

IOS ISLAND

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CHAT ROOM "Ios"

- I typed "Ios island" on the search engine, and ended up with millions of hits.
- It is a common homeland, the meeting place for the next generation.
- You're exaggerating. It is great, and the people going there are ok, but...
- You have no idea what I'm talking about. If all the internet fans of Ios went there at the same time, it would be more than packed.
- Come on, its easy for us to be there actually, not virtually.

Get recommendations

Ios is a beautiful and simple place, but also a very special and ideal place. You can just go for holidays, but young people prefer it as a destination, simply because it is the right place for them. Like migratory birds, they know they need to visit an unknown land, but they also know it's their destination.

How to get there

Ios is connected by sea with ferries and speedboats with Piraeus, other islands of the Cyclades, Crete, and the Dodecanese.



I O S



Ios, one of the most beautiful islands of Greece, is surrounded by Paros, Naxos, Sikinos and Santorini. It is internationally known as the island for youth, its long golden beaches, the crystal clear waters, remote beaches and wild nightlife. At night, the beat goes up, and the atmosphere seen in the alleys of Chora is fascinating.

However Ios, an island closely associated with Homer, offers visitors much more than the sun, the sea and entertainment, since it combines cosmopolitan life with rich Cycladic tradition.

Its name possibly comes from the word "ion" which means flower, because in ancient years the island was full of flowers. The end of the 2nd millennium BC was the time when the Ionians populated the Aegean Islands.

The leader of settlers in Ios was Neleus, the son of Codrus. In the

centuries that followed, the island participated in the flourish of the Cycladic civilisation.

Ios: distant but wonderful

Ios or Nios covers an area of 108 square kilometres, and has a population of 2,000 residents.

The capital of the island is Chora, a wonderful town which is built in a crescent on the hill above the port. Classic Cycladic architecture dominates the place: alleys, all-white stone-built houses with thick walls for protection from cold and the bright sun of the Aegean, small slated squares with fountains pouring potable water, numerous chapels. At the top of the settlement and built on a steep rock are the chapels of Agios



Nikolaos, of Christos, and of Agios Georgios, surrounded by the ruins of the medieval castle established in the 14th century by the island's ruler, Marco Crispi. Beneath the castle, on a steep rock looking over to Sikinos, Santorini and the deep blue Aegean Sea, lies the Byzantine church of Panagia Gremiotissa (1797), which was dedicated to the Assumption of Virgin Mary. On the steep hill above the port, Chora was built on the place of the ancient city of Ios. Large parts of the walls, a building, the road to the port, and the temple of Apollo where the church of Agia Ekaterini lies today, can still be seen. The ancient city agora extended between Agia Ekaterini and the chapel of Agii Anargyri. Rich finds from the Prehistoric to the Roman Periods are exhibited at the Archaeological Museum of Chora. Moving up to the hill east of Chora, one can see one of the greatest sights of Ios: the old white-washed windmills. The road continues to the Odysseas Elytis Open Theatre, an architectural masterpiece made of stone and marble, built at

one of the great poet's favourite locations with an amazing view to the Aegean Sea. The theatre hosts cultural events in summer months, while the "Omiria" cultural events take place in Chora every May. The privately-owned Modern Art Museum in Kolitsani exhibits paintings of modern art from all over the world.

Beaches everywhere

At a distance of 2 km² west of Chora, in the picturesque settlement of Ormos or Gialos, is the lee port of the island, with the all-white chapel of Agia Irini (17th century) built at its right. In Gialos one can see the bust of Homer. The small beach of the port is great to enjoy the sun and the sea or engage in sea sports. The amazing beaches of Kolitsani and Koumbara are located near Gialos – stay until sunset for an unforgettable experience. Gialos also has an organized campsite.

Heading southeast, a 3km road from Chora leads to one of the most beautiful beaches of the Aegean Islands, Mylopotas with its golden sand, the clear blue sea and all types of tourism services: rooms for rent, organised campsites, delicious food. A sea sports centre and a diving centre operate in Mylopotas.

From Mylopotas starts a 23km country road to Maganari at the most southern part of the island, where seven successive beaches with golden sand and sea sport facilities are available for all visitors.

Before Maganari, the crossroads lead east to the Byzantine monastery of Agios Ioannis of Kalamos, and to the quiet beach with the



clear waters, ideal for diving.

10 kilometres north of Chora is located Agia Theodoti, a traditional settlement with the historic church of Agios Theodosios, a sandy beach and a great view to the sunrise. Before Agia Theodoti, turning to the right, an asphalt-layered road leads to the bay of the picturesque settlement of Psathi, a popular destination for swimming, surfing, and relaxation.

Feasts and flavours

Ios has maintained a tradition that brings visitors closer and embraces them in a spirit of celebration. Traditional feasts accompany the celebrations of Ai Giannis Klidonas in Pyrgos on 24 June, of Panagia Gremiotissa in Chora on 15 August, of Ai Giannis Kalamos and Ai Giannis of Psathi on 29 August, and the Birth of the Virgin Mary in Agia Theodoti and Paleokastro on 8 September.

