

# LEFKADA

GREECE | IONIAN ISLANDS

the  
absolute  
blue



MUNICIPALITY  
OF LEFKADA



## LEFKADA

Reasons  
to visit

There are several reasons one should visit Lefkada but its famous beaches are at the top of the list! The island's beaches are listed among the best in the world by the leading travel institutions, with Egremni beach and Porto Katsiki being the most prominent examples.

Superb water-sports are another reason. Weather conditions are excellent for windsurfing and kite-surfing in two areas on the island: Ai Giannis in the north and Vassiliki to the south act like magnets for water-sport aficionados!

Lefkada's internal archipelago is considered by experts to be one of the best seas for sailing in the world. Navigation here is largely safe because weather conditions are rarely extreme while one has a multitude of protected anchorages to choose from, picturesque coves and quiet beaches, on a number of small islands scattered around Lefkada.

Up in its mountains one finds beautiful villages and imposing old monasteries, untouched by tourism.

Breathtaking views, rich flora and a varied landscape, accessible via an extensive network of trails, make Lefkada a hiker's paradise.

Lefkada enjoys all the advantages of an island without the disadvantage of accessibility; a floating bridge connects it to the mainland with traffic flowing uninterrupted.

Its position in the centre of the Ionian islands means Lefkada has easy access to the rest of the islands as well as to significant archaeological monuments and other sights on the neighboring mainland coast.

Lefkada has a noteworthy cultural tradition, as do all the Ionian islands, and is host to several literary, musical and art events. Last but not least it enjoys an excellent culinary reputation.

As you can see boredom is hardly going to be an issue! Which is why we believe that a single visit is not going to be enough...



# 01

useful information

**GEOMORPHOLOGY**  
Lefkada comprises twenty-four islands -some smaller, some larger- scattered within a tiny archipelago. It is located in the top half of the western coastland of mainland Greece, between Corfu and Kefalonia and is the fourth in size Ionian island.

Most of the island (approx 90%) is mountainous with the highest peak, Stavrota, rising to

1,182m. The largest plain is in the south, in the area of Vassiliki. Lefkada enjoys a mild Mediterranean climate.

**HOW TO REACH LEFKADA**  
**By road:**  
Lefkada is the only Greek island that can be reached by car without boarding a ferryboat, thanks to the floating bridge joining it to Akarmania that allows a constant flow of vehicles to and from the island.

The island is easily reached from northwestern Greece thanks to the Preveza-Aktion undersea tunnel and the Egnatia Odos motorway, while the Rio-Antirrio bridge



and the Ionian Odos motorway -gradually opened to the public as works progress- facilitate access to the island from the rest of Greece.

There are 5 daily bus services running from/ to Athens by Public Bus (KTEL) and a bi-weekly service from/ to Thessaloniki. During the summer months there is a daily service from/ to Igoumenitsa and from/ to Patra (via Rio) as well as a bi-weekly non-stop service to Patra.

**Public Bus:**  
Athens: +30 210 5150108  
Igoumenitsa: +30 26650 22309  
Lefkada: +30 26450 22364  
Thessaloniki: +30 2310 595439  
**Aktion Airport:**  
+30 26820 22355

**By boat:**  
The port of Igoumenitsa (100km) is an important gateway for those arriving from Western and Central Europe; so is the port of Patra (170km) mainly for ferryboats crossing from Italy.

**By plane:**  
From April to October there are direct flights from European airports to Aktion airport. During the summer months there are also daily flights from Athens International Airport to Aktion.

**Connections between Lefkada and neighboring islands:**  
Ferryboats connect Lefkada daily to Meganissi, Kefalonia



Floating bridge raises to allow the boat's passing (Fiskardo) and Ithaki (Frikes). There are also flights from/to Corfu, Kefalonia and Zakynthos.



Town of Lefkada, western view

## A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

### • 7th Century B.C.:

Lefkada was colonized by the Corinthians who opened the waterway so they could travel north with their ships. The island's ancient capital was Nirikos, situated 2.5km from the contemporary town of Lefkada, between the villages of Kalligoni and Kariotes.

• **338 B.C.:** The island was conquered by Philip of Macedonia, he initially managed to resist the Romans but was finally vanquished after heroically defending his land (2nd Century B.C.).

• **1204:** Lefkada joined the Despotate of Epirus.

• **1294:** The Despot of Epirus, Nikiforos I, gave Lefkada to his son-in-law Ioannis Orsini as part of his daughter Maria's dowry. Orsini built the kernel of the castle that still stands at the entrance to the island.

• **1331-1362:** The island was conquered by the Angevins; the place-name *Antzousis* is a

remnant of that period.

• **1357:** The peasants of Lefkada rose against the Frank despot, Gratiano Zorzi.

• **1362-1479:** The island was handed over to the Tocco Dynasty.

• **1479:** Lefkada was conquered by the Ottomans.

• **1502-1503:** Short-lived takeover by the Venetians.

• **1503-1684:** The Ottomans regained Lefkada.

• **1684 – 1797:** The island once again came under Venetian control, with a small interval of Turkish domination in 1715-1716. The island's capital was moved from the castle to Amaxiki, the contemporary capital.

