Santorini

**Santorini** ([Greek](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_language): Σαντορίνη, pronounced [[sandoˈrini]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:IPA/Greek)), officially **Thira** ([Greek](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_language): Θήρα [[ˈθira]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:IPA/Greek)) and classic Greek **Thera** ([English](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_language) pronunciation [/ˈθɪərə/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:IPA/English)), is an island in the southern [Aegean Sea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aegean_Sea), about 200 km (120 mi) southeast from the [Greek](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece) mainland. It is the largest island of a small, circular [archipelago](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archipelago), which bears the [same name](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini_caldera) and is the remnant of a [caldera](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caldera). It forms the southernmost member of the [Cyclades](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyclades) group of islands, with an area of approximately 73 km2 (28 sq mi) and a 2011 census population of 15,550. The municipality of Santorini includes the inhabited islands of Santorini and [Therasia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Therasia" \o "Therasia), as well as the uninhabited islands of [Nea Kameni](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nea_Kameni" \o "Nea Kameni), [Palaia Kameni](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palaia_Kameni" \o "Palaia Kameni), [Aspronisi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aspronisi" \o "Aspronisi) and [Christiana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christiana_Island). The total land area is 90.623 km2 (34.990 sq mi).[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-stat01-2) Santorini is part of the [Thira regional unit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thira_(regional_unit)).[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Kallikratis-3)

The island was the site of one of the largest [volcanic eruptions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volcanic_eruption) in [recorded history](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Recorded_history): the [Minoan eruption](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minoan_eruption) (sometimes called the Thera eruption), which occurred about 3,600 years ago at the height of the [Minoan civilization](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minoan_civilization).[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-readersnatural-4) The eruption left a large caldera surrounded by [volcanic ash](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volcanic_ash) deposits hundreds of metres deep. It may have led indirectly to the collapse of the Minoan civilization on the island of [Crete](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crete), 110 km (68 mi) to the south, through a gigantic [tsunami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tsunami). Another popular theory holds that the Thera eruption is the source of the legend of [Atlantis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantis).[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-pell-5)

It is the most active volcanic centre in the [South Aegean Volcanic Arc](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Aegean_Volcanic_Arc), though what remains today is chiefly a water-filled caldera. The volcanic arc is approximately 500 km (300 mi) long and 20 to 40 km (12 to 25 mi) wide. The region first became volcanically active around 3–4 million years ago,[*[citation needed](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed" \o "Wikipedia:Citation needed)*] though volcanism on Thera began around 2 million years ago with the extrusion of [dacitic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dacite" \o "Dacite) lavas from vents around [Akrotiri](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akrotiri_(prehistoric_city)" \o "Akrotiri (prehistoric city)).

History[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Santorini&action=edit&section=2" \o "Edit section: History)]

**Minoan Akrotiri**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Santorini&action=edit&section=3" \o "Edit section: Minoan Akrotiri)]

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Fresque_du_printemps,_Akrotiri,_Gr%C3%A8ce.jpg)

Springtime landscape in a [Fresco](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fresco) from the [Bronze Age](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bronze_Age), Akrotiri

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Saffron_gatherersSantorini-3.jpg)

The "[saffron](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saffron)-gatherers"

Excavations starting in 1967 at the [Akrotiri](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Akrotiri_(prehistoric_city)" \o "Akrotiri (prehistoric city)) site under the late Professor [Spyridon Marinatos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spyridon_Marinatos) have made Thera the best-known [Minoan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minoan_civilization) site outside of [Crete](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crete), homeland of the culture. The island was not known as Thera at this time. Only the southern tip of a large town has been uncovered, yet it has revealed complexes of multi-level buildings, streets, and squares with remains of walls standing as high as eight metres, all entombed in the solidified ash of the famous eruption of Thera. The site was not a palace-complex as found in [Crete](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crete), but neither was it a conglomeration of merchants' warehousing, as its excellent masonry and fine wall-paintings show. A loom-workshop suggests organized [textile](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Textile) [weaving](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weaving) for export. This [Bronze Age](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bronze_Age) civilization thrived between 3000 and 2000 BC, reaching its peak in the period between 2000 and 1630 BC.[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-7)

Many of the houses in Akrotiri are major structures, some of them three stories high. Its streets, squares, and walls were preserved in the layers of ejecta, sometimes as tall as eight metres, indicating this was a major town. In many houses stone staircases are still intact, and they contain huge ceramic storage jars ([pithoi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pithoi" \o "Pithoi)), mills, and pottery. Noted archaeological remains found in Akrotiri are wall paintings or [frescoes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fresco), which have kept their original colour well, as they were preserved under many metres of volcanic ash. The town also had a highly developed drainage system and, judging from the fine artwork, its citizens were clearly sophisticated and relatively wealthy people.

