



# Astraeus

Discover the Real Greek Cyclades

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## Easter in Syros. 24<sup>th</sup> April – 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019

Syros is to us always a very special island but Easter is very special as it has Papal dispensation for the Catholic Church to celebrate Easter at the same time as the Orthodox Church. Being at the end of April in 2019 means there should be some lovely spring sunshine. To follow some packages, we have created which we really hope will appeal to our discerning clients. As with all our holidays, these can be further personalised. Please note **places on each package are limited**, so if you are interested please contact us as soon as possible. These are not guided tours but we will be with you as much or as little as you want us to be. Scroll down for

- ❖ Option 1 – Syros and Athens Combined, itinerary and packages
- ❖ Option 2 – Syros with the first night on Mykonos, Itinerary and packages.
- ❖ Our blog about Easter in Syros
- ❖ Further hotel information
- ❖ Flight information
- ❖ Further information and terms.

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## Option 1

### Greek Easter Syros and Athens Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April – Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May

Suitable for flights from London Gatwick, Heathrow, Stanstead and Luton and also Manchester and Dublin flight prices are not included.

- 24<sup>th</sup> April: Arrive Athens you will be met by private transfer for one-night stay Piraeus Theoxenia Hotel on arrival at the hotel one of us will meet you for a welcome drink.
- 25<sup>th</sup> April: We will depart early morning, for the ferry to Syros where you will be met at the port and transferred to your hotel
- 26<sup>th</sup> April: **Good Friday** we will arrange for transport if you are staying out of the Capital to bring you in to Ermoupoli in the evening to watch the procession from the Catholic and Orthodox Churches which ends in Mioulis Square.

- 27<sup>th</sup> April again we will arrange for you be transported if you are outside of the Capital to either Ano Syros or the Orthodox Church of the Resurrection to watch the firework display to celebrate the resurrection.
- 28<sup>th</sup> April: **Easter Sunday** – Feasts take place at many restaurants and in the villages, we will book you a table at one of the best, either close to your hotel or at another resort. If you are staying at Syros Atlantis you are welcome to enjoy the family feast there.
- 29<sup>th</sup> April you will be returned to the port of Syros for your early afternoon sailing to Athens (Sea Jet arrival time approx. 16.30) where you will be collected by private transfer and taken to your hotel for a two-night stay
- 30<sup>th</sup> April – Choose between either an Athens Food Tour or an Urban Athens walking tour
- 1<sup>st</sup> May – You will be collected by private transfer and returned to Athens Airport for your return flight.

## Package 1

24<sup>th</sup> April: One-night accommodation Piraeus Theoxenia Hotel. One-night Standard Double or Twin – early morning take-away breakfast.

25<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> April: Four nights Syros Atlantis Hotel, Vari Beach. Double room or twin. Room facilities include bathroom with shower, a/c, Wi-Fi, hairdryer, fridge, kettle. Balcony with village, side sea or countryside view. Rate includes great breakfast

29<sup>th</sup> April – 1<sup>st</sup> May: Two nights' accommodation Fresh Hotel. Double or twin room with breakfast included.

Price for the week **£732.00 pp** based on two sharing. For what is/is not included please see below.

## Package 2

24<sup>th</sup> April: One-night accommodation Piraeus Theoxenia Hotel. One night. Standard Double or Twin – early morning take-away breakfast.

25<sup>th</sup>- 29<sup>th</sup> April: Four nights Benois Hotel. Galissas. Double or twin. Room facilities include Bathroom with shower, a/c, Wi-Fi, hairdryer, fridge. Balcony or terrace with pool, sea or countryside view. Rate includes breakfast.

29<sup>th</sup> April – 1<sup>st</sup> May: Two nights' accommodation Fresh Hotel. Double or twin room with breakfast included.

Price for the week **£772.50 pp** based on two sharing. For what is/is not included please see below.

### Package 3

24<sup>th</sup> April: One-night accommodation Piraeus Theoxenia Hotel. One night. Standard Double or Twin – early morning take-away breakfast.

25<sup>th</sup>- 29<sup>th</sup> April: Four nights Brazzera Hotel. Finikas. Double or twin. Room facilities include Bathroom with shower, a/c, Wi-Fi, hairdryer, fridge. kettle. Balcony with sea-view Rate includes breakfast.

