



CITY BREAK Athens

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So old yet so modern

The Greek capital is a city that has it all; a vibrant cosmopolitan hub with a rich culture, a long history, and a mild climate; one that possesses an unfading allure, attracting tourists from all over the world and promising a memorable stay whether as a short break or a longer trip. Enjoy Athens' high standard hotel services and facilities, and make the most of the wide range of choice you have as regards recreation, nightlife, shopping and dining. Use the modern metro, tram and railway system to reach most destinations. Walk along the promenade by the foot of the **Acropolis**, visit the city



The Athenian Riviera



Stavros Niarchos Foundation Cultural Centre



The Acropolis Museum

centre and its traditional neighbourhoods, the museums, the ancient sites and monuments, the theatres and art galleries, but save some of your time for the suburbs as well. The north suburbs are green and more spacious than other areas; you will find great restaurants, malls, nightclubs and sports facilities. Head south and follow the coastline, along the **Athenian Riviera**, discover the sunny shores of south Attica, visit historic sights, relax by the seaside, have a refreshing swim or practice your favourite water sport. The list of alternatives you have is a long one. Whether you travel for business or for pleasure, Athens is the perfect choice for mixing these two, any time of the year!



Peireos Street



The Academy of Athens

A walk in ancient Athens

Ancient Athens is one of Europe's oldest cities, one with a continuous history whose beginnings can be traced some 5,000 years ago. The Greek capital is known as the cradle of democracy. Ancient Athenians have nurtured and advanced science and art and provided the basis for western culture. Take a stroll along **Dionysiou Areopagitou St.** Visit the **temple of Olympian Zeus** (6th c. BC), next to **Hadrian's Arch** (131 AD). Follow the 3km pedestrian route. Start with the 5th c. BC **ancient theatre of Dionysus**; continue along the foot of the **Acropolis** - a world-renowned UNESCO world



Odeion of Herodes Atticus



Temple of Olympian Zeus



Ancient Theatre of Dionysus

heritage site; visit the **temple of the healer god Asclepius**; the 2nd c. BC **Stoa of Eumenes**; and the 161 AD **Odeion of Herodes Atticus** (a present-day venue for the yearly **Athens Festival**). Climb on the Acropolis Rock and admire the **Propylaea**, **Erechtheio**, the **temple of Athena Nike**, and the Parthenon. The **Acropolis Museum** stands right opposite the Rock, where 4,000 items from the Acropolis monuments are on display. Continue your walk northwest and you will reach **Areopagus**, the oldest Court of Law in Athens. Your next stop is **Pnyx**, the place where Athenian citizens used to hold their democratic assembly. Visit the **Ancient Agora**, the then centre of political, administrative, commercial and social activity. Finally, head to **Kerameikos**, the city's ancient cemetery, and the nearby museum where impressive tomb sculptures are on display. Athens is an open air museum, so plan your trip ahead and spend your available time wisely.



The Erechtheio, Acropolis



Stoa of Attalos

Traditional neighbourhoods with a special ambience

Athens' historic centre includes neighbourhoods with an ambience of bygone days; next to ancient Greek and Byzantine monuments and churches lie houses dating to the Ottoman Occupation period and impressive 19th c. neoclassical buildings. Visit the famous **Plaka district**, located right next to the Acropolis; wander in **Anafiotika**, Plaka's picture-perfect neighbourhood that carries a marked island ambience in its back streets and houses. Continue your walk towards **Monastiraki** where there



Plaka



Monastiraki Square

is a lively flea market (on Sundays), and stroll in pedestrianised Pandrosou and Adrianou Sts. From Monastiraki Sq. head northwest to **Psyrri**, one of the oldest neighbourhoods in Athens, that stretches around Iroon Sq. Choose one of the local traditional tavernas and enjoy your dinner listening to bouzoukia, a type of popular Greek urban folk music. **Makrygianni** neighbourhood is an area with many neoclassical imposing buildings. **Thiseio** district lies northwest of the Acropolis area and it, too, brims with culture. Visit the **temple of god Hephaestus**, the **National Observatory of Athens** on Nymphon Hill, the **Herakleidon Museum**, and the 11th c. **Agion Asomaton Byzantine Church**. The **Benaki Museum of Islamic Art** neighbours **Kerameikos** archaeological site and the **Ancient Agora**. Another district with an atmosphere is **Gazi**, an area named after the 19th century gas works that provided the city with gaslight up to a century ago. This is where the city's **Technopolis cultural centre** is located. Visit the premises where the **Industrial Gas Museum** is housed, and pick from a wide range of cultural events and exhibitions hosted there around the year.



