

# Lefkas Round

Lefkada – Kefalonia – Ithaki  
with visit to Skorprios, Meganisi  
and Ancient Oiniades



**Sail in History**

ON THE ROUTE FROM GREECE TO MAGNA GRAECIA

[www.sailinhistory.eu](http://www.sailinhistory.eu)



Co-funded by the European  
Maritime and Fisheries Fund





**Sail in History**

welcome

ON THE LEFKAS ROUND

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MAGNA GRAECIA

## *SAILING CRUISES BASED ON ROUTES OF THE SECOND GREEK COLONIZATION*

'Sail in History' is a transnational thematic touristic route between **Greece** and the **Ionian coast** of **Calabria** in **Southern Italy**, which belongs to the **Magna Graecia** based on the **ancient nautical routes**.

The sailing cruises characterized by a rich offer of cultural and scientific experiences for the participants. In practical terms, during the sailing, and during the stops in the various harbours, the participants will have the unique opportunity to be involved in exciting scientific experiences related to various disciplines, related to the sea and in particular to the history and the culture of the ancient Greece and its Calabrian colonies.

## *SAILING ROUTES*

7 locations in **Western Greece** (Corfu, Dodoni, Lefkada, Ancient Oiniades, Ancient Olympia, Delphi, Corinth) and 6 locations in the **South of Italy**. (Reggio Calabria, Locri Epizephyrri, Caulonia, Punta Scifo, Le Castella, Capo Colonna)

The sailing cruises are designed based on the ancient nautical routes between the ancient Greek city-states and their colonies in the Ionian coast of Calabria which belongs to Magna Graecia.

The sites of the tourist programme in Greece are the islands of Corfu and Lefkada and the area of Corinth and the well-known Delphi and Olympia.

The Italian sites cover the coastal city of Reggio Calabria, the ancient cities of Locri Epizephyrri and Kaulonia, the underwater archaeological area of Punta Scifo in Crotona, the town Le Castella of Isola Capo Rizzuto and the archaeological area Capo Colonna located in Calabria near Crotona.

In this booklet we present you the route from the Western Greece: **Lefkas Round**.







# 7 day itinerary

## ON THE LEFKAS ROUND

### DAY 1 - LEFKADA TOWN

Sightseeing of the town  
Briefing and Video presentation of the Island of Lefkada and the route of the cruise  
Visit of the archaeological museum of Lefkada. Lunch  
Check-in, accommodation on board; Welcome meeting on boat; general project and cruise presentation  
Dinner at restaurant with sea view & night out. Return on board

### DAY 2 - MEGANISI - VATHI

Sailing to Steno Nydri  
Sailing to Scorpios island. Stop for a dive  
Lunch on board  
Departure from Scorpios island to Meganisi island  
Dinner in the port of Vathi. Return on board

### DAY 3 - BEACH DAY

Departure for Agiofylli beach  
Stop for swimming and other activities. Lunch on board  
Video about pottery and discussion of the following activity. Pottery Activity.  
Departure for Sivota (Lefkas Island).  
Video about ancient Greek food and discussion of the following activity  
Dinner on board on the traces of Ancient Greek food and wine tasting. Return on board

### DAY 4 - KEFALONIA ISLAND

Departure from Sivota to nearby beaches of the island. Small stops for a swim until lunch  
Lunch on board - Rest  
Departure for Fiscardo  
Arrive in the port of Fiscardo, sightseeing & night out. Overnight stay on board

### DAY 5 - KEFALONIA & ITHACA ISLAND

Video about the environmental awareness and discussion of the following activity  
Sailing from Fiscardo to Aetos Alalkomenes  
Microplastics activity  
Visit Melissani Cave, stop for a dive  
Lunch on board and olive oil tasting experience  
Departure from Mellissani Cave to Sami  
Sightseeing in the town of Sami  
Sailing from Sami to the island of Ithaca  
Arriving at Ithaca, dinner in a tavern with a sea view. Overnight stay on board

### DAY 6 - ANCIENT OINIADES

Departure from Vathi to Astakos  
Driving from Astakos to the archaeological site of Ancient Oiniades,  
Visiting the archaeological site of Ancient Oiniades. Lunch in a small picturesque tavern  
Driving from Ancient Oiniades to Astakos. Sightseeing and rest  
Dinner in the port of Astakos & night out. Overnight stay on board