Pipes with running water and [water closets](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Water_closet) found at Akrotiri are the oldest such utilities discovered.[[*citation needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed)] The pipes run in twin systems, indicating that Therans used both hot and cold water supplies; the origin of the hot water probably was [geothermic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geothermal_power), given the [volcano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volcano)'s proximity. The dual pipe system, the advanced architecture, and the apparent layout of the Akrotiri find resemble [Plato](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato)'s description of the legendary lost city of [Atlantis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantis), according to Charles Pellegrino further indicates the Minoans as the culture which primarily inspired the Atlantis legend.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-pell-5)

Fragmentary wall-paintings at Akrotiri lack the insistent religious or mythological content familiar in Classical Greek décor. Instead, the Minoan frescoes depict "[Saffron](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saffron)-Gatherers", who offer their [crocus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crocus)-stamens to a seated lady, perhaps a [goddess](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goddess). Crocus has been discovered to have many medicinal values including the relief of menstrual pain. This has led many[*[who?](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Manual_of_Style/Words_to_watch" \l "Unsupported_attributions" \o "Wikipedia:Manual of Style/Words to watch)*] archaeologists to believe that the fresco of the saffron/crocus gatherers is a coming of age fresco dealing with female pubescence. In another house are two [antelopes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antelopes), painted with a kind of confident, flowing, decorative, calligraphic line, the famous fresco of a fisherman with his double strings of fish strung by their gills, and the flotilla of pleasure boats, accompanied by leaping [dolphins](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dolphins), where ladies take their ease in the shade of light canopies, among other frescoes.

The well preserved ruins of the ancient town are often compared to the spectacular ruins at [Pompeii](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pompeii) in Italy. The canopy covering the ruins collapsed in an accident in September 2005, killing one tourist and injuring seven more. The site was closed for almost seven years while a new canopy was built. The site was re-opened in April 2012.

The oldest signs of human settlement are Late [Neolithic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neolithic) (4th millennium BC or earlier), but c. 2000–1650 BC Akrotiri developed into one of the Aegean's major [Bronze Age](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bronze_Age) ports, with recovered objects that came not just from [Crete](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crete), but also from [Anatolia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anatolia), [Cyprus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyprus), [Syria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Syria), and [Egypt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egypt), as well as from the [Dodecanese](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dodecanese) and the Greek mainland.

**Dating of the Bronze Age eruption**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Santorini&action=edit&section=4" \o "Edit section: Dating of the Bronze Age eruption)]

*Further information:*[*Minoan eruption § Eruption dating*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minoan_eruption#Eruption_dating)

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Stoa_Basilica.jpg)

Stoa Basilica of ancient Thera

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Santorini_-_Grecia_-_Vista_Aerea_del_promontorio_di_Ancient_Thira_-_agosto_2018.jpg)

Aerial view of the island of Santorini with detail of [Profitis Ilias (Santorini)](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Mount_Profitis_Illas&action=edit&redlink=1" \o "Mount Profitis Illas (page does not exist)) and the ruins of ancient Thera (on the [promontory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Promontory) on the left)

The [Minoan eruption](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minoan_eruption) provides a fixed point for the chronology of the second millennium BC in the Aegean, because evidence of the eruption occurs throughout the region and the site itself contains material culture from outside. The eruption occurred during the "Late Minoan IA" period of [Minoan chronology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minoan_chronology) at Crete and the "Late Cycladic I" period in the surrounding islands.

Archaeological evidence, based on the established chronology of Bronze Age Mediterranean cultures, dates the eruption to around 1500 BC.[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-8) These dates, however, conflict with [radiocarbon dating](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radiocarbon_dating) which indicates that the eruption occurred at about 1645–1600 BC.[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-9) For those, and other reasons, the date of the eruption is disputed.

**Ancient period**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Santorini&action=edit&section=5" \o "Edit section: Ancient period)]

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Cultural_Centre_Megaro_Gyzi_04.jpg)

Picture of a young girl of Santorini, Cultural Center Megaro Gyzi, [Fira](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fira" \o "Fira)

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Skaros_Rock.jpg)

[Skaros Rock](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Skaros_Rock), originally the location of medieval fortifications

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Episkopi_Gonias_(2797558143).jpg)

The Byzantine [Church of Panagia Episkopi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panagia_Episkopi)

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:GR-santorini-pyrgos.jpg)

[Pyrgos Kallistis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyrgos_Kallistis) village

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Santorini_pyrgos_kastellkirche_160707.jpg)

*Presentation of the Theotokos* church, [Pyrgos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyrgos_Kallistis" \o "Pyrgos Kallistis) village

