

The island of Patmos, in the Aegean Sea, is the third most populous island in the Greek [Dodecanese Islands](#) and it is believed to be where St. John wrote the Book of Revelations in The Bible. It is a pretty island with good beaches and a number of historical sites and there are quite a few things to do on Patmos to keep any visitor enthralled.

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Unsurprisingly there are many religious festivals during the year and the island is very popular with pilgrims and religious tourism.

Its close proximity to Turkey and the other Dodecanese islands makes it the perfect place to base yourself to explore the entire region.

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## **When to visit Patmos**

As with many other islands in the Aegean Sea, the best time to visit Patmos is during summer. It's also this time of year, between June and September, that marks the height of the tourist season in Patmos. The weather is warm (around the late 20s and early 30s), with minimal rainfall and warm seas - ideal for days at the beach. Accommodation can be more booked up this time of year, however.

Between April and June, the weather is still mild and warm, but accommodation prices are higher and there are fewer crowds. This is the same for September and October, too.

**Best beach and swimming weather: June to September**

**Best sightseeing weather: March to June and September/October**

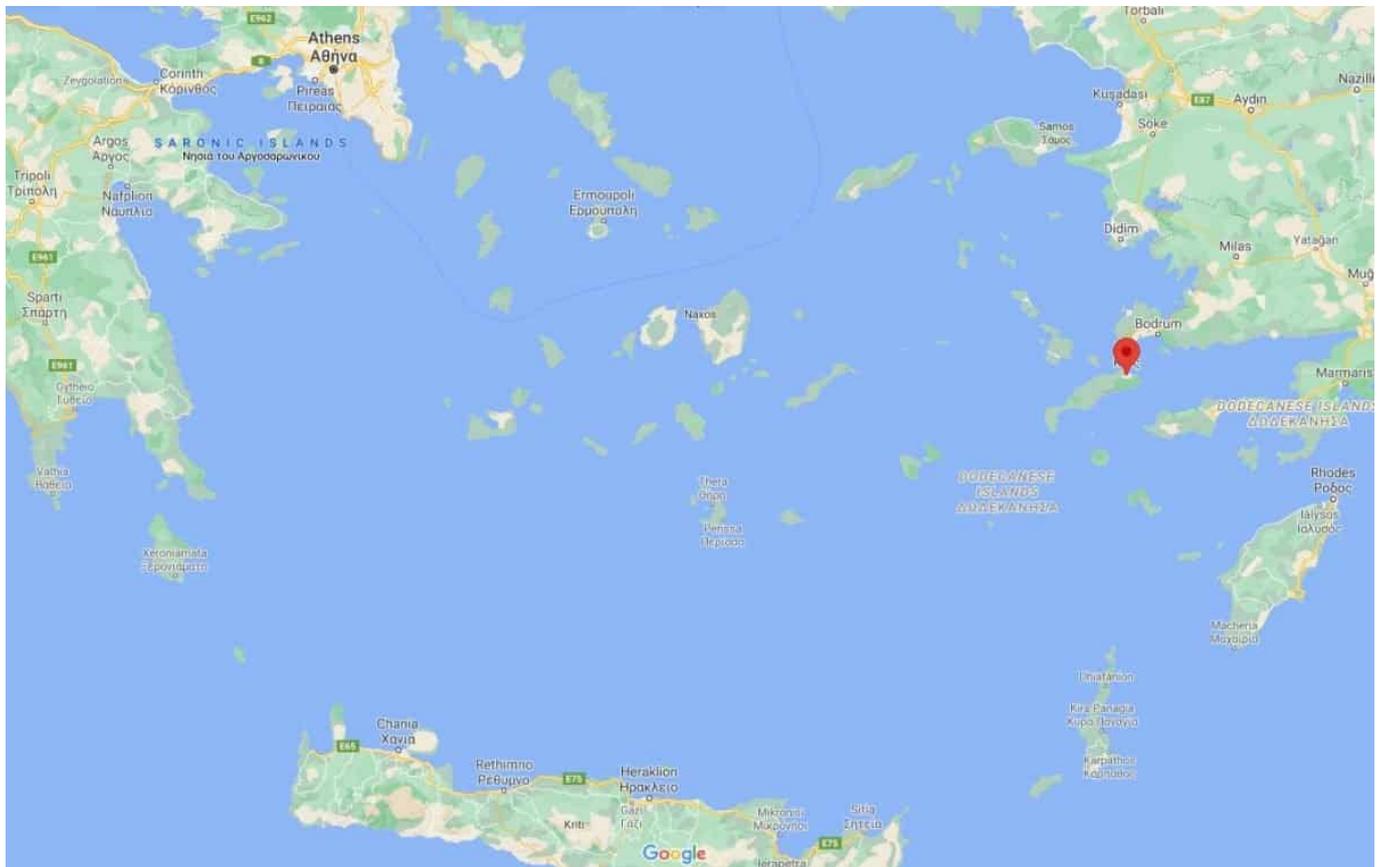


## **Where is Patmos?**

One of the Dodecanese Islands in the southeastern Aegean Sea, to its north is the island of Ikaria and to the south is Leros.

Surrounding the area of Patmos there are a smattering of other islets and islands, including Lipsi, Levitha and Fournoi. Not far from here are the more famous (and popular) islands of Naxos, Samos and Kos.

With a population of around 3,000 people, Patmos also has a few offshore islands of its own, including Marathos and Arkoi, as well as many uninhabited islets.



## How to get to Patmos

Lacking an airport - like many of the Greek islands - the only way to get to Patmos is by sea.

### Ferry to Patmos

There's a service from Piraeus (the port of Athens), but this runs only three times per week, which means it's not a regular connection; and, at eight hours in duration, it's a long journey. So if you're short on time, you may want to try another route.

Another option is to fly to one of the closest islands with an airport. [Kos](#), for example, has affordable, regular flights from Athens, as does Leros and [Naxos](#); from there, ferry services to Patmos are more regular (and quicker).

You can also fly directly to Kos or Rhodes from many European nations, making the

connection to Patmos that much smoother.

