



ISLAND HOPPING VOL. 01

# SPORADES ISLANDS

HOW TO GET THERE | WHAT TO SEE & DO | HOW TO GET AROUND | BEST PLACES TO STAY & EAT

CURATED WITH ❤ BY

The Wanderlust Diary



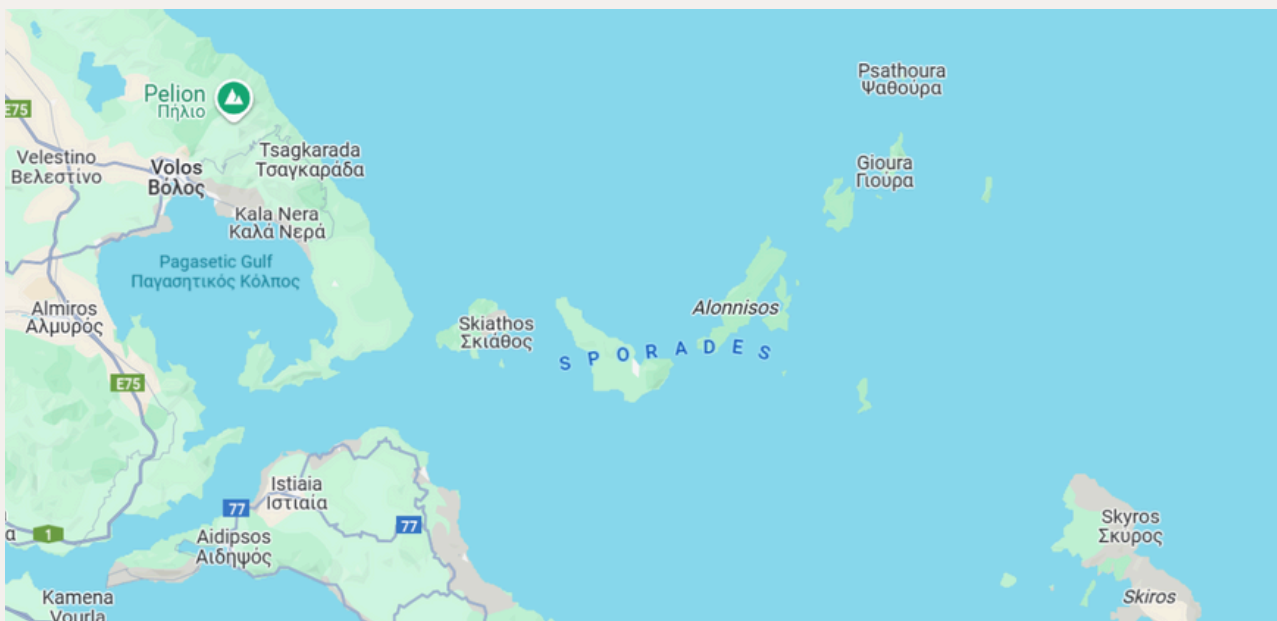
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# WHERE ARE THE SPORADES ISLANDS?

The Sporades Islands are a breathtaking archipelago in the northwest Aegean Sea, consisting of **24 islands**, only four of which are inhabited: **Skiathos, Skopelos, Alonissos, and Skyros**. These islands are renowned for their emerald-green waters, pine-covered landscapes, and idyllic Greek villages. Unlike the famous Cycladic islands, the Sporades have a more lush, green aesthetic and tend to be less crowded, making them an excellent destination for travelers seeking a balance of adventure and tranquility.

The name "Sporades" means "scattered" in Greek, referring to the way these islands are dispersed across the sea. They are located northeast of Evia and relatively close to the mainland, making them accessible yet still offering a remote island experience.



# HOW TO GET TO THE SPORADES ISLANDS

## FLYING TO SKIATHOS

Skiathos is the main entry point for the Sporades and the only island in the group with an airport. Skiathos International Airport (JSI) receives seasonal direct flights from major European cities, especially during the summer months.

