CYCLADES SELF-GUIDED

one stunning island after another

DESCRIPTION

The most romantic and even swashbuckling destination for an adventure biking tour are the Cyclades, hopping by ferry from one island to the next. Like a family with look-alike siblings, the islands share a blue and white appearance: impeccably white-washed houses surrounded by blinding azure waters. But, also like family members, each island has its own personality, attractions and individual quirks.

On the eight-day tour, you can acquaint yourself with four to five islands – Syros, Mykonos, Paros, Antiparos, Naxos, Tinos all for cycling, while the sacred ancient sanctuary of Delos island is a car-free, bike-free day trip excursion. Or you can opt to become more intimate with fewer island stops, such as, Syros, Paros and Naxos. Also, the islands offer a multiple of routes to choose from which are not listed on this page, but available when you book the tour.

No matter which Cyclades islands you choose to spend most of your time, they are are all winners, each and every one a romantic destination. We guarantee you will return home with fond memories of sublime beauty, an easy-going lifestyle and the region's incomparable light which the British novelist Lawrence Durrell once likened to "the naked eyeball of God."

Before or after your self-guided tour, we recommend booking the Athens Add-on that immerses you in the culture of Athens and the Attica region with exciting activities: Historic Central Athens bike tour (90% traffic free), Acropolis & Acropolis Museum with professional guide, Temple of Poseidon coastal cycling, Attica wine tasting, Temple of Artemis.

DETAILS

Dates	choose your dates
Duration	7 nights, 8 days standard tour — opt for more days or less days (minimum 5 days)
Add-ons	yes, Athens add-on
Arrival City	Athens, at least one day before tour departure
Arrival transfer	see Extras tab
Tour Start Point	Pireaus port to Syros island (standard tour)
Tour End Point	Naxos island

Minimum Age	18
Total Mileage	280 km, 174 miles for standard tour. Ride options offer additional mileage or less mileage.
Highest Elevation	496 meters, 1627 feet
Rating	Active. See **Rating System**

ITINERARY

Arrive at least one day early to Athens to test ride the bikes.

Bike mileage listed for each day is that day's standard bike route. Depending on your party's cycling level, most daily routes can vary by adding mileage or minimizing mileage.

The itinerary below is standard, but you can opt to spend more overnights on certain islands if your vacation is cycle oriented, such as Paros and Naxos which have numerous bike route choices. Or you can opt for more overnights on other islands, such as Tinos or Syros, if you're more inclined to sight see. The best thing about the Cyclades islands is that each one is an absolutely winning destination.

An important factor to remember about ferry hopping is that the Boats Rule. Your itinerary is dependent on ferry schedules which do not, as some foreigners may think, run at all hours nor between all islands. Because ferry schedules dictate your arrival and departure time to each island, this affects your cycling schedule.

A final important consideration is that at each port on arrival and departure you must take on and off your bikes and luggage. The boats do not idle in port so you have to do this manoeuver in one trip. It is best to have luggage that is a backpack or a wheelie, and no more than one piece of luggage plus a day pack. The luggage transfer drivers cannot come on to the ferry to help you. They will recognize you as a cyclist as you come off the boat, as there are usually few cyclists among the passengers.

Day 1: Syros

Depart from Piraeus on an early morning ferry to Ermoupoli, the picturesque capital of the Cyclades. Admire the neoclassical buildings, expecially the Apollo Opera House. Visit the Dormiton Church that holds an original El Greco. Option to walk up to Ano Syro, the charming medieval, carfree neighborhood or take a quick warm-up ride to Kambos in the barely populated north end of the island. **20 km, 12 miles** There is a longer warm-up ride, the Chrousa Loop, which can include a wine tasting stop. **16 km, 10 miles**

Day 2: Syros

The scenic cycling route takes you counterclockwise on a loop of the southern portion of the island. A half dozen or beaches beckon you to stop en route but wait till Vari Beach which is the best spot for lunch and swimming. **36 km, 22 miles**

Day 3: Tinos or Mykonos

On Tinos you'll see few foreign tourists. Cyclists are rewarded biking in traditional villages that feature basket makers, Venetian era dovecotes, marble sculptors and windmills. Tinos is worthy of a two night stay. Mykonos is famous for its all night parties, shopping and beaches but it is not a biking friendly destination. Cyclists opt for Mykonos to visit the nearby World Heritage site of Delos Island.