Santorini remained unoccupied throughout the rest of the Bronze Age, during which time the Greeks took over [Crete](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crete). At [Knossos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Knossos), in a LMIIIA context (14th century BC), seven [Linear B](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Linear_B) texts while calling upon "all the gods" make sure to grant primacy to an elsewhere-unattested entity called *qe-ra-si-ja* and, once, *qe-ra-si-jo*. If the endings *-ia[s]* and *-ios* represent an ethnic suffix, then this means "The One From Qeras[os]". If the initial consonant were aspirated, then \*Qhera- would have become "Thera-" in later Greek. "Therasia" and its ethnikon "Therasios" are both attested in later Greek; and, since *-sos* was itself a genitive suffix in the Aegean [Sprachbund](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sprachbund" \o "Sprachbund), \*Qeras[os] could also shrink to \*Qera. An alternate view takes *qe-ra-si-ja* and *qe-ra-si-jo* as proof of androgyny, and applies this name by similar arguments to the legendary seer, [Tiresias](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teiresias), but these views are not mutually exclusive. If *qe-ra-si-ja* was an ethnikon first, then in following him/her/it the Cretans also feared whence it came.[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-10)

Probably after what is called the [Bronze Age collapse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bronze_Age_collapse), [Phoenicians](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phoenicians) founded a site on Thera. [Herodotus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herodotus) reports that they called the island Callista and lived on it for eight generations.[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-11) In the 9th century BC, [Dorians](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dorians) founded the main Hellenic city on Mesa Vouno, 396 m (1,299 ft) [above sea level](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Above_mean_sea_level). This group later claimed that they had named the city and the island after their leader, [Theras](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theras" \o "Theras). Today, that city is referred to as [Ancient Thera](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Thera).

In his [*Argonautica*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Argonautica), written in Hellenistic Egypt in the 3rd century BC, [Apollonius Rhodius](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apollonius_Rhodius) includes an origin and sovereignty myth of Thera being given by [Triton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triton_(mythology)) in Libya to the Greek [Argonaut](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Argonauts) [Euphemus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Euphemus" \o "Euphemus), son of [Poseidon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poseidon), in the form of a clod of dirt. After carrying the dirt next to his heart for several days, Euphemus dreamt that he nursed the dirt with milk from his breast, and that the dirt turned into a beautiful woman with whom he had sex. The woman then told him that she was a daughter of Triton named Kalliste, and that when he threw the dirt into the sea it would grow into an island for his descendants to live on. The poem goes on to claim that the island was named Thera after Euphemus' descendant [Theras](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theras" \o "Theras), son of [Autesion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Autesion" \o "Autesion), the leader of a group of refugee settlers from [Lemnos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lemnos).

The Dorians have left a number of inscriptions incised in stone, in the vicinity of the temple of [Apollo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apollo), attesting to [pederastic relations](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pederasty_in_ancient_Greece" \o "Pederasty in ancient Greece) between the authors and their lovers ([eromenoi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eromenos" \o "Eromenos)). These inscriptions, found by [Friedrich Hiller von Gaertringen](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_Hiller_von_Gaertringen_(Epigraphiker)), have been thought by some archaeologists to be of a ritual, celebratory nature, because of their large size, careful construction and – in some cases – execution by craftsmen other than the authors. According to [Herodotus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herodotus),[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini" \l "cite_note-12) following a drought of seven years, Thera sent out colonists who founded a number of cities in northern Africa, including [Cyrene](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyrene,_Libya). In the 5th century BC, Dorian Thera did not join the [Delian League](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Delian_League) with [Athens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens); and during the [Peloponnesian War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peloponnesian_War), Thera sided with Dorian Sparta, against Athens. The Athenians took the island during the war, but lost it again after the [Battle of Aegospotami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Aegospotami). During the Hellenistic period, the island was a major naval base for [Ptolemaic Egypt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ptolemaic_Egypt).

**Medieval and Ottoman period**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Santorini&action=edit&section=6" \o "Edit section: Medieval and Ottoman period)]

As with other Greek territories, Thera then was ruled by the [Romans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Rome). When the [Roman Empire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Empire) was divided, the island passed to the eastern side of the Empire which today is known as the [Byzantine Empire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_Empire).[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-13) According to [George Cedrenus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Cedrenus), the volcano erupted again in the summer of 727, the tenth year of the reign of [Leo III the Isaurian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leo_III_the_Isaurian).[[14]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-14) He writes: "In the same year, in the summer, a vapour like an oven's fire boiled up for days out of the middle of the islands of Thera and Therasia from the depths of the sea, and the whole place burned like fire, little by little thickening and turning to stone, and the air seemed to be a fiery torch." This terrifying explosion was interpreted as a divine omen against the worship of religious [icons](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Icon)[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-15)[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-16) and gave the Emperor [Leo III the Isaurian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leo_III_the_Isaurian) the justification he needed to begin implementing his [Iconoclasm](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byzantine_Iconoclasm) policy.

