

Thessaloniki Municipality

Central Macedonia · Greece

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Thessaloniki is Greece's second city, built along a curving bay at the foot of low hills in northern Greece. Unlike Athens, it feels lived-in rather than monument-heavy: locals fill the seafront promenade every evening, and university students keep the café and bar scene going late into the night. The city has been layered by Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman, and Sephardic Jewish history, and that mix still shows in its churches, mosques, and street names.

It suits travelers who want a real Greek city rather than a postcard island — good food, a walkable historic core, and enough ancient and Byzantine sites to fill two or three days without ever feeling rushed. The philosopher *Aristotle* is the city's most famous namesake (its central square and university both carry his name), and the city itself was founded in 315 BC and named for Alexander the Great's half-sister, Thessalonike.

When to visit

Spring (April–May) and autumn (September–October) are mild and comfortable for walking. Summer gets hot and humid with little rain, while winter is cool and damp rather than snowy. The Thessaloniki International Film Festival, held every November, fills the city's cinemas and cafés with premieres and is one of the biggest film events in southeastern Europe — worth timing a trip around if you enjoy cinema.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor	9° / 15° Feels like 6°	3° / -3°	Dry air · Calm winds
February	Fair	11° / 17°	4° / -2°	Dry air · Calm winds
March	Fair	14° / 20°	6° / 1°	Dry air · Calm winds
April	Great	18° / 23°	11° / 6°	Dry air · Calm winds
May	Great	23° / 28°	16° / 12°	Calm winds
June	Good	28° / 33°	20° / 16°	Humid air · Calm winds
July	Good	31° / 35°	23° / 19°	24 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · Calm winds · UV 8 (Very high)
August	Good	30° / 35°	23° / 20°	23 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · Calm winds
September	Great	26° / 31°	19° / 14°	Humid air · Calm winds
October	Great	20° / 26°	14° / 8°	Dry air · Calm winds
November	Good	16° / 21°	9° / 3°	Dry air · Calm winds
December	Fair	11° / 16°	4° / -1°	Dry air · Calm winds

Best months: April, May, September, October

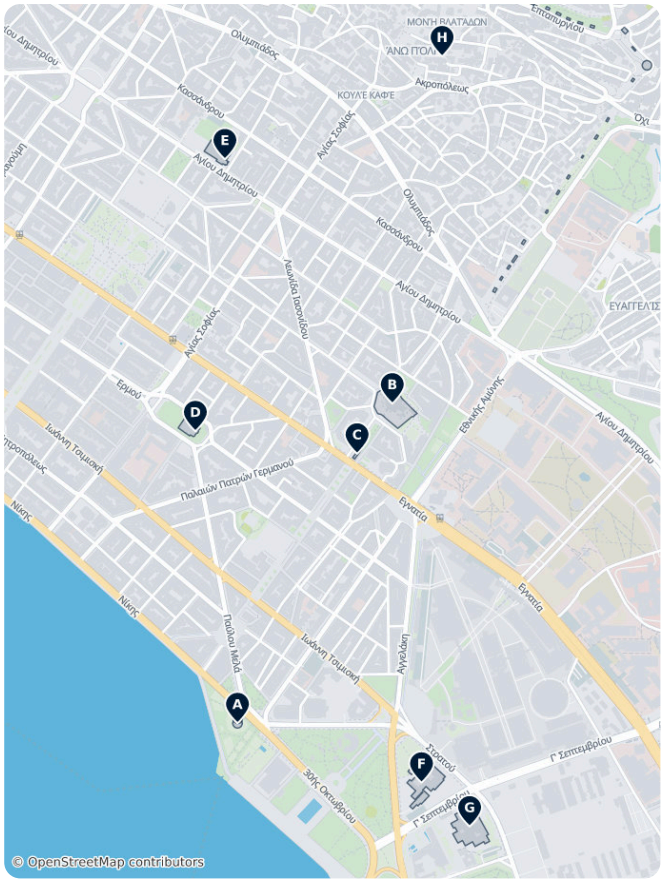
Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

June through August brings the muggiest, stickiest heat; the shoulder months trade a few degrees for far more comfortable evenings on the waterfront.

Top sights

Thessaloniki's sights span more than two thousand years, and most of the essential ones sit within easy walking distance of each other along or above the waterfront.