### DAY 7 - RETURN TO LEFKADA

Discussion of the trip (evaluation form, questionnaire)  
Sailing from Astakos back to the island of Lefkada  
Stop for a dive  
Lunch on board  
Return to Lefkada





## ACCESSIBILITY

### TO LEFKAS

The island can be accessed by road, which makes it unique in the Ionian Sea. A floating bridge, with a continuous flow, connects the island with the mainland. Moreover, the underwater tunnel of Preveza – Aktio makes it easy to access the island from the northwestern Greece and the port of Igoumenitsa. The Rio – Antirrio bridge facilitates the connection of the island with the rest of Greece, as well as the port of Patras. Additionally, Lefkada is connected with the surrounding islands. From Nydri and Vasiliki there are daily ferry boats for Meganisi, Kefalonia (Fiskardo) and Ithaca (Frikes). Also, small tourist boat tours to the nearby islands and beaches.

### Lefkas Round

**Lefkada – Kefalonia – Ithaki  
with visit to Skorpios, Meganisi, Mellissani Cave  
and Ancient Oiniades**



An aerial photograph of a lush, green island coastline. The water is a vibrant turquoise color, transitioning to a deeper blue as it extends into the distance. The land is covered in dense, green vegetation, including many tall, thin cypress trees. A small building with a red roof is visible on the right side of the island. In the background, more islands and mountains are visible under a clear blue sky.

# LEFKADA

## THE “CARRIBEAN OF GREECE”

Lefkada, also known as Lefkas or Levkas, is one in the group of the Eptanisa or “seven-islands” in the Ionian Sea in Western Greece.

Lefkada island amazes visitors with the exotic blue colour of its beaches, the good food and traditional products like, Eglouvi’s lentils, a specific type of a cured sausage (salami) and many more. Smaller islands like Skorprios and Meganisi belong in the regional unit of Lefkada.







## ARCHAEOLOGICAL

### INFO

The island of Lefkada is situated right across northwestern Acarnania. Its name derives from the hero Leukadios, son of Ikaros, or the famed cape Leukata, which is located on the south-western edge of the island. During the reign of the Corinthian tyrant Kypselos (657–625 BC) or his successor Periander (625-587 BC), the Corinthians established a colony on the northeastern part of the island, at the location where the local settlement Nirikos used to be. The city became known as Leukas and as a loyal colony, stood by Corinth in various war expeditions. It flourished ever since as a trade center, even during the Hellenistic and Roman times, until the foundation of Nikopolis on the opposite coast (29 BC). Indicative of the colony's importance for trade is the fact that the Corinthians opened a channel (*dioryktos*) on the narrows between the north edge of Lefkada and Acarnania in order to facilitate navigation along the sea routes to western colonies. Literary sources also attribute to the Corinthians a rock bridge, known as the biggest one in antiquity, which connected the city to the opposite Acarnanian land and the local road network. Part of a limestone stele with inscription at the Archaeological Museum of Lefkada possibly refers to this rock bridge.

### HISTORICAL INFORMATION

The island of Lefkas or Lefkada or Lefkadia, at the time of Omiros was known as the Niricos, as its capital was called. According to a prevailing view, the island owes its name to the steep white cliffs on its southernmost cape. Here is where legend states the poetess Sappho took her own life because her thwarted love for Phaon. The first traces of life on the island date to 8000 years before the birth of Christ, the Paleolithic era.

The German archaeologist Wilhelm Doerpfeld, an assistant to Heinrich Schliemann who discovered Troy and Mycenae, was the one who



*An ancient coin of Lefkada 400-330 b.C. from Dairfeld's excavations at Nydri. Photo© Regional Division of Lefkada.*

LEFKAS ROUND

supported the theory that Lefkada is Homer's Ithaca. In his excavations, in Nydri, he brought to light important findings from the Copper Age (about 2000 B.C.). The ancient Nikeos of the 7th century B.C., in which Kalligion at the "Koulmos" site was discovered, was the first capital of the island and was surrounded by a large wall. A small section of it, survives today. Moreover, the island related to Corinth and followed by participating in all great events of the ancient era.



