

Samos

North Aegean · Greece

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Samos is a green Aegean island, only a few kilometres from the Turkish coast. Pine forests, vineyards and olive groves cover its mountains, and quiet beaches line the coast. It suits travelers who want sea, hiking and ancient history without the crowds of the bigger Greek islands.

The island is the birthplace of the philosopher *Pythagoras*, and of the thinker *Epicurus*. Its ancient sites, Pythagoreion and the Heraion, form one UNESCO World Heritage site. It is also known for sweet Muscat wine, and for villages built on steep hillsides.

When to visit

Late May to early October is the best time for beaches and swimming. July and August are hot and dry, and strong north winds (the meltemi) are common. June and September are warm and less busy. In spring, the hills are green and good for walking.

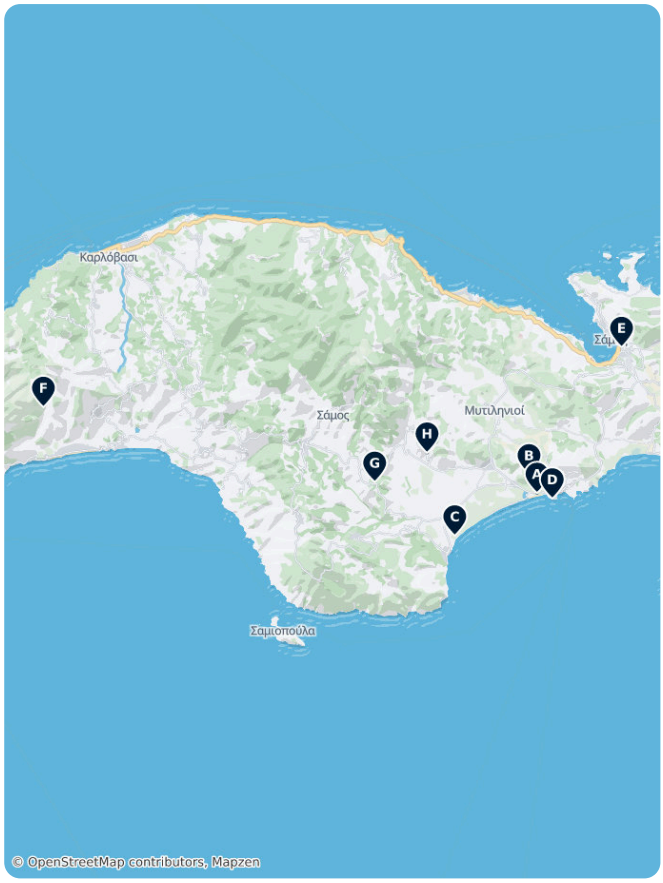
Winter is mild but wet. Many hotels, restaurants and boat trips close from November to April, and ferries run less often.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Fair Fair for hiking	13° / 17° Feels like 8°	10° / 4°	14 rainy days · Dry air
February	Good Good for hiking	14° / 17° Feels like 8°	10° / 4°	12 rainy days · Dry air
March	Great Great for hiking	15° / 19° Feels like 10°	11° / 6°	Dry air
April	Great Great for hiking	18° / 21° Feels like 14°	14° / 10°	Dry air
May	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 25°	18° / 15°	23 sunny days
June	Great Great for the beach	26° / 30°	22° / 19°	28 sunny days · Humid air · UV 9 (Very high)
July	Great Great for the beach	28° / 31°	24° / 22°	31 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · UV 10 (Very high)
August	Great Great for the beach	29° / 31°	24° / 22°	30 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · UV 9 (Very high)
September	Great Great for the beach	26° / 29°	22° / 19°	26 sunny days · Humid air
October	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 25°	18° / 14°	21 sunny days
November	Good Good for sightseeing	18° / 22° Feels like 15°	15° / 10°	Dry air
December	Fair Fair for hiking	15° / 19° Feels like 10°	12° / 7°	14 rainy days · Dry air