Airlines operating direct routes to Skiathos include:

- [Aegean Airlines](#)
- [Air Serbia](#)
- [Austrian Airlines](#)
- [British Airways](#)
- [Bulgaria Air](#)
- [Discover Airlines](#)
- [easyJet](#)
- [Finnair](#)
- [Jet2](#)
- [Olympic Air](#)
- [Ryanair](#)
- [Sky Express](#)
- [TUI Airways](#)
- [Volotea](#)
- [Wizz Air](#)

For travelers flying from other parts of the world, the best route is usually to fly into Athens International Airport (ATH) and take a domestic flight to Skiathos. The flight time from Athens to Skiathos is approximately 40 minutes.

For updated flight schedules and ticket prices, check airline websites or comparison platforms like [Skyscanner](#), [Kiwi](#) and [Google Flights](#).



## FERRY TRAVEL TO THE SPORADES

If you prefer to travel by sea, ferries operate from mainland Greece to the Sporades Islands. The main ferry ports on the mainland are:

- Volos – The most popular and frequent ferry route
- Agios Konstantinos – A smaller port with seasonal routes
- Thessaloniki – Occasional routes, mostly during summer

The main ferry operators are:

- [Blue Star Ferries](#)
- [Hellenic Seaways](#)
- [Aegean Flying Dolphins](#)

Ferry durations:

- **Volos to Skiathos:** 2.5 - 3.5 hours
- **Agios Konstantinos to Skiathos:** 2 - 3 hours
- **Skiathos to Skopelos:** 45 minutes - 1.5 hours
- **Skopelos to Alonissos:** 30 - 60 minutes

Ferry tickets should be booked in advance, especially during peak season, to secure availability and better prices.

# WHEN TO VISIT THE SPORADES ISLANDS

The Sporades enjoy a Mediterranean climate with hot summers and mild winters. The best time to visit depends on the type of experience you seek:

- **May - June:** Ideal for those who want pleasant weather, fewer crowds, and lower accommodation prices.
- **July - August:** Peak season, with bustling nightlife, full beaches, and the best events, but also the highest prices and largest crowds.
- **September - October:** A perfect balance—warm waters, fewer tourists, and a relaxed atmosphere, making it an excellent choice for honeymooners and nature lovers.



# HOW TO GET AROUND THE SPORADES

## **DRIVING AROUND THE SPORADES**

Driving is one of the most flexible and rewarding ways to explore the Sporades Islands, especially on Skiathos and Skopelos where road networks are more developed.

The main roads on these islands are generally in good condition and well-signposted, though some rural routes may be narrow or winding, particularly in mountainous areas. It's important to drive cautiously, especially on sharp bends and during peak summer months when roads can be busier.

The speed limits are typically 50 km/h (31 mph) in towns and villages, and up to 90 km/h (56 mph) on open roads, unless otherwise posted. Parking can be limited in town centers during high season, so arriving early or using designated parking lots is recommended.

For Alonissos, where the terrain is more rugged and roads are fewer, a 4x4 vehicle can be particularly useful for reaching secluded beaches and hiking trails.

Renting a car or scooter is easy and requires only a standard driver's license (EU or international).

For the best car rental deals, visit [Discover Cars](#) or [Rental Cars](#).

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

Public transportation is a convenient and budget-friendly way to get around the main Sporades Islands, especially during the high season (May to September).

Bus fares are inexpensive, and tickets can usually be purchased on board. During the off-season, services are reduced, so always check timetables in advance or ask at your hotel for the most current information.

### **Skiathos**

On Skiathos, a reliable public bus service runs frequently along the south coast from Skiathos Town to Koukounaries Beach, stopping at popular beaches and resorts along the way. Buses run every 15–30 minutes in peak season and are a favorite among both tourists and locals.

For more information on the Skiathos bus network, visit [Skiathos Transport](#).

### **Skopelos**

Skopelos also has a bus network connecting Skopelos Town, Glossa, and several key beaches, including Stafilos, Panormos, and Kastani. While the schedule is less frequent than in Skiathos, it's generally dependable.

For more information on the Skopelos bus network, visit the [Skopelos](#) website.

### **Alonissos**

Alonissos has a smaller bus service, with limited routes connecting Patitiri (the port) with Chora and a few beaches like Steni Vala.

For more information on the Alonissos bus network, visit the [Alonissos](#) website.