*Fortress of Agia Mavra was constructed in the 14th century and later expanded by the Venetians. With a central core in the shape of an irregular heptagon reinforced at its seven corners with bastions and three external ramparts.*

## ATTRACTIONS

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM OF LEFKADA

The archaeological museum of Lefkada presents the history, topography and public and private life of Ancient Leukas in separate sections of Hall A, dedicated to the public edifices, the houses, the towers and farmsteads, the production of olive oil and wine, trade, coinage, fishing and weaving. It is worth mentioning the popular cult of the Nymphs and Pan, with numerous offerings in caves. There is a characteristic exhibit of female figurines in a circular dance with a flutist in the middle, dated to the sixth century BC.

*Porto Katsiki beach with crystal clear waters The name is said to be because formerly only goats could reach this area.*





### STENO, NYDRI AREA

Another point of interest on the island and worth visiting is the area of Steno, to the west of Nydri, where the German archaeologist Wilhelm Dörpfeld brought to light in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century 33 circular tumuli dated to the Bronze Age. His research based on topographic observation and literary references aimed to detect the homeland of Odysseus, Ithaca. Nonetheless, these burial tombs with a diameter of 2,70-9,60 m. enclosed various types of burials and due to the wealth of their burial tributes they were characterized as 'royal'. Their wealth was originally connected by some scholars to trade of metals with the Balkan area or Sardinia and indicate early trade activity and cultural interaction in this broader area. Most of them are now buried, yet five of them are nowadays visible.

*Nidri is the most popular tourist resort in Lefkada. Beautiful sandy beaches stretch along the coast. One can enjoy amazing views across the islets of Heloni, Sparti, Madouri and Scorpios, the famous island of Aristotelis Onasis.*

*Meganisi islands and Sivota.*



## CAPE LEFKATA

Even though there were various divinities worshiped on the island, very few remains of temples have been identified, lying under subsequent buildings. The temple of Apollo Leukata in the homonymous cape at the south-western edge of the island was widely famous in antiquity and is related to legends about human sacrifices in honor of Apollo and the fall of the famous ancient female poet Sappho on the rocky promontory.

## MEGANISI

Meganisi island has two enchanting hill villages (Spathori and Katomerion) one of which is a “must visit”. There are also numerous quiet and sheltered anchorages around the deeply indented coast. Some are busy with wasps in late summer, and foxes haunt beaches used for BBQ parties. There are three ports.

## BEACHES

Turquoise meets azure, with white sand, white cliffs and smooth white pebbles. Vast exotic beaches, bays, cliffs that plunge into the sea and pine trees that tumbles intoxicatingly towards the coast. Porto Katsiki, Egkremnoi and Agiofilii (access by boat), Pefkoulia, Myli, Ammoglossa.



**(i) EXTRA INFO**  
**THE LIGHTHOUSE AT DOUKATO CAPE**, or as it is often called Lefkas Cape, was built in 1890 at the southernmost point of the island of Lefkada, where in ancient times was the temple of Apollo Lefkatas, a patron saint. According to the legend, in this place, the famous lyrical poet Sappho from Mytilene, from the island of Lesbos, committed suicide by jumping onto sharp rocks after she learned that her love was not returned.







**SURFIN'  
LEFKADA**  
*Board, boom,  
sail... and we're  
off to windsurf  
in Vasiliki and  
Ai Gianni, two  
of the world's  
best beaches for  
the sport and  
home to the  
International  
Regatta. If  
you prefer  
kitesurfing, Myli,  
near Lefkada  
town, is ideal. If  
you're even more  
courageous, you  
can paraglide –  
an unforgettable  
flight with an  
exciting landing  
at Kathisma,  
one of Lefkada's  
most gorgeous  
beaches. Or soar  
through the sky  
with one of the  
Aeroclub's prop  
planes or light  
aircraft.*



### ASSOS: PERFECTION IN MINIATURE

This tiny port is the prettiest settlement on the island. Built on a narrow strip of land, its few houses hug the shore, keeping their traditional Venetian-era character. The 16th century Venetian castle presiding over the whole scene is too invites you to climb up to take a closer look.