The name "Santorini" first appears c. 1153-1154 in the work of the Muslim geographer [al-Idrisi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Idrisi), as "Santurin", from the island's patron saint, [Saint Irene](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Irene_(disambiguation)).[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-EI2-17) After the [Fourth Crusade](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fourth_Crusade), it was occupied by the [Duchy of Naxos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duchy_of_Naxos) which held it up to ca. 1280 when it was reconquered by [Licario](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Licario" \o "Licario) (the claims of earlier historians that the island had been held by [Jacopo I Barozzi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacopo_I_Barozzi) and his son as a fief have been refuted in the second half of the twentieth century);[[18]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-18)[[19]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-19)[[20]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-20) it was again reconquered from the Byzantines ca. 1301 by [Iacopo II Barozzi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iacopo_II_Barozzi" \o "Iacopo II Barozzi), a member of the Cretan branch of the Venetian [Barozzi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barozzi" \o "Barozzi) family, whose descendant held it until it was annexed in c. 1335 by [Niccolo Sanudo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Niccolo_Sanudo" \o "Niccolo Sanudo) after various legal and military conflicts.[[21]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-21) In 1318–1331 and 1345–1360 it was raided by the [Turkish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anatolian_beyliks) principalities of [Menteshe](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menteshe" \o "Menteshe) and [Aydın](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ayd%C4%B1nids), but did not suffer much damage.[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-EI2-17) From the 15th century on, the suzerainty of the [Republic of Venice](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republic_of_Venice) over the island was recognized in a series of treaties by the [Ottoman Empire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ottoman_Empire), but this did not stop Ottoman raids, until it was captured by the Ottoman admiral [Piyale Pasha](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Piyale_Pasha" \o "Piyale Pasha) in 1576, as part of a process of annexation of most remaining Latin possessions in the Aegean.[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-EI2-17) It became part of the semi-autonomous domain of the Sultan's Jewish favourite, [Joseph Nasi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Nasi). Santorini retained its privileged position in the 17th century, but suffered in turn from Venetian raids during the frequent [Ottoman–Venetian wars](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ottoman%E2%80%93Venetian_wars) of the period, even though there were no Muslims on the island.[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-EI2-17)

Santorini was captured briefly by the [Russians](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Empire) under [Alexey Orlov](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexei_Grigoryevich_Orlov) during the [Russo-Turkish War of 1768–1774](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russo-Turkish_War_of_1768%E2%80%931774), but returned to Ottoman control after. Following the outbreak of the [Greek War of Independence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_War_of_Independence) on the Greek mainland in March 1821, in May Santorini followed suit, although the local Catholic population had its reservations. The island became part of the fledgling Greek state, rebelled against Governor [Ioannis Kapodistrias](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ioannis_Kapodistrias" \o "Ioannis Kapodistrias) in 1831, and became definitively part of the independent [Kingdom of Greece](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kingdom_of_Greece_(Wittelsbach)) in 1832, with the [Treaty of Constantinople](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Constantinople_(1832)).[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-EI2-17)

The island is still home to a Catholic community and the seat of a [Catholic bishopric](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Diocese_of_Santorini).

**World War II**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Santorini&action=edit&section=7" \o "Edit section: World War II)]

During the [Second World War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II), Santorini was occupied in 1941 by Italian forces and then by the Germans following the [Italian armistice](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armistice_of_Cassibile) in 1943 . In 1944, the German garrison on [Santorini was raided](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raid_on_Santorini) by a group of British [Special Boat Service](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special_Boat_Service) Commandos, killing most of its men. Five locals were later shot in reprisal, including the mayor.[[22]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Mortimer-22)[[23]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-23)

**Post-war**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Santorini&action=edit&section=8" \o "Edit section: Post-war)]

In general the island’s economy continued to decline following World War II with a number of factories closing as a lot of industrial activity relocated after to Athens. In an attempt to improve the local economy the Union of Santorini Cooperatives was established 1947 to process, export and promote the islands agriculture products, in particular its wine. In 1952 they constructed near the village of Monolithos what is today the island’s only remaining tomato processing factory. The island’s tourism in the early 1950s generally took the form of small numbers of wealthy tourists on yacht cruises though the Aegean. The island’s children would present arriving passengers with flowers and bid them happy sailing by lighting small lanterns along the steps from Fira down to the port, offering them a beautiful farewell spectacle. Once such visitor was the actress Olivia de Havilland who visited the island in September 1955 at the invitation of Petros Nomikos.[[24]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-24)

In the early 1950s the shipping magnate Evangelos P. Nomikos and his wife Loula decided to support their birthplace and so asked residents to choose whether they wanted the couple to pay for the construction of either a hotel or a hospital, to which local authorities replied that they would prefer a hotel. As a result in 1952, the Nomikos’ commissioned the architect Venetsanos to undertake the design and paid for the construction of the Hotel Atlantis, which was at the time the most glamorous hotel in the Cyclades.[[25]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-AtlantisHotel-25)

In 1954, Santorini had approximately 12,000 inhabitants and very few visitors. The only modes of transport on the island were a jeep, a small bus and the island’s traditional donkeys and mules.