• **1797:** The democratic French conquered the island.

• **1798-1807:** A period of Russian-Turkish domination. In 1802, Lefkada became a part of the Republic of the Ionian Islands (Repubblica Settinsulare), the first post-Byzantine



The fort of Aghia Mavra, mid-16th c / Francesco Camoccio / From the Spyros and Mary Stavros Collection.

semi-independent Greek state (a Russian-Turkish protectorate).

• **1807-1810:** The island was conquered by the French imperialists.

• **1810:** Lefkada was handed over to the English, who incorporated it into the State of the Ionian Islands.

• **1819:** Uprising of the peasants of Lefkada, repression, persecution and hangings. The islanders participated in the Greek Revolution of 1821.

• **1864:** Along with the rest of the Ionian Islands, Lefkada was united to Greece.

## 02 the town of Lefkada

### brief history and architecture



A distinctive street in the town

**The island of Lefkada** has had three capitals from antiquity until today: ancient **Nirikos** in the Koulmos area, medieval **Aghia Mavra** within the castle and today's town of Lefkada, first built in 1684 in Amaxiki, where it still stands, as per the ruling of Venetian Francesco Morosini. The Venetians planned the city based on the prototypes of their own cities. The settlement was initially erected around the market and the buildings were

placed so that the wind could pass through the town's streets. After the earthquake of 1825 the town was rebuilt under the supervision of the English, based on British anti-seismic regulations.

That was when sheet-metal started being used on the façade of houses. The top floors were lighter and were reinforced by wooden beams so that the buildings would be earthquake-resistant.



The little bridge at west pier

sights in the town of lefkada and nearby

**THE CHURCHES OF LEFKADA**

The most important sights in the town of Lefkada are its churches and temples. These are mainly basilicas, influenced by Venetian architecture, usually with Eptanesian (post-Cretan) icons by great iconographers and beautiful woodcut iconostases (some in gold-leaf). Most were inaugurated in the period between the 17th and 18th centuries, acquiring their final form circa 1836.

**THE MONASTERY OF PANAGHIA FANEROMENI**

Named the Kyra (Lady)

- 1 The Church of Pantokratoras
- 2 The Monastery of Panaghia Faneromeni
- 3 Ai Giannis & Mili beaches
- 4 The Marina of Lefkada
- 5 The castle of Aghia Mavra

of Lefkada, dedicated to the Virgin Mary who is considered the patron saint of the island, the monastery is one of Lefkada's significant religious monuments. Thousands of worshippers visit the monastery each year at the day of the Holy Spirit celebration. Built on a hill it has an amazing view and is only 4km from the town.

**THE VENETIAN OLIVE GROVE**

Walking along Pefaneromenis Street one reaches the Kouzounteli or Kouzoumbei area where the traditional coffee-houses are. From here begin the narrow streets that lead to the olive grove. It is a historical natural monument with numerous picturesque paths where one can walk or cycle in nature. Here you will also find the chapel of **Panaghia Vlahernon** (The Lady of Vlaherna), built in 1740.

**THE LAGOON**

A wetland of unsurpassable beauty



**THE CASTLE OF AGHIA MAVRA**

The impressive castle of Aghia Mavra stands at the entrance to Lefkada: a prime example of medieval fortification architecture with a central kernel in the shape of an irregular heptagon, reinforced by seven bastions at the corners and three internal bulwarks. The castle protected the capital from the 14th century up till 1684. There are indications that the spot where it was erected was the site of an ancient temple dedicated to Aphrodite the Aeneid.

**THE MARINA**

The Lefkada Marina is state-of-the-art with excellent facilities and 610 berths that can accommodate boats of up to 45m in length with a 3.6m draft. Within the Marina premises you will find a yacht club, restaurants and cafés, a hotel, a laundromat, a supermarket, a first-aid center etc.

protected by the Ramsar treaty, this lagoon is home to rare species of birds during the migratory months.

**THE BEACHES CLOSEST TO TOWN**

**Ai Giannis & Mili:** Spanning 4.5km these

two beaches offer turquoise waters and white sand with tavernas and cafés right on the water.

**Gyra:**

A particularly popular beach right across from the housing estate that

goes by the same name; ideal for children.

**Kastro:**

An exceptional beach situated at the entrance to the island, opposite the floating bridge, mainly frequented by locals.

# 03 culture

## THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

Small but significant museum whose findings date from the Middle Paleolithic Period up to Roman Years: The majority of the exhibits are the product of excavations carried out by German archaeologist Wilhelm Dörpfeld -Eric Schliemann's assistant-

- 1 The Public Library
- 2 The Archaeological Museum
- 3 Orfeas Museum of Folklore
- 4 Lafcadio Hearn Historical Centre



who supported the theory that Lefkada is actually Homeric Ithaki.

## HARAMOGLIOS LIBRARY

The library was personally created by its founder, Aristotelis Haramoglis. It houses over 40,000 titles – books and other publications- exclusively on the subject of Lefkada and its inhabitants, spanning over six centuries, having rightly won its place in the Guinness Book of Records.



