

PARSIFAL
YACHTING

KOS
itinerary



Kos island

Soaked in history and ruins, after a few hours wandering Kos town's fortress and the Asklepion (Hippocrates' ancient sanatorium), you become almost blasé at sidestepping millenia-old Corinthian columns gathering weeds at the roadside. Indeed the past and present converge magically on this island (the second-largest in the Dodecanese) of varied treasures: from vernal valleys and peacock-blue coves, to sylvan hillsides and rocky stretches – one moment you find yourself in a rustic mountain taverna the next in a busy cosmopolitan cafe. There really is something for everyone here.



Kos town

Scattered with ruins from the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine periods, this handsome, stylish town is a mix of the original old town – what remains of it after the 1933 earthquake, with its gauntlet of boutiques and close-knit tavernas – and modern streets and parks bursting with palms and bougainvillea. The town retains its dignity with a sedate pace and friendly locals. The harbour is especially pretty with the Castle of the Knights picturesquely perched at its centre, and like some coastal Amsterdam, everybody here gets about on bikes (there are bike lanes at every turn).



Castle of the Knights

Reach the once impregnable Castle of the Knights by crossing a bridge over Finikon from Plateia Platanou . The castle, which had massive outer walls and an inner keep, was built in the 14th century and separated from the town by a moat (now Finikon). Damaged by an earthquake in 1495 and restored in the 16th century, it was the knights' most stalwart defence against the encroaching Ottomans.



Ancient Agora

The ancient agora, with the ruins of the Shrine of Aphrodite and Temple of Hercules , is an open site south of the Castle of the Knights. A massive 3rd-century-BC stoa, with some reconstructed columns, stands on its western side.



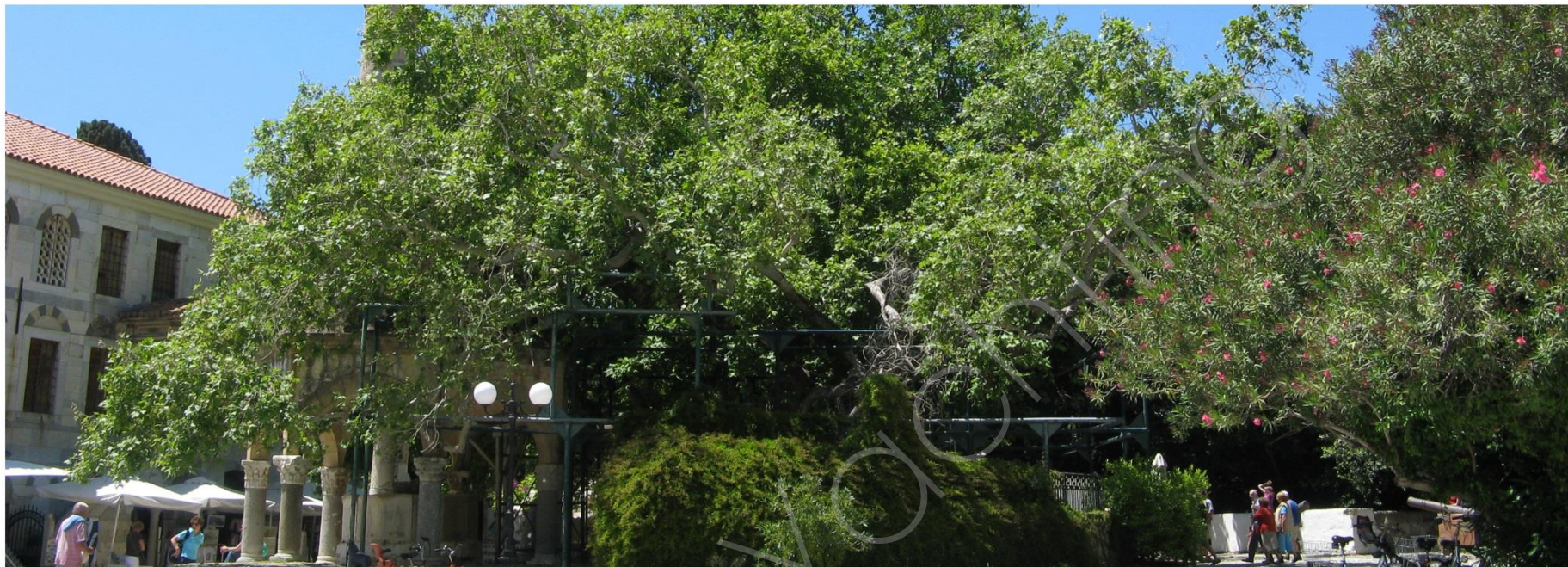
Mosque of Gazi Hassan Pasha

Beneath the Hippocrates Plane Tree is an old sarcophagus converted by the Turks into a fountain. Opposite the tree is the well-preserved 18th-century Mosque of Gazi Hassan Pasha, its ground-floor loggia now converted into souvenir shops.