# EXPLORING THE MAIN ISLANDS:

## *Skiathos*



# Skiathos: The Lively Gem

Skiathos is famous for its pristine beaches, charming old town, and vibrant nightlife. Here are the top sights to explore:

## SIGHTSEEING

### **Bourtzi Fortress**

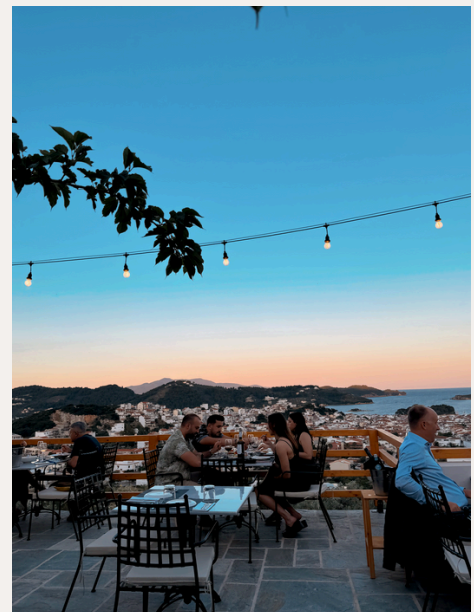
A small peninsula in Skiathos Town, home to the ruins of a Venetian fortress. Today, it offers a beautiful park, cultural events, and panoramic views of the harbor.

### **Monastery of Evangelistria**

A historic monastery located in the hills of Skiathos, where the first Greek flag was created. It offers breathtaking views and a fascinating glimpse into local history.

### **Papdiamantis House Museum**

The former home of Greece's famous writer, Alexandros Papdiamantis, now turned into a museum showcasing his life and work.





# BEACHES

## **Koukounaries Beach**

One of Greece's most beautiful beaches, known for its soft golden sand and crystal-clear waters. It is surrounded by a nature reserve and pine forest, making it a perfect blend of beach and nature experience. It also has a variety of water sports available, from jet skiing to paddleboarding.

## **Lalaria Beach**

Accessible only by boat, this stunning white-pebble beach is framed by impressive rock formations and bright blue waters. It's a must-visit for photographers and nature lovers. Due to its remote location, it remains one of the most unspoiled beaches in the Sporades. Make sure to book your boat trip a couple of days in advance, as it's a popular destination during the peak season!

## **Banana Beach**

A favorite among young travelers, this beach is known for its beach bars, music, and lively atmosphere. For those looking for a quieter experience, Little Banana Beach nearby is a serene alternative.

## **Tsougrias Beach**

Located on the uninhabited island of Tsougrias, just off the coast of Skiathos, this beach is a hidden paradise. With soft sand, turquoise waters, and a laid-back beach bar, it's an ideal day trip destination. Boats to Tsougrias run regularly from Skiathos Town, making it easily accessible for a peaceful escape. A charming area lined with traditional fishing boats, waterfront tavernas, and boutique shops. A great place to enjoy fresh seafood while watching the sunset over the Aegean.

## WHERE TO STAY

### **Luxury Stay** - Elivi Hotel ★★★★★

Elivi Skiathos is a luxurious 5-star resort set in a pine forest overlooking Koukounaries Beach, offering elegant rooms, suites, and villas—many with private pools or hot tubs. With world-class amenities including a spa, fitness facilities, gourmet restaurants, and easy beach access, it's a popular choice for couples seeking a relaxing and upscale getaway.

### **Mid-End** - Skiathos Senses ★★★★★

Skiathos Senses is a modern aparthotel in Skiathos Town, offering air-conditioned family rooms with city or pool views, a seasonal outdoor pool, and a sun terrace. Conveniently located near several beaches and local attractions, it features free WiFi, a fitness room, and optional airport shuttle service.

### **Budget-Friendly** - Skiathos House ★★★

Skiathos House offers charming, traditionally furnished rooms, studios, and apartments with private balconies, just a short walk from both the port and Megali Ammos Beach. With free WiFi, nearby parking, and easy access to public transport, it's a cozy and convenient choice.



