

Walking holidays in GREECE

Discover a side to Greece that most visitors never experience,
expertly guided by Jonathan Peat

Experiential travel is a growing trend, with many intrepid explorers seeking to expand their horizons beyond the tried-and-tested city break or beach getaway. Enter the walking holiday, a trip that combines exploration and discovery with endorphin-fuelled exercise, boutique accommodation and delectable local cuisine. Tempted? Absolutely.

At Simpson Travel, our bespoke walking trips include flights, car hire or transfers, seven nights' accommodation (with a tantalising breakfast included), a welcome dinner and drinks, plus five unforgettable walks led by our expert guide Jonathan Peat. These walks range from 2-5 hours in length, with plenty of pauses to rest and refuel. Even better, the groups on these trips are limited to no more than 15 people, so there's a real sense of community. Pack your sturdiest walking boots, a handy water bottle and your sense of adventure!

Right:
Preveli, Crete



Walking in western Crete

In the ever-changing landscape of western Crete, our carefully planned itineraries offer a chance to take in the fascinatingly rich flora and fauna that benefit from the island's isolation, favourable climate and wide variety of habitats (from coastal marsh to mountain range). Discover remote and timeless monasteries, the evocative ruins of ancient Minoan palaces, the breathtaking geological features

of the White Mountains and Crete's wonderful gorges and plateaux. Informal stops at tiny, whitewashed chapels or rustic kafenions (cafés) give a taste of the slower pace of life in the rural community and you'll also uncover other aspects of island life including Cretan myths, edible and medicinal plants, cultivated and farmed crops, and the history of plant lore.

GREECE

Walking in southern Crete

Based in Loutro, our walks in southern Crete cover the most dramatic terrain of all our walking holidays but the effort is more than rewarded by the views – so astonishing, they remain etched in the memory for a lifetime. Loutro epitomises the sort of unpretentious fishing village that many visitors to Greece look for but never find; accessible only by boat, or by a walk along a cliffside path, it enjoys an idyllic position in a sheltered bay on Crete's impossibly blue southern shores. Led by Jonathan Peat, the trip's five daily walks encompass deserted beaches, magnificent gorges and Byzantine wonders. Few visitors to Crete ever see this part of the island, but those who discover it will want to return again and again.