29<sup>th</sup> April – 1<sup>st</sup> May: Two nights' accommodation Fresh Hotel. Double or twin room with breakfast included.

Price for the week **£780.00 pp** based on two sharing. For what is/is not included please see below.

### Package 4

24<sup>th</sup> April: One-night accommodation Piraeus Theoxenia Hotel. One night. Superior Double or Twin – early morning take-away breakfast.

25<sup>th</sup>- 29<sup>th</sup> April: Four nights Ermoupoli Mansion, Ermoupoli. Luxury double or twin room. Room facilities include Bathroom with shower, a/c, Wi-Fi, hairdryer, mini bar. Breakfast is included

29<sup>th</sup> April – 1<sup>st</sup> May: Two nights' accommodation Amelia Hotel Athens. Double or twin deluxe room with breakfast included.

Price for the week **£970 pp** based on two sharing. For what is/is not included please see below.



*Figure 1 Vari Beach*



*Figure 2 Vaporia Syros*

## Option 2

### Greek Easter Mykonos and Syros Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> April – Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May

Suitable for flights from London Gatwick flight prices are not included.

- 24<sup>th</sup> April: Arrive Mykonos you will be met by private transfer for one-night stay in Mykonos Town (for hotel choice please see below) during the evening one of us will meet you for a welcome drink.
- 25<sup>th</sup> April: We will depart early afternoon for the ferry to Syros where you will be met at the port and transferred to your hotel
- 26<sup>th</sup> April: **Good Friday** we will arrange for transport if you are staying out of the Capital to bring you in to Ermoupoli in the evening to watch the procession from the Catholic and Orthodox Churches which ends in Mioulis Square.
- 27<sup>th</sup> April again we will arrange for you be transported if you are outside of the Capital to either Ano Syros or the Orthodox Church of the Resurrection to watch the firework display to celebrate the resurrection.

- 28<sup>th</sup> April: **Easter Sunday** – Feasts take place at many restaurants and in the villages, we will book you a table at one of the best, either close to your hotel or at another resort. If you are staying at Syros Atlantis you are welcome to enjoy the family feast there.
- 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> April take some time to discover our beautiful island.
- 1<sup>st</sup> May – You will be collected by private transfer and returned to Syros Port for your return ferry to Mykonos where you will be met by private transfer and returned to the airport.

## Package 5

1-night accommodation Harmony Boutique Hotel, Mykonos Town. Double or twin room. Balcony with Garden View. Breakfast is included.

6 nights' accommodation Syros Atlantis Hotel. Double or Twin Room. Room facilities include bathroom with shower, a/c, Wi-Fi, hairdryer, fridge, kettle. Balcony with village, side sea or countryside view. Rate includes great breakfast.

Price for the week **£519 pp** based on two sharing. For what is/is not included please see below.

## Package 6

1-night accommodation Harmony Boutique Hotel, Mykonos Town. Double or twin room. Balcony with Garden View. Breakfast is included.

6 nights' accommodation Benios Hotel. Double or Twin Room. Room facilities include bathroom with shower, a/c, Wi-Fi, hairdryer, fridge. Balcony or terrace with pool, sea or countryside view. Rate includes breakfast.

Price for the week **£567 pp** based on two sharing. For what is/is not included please see below.

## Package 7

1-night accommodation Harmony Boutique Hotel, Mykonos Town. Double or twin room with Garden View. Breakfast is included.

6 nights' accommodation Brazzera Hotel Double or Twin Room. Room facilities include bathroom with shower, a/c, Wi-Fi, hairdryer, fridge. Balcony with sea view. Rate includes breakfast.

Price for the week **£590 pp** based on two sharing. For what is/is not included please see below.

## Package 8 (based on 2 couples)

1-night accommodation Apenema Resort, Mykonos Town. Superior double or twin room x 2. Breakfast is included.

6 nights Plagia Villas, Finikas. 3-bedroom villa 2 x bathrooms. Panoramic Sea View with hot tub.

Price for the week **£715 pp** based on four people. For what is/is not included please see below.

## Easter in Syros



Figure 3 Ano Syros

### Harmonious celebration and red eggs!

My blog from 2018 with a contribution about red eggs from Lena!