**1956 earthquake**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Santorini&action=edit&section=9" \o "Edit section: 1956 earthquake)]

At 3.11 am on 9 July 1956 a [earthquake](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1956_Amorgos_earthquake) with a magnitude (depending on the particular study) of 7.5,[[26]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Tsampouraki-Kraounaki-26) 7.6,[[26]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Tsampouraki-Kraounaki-26) 7.7[[27]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Papadimitriou2005-27) or 7.8[[28]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Okal2009-28) struck 30 km south of the island of Amorgos. It was the largest earthquake of the 20th century in Greece and had a devastating impact on Santorini.[[28]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Okal2009-28)[[27]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Papadimitriou2005-27) It was followed by aftershocks, the most significant being the first occurring at 3:24 am, 13 minutes after the main shock, which had a 7.2 magnitude.[[28]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Okal2009-28) This aftershock which originated close to the island of Anafi is believed to have been responsible for most of the damage and casualties on Santorini.[[28]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Okal2009-28) The earthquake was accompanied by a tsunami which while much higher at other islands is estimated to have reached 3 metres at Perissa and 2 metres at Vlichada on Santorini.[[28]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Okal2009-28)

Immediately following the earthquake the Greek Prime Minister Konstantinos Karamanlis declared Santorini a state of "large-scale local disaster" and visited the island to inspect the situation on 14 July.[[29]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Simos-29)

Many countries have offered to send relief efforts, though Greece refused to accept the offer of the United Kingdom to send warships to help from Cyprus where they were involved in the [Cyprus Emergency](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyprus_Emergency).[[29]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Simos-29)

As there was no airport the Greek military made air drops of food, tents and supplies, while camps for the homeless were established on the outskirts of Fira.[[30]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-NYTimes2-30)

On Santorini the earthquakes killed 53 people and injured another 100.[[31]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-NYTimes1-31)[[29]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Simos-29) On Santorini 35% of the houses collapsed and 45% suffered major or minor damage.[[29]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Simos-29) In total, 529 houses were destroyed, 1,482 were severely damaged and 1,750 lightly damaged.[[29]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Simos-29) Almost all public buildings were completely destroyed. One of the largest buildings that survived unscathed was the newly built Hotel Atlantis, which allowed it to be used as a temporary hospital and to house public services. The greatest damage was experienced on the Western side along the edge of the caldera, especially at Oia, with parts of the ground collapsing into the sea. The damage from the earthquake reduced most of the population to extreme poverty and caused many to leave the island in search of better opportunities with most settling in Athens.[[29]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-Simos-29)

**Tourism**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Santorini&action=edit&section=10" \o "Edit section: Tourism)]

The expansion of tourism in recent years has resulted in the growth of the economy and population. Santorini was ranked the world's top island by many magazines and travel sites, including the *Travel+Leisure Magazine*,[[32]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini" \l "cite_note-32) the *BBC*,[[33]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-33) as well as the *US News*.[[34]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-34) An estimated 2 million tourists visit annually.[[35]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-35)

The island's [pumice](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pumice) quarries have been closed since 1986, in order to preserve the caldera. In 2007, the cruise ship [*MS Sea Diamond*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MS_Sea_Diamond) ran aground and sank inside the [caldera](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caldera). As of 2019, Santorini is a particular draw for Asian couples who come to Santorini to have pre-wedding photos taken against the backdrop of the island's landscape.[[36]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-36)

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Santorini-20070808-058248-panorama-small.jpg)

Panoramic view of Santorini's principal city, Fira.

Geography[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Santorini&action=edit&section=11" \o "Edit section: Geography)]

*Main article:*[*Santorini caldera*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini_caldera)

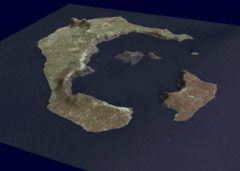
**Geological setting**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Santorini&action=edit&section=12" \o "Edit section: Geological setting)]

The Cyclades are part of a [metamorphic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metamorphism) complex that is known as the [Cycladic Massif](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cycladic_Massif). The complex formed during the [Miocene](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miocene) and was folded and metamorphosed during the [Alpine orogeny](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alpine_orogeny) around 60 million years ago. Thera is built upon a small, non-volcanic [basement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basement_rock) that represents the former non-volcanic island, which was approximately 9 by 6 km (5.6 by 3.7 mi). The basement rock is primarily composed of metamorphosed [limestone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Limestone) and [schist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schist), which date from the Alpine Orogeny. These non-volcanic rocks are exposed at [Mikro Profititis Ilias](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mikro_Profititis_Ilias" \o "Mikro Profititis Ilias), Mesa Vouno, the Gavrillos ridge, [Pyrgos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyrgos_Kallistis" \o "Pyrgos Kallistis), [Monolithos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monolithos,_Greece" \o "Monolithos, Greece), and the inner side of the caldera wall between Cape Plaka and Athinios.