The Tower of Winds, Roman Forum



Anafiotika



Plaka

Present-day Athens

The Greek capital is a modern metropolis; one which can cater for all of its visitors' needs. Public transport means include the **Athens Metro** underground railway (*Attiko Metro*), electric **trolley buses**, the **tram rail** system (*Athens Tram*), the **suburban railway** (*Proastiakos*) and a dense city bus network. Board the metro from the **Athens International Airport – Eleftherios Venizelos** and travel everywhere in the city and all the way to the country's port, **Piraeus**, or take express bus lines **X93, X95, X96, X97** from and to the airport.

A favourite tourist destination is **Syntagma Sq.**, where the Greek Parliament is located with the



Vasilissis Sofias Avenue



Lycabettus Hill



Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Syntagma

Tomb of the Unknown Soldier fronting it. Two *Evzones* - members of the Presidential Guard (a select military corps) – stand on both sides of it, in traditional costume. Stroll to the south of the adjacent **National Garden**, where **Zappeion** is located - an emblematic 19th c. historic edifice, used today as a venue for official ceremonies and meetings. The horseshoe shaped **Panathenaic Stadium** – an all-marble Stadium where the first Modern Olympic Games took place – is a nearby must-visit site, too. Take a stroll down **Patisson St.** (from Omonoia Sq.) where the **National Technical University** and the **National Archaeological Museum** are located; climb on **Lycabettus Hill**, a green location, on the top of which you will enjoy a lovely view of the entire city; go shopping in **Kolonaki** district, an uptown area with designer boutiques; and walk along **Vasilissis Sofias Avenue** which is lined with neoclassical buildings, embassies and museums.



Zappeion



Panathenaic Stadium

DAY TRIPS IN CULTURE, HISTORY & ART

Athens is known across the world as a city steeped in history and art. Choose it for your next city break and visit museums and galleries that will feed your cultural appetite. One of the oldest museums in Athens is the **Benaki Museum**, near Kolonaki Sq., with exhibits that range from prehistoric finds to recent works of art. The **Byzantine and Christian Museum** places an emphasis on the Byzantine and post Byzantine Period (from the 3rd c. AD onwards). In the nearby **Museum of Cycladic Art** you



Byzantine and Christian Museum



Goulandris Natural History Museum



Benaki Museum

will see items from the period starting in the middle Bronze Age (2nd millennium BC) to the end of Roman times (4th c. AD). If you're interested in fine arts, visit the **Gkika Gallery**, on Kriezotou St. in the city centre. Within a short distance you will find the **Numismatic Museum**, on Panepistimiou St. Its collections include monetary objects and similar items that date as far back as the dawn of history. The **National History Museum** is located on Kolokotroni Sq., and it will offer you some insight into Greece's long past. In picturesque Plaka area, take your children for a visit to the **Museum of Greek Children's Art**. In nearby Acropolis area, make a point of seeing the amazing collections in the **Ilias Lalaounis Jewellery Museum**; it is the only museum of modern jewellery in Greece. The brand new **National Museum of Contemporary Art** is located on Syngrou Ave., near Syngrou-Fix metro station. Last but not least, plan a tour of the **Goulandris Natural History Museum** with the family, in the green suburb of Kifissia. Enjoy the natural exhibits as well as the impressive displays on environmental sciences.