- A White Tower of Thessaloniki is the city's best-known symbol, an Ottoman-era fortified tower on the waterfront with a museum on the city's history inside and views over the bay from the top.
- B Rotunda started as a Roman mausoleum, became a church, then a mosque, and is now a UNESCO-listed monument with rare early Christian mosaics still visible inside its dome.
- C Arch of Galerius is a Roman triumphal arch built to celebrate a military victory, decorated with carved reliefs that are still legible after 1,700 years.
- D Hagia Sophia is one of the oldest churches in the city still in continuous use, with Byzantine mosaics dating back to the 9th century.
- E Church of Saint Demetrios honors the city's patron saint and stands over what is believed to be his martyrdom site, with a crypt open to visitors below the main church.
- F Archaeological Museum Thessaloniki holds finds from Macedonian tombs and settlements across the region, including gold jewelry from the era of Philip II and Alexander the Great.
- G Museum of Byzantine Culture covers the Byzantine period in more depth, with well-preserved textiles, icons, and everyday objects displayed across several eras.
- H Byzantine Walls mark the edge of the old upper town, Ano Poli, and are one of the best-preserved stretches of city wall left from the Byzantine era.



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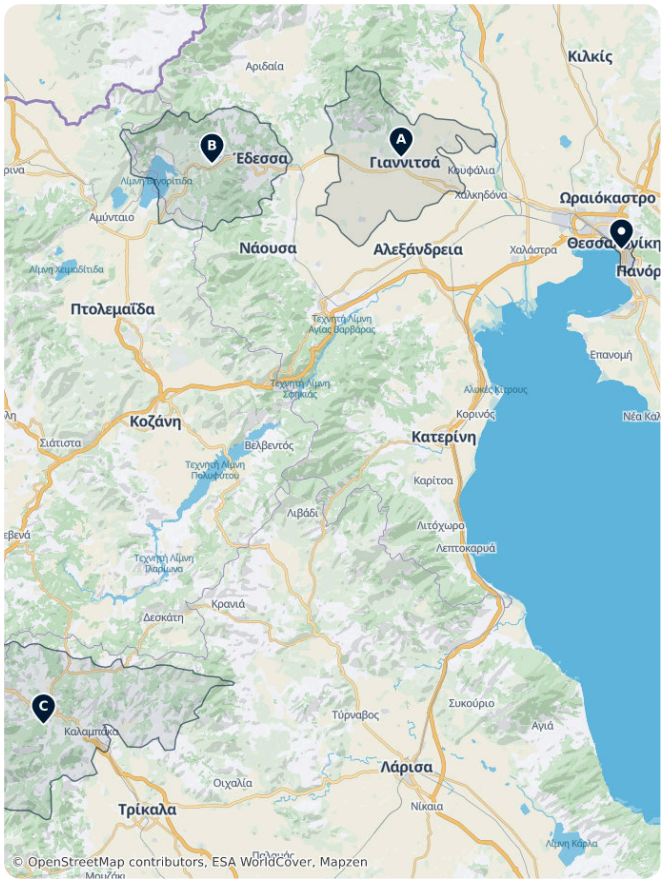
What to experience

A few things define a visit here beyond sightseeing:

- Walk or cycle the length of the seafront promenade at sunset, ending at Umbrellas, a spot locals treat as an evening ritual rather than a tourist stop.
- Climb up into Ano Poli to Trigonio Tower for the best panoramic view over the rooftops and the bay, especially near dusk.
- Browse the produce and spice stalls at Modiano Market, a working covered market that has operated in the same spot since the early 20th century.

Day trips

Thessaloniki sits close to some of Greece's most important ancient sites, as well as beaches and wine country, making it a good base for day trips.



- A Pella — about 45 minutes by car or bus, this was the ancient capital of Macedon and the birthplace of Alexander the Great; its excavated palace grounds and mosaic floors are worth the short trip.
- **Kassandra peninsula (Halkidiki)** — roughly an hour by car, the closest of the three Halkidiki "fingers" has sandy beaches and pine forest right down to the water, an easy half-day or full-day escape.
- **Vergina** — about an hour by car, home to the Royal Tombs of Aigai, a UNESCO World Heritage site where the tomb of Philip II of Macedon was found intact with its treasures.
- B Edessa — about 1.5 hours by car or train, a hill town known for waterfalls that drop right through the town center, best seen after spring rains.
- C Meteora — around 2.5–3 hours each way, so best treated as a long full day or an overnight; the cliff-top monasteries are one of Greece's most striking sights and justify the distance.