The metamorphic grade is a [blueschist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blueschist" \o "Blueschist) [facies](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metamorphic_facies), which results from tectonic deformation by the [subduction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subduction) of the [African Plate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Plate) beneath the [Eurasian Plate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eurasian_Plate). Subduction occurred between the [Oligocene](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oligocene) and the [Miocene](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miocene), and the metamorphic grade represents the southernmost extent of the Cycladic blueschist belt.

**Volcanism**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Santorini&action=edit&section=13" \o "Edit section: Volcanism)]

Volcanism on Santorini is due to the [Hellenic subduction zone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenic_subduction_zone) southwest of Crete. The [oceanic crust](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oceanic_crust) of the northern margin of the [African Plate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_Plate) is being subducted under Greece and the Aegean Sea, which is thinned [continental crust](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Continental_crust). The subduction compels the formation of the [Hellenic arc](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hellenic_arc), which includes Santorini and other volcanic centres, such as [Methana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Methana_Volcano" \o "Methana Volcano), [Milos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Milos), and [Kos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kos).[[37]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-druitt-37)

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Santorini_3D_version_1.gif)

Three-dimensional [CGI](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer-generated_imagery) [aerial spinning view](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aerial_view) of Santorini island

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Santorini_NeaKameni_tango7174.jpg)

Volcanic craters at Santorini (2011 photo)

The island is the result of repeated sequences of [shield volcano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shield_volcano) construction followed by [caldera collapse](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caldera).[[38]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-38) The inner coast around the caldera is a sheer precipice of more than 300 metres (980 ft) drop at its highest, and exhibits the various layers of solidified lava on top of each other, and the main towns perched on the crest. The ground then slopes outwards and downwards towards the outer perimeter, and the outer beaches are smooth and shallow. Beach sand colour depends on which geological layer is exposed; there are beaches with sand or pebbles made of solidified lava of various colours: such as the Red Beach, the Black Beach and the White Beach. The water at the darker coloured beaches is significantly warmer because the lava acts as a heat absorber.

The area of Santorini incorporates a group of islands created by volcanoes, spanning across Thera, Thirasia, Aspronisi, Palea, and Nea Kameni.

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Viewing_Fira_from_Nea_Kameni.JPG)

Fira from [Nea Kameni](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nea_Kameni" \o "Nea Kameni) volcanic Island

Santorini has erupted many times, with varying degrees of explosivity. There have been at least twelve large explosive eruptions, of which at least four were [caldera](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caldera)-forming.[[37]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-druitt-37) The most famous eruption is the [Minoan eruption](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minoan_eruption), detailed below. Eruptive products range from [basalt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basalt) all the way to [rhyolite](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhyolite), and the rhyolitic products are associated with the most explosive eruptions.

The earliest eruptions, many of which were [submarine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Submarine_eruption), were on the Akrotiri Peninsula, and active between 650,000 and 550,000 years ago.[[37]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-druitt-37) These are [geochemically](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geochemistry) distinct from the later volcanism, as they contain [amphiboles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amphibole).

Over the past 360,000 years there have been two major cycles, each culminating with two caldera-forming eruptions. The cycles end when the magma evolves to a rhyolitic composition, causing the most explosive eruptions. In between the caldera-forming eruptions are a series of sub-cycles. Lava flows and small explosive eruptions build up [cones](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volcanic_cone), which are thought to impede the flow of magma to the surface.[[37]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-druitt-37) This allows the formation of large magma chambers, in which the magma can evolve to more [silicic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silicic) compositions. Once this happens, a large explosive eruption destroys the cone. The Kameni islands in the centre of the lagoon are the most recent example of a cone built by this volcano, with much of them hidden beneath the water.

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:ISS017-E-5037_lrg.jpg)

Recent aerial image of the volcano crater

**Minoan eruption**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Santorini&action=edit&section=14" \o "Edit section: Minoan eruption)]

*Main article:*[*Minoan eruption*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minoan_eruption)

The devastating volcanic eruption of Thera around 1600 B.C. has become the most famous single event in the Aegean before the fall of [Troy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Troy). It may have been one of the largest volcanic eruptions on Earth in the last few thousand years, with an estimated VEI ([volcanic explosivity index](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volcanic_explosivity_index)) of 6 according to the last studies published in 2006, confirming the prior values. The violent eruption was centred on a small island just north of the existing island of Nea Kameni in the centre of the caldera; the caldera itself was formed several hundred thousand years ago by the collapse of the centre of a circular island, caused by the emptying of the magma chamber during an eruption. It has been filled several times by [ignimbrite](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ignimbrite) since then, and the process repeated itself, most recently 21,000 years ago. The northern part of the caldera was refilled by the volcano, then collapsed once more during the Minoan eruption. Before the Minoan eruption, the caldera formed a nearly continuous ring with the only entrance between the tiny island of Aspronisi and Thera; the eruption destroyed the sections of the ring between Aspronisi and Therasia, and between Therasia and Thera, creating two new channels.

