

If I Had Only 48 Hours in Athens, Here's What I Would Do...

The spectacular city of Athens, the capital of Greece, is known as being one of the most culturally and historically rich cities in the world. With its stunning sunny weather, many ancient attractions, and exciting modern areas, visiting Greece can be nothing short of a lifetime experience.

In this article, we'll give you some unique, little-known tips for your upcoming trip, whether you're traveling with kids, your partner, your girlfriends, or you're on a solo trip.

Where I Would Stay & Why

The hotel you choose can make a huge difference to the quality of your trip. Greece is a hot, bustling city, so it's vital that you have a calm, picturesque place to call home during your trip.

For a Family Trip: Ava Hotel & Suites

This lovely four-star hotel is located in central Athens in the pretty Plaka neighborhood close to plenty of attractions and historic sites. Each room in this hotel has plenty of space including a fully equipped kitchenette where you can prepare lunches and dinners for the kids. With its gorgeous, iconic Athens views and its welcoming, family-friendly atmosphere, you and your family will love this boutique hotel.

Estimated price: \$260 per night

For a Couple's Getaway: St George Lycabettus

Athens is the ideal city for a romantic couples' getaway, with its vibrant modern culture set against the backdrop of some of the world's oldest ruins and history. At St George Lycabettus, you and your partner can enjoy a minimalist, fresh white interior with a wraparound balcony and panoramic city views. It really is the perfect place to take some deep breaths and relax after a busy few months or years of motherhood. The hotel has an excellent restaurant, a communal pool, and even a mini cinema.

Estimated price: \$80 per night

For a Girlfriends' Weekend Vacation: The Foundry Hotel

This quirky, artistic boutique hotel was built in the 1930s in a building that has served as a stable, a font foundry, and a theater. The interior features both original architectural features and modern touches. You and your girlfriends will love the eclectic interiors and the stunning,

plant-filled rooftop terrace with its panoramic views of the Parthenon. If you are looking for a holiday home that's a suitable backdrop for some amazing Instagram shots, this spot will not disappoint!

Estimated price: \$100 per night

What I Would Do in Athens in 48 Hours If I Were Traveling with ...

When you're deciding what to do in Athens, you need to consider who you're traveling with. Here are some ideas of things to do for different groups of travelers. The great

What I Would Do if Traveling with Young Children

The Acropolis

The Acropolis is probably the most iconic landmark in Athens, if not in the whole of Greece. The Acropolis Hill is filled with fascinating ancient monuments and offers a breathtaking view of the city. For kids, this attraction is an absolute must-visit.

Today, the monuments and works of art are filled with ancient stories and myths. Your kids will never forget learning about Ancient Greece and its mighty Gods, epic battle stories, beautiful love stories, and thrilling adventures. The museums in the Acropolis all have excellent tours and accommodations for kids, so you won't have to worry about keeping them entertained!

Estimated price: \$35 per person for a combination ticket, allowing you to skip the lines

The Athens Happy Train

The Athens Happy Train is a fantastic kid-friendly way to see the entire city. This toy-like train chugs its way through the historic city, passing by Constitution Square, the Panathenaic Stadium, Plaka, and many other famous sites. Kids adore traveling on this magical little train and won't forget the experience for years to come.

Estimated price: \$4 for kids, \$6 for adults

Attica Zoological Park

If your kids need a break from the many historic sights in Athens, why not spend an afternoon enjoying the charming Attica Zoological Park. Here, you will get up close and personal with over 350 species, including many exotic and endangered animals, including giraffes, zebras, antelopes, flamingos, jaguars, hippos, rhinos, elephants, and more.

Estimated price: \$20 for adults, \$15 for children, free for children under 3

What I Would Do if Traveling with Teens

Street Art Walking Tour

Show your teens the modern urban side of Athens on a Street Art Walking Tour. The street art in Athens is considered to be some of the best in the world. The tour will take you through hip young neighborhoods and will provide some enlightening ideas about present-day Greece and its political and economic situation.

Estimated price: \$50 per person

Olympic Games Workshop

For sporty teens, the Olympic Games Workshop will be an unforgettable experience. This private tour explores how ancient athletes trained and what sports they played. Your teens will get to try some historic training techniques before getting to race around the historic Panathenaic Stadium. This is a great opportunity for teens to get in some exercise and learn some history at the same time.

Estimated price: \$40 per person

The Cycladic Museum

This fascinating museum is dedicated to exploring the ancient cultures of the Aegean and Cyprus, with a focus on art from the third millennium BC. A highlight of this museum is the top floor video which shows the life, customs, and trades skills learned by young people in Ancient Greece. The video includes dramatizations by modern day local teens. Your kids will love seeing firsthand what life would have been like as a teen in Ancient Greece.

Estimated price: \$12 in high season, \$6 in low season, free for children under 18

What I Would Do on a Parents' Getaway with My Significant Other

Riviera and Beaches

If you and your partner are planning a romantic vacation to Athens, be sure to leave some time in your itinerary for a visit to the riviera. This stretch of palm-filled beaches on the southern side of the city provides relaxing ocean views, plenty of chic Mediterranean bars, and the feeling of mid-century riviera glamor.

Estimated price: Free

Diomidous Botanical Garden

For a break from the hustle and bustle of historic Athens, head to the often overlooked Diomedes Botanical Gardens. This peaceful green haven dates back to the 4th century BC and is filled with Ancient structures and plenty of colorful, blooming flowers.

