

Zakynthos

Ionian Islands · Greece

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



Overview

Zakynthos, also called Zante, is a green island in the Ionian Sea with long sandy beaches, white cliffs and sea caves. It is best known for the shipwreck cove at Navagio and for the loggerhead sea turtles that nest on its southern shores.

The island suits beach holidays, boat trips and relaxed road trips. The east coast has busy resorts and the capital, Zakynthos Town. The north and west are wilder, with steep cliffs and small villages. The south is quieter and protected for nature.

When to visit

Late May to early October is the main beach season. June and September are warm, with calmer beaches than July and August. July and August are hot and humid. Winters are mild and wet, and many beach businesses close.

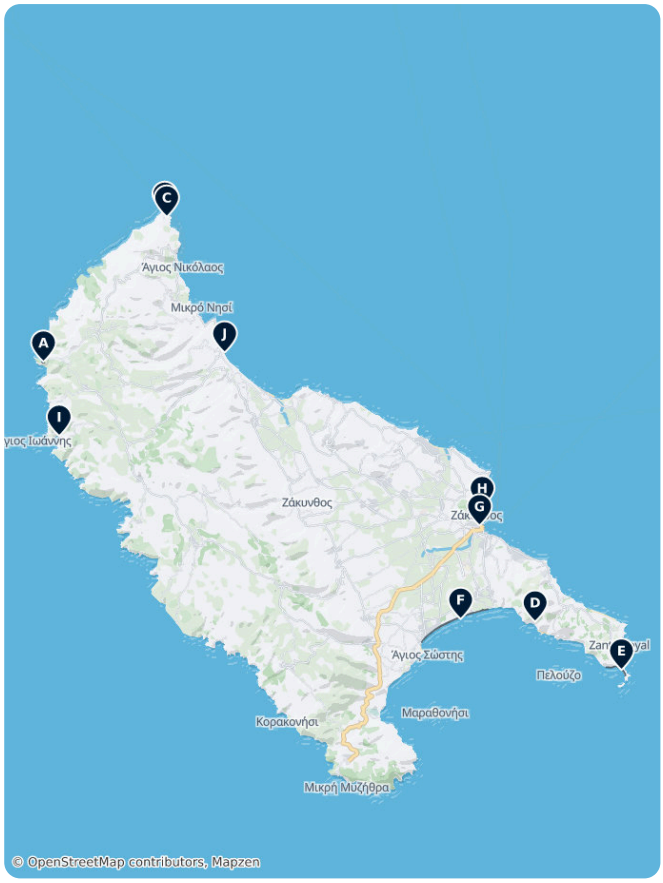
The big event is the turtle nesting season on the southern beaches, from May to August. Plan a trip then if you want to see the Zakynthos National Marine Park at its most active. Hatchlings follow later in the summer.

MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Fair Fair for wildlife watching	14° / 17° Feels like 9°	11° / 7°	16 rainy days · Dry air
February	Fair Fair for wildlife watching	14° / 17° Feels like 9°	11° / 7°	13 rainy days · Dry air
March	Good Good for wildlife watching	15° / 18° Feels like 11°	12° / 8°	Dry air
April	Great Great for wildlife watching	17° / 20° Feels like 14°	14° / 11°	Dry air
May	Great Great for sightseeing	21° / 24°	18° / 15°	23 sunny days
June	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 28°	22° / 18°	27 sunny days · Muggy, humid air · UV 9 (Very high)
July	Great Great for the beach	27° / 30°	24° / 22°	30 sunny days · Oppressive humidity · UV 9 (Very high)
August	Great Great for the beach	28° / 30°	25° / 23°	30 sunny days · Oppressive humidity · UV 8 (Very high)
September	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 28°	23° / 19°	22 sunny days · Muggy, humid air
October	Great Great for sightseeing	22° / 25°	19° / 15°	
November	Good Good for wildlife watching	19° / 22° Feels like 15°	16° / 12°	14 rainy days · Dry air
December	Fair Fair for wildlife watching	15° / 18° Feels like 11°	13° / 9°	16 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 Navagio beach is the most famous beach in Greece, a white cove under tall cliffs with a rusting wreck. Since the 2022 rockfall, **landing and swimming at the beach are banned**, and boats must stay 50 m from the shore. Most visitors see it from a boat offshore or from the clifftop viewing platform where it is open.
- B Blue Caves are sea caves and arches at the northern tip, reached by boat. The water glows bright blue in the morning light. C Cape Skinari Lighthouse stands above them.
- D Zakynthos National Marine Park protects Laganas Bay, one of the most important nesting areas for loggerhead turtles in the Mediterranean. Boat trips go to the bay, and rules limit how close boats may get.
- E Gerakas Beach is a long sandy beach in the south-east and one of the main turtle nesting beaches. Visit with respect for the marked nest areas.
- F Laganas beach is the island's lively resort beach, with water sports and a busy nightlife strip behind it.
- G Saint Dionysios Church in Zakynthos Town holds the relics of the island's patron saint. It is a living church, so dress modestly.
- H Solomos Square is the main square of the capital, on the waterfront, with the statue of the national poet *Dionysios Solomos*. The Solomos museum is next to it.
- I Porto Vromi is a small beach in a narrow cove on the west coast, with clear water and a quiet feel.
- J Xigia Beach is a beach in the north known for its sulphur springs and pale cliffs.

