

Secrets
of
Greece

TINOS

Anneke Kamerling



a safe and sacred haven

Secrets of Greece.net

Travel guides in a different way!

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Tinos belongs to the Cyclades archipelago and is located between the islands of Andros and Mykonos in the Aegean Sea. It covers an area of 195 km². The interior is mountainous with the highest peak being the Tsiknias (727 m), which can be seen from almost anywhere on the island.

The rugged landscape is occasionally interrupted by small green oases. The many characteristic pigeon houses are striking. There are 64 traditional picturesque villages, which are relatively close to each other.

The island has about 8,500 inhabitants, of which about half live in the capital Chora. The population today increasingly lives on tourism, but agriculture, livestock, and fishing are still an important source of income for the Tinians. However, the main source of income is the service sector, not to mention marble extraction and processing. Tinos' green marble has been quarried since ancient times and was used in, amongst others, the construction of the Louvre in Paris and Buckingham Palace in London. The island has been known for years as an artist's island.

Chora is the island's capital. It is a pleasant place where the typical Cycladic houses are interspersed with modern new constructions. The centre is dominated by the Panagia Evangelistria Church, which makes the island the religious pilgrimage site of Greece and attracts many domestic and foreign visitors each year.

The island has many beautiful sandy and pebble beaches along the entire coastline.

In ancient times, Tinos was called 'Ophioussa' ('ophis' = snake) because of the large number of snakes on the island. According to mythology, Poseidon sent the snakes off the island and to show their gratitude, the islanders built a temple for him in Kionia. In mythology, the island is referred to as the seat of Aeolos, the god of the winds.

The history of Tinos traces back to prehistoric times. In addition to ancient remains, numerous chapels and some beautiful churches and monasteries from the Byzantine period have been preserved.

Tourism on Tinos started several decades ago. There are hotels and apartments in class A to E. Furthermore, the island has good eateries and a pleasant nightlife. The season (June-September) is short. Out of season, museums, eateries, and tourist shops are closed.

The lovely beaches, the picturesque villages, the unspoilt nature, and the fascinating sights make the island an ideal place for the holidaymaker.

Welcome
to
Tinos!



Holy Tinos

Welcome to Tinos! 1

Map
of the
island



Chora, also called Tinos town and located on the southern west coast, is the island's capital. It is the main port on the island, where you will most likely set foot ashore.

Entering the harbour, from the deck you will see the most important church in Greece, the church of Panagia Evangelistria or Megalochari (Great Joy) towering over the town. The discovery of the miraculous icon of the Virgin Mary is the most important factor in the development of the town. In the 11th-century Kechrovouni Monastery, lived a nun named Pelagia, who had a series of visions in her dreams and then pointed to the place where an icon of the Virgin Mary was buried. This was 7 km from the monastery, amid the ruins of a Byzantine chapel. It was here in 1828 that the imposing white marble St Mary's Church was built, the new home of the icon, which is said to have been painted by the Apostle Luke and to be capable of performing miracles. The icon is covered with gold, diamonds, sapphires, pearls, and votive pictures. The pilgrimage church attracts tens of thousands of visitors. Every year, on the 25th of March and the 15th of August, pilgrims from all over the world, come to the island and ascend the wide road from the harbour to the church, sometimes even on their knees, to worship the icon.

Over time, the town has expanded around the church. Today, Chora has about 3,000 inhabitants and, in addition to being the main port, it is also the tourist centre of the island. When the ferries arrive, it is very busy along the quay and you can watch the chaotic spectacle of the loading and unloading of the ships, while enjoying a snack and a drink from one of the many terraces.

The capital Chora



Chora



From south to north and back again

Loutra

Again, our starting point is Chora. You leave the city in a northerly direction on the main road. If you have already traveled the previous routes, the first part of this route may seem familiar to you. At the T-junction with the road to Pyrgos, turn right towards Komi.

