



TRIP OVERVIEW

Discover the stunning beauty of the Greek Islands on this holiday of short swims in and around the sunlit Cyclades. This adventure is based on the original SwimTrek trip, which has been running for 20 years since 2003. However, the shorter daily swim distances are designed for those who are relatively new to open water, or simply enjoy a more leisurely pace on holiday, with a little more time on dry land. From our base of Schinoussa at the heart of the archipelago, we can island-hop around the Cyclades, discovering isolated beaches and breathtaking coastlines. We will also enjoy several adventurous crossings and more liberating swims as we stretch out into deeper waters. Our beautifully remote Greek adventure will consist of exploring the unspoilt islands of Schinoussa, Fidousa, Iraklia, Kato Koufonisi and Keros.

With a combination of short crossings between islands and coastal swims, you'll have the chance to explore the diverse natural beauty that is abundant in this unique island group. From sea caves and tunnels, to arches and islets, there is no shortage of stunning topography to find both above and below the water.

WHO IS THIS TRIP FOR?

This trip is designed for the swimmer that is looking for a combination of both island-hopping and coastal swims.

Swimmers should also have a basic understanding of open water swimming and be capable of completing the average swim distance of around 2 km prior to the start of the trip. The average daily swim distance is around 3km (split over a minimum of two swims).

We have given this trip a 'Leisurely' grading designed for people who want to swim at a more relaxed pace and enjoy the scenery.

LOCATION SUMMARIES

Schinoussa

Our base for the week, Schinoussa is still largely unspoilt and undiscovered by all but the most intrepid traveller. Its claim to fame is the high number of beaches dotted along its rocky and craggy coastline.

Iraklia

Iraklia is incredibly charming and photographic with a vast raw natural landscape, calm atmosphere and slow pace of life. It remains situated entirely away from mass tourism, even in high season.

Koufonissi

Koufonissi is comprised of two islands, Ano (upper) and Kato (lower). We discover and swim the lower island of Kato Koufonissi - an untouched paradise recognisable for its sandy beaches and bohemian lifestyle.



Keros

Known for its archaeological importance in Cycladic history, the uninhabited island of Keros is famous for its flat-faced marble statues, which later inspired the works of Pablo Picasso and Henry Moore.

Náxos

Náxos is the largest and most fertile of the Cycladic islands. Meadows flow down to vast beaches and cliffs sink suddenly into the sea to give Náxos such astounding natural variety. The peak of Mt Zeus, which is claimed to be the birthplace of the god Zeus, is the highest point in the Cyclades.

TRIP SCHEDULE

Start Point	Archipelagos Hotel, Schinoussa. www.schinoussa.com
Start Time	17:30 on Day 1
Finish Point	Archipelagos Hotel, Schinoussa. www.schinoussa.com
Finish Time	09:00 on Day 7

Daily Itineraries

Please note that the below daily itineraries are an example of the swims that may take place during your trip, however, actual swim locations and distances will vary according to local weather and sea conditions. Your SwimTrek guides and local boat pilot will determine the most suitable swim locations each day and will communicate the plan with all guests as soon as possible.

Day 1

After arriving in Schinoussa on the Express Skopelitis ferry (the island's only connection with Naxos), you will be picked up by our local hotel partners and transferred to the Archipelagos Hotel. After some time to check into your room and freshen up, we meet at 17:30 on the terrace of the hotel. In the light of an Aegean sunset, you'll enjoy welcome drinks, introductions and a chance to discuss the daily schedule in the pre-trip briefing. Then it's off for dinner at one of the island's beautiful tavernas.

Day 2

We begin this morning with a gentle start, easing into the day with a technique analysis session and the option to have your stroke videoed to help you get the most from your open water swims. Following this, we hold our acclimatisation swim in Tsigouri Bay, accessed by the hotel's own private path. After lunch we swim to the uninhabited island of Fidousa, with its steep rocky shore and curious mountain goats. The early evening is given over to a session on technique advice and video playback where we review your footage from the morning.

Day 3

This morning we board our boat and sail across to the beautiful island of Iraklia, which sits directly opposite Schinoussa's southern coast. We'll then spend our morning swimming around a craggy



coastline, which descends into underwater cliffs. We swim over the sunken wreck of a former German World War II plane, located just 9 metres below the surface in Alimnia Bay. Following an onboard lunch and some rest in Alimnia Bay, we continue swimming to complete a Livadi Bay to Venetiko coastal swim.