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What to experience

- Take a boat tour to the Blue Caves in the north or the Keri sea caves in the south, and swim in the clear water.
- Join a turtle-watching boat trip in Laganas Bay in summer. Choose an operator that keeps its distance and follows the park rules.
- Watch sunset from the Bochali viewpoint above Zakynthos Town, next to the Venetian castle.
- Try a day on the quiet west coast, from Porto Vromi to the villages inland.
- On 24 August and 17 December, the island celebrates its patron saint with services and processions in Zakynthos Town.

Day trips

Most visitors stay on the island. Two longer trips are possible.

- A Kefalonia: a larger neighbouring island, reached by a seasonal ferry from Agios Nikolaos in the north to Pesada. It is best as a full day or an overnight stay, with a car.
- Ancient Olympia on the mainland: the birthplace of the Olympic Games. Take the ferry to Kyllini, then drive. It is a long day, so start early.



Where to explore

Zakynthos is one of the southern Ionian Islands. Neighbouring islands are easy to combine on a longer trip.

- Kefalonia is the nearest neighbour to the north, with caves, a large bay and quiet villages.
- Lefkada is joined to the mainland by a short bridge, with beaches and windsurfing.
- Corfu and Paxos lie far to the north.

Getting there

- **By air**: Zakynthos Airport (ZTH) is about 4 km from Zakynthos Town and close to Laganas, Tsilivi and Kalamaki. Most international flights are seasonal, from spring to autumn. Athens flights run all year. Taxi or rental car is the easiest transfer.
- **By ferry from the mainland**: ferries run from Zakynthos Town to Kyllini in the Peloponnese, about 1 hour 15 minutes, with several sailings a day. From Kyllini you can continue by road to Patras and Athens.
- **By ferry from Kefalonia**: a seasonal summer ferry links Agios Nikolaos in the north of the island to Pesada on Kefalonia.

Getting around

- **Rental car**: the best way to see the beaches, villages and viewpoints. Book early for July and August.
- **Public bus**: buses link Zakynthos Town with the main resorts. Service is thin to the west and north, so plan day trips by car or tour.
- **Taxi**: practical for short trips and airport transfers. Agree the fare before you leave.
- **Boat tours**: the main way to reach the Blue Caves, the Keri caves, the turtle bay and the sea views of Navagio. Boats leave from Zakynthos Town, Porto Vromi, Agios Nikolaos, Laganas and Keri.
- **On foot**: Zakynthos Town is flat and walkable. Elsewhere you need transport, and cycling is hard because of hills and traffic.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

Zakynthos Town is flat and walkable, but beaches and villages are spread out and need a car or boat.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Low

Hills, narrow roads and summer traffic make cycling hard for most visitors.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?** Yes, for most trips. Beaches, villages and viewpoints are spread out, and buses do not reach many of them.
- **Roads**: roads to the west and north are narrow, with sharp bends. Drive slowly and avoid them after dark.
- **Parking**: parking at popular beaches and viewpoints fills early in summer. Arrive in the morning.
- **Scooters and ATVs**: they are popular but cause many injuries. Wear a helmet and check your insurance.

