

Title:

Travel To Athens: A Gift From The Gods

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539

Summary:

Travelers who expect to be greeted by lone standing relics of ancient Greece will be awestruck by the sprawling urban metropolis of today's Athens. The capital city is an explorer's paradise as historic gems are embedded within the modern day melee and cultural nuances of a turbulent past are written between the lines of concrete and the sparkling blue Aegean Sea.

Keywords:

Athens, travel to Athens, airfare to Athens, Athens travel information, travel to Europe, Italy

Article Body:

Travelers who expect to be greeted by lone standing relics of ancient Greece will be awestruck by the sprawling urban metropolis of today's Athens. The capital city is an explorer's paradise as historic gems are embedded within the modern day melee and cultural nuances of a turbulent past are written between the lines of concrete and the sparkling blue Aegean Sea. Everywhere in Athens is a testament to why this mythic peninsula is considered the cradle of Western civilization and modern democracy.

Of particular interest, Athens received a much needed facelift in preparation for the 2004 Olympics. Notorious for its nefos (smog) resulting from rapid growth and congestion following World War II and the Cold War, Athens realized the need to clean up its act when it became clear that historic monuments were eroding at an alarming rate due to acid rain from air pollution. Due to this Olympic makeover, it is extremely easy to navigate around the well marked streets in English and Greek and transportation has never been more streamlined.

Mythological Mythos

Ancient Greece reached its societal peak in the 1st century BC when magnificent monuments like the Parthenon and the Temple of Athena Nike were constructed on the fortified Acropolis and Socrates and Plato developed their Western thinking schools of thought. While most of the major attractions from the time period are in the center of the city, travel in the outskirts of Athens will bring encounters with many significant locations from this time period. Marathon, of

the famous battle (and today's 26.22 mile race), is just northeast of Athens and the ancient Mycenaean excavation site at Velatouri is to the south, boasting the unearthed Thorikos theatre. While the Grecian period is omnipresent, Greece has fascinating Turkish and Persian cultural influences as a result of many wars and takeovers until the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the 20th century.

Club Hopping or Island Hopping?

In the spring and summer evenings, enjoy the cafés and restaurants as they begin to spill into the streets and squares. Greece, and particularly Athens, is notorious for its boisterous and tireless nightlife. The Port of Piraeus comes to life as many vacationers head out for their island excursions from this historic cove. Athens is the perfect place to become immersed in Greek culture and life before taking a ferry ride to one of the surrounding tranquil, historic or party islands - the choice is yours. The port itself is also of particular historic interest. One of the oldest in the world, the port was heavily used during the Peloponnesian Wars in the 4th century BC and remnants of the long Themistoclean Walls, which fortified the port and Athens together during this time period, still survive today.

A trip to Athens is not only a journey of history, but one of modernity and progress. After Greece's golden age, Athens' grandeur was squandered to nearly nothing by invaders and the sweeping tides of history. Today, the free and booming capital city is again a testament to its historic commitment to forward thinking civilization. Experience the rebirth of the foundations of the western world in Athens!

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