On Santorini, a deposit of white [tephra](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tephra) thrown from the eruption is found lying up to 60 m (200 ft) thick, overlying the soil marking the ground level before the eruption, and forming a layer divided into three fairly distinct bands indicating different phases of the eruption. Archaeological discoveries in 2006 by a team of international scientists revealed that the Santorini event was much more massive than previously thought; it expelled 61 cubic kilometres (15 cu mi) of magma and rock into the Earth's atmosphere, compared to previous estimates of only 39 cubic kilometres (9.4 cu mi) in 1991,[[39]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-:0-39)[[40]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-:1-40) producing an estimated 100 cubic kilometres (24 cu mi) of tephra. Only the [Mount Tambora](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_Tambora) volcanic eruption of 1815, the [181 AD eruption](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hatepe_eruption) of the [Taupō Volcano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taup%C5%8D_Volcano" \o "Taupō Volcano), and possibly [Baekdu Mountain](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baekdu_Mountain" \o "Baekdu Mountain)'s 946 AD eruption have released more material into the atmosphere during the past 5,000 years.

[](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:SantoriniPartialPano.jpg)

Partial panoramic view of the [Santorini caldera](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini_caldera), taken from Oia.

**Speculation on an Exodus connection**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Santorini&action=edit&section=15" \o "Edit section: Speculation on an Exodus connection)]

In *The Parting of the Sea: How Volcanoes, Earthquakes, and Plagues Shaped the Exodus Story*,[[41]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-:2-41) geologist [Barbara J. Sivertsen](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Barbara_J._Sivertsen&action=edit&redlink=1) seeks to establish a link between the eruption of Santorini (c. 1500 BC) and the [Exodus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Exodus) of the [Israelites](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israelites) from [Egypt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egypt) in the [Bible](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bible).

Other than the Bible, there is no historic evidence of any Jewish [exodus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Exodus) from Egypt, at least not from the Egyptian sources.

A 2006 [documentary film](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Documentary_film) by [Simcha Jacobovici](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simcha_Jacobovici" \o "Simcha Jacobovici), [*The Exodus Decoded*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Exodus_Decoded),[[42]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-:3-42) postulates that the eruption of the Santorini Island [volcano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volcano) (referred to as c. 1500 BC) caused all the [biblical plagues described against Egypt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plagues_of_Egypt). The documentary presents this date as corresponding to the time of the Biblical [Moses](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moses). The film asserts that the [Hyksos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyksos) were the Israelites and that some of them may have originally been from [Mycenae](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mycenaean_Greece). The film also suggests that these original Mycenaean Israelites fled Egypt (which they had in fact ruled for some time) after the eruption, and went back to Mycenae. The [Pharaoh of the Exodus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pharaoh_of_the_Exodus) is identified with [Ahmose I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahmose_I). Rather than crossing the [Red Sea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Sea), Jacobovici argues a marshy area in northern Egypt known as the [Reed Sea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reed_Sea) would have been alternately drained and flooded by [tsunamis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tsunami) caused by the caldera collapse, and could have been [crossed during the Exodus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Passage_of_the_Red_Sea).

Jacobovici's assertions in *The Exodus Decoded* have been extensively criticized by religious and other scholars.[[43]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-:4-43)[[44]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-:5-44) In a 2013 book on this connection, *Thera and the Exodus*, a dissident from the consensus [Riaan Booysen](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Riaan_Booysen&action=edit&redlink=1), tries to support Jacobovici's theory and claims the pharaoh of the Exodus to be [Amenhotep III](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amenhotep_III) and the biblical Moses as [Crown Prince Thutmose](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crown_Prince_Thutmose), Amenhotep's first-born son and heir to his throne.[[45]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-:6-45)

**Speculation on an Atlantis connection**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Santorini&action=edit&section=16" \o "Edit section: Speculation on an Atlantis connection)]

*Main article:*[*Location hypotheses of Atlantis*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Location_hypotheses_of_Atlantis)

[Archaeological](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Archeology), [seismological](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seismology), and [vulcanological](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vulcanology" \o "Vulcanology) evidence[[46]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-:7-46)[[47]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-:8-47)[[48]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-:9-48) has been presented linking the [Atlantis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantis) myth to Santorini. Speculation suggesting that Thera/Santorini was the inspiration for [Plato](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato)'s Atlantis began with the excavation of Akrotiri in the 1960s, and gained increased currency as reconstructions of the island's pre-eruption shape and landscape frescos located under the ash both strongly resembled Plato's description. The possibility has been more recently popularized by television documentaries such as [The History Channel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_(U.S._TV_channel)) programme *Lost Worlds* (episode "Atlantis"), the [Discovery Channel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discovery_Channel)'s [*Solving History with Olly Steeds*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Solving_History_with_Olly_Steeds), and the BBC's *Atlantis, The Evidence*, which suggests that Thera is Plato's Atlantis.[[49]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-:10-49)[[*non-primary source needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:No_original_research#Primary,_secondary_and_tertiary_sources)]

**Post-Minoan volcanism**[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Santorini&action=edit&section=17" \o "Edit section: Post-Minoan volcanism)]

Post-Minoan eruptive activity is concentrated on the Kameni islands, in the centre of the lagoon. They have been formed since the Minoan eruption, and the first of them broke the surface of the sea in 197 BC.[[37]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-druitt-37) Nine subaerial eruptions are recorded in the historical record since that time, with the most recent ending in 1950.