Food & drink

Look for local sweets such as *mandolato*, a soft almond nougat, and for the island's white wine, *Verdea*. Local dishes use olive oil, tomato and fresh fish. Cheese and honey are common at village tavernas.

For a good meal, walk the waterfront in Zakynthos Town. Village tavernas inland often serve simple home-style menus.

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

Zakynthos is generally safe for visitors. Keep valuables out of sight at beaches and in parked cars.

- **Nesting beaches**: follow posted rules. Do not enter marked nest areas, and do not touch turtles or eggs.
- **Nightlife areas**: Laganas and Kalamaki are loud and busy in summer. Take care with drinks and with late-night driving.
- **Sun and heat**: summer afternoons are hot. Use sun protection and drink water.
- **Sea**: watch for sea urchins on rocky shores. Swim only where the water is calm.
- **Water**: use bottled water for drinking.
- **Earthquakes**: the Ionian Islands are seismically active. Small tremors are normal.

History

Zakynthos was ruled by Venice for about three centuries until 1797, and the Venetians called it the "flower of the Levant". Their castle still stands on Bochali hill above the capital. The island joined Greece in 1864.

A severe earthquake on 12 August 1953 destroyed most of the old town. It was rebuilt with low buildings and a Venetian look.

The island is also the birthplace of *Dionysios Solomos*, whose poem *Hymn to Liberty* became the words of the Greek national anthem. *Saint Dionysios* is the island's patron saint, honoured at Saint Dionysios Church.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Greece at a glance:

CURRENCY
EUR €

EMERGENCY
112

ELECTRICITY



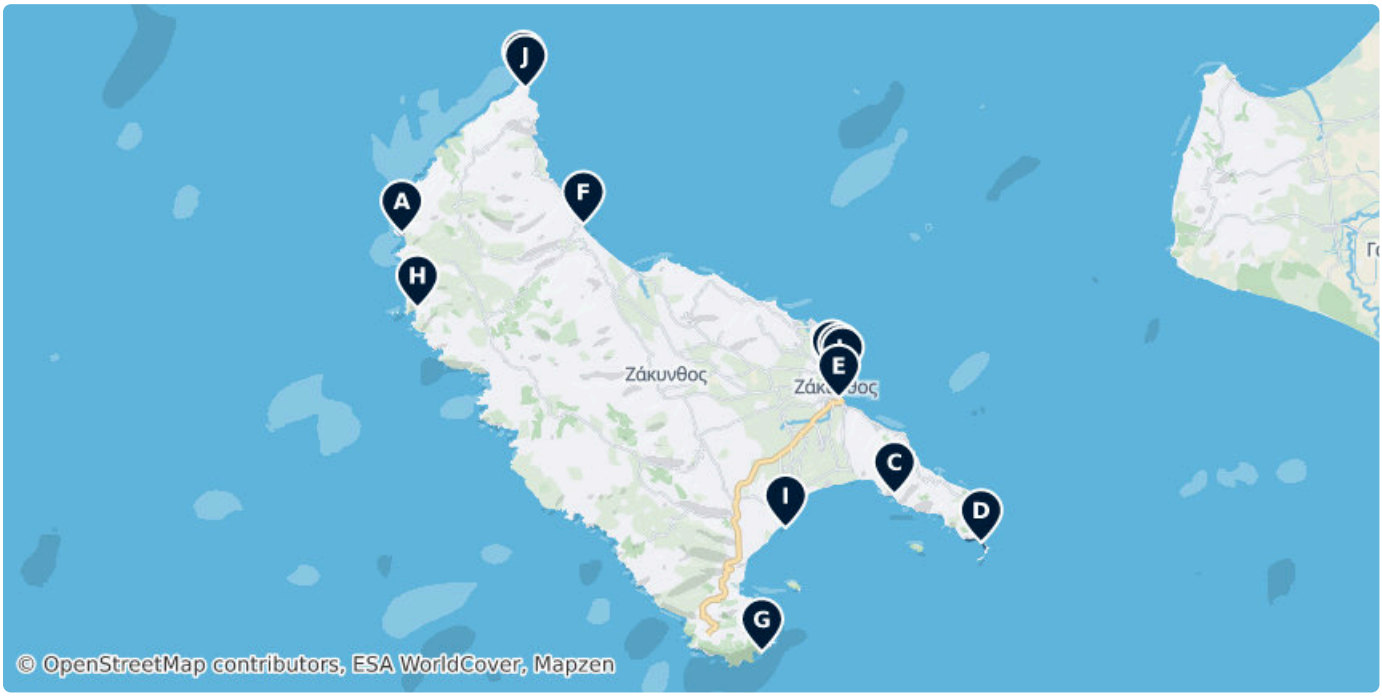
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LANGUAGES
Greek

