

Cycle Cyclades

May 26 – June 2

Santorini add-on, June 2 – 6



Cycle Cyclades is our best tour! Apart from cycling amidst the most gorgeous islands in the Aegean, each one a veritable honeymoon haven, the trip is enhanced by two very special guests. Cyclist **Brady Kiesling**, a former US diplomat stationed in Athens with a Master's in archaeology, entertains us with enlightening Greek history "seminars" delivered with his characteristic keen wit during Happy Hour. Gastronomy expert **Regina Tassitano** enriches our dining experience with her skilled menu choices of the local healthy Mediterranean cuisine. We promise an abundance of fun!

Special Guest Cyclist

Brady Kiesling, a former U.S. diplomat stationed in Greece, author and archaeologist with an expertise in Greek history and archaeology will give daily lectures during the cycling portion of the tour.

Each island has its own signature charm. Traditional Tinos is known for its chapels and dovecotes. Mykonos is famous for its cosmopolitan sophistication, while still being a simple island. Paros is quiet and unassuming with no major ruins to speak of but popular with antiquities and sandy beaches and an extensive network of asphalt roads. Santorini's world famous sunsets and white volcanic cliffs make it a "must see" destination for lovers and travel connoisseurs.

Trip Highlights

- Famous beaches of Mykonos
- Boat ride to the caldera in Santorini
- Waterfront tavernas and Byzantine churches in Paros
- Cycle 1650 feet in Naxos to a 6th century BC *kouros*
- Venetian dovecotes in Tinos

Day 1: Tinos

Welcome to sunny Greece! Our cycling debut ride hugs the Attika coastline to its tip at Sounion where the magnificent Temple of Poseidon overlooks the Aegean Sea. By ferry we arrive to Tinos to encounter the serenity of Greece's most spiritual island. Pilgrims come from all over Greece to pay homage to a local icon.

Brady's Seminar: A Sweeping History of Ancient Greece

Day 2: Tinos

Today's ride into Tinos' countryside takes us past a series of small villages, all of which you must dismount to enter as they are car-free. Adorable villages where you encounter a folk art museum, aqueduct, streets with low arched vault ceilings, grotto-like water fountains and traditional basket weavers working by hand.

Brady's Seminar: Early Cycladic Culture and its Modern Echoes



Day 3: Mykonos

Early morning cycling in Tinos on a back road that has no towns, gas stations, nothing but raw nature with vivid views of the sea. The quick boat to Mykonos brings us one of Greece's most popular islands, famous for its beaches which is precisely where we spend the day.

Brady's Seminar: Delos, the Sacred/Political Center of Greece

Day 4: Paros

We take a short boat ride to Delos island for a guided tour at one of the most sacred sites in all ancient Greece. Afternoon boat to Paros docks right in front of the island's signature windmill at Parikia. A short flat cycling route on a quiet back road takes us to the charming little fishing village of Naoussa now popular with chic Athenians.

Brady's Seminar: Foreign Fleets in the Aegean

Day 5: Paros

A long cycling day with lots to see. Climb to Valley of the Butterflies and be rewarded by the beauty of green moths that inhabit this shaded retreat. A short ferry ride to the tiny island of Antiparos whose mammoth cave once held 300 people for midnight mass. Tranquil Antiparos makes Paros feel practically like a frenzied metropolis.

Brady's Seminar: Island Life in the Byzantine Years

Day 6: Naxos

A quick ascent to Lefkes, Paros' highest village, and then the short ferry ride to Naxos. At Naxos we linger in its harbor town, Hora. Here you find an endearing cluster of whitewashed houses, narrow winding medieval alleys, and the distinguished Apollonian Portara gateway which captures everyone's imagination.

Brady's Seminar: The Cyclades in Modern Greek Life



Exclusions

- International airfare
- transfers to/from airport
- Departure transfer from Naxos
- lunches
- Travel insurance

August 18-25 Cycle Cyclades tour without guest archaeologist or local culinary expert. 2030 euros.

Trip Price

2480 euros per person
500 euros, single supplement

1880 euros per person for
Santorini add-on,
340 single supplement

Note: tour prices are based on the euro which is the official currency of Greece. Exchange rates found at www.xe.com

