

GREECE · BEACHES · ISLANDS · HISTORY · FOOD · HIKING

Corfu & the Ionian Islands

The greenest of the Greek islands, strung down Greece's west coast: Corfu's Venetian old town and olive-clad north-east, tiny Paxos, Lefkada's white cliffs, Kefalonia's Myrtos Beach and Zakynthos's Shipwreck Cove. Direct flights from London run from about April to October, and the sea is warm enough for swimming from late May; June and September give the best balance of heat, crowds and prices.

 Read the UK government's travel advice for Greece and entry requirements before you go.

 COUNTRY Greece	 BEST TIME May–Jun, Sep	 FLIGHT FROM LONDON 3h 05m direct ~£130–£400 return	 DAILY BUDGET £60–£260 ££ Moderate
 WARMEST MONTH July (32°C)	 SEA TEMPERATURE 14–26°C coolest–warmest	 TIME ZONE Athens +2h vs UK now	 CURRENCY Euro £1 ≈ €1.19

Most UK visitors fly into Corfu or Kefalonia and stay put, though ferries make a two-island trip easy. Corfu suits almost everyone: families in the sandy north-west and Kassiopi, couples and walkers on the quieter north-east coast facing Albania, and culture lovers in Corfu Town. Paxos, about an hour by fast ferry from Corfu, is for slow villa holidays and boat hire. Kefalonia is bigger, wilder and better for driving, while Zakynthos mixes loggerhead turtle beaches with Laganas's club strip. Lefkada, joined to the mainland by a causeway, has the finest west-facing beaches. The season runs from May to October; outside it, many hotels and tavernas close and the rain arrives.

Highlights

- 1** ARCHITECTURE

Corfu Old Town

A UNESCO-listed maze of Venetian lanes between two fortresses, with the arcaded Liston built under French rule and cricket still played on the Spianada. Climb the Old Fortress at sunset and eat in the backstreets of Campiello.
- 2** BEACH

Paleokastritsa

A cluster of small coves with clear turquoise water beneath a clifftop monastery on Corfu's west coast. Take a boat trip to the sea caves, then drive up to the village of Lakones for the view down over the bays.
- 3** NATURE

Paxos and Antipaxos

Tiny, olive-covered Paxos has three harbour villages, Gaios, Lakka and Loggos, and hiring a small boat is the way to explore. Antipaxos, a short hop south, has vineyards and the startlingly clear water of Voutoumi beach.
- 4** BEACH

Myrtos Beach, Kefalonia

A sweep of white pebbles and intensely blue water below sheer cliffs in north-west Kefalonia, best seen first from the road above. Afternoons are busiest; combine it with the Venetian-castle harbour village of Assos nearby.

5

NATURE

Navagio (Shipwreck Beach), Zakynthos

A rusting smuggler's ship lies on a white cove enclosed by cliffs on Zakynthos's north-west coast. Rockfall risk has kept the beach and its waters closed to visitors in recent seasons, so see it from the clifftop viewpoint and check current rules before going.

Where to stay

WHERE TO STAY

Corfu Town

Stay in the old town for restaurants, museums and evening strolls; good for couples and short breaks, though you will need transport for the best beaches.

WHERE TO STAY

Kassiopi, Corfu

Harbour village in Corfu's north-east with pebble coves, coastal walks and plenty of tavernas; suits couples and families wanting calm water and views of Albania.

WHERE TO STAY

Fiskardo, Kefalonia

Kefalonia's prettiest harbour, largely spared by the 1953 earthquake, with yachts, upmarket tavernas and boat trips to Ithaca; best for couples happy to pay more.

