Information about villages, beaches, sightseeing, restaurants, activities and more...
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About Santorini

Its incredible scenery attracts thousands of visitors every year to Santorini for vacation, honeymoon and wedding ceremonies. The island has also attracted several movie productions, including Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life.

The island of Santorini faces the caldera, the famous submerged volcano crater situated in the middle of a basin with water. In the ancient times, the island of Santorini was called Strogili, which means "round" in Greek and a myth says that it was created in a miraculous way. After a terrible volcanic eruption, the centre of the island sank in the sea, leaving only the crater and the imposing cliffs. From these cliffs, one can admire the most stunning little villages that seem suspended in the sky and the unique wild nature of the island.

These villages consist of white typical Cycladic houses with blue painted windows facing the black volcanic rock of the caldera: a sight that has inspired artists and ordinary people, especially in the sunset when the horizon is tainted by the amazing colors of pale red and orange.

The name "Santorini" comes from "Santa Irene", although its official Greek name is Thera. It is located at the south of the Cyclades islands, between Ios and Anafi. The capital is Fira but the most picturesque village of Santorini is Oia. Popular resorts also include Firostefani and Imerovigli. The most famous beach is Red Beach but nice beaches also include Perissa, Kamari, Perivolos and Vlychada.

The most important sight of Santorini is certainly the volcano, whose eruption changed the course of world history. The first eruption of the volcano is estimated at around 1500 BC and archaeologists say it was so strong that the tsunami waves destroyed the Minoan towns in Crete. The last eruption was a few years ago, in 1956, and today the volcano is still alive today. Some legends lead to believe that the destruction of Santorini could be related to the myth of Atlantis, the rich town that sunk in a day and night.
Best Villages in Santorini

**Oia** (Rating: ★★★★★ by Greeka members)

**Location:** 11 km north west of Fira

**Description:** Oia, pronounced "Ia", is the most famous of all villages of Santorini. It is world known for its quite life and the fantastic sunset. Obviously the most beautiful and picturesque village of Santorini.

**Sightseeing:** Museum of musical instruments, Nautical Museum, Romantic Sunset, Thirassia Island

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**Fira** (Rating: ★★★★★ by Greeka members)

**Location:** 10 km from the main port, Athinaios

**Description:** Fira is the capital of Santorini and the main transport hub of the island. Although it gets very busy in summer, it still offers some of the greatest view to the volcano and the famous caldera of Santorini.

**Sightseeing:** Archaeological Museum, Bellonio Cultural Centre, Caldera, Catholic Cathedral, Domenican Convent, Folklore Museum, Megaron Gyzi, Museum of Prehistoric Thera, Orthodox Metropolitan Cathedral, Take A Donkey Ride, Volcano and Hot Springs
**Firostefani** (Rating: ★★★★ by Greeka members)
**Location:** 2 km north of Fira

**Description:** Firostefani is a small village within a walking distance from Fira. It is like a suburb to the capital of Santorini. It distinguishes for its traditional architecture, the wonderful view and its tourism development.

**Sightseeing:** Agios Nikolaos Monastery

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**Imerovigli** (Rating: ★★★★ by Greeka members)
**Location:** 3 km north west of Fira

**Description:** Imerovigli is like an extension of Fira but it is situated on a higher cliff. Providing some very romantic views, Imerovigli is more quiet than Fira but still enough tourism developed.

**Sightseeing:** Skaros Rock
Best Beaches in Santorini

**Red Beach** (Rating: ★★★½ by Greeka members)
**Location:** 12 km south west of Fira

**Description:** Red beach is one of the most beautiful and famous beaches of Santorini. It has black and red volcanic pebbles and hot water.

**Kamari** (Rating: ★★★★½ by Greeka members)
**Location:** 10 km south east of Fira

**Description:** The beach resort of Kamari is situated on the southern part of Santorini, right next to Perissa, with the enormous rock called Mesa Vouno between them.

**Perissa** (Rating: ★★★ by Greeka members)
**Location:** 10 km south east of Fira

**Description:** Perissa is a tourist resort that gets very crowded in summer. An impressive and organized beach, Perissa has black sand on its shore. The remains of Ancient Thera are close by.

**Sightseeing:** Ancient Thera, Church of Holy Cross, Panagia Katefiani
**Best Sightseeing in Santorini**

**Caldera**  
**Location:** Fira  
The Caldera of Santorini is undoubtedly one of the natural wonders of Earth. The volcanic explosion that occurred here more than 3,500 years ago changed forever the topography of the Mediterranean coast.

**Romantic Sunset**  
**Location:** Oia  
The sunset of Santorini is probably the most famous in the world. It is gorgeous from every part of the island, but the sunset in Oia is the best. Thousands of couples in love come to Santorini every year to see the sunset or get married with this lovely background.
Volcano and Hot Springs
Location: Fira
The famous volcano of Santorini stands in the middle of the sunken caldera, right opposite the coastline of Santorini. It is located on the island of Nea Kameni and many tour boats go there from Fira. On the neighbouring island of Palea Kameni, there are the hot springs, which are said to have curative properties.

Akrotiri Minoan Site
Location: Akrotiri
The Minoan Town of Akrotiri is one of the most important ancient sites on Santorini. It is located on the southern side of the island and the town was found almost intact, covered with layers of ashes. Scientists believe that this town was destroyed by the volcanic eruption of Santorini in about 1,650 BC. After many years of being closed down, the site reopened to visitors in April 2012.
Museum of Prehistoric Thera
Location: Fira
The Museum of Prehistoric Thera is located in Fira and exhibits findings from the prehistoric times that have been excavated from Akrotiri, the Ancient Thera and other areas on Santorini. Exhibits include ceramics, marble statues, Minoan frescoes from Akrotiri, tools and weaponry.

Take A Donkey Ride
Location: Fira
Taking a donkey ride is one of the most popular activities on Santorini. Particularly, in Fira and Oia, donkey rides are very common. The most famous route is from the old port of Fira up to the town.

Entertainment in Santorini

Fanari
Category: Restaurants
Location: Fira
Fanari Restaurant, located on a cliff side overlooking the sea boasts some splendid views of Santorini caldera and the sunset. The menu includes original Greek specialties prepared from locally available ingredients.
Ampelos
Category: Restaurants
Location: Fira
Located next to the main church of Fira with a magnificent view of the caldera, Restaurant Ampelos has a closed dining hall as well as an open terrace surrounded by a profusion of bougainvillea, geraniums and hibiscus.

Archipelagos
Category: Restaurants
Location: Fira
Archipelagos Restaurant is located at one of the most beautiful spots in Fira. Housed in a refurbished 19th century captain's home, that has been carved out of the volcanic cliff, the restaurant offers panoramic views of the island.

Watersports in Santorini

Wave Sports
Location: Perissa
Wave Sports Club is located in Perivolos Beach, Santorini and offers its clientele a friendly atmosphere in a warm and pleasing environment. Wave Sports Club is located at Perivolos Beach, in Santorini; in fact, it is attached to the well-known "Chili" Bar, so it is really easy for you to find.

Diving in Santorini

Dive Center Santorini
Location: Perissa
Diving has become a popular sport in the recent times and many tourists prefer to explore the volcanic island by diving underwater. Santorini Dive Center operates from Perissa Beach as well as Akrotiri and has quick access to all good sites, which can be easily reached from the dive station at the small beach located below the cliffs of Akrotiri.
Credits

Greeka.com would like to thank the following members for their valuable contribution, as some of the photos included in this guide belong to them:

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