# WHERE TO EAT

## 1. Marmita

**Location:** Skiathos Town

**Budget:** €€€ (Mid to High)

**Cuisine:** Modern Greek with seafood specialties

Nestled in a traditional home with a beautiful garden, Marmita offers authentic Greek cuisine with a modern twist. The menu features dishes made with seasonal and fresh local ingredients, resulting in flavorful and mouthwatering meals. The restaurant is well known for its tender lamb dishes and fresh seafood menus.

## 2. Amfiliki Tavern

**Location:** Skiathos Town, overlooking the sea

**Budget:** €€ (Moderate)

**Cuisine:** Traditional Greek and seafood

Perched above the harbor, Amfiliki Tavern offers stunning sea views and a menu rich in traditional Greek dishes and fresh seafood. Guests praise the authentic flavors and the restaurant's commitment to quality. It's an ideal spot for a romantic dinner or a relaxed evening with friends.

## 3. To Palouki

**Location:** Skiathos Town, behind the Old Port

**Budget:** €€ (Moderate)

**Cuisine:** Traditional Greek

This lively and welcoming restaurant is a favorite among locals and tourists alike. Known for dishes like drunken pork and tender kleftiko (lamb slow-cooked in parchment), To Palouki offers delicious meals at reasonable prices. The atmosphere is vibrant, and the service is consistently praised.



# EXPLORING THE MAIN ISLANDS:

## *Skopelos*





# Skopelos: The Mamma Mia Island

Skopelos is best known as the filming location of Mamma Mia! and offers a mix of cultural heritage and natural beauty. Here are the top places to visit:

## SIGHTSEEING

### **Agios Ioannis Chapel**

Also known as the Mamma Mia! church, this iconic white chapel sits atop a rock formation overlooking the sea. A steep but rewarding climb leads to spectacular views, making it a prime spot for photography.

### **Panagitsa of Pyrgos**

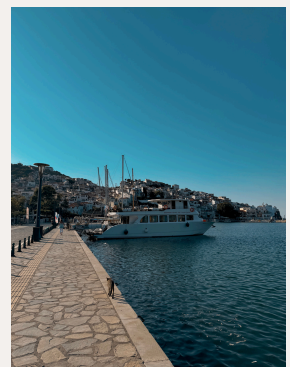
A charming white-washed church perched on the cliffs of Skopelos Town. It's one of the most photographed locations on the island and a great place to soak in traditional Greek architecture.

### **Glossa Village**

A traditional Greek village with narrow streets, stone houses, and incredible sunset views. It offers an authentic local experience away from the crowds, with charming tavernas serving homemade dishes.

### **Sendoukia Pirate Graves**

Ancient rock-cut tombs dating back to Roman times, located in a remote part of the island with hiking trails and panoramic views. The surrounding trails are perfect for adventurous hikers.



# BEACHES

## **Kastani Beach**

Featured in Mamma Mia!, this beach boasts soft sand and tranquil waters. It's one of the island's most picturesque spots, with a beach bar offering sunbeds and refreshments.

## **Panormos Beach**

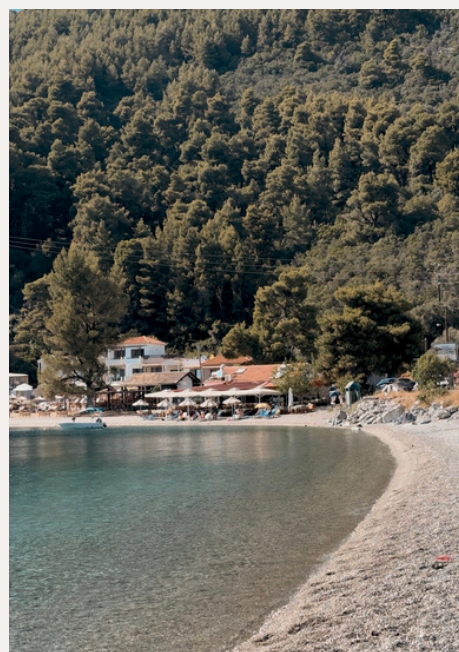
One of the most popular beaches on the island, Panormos is known for its deep blue waters, smooth pebbles, and scenic backdrop of pine-covered hills. The beach is well-organised with sunbeds, umbrellas, and several seaside tavernas serving fresh seafood and local dishes. Its calm waters make it ideal for swimming, and the nearby parking and amenities make it a convenient spot for families and couples alike.

