
COSTA
NAVARINO

Sites of Interest



1. Vaulted Tombs (5 - 75 min)
2. The Palace of Nestor (20 min)
3. Ancient Olympia (90 min)
4. Temple of Apollo Epicurius (150 min)
5. Ancient Messini (80 min)
6. The Castle of Kyparissia (40 min)
7. Paleokastro, Pylos (20 min)
8. The Castle of Kalamata (60 min)
9. The Castle of Koroni (60 min)
10. The Castle of Methoni (40 min)
11. Neokastro, Pylos (20 min)
12. Church of the Transfiguration (20 min)
13. Andromonastiro (90 min)
14. Church of St. Theodora (120 min)
15. Bay of Navarino (15 min)
16. Archaeological Museum of Chora (25 min)
17. Archaeological Museum of Pylos (20 min)
18. The collection of the French Rene Puaux-Mansion Tsiklitiras (20 min)
19. Archaeological Museum of Messenia (60 min)
20. Voidokilia (15 min)
21. Gialova lagoon (15 min)
22. Finikounda beach (45 min)
23. Fanari and Sfaktiria islets (15 min)
24. Neda River (120 min)
25. Polylimnio (40 min)
26. Taygetos (120 min)



HISTORICAL SITES OF INTEREST

Its earliest history shrouded in the mists of time, Messinia's cultural past reveals a rich tapestry of kings and queens, honor and tradition, war and friendship.

Costa Navarino provides the ideal base from which to explore this checkered past. Neolithic settlements, Mycenaean palaces, Classical temples, Byzantine churches and medieval castles are all within easy reach, both in Messinia as well as in the broader.

1. Vaulted Tombs

Also known as "tholoi", these Bronze Age burial structures (17th - 16th century BC) are characterized by the superposition of successively smaller rings of mud-bricks or stones. The oldest vaulted, or beehive, tomb discovered to date is in Messinia. From there, this type spread to other areas of Greece, particularly Argolida, Laconia and Attica.

2. The Palace of Nestor

The elaborate two-story complex (13th - 12th century BC) with royal apartments and workshops is unique among Mycenaean palaces due to its complete lack of defensive walls. The Palace of Nestor, the wise old king of Homeric fame, was unearthed in 1939, revealing more than 600 clay tablets inscribed with a mysterious script that has come to be known as Linear B, the first written language in history to use syllabic signs. These finds, inscribed with a script that represents the oldest known Greek dialect, proved to be as astonishing as Schliemann's discovery of the magnificent gold artifacts of Mycenae.

3. Ancient Olympia

The cradle of the Olympic Games - first held in 776 BC, and a timeless shrine to the ideals of virtue, honor, peace and noble competition, ancient Olympia is a UNESCO World Heritage Site famous for its magnificent stadium and the substantial remains of two Classical temples with superb marble pediments.

There are three museums open for visits:

- Archaeological Museum of Olympia
- Museum of the History of the Excavations in Olympia
- Museum of the History of the Olympic Games of Antiquity

4. Temple of Apollo Epicurius

The first in Greece to be listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site (the Acropolis of Athens was listed one year later), located high up in remote mountain terrain, the Temple of Apollo Epicurius at Bassae (420-400 BC) is the work of Ictinus, one of the principal architects of the Parthenon, and ranks among the best surviving examples of Classical architecture.

5. Ancient Messini

The city was built in 369 BC according to the Hippodamian grid system, so named after Hippodamus of Miletus, who conceived the idea that a town plan should reflect a rational and democratic social order. Fortifications stretching for 9 km, the massive fortification walls of Ancient Messini are among the best preserved in Greece and - according to Pausanias - were the strongest in antiquity.

6. The Castle of Kyparissia

Founded in the 4th century BC, Kyparissia is crowned by a fortress with two defensive walls and a tower that was built in the Byzantine period.

7. Paleokastro, Pylos

A rocky promontory with ruined battlements and towers of a Frankish fortress dating back to the 13th century, built on the ruins of the Acropolis of Pylos.

8. The Castle of Kalamata

Lying at the head of the Gulf of Messinia as the region's capital, Kalamata is dominated by the ruins of a 13th century Frankish castle built by Geoffrey de Villehardouin, which today overlooks the old quarter of the city.

9. The Castle of Koroni

Within the walls of this 13th century sea-girt castle with grand Venetian fortifications is an oasis of flowers and trees, a tranquil convent and a cluster of quaint whitewashed houses along narrow cobblestone paths.

10. The Castle of Methoni

Occupying a headland jutting into the sea, the fortress of Methoni, which had its heyday in the period from the 13th to the 15th century, is one of the most impressive medieval sites in Greece.

11. Neokastro, Pylos

Built in 1573, the Ottoman fortress known as Neokastro features some impressive defensive walls and for years guarded the southern approach to the harbor of Pylos, the finest on the west coast of the Peloponnese.

12. Church of the Transfiguration

This well preserved church, first built as a mosque, is located on the acropolis of Neokastro, protected by its long-standing walls.