Best months: May, June, July, August, September, October

Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

Top sights



- A Pythagoreion is the ancient harbour town on the south-east coast. It was the island's capital in the 6th century BC, and parts of its walls and harbour still stand. Today the modern village of the same name has a pleasant waterfront.
- B Eupalinos Tunnel is a water tunnel of about one kilometre, dug through a hill in the 6th century BC. Workers dug from both ends and met in the middle. Parts of it are open to visitors. It is closed on Tuesdays, so check opening days before you go.
- C Heraion of Samos was the island's great sanctuary of the goddess Hera. One tall column still stands in the marshy site, which is a short drive from Pythagoreio.
- D Castle of Pythagorio is a stone tower above the harbour of Pythagoreio. It dates from the Greek War of Independence and gives a good view of the bay.
- E Archaeological Museum of Vathy is in the main town. Its best-known piece is a very large ancient statue of a young man (a kouros), found at the Heraion.
- F The Real Pythagoras Cave is a cave on the slopes of Mount Kerkis. Legend says *Pythagoras* hid here. It is reached on foot along a path, so wear sturdy shoes.
- G Megali Panagia Monastery and H Moni Timiou Stavrou are monasteries in the hills. Dress modestly when you visit.

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What to experience

- **Wine tasting**: Taste Muscat wine at a local winery or cooperative. The sweet wine comes from Muscat grapes grown on terraced mountain vineyards.
- **Boat day trip**: Take a summer boat from Pythagoreio to the small islands and beaches offshore.
- **Walk to the Potami waterfalls**: A forest path near Karlovasi leads to waterfalls and pools. The water is lowest in late summer.
- **Village feast (panigiri)**: In summer, many villages hold an evening feast for a saint's day. There is food, music and dancing. Ask locally for dates.
- **Hike on Mount Kerkis**: This is the highest peak on the island. Start early, because summer afternoons are hot.

Day trips

Samos is an island, so every day trip needs a boat. Check the timetable first, because service is limited outside summer.

- **Kusadasi and Ephesus, Turkey**: about 1 to 1.5 hours by ferry, with daytime sailings only and fewer from October to May. Ephesus is a large, well-preserved Roman city a short drive from Kusadasi. Take your passport.
- **Patmos**: ferries run from Pythagoreio and Karlovasi, but not daily, so check the timetable before planning a day trip. The Cave of the Apocalypse and the hilltop monastery are UNESCO-listed.
- Ⓐ Ikaria lies to the south-west. It is a quiet place with hot springs and a relaxed way of life. Ferries take 1 to 3 hours and run only a few days a week, so an overnight stay is often easier.



Where to explore

Samos is part of the North Aegean region. The closest island destination with its own guide is Ikaria, which lies to the south-west.

Getting there

- **By air**: Samos International Airport (SMI) is on the south coast, near Pythagoreio. Flights from Athens take about an hour. In summer there are also charter and seasonal flights from other European cities. Taxis and rental cars are the main way to reach your hotel.
- **By ferry**: Ferries from Piraeus (Athens) take roughly 9 to 13 hours, depending on the ship and port, and run less often in winter. The main ports are Vathy (the main town, north-east) and Karlovasi (north-west). Pythagoreio is a smaller port with seasonal links.
- **From Turkey**: Seasonal ferries run to Kusadasi from Vathy and Pythagoreio.
- **Between islands**: Ferries connect Samos to Ikaria, Patmos and other Aegean islands. Timetables change by season.

Getting around

- **Car**: A rental car is the easiest way to see the island. Book ahead in July and August.
- **Bus**: Public buses link the main towns and some beaches. They run less often in winter and at weekends, so check timetables.
- **Taxi**: Taxis are useful for airport transfers and for trips to villages that have no bus. Agree the price before you start.
- **Scooter**: Scooters and small cars are common rentals, but mountain roads are narrow and steep.
- **On foot**: Pythagoreio and Vathy are easy to explore on foot. Distances between towns are too long to walk.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Low

Pythagoreio and Vathy are easy to walk, but the island is spread out and hilly.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Low

Roads are steep and winding, with little cycling infrastructure.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?** Yes. Beaches, villages and monasteries are far apart, and buses are limited.
- **Roads**: Mountain roads are narrow with many bends. Drive slowly and watch for goats.
- **Parking**: Parking is easy outside towns. In Pythagoreio and Vathy, use the car parks near the harbour in summer.