Where to explore

Thessaloniki's home region stretches from the coast to inland lakes and mountains, giving easy access to very different landscapes.

- Chalkidiki is the beach region most Thessaloniki locals head to on weekends — three separate peninsulas with everything from lively resort towns to quiet pine-backed coves.
- Heading inland instead, Serres is the gateway to Lake Kerkini, a wetland reserve known for pelicans, water buffalo, and birdwatching boat trips.

Getting there

- **By air**: Thessaloniki Airport "Makedonia" (SKG) has scheduled international and domestic flights and sits about 16 km southeast of the center; a public bus (route 78 or 78N) reaches downtown in roughly 40–50 minutes, or a taxi takes about 25 minutes.
- **By train**: Thessaloniki's main railway station connects to Athens by intercity and high-speed trains (around 4–4.5 hours); a seasonal overnight sleeper runs to Belgrade in summer, and a bus now covers the Sofia route since the direct train was suspended.
- **By bus**: The city's long-distance KTEL bus terminal has frequent coach connections to Athens, and to towns across northern Greece.

Getting around

- **Public transit**: A bus network (OASTH) covers the whole city, and a metro line opened in 2024 running from the New Railway Station through downtown. Both accept contactless bank card or phone payment directly at the validator, so there is no need to plan ahead for tickets. See the OASTH site for routes.
- **Taxi**: Metered taxis are common and easy to hail on the street in the center.
- **On foot / cycling**: The waterfront and the historic core below Ano Poli are flat and easy to explore on foot; a bike path runs the length of the seafront promenade, though the old town's hilly, cobbled streets are better done on foot than by bike.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

High

The waterfront and the lower historic core are flat and compact; only the steep lanes of Ano Poli require a bit more effort.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

A dedicated bike path runs the length of the seafront promenade, but the old town's narrow, hilly streets are better explored on foot.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?**: Skip it for the city itself — the center is compact and walkable, and parking is limited. A car becomes useful once you want to explore Halkidiki's beaches or inland towns at your own pace.
- **Parking**: Paid street parking (pay-and-display) covers most central streets, plus a handful of multi-story car parks near the port and Aristotelous Square; expect higher demand and enforcement on weekdays.
- **Restrictions**: A limited pedestrian and restricted-traffic zone covers parts of the historic center and Ladadika district, so check signage before driving in.

Food & drink

Thessaloniki has a reputation as Greece's food capital, shaped by refugee cooks who arrived from Asia Minor in the 1920s and brought spiced, Ottoman-influenced dishes with them. Look for *bougatsa* (a custard or cheese-filled pastry, usually eaten for breakfast), *trigona Panoramatos* (syrup-soaked pastry triangles), and street-food staples like *koulouri* (sesame bread rings) sold from carts everywhere.

For a concentrated area to eat and drink, head to the Ladadika district near the port, a former warehouse quarter now packed with tavernas, or the streets around Modiano Market for cheap, casual meze bars.

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

Thessaloniki is a safe city for tourists by international standards; violent crime against visitors is rare. The main risks are pickpocketing on crowded buses and around the main squares and nightlife areas, so keep bags zipped and phones out of back pockets. Tap water is safe to drink throughout the city.

History

Thessaloniki was founded in 315 BC by a Macedonian king who named it after his wife, Alexander the Great's half-sister. It grew into one of the Byzantine Empire's most important cities, second only to Constantinople, which is why its churches — including Hagia Sophia and Church of Saint Demetrios — carry some of the finest surviving Byzantine mosaics anywhere.

Under Ottoman rule from 1430 to 1912, the city became home to one of the largest Sephardic Jewish communities in Europe, expelled from Spain in 1492 and welcomed here; before the Second World War, Jewish residents made up close to half the population. Most of that community was deported and murdered during the Nazi occupation, a history now marked around the city with memorials. The Arch of Galerius and the Roman-era ruins nearby are reminders of an even older layer, when the city was a key stop on the Roman road connecting Byzantium to the Adriatic.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Greece at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY

