

Sacred Summits of Olympus and Meteora

Trip Code: GMO

Version:



WALK & TREK



GUIDED GROUP



MODERATE



HIGHLIGHTS

- Hike up the highest peak in Greece nestled in a UNESCO national park
- Walk on ancient trails in the foothills of Meteora's sandstone mountains
- Visit the breathtaking UNESCO floating monasteries of Megalo and Varlaam
- Look for eagles and chamois and walk along the E4 long distance trail

AT A GLANCE

- 6 days walking
- Max altitude - 2919m
- Join at Thessaloniki

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

Captivating Greece boasts the breathtaking UNESCO floating monasteries of Meteora and "the home of the gods," Mount Olympus, the highest peak in the country. Dominating a UNESCO national park and world biosphere reserve, dramatic Olympus, the Throne of Zeus, serves as the highlight of this fantastic trekking journey, featuring stays in traditional mountain huts and a spectacular trek onto the mountain. Greece's first national park, Olympus, sits on the Macedonian border and is home to a wonderful variety of wildlife, including chamois, wolves, jackals, woodpeckers, birds of prey, and butterflies.

Our journey commences in the Greek village of Krastaki, nestled at the base of the floating Orthodox monasteries of Meteora. This UNESCO World Heritage Site comprises towering sandstone pillars crowned by enchanting monasteries. We'll traverse trails once frequented by 11th-century monks and visit two of the monasteries before continuing to the quaint town of Litochoro. With its stunning mountain backdrop, Litochoro offers an ideal setting to relax before embarking on our trek to the highest point in Greece.

Mount Olympus, the second-highest peak in the Balkans, promises a true mountain adventure, complete with dramatic ridges and breathtaking scenery. If you seek a unique trekking journey boasting panoramic views extending to the coast, then this adventure is the perfect choice.

Is this holiday for you?

This is an exceptional mountain journey featuring a significant amount of ascent and descent during the days spent in Olympus National Park. While the trails are generally well-maintained, there is a ridge section where scrambling (equivalent to UK scrambling grade 1) will be necessary. Walking durations vary from 4 to 8 hours on days 4, 5, 6, and 7, with occasional exposure during the final ascent to the summit (which is optional).

For three nights, we will lodge in traditional mountain huts, most of which are inaccessible by vehicles. You will need to carry your personal equipment for four days; however, bedding is provided, and with strategic packing, there is no need to burden yourself with a heavy backpack. This holiday is suitable for regular walkers with a good head for heights and some scrambling experience, who seek a remarkable mountain adventure in a cherished part of Europe.

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- A professional and qualified tour leader/mountain guide
- Single timed airport transfers on arrival and departure
- All accommodation as described
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan All land transport required by the itinerary
- All activities/excursions/entrance fees mentioned unless specified as 'optional'

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Airport transfers other than group transfers
- Tips
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Any additional activities/excursions indicated as optional
- Miscellaneous personal expenditure - drinks and souvenirs etc

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at Thessaloniki Airport.

A single timed transfer from the airport to the group hotel in Kastraki will be provided. This transfer will depart in the mid afternoon.

On the last day of the holiday there will be a single timed group transfer back to Thessaloniki Airport from Litochoro departing mid-morning.

Anyone may join the group transfers by prior arrangement. Travelling as a group or on public transport saves energy. If this is not practical, we can provide private transfers at an additional cost.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

All breakfasts, 3 lunches and 3 dinners are included in the holiday price.

Food & Water

Water from the taps may not be drinkable in all locations on this trip - please check with your guide. We recommend taking water purification tablets and a reusable bottle with a filter such as [Water-to-Go](#), which can both be used to help make safe other water sources. Please note that we do not encourage the purchase of single use plastic bottles.

Greek food is absolutely excellent with its colourful Mediterranean diet of tasty dishes alongside a fantastic range of fresh vegetables and salads. Local menus include fava beans, olives, aubergines, fresh cheeses, filled filo pastries, lamb and poultry plus don't forget excellent breads to dip in taramasalata and tzatziki. Breakfasts are continental in style with tea, coffee, cereals, bread, jam, yoghurt, honey and occasionally cheese. Lunches will be picnic style and the group will make them up during breakfast to carry during the day (bread, cheese, tomatoes, cucumber, ham or dried meat, fruit and biscuits). In Litoro and Krastaki we'll eat in small local restaurants with something to suit all tastes and budgets. In the refuges dinner will be simpler but filling with thick soups, pastas, stews etc. As one of the oldest wine-producing regions in the world, the country has an excellent selection of local wines available by the glass. The light beer of Mythos, the aniseed aperitif of Ouzo, Metaxa the local brandy, Retsina (wine with an acquired taste) and the fiery Tsipouro are all popular local tipples and well worth a try.

Accommodation

You will spend 4 nights in simple guesthouses / hotels in Kastraki and Litoro in en-suite rooms. If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired with another single client of the same sex.

For the 3 nights in Olympus National Park, the group will stay in two mountain refuges with dormitory accommodation, known as Refuge A and Refuge C. Blankets are provided, however we recommend taking a sheet sleeping bag liner for these 3 nights. Each refuge has a restaurant, plus drinks and snacks can be purchased. Toilet and washing facilities will be simple, refuge A does offer refreshing cold showers! Though basic, the atmospheric location of these huts more than makes up for the lack of facilities. It also allows the chance to stay in the UNESCO national park.