Day 4

Today, we'll carry out our first major crossing of the week and swim out from Schinoussa to Iraklia. There's then time to head onto the island and explore the Castle ruins from 3000 BC. After you've had the time to look around this untouched island, you can board our boat and head back to Schinoussa. If you prefer to stay a little longer, there is the option of staying on Iraklia for lunch and catching the mid-afternoon ferry back to Schinoussa. This afternoon is yours to either kick back and relax or explore Schinoussa and/or Iraklia at your own pace. Please note that lunch is at your own expense today.

Day 5

Today we head out from Schinoussa's isolated eastern shoreline and swim our way to the grand, striking cliffs of Kato Koufonissi ("Lower Cave") Island. After setting foot on Kato Koufonissi, we enjoy a well-deserved lunch and have the chance to explore this remote and virtually uninhabited paradise. This afternoon, we enjoy a coastal swim from the Panagia Settlement to Nero Beach, exploring the beauty of this unspoilt island further, before returning to Schinoussa.

Day 6

After breakfast, we set out to sail across from Schinoussa towards the uninhabited island of Keros. This island was once the centre of an ancient Cycladic community - its demise is still shrouded in mystery. It is also known as a site of important archaeological significance with excavations both above and below the water.

We begin our swims in among the fascinating outcrops of the islands south of Keros. The route is a swimmer's paradise, providing sheltered crossings and giving a fantastic sense of achievement. Swim distances are flexible, so you can choose to do as much or as little as you like. After lunch, onboard our boat, we reach Keros and swim a section of its wonderfully deserted coastline, before returning once again to Schinoussa.

Day 7

We hold an early morning swim in Tsigouri Bay before breakfast. It's a last chance to check with your guides on any swim technique issues before our remote swimming adventure ends at Schinoussa Harbour. Here, you can catch the morning ferry to Naxos.

TRIP GRADING

We have given this trip a 'Leisurely' grading designed for people who want to swim at a more relaxed pace and enjoy the scenery.



Swimming Distances

SWIM	DISTANCE	SWIM	DISTANCE
Tsigouri	1km	Tsigouri - Fidousa	2km
Iraklia Coastal	2km	Iraklia Coastal	1km
Schinoussa-Iraklia	2km		
Kato Koufonissi Coastal	2km	Panagia – Nero Beach	1km
Keros Archipelago Island Hop	2km	Keros Coastal	1km

*Please note that these swims are an example of what may take place during your trip and should be used as a guide only. Actual swim locations and distances will vary according to local weather and sea conditions.

Swimming Conditions

Swimming in the sea is a fantastic experience, however you should be aware that certain marine life such as sea lice, jellyfish, sea urchins and coral could be present during the swims. In all cases we will work on reducing your contact with these creatures, however if you suffer from anaphylaxis, please consult the office prior to booking.

Walking Conditions

Please note that most walks take place on recognised paths and tracks, however there may be cases where we walk along trails or other unsealed surfaces and care should be taken in these areas.

Temperatures

MONTH	WATER TEMPERATURE*	AIR TEMPERATURE*
June	21-24°C / 70-75°F	22-26°C / 72-79°F
September	22-25°C / 72-77°F	22-26°C / 72-79°F

*Please note that these temperatures are indicative and should be used as a guide only.

Weather Caveat

For safety reasons, we rely on decent weather conditions when carrying out our swims. Therefore, open water swimming holidays require a certain degree of on-trip flexibility which can result in changes to the planned itinerary. These changes often add a touch of uniqueness to your trip and will be communicated to you by your SwimTrek guides as quickly as possible.



TRIP INFORMATION

Group Size

This trip has a maximum group size of 14. The group will be split into a maximum of three groups, based on speed, with each group being accompanied by their own safety vessel/escort.

Boat Support

Boat support on this trip includes one main vessel and two support boats to be piloted by your SwimTrek guides and a local boat pilot. Please note that this boat support is subject to change without notice and cannot be guaranteed.

Extra Activities

As well as swimming, the unspoilt and idyllic nature of our trip makes it an ideal setting for trekking either side of our swims. Walks to local beaches, villages and historical landmarks allow you to take in the captivating views and wild landscapes that these islands have to offer. Otherwise, the locations we encounter are ideal for relaxing and enjoying the hot sun, during free time.

Equipment Checklist

For your basic, essential packing list, please visit our [Packing List](#) page on the website. There are no **additional, specific** items required for this location.