Estimated price: \$10 for adults, free for children under 15

A Concert in the Ruins

Athens is host to plenty of concerts and musical shows throughout the year. If you're lucky enough to catch a show at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus in the Acropolis, it's an experience that should not be missed. The "Herodion" dates back to around 160 AD, and it is now a semicircular stadium that seats up to 4680 people. Seeing a concert with the ruins of the Odeon and the distant city views in the background is nothing short of magical.

Estimated price: Can vary depending on the performance from \$10-\$200

What I Would Do if I Were Traveling Solo

Mount Parnitha National Park

Hiking through the Mount Parnitha National Park is a great way to spend a solo afternoon in Athens. The park is a bit of a trek from central Athens, but for nature lovers it's well worth the trip. You'll love exploring the vast pine tree-filled mountains by foot or by bike and getting a taste of Greece's natural terrain.

Estimated price: Free

The Acropolis

The Acropolis is a must-visit for any type of trip. However, if you're traveling solo, it's an especially great place to visit. It's expansive enough to get lost in for a whole day. Plus, without any companions, you can really immerse yourself in the city's ancient history via the monuments and buildings of the Acropolis.

Estimated price: \$35 per person for a combination ticket, allowing you to skip the lines

Street Food Tour

Athens is an amazing city for history and art, but it's also a Mecca for food lovers. The street food in Athens is exceptional. If you're visiting the city alone, take yourself on an afternoon food tour through the street stalls and get to know the real Athens through its local cuisine.

Estimated price: \$10-\$20

What I Would Do on a Girlfriends' Trip

Bar Hopping in Koukaki

If you and your girlfriends want to let loose and go on a sophisticated bar-hopping tour in Athens, Koukaki should be on the top of your list. The area has recently been renovated and is now home to plenty of stunning modern bars and restaurants where you can enjoy wine and cocktails into the wee hours of the morning.

Estimated price: \$50-\$200 for an evening

Explore the Ileana Tounta Contemporary Art Center

If you and your friends are interested in modern art, head to the Ileana Tounta Contemporary Art Center. This is the type of place that kids would find hard to swallow, but that you and your friends may enjoy exploring. The calm, sleek galleries in this art center hold some of the world's finest modern art collections, plus they provide some respite from the hot Athenian sun outside.

Estimated price: \$12

Athens' Best Restaurants and Signature Foods

What to do in Athens? Eat! Athens is a real hotspot for foodies. Greece is known for its unique, tasty, refreshing dishes, and the food stalls in restaurants in Athens will not disappoint.

Foods to Try

- **Taramasalata** - Greek meze dip made of fish and olive oil
- **Olives and olive oil** - Grecians are known for their exceptional olives and olive oil
- **Moussaka** - A hot lasagne-like dish made of ground meat and potatoes
- **Seafood** - Athens has some excellent fresh seafood dishes
- **Greek Salad** - A Classic Grecian dish with tomatoes and feta, perfect for a light lunch or snack
- **Gemista** - Stuffed vegetables

Restaurants to Try

- **Dipporto** - A rustic downtown restaurant with authentic Grecian dishes and wine poured straight from barrels in the restaurant.
- **Esperides** - Situated on a pedestrian street, good for an adult-only late-night meal.
- **Oliver Family House** - A lovely family-friendly spot with indoor and outdoor spaces, creative activities for kids, and a healthy, accessible menu.

How I Would Get Around the City: Metro, Buses, and Trolleybuses

The public transport system in Athens is cheap, reliable, and easy to use. The Metro consists of 3 lines and will get you around quickly.

The buses and trolleybuses cover most of the city and will give you and kids a little rest if you've spent too long on your feet.

The One Not-To-Be-Missed Highlight for First-Timers: The Acropolis

We've already mentioned the Acropolis twice in this guide, but it remains the ultimate attraction in the city. No matter who you're with, they are sure to find something to spark their imagination at this fascinating site. In fact, we'll go as far as to say that you've not fully experienced Athens until you've explored the Acropolis!

Estimated price: \$35 per person for a combination ticket, allowing you to skip the lines

The One Hidden Gem: Tilos

This little Greek island is a quick day trip from Athens. Kids and adults alike will love exploring the abandoned ghost town of Mikro Horio before heading out for some laidback time on the beach swimming, kayaking, and sunbathing.

What I Would Skip: The Parthenon

This may be a controversial opinion, but I would personally give the Parthenon a miss. While it's vital that you visit the Acropolis on any trip, going into the Parthenon isn't really essential. Sadly, the majority of the statues that were built for the Parthenon are now housed at the British Museum in London. The ruin is often covered in scaffolding and surrounded by eager tourists.

One Neighborhood I Would Explore: Anafiotika

While most people recommend the Plaka area, chances are, you'll spend plenty of time there anyway. The quiet Anafiotika is hidden away on the north side of the Acropolis and features plenty of tiny, twisty lanes, stunning architecture, and even some local cats dozing in the sun. Exploring this little known area feels like stepping onto a secluded Greek Island.

What Time of Year I Would Go: Summer

Yes, Athens gets pretty warm in the summer, but it's still the best time to visit. In the summer, you're guaranteed clear blue skies and the best sun-drenched views of the city.

The One Item I Would Take: Sunscreen and Cool Clothes

As you probably already know, Athens can get *hot*. Make sure you come prepared with sunscreen, hats, cool clothes, water bottles, and even portable fans and parasols if your kids are particularly susceptible to sunburns.