Food & drink

Samos is known for sweet Muscat wine, olive oil and honey. Fish and grilled meats are on most taverna menus. Many dishes use herbs and vegetables from local gardens.

For eating, go to the harbour front in Pythagoreio and Vathy. Also try the village squares in the hills. They serve simple local food at fair prices.

What to eat & drink

LUNCH

Dolmades · Ντολμάδες
Vine leaves stuffed with rice and herbs, sometimes with minced meat, served warm or cold.

Greek Salad · Χωριάτικη σαλάτα
Tomato, cucumber, onion, olives, and a block of feta cheese, dressed with olive oil.

DINNER

Moussaka · Μουσακάς
A baked layered dish of eggplant, potato, and minced meat topped with béchamel sauce.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Souvlaki · Σουβλάκι
Grilled skewered meat, often served in a pita wrap with tomato, onion, and tzatziki.

Gyros · Γύρος
Spit-roasted meat sliced and wrapped in pita with fries, tomato, onion, and tzatziki.

Spanakopita · Σπανακόπιτα
A savory pastry filled with spinach and feta cheese, wrapped in flaky phyllo dough.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Baklava · Μπακλαβάς
Layers of phyllo pastry filled with chopped nuts and soaked in honey syrup.

DRINKS

Greek Coffee · Ελληνικός καφές
Thick, unfiltered coffee traditionally served in a small cup, often with a glass of water.

Ouzo · Ούζο
An anise-flavored aperitif, usually served with ice and small plates (mezedes).

Retsina · Ρετσίνα
A distinctive resin-flavored white wine, a Greek tradition dating back centuries.

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Safety & health

Samos is very safe for visitors. Petty crime is rare. Use normal care with bags in busy ports in summer.

- **Heat and sun**: Summer is hot. Use sunscreen, and drink plenty of water.
- **Wildfires**: Dry summers bring a risk of forest fires. Follow local alerts, and never light fires outdoors.
- **Wind and ferries**: Strong summer winds can delay or cancel ferries. Keep a spare day before a flight home.
- **Water**: Tap water is generally drinkable, but many visitors prefer bottled water for taste. Avoid water from rivers and unfamiliar countryside sources.
- **Medical care**: A hospital is in Vathy. Serious cases may need transfer to Athens.

History

Samos was one of the richest Greek city-states in the 6th century BC. Under the ruler *Polycrates* (about 540 to 522 BC), Samos gained a great harbour, the huge temple of Hera at Heraion of Samos and the water tunnel at Eupalinos Tunnel. You can see the remains of all three today at Pythagoreion and nearby.

The island gave the world several famous thinkers. *Pythagoras* was born here around 570 BC. *Epicurus* was born here in 341 BC, and *Aristarchus* proposed that the Earth moves around the Sun.

Later, Samos came under Ottoman rule. In the 19th century it became a self-governing principality. It joined Greece in 1912.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Greece at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