# KEFALONIA

## PARADISE LOST

Kefalonia is the largest of the Ionian Islands in western Greece and the 6th largest island in Greece. Beautiful beaches with crystal blue waters in combination with picturesque villages, provide to the visitor a unique experience.



## HISTORICAL

### INFO

Kefalonia is the largest of the Ionian islands and its name comes from either the mythical Kephalos or the ancient tribe of the Kephallenians. The ancient peoples acknowledged the strategic location of the island at the entrance of the Patraikos and the Corinthian Gulf throughout the times. According to literary sources, the western promontory of Paliki - and more particularly the ancient city Pali - was a station for the Corinthians on their way towards Corfu or Sicily during the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. The naval importance of this promontory is also attested at the site Valtsa of Katoe, more to the southwest, where a mosaic depicting dolphins and the trident of Poseidon was discovered in a Roman house (exhibited at the Archaeological Museum of Argostoli). It has been associated with a possible sanctuary in the area that sailors in antiquity must have been aware of, and it would have been similar to the Sanctuary at Rhoda, on the north coast of Corfu.

The island had a continual presence over the Paleolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age based on findings in caves as well as in Mycenaean tombs in different parts of the island. After a break in habitation between the



11<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC., the first settlements with fortified acropolis appeared on the island. Throughout the historical times, the island was divided into 4 areas with an equal number of capital cities: Krani and Pali on the western part of the island, Sami and Pronnoi to the east. The most important city in antiquity was Sami, especially when the Romans mainly used its port as a station towards Italy.

## ATTRACTIONS

This large island is oriented to tourism, with frequent charter flights in summer bringing people to the sandy beaches around the south of the island and the smart villages of the north. Flights to Athens and regular ferries from Argostoli and Poros to Killini (Peloponnese, buses to Athens) and Fiskardo to Levkas (Vassiliki) keep it in touch with the rest of Greece.

**Fiskardo** is a smart little port crowded with boats (arrive early for a good berth), and quite classy restaurants and cafés with classy prices. It's well worth a visit in spite of the crowds. Food here is more imaginative than average, but if you're ready for a change from Greek cuisine, try 'Lord Falcon'. Tucked 90m behind the SW corner of the harbor, it offers good Thai food as well as some more conventional Greek dishes. Café Tselenti has the highest prices with quality food and service. It also provided the inspiration for 'Capt Corelli's.

**Argostoli Town** is a port of entry, nearby airport. Ferries to Killini. It's a bit off the beaten track for sailors, but the pedestrian precinct of the town has a lively evening, and an excellent range of shops. The sheer native bustle of the place, only lightly touched by tourism, is very attractive. A 'marina' built just outside the town has never been commissioned. Many quays in it are uncomfortably exposed to surge from the summer northerly winds.

### Lake Cavern of Mellissani

The lake cavern of Mellissani is located about 2 km northwest of Sami. The cave was a place for the cult of Pan and the Nymphs. This was based on clay figurines depicting Pan and dancing Nymphs that were found here.



#### (i) EXTRA INFO

Scuba diving is particularly popular in Kefalonia, due to the rocky coastline and the safe waters. Kefalonia diving centers are found in almost all tourist places of the island, from Fiskardo and Agia Efimia on the north to Lassi and Lixouri on the southern side. These centers offer courses for all ages and organize diving trips to interesting sites.