## LEFKADA PUBLIC LIBRARY

Opened in 1953 it is housed in the former residence of the Zoulinos family along with the collection of post-Byzantine Eptanesian Iconography. Here you will find a significant number of books and publications as well as exceptional samples of Ionian- style devotional painting by iconographers Doxaras, Roussos, Patsaras, Gazis etc.

## ORFEAS MUSEUM OF FOLKLORE

This museum showcases over 1,000 functional objects representative of the island's agricultural history; among these you will see tools of old professions as well as traditional costumes, embroidery etc. The museum is now housed in the renovated building owned by the museum – an example of typical architecture from the English era- situated behind



Lefkada's central square.

## THE PHONOGRAPHIC MUSEUM

This is a small private museum opened in 1990 by collector Takis Katopodis; it houses an exhibition of rare

functional objects including 50 phonographs and a rhombus dating back to 1800.

## LAFCADIO HEARN HISTORICAL CENTRE

Here visitors, with the help of photos, scripts,

exhibits and interactive applications, browse through the significant events of Lafcadio Hearn's –Japan's "national" poet- impressive life, as well as 18th and early 19th century European, American and Japanese civilizations.

## THE PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA OF LEFKADA

Founded in 1850 on the initiative of Lady Dorina Kalkani-Petritsopoulou, Aristotelis Valaoritis and other illustrious Lefkadians, the Philharmonic orchestra demonstrated its

multifaceted artistic identity at some of the most significant moments of the Greek Nation's history and, today, continues its musical tradition, with a presence at all local public events.

*Did you know that the Philharmonic orchestra, with 1,000 registered members, is the oldest society in Lefkada and the second oldest Philharmonic orchestra in Greece?*



some distinguished lefkadians

• **Ioannis Zambelios** (1787-1856). Upon completing his studies in Italy and Paris (law, literature, philosophy) he returned to Lefkada and was appointed Prosecutor for the State of the Ionian Islands. In 1817 he was initiated to the Society of Friends (Filiki Eteria) and became the greatest member of the Society in Lefkada risking his life for the cause.

• **Spiridon Zambelios** (1813-1881). The son of Ioannis Zambelios was a historian of European acclaim, founder of the theory that accepts the uninterrupted historical continuity of Hellenism.

• **Aristotelis Valaoritis** (1824-1879). Born in Lefkada, he studied law in Geneva and Paris but never practised as a

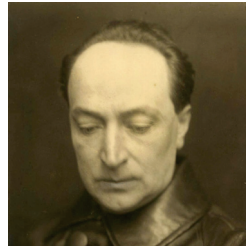


lawyer. He was mainly a poet but also wrote about history, folklore etc. His poetry is naturalistic but, most importantly, it reverberates his love for his country and his admiration for the fighters of pre-revolution times and of the 1821 Greek War of Independence.



• **Lafcadio Hearn or Yakumo Koizumi** (1850-1904). Author, translator, journalist, educator, he was born in Lefkada, the son of an Irish father and a mother that hailed from the island of Kythera. He moved permanently to Japan in 1889 and is

considered to be one of Japan's national authors, creator of great works of literature.



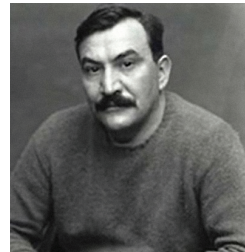
• **Angelos Sikelianos** (1884-1952). One of Greece's leading lyric poets and founder of the Delphic Idea movement. In his poetry he melded ancient Greek and Christian values, becoming a pan-humanist.

• **Gerasimos D. Grigoris** (1907-1985). Literary figure, twice awarded with national prizes for literature (in 1958 and 1963). He wrote poetry and published three compilations of short stories.

• **Nikos Svoronos** (1911-1989). This world-renown Byzantine scholar and studier of

contemporary Greek history lived in Paris where he excelled in his field and received universal acclaim.

• **Theodoros Stamos** (1922-1997). A world-renown painter, one of the pioneers of abstract expressionism in



America. He had his first important exhibition in New York at the age of 21. The municipal Art Gallery was named in his honour.

• **Nanos Valaoritis** (born in 1921). A great surrealist poet, author, playwright and university professor. He was the first to translate Greek poets of the 30s into English.

• **Agnes Baltza** (born in 1944). A leading mezzo-soprano with an international career.

speech and art festival / international folklore festival

Since its inception in 1955, the Speech and Art Festival has been promoting the cultural heritage of the Ionian islands with scientific and literary events, plays and concerts.

During the festival, the town streets are filled with a variety of dance and musical groups from Lefkada, other areas of Greece and foreign countries.

It is thanks to the festivals that significant artists from around the world have occasionally performed in Lefkada; the great Maria Callas made an unscheduled appearance in the town's central square, singing solo to the accompaniment of a piano, in what was to be her last live performance to an audience in Greece.



Both festivals are organized by the Cultural Centre of the Municipality of Lefkada and take place every August.



From the parade of the International Folklore Festival

customs, festivals and events

A number of events take place during the summer months; a detailed programme is published every year by the Municipality of Lefkada.

Popular events are the Lefkadian Gastronomy Festival in Markas square, the representation of the traditional peasant wedding in Karya, the Varkarola on the town's seafront, the Valaoritia in Nydri, the Lentil Festival in Aghios Donatos and the wine festival in Fryas.