Day 4: Paros

En route to your hotel just outside Naoussa, a one-time sleepy fishing village, bike to Korakas for a hike up to the lighthouse built in 1887 with spectacular views. Stop again to swim at the unusual Kolymbithres beach whose rock beach will wow you. You also have the option to cycle to Santa Maria beach far northeast end of the island. **Day 5: Paros**

Lots of cycling options. Make a loop around Paros, stopping at the delightful Valley of the Butterflies atop a hill in a surprisingly woody area. **56 km, 35 miles.** Or take a short ferry to Antiparos island to bike to the famous Antiparos Cave and get another work-out walking up and down its 400 steps. **61 km, 38 miles** (long version)

Day 5: Paros

Maximize your cycling on Paros by making a loop of the island **50 km, 30 miles**. Or stretch the loop further by adding Antiparos island which is only about 10 minutes away by boat from Pounta port. Antiparos is a more relaxed version of Paros. Bike to the famed Antiparos cave adding **18 km, 11 miles** to the loop.

Day 6: Naxos

Naxos is only 45 minutes from Paros by boat, so if you take the noon ferry you have time for a morning ride in Paros up to Lefkes village. **23.40 km, 15 miles** Depending on your desires and ability, in Naxos your biking options are Agia Anna Beach **11 km, 6.80 miles** or the olive oil museum in Eggares **18 km, 11 miles** or Alyki pine forest **45 km, 28 miles**

Day 7: Naxos

Cycle the interior of the island to two kouros statues lying unfinished in their quarries. Continue to Halki an adorable little village famous for its kitron liqueur made from lemon leaves. Bike further to Aria Springs and hike to Za Cave. **48.60 km, 30 miles** For ambitious cyclists, challenge yourself to circle the island **82 km, 51 miles**

Day 8: Departure

Whether you are leaving Naxos by boat or air, if you have time take a morning spin to Dimitra Sanctuary to see the restored pagan temple and Byzantine church. Start the ride by 8:30 am and there's time enough to shower before check-out at noon and head to the port or airport. **35 km, 21.80 miles**

COST & INCLUSIONS

Cost in euros based on double occupancy

1-2 riders	2480 euros per person
3-4 riders	2350 euros per person
Single Supplement	950 euros

TOUR INCLUSIONS

Accommodations: 3-4 star hotels, primarily family owned and operated, ranging from boutique hotels to seaside upscale hotels. Tasteful, clean, air-conditioned, private bath, abundant hospitality, comfort. All accommodations are standard doubles with option for upgrade. All accommodations serve breakfast, usually buffet style. Tour prices are based on double occupancy. See Accommodations tab to request more info about tour's accommodations

Ferry transfers: Pireaus to Syros, then to Mykonos or Tinos, then to Paros then to Naxos

Luggage transfers: luggage transfers on each overnight island to and from the ports

Bikes: Specialized road bike. Triple chain ring, 27 gears, carbon fiber fork. Upgrade to a carbon bike for 50 euros a day. Electric bikes are available as an upgrade for 50 euros a day. Regular pedals or toe clips on request. You are welcome to bring your own clip-in pedals and shoes. See **Our Bikes** and **Our Gear**

Bike gear: 2 water bottles, helmet, handlebar pouch, lock, rear rack on request For hygienic purposes we encourage you to bring your own helmet.

Bike tools: hand pump, patch kit, tire irons, spare tube, multi-tool. One set per group.

Bike Routes: Options (1) RideWithGPS tour routes to upload to your iphone or Android with voice narration – bike mount on request (2) GPX tracks to download to your device – bring your own bike mount

Color copies of Distance Elevation Profiles

Maps of each island

Meals: Breakfasts are included at each hotel.

Trip packet: useful and interesting information about the region

CycleGreece jersey: short sleeved, rear pockets, locally made

Gratuities, tips and 24% VAT taxes

TOUR EXCLUSIONS

International airfare to/from Greece

- Transfers from Athens Airport to Athens – see Extras tab
- All meals except breakfast
- Departure flight or boat from Naxos to Athens or to other destinations at tour's end
- Excursion to Delos island (about 40 or 50 euros)
- Travel insurance – see Extras tab

TAKE NOTE

- Participants are required to sign our **Waiver**
- Participants are required to agree to the **Booking Agreement**
- Travel Insurance is required as a condition for participation in a CycleGreece tour

See the website for more details about ACCOMMODATIONS, EXTRAS, ADD-ONS, MAP and BOOKING AGREEMENT

CYCLEGREECE

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