In April last year I was lucky enough to be staying in Syros with my mother in a lovely apartment overlooking Vaporia and the magnificent Orthodox Church of Agios Nikolaos on Palm Sunday, the churches were full, bells were ringing and people were carrying their Palm Crosses. Unlike most years Easter in 2017 was celebrated on the same date in

both the Western and Orthodox Christian Churches.

The system of calculating (computus) the date of marking the resurrection of Jesus Christ in both Churches is complex, based on the spring equinox and the lunar cycle and the dates can differ by weeks. In 2018 Easter Sunday in the Western Christian church will fall on Sunday 1st of April while in the Orthodox church (Pascha) will fall on Sunday 8th April.

So, on Syros that would mean that the large Catholic community (Syros has been referred to as the Island of the Pope) would be celebrating the Resurrection whilst Orthodox community is still celebrating Palm Sunday? Well no, it may be like that in most mixed Christian communities across the world, but not here. A Papal dispensation means that almost uniquely that the Orthodox and Catholic community in Syros celebrate Easter at the same time, and those celebrations are a must see.

On Good Friday both community's locals and visitors starting from both Orthodox and Catholic Churches in Ermoupoli head out in procession with holy biers, eventually all processions assemble in Miaouli Square where hymns are sung accompanied by the city's band.

The arrival of Easter Sunday is marked by both the Catholic and Orthodox churches on the hills overlooking Ermoupoli letting off fireworks, which can be seen from the whole island, also on a clear night if you are lucky enough to be on one of the hills you can see the fireworks going off on the surrounding islands! Also, on Easter Sunday many villages hold feasts all this and spring in the Cyclades. it's just too good to miss.

As for the red eggs see below!

### Red Eggs

On Maundy Thursday Greeks boil eggs with red-coloured water. The colour is a symbol of Christ's blood and in the old days, before professional colouring, they would boil them with onions, which would give them a light maroon colour. The first egg of the batch is dedicated to Virgin Mary and they place it next to her icon until next Easter. That one will never be eaten (hopefully). The rest will sit tight until Holy Saturday night. If you happen to be strolling down any street, approximately fifteen minutes before midnight on Holy Saturday in any place in Greece, you will see Greeks coming out of their homes in perfect sync. They will be all dressed-up and carrying unlit candles. And chances are that before walking out they grabbed a couple of eggs. At twelve o'clock the bells will start ringing and the priest will start singing the appropriate hymn and people will be cheering and hugging and kissing. All the candles will get lit with Holy light and fireworks will explode for a good ten minutes (sometimes longer). It won't be long before people begin taking eggs out of their bags and pockets and start bumping them against each other. Cracking the other person's egg is your main objective here. A cracked egg is a symbol of new life and Christ's resurrection. That's why as they bump the eggs one person says Christos Anesti (the Christ is risen), to which the other one has to reply Alithos Anesti (Indeed or It is true, he has risen). Some will stay for the Mass which can last till four in the morning but most people start heading back home, carrying the Holy light with them. Before entering the household, they will use the candle's smoke to form a cross on their front door. For up to forty days after Easter, if people see each other for the first time and there are any red eggs left where they are, they will honour the tradition and crack them!



Figure 4 Easter Procession 2018

## Hotel information



*Figure 5 Azoliminos Beach Syros*

All of our hotels are handpicked and chosen for their suitability for our clients.

### **Piraeus Theoxenia (5\*)**

A six-minute walk from the port of Piraeus this 5\* hotel provides high quality accommodation. All rooms have an en-suite with a bath, a mini-bar, a TV with some international channels, a hairdryer and tea/coffee making facilities. The hotel has a restaurant and bar which stay open until midnight and also provide room service until midnight. Breakfast is served too late for early ferries; however, hot drinks, cake and juice are served from early in reception and we have an agreement for them to provide a packed breakfast to eat on the ferry.

### **Syros Atlantis (3\*)**

We are in awe of the service this three-star hotel just behind Vari Beach provides. In an industry where service is the key, this family go above and beyond what even we would expect. Rooms are beautifully decorated with en-suite shower rooms. All rooms have a fridge, kettle, TV and hairdryer, they have large private balconies. Our customers tell us that this hotel provides a fantastic breakfast with lots of homemade

pastries and bread. For their customers the family will be hosting an Easter Sunday Feast this is an additional charge and we will let you have the menu and cost when we have it – you can guarantee it will be fantastic. The hotel has a bar and large terrace area. The family will also cook your evening meal if you do not feel like venturing out.