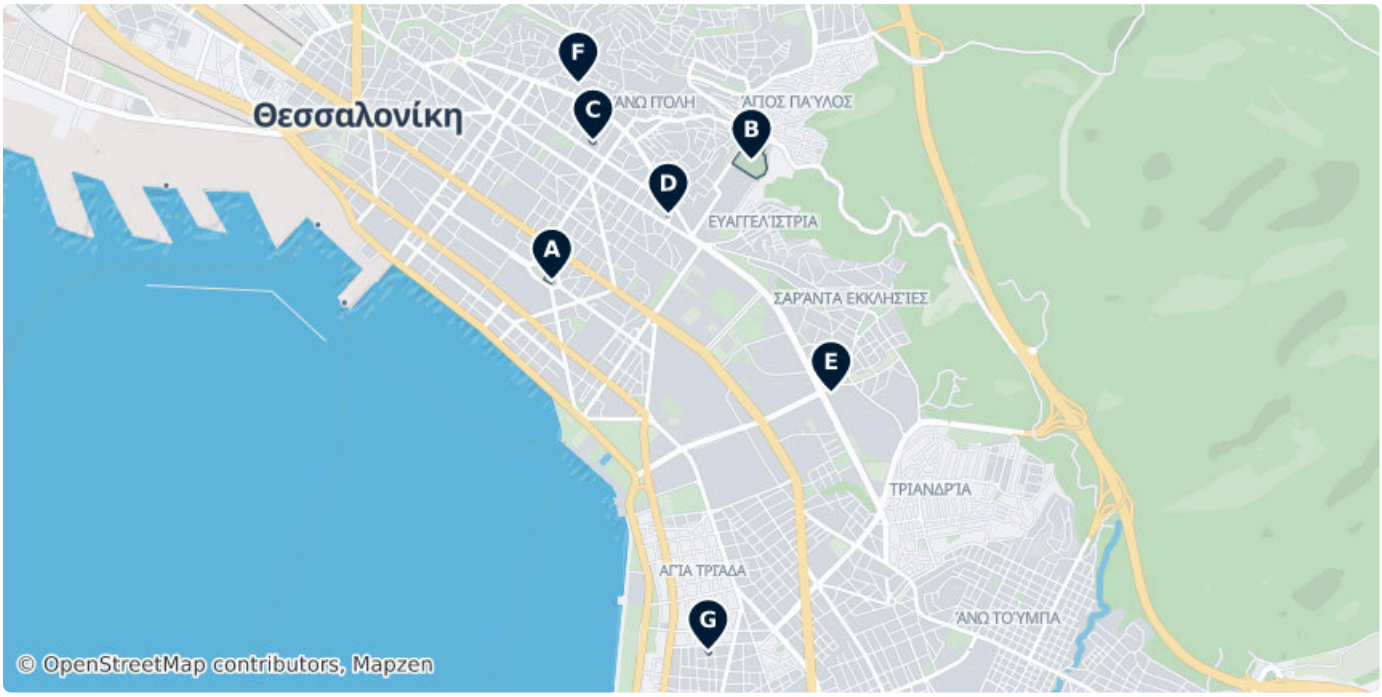
Type C / Type F
230 V · 50 Hz

LANGUAGES
Greek

TAP WATER
Use caution

Editor's Choice: Thessaloniki Highlights

This curated list features seven of Thessaloniki's most iconic landmarks, highlighting the city's rich cultural and historical tapestry. It includes Byzantine churches like the 7th-century Hagia Sophia, Ottoman-era mosques such as the 15th-century Alaca Imaret and the early 20th-century Yeni Mosque, as well as significant museums like the Atatürk Museum and the Olympic Museum. The atmospheric Ano Poli district and the unique Pashina Gardens park complete this selection, offering a comprehensive glimpse into Thessaloniki's diverse heritage.





A Hagia Sophia

The Hagia Sophia is a church located in Thessaloniki, Greece. With its current structure dating from the 7th century, it is one of the...

9 Αν. Κεραμοπούλου, Θεσσαλονίκη 54622, Greece (40.63270, 22.94717)

agiasofia.info, +30 2310270253



B Pashina Gardens

A small, unusual park with half-ruined structures covering its grounds.

Θεσσαλονίκη 54634, Greece (40.63827, 22.95940)



C Alaca Imaret Mosque

Alaca Imaret Mosque or Ishak Pasha Mosque, literally the "colourful mosque", is a 15th-century Ottoman mosque in Thessaloniki, Greece.

3 Πλατεία Δημητρίων, Θεσσαλονίκη 54633, Greece (40.63919, 22.94969)



D Atatürk Museum

The Atatürk Museum is a historic house museum in Thessaloniki, Central Macedonia, Greece.

