

## ***Acropolis***



**Rising above the concrete jungle that is modern Athens, the “sacred rock” is crowned by three temples dating from the fifth century BC, attracting three million visitors per year. The obvious starting point for a first-time visit is the largest and most impressive temple, the Parthenon, supported by 46 Doric columns and considered classical architecture’s most**

**influential building. Be sure to walk below the Acropolis at night, too, when it is at its most magnificent, bathed in golden floodlighting.**

**Address: Acropolis Hill, Plaka**

**Contact: 00 30 210 321 4172; [odysseus.culture.gr](http://odysseus.culture.gr)**

**Opening times: daily, 8am-8pm (summer); 8.30am-3pm (winter)**

**Admission: €20; free on the first Sunday of the month Nov-Mar**

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**Address: Dionysiou Areopagitou 15, Makrigianni (on the edge of Plaka)**

**Contact: 00 30 210 9000 900; [theacropolismuseum.gr](http://theacropolismuseum.gr)**

**Opening times: Apr-Oct Mon 8am-4pm, Tue-Thu and Sat-Sun, 8am-8pm, Fri 8am-10pm; Nov-Mar Mon-Thu 9am-5pm, Fri 9am-10pm, Sat-Sun 9am-8pm**

**Admission: €5**

## ***Plaka***



**Plaka is Athens's oldest residential quarter. Built into the hillside below the Acropolis, Plaka is Athens's oldest residential quarter. Retaining a quaint village atmosphere, despite the hordes of tourists, its cobble streets are lined with pastel-coloured neo-classical mansions, small hotels, souvenir shops and bustling tavernas. Notable sights include the Museum of Traditional**

**Greek Instruments, the Museum of Greek Folk Art and the 12th-century Byzantine Little Mitropolis Church. Metro station: Monastiraki or Acropolis.**

## ***Benaki Museum***



**Housed in a neo-classical building with a lovely roof-terrace cafe, this museum traces Greek art right up the 20th century. Sculpture, ceramics, jewellery, paintings, furniture and costumes are on display, but top pieces include the Thessaly Treasure (a hoard of gold filigree jewellery set with precious stones, dating from the second century BC), two early paintings by El Greco,**

**and the reconstruction of two 18th-century, wood-panelled, Ottoman-inspired living rooms**

**Housed in a neo-classical building with a lovely roof-terrace cafe, this museum traces**

**Address: Vassilissis Sofias and Koumbari 1, Kolonaki**

**Contact: 00 30 210 367 1000; [benaki.gr](http://benaki.gr)**

**Opening times: Wed and Fri 9am-5pm; Thur and Sat, 9am-midnight; Sun, 9am-3pm**

**Admission: €9 (free Thur)**

## ***Mt Lycabettus***



See the whole of Athens in one go from the city's highest vantage point (970ft), capped by a tiny, whitewashed church, a restaurant and a stunning open-air café. Nearby, carved into the rocks on the north-facing slope, Lycabettus Theatre has been staging open-air concerts since 1965, with past performers including Morrissey and Pink Martini, but now in need of renovation, its future looks

uncertain. The steep path up zigzags through pinewoods and sub-tropical vegetation. Alternatively, catch the funicular from Ploutarchou Street in Kolonaki (every 30 minutes, 9am-1.30am).

**Mt Lycabettus is the city's highest vantage point.**

### **Day trips**

## ***Temple of Poseidon, Cape Sounion***



Built as a place of worship to the god of the sea, Poseidon, the fifth-century-BC Temple of Poseidon (00 30 22920 39363; daily, 9.30am-sunset; €8) stands on the southernmost point of Attica peninsula. Originally made up of 34 white marble Doric columns, 15 of which remain, it commands amazing views over the Aegean Sea, which are spectacular at sunset.

The coastal road from Athens to Sounio (43 miles south-east of Athens) passes through the upmarket seaside suburbs of Glyfada, Vouliagmeni and Varkiza, and affords fine views over the Saronic Gulf.

The fifth-century-BC Temple of Poseidon stands on the southernmost point of Attica peninsula

# *Delphi*



**Probably the most beautiful classical site in Greece, Delphi (00 30 22650 82312; daily, 8am-8pm summer; 8.30am-3pm winter; €9 covers both the site and the museum) was the home of the fabled Oracle which spoke its prophecies (with the help of trance-inducing leaves) through priestesses. Dating back beyond the eighth century BC, the site is built into a hillside 130 miles north-west**

**of Athens and is scattered with ancient temples overlooking a gaping chasm. There's also an excellent museum displaying bronze and marble sculptures. On the road back to Athens, about seven miles from Delphi, the mountain village of Arahova is an upmarket winter resort and a great place to shop for fluffy flokati rugs and locally-produced cheese. Delphi is 130 miles north-west of Athens.**