Vari in Spring is quiet, the beach does not have its beds yet, however there are a couple of restaurants and bars open within walking distance. Vari is on the main bus route to the Capital and the bus takes approximately 15 minutes.

#### **Benois Hotel. (4\*)**

Another really popular hotel with our guests this summer, Benois is situated in front of Galissas beach, the longest on the island. Rooms all include a/c, TV, hairdryers and fridges. The hotel has a snack bar and bar and wonderful terrace. It does have a pool although it may be a little cold in April! Galissas like Vari will be quiet in April, however, there will be restaurants and bars open. The village holds an Easter Sunday Feast and if you chose this option, we will advise you more.

Galissas is also on the main bus route to the capital and there is a bus stop directly outside of the hotel, the journey depending on which way you take the bus takes around 30 minutes.

#### **Brazzera Hotel (3\*)**

Another wonderful hotel (we don't do bad ones!) Brazzera is managed by a mother/daughter combination. The rooms we have planned have panoramic sea-views from wonderful balconies. Each room contains an en-suite with a shower, fridge, kettle, TV, hairdryer and aircon. The hotel has a wonderful roof terrace with views stretching out to sea. There is also a bar and terrace on the ground floor of the hotel.

Brazzera is steps from the sandy beach of Finikas which is narrow and sandy. Finikas itself has a marina, bars and restaurants, some of which will be open in spring. There is also a large mini-market, bakery, butcher and cash point. The bus to town takes around 35 minutes.

#### **Ermoupolis Mansion (5\*)**

Places in this hotel are very limited as it only has a few rooms, they describe it better than I ever could;

*The hotel was built in late 19th century. Because of its important neoclassical architecture, it is listed by the Greek Ministry of Culture as a protected historical monument. Originally built as a house for one of the richest families of Syros, it still preserves its aristocratic authenticity. Among other architectural features, there are two handmade frescos at the ceilings of the lobby and the main veranda. The majority of the furniture consists of antiques manufactured on Syros.*

*Recently transformed to a luxurious boutique hotel, it accommodates up to 10 persons. There is the Luxury Suite that can host two persons, the Family Suite that can host up to four persons and a separate Apartment that can accommodate two to four persons.*

You are close enough to walk in to the capital from this wonderful place. Rooms are differently organised so if you want more information please let me know.

### **Fresh Hotel, Athens. (4\*)**

Located centrally, close to Syntagma Square this modern 4\* hotel is a really popular choice with us and our clients. Rooms are nicely decorated and include en-suites with showers, a/c, TV with some international channels, coffee/tea making facilities, fridges and hairdryers. The hotel also has a wonderful rooftop restaurant and bar with views to the Acropolis. There is also a swimming pool on the roof but that is seasonal! A buffet breakfast is served in the first-floor restaurant area.

Fresh is close enough to walk to all of the major attractions

### **Amalia Athens (4\*)**

Amelia is in a prime position in Syntagma Square overlooking the Greek Parliament and the National Gardens Deluxe rooms are spacious front side rooms, situated in all six floors and offer a balcony, with a view to the National Gardens, Greek Parliament or Lycabettus Hill. The hotel has a lobby lounge with views over the National Gardens which serves drinks and snacks throughout the day/evening. The hotel's restaurant Mezzanine serves buffet breakfast and A la Carte lunch and dinner.

Deluxe rooms come with a bathroom with a bath and or shower, a/c, TV, safe, mini-bar and hairdryer.

### **Harmony Boutique Hotel (4\*)**

Close to Mykonos town and the Old Port. Double rooms with a garden view have an en-suite with a bath or shower, a/c, safe, hairdryer, TV and kettle. With a balcony with a view to the garden.

The hotel has a lounge bar, a restaurant, pool and a spa.

### **Apanema Hotel and Suites (4\*)**

A small new resort hotel on the outskirts of Mykonos Town. Superior rooms have balconies facing the sea, en-suite bathrooms have bath/shower, mini-bar, safe, hairdryer, TV. The hotel is a 10-15-minute walk into Mykonos Town. It has a restaurant pool and bar.