WHERE TO STAY

Lakka, Paxos

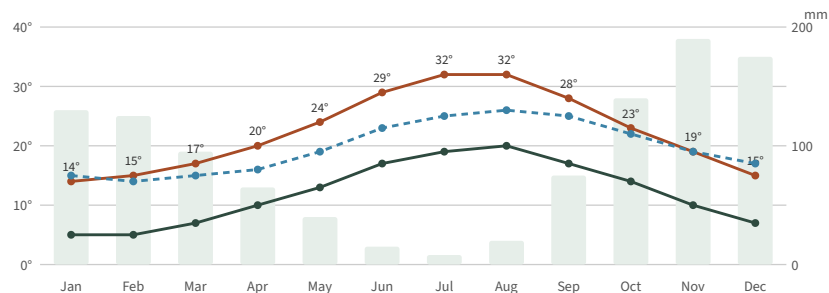
A horseshoe bay in northern Paxos with villa rentals, small beaches and boat hire; ideal for a slow week of swimming and long taverna lunches.

When to go to Corfu & the Ionian Islands

Best time: **May–Jun, Sep.**

**Average climate in Corfu Town**

— High °C
 — Low °C
 — Sea °C
 ■ Rain (mm)

**How much does Corfu & the Ionian Islands cost?**

SHOESTRING

£60

per person / day
≈ €71.42

MID-RANGE

£125

per person / day
≈ €149

COMFORTABLE

£260

per person / day
≈ €309

Per person per day excluding flights. Return flights from London typically cost £130 off-peak and £400 in school holidays.

Visas & entry for Corfu & the Ionian Islands

Shown for a British passport.

No visa needed

You can travel without a visa to the Schengen area, which includes Greece, for up to 90 days in any 180-day period without a visa. This applies if you travel: as a tourist; to visit family or friends; to attend business meetings, cultural or sports events; for short-term studies or training.

The requirements for working in Greece are different. If you are a touring creative, see details about the Uniform (Schengen) visa.

From the UK government's FCDO entry requirements for British passport holders — read the full page for passport validity, permits and exceptions.

Health & vaccinations

See a travel health nurse, GP or travel clinic **6–8 weeks before you go**. Make sure routine UK vaccinations (such as MMR and diphtheria-tetanus-polio) are up to date.

RECOMMENDED FOR MOST TRAVELLERS

Tetanus

SOMETIMES ADVISED — DEPENDS ON YOUR TRIP, ACTIVITIES AND HEALTH

Bat Lyssavirus

YELLOW FEVER CERTIFICATE

No yellow fever certificate is required to enter.

MALARIA

No malaria risk

Source: TravelHealthPro (National Travel Health Network and Centre), checked 21 October 2026. This is a summary, not medical advice.

Public holidays in Greece

The next 12 months. Banks, offices and some sights may close, and transport and hotels get busy around these dates.

Wed 28 Oct 2026	Ohi Day
Fri 25 Dec 2026	Christmas Day
Sat 26 Dec 2026	Glorifying Mother of God
Fri 1 Jan 2027	New Year's Day
Wed 6 Jan 2027	Epiphany
Mon 15 Mar 2027	Green Monday
Thu 25 Mar 2027	Independence Day
Fri 30 Apr 2027	Good Friday

Sat 1 May 2027	Labour Day
Mon 3 May 2027	Easter Monday
Tue 4 May 2027	Labour Day (observed)
Mon 21 Jun 2027	Pentecost Monday
Sun 15 Aug 2027	Dormition of the Mother of God

National holidays only. Dates based on lunar calendars can move by a day or two depending on official announcements.

Know before you go

Corfu's heavy winter rainfall is why it is so green: from November to March expect grey spells, cool seas and shuttered resorts, so treat the Ionians as a May–October destination.

To island-hop, use the summer-only Kefalonia–Zakynthos ferry from Pessada or the Corfu–Paxos fast ferries, and book hire cars well ahead for July and August, when fleets sell out.

Plugs, money, phrases, emergency numbers and more: see our Greece guide.

Visa, health and safety rules change. Before you book or travel, check the FCDO travel advice (gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice) and TravelHealthPro (travelhealthpro.org.uk). Costs are estimates. © 2026 Pick My Trip.