TAP WATER
Use caution

Zakynthos Essentials

Zakynthos is defined by dramatic limestone cliffs and the turquoise waters of Navagio Beach, home to the 1980 Panagiotis shipwreck. The island's southern shores, particularly within the National Marine Park, serve as vital nesting grounds for endangered Caretta caretta sea turtles. Beyond the coast, the capital features the Renaissance-style Saint Nikolaos on the Mole and the museum dedicated to national poet Dionysios Solomos. For panoramic views, the hilltop village of Bohali overlooks the harbor and the remains of a Venetian castle.





A Navagio Beach

Navagio Beach, or Shipwreck Beach, is an exposed cove, sometimes referred to as "Smugglers Cove", on the coast of Zakynthos, in the Ionian...

29090, Greece (37.85922, 20.62486)



B Blue Caves

Do not miss out one of Zakynthos' wonders - little caves carved into cliffs. Can be visited with a tour or on a rented boat.

Greece (37.93292, 20.70091)



C Zakynthos National Marine Park

The National Marine Park of Zakynthos founded in 1999, is a national park located in Laganas bay, in Zakynthos island, Greece.

29100, Greece (37.73027, 20.93307)

nmp-zak.org/en



D Gerakas Beach

Popular beach and a part of natural reserve aiming to protect the turtles - please don't come here during the nesting season.

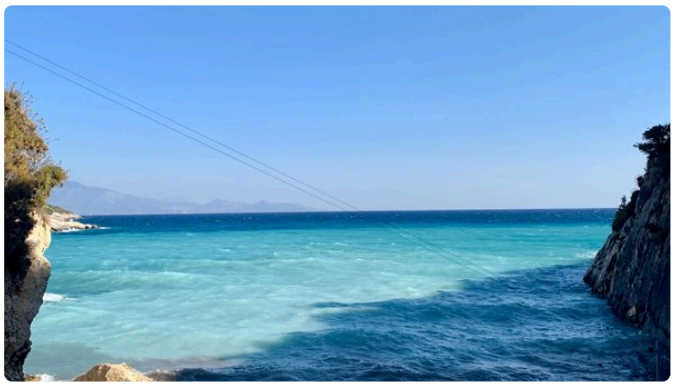
Greece (37.70638, 20.98724)



E Saint Dionysios Church

Saint Dionysios of Zakynthos was a 16th-century Orthodox Christian Archbishop of Aegina.

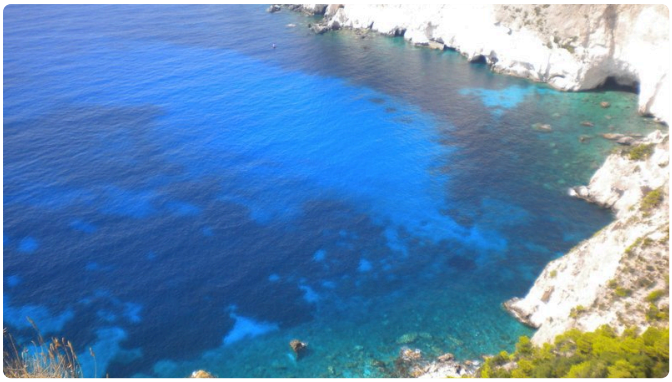
8 Βουλγάρεως, Ζάκυνθος 29100, Greece (37.77804, 20.89820)



F Xigia Beach

Quite difficult to find but totally worth it - if looking for a tranquil place to relax. There are no facilities, just virgin nature.