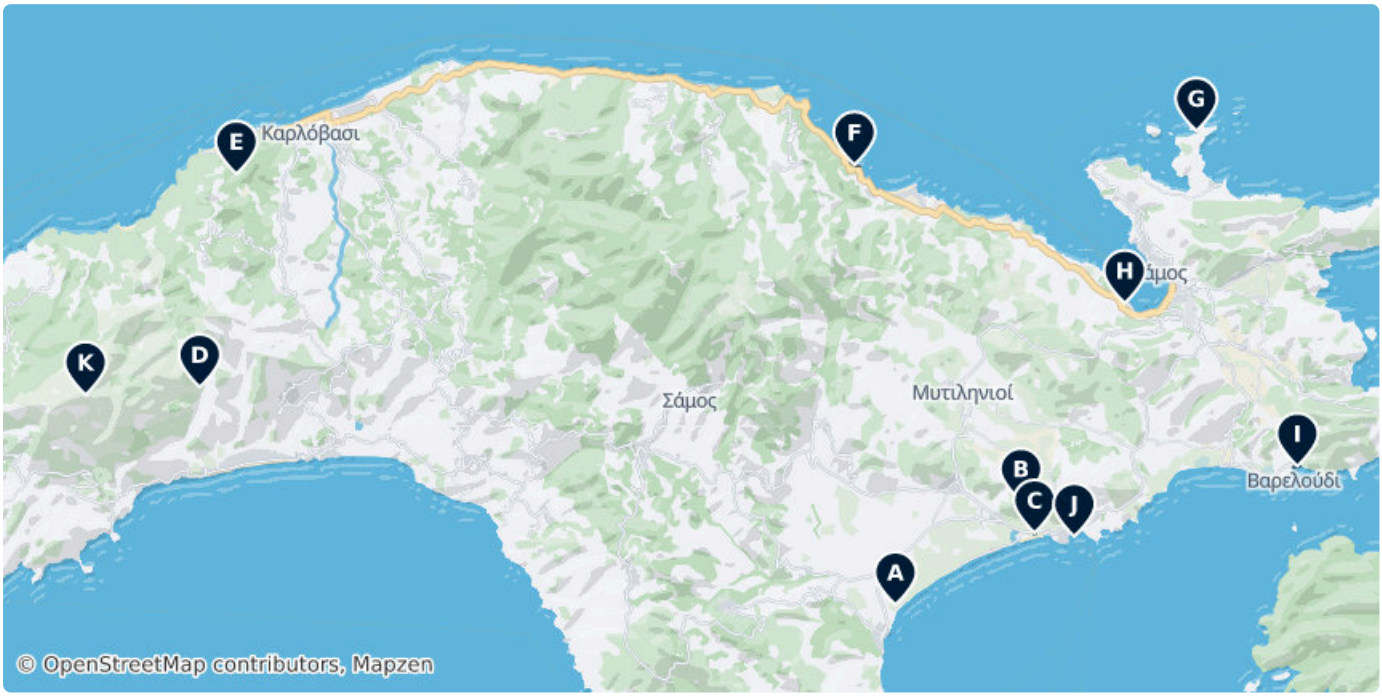
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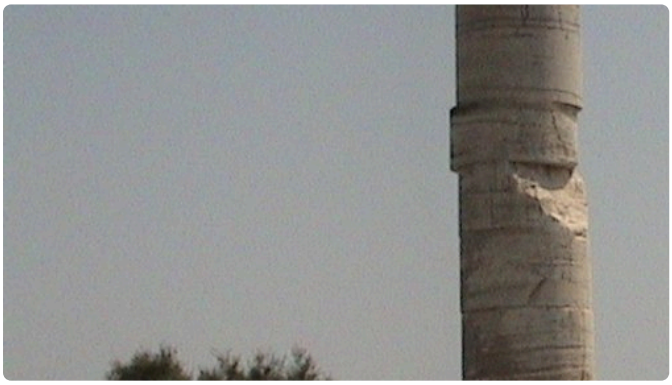
LANGUAGES
Greek

TAP WATER
Use caution

Samos Essentials

Samos features UNESCO World Heritage sites including the 6th-century BC Tunnel of Eupalinos and the Heraion sanctuary. The island's history is tied to the mathematician Pythagoras, whose legacy is preserved at a cave on Mount Kerkis and a harbor-side monument. Natural highlights range from the Potami waterfalls to the high peak of Mount Kerkis. Coastal areas offer diverse terrains, from the pebbled shores of Tsamadou to the shallow sands of Psili Amos, while the island's viticulture is showcased at the Samos Wine Museum.





A Heraion

The Heraion of Samos was a large sanctuary to the goddess Hera, on the island of Samos, Greece, 6 km southwest of the ancient city of Samos.

83103, Greece (37.67212, 26.88651)



B Tunnel of Eupalinos

The Tunnel of Eupalinos or Eupalinian aqueduct is a tunnel of 1,036 m length running through Mount Kastro in Samos, Greece, built in the...

83103, Greece (37.69885, 26.92754)



C Pythagoreion

Pythagoreio is a town and municipal unit on the island of Samos, North Aegean, Greece.