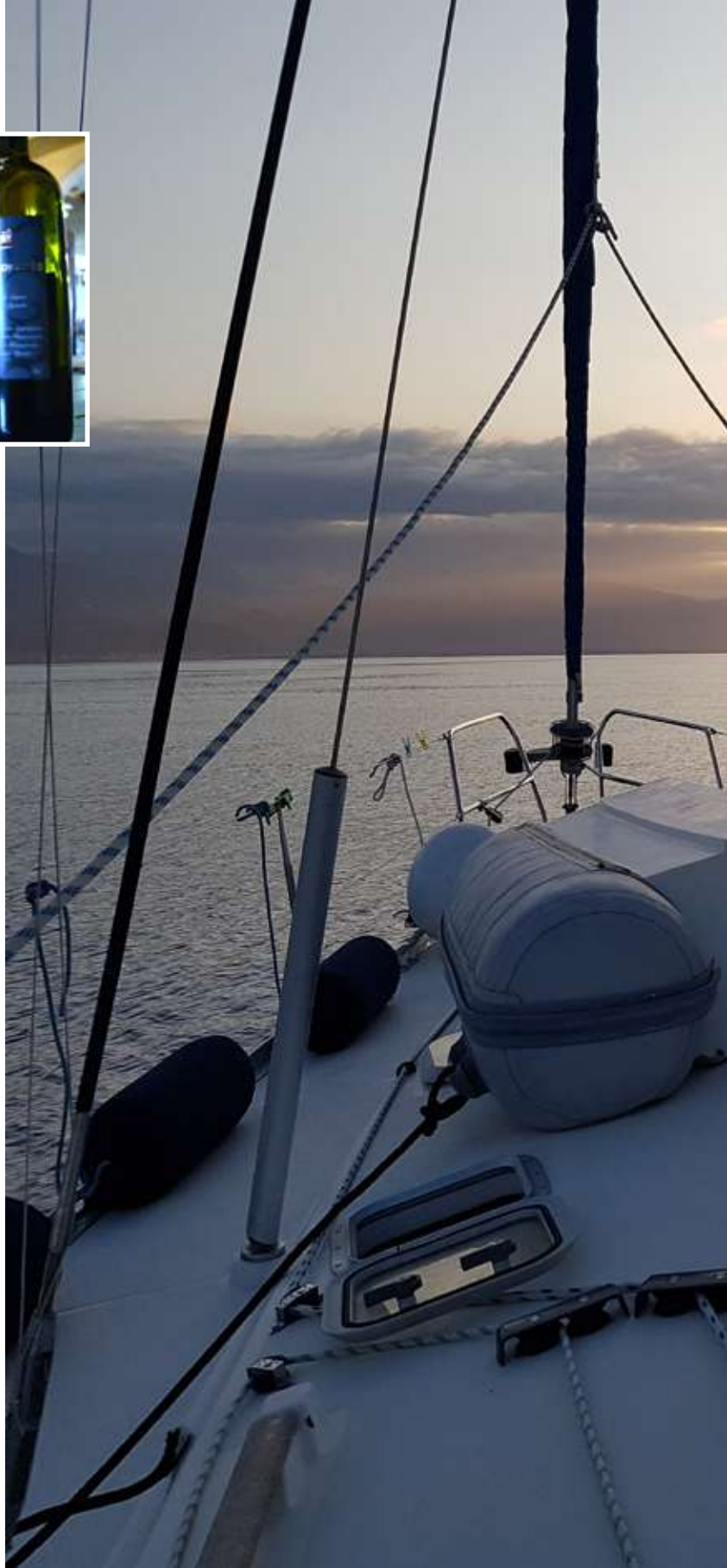






#### (i) EXTRA INFO

*The wine tradition of Kefalonia dates from ancient times and continues until today. Around the island, visitors shall meet many Kefalonia wineries, especially in the central and the southern part. One of the largest wineries in Kefalonia is the **Robola** Cooperative, which is open for visitors and has a small open museum in the yard. Robola is actually the most famous wine variety of Kefalonia and has received many awards in world wine-tasting competitions.*







# ITHACA

## THE SMALL DIAMOND OF THE IONIAN

Ithaca is a Greek island located in the Ionian Sea, off the northeast coast of Kefalonia and to the west of continental Greece. Ithaca's main island has an area of 96 square kilometres (37 sq mi) and had a population in 2011 of 3,231. It is the second-smallest of seven main Ionian Islands, after Paxoi.





Ithaca is a small island with many bays that served to the Corinthians during the archaic period as a base for their expeditions to the West. That was the flourishing period for the island, when it developed cultural interaction with the east and the west. According to sources and archaeological finds, there were sanctuaries of Apollo Archageta and Artemis in the area of Aghios Georgios. These are both Corinthian cults and this fact indicates that Ithaca was strongly connected to Corinth during the archaic colonization. In the Museum of Vathi there is a treasure of silver Corinthian coins and Corinthian aryballoi dated to the seventh century BC.