Left: Loutro
Below: Itanos

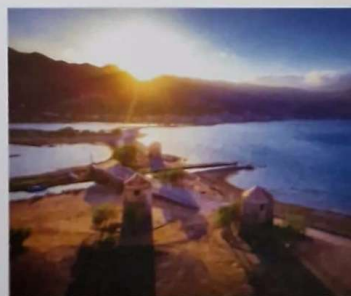


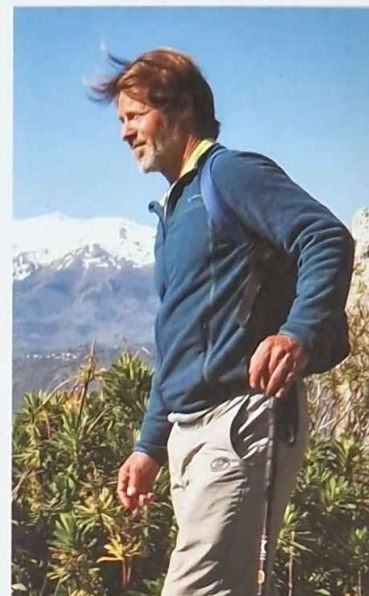
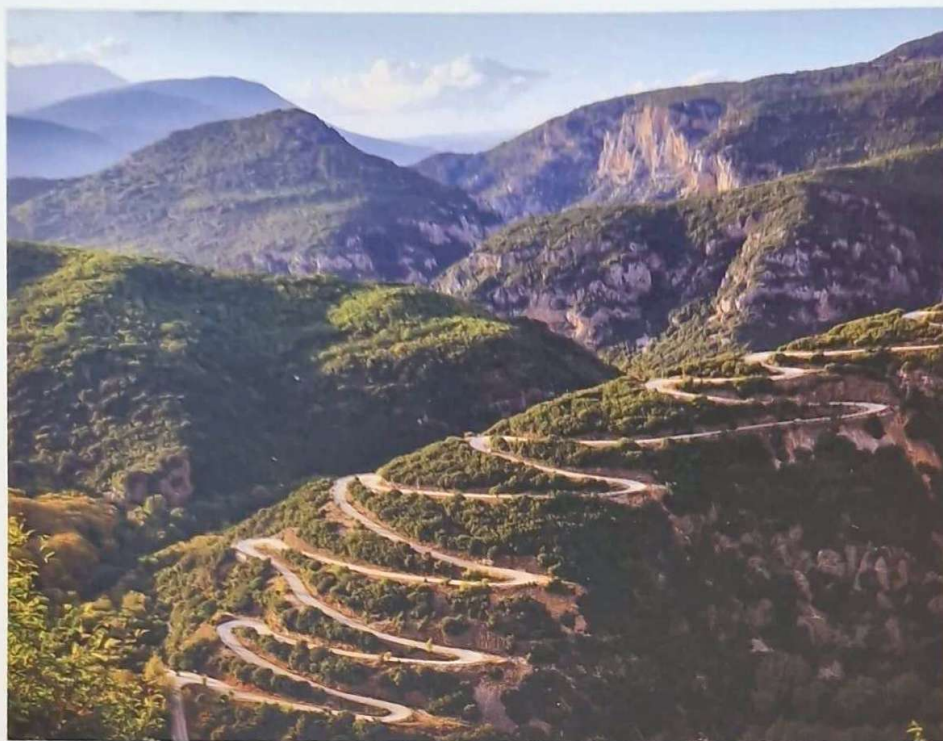
Walking in eastern Crete

The countryside in eastern Crete remains the most rugged, wild and unexplored on the island. Stunning beaches washed by water of amazing clarity and colour are cooled by a fresh sea breeze, while inland, tiny villages dot the hillsides and the distant jingle of goat bells echoes in the valleys. The gorges in the east (of which there are many) have a unique geology and you'll find endemic plants, insects, and animals that have disappeared from many other parts of the island. The unspoilt landscape evokes a sense of Crete as it was thousands of years ago and you will come to a greater understanding of the island's rich history in your journey along ancient pathways to discover



archaeological sites, hidden churches and deserted villages. Based by the lovely sandy beach at Kouremenos, your holiday accommodation is well-placed for leisure, with a couple of excellent tavernas just a stroll away and a windsurfing school if you're feeling energetic.





Your expert guide to Greece

Jonathan Peat is a qualified European Mountain Leader and has been hosting walks in Greece for more than 30 years. The son of a Greek mother and Scottish father, he grew up in Greece and the UK and is fluent in both languages. He also speaks French, is a keen organic gardener, an artist and a daily practitioner of yoga and meditation. In 1990, Jonathan was instrumental in setting up the walking programme for Simply Crete and lived on the island for many years, enjoying its culture, natural history and proud tradition of hospitality. His abundant knowledge affords our guests insights into aspects of the island that often go unseen, and his natural enthusiasm for the Greek people ensures a warm welcome from the locals.

Walking in Corfu & Epirus

Corfu is blessed with a rich natural landscape of mountains, olive groves, fertile valleys and a coastline dotted with secluded coves, sandy beaches and rocky inlets. Conquered by the Phoenicians and Venetians, and loaded with history and culture, its vibrant capital is arguably the most impressive of all the Ionian



island towns, and a wonderful place to begin your two-centre adventure with a tour of the town and time for a swim. Part two is a thrilling contrast to Corfu, venturing into the wildly beautiful region of Zagoria and the Pindus mountains, where you'll spend five days walking in the Vikos Aoo National Park area, learning about its unique fauna and flora. Often described as one of the last great wildernesses in Europe, the scenery here is rugged and dramatic, with the mighty Vikos Gorge as its centrepiece. Longer than the better-known Samaria Gorge on Crete, Vikos is one of the deepest gorges in the world, and there's a real sense of achievement in walking part of its 32km length.

“The Vikos Aoo National Park is often described as one of the last great wildernesses in Europe.”

Above: Vikos
Below:
Paleokastritsa