Xigia, Ξύγκια, Xigia 290 91, Greece (37.86377, 20.73844)



G Keri Blue Caves

Spectacular arches and deep caves - this is a sight typical for Zakynthos. Take a boat tour to admire the varied coast.

Greece (37.65250, 20.85014)



H Porto Vromi

This beach is the best place to catch a boat to the Shipwreck Beach and the adjacent blue caves.

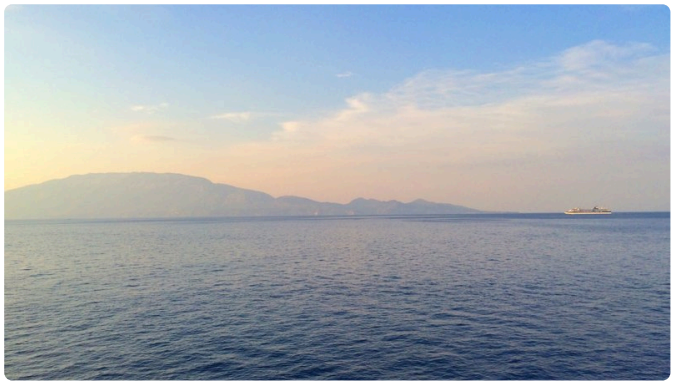
(Unnamed Road), 29090, Greece (37.82242, 20.63467)



I Cameo island

Private islet connected to Agios Sostis by a long wooden footbridge. It features a small beach area known for the white linens fluttering above the water and views across Laganas Bay.

29092, Greece (37.71371, 20.86501)



J Cape Skinari

Come here for a walk - the views are spectacular - or for a dip into the sea. The experienced like to dive here during the night.

(Unnamed Road), 29090, Greece (37.93101, 20.70215)



K Dionysios Solomos Museum

Located in Saint Mark's Square, this museum is dedicated to the national poet of Greece, Dionysios Solomos. It houses his personal manuscripts, portraits, and the tombs of Solomos and Andreas Kalvos.

29100 Zakynthos (37.78849, 20.89866)

zakynthos-museumsolomos.gr



L Saint Nikolaos on the Mole

You wouldn't say this building was damaged by several earthquakes. A beautiful Renaissance church situated by the sea.

Διονυσίου Ρώμα, 29100, Greece (37.78694, 20.90058)