### **Plagia Villas**

These villas are set above the pretty little resort of Finkas and are a 5-minute walk to the marina (down a hill so around 10-15 minutes back up), They are on three levels with two bedrooms on the top level (with balconies. On the middle floor is the living area with a fully equipped kitchen and dining room and a living area outside is a terraced area for eating outside, with steps down to the hot tub. On the ground floor is the third bedroom with its own bathroom. These villas are beautifully furnished and looked after by a lovely owner who really cares about clients. If you are interested in another type of villa please let us know. Groceries can be purchased in Finikas where you will find restaurants and bars and a narrow sandy beach.



Figure 6Plagia Hot Tub

## Flight information

These are the flights we suggest, we can price them and add them to your package. You are also free to purchase them yourself. For routes other than mentioned below such as Bristol and Edinburgh we can repackage an Easter Break for you.

Which ever flight you choose your transfer will be waiting for you on arrival at Athens or Mykonos Airport

### Option 1 24/04/2019 - Athens

Airport	Airline	Departure Times
London Gatwick	Easy Jet	05.45-11.20
London Gatwick	Easy Jet	14.40-20.25
Manchester	Easy Jet	15.45-21.40
London Luton	Ryan Air	07.00 -12.50
London Stanstead	Ryan Air	09.15-14.50
Dublin	Ryan Air	07.25-13.35
London Heathrow	British Airways	07.00-12.45
London Heathrow	British Airways	09.00-14.40
London Heathrow	British Airways	13.15-18.55
London Heathrow	Aegean Airlines	12.15-17-50
London Heathrow	Aegean Airlines	16.35-22.10

**Return 01/05/2018**

Return to Airport	Airline	Return Times
London Gatwick	Easy Jet	12.10-14.05
London Gatwick	Easy Jet	21.05-22.55
Manchester	Easy Jet	22.30-00.25
London Luton	Ryan Air	13.15-15.05
London Stanstead	Ryan Air	16.05-17.55
Dublin	Ryan Air	14.00-16.25
London Heathrow	British Airways	13.35-15.40
London Heathrow	British Airways	15.35-17.30
London Heathrow	British Airways	19.55-21.45
London Heathrow	Aegean Airlines	13.30-15.30
London Heathrow	Aegean Airlines	19.15-21.10

**Option 2 - Mykonos**

London Gatwick	Easy Jet	08.05-13.25
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**Return**

London Gatwick	Easy Jet	14.30-16.25
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*Figure 7 Galissas Beach Syros*

**Further information.**

- We are selling a limited number of these packages, so if you are interested please contact us.
- Availability sells out quickly especially in Syros around Easter, if the stated accommodation is not available, we will quote you on something similar.
- We are aware that some children are still off school and of course can add them to your quote.

- Each package includes all transfers from airports and ports and to and from accommodation. Ferry tickets and accommodation as described.
- For transfers to and from Ermoupoli on Good Friday, Saturday and to lunch on Easter Sunday there will be a local charge, however, we will coordinate this with hotels etc.
- We can of course tailor these packages more and change accommodation
- Plagia Villas have three double bedrooms and two bathrooms and one guest cloak, so two extra people could be included. We are happy to recalculate.
- Overnight tax is not included in the package rate as we can not collect it for you. As at November 2018 the rate for each category is below. We have no had any information that this is increasing for 2019, however if it does it will be January and we would inform you. You pay this directly to the hotel on check in or check out.
  - 3-star hotel 1.50 euro per night per room
  - 4-star hotel 3.00 euro per night per room
  - 5-star hotel 4.00 euro per night per room
- These packages are subject to our normal Terms and Conditions and a deposit of 50% of the holiday would be due on booking and a further 50% eight weeks before the commencement of the holiday.
- If you are a group of three or more or a single traveller please contact us for a quote.
- Ferry schedules are subject to change we will book the ferries that are most suitable to the package.
- The Athens excursions both last approximately 3.5 hours and we think are a great introduction to Athens, places on these excursions are limited. We will confirm availability on booking, if you would prefer a different excursion, we offer many so please don't hesitate to ask.
- If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us.



*Figure 8 Mioulli Square*