

Peloponnese Self-Guided



The Peloponnese Peninsula has been inhabited for millennia and is the source of many of Greece's most beloved mythological figures and real life heroes, from Jason and his Argonauts to King Leonidas of Sparta.

You will visit the region's most legendary sites as you ascend mountain roads, hug gorges, follow winding seacoast roads and overnight in memorable accommodations where the hosts make you feel proud to have arrived by bike. Almost the entire route consists of rural back roads.

Trip highlights

- Charming Poros island
- Lion's Gate at Mycenae, Europe's oldest monument
- Serene Bourtzi island with lovely views of Nafplio
- Ancient Olympia and its Temple of Zeus
- 3rd century BC Epidavros Theatre seating 15, 000

Day 1: Poros

Arriving into Poros harbor, your first glimpse of Poros brings to mind a fairy tale island -- pastel, neo-Classical buildings bunched in a triangular shape with the town's clock tower akin to a candle atop a sugary cake. Take a warm-up spin around the island, climbing up to the Temple of Poseidon and then over to Neorio Beach for water sports.

Day 2: Nafplio

The best leg is climbing a cliff on a road devoid of villages or cars that overlooks the dazzling blue sea. The highlight of the day is a stop at Ancient Epidavros, the 3rd century BC outdoor theatre seating 12,000 spectators with impeccable acoustics. Heading towards Nafplio, just off the side of the road, don't miss the ancient Mycenae bridge,

Day 3: Nafplio

Elegant Nafplio has superb food and local wine, arts and custom-made jewelry and wondrous antiquities. Ancient Mycenae, only an hour's ride away, holds the tomb of King Agamemnon who launched the Trojan War. In Nafplio be sure to visit Bourtzi island for a picturesque view of Nafplio.

Day 4: Stemnitsa

Today is all about climbing. The first mountain is "bald," no trees, which permits a panoramic view of a series of distant mountains reminiscent of sea waves (2297 ft). After lunch in Tripoli, you climb into the heart of Arcadia where the landscape is more verdant, especially in cute little Stemnitsa overlooking the Lousios Gorge.

Day 5: Olympia

Most of today's route is downhill which makes you think it will be a short ride. But there is a detour in Dimitsana to visit the truly fascinating live-action water power museum which brings alive what pre-industrial life was like in Arcadia. The ride ends cycling past the Olympia stadium, the ruins lying within a discus throw of your bike route.

Day 6: Lampei

Spend the morning touring Ancient Olympia, home of the original Olympics. Its Temple of Zeus was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The modern Olympics, resurrected in 1896, are given prominence in a museum exhibiting quirky memorabilia from past games. After lunch, a 3 hour ride brings you to sleepy Lampei.

Day 7: Vytina

Today you reverse course and head east, cycling on a mountain ride that is basically flat. There is a slight detour to see a Pausanias in the 2nd century AD. The route takes you to Vytina, a most charming little mountain town with a cornucopia of delicious homemade products.

Day 8: Nemea

A lot of mileage today but the end result is worth it because your overnight accommodations are in a winery. Peloponnese viticulture dates back to Homer who called the region Ampeloessa, meaning "full of vines." Nemea is the most important town in southern Greece for red wine production.

Day 9: Nemea

You have two choices today. Either ride around the Nemea region hopping from one winery to the next. There are many domains in this region for wine tasting. Or you can cycle to Ancient Corinth where St. Paul once lived and the formidable Akrokorinthos Fortress with 360 degree panoramic views.

Day 10: Departure

Start/End Points

Prior to Day 1 meet in Athens to fit the bikes. On Day 1 you take a 7:15 am boat to Poros. The bikes go on the ferry boat with you. Tour ends in Nemea south of Corinth from where you are transferred to Athens or Athens Airport

Mileage

Total Mileage 369 miles, 594 km **Average Daily** 41 miles, 66 km

Day 1 12 miles 20 km loop around the island with slight climb, flat along coast

Day 2 48 miles, 78 km starts flat but has 2 big climbs, 738 ft, 1150 ft, then 20 miles down to sea

Day 3 25 miles, 40 km flat with one steep 3 km ascent

Day 4 60 miles, 99 km mountain climbing, highest ascent almost 4000 ft

Day 5 54 miles, 87 km mostly downhill

Day 6 26 miles, 42 km climbing up to 2600 ft

Day 7 34 miles, 55 km, mostly flat along a ridge, but climbing in the end

Day 8 51 miles, 88 km, ups and downs

Day 9 59 miles, 96 km downhill near sea level, then climb back up

Cost per person in euros

- 1 rider — 2800
- 2 riders — 2040
- 3 riders — 1870 + single supp
- 4 riders — 1785
- Single Supplement — 490

Rating

This is a challenging tour. Although the average daily is only about 40 miles, many of these miles are on mountains. Riders must be already fit and trained to sign up for this tour.

In general our self-guided tours are designed for experienced riders. For your own comfort and safety, at least one person in a party of 2-4 riders must have experience with cycling for extended miles unguided without vehicle support and have a modicum of bike mechanic skills. We also require self-guided riders to keep a credit card on file with us.

Optional Archaeology Guides

Private one hour tour with professional licensed guide at Epidavros and/or Ancient Mycenae. 100 euros per party for each site, plus entry tickets (Epidavros 6 euros per person, Mycenae 8 euros per person). These particular tour guides are accustomed to cyclists arriving on bicycles so meeting times are somewhat flexible. Visiting premier ruins without a guide is like watching a movie with the sound turned off. Contact us if you wish testimonials from clients who have taken these tours.

Inclusions

Accommodations in 3-4 star hotels ranging from upscale to family run guesthouses. Tasteful, clean, air-conditioned, private bath, abundant hospitality, comfort. All accommodations come with breakfast. Tour price based on double occupancy. Single supplement costs apply for individual rooms. Triples may or may not be available depending on the hotel, in which instance your party would book one double and one single.

6 luggage transfers, 2 bike transfers including your transfer from Nemea to Athens or Airport on Day 12

Boat ticket from Piraeus to Poros on Day 1

Specialized bicycle: road Allez model with carbon fiber forks or hybrid Crossroads with suspension. Triple chain rings, 27 gears.

Bike gear: water bottles, map holder, rear rack, odometer, helmet, lock. For hygienic purposes we encourage you to bring your own helmet.

Bike tools and part: hand pump, tire irons, spare tube, bike tool with spoke truer, patch kit, spokes.

Cue sheets with GPS profiles

Maps

Trip packet with useful information (e.g., recommended tavernas, points of interest, phone numbers, etc.)

1 mobile phone per couple with 10 euros phone card

CycleGreece jersey

Gratuities, tips, VAT tax

Exclusions

- Airfare to/from Greece
- Transfers from airport to Athens
- Athens hotel before Day 1
- boat or water taxi to/from Poros island (Galatas port on mainland)(5-10 minutes)
- Meals except breakfast
- Travel Insurance