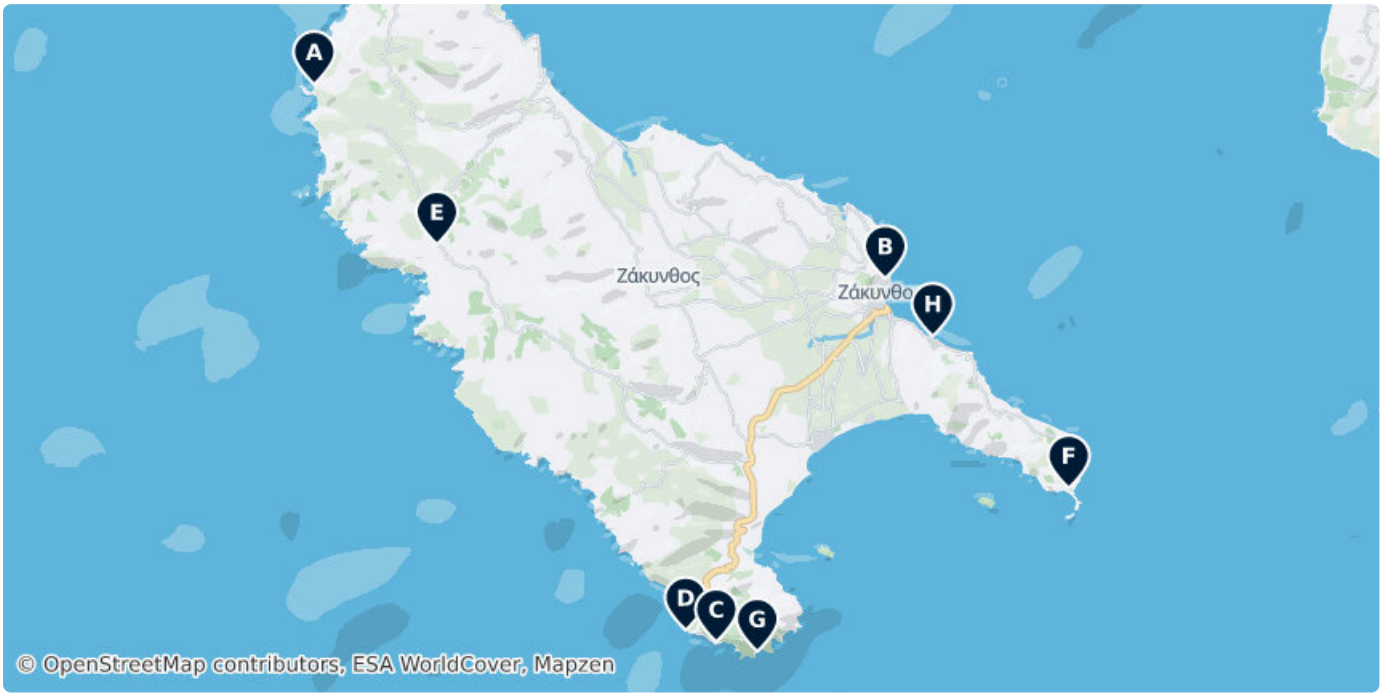
M Bohali

One of the most affluent areas of Zakynthos. Walk past the villas and enjoy the breathtaking view of the bay.

(Unnamed Road), Ζάκυνθος 29100, Greece (37.79018, 20.89415)

Editor's Choice

This selection highlights the diverse geography and heritage of Zakynthos, from the dramatic limestone cliffs of Cape Keri to the famous shipwreck overlook at Navagio. Cultural sites include the Dionysios Solomos Museum in Zakynthos Town and the Venetian-era stone bridge in Argassi. Natural landmarks range from a 2,000-year-old olive tree in Exo Hora to the sea caves of the Keri peninsula and the turtle conservation center at Gerakas, dedicated to the protected Caretta caretta species.



A View to the shipwreck

A cliffside overlook providing a panoramic perspective of Navagio Beach and the 1980 wreck of the MV Panagiotis.

(37.86184, 20.62562)



B Dionysios Solomos Museum

Located in St. Mark's Square, this museum contains the tombs of poets Dionysios Solomos and Andreas Kalvos, plus historical manuscripts and Ionian school paintings.

29100 Zakynthos (37.78849, 20.89866)

zakynthos-museumsolomos.gr



C Keri View Point

A vantage point offering views of the Mizithres, two large white conical rock formations rising from the sea at the base of the cliffs.

29092, Greece (37.65115, 20.81785)

D Cape Keri

The island's southernmost point, characterized by a lighthouse and vertical limestone cliffs that drop 200 meters into the Ionian Sea.

(37.65559, 20.80326)

E Oldest Olive Tree on Zakynthos

Situated in the village of Exo Hora, this specimen is estimated to be over 2,000 years old and features a distinctive, massive hollowed trunk.

(37.80139, 20.68427)

F Zakynthos Sea Turtle Rescue & Information Centre

Located near Gerakas Beach, this center provides educational exhibits on endangered Caretta caretta sea turtles and rehabilitates injured marine life.

(37.70927, 20.98640)

G Keri caves

A series of sea caves and natural arches along the southwestern coast, accessible only by boat for exploring turquoise waters and limestone formations.

(37.64751, 20.83748)