Numismatic Museum



Museum of Cycladic Art

Urban green spaces for your leisure time

During your stay in the Greek capital, spend some time visiting open air green spaces. Take the family to the **National Garden** right next to the Parliament building in Syntagma Sq. and enjoy the sounds of nature in the heart of the city. Your kids will love the small zoo, and the playground; there is also an archaeological site and a traditional café. **Attiko Alsos** is an urban forest and the most elevated green



National Garden



Pedion tou Areos



Eleftherias Park

area within the city, which affords a fine view of Mt. Hymettus and of Athens. You will find an open air cinema and a theatre (in the summer), two playgrounds, cafés, volleyball, basketball and tennis courts, and a parking lot. At a stone's throw from the city centre – only 1km away from Omonoia Sq - you can visit **Pedion tou Areos**, a spacious green area. **Strefi Hill** is a pine-covered hill, located in Exarcheia district, with a basketball court, a playground and a small theatre. The biggest park in Athens' metropolitan area is **Antonis Tritsis Environmental Awareness Park**, at Ilion, covering an area of 120 ha. There are six lakes in the park; follow the path around them, go birdwatching and spend your day learning about rare species of fauna and flora that exist in the area. Take your children to the **Athens Zoo Park**, in Spata, Attica. There is a playground next to the entrance for little ones and benches are placed at various points along the way for people to rest; you can also have a coffee or a meal at the *Zoo café*. The list of green spaces in the Greek capital and suburbs is a long one, so plan ahead and see more!



Strefi Hill



Antonis Tritsis Environmental Awareness Park

Athens by night

The Greek capital is a city with a vibrant nightlife, one that will offer you memorable experiences. Start with the city centre: you'll find a variety of restaurants, bars, tavernas, coffee shops, and clubs in **Thiseio, Monastiraki** and **Psyrri** districts. Enjoy your dinner, listen and dance to live Greek music until the wee hours of the night. Head for **Gazi** district, an area considered by most Athenians as a hotspot in terms of downtown nightclubbing – have a great time listening to Greek music, lounge, jazz, rock, or pop music; visit **Technopolis City of Athens** and choose among the events and performances that get staged in the premises. In the vicinity of the Acropolis, go for a stroll



Ejekt Festival

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in famous **Plaka** neighbourhood and feel the area's special ambience; pick a traditional taverna and savour scrumptious Greek dishes while you listen to *bouzoukia*. If you're looking for a stylish international, ethnic or haute cuisine restaurant close to the centre, then **Kolonaki** is your must-visit area. The northern and southern suburbs will also offer you a wide variety of similar restaurants to choose from. If you're a concert fan, you will enjoy an indoor event at **Megaron, the Athens Concert Hall**. In the summertime, make a point of viewing an outdoor dramatic or musical performance at the **Odeon of Herodes Atticus** as part of the **Athens and Epidaurus Festival**. Don't miss out on watching a film in open air cinemas across the city and dancing in music festivals such as **Rockwave Festival, Plissken Festival, Ejekt Festival** and **Summer Nostos Festival**. Pick from the vast array of choices and enjoy Athens' busy nightlife!



Plaka



Odeon of Herodes Atticus

Thessaloniki by night

When the sun sets, the city stays awake and follows the lively rhythm of the night. Enjoy your dinner time in the city centre – visit **Ladadika**, **Evosmos**, and **Ano Poli** areas. Savour local scrumptious dishes in a traditional taverna, *ouzeri* (type of taverna where ouzo spirit is served with *mezedes* - tasty fish or meat titbits), or a *rebetadiko* (a restaurant where live **rebetiko music** is played). Enjoy your drink and dance until the wee hours in bars and clubs along **Valaoritou St.**, in the **harbour area**, in **Kalamaria**, **Toumpa**, **Kastra** and **Polichni**. Those of you aged 25 and above can visit the **Thessaloniki Regency Casino** (12km off the city towards **Macedonia International Airport**). Enjoy a music, theatre or art



Nea Paralia



performance in the **Thessaloniki Concert Hall**. Choose among the wide variety of events, festivals, exhibitions, concerts and various performances that take place in the **Thessaloniki International Fair** premises and in other locations such as **Mylos** multicultural centre.

In the summertime, make a point of boarding one of *karavakia* (a water bus service) and enjoy the city night views in the cool of the evening. Take your better half for a romantic evening walk by the sea, along **Nea Paralia**, and watch a film in an **open air cinema** under the starlit summer sky. Drink in the amazing evening city view from Ano Poli (Kastra area). Enjoy your nights out in Thessaloniki!