11 Ησαΐου, Θεσσαλονίκη 54634, Greece (40.63576, 22.95430)

Tu–Su	10:00–17:00



E Olympic Museum

Thessaloniki Olympic Museum, the unique Olympic Museum of Greece, is situated at Thessaloniki, Central Macedonia, Greece.

Γ΄ Σεπτεμβρίου, 54636 Θεσσαλονίκη (40.62747, 22.96428)

Mo–Fr	09:00–19:00
Sa	10:00–16:00
Su	10:00–14:00

olympicmuseum-thessaloniki.org, +30 2310968531



F Ano Poli

Thessaloniki's Upper Town called Ano Poli is the old town of Thessaloniki and is located around the city's acropolis north of the city...

20 Άθωνος, Θεσσαλονίκη 54633, Greece (40.64185, 22.94878)



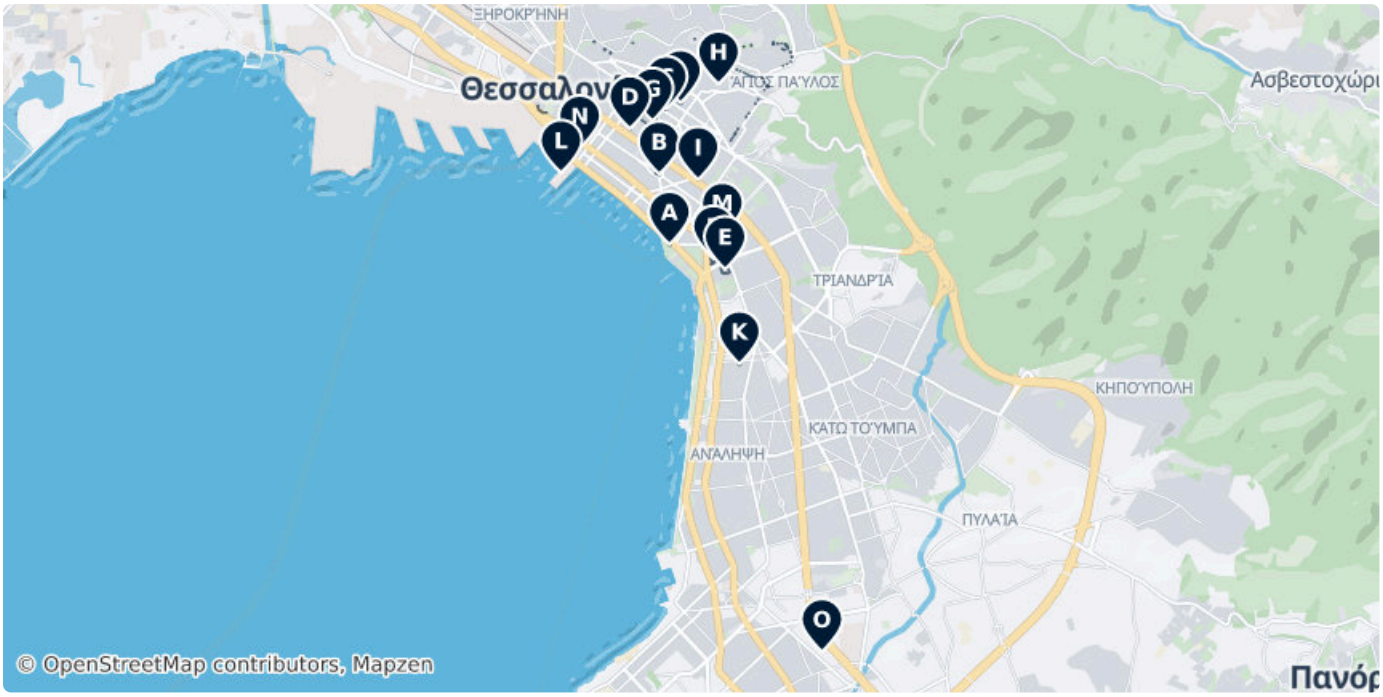
Yeni Mosque

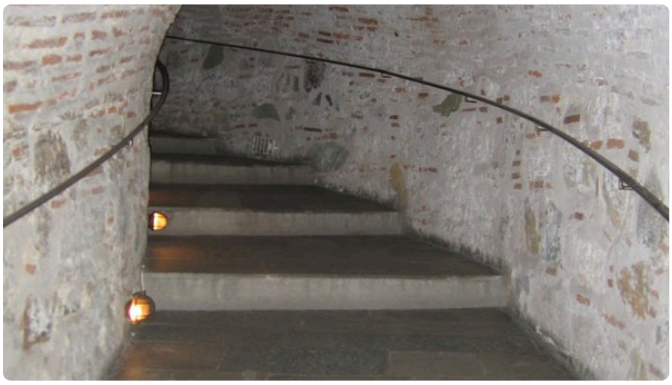
The Yeni Mosque is a historical mosque in Thessaloniki, Greece. It was built by Italian architect Vitaliano Poselli in 1902 for the city's...

2 Πραξιτέλους, Θεσσαλονίκη 54641, Greece
(40.61548, 22.95674)

Heritage & Museums

Discover Thessaloniki's extensive cultural heritage through its collection of UNESCO-listed Byzantine churches, ancient Roman ruins, medieval city walls, and diverse museums. This list features iconic landmarks such as the White Tower, Hagia Sophia, and the Archaeological Museum, each highlighting different eras of the city's historical and artistic evolution.





A White Tower of Thessaloniki

The White Tower of Thessaloniki is a monument and museum on the waterfront of the city of Thessaloniki, capital of the region of Macedonia...

(Unnamed Road), Θεσσαλονίκη 54621, Greece
(40.62633, 22.94838)

lpth.gr, +302310267832



B Hagia Sophia

The Hagia Sophia is a church located in Thessaloniki, Greece. With its current structure dating from the 7th century, it is one of the...

9 Αν. Κεραμοπούλου, Θεσσαλονίκη 54622, Greece
(40.63270, 22.94717)

agiasofia.info, +30 2310270253



C Church of Saint Demetrios