## Getting around Patmos

### By bike

Patmos is very hilly but it is still possible to explore parts of it by bike. There are also e-bikes and scooters for hire from [Billis rental](#) that make it easier.

### By bus

There are daily local bus routes on Patmos Island that connect the areas of Skala - Apokalipsis Cave - Chora - Grikos -Kambos. You can access the current timetable [HERE](#).

### Taxi ON Patmos

There are a number of taxis on the island. To contact them call

**International: +30 22470 31225**

**Calling in Greece: 22470 31225**

### Car and Scooter rental

Scooters, ATVs and cars can be hired from several places on the island. A small car is a great idea to see some of the more authentic parts of the island including the more remote and interior villages.

We use and recommended [RentalCars](#) for car hire or

Further reading : [Driving in Greece](#)





## Patmos Hotels and Houses

The official center of Patmos, Chora, may be home to one of the island's main draws (the Monastery of Saint John the Theologian), but it doesn't have a lot of accommodation options, or other amenities.

Generally, there's quite a lot of accommodation scattered across the sizeable island of Patmos, so there should be something to suit your travel type and budget - depending on how far you want to be from the main port, of course.

Skala is the most convenient place to base yourself when you're staying in Patmos. There are a variety of amenities, good connections with other islands, and a bus service that's easy to use, too.

[Skala Hotel](#) is a pretty low-rise established covered in flowering vines and only a 4-minute walk from the Port and 10-minutes from the nearest Beach. [Latmos 1860](#) is similarly positioned and has wonderful views over the Bay.

[Patmos Aktis Suites and Spa](#) is one of the most luxurious hotels on the island and is on the beachfront on Grikos Bay. [Porto Scourati](#) is also worth a look - not on the beach but high on the hill above Meloi Bay, it is popular with couples and has a great day spa as well.

If you are looking for a beautiful, self-contained Villa for your visit it's hard to beat [A Vision in White](#) that can sleep 8 people or [Make for the Hills](#) which has an incredible infinity pool and can sleep up to 14 people.



[A Villa in White](#)

## Patmos restaurants and food

Dining out in Patmos is mainly concentrated in the larger settlements of Chora and Skala, though you can still find some charming eateries scattered among the island's beaches and in smaller towns.

But wherever you are on the island, local squares are the places to go for food and drink. Usually, these hubs of community have at least one bar and/or restaurant to while away the evening in.