## **Hovolo Beach**

A secluded beach with unique rock formations and clear waters. It is a hidden gem perfect for those looking to escape the crowds.

## **Milian Beach**

A stunning beach with a mix of sand and pebbles, crystal-clear waters, and a relaxed atmosphere. A nearby taverna offers fresh seafood with an incredible view.





## WHERE TO STAY

### **Luxury Stay** - Natura Luxury Villas ★★★★★

Natura Luxury Beachfront Villas is a 5-star retreat in Neo Klima, offering elegant accommodations with ocean views, a restaurant, bar, and concierge service. Just a short distance from several beaches, it features private parking and airport transfers, making it a stylish and convenient getaway.

### **Mid-End** - Fasolaki Skopelos - Eco Residencies ★★★

Fasolaki is a stylish adults-only retreat in Skopelos Town, featuring beautifully decorated apartments with wooden ceilings, earthy tones, and fully equipped kitchens. Guests enjoy warm hospitality, homemade breakfasts, and cooking lessons using fresh garden ingredients. Just a short walk from the port and beaches, it's a peaceful and authentic escape close to local attractions.

### **Budget-Friendly** - Villa Ble ★★★

Villa Ble is a charming studio accommodation set in lush greenery near Skopelos Port, offering air-conditioned rooms with kitchenettes and garden-view balconies. Guests enjoy a breakfast buffet, a relaxing bar, BBQ facilities, a playground, and free port transfers, all just a short walk from local shops and restaurants.

## WHERE TO EAT

### 1. Agnanti Restaurant

**Location:** Glossa Village

**Budget:** €€€ (Mid to High)

**Cuisine:** Modern Greek

Perched in the picturesque village of Glossa, Agnanti offers panoramic views of the Aegean Sea. The restaurant is renowned for its refined take on traditional Greek dishes, utilizing fresh, local ingredients. It's an ideal spot for a romantic dinner or special occasion.

### 2. Muses Restaurant

**Location:** Skopelos Town, near the port

**Budget:** €€€ (Mid to High)

**Cuisine:** Seafood and Mediterranean

Situated along the waterfront, Muses Restaurant offers diners a chance to enjoy fresh seafood while taking in stunning views of the harbor. The ambiance is enhanced by the gentle sea breeze and the sound of waves, making it a memorable dining experience.

### 3. To Rodi

**Location:** Skopelos Town

**Budget:** €€ (Moderate)

**Cuisine:** Traditional Greek

Nestled in a quaint garden courtyard, To Rodi offers a tranquil dining environment away from the bustling streets. The restaurant serves classic Greek dishes prepared with fresh ingredients, making it a favorite among both locals and visitors.



# EXPLORING THE MAIN ISLANDS:

*Alonissos*





# Alonissos: The Nature Lover's Paradise

Alonissos is home to the National Marine Park of Alonissos, making it an ideal destination for wildlife enthusiasts. Here are the must-visit attractions:

## SIGHTSEEING

### National Marine Park of Alonissos

The first marine park in Greece, protecting rare species like the Mediterranean monk seal. Boat tours offer an opportunity to see dolphins and seabirds in their natural habitat. It is also a great spot for eco-friendly travelers interested in conservation efforts.

### Chora (Old Alonissos)

A picturesque hilltop village with cobbled streets, charming houses, and stunning sea views. It's a great place to enjoy a meal with a view and shop for handmade crafts.

### Ikos Research Center

A marine conservation organization that allows visitors to learn about local wildlife, particularly the endangered monk seals, through guided educational programs.