The Church of Saint Demetrius, or Hagios Demetrios, is the main sanctuary dedicated to Saint Demetrius, the patron saint of Thessaloniki,...

Αγίου Δημητρίου 97, 54633 Θεσσαλονίκη (40.63863, 22.94802)

agdimitriosthes.gr, +30 2310 270008



D Church of Panagia Chalkeon

The Church of Panagia Chalkeon is an 11th-century Byzantine church in the northern Greek city of Thessaloniki.

17 Χαλκέων, Θεσσαλονίκη 54631, Greece (40.63682, 22.94365)

Mo–Su	09:00–12:00



E Museum of Byzantine Culture

The Museum of Byzantine Culture is a museum in Thessaloniki, Central Macedonia, Greece, which opened in 1994.

Στρατού 2, 54640 Θεσσαλονίκη (40.62408, 22.95504)

Nov-Jun Mo	08:30–15:30
Nov-Jun Tu	Closed
Nov-Jun We–Su	08:30–15:30
Jul-Oct Mo–Su	08:00–20:00
Apr-Jul Tu	13:00–20:00

mbp.gr, +30 2313306400



F Archaeological Museum Thessaloniki

The Archaeological Museum houses artifacts from Macedonia, spanning prehistoric to Roman times, emphasizing Thessaloniki's regional history.

Μανώλη Ανδρόνικου 6, 54013 Θεσσαλονίκη (40.62503, 22.95366)

Mo–Su	09:00–17:00

amth.gr, +30 2313310201



G Roman Forum

The Roman Forum of Thessaloniki is the ancient Roman-era forum of the city, located at the upper side of Aristotelous Square.

Πλατεία Δικαστηρίων, Θεσσαλονίκη 54631, Greece
(40.63755, 22.94634)



H Byzantine Walls

The Walls of Thessaloniki are the 4 kilometer-long city walls surrounding the city of Thessaloniki during the Middle Ages and until the...

6 Αγίας Αικατερίνης, Θεσσαλονίκη 54632, Greece
(40.64087, 22.95425)

thessaloniki.gr



I Arch of Galerius

The Arch of Galerius or Kamara and the Rotunda are neighbouring early 4th-century AD monuments in the city of Thessaloniki, in the region...

43 Δημητρίου Γούναρη, Θεσσαλονίκη 54635, Greece
(40.63221, 22.95181)

Mo–Su 10:00–18:00



J Alaca Imaret Mosque

Alaca Imaret Mosque or Ishak Pasha Mosque, literally the "colourful mosque", is a 15th-century Ottoman mosque in Thessaloniki, Greece.

