

Cycle Cyclades

July 1 - 8 cycling

July 8 - 12 walking



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.

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*
- Fill your bike bottles with fresh springs water in Andros

The Cyclades are the most popular destination islands in Greece. Be one of the few visitors who cycles around the islands, ferry hopping from Andros to Santorini with Mykonos, Paros and Naxos in between. The Cyclades has mountains to ascend, but none steep enough to intimidate the moderate cyclist. Each island is a honeymoon-type haven with romantic sea-side vistas, whitewashed houses, windmills, olive groves and ancient ruins.

Each island has its own signature charm. Andros is big but with few foreign tourists, so it retains a traditional charm. 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 Greeks and foreigners alike. Naxos has ruins 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.

Day 1: Andros

Welcome to sunny Greece! We meet at the pedestrian mall surrounding the Acropolis to test our bikes then transfer to Rafina port and catch the late afternoon ferry to Andros, the most northerly of the Cyclades Islands. Its main town, Chora, is elegant with a car-free street laid out in marble. Our welcome dinner is in a traditional taverna perched on steps.

Seminar: A Sweeping History of Ancient Greece

Day 2: Andros

Our warm-up morning ride is a loop that includes Sariza springs whose waters are therapeutic and good for kidneys. This is a premier site to fill up your water bottles. Free afternoon for swimming or visiting the celebrated Goulandris Modern Art Museum. Our optional late afternoon ride is only 10 km but we climb 1377 feet.

Seminar: Early Cycladic Culture and its Modern Echoes

Cycle Cyclades 2009



Cycling Summary

Day 1 no cycling (test the bikes)

Day 2 30 km, 19 miles, 2 hours at casual pace, highest climb is 967 feet, optional 12 mile afternoon ride with climb of 1377 feet in 6 miles.

Day 3 60 km, 37 miles, morning 20 miles mostly downhill, afternoon 17 miles roundtrip with 1-2 very short steep climbs

Day 4 11 km, 6.8 miles, afternoon flat ride to hotel, optional mileage on fairly flat route if desired

Day 5 70 km, 43 miles, ups and downs, but nothing mountainous, highest climb is 1640 feet

Day 6 40 km, 25 miles, 21 miles in morning, main climb takes about 1 hour. Short flat ride to hotel. Afternoon optional ride with several climbs

Day 7 70 km, 43 miles, hardest day, but optional less mileage if desired, Highest climb 1633 feet or 1991 feet if entire ride is done.

Day 8 31 km, 19 miles, morning ride takes only about 2 hours round trip. Some climbs but not burdensome.



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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 us a seminar and tasting of their famous liqueur. For the more ambitious, we cycle to Aria Springs, fill up the water bottles, and take a hike up to Za Cave.

Seminar: The Portara and Kouros of Naxos

Day 8: Santorini

Morning cycling to Dimitra Temple on Naxos which is nicely preserved with informative historic markers. After this ride the cycling portion of the tour is over and we head on by boat to Santorini, known to Greeks as Thira. We arrive in time for a sunset wine tasting overlooking the caldera.

Day 9: Santorini

We take a boat ride to the center of the caldera where one can find soft warm mud to slather on your body. A mule ride 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 chicest town on Santorini. 2-3 hours walk.

Day 10: Santorini

The morning is reserved for cultural pleasures – we take a short hike up to the ruins of Ancient Thira going back to the 7th century BC and visit the incredibly well preserved Minoan style murals in the local museum. The afternoon is free for swimming at the Red Beach, so called for its red sand. 1-2 hour walk.

Day 11: Santorini

We take a fishing boat to Anafi, a small island with only one village. There's a wonderful serene hike to Kalamiotissa, reported to be the largest rock second to Gibraltar. The views are gorgeous. Our farewell dinner is in Ammoudi just steps from the sea. About 2 hours hike.

Day 12: Departures

Daily flights from Santorini to Athens Airport



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

Rating

Moderate
averages 25 miles a day,
regular
ascents and descents



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