

Past meets present: Cycling from Vytina to Nafplio
A cultural and archaeological cycle tour in the Peloponnese
Culture, archaeology, nature, sea and local delicacies



Code tour: GR01C



An unbelievable fascinating cycle tour full of archaeological treasures from Ancient Greece. This tour is the perfect highlight of art and the beauty of a mountainous and maritime landscape. The route goes up into the hills and suddenly there is a glimpse of the crystal-clear sea. You will cycle in a sun-drenched landscape with the beautiful pines of Mount Mainalo and enjoy the long beaches of the Argolic Gulf, also known as Gulf of Nafplion (Nafplio), a beautiful and evocative inlet of the Aegean Sea. You will visit some of the most important archaeological sites in this region such as Epidaurus with its famous theatre and Mycenae, included in the list of UNESCO heritage. Then you will go also to ancient Tegea, Argos, Lerna with the lake of the same name where Hercules killed the mythical beast (the famous Hydra of Lerna, considered immortal) and the walls of the ancient Tiryns.

The destination of this trip is the central-eastern Peloponnese, where the mythical eternal mountains meet a fantastic blue sea. The starting point is Vytina, a small and typical mountain village, surrounded by forests where you can still breathe fresh and pure air and wake up in the morning with the soft birdsong.

On the first cycling day you pass picturesque villages and in the end, you have a well-deserved descent towards Tripoli, a small typical Greek town, located in the heart of the Peloponnese peninsula. Tripoli has a typical Greek atmosphere, not yet characterized by mass tourism.

The next place on the route is the small and charming fishing village of Paralio Astros with its colourful harbour. The tour ends in the seaside resort of Nafplio, a dream location in the eastern part of the Peloponnese, where you will make two round tours and will spend some wonderful days.

The daily routes of this cycling tour are not too difficult. You are free in the morning to leave whenever you want and to arrive at any time of the day. You can make nice breaks on the many beaches, at archaeological sites, in cosy restaurants enjoying local delicacies and appreciate a glass of wine or cool beer on sun-drenched terraces.



Starting days: every Saturday from April till October

Participants: minimum two people

Level: 2,5, medium

You need to have some cycle experience. The daily distances are not too long, but on some days, there is uphill cycling in a hilly landscape. Significant difference in height.

Daily Kilometers: min. 38 km / 23,6 mi – max. 55 km / 34,2 mi

Total km: 277 km / 172 mi

Program day by day

Day 1: Arrival at Vytina

Individual arrival at Vytina,, a characteristic Greek village, which was of fundamental importance in 1821 during the Greek war of independence.

On request, it is possible to book a transfer from the Athens airport to Vytina or you can reach the place by public bus. The village is located at the foot of Mount Mainalo, at an altitude of 1033 meters a.s.l. and thanks to its beautiful natural context, it is considered one of the most famous tourist resorts of the Peloponnese. In winter, the village is often covered with snow, offering the visitor a truly evocative scenario. At the end of the afternoon, the bicycles and all equipment will be delivered directly to the hotel.

Overnight stay with breakfast in Vytina.

Day 2: Vytina – Alonistaina – Piana – Tripoli

In the morning in the saddle to start the first beautiful route that leads to Tripoli today. In the beginning, it goes uphill over the mountain Mainalo. It is a suggestive bike ride through pine forests to the town of Alonistaina, 6 km southeast of Vytina.

Alonistaina is located at about 1200 meters above sea level and it is one of the higher villages on the Peloponnese and an ancient settlement. The route offers various

possibilities to take a nice break admiring the beautiful landscape. You continue cycling

towards Piana, another historic settlement, located at an altitude of 1090 meters. In the centre of the village, which is built on a large rock, it is definitely worth visiting the large

church of San Giorgio. This church served as a fortress during the Greek War of

Independence. It was in Piana that the Greek general Theodoros Kolokotronis assembled his troops against the Ottoman army. From here, you can enjoy a beautiful view over the

lower plain and have a nice cup of coffee or something to eat in a cosy restaurant.