Sports events

- The Green Half-Marathon in May
- The Sea-sports Festival in Vassiliki at the end of June and the International Sailing Regatta at the end of September
- Kitesurf and windsurf in Mili beach in the beginning of summer
- Trail Running Race in Nikiana in October

The kantades

During the celebration of local religious festivals, on May Day, but also on regular Saturday nights in the island's tavernas, the kantadori – traditional singers – entertain the crowds with boundless joy and energy.

The custom of the kantades – traditional serenades of the Ionian islands – survives thanks to the existence of societies: **Orfeas**, a music and literature club that runs mixed chorus and mandolinata chapters and a dance troupe, the folk dancing society **Pegasus** and the music and dance society **Nea Chorodia (New Chorus)** that supports a music school, chorus, mandolinata and dancers and organizes the "Varkarola" in August.

*Weddings on Lefkada: Each year Lefkada is the preferred destination of young couples from around the world who choose the island's idyllic landscapes as a setting for their special day, and hold their wedding here.*



Varkarola



The folk group "Aghiomavritiki para"

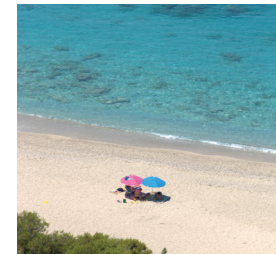


Representation of a peasant wedding in Karya

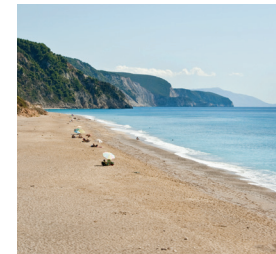


04 getting to know the island

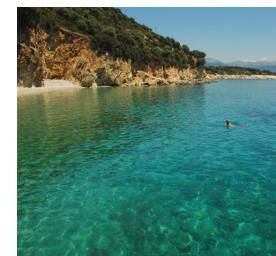
Lefkada is an island with many interesting sights. This short guide is an attempt to convey something of its atmosphere to the reader.



Pefkoulia



Athani, Gialos beach



A beach on Kastos



Meganissi, a beach in the northwest



© fagottobooks



to the west

**The west of the island** is characterized by wild, awe-inspiring beauty where steep white cliffs meet the endless blue of the sea mingling with the green of the pine trees.

The western coastline of Lefkada is home to some of the best beaches in the Mediterranean.



1



2



3

**Aghios Nikitas** is a picturesque seaside village set in exceptionally beautiful surroundings at only 12km from the town.

#### The Beaches

**Pefkoulia, Milos,**

**Kathisma, Kalamitsi,**

**Egremni, Gialos**

**Athaniou, Porto Katsiki:**

Beaches of unparalleled beauty, world-renowned and award-winning, with turquoise waters, white sand and imposing rocks. We suggest you visit them early in the season or late in the autumn to



4

enjoy them at their best, without the hordes of vacationers that inundate them in summer.

Apart from the famous beaches you will discover a score of smaller, equally beautiful ones.

- 1 Aghios Nikitas
- 2 Kavalikefta, Kalamitsi
- 3 Kathisma
- 4 Porto Katsiki
- 5 Egremni



5

to the east

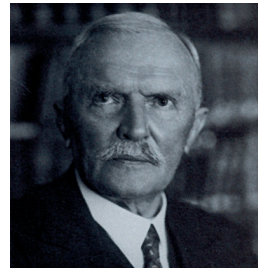
**The East coast is** predominantly green with tranquil landscapes and calm seas. Here, tourist infrastructure is fully developed.

In **Kalligoni** one can still see traces of the ancient walled settlement of the island's first capital.

**Kariotes** village is home to **Alexander's Salt Marsh** (salt pit). It's a preserved industrial monument of significant beauty.

**Ligia:** Some of the island's most famous fish taverns are to be found in the picturesque Ligia, the port of the beautiful mountain village of **Katouna**.

- 1 Nydri and view to the islets
- 2 Ligia
- 3 Dimossari
- 4 Beach in Nikiana
- 5 The statue of Onassis at Nydri port

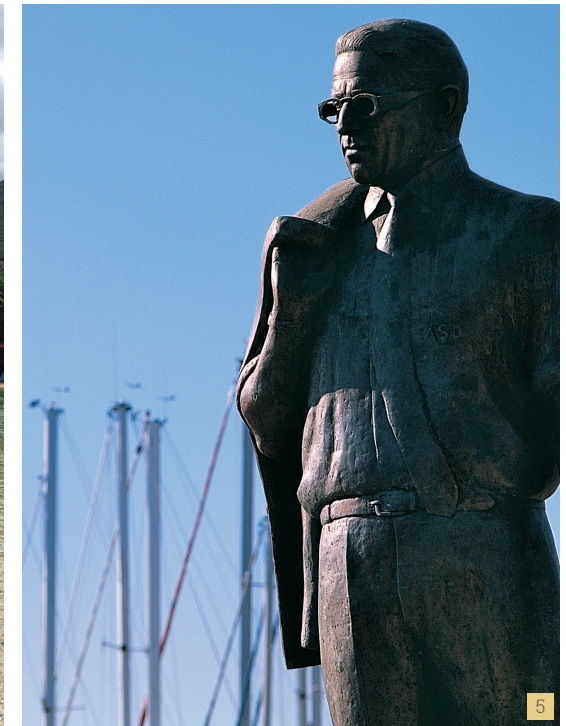


**Nikiana** is one of the most developed touristic areas on Lefkada, offering impressive nature and beautiful, small beaches.

