission: €3. Monday – Sunday, 09:00-14:00).

### **Old Pili**

The medieval castle in Palio Pili, 15 km from Kos town, towards Kefalos, is called "Mistras of the Dodecanese". If you walk up the steep acclivity, you will find, apart from the church of Panagia Kastriani, built in 1080, a hidden café. This is built in a rock, and there you can enjoy traditional Greek coffee and spoon sweets.

## **What to do**

### **Tiny urban train trip in Kos Town & Asclipeion**

Both the two tiny urban trains depart from the Town Hall on a daily basis every 30' (08:00 – 17:30 & 18:00 – 22:30). The tour takes roughly 20'. This is a unique chance to glance at Kos basic sightseeing, monuments and Asclipeion. Between 08:00 and 17:30 there is a tourist guide in order to provide assistance and all the needed information.

[City Hall, Akti Kountourioti, tel. +30 22420 26276.

Admission: €5 (students: €2, 5)].



**Cycling in Foinikon Boulevard (Palm Trees Boulevard)** [Cycling group of Kos, Kolokotroni 7B, tel. +30 22420 25807]

Kos seems perfect for cyclers since it has a 15 km cycling boulevard, something not ordinary for the average Greek island. It's too easy to hire a bike, so take a cycle, ride it and explore Kos narrow cobbled-streets, and or the tranquil area of Palio Limani (yacht marina). Don't miss to enjoy cycling in Foinikon Boulevard, one of the most adorable boulevards in Greece. The more demanding cyclers will love mountain bike and trekking sessions in Kos Mountains. This kind of sessions is also available in Kalymnos and Nisyros as well.

(Kos bike activities – Kipriotis Village, tel. +30 6944150129 / 6989479455)

### **Traditional products shopping**

Undoubtedly you have to try sweet tiny tomato (spoon sweet stuffed with almond), "katimeria" (twisted fried cheese pie with mizithra cheese served with honey and cinnamon), thyme honey, and traditional "kanelada" (cinnamon drink). Since Kos hosts renowned vineyards, one have to taste fine wines and a distinctive kind of cheese, the so-called "krasotiri" (wine cheese or "possa's" cheese: cheese baked with red wine). (Community market of Kos, Elefthereias sq. Opening hours: Monday – Sunday, 08:00-22:30).

### **Sunset in Zia**

The small village of Zia, 15km form Kos town, offers the most captivating sunset view in Kos. Located on the top of Dikaios Mountain, Zia is renowned for its spring of natural mineral water and the greenside hills. From Zia you can see out over Kalymnos, Pserimos, and Turkish Aegean coast.

### **Horse riding**

Try a memorable horse riding session in one of Kos riding centers and enjoy Kos beauties from a different point of view.

# Where to swim

## BEACHES

*"Surrender to the crystal clear waters of Kos"*

Paradoxically, it isn't widely known that the "light blue pallet" of Kos is one of the most impressive Greek ones, since it combines regular, but absolutely lovely, beaches with thermal ones (thermal beaches have strong therapeutical characteristics). Kos hosts various types of beaches which can satisfy any demand.



The notable Psalidi beach is located on the east side of Kos Island and 3,5km from the town of Kos. Psalidi beach is easily accessible through a convenient road. This is a well-organized beach with both sand and pebbles (touching the pebbles is like a free and relaxing session of reflexology), and a variety of water-sports facilities available for all ages. The crystal clear waters with the high salt content and the refreshing sea streams offer you the opportunity to enjoy the experience of a natural revival and therapeutic spa.

This area hosts the luxury Kipriotis Group hotel rooms and suites which stand as the perfect option for absolutely incomparable accommodation experiences.

If you want to stay in a close distance from the city centre, Lampi is your destination. This well-organized and always crowded beach is the place where North Europeans love to be. Lampi's beach bars are busy 24/7 during the touristic season. Equally busy is the popular Kardamaina beach.

Kefalos unique beaches, Kamila, Paradise and Psilos Gremos (with crystal-clear waters and vast sandy beaches), are also on top of the agenda. Within a 12km distance from the town, you will find the sandy beaches of Marmari and Tigaki, both perfect for families.

If you want to have a challenging surf session, follow the street signs directing you towards Marmari and Limnionas.

# Gastronomy

Kos is an idyllic destination for anyone seeking traditional local recipes for food and pastries.