After this, it goes downhill towards Tripoli, the capital of Arcadia, located in the middle of the Peloponnese. The city is positioned at an altitude of 650 meters on the Mantinea

plateau. Tripoli is a modern city, but it has retained the traditional Greek lifestyle. During

the Ottoman Empire, it was the capital of the Peloponnese, due to its strategic

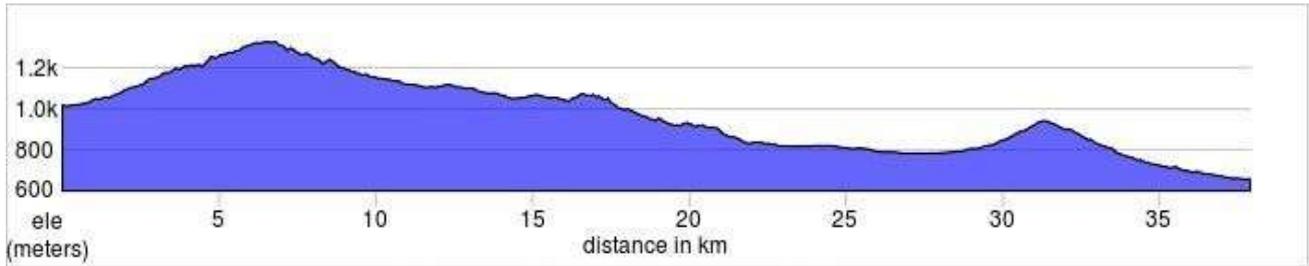
geographical location in the centre of the peninsula. Stroll through the city to explore the old town centre and soak up its charm, before returning to the hotel for your well-

deserved rest.

Overnight stay with breakfast in Tripoli.

Distance: 37.9 km / 23,5 mi

Ascent/Descent: + 552m. - 910m



Day 2 / Route: Vytina - Tripoli



Day 3: Round tour from Tripoli to the Ancient Mantinea and the Kapsia Cave.

Around Tripoli there is a beautiful high plateau and this is where your cycling adventure starts today. The route passes through vineyards and apple orchards until you reach the excavations of the ancient city of Mantinea, one of the most important Ancient Greek cities in terms of size and how preserved. It is an interesting archaeological site with many temples and a beautiful Greek theatre, which could accommodate 6200 spectators. On the other side of the excavations, we recommend visiting the extravagant church of Fotini. The church was built in 1972 and combines different architectural elements (classical, Byzantine and Minoan)

The ride continues on a flat route between orchards to the village of Kapsia. A truly natural underground wonder awaits you here, the cave of Kapsia, one of the most beautiful caves in Greece. There are multicolour stalactites and stalagmites that have been formed over millions of years. The colours range from bright red to yellow and blue. A true masterpiece of Mother Nature. At the end of this emotionally filled day, you will return to Tripoli cycling along a quiet provincial roads.

Overnight stay with breakfast in Tripoli.

Distance: 46.9 km / 29 mi

Ascent/Descent: +270m.- 285m



Day 3 / Route: Tripoli Roundtrip (Mantineia- Capsia Caves)

Day 4: Tripoli - the antique Tegea - Paralio Astros

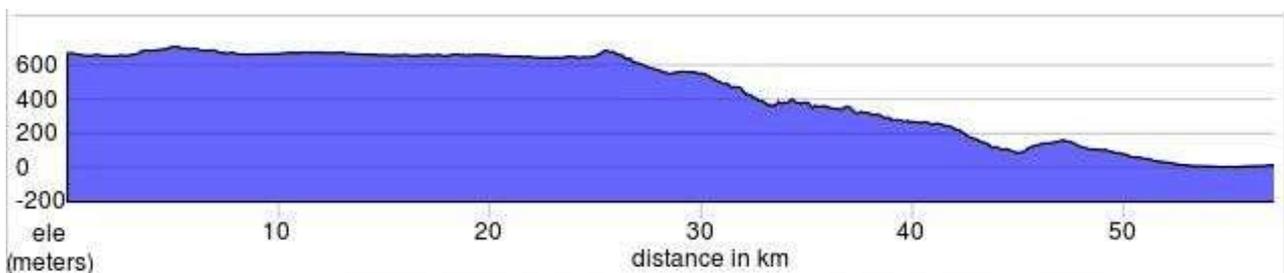
Today you will leave Tripoli and cycle through extensive meadows to the village of Tegea, another important city-state from ancient Greece. Here the history is even shown in different layers, a unique sensation. The Byzantine Church of the Sleeping Madonna was built in the mid-tenth century on the ruins of the ancient Hellenistic theatre. You can also see the Agora and, to the south, the temple of Athena Alea, one of the most important from the classical period and the second largest temple after that of Zeus in ancient Olympia.