Single rooms are available for a supplementary cost (not available at the mountain refuges). If you are planning to extend your holiday, additional nights at the group hotels are available on request.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be led by a professional and qualified tour leader.

Altitude

This holiday involves going to moderately high altitude. During the course of your trip you will reach altitudes in excess of 2500 metres. Most people will have no difficulty with this level of altitude but before coming on the holiday, we recommend you read the advice on [trekking at high altitude](#). You can also talk to one of our trekking experts if you have any concerns about altitude.

Spending Money

The local currency in Greece is the Euro and approximately 250 - 300 Euro should cover extra expenses - drinks with evening meals, snacks, non-included meals and drinks in the refuges. We recommend taking your money in local currency or carrying a debit/credit card to use at a local ATM. There is an ATM at Thessaloniki Airport and in Litochoro where you can withdraw Euros.

Guidance on Tipping

Most people will want to tip their local guide if they have had a good experience. This is a purely personal decision and it is important to remember that tips are a way of saying 'thank you' and are not part of the wages of local staff. We recommend that any tips be given from the group as a whole rather than from individuals and that the group decides together on a level of tipping that everyone is comfortable with.

Baggage Allowance

There is no weight restriction other than that imposed by your international carrier but we do ask you to limit your luggage to one piece plus your day pack. Baggage will be transported between overnight stops (except on Days 4, 5 and 6) by vehicle. A 35-40 litre rucksack should be adequate for the two day trek into Olympus National Park. Any items not required on the two day trek can be left at the hotel in Litochoro.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders. A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday. Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

Health & Vaccinations

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations.

GHIC / Medical cover

UK residents should carry a free Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). This entitles you to state provided medical treatment when you're visiting an EU country or Switzerland. This is not a substitute for medical travel insurance which is vital when travelling overseas.

Currency

The currency for part or all of this holiday is the Euro.

Preparing for your Holiday

Getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience.

You should be aerobically fit and comfortable with walking 6 to 8 hours for consecutive days. Hill walking, with a good amount of ascent and descent, is the best training. Running, cycling and swimming are also good for developing cardiovascular fitness and stamina.

Climate

The best time of year for trekking in the Olympus National Park and a summit attempt is in September and October - when we have planned our trips. We can expect daytime temperatures to range between 20 and 25 degrees centigrade, dropping at night to 10-15 degrees centigrade in the towns and villages and 5 - 10 degrees centigrade in the mountains. During early summer the trails of Mount Olympus can be covered in snow, whilst it is too hot and busy to complete this itinerary comfortably during July and August. Although the whole coastline is blessed with sunshine from spring to autumn, we can expect a wide variety of weather as with all mountain regions.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

- The Gods of Olympus - Barbara Graziosi

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

The following checklist should help you with your packing. As a general rule, you should always try to keep the weight of your equipment to a minimum.

You must bring the following items:

- Hiking boots

- Trainers to travel in and for the huts

- Socks

- Trekking trousers

- Lightweight waterproof overtrousers

- Underwear

- Baselayer shirts

- T-shirts and/or casual shirts

- Fleece jacket or warm jumper

- Waterproof jacket

- Warm jacket
 - Gloves or mittens
 - Sunhat or cap
 - Sunglasses
 - Warm Hat
 - Daypack minimum 40 litres
 - Headtorch and spare batteries
 - Sun protection (including for lips)
 - Water bottles x2 1 Litre (we encourage re-filling water bottles rather than single use plastic)
 - Water purification tablets
 - Sheet sleeping bag liner (for the huts)
 - Washbag and toiletries
 - Small Towel
 - Antibacterial hand wash
 - Small padlock (to lock the your luggage)
- Basic First Aid Kit including: Antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium)
- painkillers, plasters and blister treatment, Insect repellent (DEET), and re-hydration salts (Dioralite).
Glucose tablets and multi-vitamin tablets are a good idea

Equipment (provided locally)

- Climbing harness
- Climbing helmet

(These items will be issued to everyone at the start of the trip for the ascent of Olympus for extra security on a short section near the summit. You should ensure you leave room for them in your daypack)

The following items are optional:

- Trekking poles

- Thermal baselayer - leggings
- Swimwear
- Shorts

- Earplugs (Especially if you are not the one snoring)

- Insect repellent

- Camera

- Travel clothes

- Pen-knife (note: always pack sharp objects in hold baggage)

- Repair kit - (eg. needle, thread, duct tape)
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping (to avoid plastic bags)

Cotswold Outdoor

Many of the equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive a 12.5% discount with Cotswold Outdoor, Snow+Rock and Runners Need. The discount code can be downloaded from your MyKE account and you can use this code at the checkout, either in store or online.

Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for joining in Thessaloniki. Single timed transfers from/to Thessaloniki Airport to/from the group hotel are provided.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London to Thessaloniki with British Airways. Outbound flights will depart from the UK in the morning, arriving in the early afternoon of the same day. Return flights will depart in the early afternoon of the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK later that same evening.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

"They say you should never meet your heroes, as they may disappoint you. But Olympus has been my hero for many years, and now that I've finally met it, and crossed its broad shoulders with fellow adventurers under the KE banner, I can report that it is far from a disappointment." Nick Hallissey, Deputy Editor of Country Walking magazine, recently returned from trekking Mount Olympus with one of our KE groups. Read more about his experience [here](#).

Please Note This document was downloaded on 21/12/2024 and the trip is subject to change