Ios saves many gourmet surprises for the visitors: chickpea balls, bourgeto



horse mackerels (cooked in tomato and vegetable sauce), tsimetia (stuffed courgette flowers), sun-dried chargrilled minnows, and the necessary touch of capers in salads and casseroles, all accompanied by local wine. Don't miss the chance to try the select cheese products of Ios: spicy white kefalotyri, "xino" (soft white cheese), "skotyri" (a mixture of cheeses, skimmed-milk cheese and herbs), and sweet skimmed-milk cheese. The traditional sweets of Ios include pasteli, avgokalamara (elsewhere known as diples, a deep fried pastry), melitina or myzithropites pastries (stuffed with sweet skimmed-milk cheese), macaroons, and pastota figs (dried figs dipped in sesame). Also try the raki of Ios: it is even stronger than that made in Crete!

Routes for all

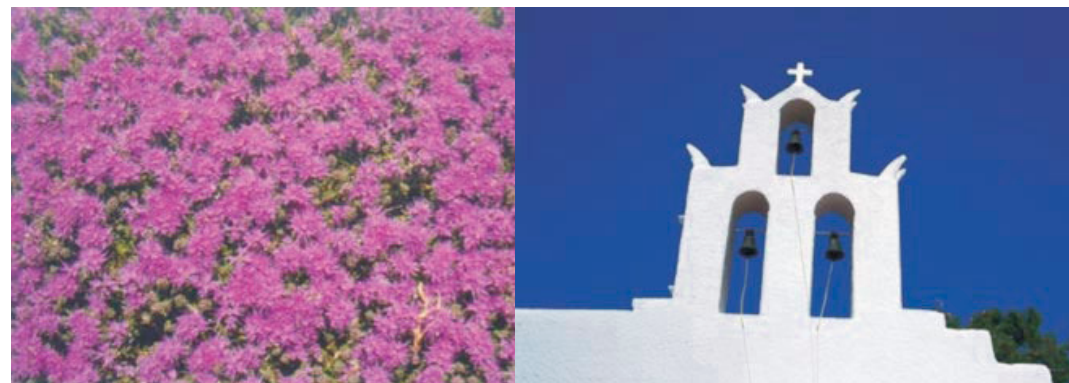
For those who love hiking, Ios is the ideal destination. Its hilly morphology

and the innumerable paths opened by shepherds on its hills enable visitors to see amazing places of wild beauty and enjoy the view to the nearby islands.

- 1 **Chora –Profitis Ilias (3.2km, estimated hiking time: 90 min).** A wonderful route of natural beauty to the church of Profitis Ilias, towards the peak of the mountain (514m).
- 2 **Chora –Profitis Ilias (2.9km, 75 min).** An alternative route to the above destination.
- 3 **Agia Theodoti- Paleokastro (2.3km, 90 min).** In Paleokastro you can see the court of a 2.5m Byzantine fort-observatory, and the church of Panagia Paleokastritissa, built on the fort.
- 4 **Agia Irini – Valmas beach (0.8km, 15 min).** A short route to the amazing beach south of the port.
- 5 **Mylopotas – Klima- Pikri Nero- Maganari** One of the best routes in Ios, however access from Klima bay and then on to Maganari is very difficult.
- 6 **Chora- Pyrgos- Psathi (10km, 5 hours).** The view from the peak of Pyrgos, the highest spot of the village (713m), is impressive. This is the location of the monastery of Agios Ioannis, which was built in the 16th century on ruins of a temple dedicated to Apollo.

7 **Agia Theodoti- Chora (6.5 km, 4 hours).** The route passes through the mainland, where the landscape is wonderful.

8 **Chora – Homer’s tomb (9 km, 4 hours).** A great route on the north side of the island, ending at the location Plakotos. It was there that a domed tomb was discovered which, according to the inscription found, is the tomb of Homer. Ancient writers (Strabo, Plinius, Pausanias) refer that Homer died in Ios; furthermore, several coins of the 3rd-2nd centuries BC found on the



island feature the face of Homer.

9 **Chora- Port,** taking the traditional slated path.

10 **Port - Kambos** The hill of Skarkos is located in the valley of Kambos, near the port. At this location, excavations brought to light a settlement considered to be the oldest Cycladic settlement, even older than Akrotiri in Santorini. Excavations produced rich finds, which are now exhibited at the Archaeological Museum of the island.

Agrotourism? In Ios, for sure

If you want to experience daily farming works performed in the old-fashioned way, local stockfarmers will be willing to show you through the entire production process (grazing, milking, cheese-making). You can do the same with fishermen and apiarists of the island.

And if you like land sports, you can play football at the field of Kambos, or

island. Young people are interested in meeting new people, but also to experience the spirit of fun only found in Ios. Lots of places for all music preferences will keep everyone happy.



basketball or volleyball at the court in Chora, and on the beaches of Mylopotas and the port.

ONLY IN IOS

Ios is considered as one of the most famous meeting points for young people from all over the world, who make up a global community on the



Let's go to Sikinos...

Only a stone's throw away!!!