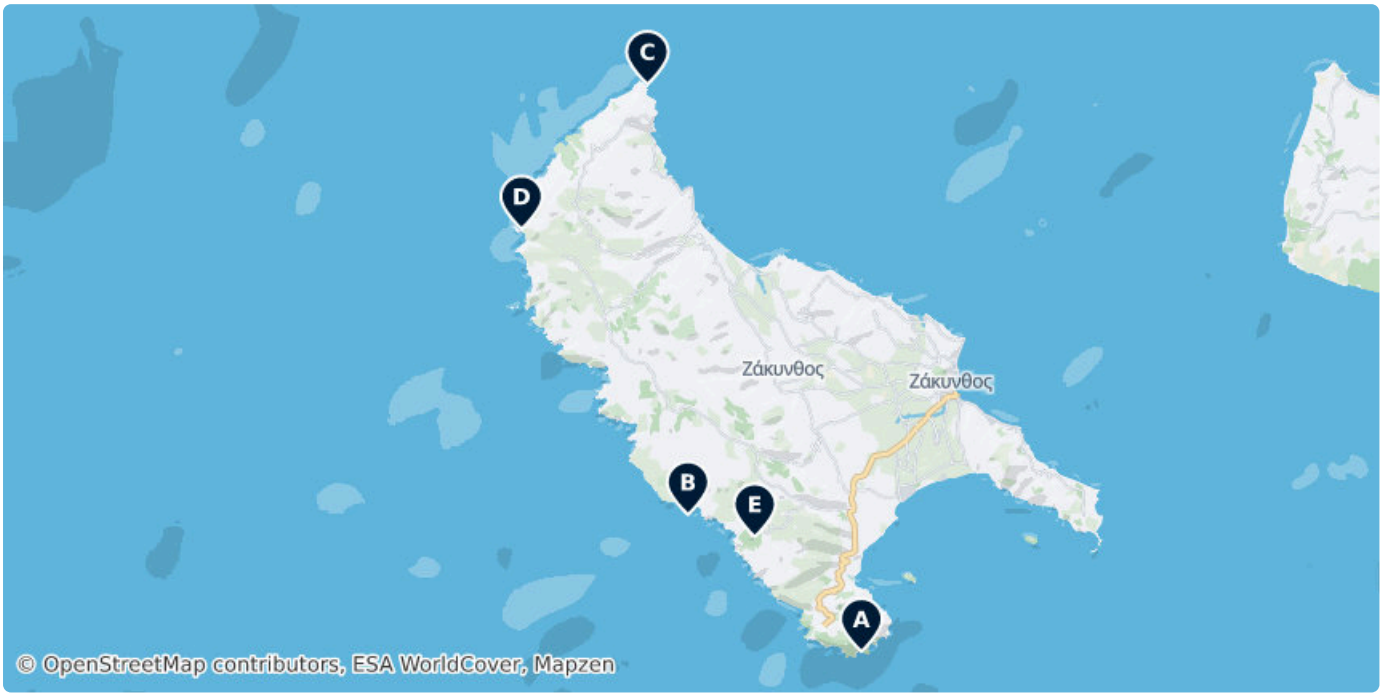
H Argassi Stone Bridge

Built in 1885, this three-arched stone bridge now sits partially submerged in the sea due to shoreline erosion.

(37.76671, 20.92140)

Shipwrecks and Caves

Zakynthos features a dramatic coastline defined by white limestone cliffs and crystal-clear Ionian waters. This collection highlights the island's most significant geological and maritime landmarks, from the iconic Panagiotis shipwreck on Navagio Beach to the Blue Caves at Cape Skinari, famous for their light-refracting properties. Explore the sea-carved arches and tunnels of the Keri and Damianou caves, which offer insights into the island's karst topography and local folklore. These sites provide a glimpse into the natural erosion processes and maritime history of the southern Ionian Sea.



A Keri cave

Limestone sea caves located on the southwestern Marathia Peninsula. Accessible by boat, these formations feature deep waters suitable for snorkeling and diving among local marine life.

(37.64822, 20.83974)



B Rock arch

A natural limestone formation creating a bridge over the sea. Located on the rugged western coast, it showcases the effects of marine erosion on the island's steep cliffs.

29092, Greece (37.71675, 20.73002)



C Blue cave

A series of geological formations at Cape Skinari. The caves are known for the vibrant blue color of the water, caused by the reflection of sunlight against the white limestone seafloor.

29090, Greece (37.93167, 20.70442)



D Panagiotis

The Panagiotis is a shipwreck lying in the white sands of an exposed cove on the coast of Zakynthos, which is among the southernmost of the...

29090, Greece (37.85943, 20.62478)



E Cave Damianou

A two-story limestone cave situated near the village of Agalas. It contains stalactites and stalagmites and is linked to local legends involving a protector and a mythical dragon.

(Unnamed Road), 29092, Greece (37.70568, 20.77230)

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