Inclusions

- Accommodations in 3-4 star hotels ranging from boutique hotels to seaside luxury hotels. Tasteful, clean, air-conditioned, private bath, abundant hospitality, comfort. All accommodations come with breakfast. Tour price based on double occupancy. Check single supplement price for a single room.
- All dinners with local house wine.
- Ferry transfers (5 one-way, 2 round-trip)
- Specialized road or hybrid bike. Your choice. Triple chain ring, 27 gears. Road bike has carbon fiber fork. Hybrids have front suspension. Click here for photos and specs
- Bike gear: odometer, 2 water bottles and cages, map holder or handlebar pouch, rear rack on request.
- Support vehicle ("sag wagon") with bilingual driver. Vehicle carries spare parts, floor pump, ice cooler, water, nutritious snacks, bike tools, first aid kit, day packs, luggage and gives you a lift if you get tired. The driver is also a mechanic.
- Bike Guide who is also the Tour Leader handling the tour logistics.
- Cue sheets with GPS profiles (click example).
- Maps and cue sheets
- Daily one hour "seminars" about Greece with special guest Brady Kiesling
- Boat trip to Delos island with entrance fees.
- Entrance fees to Temple of Poseidon in Sounion, Valley of the Butterflies, Antiparos Cave
- Trip packet with useful and interesting information
- CycleGreece jersey
- Gratuities, tips and VAT taxes

Day 7: Naxos

Today is the tour's highest cycling day, up to 1633 feet. En route we stop at a marble *kouros* (ancient Greek male statue) left unfinished in its quarry. At Halki, the owners of a *kitron* distillery give a demonstration and tasting of their famous liqueur made from lemon leaves. For the more ambitious, we cycle to Aria Springs, fill up the water bottles, and take a hike up to Za Cave where Zeus was said to be born.

Brady's Seminar: The Portara and Kouros of Naxos

Day 8: departures or Santorini add-on

Morning cycling to Dimitra Temple on Naxos which is a nicely reconstructed site with a meticulously laid stone walkway. The ride is quick enough to return to the hotel, shower and check-in time to catch an afternoon ferry. The cycling tour is now over. Opt for the Santorini Add-On package to reach Thira (as the Greeks call the island) in time for a sunset wine tasting overlooking the caldera.

Day 9: Santorini

A delightful introduction to Santorini is through its cuisine. We attend a fascinating cooking class that focuses on indigenous foods of the island. Even if you never cook you will still assuredly enjoy hearing the history and origins of Santorini cooking plus learning to make four different appetizers, an entree and dessert. Includes wine tasting and lunch.

Day 10: Santorini

A day full of culture. An hour hike up to the 7th century BC ruins of Ancient Thira, tour a renovated winery that is now a contemporary art gallery, visit an underground wine museum with Santorini's oldest wine press, study the finely preserved Minoan frescos in the local museum. Afternoon swimming at Red Beach.

Day 11: Santorini

We take a boat ride to the center of the caldera where one can scoop up soft warm mud to slather on your body standing in the sea. A mule ride takes you up to the top of the cliffs. Later in the day, in the cool of the afternoon, a hike along the ridge path to Oia, the chic-est town on Santorini. 2-3 hours walk

Day 12: Departures

daily flights to Athens



Special Guest Cyclist

Brady Kiesling was the first diplomat to resign in protest over the 2003 invasion of Iraq. A Political Counselor in Greece at the time, he continues to live in Athens where he is an avid cyclist.

Brady is also an archaeologist, having a degree in Ancient Greek from Swarthmore and an MA from Berkeley in Ancient History and Mediterranean Archaeology. He has excavated at Ancient Corinth and Nemea in Greece and Aphrodisias in Turkey.

Learn more about this amazing man from his book "Diplomacy Lessons: Realism for an Unloved Superpower" (Potomac Books 2006). He provides daily lectures during the 8 day cycling portion of the Cycle Cyclades tour www.bradykiesling.com

Start & End Points

Meet on Day 1 in Athens at 9:00 am to fit the bikes and cycle the Attika coast. Afternoon boat to Tinos. 8 Day cycling tour ends in Naxos where you can catch boats to Piraeus or a flight to Athens. The Santorini Add-On tour includes boat to Santorini from Naxos and morning return flight to Athens in tour cost. End: 8 days tour ends in Naxos, 12 days tour ends in Santorini

Mileage Summary

Mileage

Support vehicle available for lifts. Additional mileage available for road warriors

Day 1 Attika 33 miles, 54 km, 2-3 hours ride, highest ascent sea level to 230 feet

Day 2 Tinos 25 miles, 40 km, 3 hours, highest ascent 1400 feet, one steep section lasting 3 miles/6 km

Day 3 Tinos 15 miles, 25 km, 1-1½ hours, flat and downhill, highest ascent 650 feet

Mykonos 17 miles, 26 km, 2 hours, highest ascent 650 ft, 2-3 *very short* steep ascents

Day 4 Paros 7 miles, 11 km, ½ hour, flat easy ride to seaside hotel

Day 5 Paros & Antiparos 36 miles, 58km, 4 hours, two 3km climbs

Day 6 Paros 21 miles, 34 km, 1½ hours, one minor ascent of 700 feet

Naxos 3 miles, 5 km, flat easy ride to seaside hotel

Day 7 Naxos 43 miles, 69 km, 5-6 hours, one long ascent 1600 ft, tour's hardest ride

Day 8 Naxos 18 miles, 30km, 2 hours roundtrip, ascend 721 ft, gentle ups and downs