In 1707 an undersea volcano breached the sea surface, forming the current centre of activity at Nea Kameni in the centre of the lagoon, and eruptions centred on it continue—the twentieth century saw three such, the last in 1950. Santorini was also struck by a devastating earthquake in 1956. Although the volcano is dormant at the present time, at the current active crater (there are several former craters on Nea Kameni), steam and [carbon dioxide](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carbon_dioxide) are given off.

Small tremors and reports of strange gaseous odours over the course of 2011 and 2012 prompted satellite radar technological analyses and these revealed the source of the symptoms; the magma chamber under the volcano was swelled by a rush of molten rock by 10 to 20 million cubic metres between January 2011 and April 2012, which also caused parts of the island's surface to rise out of the water by a reported 8 to 14 centimetres.[[50]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-NG-50) Scientists say that the injection of molten rock was equivalent to 20 years’ worth of regular activity.[[50]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-NG-50)

**Historic Facts About Santorini**

* **Santorini has a volcanic past** – Hundreds of years ago the beautiful island of Santorini did not have the characteristic shape that it has today, the island was round. That is before the volcanic eruption of 1600 BC (thought to be the largest in recorded history!) which collapsed the island and left the caldera we see today.
* Santorini is the only inhabited caldera in the world
* The volcanic eruption caused a tsunami so large that is thought to have contributed to the collapse of the Minoan civilisation in Crete 110 km away!
* Santorini is still an active volcano today and you can visit the volcanic island of Nea Kameni in the centre of the island and see the hot smoke and swim in the hot springs.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Santorini / Thira**  Σαντορίνη / Θήρα | |
| Santorini montage. Clicking on an image in the picture causes the browser to load the appropriate article, if it exists.  [About this image](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Santorini_Montage_L.png)  **Clockwise from top:** [Partial panoramic view of Santorini](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fira), [Sunset in the village of Oia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oia,_Greece), [Ruins of the Stoa Basilica at Ancient Thera](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Thera), the Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral of Ypapanti at the town of Fira ([[it]](https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cattedrale_della_Presentazione_di_Cristo_(Fira)), the [Aegean Sea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aegean_Sea) as seen from Oia, and view of Fira from the island of [Nea Kameni](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nea_Kameni" \o "Nea Kameni) at the [Santorini caldera](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini_caldera). | |
| [Santorini / Thira is located in Greece](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Greece_location_map.svg)  Santorini / Thira  Santorini / Thira  show  **Location within the region** | |
| Coordinates: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/55/WMA_button2b.png/17px-WMA_button2b.png[36°25′N 25°26′E](https://geohack.toolforge.org/geohack.php?pagename=Santorini&params=36_25_N_25_26_E_type:city_region:GR-L)[Coordinates](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geographic_coordinate_system): https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/5/55/WMA_button2b.png/17px-WMA_button2b.png[36°25′N 25°26′E](https://geohack.toolforge.org/geohack.php?pagename=Santorini&params=36_25_N_25_26_E_type:city_region:GR-L) | |
| **Country** | Greece |
| [**Administrative region**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Administrative_regions_of_Greece) | [South Aegean](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Aegean) |
| [**Regional unit**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regional_units_of_Greece) | [Thira](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thira_(regional_unit)) |
| **Government** | |
| **• Mayor** | Antonis Sigalas |
| **Area** | |
| **• Municipality** | 90.69 km2 (35.02 sq mi) |
| **Population**   (2011)[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-census11-1) | |
| **• Municipality** | 15,550 |
| **• Municipality density** | 170/km2 (440/sq mi) |
| **• Municipal unit** | 14,005 |
| **Community**  [[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Santorini#cite_note-census11-1) | |
| **• Population** | 1,857 (2011) |
| [**Time zone**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time_zone) | [UTC+2](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UTC%2B2) ([EET](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_European_Time" \o "Eastern European Time)) |
| **• Summer (**[**DST**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daylight_saving_time)**)** | [UTC+3](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UTC%2B3) ([EEST](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eastern_European_Summer_Time" \o "Eastern European Summer Time)) |
| [**Postal code**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postal_codes_in_Greece) | 847 00, 847 02 |
| [**Area code(s)**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Telephone_numbers_in_Greece) | 22860 |
| [**Vehicle registration**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vehicle_registration_plates_of_Greece) | EM |
| **Website** | [www.thira.gr](http://www.thira.gr/) |