The most important settlement according to Plutarch was the ancient city of Alakomenai, which is identified on a hill in the area of Aetos above a small harbor, known by the locals as the “**Kastro of Odysseus**”. There are few remains of the fortification of this ancient acropolis. The coins that were found here with the head of Odysseus on one side and the inscription ithakon/ιθακων on the other side are considered as a strong proof for the identification of the Homeric Ithaca on the island. Some researchers have also related a fortification tower known as “**Homer’s School**” or “**Palace of Odysseus**” on the Aghios Athanasios hill, at the north part of the island, to the Homeric references. Over the last 10 years, research by the University of Ioannina at this location has discovered various finds from prehistory to Roman times.



*The extra virgin olive oil from a local variety of olive trees and the family wines from indigenous vine varieties are the main products. They cultivate the land mainly for their own needs, but there is always something put aside to offer to the guest! Herbs, honey, meat and cheese, as well as some special foods and desserts have always attracted the visitors who not only taste them on the spot, but also take them along.*

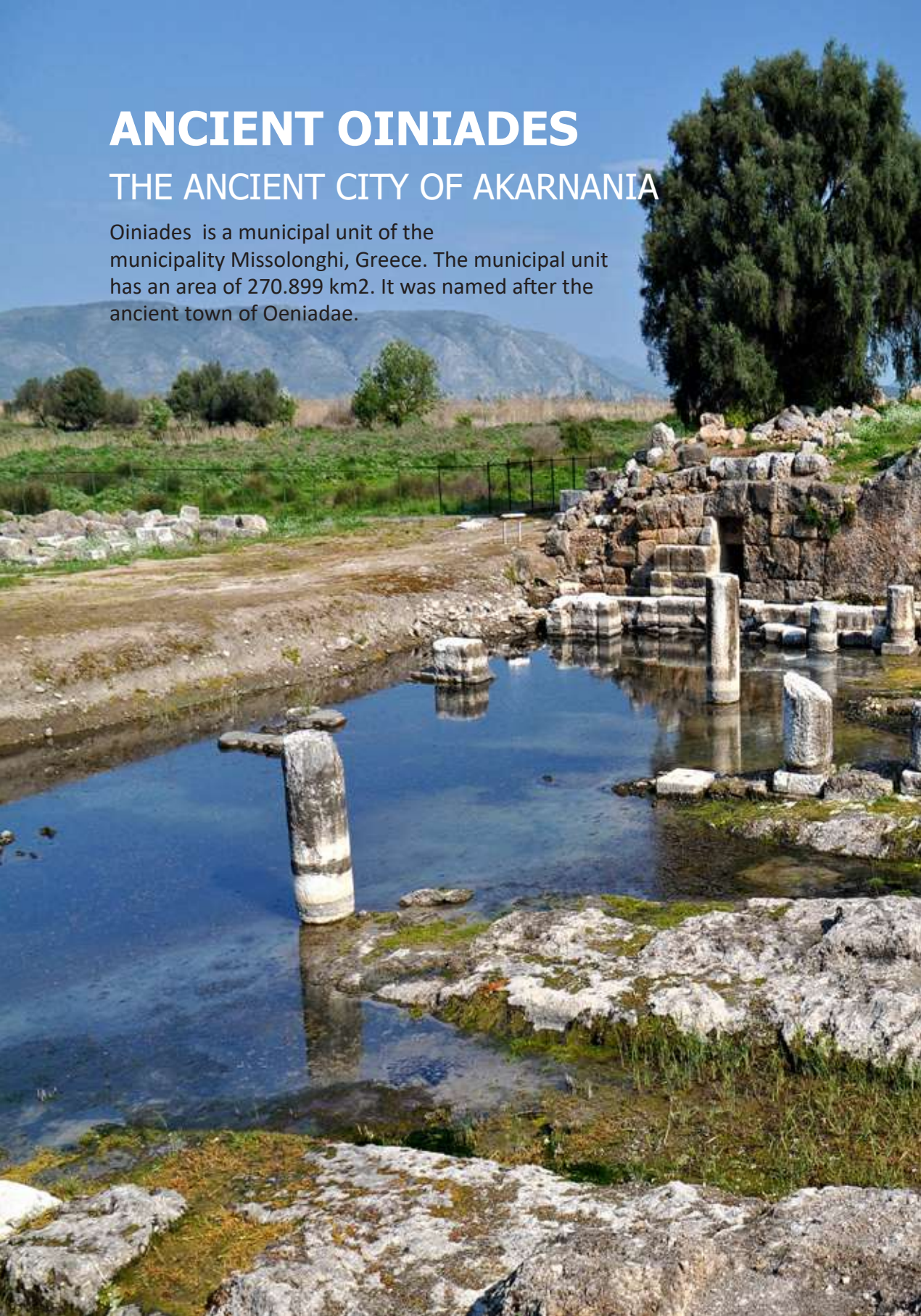




# ANCIENT OINIADES

## THE ANCIENT CITY OF AKARNANIA

Oiniades is a municipal unit of the municipality Missolonghi, Greece. The municipal unit has an area of 270.899 km<sup>2</sup>. It was named after the ancient town of Oeniadae.







## HISTORICAL

### INFO

Oiniades thrived in antiquity as an important city of western Greece due to its strategic location. Situated close to the Acarnanian southern coast it facilitated and controlled the sea passage to both the Corinthian Gulf and the Ionian Sea. Southern winds in this area favored sailing towards north, so Oiniades became not only a crucial point of control of the area but also an important trade station for sailboats travelling to the west. Moreover, lying on the top of a hill over the fertile valley of the floatable Achelous River it also controlled the road trade networks towards the Ionian coast and the hinterland. Due to its key role in the area on different levels, it diachronically became a point of claim.

According to Thucydides, in the archaic times the pirates had taken over the western part of the Corinthian Gulf, but the Corinthians managed to eliminate piracy in the area when they founded colonies, such as Ambrakia, Sollion and Anaktorion. The site is not reported as a Corinthian colony itself, but it has been connected with Corinth based on mythological reference. According to the myth, Alkmeon, famous for his war skills, left Corinth and went to Acarnania and founded Oiniades. Oiniades were reported to have been historically an ally of the Corinthians until the second half of the fifth century BC when the Athenians grew in power and took over the control of the area. Ancient sources such as Thucydides, Plutarch and Pausanias report the prime