**Nydri** was the first place on Lefkada to acquire a tourist infrastructure mainly due to the

proximity of Skorpios island and its former famous owner Aristotelis Onassis, right across the water. Small boats make day trips from Nydri port to the small islands and beaches close by, while the sea, always calm here, is ideal for any

*Did you know that according to the German archaeologist Wilhelm Dörpfeld, Lefkada is the Homeric Ithaki? His theory is based on geographical indications and excavation findings mainly in the Nydri area. When in Nydri, you can visit one of the excavation sites.*



type of watersport. Three kilometers to the south lies the gorgeous cove of **Vlycho**, an abode for a large number of sailing boats.

**The waterfalls at Dimossari:**

A twenty-minute walk along a lovely and cool, verdant path will lead you to the waterfalls at Dimossari hidden in lush greenery very close to Nydri.

Meganissi  
Kalamos  
Kastos  
Skorpios  
Madouri

**Meganissi:** Seen from above the island's lacy shores and deep little coves look very impressive. Meganissi, whose total area is 20 square meters, has over 1,000 permanent residents who live in three traditional stone-built settlements: Katomeri, Spartochori and Vathi.

There are many excellent beaches in the numerous protected coves around the island that attract many sailboats. A ferryboat service connects Meganissi to Nydri,



while a fast boat service runs to and from the port of Lefkada.

**Kalamos:** A small island with interesting morphology and varied flora. There are four villages on the island: Kalamos, the pretty port where the boats moor, Episkopi, Kastro and Kefali.

**Kastos:** Characterized by its low hills, its lacy shores and the olive-trees that grow abundantly all over the island, Kastos is a safe anchorage and an amazing fish haven, strewn with small, pretty beaches.

Both Kalamos and Kastos can be reached by boat from Mitikas on



the mainland (Prefecture of Aetoloakarnania).

**Skorpios:** The most famous of Lefkada's islets (possibly of all Greek islands) because of its original owner Onassis as well as its current owner, Russian tycoon, Dmitry Rybolovlev.

**Madouri:** This islet that belongs to the family of Aristotelis Valaoritis is situated directly opposite Nydri.

- 1 Spilia, Meganissi
- 2 Katomeri, Meganissi
- 3 Asprogiati, Kalamos
- 4 Skorpios



## the islets of lefkada

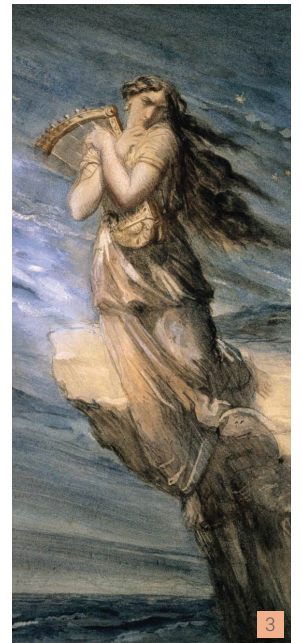
to the south

**Cape Lefkata or Nira:** The view from this spot, standing literally "on the edge", is majestic. Legend connects the Cape to stories of redemption from

- 1 Cape Lefkatas
- 2 Vassiliki
- 3 Sappho at Lefkatas. Painting by Th. Chassériaux

unfulfilled love; most famously the lyric poetess Sappho threw herself off the cliffs here to be liberated from her unrequited love for Phaon. The spot where the 15-meter tall lighthouse stands today was a sacrificial site in antiquity which is why the temple to **Apollo Lefkata** was erected here.

**Vassiliki:** Vassiliki has a well-developed tourist



## to the south

infrastructure that does not, however, interfere with its quaintness.

Apart from its world-renown beach that is ideal for windsurfing, Vassiliki offers itself to a multitude of other activities such as hiking, cycling, horse-back riding, sea excursions etc. Close-by you will also find one of

Lefkada's most beautiful beaches, **Aghiofli**.

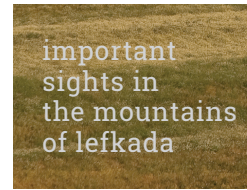
### **Syvota:**

A quaint fishing village in a cove that goes by the same name, Syvota is a favourite destination for sailors.

### **Mikros Gialos:**

A pretty, quiet, pebble beach with clear waters situated close to the village of **Poros**.

- 1 Aghiofli
- 2 Syvota bay
- 3 Mikros Gialos



### **The mountain villages:**

The villages of the **Sfakiotes** are well worth visiting: **Kavalos** with its Museum of Folklore, **Lazarata** and **Asprogerakata** with their stone houses and tree-filled yards, with the picturesque village-square in **Frya** and the beautiful bell-towers of their churches, **Drymonas**, an unspoilt jewel and **Exanthia**, unpretentious and authentic. Another top choice is **Karya**, the traditional head village; here one finds tavernas, a Museum of Folklore and the monastery of **Aghios Ioannis in Livadi**. Another must-visit is **Englouvi**, the quaint village, on the highest point on the

- 1 Karya
- 2 Exanthia
- 3 Drymonas



island; so are **Alexandros** and **Kolyvata**, built in a beautifully serene landscape.