Due to restricted space on the ferries, we recommend traveling with soft suitcases.

SwimTrek will also provide water and electrolytes at every location and refill your bottles.

GETTING THERE

As SwimTrekkers come from all over the world, and join our swimming holidays in numerous destinations, we don't currently offer flights as part of our SwimTrek packages. We do however want to do as much as we can to ensure that our guests get the best deals when travelling to one of our trips so check out our [SwimTrek flight tips](#) page on the website.

The trip will start and finish at the Archipelagos Hotel on the island of Schinoussa. Please ensure that your travel is arranged accordingly.

While there are several travel options to get to Schinoussa, SwimTrek recommends flying into Athens and arriving at Schinoussa by travelling via Naxos Island.

The recommended options are:

1. Flying into Athens, then flying from Athens to Naxos (the nearest airport to Schinoussa) and taking a ferry from Naxos to Schinoussa.
2. Flying into Athens, taking a ferry from Athens to Naxos, & another ferry from Naxos to Schinoussa.



Flights from Athens to Naxos

From Athens airport you can fly directly into Naxos via Olympic Air. Once released, flight schedules and availability can be found at www.olympicair.com or www.skyexpress.gr/en.

Ferries from Athens to Naxos

From Athens airport, you will need to catch a bus to Piraeus Port to catch a ferry to Naxos. For airport bus timetables, please visit www.athensairportbus.com/en/timetable/. For information on taxis from the airport to Piraeus Port, please visit <https://www.taxi-athens.net/>.

Depending on the ferry service that you book from Athens to Naxos, the journey time can vary significantly, however, in general the trip takes approximately 5-6 hours. The price of the ferry is approximately €50-€80 for a one-way trip and tickets are available to purchase online at www.openseas.gr or www.danae.gr, or from one of the local ferry agents who are located along the Piraeus Port harbour front.

Ferries from Naxos to Schinoussa

Once on the island of Naxos, you will need to catch the 'Express Skopelitis' ferry to Schinoussa. Please note that this ferry usually only departs from Naxos **once per day** at 14:00, however, this is subject to change and should be confirmed at the time of making your ferry booking. Tickets for this ferry, once released, can be booked online via either www.openseas.gr or www.danae.gr.

If you arrive in Schinoussa on the Express Skopelitis on Day 1 of the trip, you will be met for a transfer to the Archipelagos Hotel. If you are on an alternative ferry, please contact Panagiotis on hotelarchipelagos@gmail.com to arrange a private transfer.

If you are unable to catch the 'Express Skopelitis' ferry at the beginning of your trip, private water taxis can be arranged by contacting Panagiotis on the email above, however, please note that this cost is approximately €200 and are subject to availability.

Alternative routes:

Other travel options are available, such as from Santorini, and guests are welcome to contact our team if they want to consider at other options.

It is also possible to catch a direct ferry from Athens (Piraeus Port) to Schinoussa through Blue Star Ferries, please note that these run infrequently throughout the season and don't always offer daily departures. It is worth noting that in past years these ferries have often not matched up well with incoming flights from European destinations. Ferry schedules, once released, can be found at www.openseas.gr or www.danae.gr.



IMPORTANT: While it is recommended that you purchase your ferry tickets online in advance, it is worth mentioning that neither ferry operators nor third-party websites will issue an 'e-ticket' at the time of booking, i.e., you will not be able to print your ticket prior to travel. You will have the option to either have your ticket sent to you via courier (upon payment of a postage fee) or to pick up your ticket when you arrive in Greece. Pick-up locations can vary from one ferry operator to the next and often include locations in central Athens, as well as offices which are located at your selected departure port. For any enquiries about ticket collections, please contact the ferry operator or booking agent directly.

Return travel from Schinoussa

The trip will finish on the morning of Day 7, the most popular option is to take the morning 'Express Skopelitis' ferry back to Naxos and make your onwards journey from Naxos to Athens. Alternatively, there may be ferries from Schinoussa to alternative locations in Greece, so please check www.openseas.gr or www.danae.gr for ferry route options, schedules and tickets, once they are released.