*It's difficult to imagine the city that used to be here. Heavily fortified already since the 5th century. The city was located in a strategic position and had ports, in one of which used to be shipyards, places where ships were hauled, repaired and kept.*

of the city along the fifth, fourth and third centuries BC until the first century BC. Scholars mainly refer to the site as a typical example of a fortified ancient Greek town. Apart from the massive city walls, there are currently in situ ruins of private and public buildings, a theater, dockyards and port installations.

The archaeological site extends over an oak-covered hill where the well-preserved city walls stand out. The massive fortification protected not only the acropolis on the top of the hill but also the dockyards and a port to the south, in a separate enclosure. The walls are partly preserved in great height with different types of gates and towers possibly adjusted in posterior periods and the so-called Red Tower standing out. Within the fortification several public buildings have been identified at the area of the agora, amongst which a Bouleuterion and a Heroon.

The ancient theatre with an estimated capacity of about five thousand spectators is another indicating element of the prime of the settlement in ancient times. Its construction initiated by the Athenians when they occupied the city in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC and it was reconstructed in the Hellenistic and the Roman Periods. It had a unique view of the valley and the coastal area and great acoustics.

The most imposing monument of the site are the shipyards that stand out not only because of their uniqueness in the area but also for the great state of their preservation. It is worth noting though that over the years the riverbed has covered the surrounding in soil and created scattered ponds. They were fortified facilities were located to the west of the ancient port used to repair or keep the sailboats inside over wintertime. It was a p-shaped construction carved into the rock with a hilled floor. In the interior five rows of seventeen columns separated symmetrically the building and supported the tiled roof. They mainly created elongated aisles that could host eleven sailboats in total. The dockyards were a construction of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, current and like the port of Zea in Piraeus; their diachronic function indicates the important role of Ancient Oiniades as a facilitator of sea trade in antiquity.





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