### **The Englouvi Plateau**

The landscape here is otherworldly and wildly beautiful. This is where the famed Englouvi lentils are grown. Here you can also visit the church of **Aghios Donatos** and the "**Volti**" (Vaults); these are low, vaulted, stone buildings that are unique to this area.





Hike up to the small church of Prophitis Elias to enjoy an unobstructed 360° view; not far below you will be able to see the pretty, tiled roofs of the village of Englouvi.



- 1 Englouvi
- 2 Aghios Donatos
- 3 Vault in Englouvi



**The Monastery of Kokkini Ekklesia and the Monastery of Asomatos Archangel Michael:**

The monasteries are both abandoned but retain traces of their former prestige and centuries-long history. They can be found up in the mountains (the first close to Platistoma, the second in the area of Vafkeri).



- 1 Asomatos Monastery
- 2 Fields of lentils on the plateau of Englouvi
- 3 Kokkini ekklesia
- 4 Kavalos Folklore Museum
- 5 Melissa Gorge

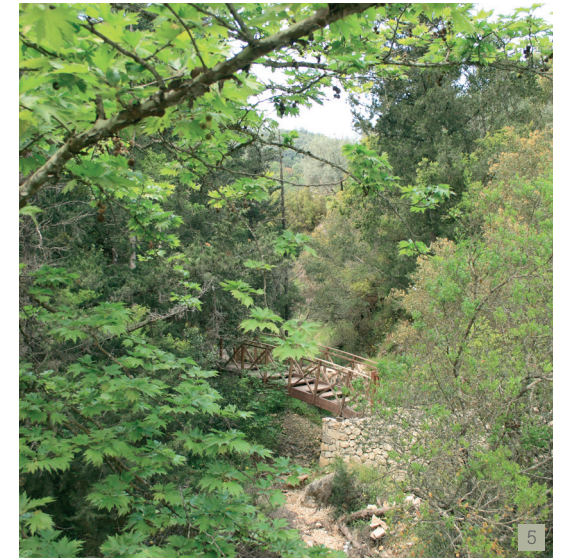
**Melissa Gorge (Faraggi Melissas):**

The gorge is situated in the area of Sfakiotes; its many paths have been recently marked and take you past water-

mills, stone bridges, wells and lush greenery.

**Skaros Hill (Lofos Skaron):**

The hill is nearby Kolyvata village and is one of the loveliest inland spots on Lefkada with an abundance of rare flora, a rare species of oak forest and an impressive geological formation.





1. Sparti 2. Heloni 3. Madouri 4. Skorprios 5. Meganissi 6. Thilia 7. Kalamos 8. Kastos 9. Arkoudi 10. Kefalonia 11. Vlycho bay 12. Nydri

Upon reaching the peak you will be rewarded with a breathtaking view over the islets of Lefkada. Do not forget to also visit the old monastery of Aghios Georgios ton Skaron

- 1 Skaros Hill
- 2 Monastery of Aghios Georgios
- 3 Holy Table, Rodaki
- 4 Kerasia springs

**Syros** is a beautiful traditional village of lush greenery and moving water such as the **Piges Kerasias** springs that are well concealed by massive plane trees and ivy.

A few kilometers to the south of Syros village you will come across the **Monastery of Aghios Ioannis in Rodaki**.

The Monastery has an exceptional view and was erected on the site of a Dorian temple dedicated to the goddess Dimitra. Its Holy Table stands on the capital of one of the ancient temple's columns.

This is the site of **W. Dörpfeld's** excavation in 1905.



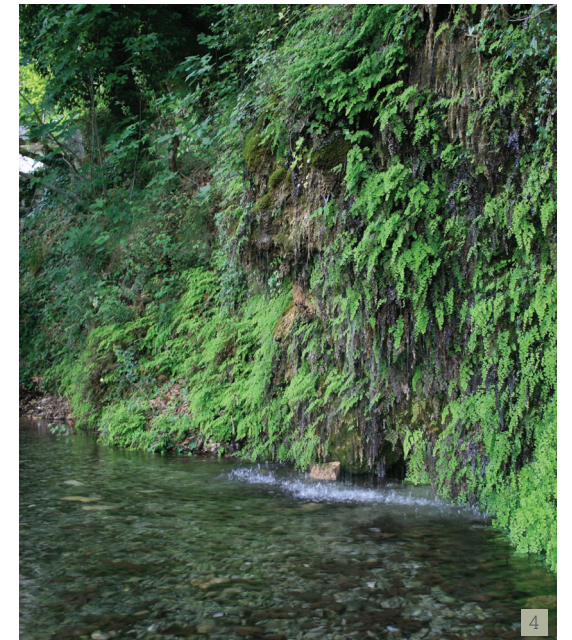
1



2



3



4

# 05 cookery and products of Lefkada



1

### The cookery of Lefkada

Chef Evie Voutsina, in her awarded book "The cookery of Lefkada" engagingly refers to the island's rich gastronomy tradition. Luckily this tradition is continued in several of the island's tavernas where the visitor can

savour traditional Lefkadian dishes. Among the local specialties are cuttlefish cooked in their ink (photo 1), cod bianco, octopus with potatoes in the oven (photo 2), fish soup with white sauce, rooster served with pasta.