3 Πλατεία Δημητρίων, Θεσσαλονίκη 54633, Greece
(40.63919, 22.94969)



K Yeni Mosque

The Yeni Mosque is a historical mosque in Thessaloniki, Greece. It was built by Italian architect Vitaliano Poselli in 1902 for the city's...

2 Πραξιτέλους, Θεσσαλονίκη 54641, Greece
(40.61548, 22.95674)

L Thessaloniki Museum of Photography

Dedicated to photography, this museum showcases historical and contemporary photographic works related to Thessaloniki and beyond.

Θεσσαλονίκη (40.63281, 22.93539)

thmphoto.gr, +30 2310 566 716



M Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art

MOMus Contemporary, in full MOMus–Museum of Contemporary Art–Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art and State Museum of Contemporary Art...

Egnatias 154, Thessalonika 54636, Greece
(40.62715, 22.95472)

Th–Sa	10:00–18:00
Su	11:00–15:00

mmca.org.gr, +30 2310 24 00 02

N Museum of Musical Instruments

A very interesting collection of old musical instruments through the ages used in Greece. Featuring ancient bagpipes, horns, drums and more.

Katouni 12, Thessalonika 54625, Greece
(40.63506, 22.93765)

+30 231 023 8391

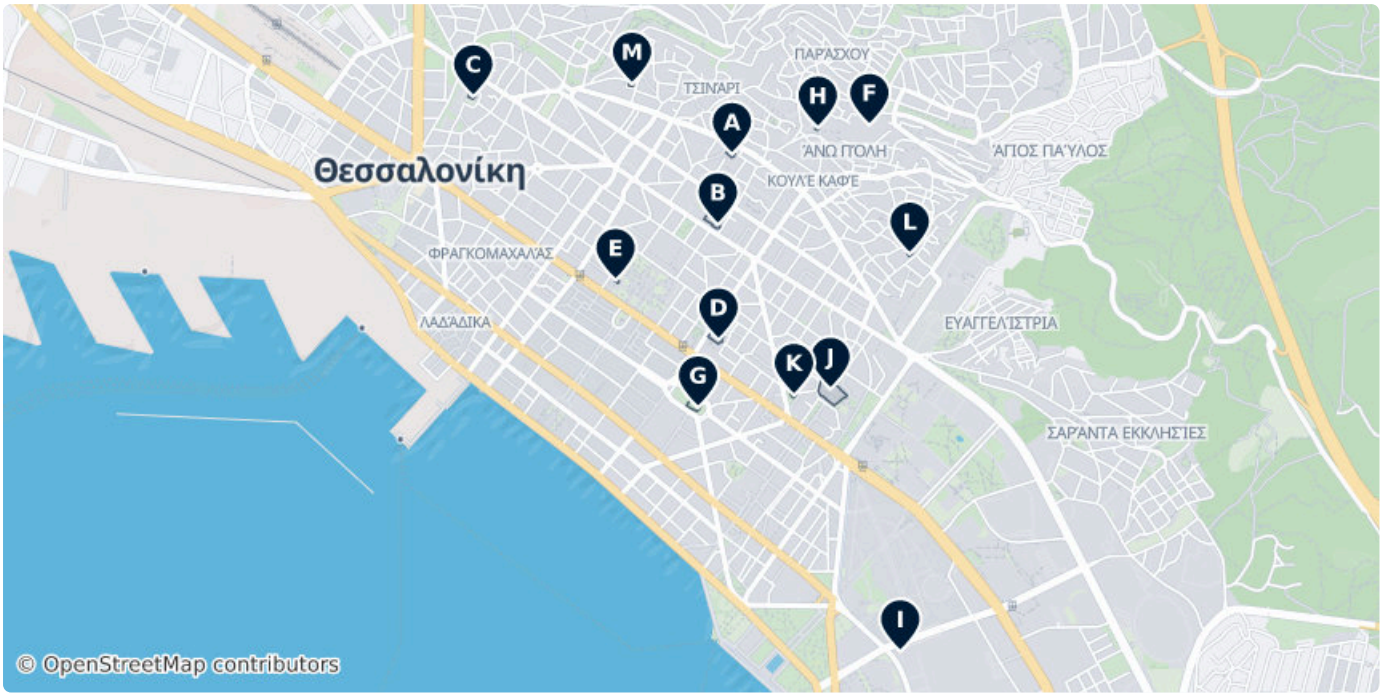
O Mnemeio Doxas kai Times stis Alesmonetes Patrides

A memorial honoring the memory and glory of the lost homelands of Asia Minor Greeks.