Archaeological museum

There's a fine 3rd-century-AD mosaic in the vestibule of the archaeological museum. The most renowned statue is that of Hippocrates.



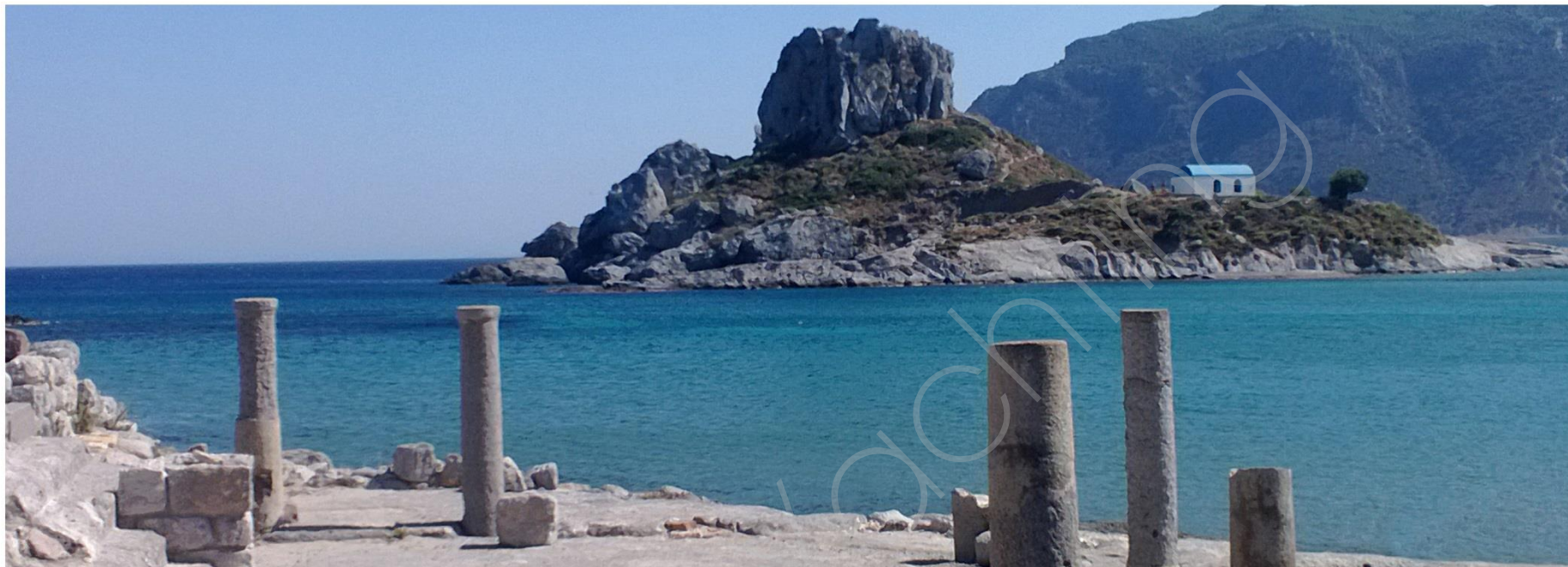
Hippocrates plane tree

North of the ancient agora is the lovely cobblestone Plateia Platanou, where you can pay your respects to the Hippocrates Plane Tree, under which Hippocrates is said to have taught his pupils. Plane trees don't usually live for more than 200 years, though in all fairness this is certainly one of Europe's oldest. This once-magnificent tree is held up with scaffolding, and looks to be in its death throes.



Asklepeion

On a pretty pine and olive grove-clad hill 4km southwest of Kos Town stand the extensive ruins of the renowned healing centre which taught the principles of Hippocrates' way. Doctors and healers come from all over the world to visit.



Kastri

Right opposite the beach of Kefalos, on the southern side of Kos island is the tiny Kastri islet. It is totally rocky and barren with little vegetation. Some remains of an old castle lie on top of this rocky islet that used to guard the bay from enemies and pirates. On the other side, there is a small chapel in blue and white colors dedicated to Saint Nicolas, the saint protector of sailormen. Kastri islet can be reached by boat or swimming from Kefalos beach.



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