ACCOMMODATION

Your nights in the Cyclades are spent on the island of Schinoussa at the simple and the locally owned Archipelagos Hotel. Located on the south side of the island, it lies only a few hundred metres from Schinoussa's most popular beach, Tsigouri. The hotel is beautifully secluded and traditionally designed. The local village is situated only 700 meters away making this an ideal stay in Schinoussa. The rooms at the Archipelagos Hotel vary significantly from one room to the next, so please pay attention to the room description (including the room size) during the booking process. Rooms are based on a twin-share and have en-suite bathroom facilities. There are a limited number of single supplement rooms which can be reserved during the booking process, subject to availability.

Pre/Post Trip Accommodation and Trip Extension Options

If you require additional accommodation at Archipelagos Hotel prior to your trip, please contact Panagiotis via e-mail hotelarchipelagos@gmail.com.

Staying in Naxos

Naxos is an ideal island on which to stay either prior to or after your trip. We recommend the Hotel Grotta, a superb family-run hotel only 10 minutes' walk from the ferry terminal and with lovely views over the islands of Mykonos and Paros. It has been SwimTrek's home away from home on Naxos for many years. You can book rooms at Hotel Grotta via www.hotelgrotta.gr.



Staying in Athens

The Hotel Phidias is a great hotel if you need to stay overnight in Athens prior to or after your SwimTrek trip. A free shuttle service to the hotel is available for all guests from the airport, port, metro or railway station. To book this shuttle, please ensure that you contact the hotel prior to travelling, by emailing mphidiasgr@otenet.gr or calling +30 210 4296 480. For further information on getting to the hotel, please visit www.phidias.gr.

Food and Drink

All breakfasts and lunches (except lunch on day 4) are included in your trip price, however, dinners are at your own expense. This gives you a fantastic opportunity to sample the abundance of traditional family-run tavernas over the course of your trip. The average cost of dinner is between €20 - €30. For more information, please visit our [food and drink](#) page on the website.

TRAVEL ADVICE

For more information on any of the following sections please visit the [Travel Advice](#) page of our website.

Money, Extra Expenses and Tipping

You should bring extra money with you to cover such items as dinners, drinks, entertainment, souvenirs and your ferry transfers to and from Schinoussa at the start and at the end of the trip. The local currency in Greece is Euro (€). A single ATM machine is available on Schinoussa but can be unreliable, so we suggest withdrawing money before your departure or in Naxos.

We believe that tipping is done entirely at your own discretion. If you have been provided with excellent it may be something you wish to do. Your SwimTrek Guides can advise on local norms for service providers like boat crew, waiters or taxis. Nothing is expected for your SwimTrek Guides, but many groups like to present something to the Guides at the end of the trip.

Responsible Travel

SwimTrek is conscious of the importance of protecting the world's natural wonders. We are acutely aware of our responsibility to not only take care of the natural environments which we are lucky enough to explore, but also to educate our guests about the importance of conservation efforts and responsible tourism. It's for this reason that we have worked so closely with our partners to ensure that our trips are conducted in the most responsible and sustainable way possible, working tirelessly to minimise the impact of our presence on local marine life and the natural habitat.

For more information, please visit our [Responsible Travel](#) page on the website.

Passports and Visas

Greece is part of the European Union. Non-residents of Greece require a full passport to enter the country, which should be valid for six months beyond the expected length of stay. Citizens of all E.U.



member states, U.S., Canada, Australia and New Zealand do not require a visa to enter Greece. Please note that visa regulations are subject to change, and we advise that you check your own visa requirements prior to travel.

Travel Insurance

We consider comprehensive travel insurance to be essential, and we strongly recommend that you purchase insurance which includes, but is not limited to, cover for illness, accident, emergency repatriation, ambulance, air ambulance, helicopter rescue services, cancellation, lost luggage and delays. Your travel insurance should also cover you for open water swimming and any other activity listed in your trip itinerary (including races and competitions, where applicable). Please read your policy details carefully and remember to take them with you on your trip for your own reference. For further information about travel insurance, please visit www.swimtrek.com/travel-insurance.

Health Information and Recommended Vaccinations

Here at SwimTrek we pride ourselves on our focus on safety and the well-being of all our guests. As we operate in some beautiful and remote locations medical facilities are not always easily accessible. SwimTrek Guides, and many staff working for our local partners, are first aid trained. However, we ask that you read our [Travel Health](#) page to ensure that you are informed about general Travel and Swim Health precautions.

Travel Plugs & Electricity

There is complimentary WIFI across the hotel and in rooms. For a useful source of information on the different electrical outlets, electrical plugs, and electric sockets, please visit worldstandards.eu