Ladadika

Thessaloniki by day

Explore Thessaloniki's waterfront area, follow the promenade that stretches as far as the eye can see, relax or go jogging with the locals. Stroll along the large walkway by **Nikis Avenue** and the pedestrianised **Aristotelous Sq.**, relax in one of the cafés along the way, enjoy a bicycle ride with the family, and have your meal in a bar or restaurant in **Ladadika** area. Go shopping in busy streets such as **Mitropoleos**, **Tsimiski**, **Ermou**, **Pavlou Mela**, **Vogatsikou**, and **Proxenou Koromila**. See the antique shop windows in **Bit Bazaar** square, the hotspot of the city's thriving student community, close to the **Roman Forum**. Enjoy the scent of exotic spice flavours in shops selling fresh produce inside traditional marketplaces such as **Modiano**, **Kapani** (or Vlali), and **Vatikioti**.



Aristotelous Square



Archaeological Museum

Visit the exhibition that takes place inside Thessaloniki's landmark, the **White Tower**, and museums such as the **Archaeological Museum**, the **Museum of Byzantine Culture**, the **Jewish Museum of Thessaloniki**, the **State Museum of Contemporary Art**, the **Photography Museum**, the **Goulandris Natural History Museum**, the **Cinema Museum**, the **Folk and Ethnographic Museum**, and the **Teloglio Foundation of Art**, to name but a few. The Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman monuments in the city centre are also well worth visiting. The most famous are the **Palace of Galerius** (late 3rd c.), the **Octagon** (a throne and audience hall), **Eptapyrgion** Fortress in Ano Poli, and **Trigoniou Tower** located in the eastern city walls.



Eptapyrgion

An open air UNESCO world heritage site

The biggest city in the Greek North is a place with a vibrant atmosphere, rich in history and culture. Choose it as your next cultural city break and enjoy the wealth of its historic sites. Discover Thessaloniki's Roman, early Christian and Byzantine monuments as you saunter in the city centre. Walk by its 4km long **Walls** that date back to its founding days (late 4th – early 3rd c. BC). See the imposing **Eptapyrgio** fortress located NE at the highest point of the city fortifications. Visit **Rotunda**



Saint Demetrius



Panagia Acheropoiitos Church



Panagia Chalkeon Church

(a domed Roman temple converted in the early Christian years into **Saint George Church**) and marvel at the 5th c. outstanding gold and silver-coloured early Byzantine mosaics. The churches of **Saint Demetrius** and **Saint David** (Latomou Monastery) are masterpieces of early Christian art and architecture. Nearby **Vlatadon Monastery** is an impressive building with Middle and Late Byzantine period mosaics; the location offers an amazing view over Thermaikos Gulf. **Prophitis Ilias** Church is an impressive and elaborate construction built on Ano Poli in the late Byzantine period. The **Holy Twelve Apostles Church** is also a Late Byzantine [14th c.] edifice located on Olympou St., near the city's western Walls. Head downtown and visit the early Christian [5th c.] **Panagia Acheropoiitos Church** on Agia Sophia St., as well as nearby **Saint Sophia Church**, a 7th c. domed basilica. Close to the Roman Forum you will find the 11th c. **Panagia Chalkeon Church** (a.k.a. the Red Church). Thessaloniki's list of Byzantine monuments is a long one, so make the most of your time in this open air UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Rotunda



Saint Sophia Church

Thessaloniki – A Mediterranean port with a multicultural history

Thessaloniki is a historic port city and a bustling modern metropolis. The capital of Macedonia was established by Cassander, its first king, and named after his wife, the sister of Alexander the Great. The city's 23 centuries of continuous existence were marked by periods of great prosperity alternated with wartime and occupation. Thessaloniki was the most important city in the Byzantine Empire –