2

### The products of Lefkada

The island's most famous products are **Englouvi lentils**, **thyme honey** from Athani, **mandolato** and **pasteli** (nougat and sesame seed sweets), **avgotaracho** (fish roe) from Ivvari (photo 3), **ladopita** (traditional sweet with sesame and

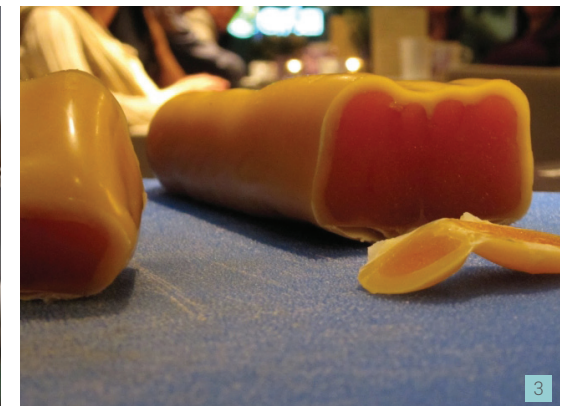
syrup), the renown Lefkada **salami** as well as the local **wine**, namely the Vertzami and Vardea varieties. Also famous is Lefkada's embroidery, especially the renown Karsaniki stitch (from Karya village) to be found nowhere else in Greece.



The local soft-drink is soumada (condensed bitter-almond syrup diluted in water); it would traditionally cool off Sunday afternoon strollers, who would enjoy their soumada accompanied by coriander-flavoured rusks.



Egret in action in Ivvari, Lefkada



3

## 06 alternative activities



Flamingos near the castle of Aghia Mavra

*You will be greeted by chirping in the Melissa Gorge in Kavalos. Several kinds of birds nestle among the deep foliage here, among them kestrels, owls, hoopoes and the king of the skies, the eagle.*

### Bird watching

Get equipped with binoculars and prismatic lenses and explore the unique diversity of Lefkada's bird fauna. Lefkada's lagoon belongs to the NATURA network and is home to a large

variety of endemic and migratory birds. Take pictures of sleek herons, wild ducks, pelicans, impressive swans and pink flamingos.

### Cycling

Discover on bike the historical centre

of Lefkada and its outskirts. Cycle around the lagoon or become lost in the Venetian olive grove. The land is flat here and cycling is easy; the flat country around Vassiliki is also an interesting option for cyclists.

### Hiking

Lovers of nature will be delighted by the hiking trails on Lefkada and by the island's rich and diverse flora. Let your steps lead you down paths through fragrant pine forests, by perennial olive trees and towering cypresses.

### Lefkas Trail Run

When October comes round, put on your sports gear and your best mood and join the Lefkas Trail, the new sports event that allows participants to discover and admire the mountains of Lefkada in all their glory. Two alternative itineraries, 5km

or 23km, take you through lushly green country roads and trails. Enjoy this reviving experience while getting to know parts of the island you had never imagined existed.

### Swimming

Swim your way around Lefkada's beauty; discover its lacy

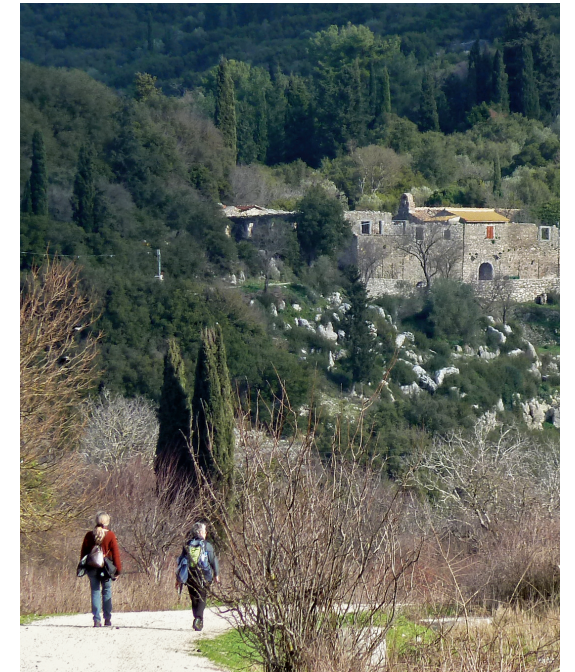
shores, turquoise waters and secret caves, waterside. To experience the absolute adventure try **open-sea swimming**, a 7-day swimming trip around Lefkada and the neighboring islands accompanied by trained escorts.

### Sailing

The sea enclosed



Cycling in Lefkada's historical centre



Hiking in the meadows of Karya



## alternative activities

---

by Lefkada, Ithaki and the mainland is considered ideal for sailing according to the experts; the state-of-the-art Marina in the town of Lefkada is a hub for sailors.