Kos has a distinctive "sweet" tradition. Among the most popular pastries is the sweet tiny tomato stuffed with almond (spoon sweet). Moreover exceptionally tasteful are "katimeria" (twisted fried cheese pie with mizithra cheese served with honey and cinnamon) and the renowned thyme honey of Kos. The menu is almost endless, but "krasotiri" or "possa's cheese" deserves a special mention. The red wine that comes from the fruitful vineyards of Kos is used for this kind of spicy cheese to be baked in. Visitors of Kos use to be addicted to "kanelada", a traditionally made refreshing cinnamon drink. There is no case to miss it; it's absolutely delicious.

Greeks love meat and always they try to have the finest selection of beef, pork, lamb, and chicken. Kos keeps a distinctive position among meat producers in Greece, so you have to taste the delicious meat-based recipes of Kos, such as stuffed lamb, and pork served with groats. However, Kos also the right place to enjoy incomparably fresh and tasteful seafood. Greek meze based on various kinds of fishes and octopus meatballs will captivate even the most demanding seafood lovers.

Furthermore, Kos has a challenging variety of traditionally prepared pies (cheese pies etc.), made by local herbs (thyme, oregano, etc.) and extra virgin olive oil. Apart from the outstanding local recipes, there is also a great range of other options. Kos used to be a place where different cultures were connecting, a crossroad of various civilizations. This rich history is also depicted in food choices. Actually, the Muslim neighborhood of Kos is the perfect place to enjoy authentically exotic dishes from the Turkish culinary tradition.

Finally, there is a plethora of restaurants which focus on differentiated types of cuisine and they can fulfill any gastronomical desire, even the most sophisticated one.

## Night life

Kos Island offers a remarkable plethora of options in terms of entertainment. Whether you are looking for calm and quiet nightlife options, or for frenetic dancing tempo, you have visited the right place.

The Old Town (Palia Poli), accessible through Agias Paraskevis square, is ideal early in the evening. Walking the traditionally designed cobbled streets, visitors have the chance to glance at the colorful market's fashionable stores and shopping corners.

If you consider yourself a party maniac, the Town (Poli) is your destination. Exarcheia area and its side-streets constitute a neighborhood full of cozy music bars where clubbers tend to warm-up for their coming nights out, or to listen to music and dance in a chill out atmosphere.



Moreover, Kos Island offers great variety of choices for anyone who seeks live music shows, and or all day long beach bar relaxing choices.

There is no doubt that Labi with the chic sea-front bars is the absolute terminus for stylish people looking for sophisticated nightlife options.

## Excursions

### Trips

Kos Island is advantageously located in the middle of wonderful Greek islands and adorable islets scattered in the Aegean Sea. Whether you prefer a one day trip via ferry boat (there is daily connection), or you are in favour of a mini cruise, you have the chance to make a fast and relaxing visit to stunning Kalymnos, Nisyros,

Patmos, Leros, Marathi, and Pserimos. Furthermore, Kos Island stands just a few nautical miles away from the Turkish Aegean coastline. On a daily basis ferries depart from Kos and in about fifty minutes reach Bodrum's crowded port. Visiting Bodrum (the ancient Greek city of Alicarnassos) signifies the symbolic travelling to an entirely different world and gives you the opportunity to be familiarized to a mysterious cultural environment.

\*For further information please do not hesitate to contact the Reception



## How to reach us

The Dodecanese Islands are located in the southeast part of the Aegean Sea and consist of twelve major islands and a number of smaller islands. Amongst the largest and most popular islands of the Dodecanese complex is the island of Kos and the island of Rhodes.

### Kos island

#### BY AIR

Kos International Airport **Hippocrates** is the fourth largest airport in Greece right after the new airport of Athens **Eleftherios Venizelos**, **Macedonia** in Thessaloniki and **Nikos Kazantzakis** in Crete.

Direct charter flights land on Kos from all major European cities.

Jumbo Jets land of Kos

- ☐ Three daily flights from Athens by Olympic Airways
- ☐ Two daily flights from Athens by Aegean Airways
- ☐ One daily flight from Thessaloniki by Olympic

#### BY SEA

Numerous daily connections with all the Dodecanesian islands. Approximate duration of travel: one to two hours.

Daily connections to the port of Piraeus. Duration of travel approximately 7 hours

#### BLUE STAR FERRIES

Tel: +30 210 8919800

Airways

For information of flights, call:

OLYMPIC AIRWAYS Tel. +30 801 801 01 01

AEGEAN AIRLINES Tel. +30 801 11 20000