(40.58935, 22.96665)

Historic Orthodox Churches

This collection features 13 significant Greek Orthodox religious sites in Thessaloniki, highlighting Byzantine churches and monasteries dating from the 5th to 14th centuries. Several are UNESCO World Heritage sites, showcasing architectural styles from early Christian basilicas to late Byzantine designs, reflecting the city's rich spiritual and historical legacy.





A Church of Prophet Elijah

A Greek Orthodox church recognized as a UNESCO heritage site, dedicated to the Prophet Elias, located on a prominent hill overlooking Thessaloniki.

Ολυμπιάδος 53, 54633 Θεσσαλονίκη (40.64090, 22.94862)

Mo–Su 17:00–19:00

+302310273790



B Church of Saint Demetrios

The Church of Saint Demetrius, or Hagios Demetrios, is the main sanctuary dedicated to Saint Demetrius, the patron saint of Thessaloniki,...

Αγίου Δημητρίου 97, 54633 Θεσσαλονίκη (40.63863, 22.94802)

agdimitriosthes.gr, +30 2310 270008



C Church of the Holy Apostles

The Church of the Holy Apostles is a 14th-century Byzantine church in the northern Greek city of Thessaloniki.

3 Πλατεία Αγίων Αποστόλων, Θεσσαλονίκη 54630, Greece (40.64277, 22.93757)



D Acheropeetos

The Church of the Acheiropoietos is a 5th-century Byzantine church in the northern Greek city of Thessaloniki, Central Macedonia.

Αγίας Σοφίας 56, 54635 (40.63489, 22.94804)

Mo–Su 08:00–12:00, 17:00–19:00



E Church of Panagia Chalkeon

The Church of Panagia Chalkeon is an 11th-century Byzantine church in the northern Greek city of Thessaloniki.

17 Χαλκέων, Θεσσαλονίκη 54631, Greece (40.63682, 22.94365)

Mo–Su 09:00–12:00



F Vlatadon Monastery

Vlatades Monastery or Vlatadon Monastery is a monastery in Ano Poli, Thessaloniki, Greece.

149 Επταπυργίου, Θεσσαλονίκη 54634, Greece (40.64184, 22.95448)



G Hagia Sophia

The Hagia Sophia is a church located in Thessaloniki, Greece. With its current structure dating from the 7th century, it is one of the...

9 Αν. Κεραμοπούλου, Θεσσαλονίκη 54622, Greece (40.63270, 22.94717)

agiasofia.info, +30 2310270253



H Church of Hosios David

Byzantine church known as Moni Latomou, part of Thessaloniki's historic Orthodox ecclesiastical architecture.

Επιμενίδου 17, 54633 Θεσσαλονίκη (40.64176, 22.95228)

Mo–Su 07:00–12:00

I St. Konstantine and St. Helen Orthodox Church

Orthodox church dedicated to Saints Konstantine and Helen, representing Thessaloniki's religious tradition.

Λεωφόρος Τρίτης Σεπτεμβρίου, Θεσσαλονίκη 54636, Greece (40.62480, 22.95580)



J Rotunda

Originally the Rotunda of Galerius, a massive early 4th-century Roman structure later converted into a church, featuring a large dome and Byzantine mosaics.

56 Δημητρίου Γούναρη, Θεσσαλονίκη 54635, Greece (40.63330, 22.95282)

Mo–Su 08:30–15:30

visitgreece.gr/mainland/macedonia/the... , +302310209913



K St. Panteleimon

The Church of Saint Panteleimon is a late Byzantine church Built in the 14th century in Thessaloniki, Greece.

Λεωνίδα Ιασωνίδου, Θεσσαλονίκη (40.63310, 22.95127)



L St. Nicolas Orphanos

The Church of Saint Nicholas Orphanos is an early 14th-century Byzantine church in the northern Greek city of Thessaloniki.

Ηροδότου, 54634 Θεσσαλονίκη (40.63768, 22.95621)

Mo–Th 10:00–13:00



M Agia Ekaterini

The Church of Saint Catherine is a late Byzantine church in the northwestern corner of the Ano Poli, Thessaloniki, Greece.

4 Ηούς, Θεσσαλονίκη 54632, Greece (40.64317, 22.94435)

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