Back in the saddle again, you descend from Monte Parnoras to the sea. You are surrounded by olive groves and pass small characteristic villages. You could take a break to visit an olive oil mill, where olive oil is pressed at a certain time of the year. Along the way, you will also pass the ancient city of Eve, where some remains with dozens of sculptures and polychrome mosaics of the palace of Herodes Atticus, have recently been found. You will soon arrive in Paralio Astros, a small fishing village with no more than 900 inhabitants. Here you can spend the rest of the day on the beach, walking and visiting the castle on the hill or enjoying the picturesque harbour with the moored colourful fishing boats. There are numerous restaurants where you can taste fresh fish and local specialties.

Overnight stay with breakfast in Paralio Astros.

Distance: 54.6 km / 33,9 mi

Ascent/Descent: + 700m. - 1276m



Day 4 / Route: Tripoli- Tegea- Paralio Astros



Day 5 Paralio Astros - Nafplio

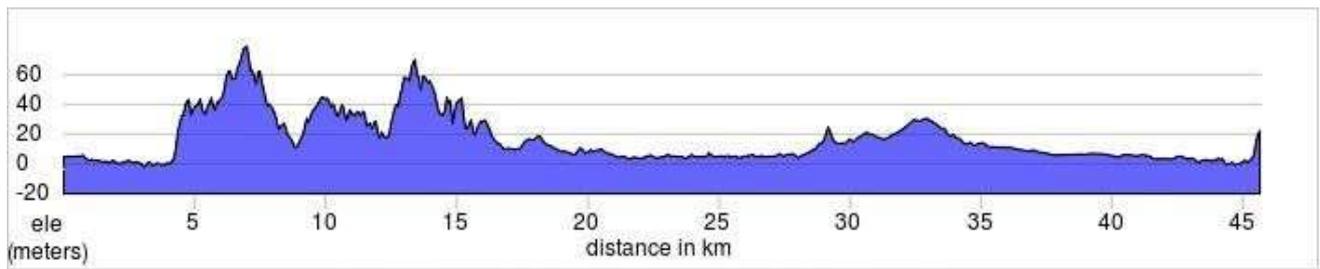
Today after breakfast immediately in the saddle for a special and flatter ride along the coast towards Nafplio. Along the way, you have a beautiful view of the deep blue sea of the Argolic Gulf. The route has light ups and downs and soon you reach Myloi, a small village on the coast where you can relax and have a drink or eat some Greek specialities. Nearby you can also visit the archaeological excavations of ancient Lerna with an extensive exhibition about prehistory and the Bronze Age. At the lake of ancient Lerna, Hercules killed the mythical multi-headed beast.

Your cycling tour continues over vast plains before reaching Argos, one of the oldest cities in Greece, the birthplace of Hercules. Here, on the mountain of Larissa, is an imposing fortress with cyclopean walls. At the foot of the mountain is the ancient theatre of Argos. You will cover the last kilometers and reach Nafplio, a seaside resort where natural beauty, history and modernity blend harmoniously. The town has narrow streets, a central square of marble, neoclassical buildings, modern bars and a lively nightlife. The castle "Palamidi" frames the city and the fortress of Bourtzi in the sea! And how about a nice walk along the characteristic, lively harbour with not only the local fishing boats, but also full of luxury yachts. A beautiful atmosphere to fully enjoy.

Overnight stay with breakfast in Nafplio.

Distance: 45 km / 28 mi

Ascent/Descent: +457m.- 443m



Day 5 / Route: Paralio Astros - Nafplio

Day 6 Round tour to Mycenae

Today a ride through the enchanting Greek countryside. The program features no less than the great, well-known Bronze Age city, Mycenae, which dates back 3,500 years ago. During the tour, you can also stop to admire the imposing ruins of Tiryns Castle, considered an important centre in the Eastern Mediterranean. You will cycle through lemon and orange plantations and reach Mycenae, the kingdom of the mythical king Agamemnon. Mycenae has long been the centre of Greek civilization.

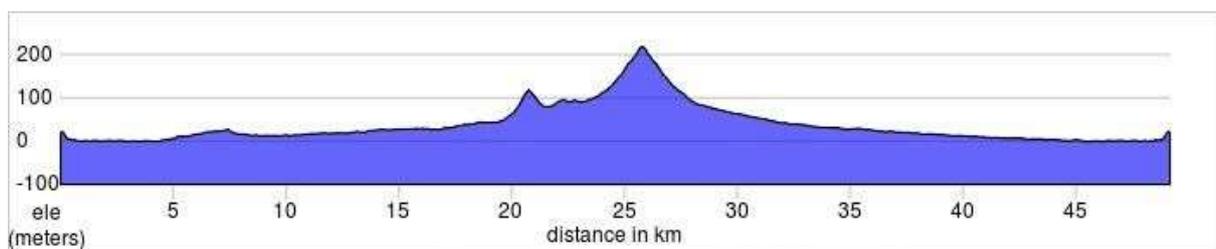
The Mycenaean Acropolis with its fortress and ancient Cyclopean walls were built 3360 years ago at an altitude of 280 meters. Here you can admire the impressive excavations and important remains of the city.