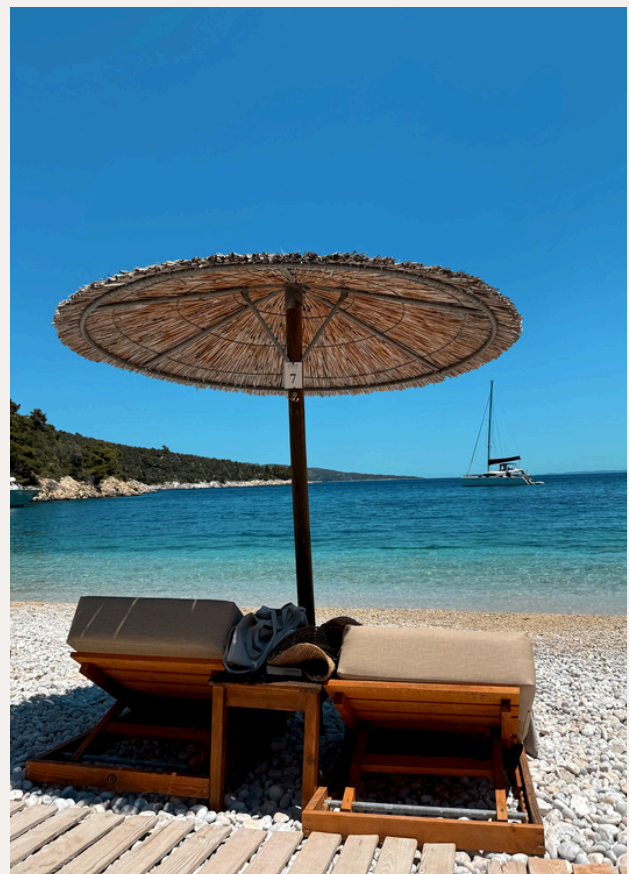
## BEACHES

### **Agios Dimitrios Beach**

Considered one of the most beautiful beaches in Alonissos, with turquoise waters and a mix of sand and pebbles. Its serene atmosphere makes it perfect for sunbathing and relaxation.

### **Leftos Gialos Beach**

A picturesque beach lined with olive trees, offering crystal-clear waters and a tranquil setting. Visitors can enjoy the convenience of sunbeds and umbrellas, as well as the delightful beachfront tavernas serving fresh seafood and traditional Greek dishes.



## WHERE TO STAY

### **Luxury Stay** - The Infinity 180 Luxury Suites ★★★★★

Infinity 180 Luxury Suites in Patitiri offers elegant, adults-only apartments with breathtaking views and private outdoor spaces. Guests can unwind with top-tier amenities including an infinity pool, spa, sauna, and a romantic restaurant serving gourmet meals and champagne breakfasts. Located near beautiful beaches and the National Marine Park of Alonissos, it's a serene and luxurious island escape.

### **Mid-End** - Casa Nina ★★★

Casa Nina offers a stylish and serene stay near the main port of Alonissos, blending Mediterranean charm with a mix of classic and modern design elements. With elegantly decorated rooms, a peaceful atmosphere, and a convenient location just minutes from Patitiri's shops and restaurants, it's ideal for both romantic getaways and family holidays.

### **Budget-Friendly** - Pantheon ★★★

Pantheon in Patitiri offers comfortable, air-conditioned guest rooms with sea-view balconies, kitchenettes, and free WiFi, ideal for a relaxing stay. Just a short walk from beaches and the Alonissos Port, the property features a sun terrace, outdoor seating, and is praised for its cleanliness, views, and convenient location.

## WHERE TO EAT

### 1. Tassia's Cooking

**Location:** Patitiri

**Budget:** €€ (Moderate)

**Cuisine:** Traditional Greek and Seafood

Tassia's Cooking is a beloved family-run taverna known for its authentic Greek dishes and warm hospitality. Located near the port in Patitiri, it offers a cozy atmosphere and a menu featuring fresh seafood and local specialties.

### 2. Ostria Restaurant

**Location:** Patitiri

**Budget:** €€ (Moderate)

**Cuisine:** Seafood and Mediterranean

Ostria Restaurant is a popular spot for seafood lovers, offering a variety of fresh fish dishes and traditional Mediterranean cuisine. With its friendly service and inviting ambiance, it's a great place to enjoy a leisurely meal.

### 3. Astrofegia Restaurant

**Location:** Chora (Old Village)

**Budget:** €€ (Moderate)

**Cuisine:** Traditional Greek

Astrofegia Restaurant offers a charming dining experience in the heart of Chora. Known for its traditional Greek dishes and serene courtyard setting, it's an ideal spot for a romantic dinner or a peaceful evening with friends.





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