The first village you will meet is **Loutra**, which owes its name to baths that are said to have been here. This once very prosperous village now has no more than 35 inhabitants. The remarkable church of Saint Joseph, built in Neoclassical Baroque style, dates back to the mid-19th century. In this period the village played an important role. After the destruction of the castle on Xombourgo, two monasteries were founded in the area of Loutra at the beginning of the 19th century. The Jesuit Monastery now houses a Folklore Museum and in the Ursuline Monastery you can see artful embroidery and musical instruments. Loutra is a suitable starting point for hikes on the old paths in the area.

Further north you will come to **Krokos**, named after the common crocuses, which bloom here in the densely vegetated ravine in early spring. It is the *Crocus sativus*, or the saffron crocus. This is the crocus where saffron is extracted from the 3 stamps of the pistil. No less than 13,000 pistils are needed for 100 g of saffron. It is not surprising that saffron is one of the most expensive spices in the world. The Minoans already used saffron in their palace frescoes from 1600-1500 BCE. Evidence has also been found of its use as a medicine. According to Greek mythology, the flower got its name from the young shepherd Krokos. Krokos fell in love with the nymph Smilax. He adored her and made advances. Smilax, however, could not decide whether to accept a mortal's love or not. The gods admired the young shepherd's tenacity and rewarded him with eternal life by turning him into a crocus. Smilax's behaviour irritated the gods and so she was turned into a spiky *Taxus*. Krokos is a suitable place for a cup of coffee at one of the kafeneia before moving on.



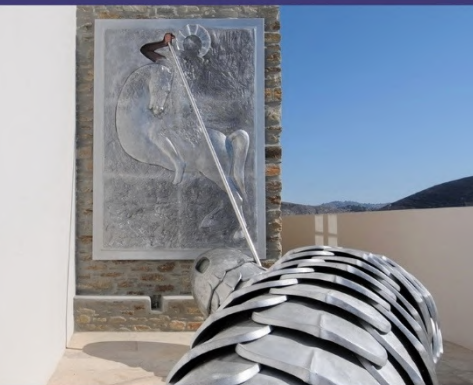
Marble Museum



Panormos Museum



Ceramics Museum



Tsoklis Museum

Marble Museum - Pyrgos

This modern museum was established in 2007 by the Cultural Foundation of the Bank of Piraeus. It is located in a modern building next to the Art Academy, just outside the village of Pyrgos. It shows the history of marble technology from ancient times to the present day. Here you can follow the marble working process through performances, photos, and audio-visual information: from extraction from the quarries, cutting of the blocks, transport, and, as a final result the sculpting of artistic old and modern sculptures. Opening hours: 1st of March - 15th of October, Wed-Mon from 10.00-18.00 hours, 16th of October - 28th of February, Wed-Mon from 10.00-17.00 hours (closed on Tuesdays). Tel.: +30 22830 31290.

Panormos Museum - Pyrgos

This museum is located next to the Giannoulis Chalepas Museum. In addition to some works by Chalepas, sculptures and authentic plaster models by artists from Panormos can be seen. Opening hours: 1st of May - 15th of October, Wed-Mon from 10.30-14.00 and 17.30-20.00 hours (closed on Tuesdays). Tel.: +30 22830 31262.

Ceramics Museum - Aetolia

This museum was founded in 1989 by the cultural association of the village and is housed in a traditional building with a dovecote and baking oven. The museum shows the history of traditional pottery from the geometric period to the last century. There are more than 200 objects to admire. In addition to local pottery, ceramics from all over the world are on display. Delft Blue is represented as well. The museum is open daily from June to the end of September from 10.30-14.00 and 17.30-20.00 hours.

