

PARSIFAL  
YACHTING

# ITHACA

itinerary



## Ithaca island

Sheltered Ithaki dreams happily between Kefallonia and mainland Greece. The island is celebrated as the mythical home of Homer's Odysseus, where loyal wife Penelope waited patiently, besieged by unsavoury suitors, for Odysseus' much-delayed homecoming. This tranquil island is made up of two large bodies of land joined by a narrow isthmus. Sheer cliffs, precipitous, arid mountains and occasional olive groves gild this Ionian jewel. Diminutive villages (much rebuilt after the 1953 earthquake) and hidden coves with pebbly beaches add to the charm, while monasteries and churches offer Byzantine delights and splendid views.



## Vathy

Ithaki's laid-back main town sprawls along its elongated waterfront. The central square, Plateia Efstathiou Drakouli, buzzes with seafront traffic and cafes, and narrow lanes wriggle inland from the quay. Somewhat bedraggled, despite its gorgeous waters and surrounding mountains, Vathy is the only place on the island with nightclubs, banks, travel agencies and the like.



# Archaeological & Maritime-Folklore Museum

The archaeological museum contains excavation finds from Aetos, dating from the Geometric to the Roman period and a remarkable collection of finds dated to the Geometric period. The most important items of the exhibition are: The Ring-shaped vase. It has angular walls and is decorated with narrow bands on the sides of the ring, hatched triangles on the neck, and panels with diagonals on the handle. Dated to the end of the Late Geometric period. Votive inscription that mentions goddesses Athena and Hera. It was found at Polis Cave and dates from the Late Archaic period.

The collection of Maritime - Folklore Museum of Ithaca, founded in 1923, houses more than 1,500 exhibits, including old photographs, paintings of ships of ship-owners of Ithaca, nautical instruments and uniforms, documents and books of the Shipping commerce School Stathatos, which was established on the island in the early 20th century and was famous throughout Greece.



## Around Ithaca

Ithaki reaches back into the mythical past to claim several sites associated with Homer's 'Odyssey'. The Fountain of Arethousa, in the island's south, is where Odysseus' swineherd, Eumaeus, is believed to have brought his pigs to drink. The location of Odysseus' palace has been much disputed and archaeologists have been unable to find conclusive evidence; some present-day archaeologists speculate that it was on Pelikata Hill near Stavros, while German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann believed it to be at Alalkomenes, near Piso Aetos. Take a break from Homeric myth and head north from Vathy along a fabulously scenic mountain road to sleepy Anogi, the old capital. Its restored church of Agia Panagia (claimed to be from the 12th century) has incredible Byzantine frescoes and a Venetian bell tower. Obtain keys from the neighbouring kateneio. About 200m uphill, the small but evocative ruins of Old Anogi fill a rock-studded landscape.

Further north again, the inland village of Stavros. Visit its small, interesting archaeological museum, with local artefacts dating from 3000 BC to the Roman period. Driving north, make your way to the top of Exogi for panoramic views; on the way you'll pass the House of Homer archaeological dig, down a dirt road signposted on the right. A twisting road hugs the beautiful coastline to end at lovely Kioni, perhaps the island's most picturesque seafront village. It spills down a verdant hillside to a miniature harbour where yachts overnight and sailors fill the few tavernas and cafes.



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