Much of the food to be found in Patmos is delicious and has a food scene that grew from its 16th-century role as a commercial port.

When wining and dining across the island, make sure to try the Patmos *tyropita* - an open-topped cheese pie stuffed with a combination of local cheeses. There's also *kalamaria* (stuffed squid) and the popular *poungi*, literally "purse", except this purse is pastry encasing honey or sugar.

If you're a fan of wine, make sure to sample local wine - *fokiano*, a sweet red made on the island; and *moschato*, a white wine. It's quite rare to come across it nowadays, but if you're offered it, don't turn it down!







**credit@Pleiades Bar Restaurant Patmos**

## **Things to do on Patmos**

Known as the “Sacred Island”, Patmos is known for its Christian connections and attracts pilgrims and other tourists from across the world.

Aside from its biggest attractions, however, there is plenty more that makes Patmos an enticing place to spend a vacation. With some stunning beaches, rugged scenery, and traditional towns to discover, Patmos is waiting to be discovered.

Here are the best things to do on the island:

## Patmos Beaches

The first beach you're likely to encounter on Patmos is **Skala Beach**. Around four kilometres to the north of Chora, this buzzing beach is a popular place to spend the day. Offering up all of the usual beach amenities you'd expect - sunbeds, umbrellas, etc. - the water here is clear, clean, and there's shade from nearby trees too.

**Petra Beach** is another popular spot. Dominated by a large and usual rock formation (hence the name), the beach has sunbeds, an eatery, umbrellas, and some shady spots to relax under. If you feel like exploring, nearby you'll find the pebbly **Plaki Beach**, with many coves and other little beaches to check out.

Elsewhere, there's **Psiliamos Beach**. Known for its fine white sand, which is unusual for Patmos, it's set in a pretty cove with a horseshoe-shaped shoreline. Less busy than other beaches in high season, it's not easy to reach by public transport and is best reached via your own wheels (or hop on a boat from Skala).

Another secluded beach is **Agios Nikolaos Beach**. It takes its name from the church that overlooks the sea. The water here is clear and laps a stony shoreline; don't expect many facilities but do expect a relaxed atmosphere.

For more seclusion, try the calm **Diakofti Beach**. It's quiet and unspoilt, located in a bay backed by the village of Diakofti itself - there are a couple of food stands too.

One of the most popular beaches, particularly in the summer, is **Geranou Beach**. This long stretch of pebbly sand has clean, clear water, and lots of shady spots to unwind. It's protected from strong summer winds and is a natural spot to soak up some sun. Also, nearby is a local taverna where you can enjoy freshly caught fish for lunch.



**Agriolivadi Beach**



**Scala Beach**

## **Monuments and museums of Patmos**

### **Monastery of Saint John the Theologian**

One of the main attractions on Patmos is the fortress-like Monastery of Saint John the Theologian. Standing on the highest part of Chora, you can see this marvel from miles around.

Founded in 1088, this Greek Orthodox monastery is actually a UNESCO World Heritage Site, named after Saint John - disciple of Jesus and author of the Book of Revelation.

Due to its famed namesake and its long history, the monastery is probably one of the first places people visit on their trip to Patmos. It's a striking sight - dark stone ramparts rising up above the blocky white houses below.

Once inside, there's a beautiful courtyard, where there's a well containing holy water; a museum where you can learn more about the history of the building; and the monastery itself, decorated with eye-catching frescoes.

### **Cave of Apocalypse**

This is the main attraction on Patmos and one of the most important in Greece.

Saint John was originally exiled to Patmos by Roman emperor Domitian, and it is in this cave that he received the visions that he later wrote down as the Book of Revelation.

The Cave of Apocalypse is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and is a place of pilgrimage for Christians. Located on the side of a mountain between Chora and Skala, there's an awe-inspiring atmosphere in the cave which is almost like a church itself.

There are mosaics, a rock that John is said to have used as a pillow, an altar, and various paintings and tapestries. Guides are available - and recommended if you want to learn more about the meaning of the place. However, it's also pleasant to sit inside and reflect.

## **Museums of Patmos**

### **Ecclesiastical Museum**

Located in the grounds of the monastery, this museum may be small, but it has an interesting selection of artefacts that tell the religious history of Patmos. There's an archive of Byzantine documents, so you can see archives related to the founding of the monastery, as well as other ancient books.