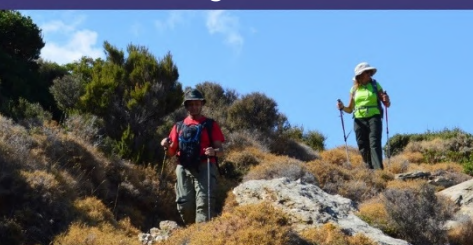
Kostas Tsoklis Museum - Kambos

This museum, housed in the old primary school of the village, was opened on the 21st of May 2011 by the painter Kostas Tsoklis (1930) himself. The permanent exhibition provides a glimpse into his artistic life and shows varied works. Characteristic is the "classic" precision on which modern subjects are depicted. In a specially equipped room broadcasts of his daily TV and radio programs can be seen and heard. The museum regularly organizes artistic workshops for both children and adults. Opening hours: 1st of June - 30th of September, Wed-Mon from 10.00-13.30 and 18.00-21.00 hours (closed on Tuesdays). Tel.: +30 22830 51009.

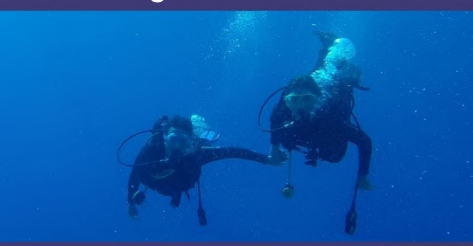
Sport in brief



Bouldering



Hiking



Diving

There are numerous possibilities for sports on Tinos. Windsurfing, sailing, swimming, beach volleyball, basketball, football, mountain biking, climbing, bouldering, and hiking are some examples of sports you can practice on the island.

Bouldering

Bouldering is a kind of climbing on rocks and boulders up to about 5 m high, without the use of ropes, but with special mattresses to prevent injury in the event of a fall. As long as you follow the instructions, it is at least as safe as conventional climbing. Tinos is a favourite spot for this sport and there is a special guide for bouldering on the island. There are no specialized climbing shops on the island, so you will need to bring your own equipment. All you need are brushes, magnesium powder, mountain boots, and of course the pillows. For bouldering you can contact Manthos Prelorentzos. Tel.: +30 6946730291, +30 6947440962.

Climbing

Manthos Prelorentzos, Antonis Apergis, and Roza Vidali organize climbing excursions on Xombourgo as well.

Fishing

A fishing license is not required for fishing with a rod on the beach but from a boat at sea, it is.

Hiking

Tinos is an ideal hiking island. Everywhere on the island you can find old, nowadays mostly signposted paths. They form a unique network, between the villages and settlements and were once the main routes for transporting goods with donkeys and mules. Various walking tours are organized by the local travel agencies, but of course you can also plan your own walks. Do you prefer to go with a guide? Carlos Merlin is happy to take you to places you would not easily discover on your own. Tel.: +30 6932684997.

Water sports

The beaches of Kionia and Agios Fokas offer various water sports facilities. You can rent surfboards and/or take lessons on several beaches. Kolymbiithra is loved by the more experienced wind and kite surfers. At the Paesino Diving Center in Agios Fokas you can go for diving excursions, and you have the option of renting small one and two-person sailing boats, taking sailing lessons or taking part in an organized sailing excursion. Tel.: +30 6948069977.

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Secrets of Greece

offers the most detailed English travel guides to various Greek holiday destinations. These beautifully illustrated guides pay extensive attention to history, local traditions, and many points of interest but also cover topics that usually receive little or no attention.

In addition to descriptions of sights, villages, local customs and traditions, history, mythology, and legends, the guides contain many pictures, and small maps. With the help of these travel guides you will get to places, which you would never find otherwise, and you will get to know the real Greece and its inhabitants.

The travel guides are written by Anneke Kamerling, who worked for many years as destination developer and knows the ins and outs of the various destinations like no one else. Every year she returns to Greece and updates the information in the books immediately if anything has changed.

The travel guides are therefore always up to date. She will show you around your holiday destination in a personal way.



Secrets of Greece's travel guides will surely help to make your stay in Greece an unforgettable experience!

All books are available as paperback and E-book.

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