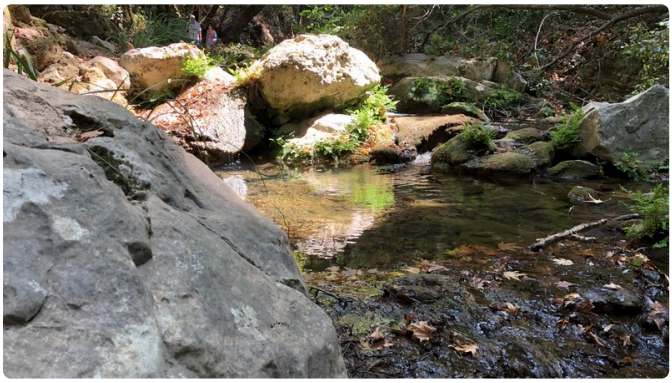
Πυθαγορείου-Χώρας, 83103, Greece (37.69075, 26.93194)



D Pythagoras Cave

Located on the eastern slopes of Mount Kerkis, this natural cave is where the mathematician Pythagoras reportedly sought refuge from the tyrant Polycrates. The site includes two small chapels, Saint John the Theologian and Panagia Sarandaskaliotissa.

Votsalakia, 831 02 Municipal Unit of Marathokabos, Greece (37.72835, 26.65934)



E Potami Waterfalls

Situated near Karlovasi, these falls are reached via a forest path and a swim through a narrow canyon. The area features a series of small cascades and the 19th-century church of Metamorphosis located near the trail entrance.

83200, Greece (37.78335, 26.67132)

F Tsamadou

A pebble beach on the northern coast near Kokkari, known for its turquoise waters and steep surrounding cliffs. It is one of the few locations on the island with a designated area for nudism.

83100, Greece (37.78573, 26.87316)

samos-beaches.com/tsamadou.htm



G Livadaki

A secluded bay on the northeastern peninsula characterized by shallow, calm waters and fine sand. The beach is situated at the end of a dirt road and features a narrow, fjord-like entrance.

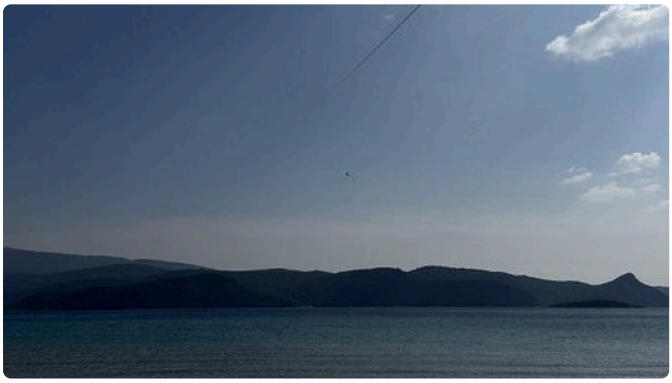
83100, Greece (37.79449, 26.98478)

H Samos Wine Museum

Housed in a 19th-century stone building in Malagari, this museum details the production of Samos Muscat wine. Exhibits include traditional winemaking tools, large wooden vats, and historical documentation of the island's winemaking cooperatives.

Σάμου-Καρλοβάσου, 83100, Greece (37.75005, 26.96143)

Mo–Su 09:00–18:00



I Psili Amos

A shallow, sandy beach located on the southeastern coast, only 1.2 kilometers from the Turkish mainland. The name translates to "Fine Sand," reflecting the shore's texture, which is rare for the island's predominantly pebbly coastline.

Ψιλή Άμμος 83100, Greece (37.70799, 27.01776)



J Pythagoras Statue

A bronze monument located on the pier of Pythagoreio harbor. Created by sculptor Nikolaos Ikaris, the artwork depicts the philosopher forming a right-angled triangle, representing the Pythagorean theorem.

Pythagorio, 831 03 Municipal Unit of Pythagoreio, Greece (37.68980, 26.94493)



Kerkis

Kerkis or Kerketeus is a mountain, forming the bulk of the western part of the Greek island of Samos.

83200, Greece (37.72637, 26.62206)

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