You'll also see priest vestments, manuscripts, and other items related to Byzantine Christian ceremonies.

### **Kapopoulos Fine Arts Gallery**

With all that beautiful scenery, it's no wonder that an art gallery has been set up on the

island. Founded in 2015, the gallery plays host to colorful works by Greek artists and is a lovely place for art lovers to browse. It's situated in central Chora.

### **Patmos Folklore Museum**

To see a slice of less ancient history in Patmos, pay a visit to the Folklore Museum. The museum itself is situated in a 17th-century mansion once owned by the wealthy Simantiri family in Chora and plays host to various items that have been used between the 14th and 19th centuries on Patmos.

There's a rich variety of objects on display, including family heirlooms, Russian-style icons, paintings, photographs, and antique furniture. It's small, but it's an interesting glimpse into a more isolated time on Patmos, well before the days of tourism.

## **Nature and outdoors**

### **Nearby islands and islets**

The island of Patmos is surrounded by picturesque islets and other islands that are perfect for day trips. These islands boast beautiful beaches and pristine ecosystems and are only accessible by boat (from Skala).

With no roads to speak of, these islands can only be explored on foot - so bring some sturdy hiking boots. Arki, for example, has a lovely hike along the coast, but it also has some great spots for diving, too.

### **The windmills**

Photographers take note - located in Chora overlooking the Aegean Sea are three windmills. Two of these date back to 1588, while the other dates back to 1863.

These windmills were once used to grind wheat to make flour but fell into disrepair around the 1950s. Sadly left to the elements for many years, they were refurbished in 2009 and are now a firm fixture of Patmos' landscape.

### **Hiking**

Hiking around Patmos is one of the best ways to see this island's stunning scenery. There are a variety of hiking routes on which you can explore the islands, including pathways that lead through historic parts of town, trails that lead to hidden beaches, and others leading to charming chapels.

The most demanding of these hikes leaves from Diakofti, in the south, and runs all the way to Psilimos - one of the most remote beaches on the island - along paths used by shepherds.

There are other shorter hikes, however, such as the mile-long trail that runs between Skala and Chora (taking only around 40 minutes). Or you could take the trail that ruins for a mile and a half from Chora to the Chapel of the Annunciation.

### **Scuba diving**

If you're a keen lover of the underwater world, then you'll love scuba diving in Patmos. In particular, divers often head to the Arki group of islands in the north.

Part of a wildlife refuge, there are 14 islets here, each with multiple dive spots. There is an abundance of marine life to discover - the area is known for its crystal clear waters, which makes for good visibility. It's a great spot even if you're just a beginner!





**Inside the Monastery of St. John the Theologian**

## **Events on Patmos**

### **Religious Events**

One of the most important festivals is the **Dormition of the Virgin**. Taking place on 15th August, this event is often referred to as the “Easter of the Summer”.

The most festive happenings usually occur near the Monastery of Panagia Geranou, with a procession that sets out in the morning from the Church of Megali Panagia.

**The Feast of Saint John**, taking place on the 26th of September at the Cave of Apocalypse, sees worshippers arriving to honor Saint John. This also takes place again on 8th May, with all-night vigils and celebrations in Chora.

**Carnival** celebrations take place in Skala and Kambos, specifically on the Sunday before Lent. On Monday, people in Lenten food – pickled octopus, for example – and kites are flown in the sky to mark the beginning of the season.

## **Other Events**

Film buffs should make sure they are on the island for **The International Film Festival of Patmos**. Under the tagline of “Understanding the world through film”, this has been taking place 23rd to 29th July since 2010.

Meanwhile, **The Festival of Taste and Tradition** is a firm favorite of foodies. Falling on the last weekend of June each year, the festival aims to highlight the local traditions surrounding food and promote Patmos’ own food scene.

Being a famed pilgrimage spot, the **Festival of Religious Music of Patmos** is a must. This summer event sees a variety of artists performing at unique locations across the island, making for a unique ambiance.

There’s also the **Festival of Folklore Dances**. Taking place in the second weekend of September, various dance troupes from across the region come to Patmos to revive and preserve dancing traditions of the Greek islands – expect costumes, traditional instruments, and dancing, of course!



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### The island of St.John



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