### Kitesurfing

Kitesurf fans from around the world congregate in Lefkada each year due to its excellent

weather conditions. The Kite Surf Open championship that takes place in Mili bay in July sees the participation of a large number of kitesurfers from Greece and around the world.

### Windsurfing

Windsurfers love Lefkada. The beaches at Vassiliki and Ai Giannis are considered

among the best in the world for the specific sport and have often hosted international races. In Vassiliki, the winds combined with the morphology of the land cause an unusual phenomenon in which the strength of the wind increases gradually from early to late afternoon, creating ideal conditions for every level and style

of windsurfing. In Ai Giannis, conditions are fairly similar but the big waves that come from the open sea are appropriate only for expert windsurfers.

### Paragliding

Tandem paragliding with an experienced instructor offers you the opportunity to experience the thrill of flying along with a



Sailing by Meganissi

unique bird's eye view of Lefkada.

### Horseback Riding

There are horseback riding schools in the plain of Vassiliki and in the olive grove in the town of Lefkada; areas recommended for riding are Ai Giannis, Vassiliki and the lake at Maradochori.

### Diving

The organized diving centres in Nikiana and Nydri offer a variety of supervised diving expeditions with certified instructors.

### Mountain bike

Seeing that Lefkada is 90% mountainous, mountain bike excursions seem the obvious choice; one has several organized



Windsurfing & Kitesurfing in Mili beach



Paragliding in Kathisma



Horseback riding on the road to Ai Giannis



Para-sailing in Nydri with Madouri in the background

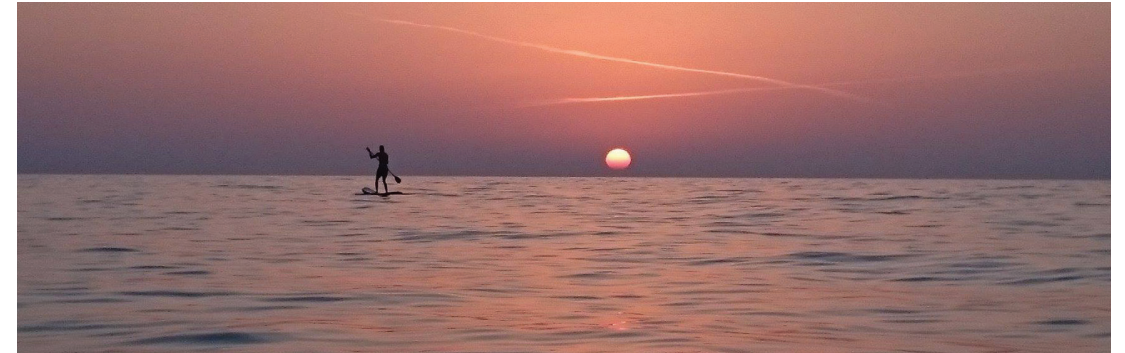
options to choose from, each with a different degree of difficulty.

#### Sea-sports

It is only natural that one would find such a large variety of water-sports in a place intrinsically linked to the sea. Experience the magic of the sea and become energized by a **kayaking** expedition,

practice your balance on a **Stand Up Paddle Board** –a sport for the entire family- and, if you feel like an adrenaline rush, have a go at **water-skiing** with all of its variations, such as **wakeboarding**.

**Parasailing** has also become quite popular, enjoyed both by children and adults.



Stand Up Paddle in Kathisma

#### sources / production team

##### Texts and photographs:

From fagottobooks editions:

Lefkada, the Complete Guide

Lefkada, Best Of

Destination Lefkada

Lefkada on foot, by Lida Out

Ionian Sea: Meganisi- Kalamos- Kastos

Wilhelm Dörpfeld's Lefkada 1891-1913

The Cookery of Lefkada, by Evie Voutsina

Authentic Greek Cooking, by Evie Voutsina

Cape Lefkatas and the Temple of Apollo,

by Constantinos G. Mahairas

##### Production team:

**Editor** Nikos Thermos | **Texts** Effie Barla, Kleri Zania, Nikos Thermos | **Editing** Eleftheria Kopsida | **Translation** Marina Leonidhopoulos | **Creative director** Giota Kokkosi | **Production & Design** Xenofontas Sakellariou | **Photography** Fagotto Image bank, Fritz Berger, Sakis Zogas, Xenofon Mikronis, Lida Out, Tina Webb, Thanos Papadopoulos, Kavvadas water sports, Nautilus diving club, Andreas Thermos, A.G.G. yachts, MG yachts, Giannis Loizou, Fabian Keller, Danilo Consorti, Epaminondas Oikonomou, Kiki Vandis, Violeta Vuckovic, Voula Katopodis, Anna Kalaitzi, Regional Unit of Lefkada  
**Cover photo Milos beach:** Andreas Thermos **Backcover Skaros Hill:** Philippe Waechter | **Production** Fagottobooks | **Publisher** The Committee for the Development and Promotion of Tourism of the Municipality of Lefkada  
[www.lefkada.gov.gr](http://www.lefkada.gov.gr)



Kayaking in Kryoneri, Ai Gianni



Published by The Committee for the  
Development and Promotion of Tourism  
of the Municipality of Lefkada

GREECE