Thessaloniki International Film Festival facilities



Thessaloniki Book Fair booths



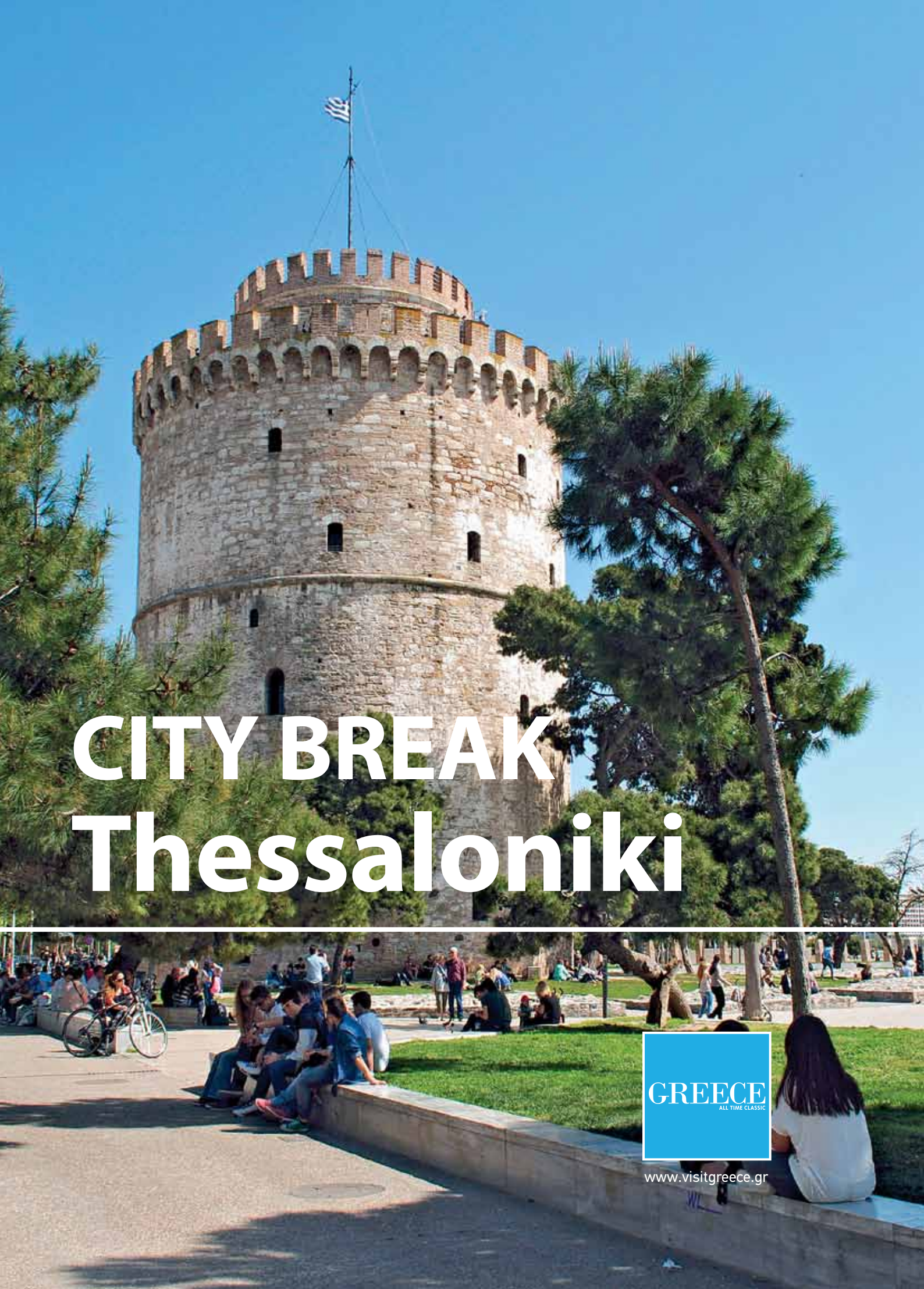
Ano Poli

second only to Constantinople - and its impressive early Christian and Byzantine monuments have earned it an inscription on **UNESCO's World Heritage Site List**. People of various cultures, ethnic origins and religions have settled in Thessaloniki and helped shape its multicultural character. The second largest city in Greece is today a thriving cultural, commercial and educational hub in northern Greece.

Travel to Thessaloniki on the occasion of major events such as the **Thessaloniki International Fair** in September, the **Thessaloniki International Film Festival** in November, and the **Thessaloniki Book Fair** in May. Enjoy your stroll along *Nea Paralia* (the seafront area); see the imposing **White Tower**, and pass by the '*Umbrellas*' - a famous modern sculpture by G. Zongolopoulos. Visit nearby museums and see monuments that date from the Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman times; wander in scenic neighbourhoods such as **Ano Poli** and **Ladadika**. Try the excellent local gastronomy, relax in picturesque coffee shops and enjoy a night out in the city.



White Tower



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