Not accessible due to restoration work.

13. Andromonastiro

This remarkable Byzantine monastery is said to have been founded in the 14th century by the emperor Andronicus IV Palaeologus. The main church houses rare portable icons and exquisite wall paintings.

14. Church of Saint Theodora

Built around the 12th century and dedicated to a local saint, this charming small church on the border of Messinia and Arcadia is the site of a “miraculous” phenomenon: 17 mature trees grow from the roof of the church with no roots visible either inside or outside the structure.

15. Bay of Navarino

A magnificent natural harbor - one of the largest in the world, the entrance of which is almost blocked by the island of Sfaktiria - the Bay of Navarino was the scene of the famous naval battle in 1827 in which an allied British, French and Russian fleet defeated a combined Egyptian-Ottoman armada, marking a decisive turning point in the Greek War of Independence. This was the last major naval battle in the world to be fought entirely with sailing ships.

16. Archaeological Museum of Chora

The museum houses finds from the nearby Palace of Nestor and its environs, including pottery, wall paintings, clay tablets and gold beakers.

17. Archaeological Museum of Pylos

The museum collection includes Mycenaean ceramics and fine Hellenistic artifacts.

18. The collection of the French Rene Puaux- Mansion Tsikliras

Displays commemorate the famous naval battle of Navarino (1827) in which an allied fleet of England, France and Russia defeated a combined Egyptian-Ottoman armada, marking a decisive turning point in the Greek War of Independence and leading to the proclamation of the independent Greek state.

19. Archaeological Museum of Messenia

The museum building is located at the heart of the historic center of Kalamata. The exhibition aims to display the antiquities of Messenia from the Prehistoric times until the Byzantine era.

NATURAL ATTRACTIONS

Messinia is blessed with a wealth of natural attractions that are within easy reach and certainly worth a visit. Nearby islets - some with fascinating historical backgrounds - offer a pristine environment for relaxation and exploration, while the mainland is a veritable kaleidoscope of sandy beaches, deep gorges, enchanting lakes, sparkling waterfalls, olive groves and vineyards.

20. Voidokilia beach

One of the best beaches in the world according to “The Times”

21. Gialova lagoon

A key stopover site in the flyway of migratory birds, the Gialova lagoon, Greece’s southernmost major wetland, has been declared an Important Bird Area (IBA), providing shelter to 271 of the 442 recorded bird species in Greece and supporting a mosaic of habitats. It is the only refuge in Europe of the African chameleon, a unique species of reptile that changes skin color depending on its mood.

22. Finikounda beach

A sandy beach on a stretch of pristine coastline.

23. Fanari and Sfaktiria islets

Ideal location and conditions for coaststeering enthusiasts.

24. Neda River

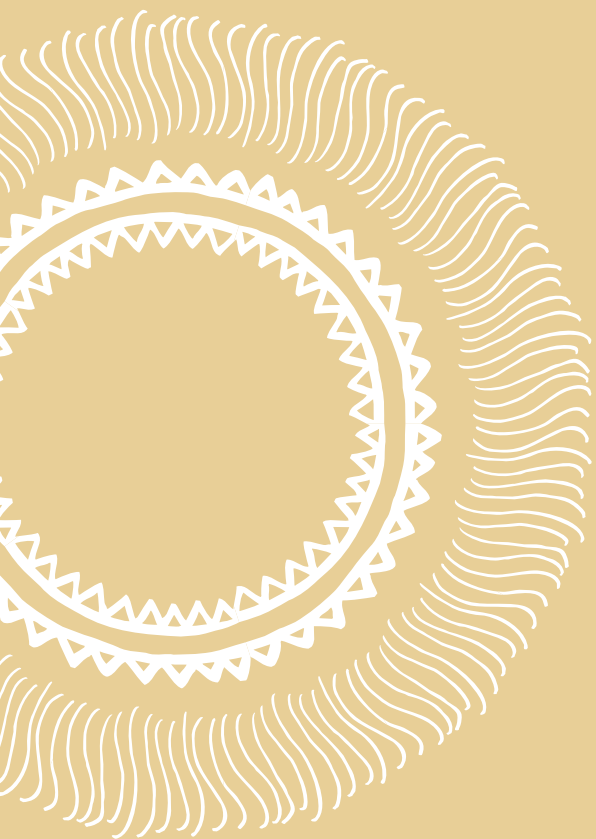
The spectacular gorge of the Neda River, named after one of the Nymphs who nursed the infant Zeus. The river has the distinction of being the only one in Greece with a female name.

25. Polylimnio waterfalls

One of Messinia’s best-kept secrets.

26. Taygetos

The highest mountain of the Peloponnese (2,407m), hosts 138 endemic plant species on the western side of the mountain alone, 53 of which are protected under international and national legislation. Home to 42.6% of the endemic plants in the Peloponnese, Mount Taygetos is a veritable paradise for botanists and ecotourists alike.



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