The Leon gate at the main entrance of the Acropolis is famous all over the world and is the first example of monumental sculpture in Europe: together with the tomb of Atreo, the father of Agamemnon, it is one of the main cultural and historical attractions of Greece. After your visit you will return to Nafplio

Overnight stay with breakfast in Nafplio.

Distance: 51 km / 31,7 mi

Ascent/Descent: +358m.- 368m



Day 6 / Route: Roundtrip to Mycenae



Day 7 Round tour to Epidauros

It is the last cycling day of this trip. After breakfast, you will be transferred to Epidauros, one of the must-see places of any trip through classical Greece. Epidauros has a huge, perfectly preserved theatre, which was built over 2,300 years ago and could hold over 14,000 spectators. Theatre performances are still held during the summer months. Epidauros is also considered to be the place where medicine was born: in fact, it was an important treatment centre in ancient times, with a sanctuary dedicated to Asclepius, the god of medicine.

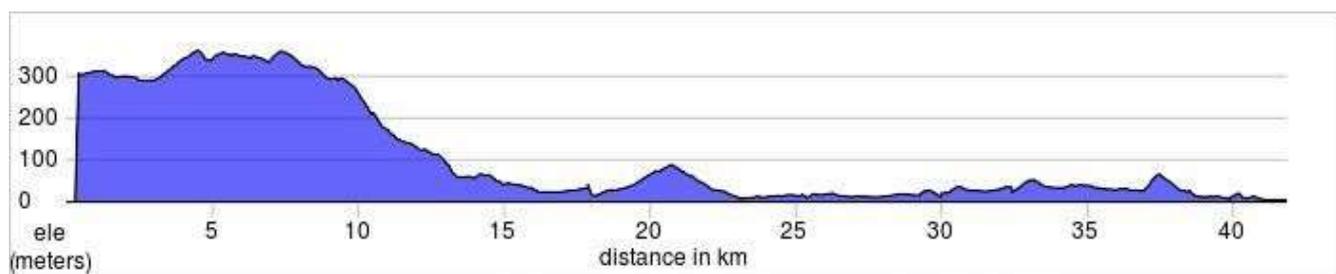
By visiting this archaeological site, you will understand the ancient Greeks' idea of medicine and healing. Everything was based on the principle: "a healthy mind in a healthy body". And just attending theatre performances was seen as an important part of this process. However, not only the theatre was important in the city. There were many temples, arcades, houses, shops and baths. After Epidauros, you cycle mostly downhill back to the coast, always surrounded by a mountainous landscape with pistachio plantations.

Afterwards you can take a wonderful refreshing dip in the clear waters of the sea

Overnight stay with breakfast in Nafplio.

Distance: 41,8 km / 26 mi

Ascent/Descent: +331m.- 631m



Day 7 / Route: Roundtrip to Epidaurus

Day 8 End of the tour after breakfast

Today is the last day! After breakfast, prepare for departure.

If you wish, you can add some options to this trip, for example, you can extend your stay in Athens and take a tour of the Acropolis here, visit museums or add a few extra days by the sea

Prices per person:

In double room € 750,00

In single room € 895,00

High season supplement (14/05-11/06 and 03/09-14/10) € 60,00

Bike rental*

Trekking bikes € 80,00

Road bikes € 120,00

E-bikes € 230,00

Tandem € 240,00

Helmet € 10,00 per week

* Clients who do not have the transfer to the first hotel, will have a surcharge for the bike rental of € 40,00 per bike

Included in the price

- 7 nights with breakfast
- Luggage transportation form hotel to hotel
- Maps, route notes with pictures and information about the tour in English
- Telephonic helpline
- Transfer bikes and persons from Nafplio to Epidaurus on day 7
- gps tracks

Not included in the price

- The trip to and from Greece
- Transfer from and to airport
- eventual wine-tastings
- Lunches and dinner
- Entrée tickets for cultural activities, museums etc.

- all what is not mentioned under “included in the price”



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