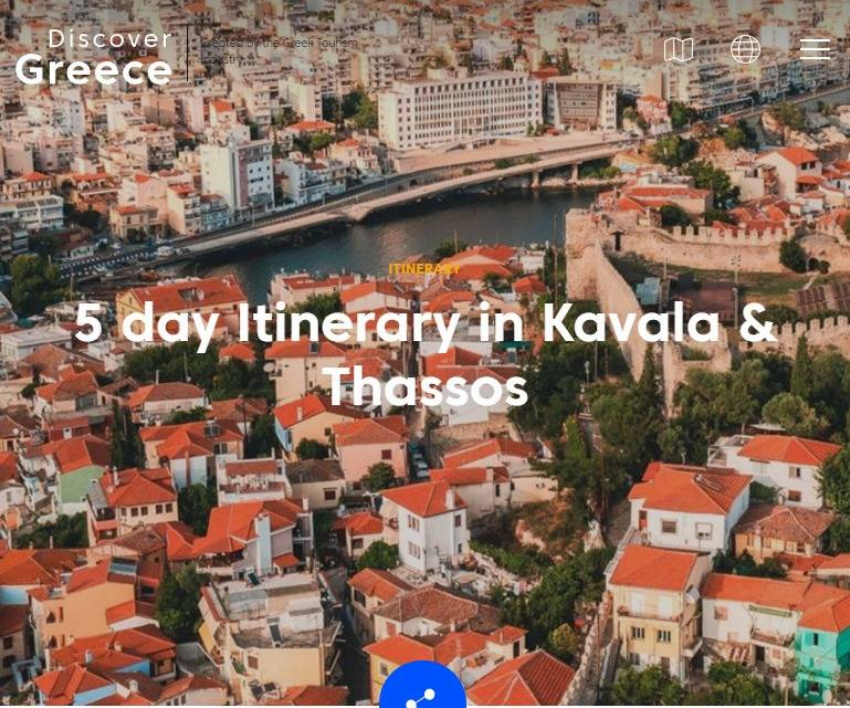


ITINERARY

5 day Itinerary in Kavala & Thassos

Think you know Greece? Before answering, allow us to introduce Kavala and Thassos, a city-and-island combo in northern Greece where you'll discover Macedonian culture, magical beaches, mountain villages and delicious seafood

You'll quickly realise that 5 days aren't enough for your holidays in Kavala and Thassos. But if that's all you've got, you'll want to make the most of the multicultural charms of one of Greece's most idiosyncratic coastal cities and the beaches and mountain villages of its northernmost island. Of course, you're free to extend your stay or amend your itinerary in northern Greece in any way you wish. But for now … welcome to the highlights.

*As an itinerary that's been **road-tested by Discover Greece**, we've included the restaurants and experience providers that supported our journey – although there are, of course, plenty of alternatives out there. The trip is designed to be enjoyed best during summer ... and if you can make that early or late summer (June or September/early October), so much the better. We're assuming you'll hire a car but you can also catch taxis and buses.*

Start point - End point

Kavala airport

Distance

482 km

Means of transport

Boat, Airplane, Car, Foot

Duration

5 days

Highlights

Kavala Old Town, the Archaeological site of Philippi, wine-tasting, beach & village-hopping in Thassos, the seafood

DAY 1 • OVERVIEW

Kavala

98 km **Airplane, Car, Foot** **3**

Arriving at Kavala Airport first thing in the morning (or the previous night), you stretch your legs in the Old Town of a city like no other in Greece. Fear not, you get to spend the afternoon on the beach and for dinner we've got a delicious seafood meal lined up.

Stop 1

A walking tour of Kavala Old Town

A walking tour of Kavala Old Town

East meets west in Kavala Old Town, with the **Ottoman influence** apparent in the architecture but also evidence of 2,500 years of **Ancient Greek** and **Roman history**. Centring on the Panagia district, the Old Town is built on a peninsula topped by a 15th-century **Byzantine Acropolis**, with views of red roof tiles and the Ottoman-era **Kamares Aqueduct** (which replaced a Roman one) snaking towards the New Town. Pass by the **Imaret**, an early 19th-century landmark built by Mehmet Ali (founder of the last Egyptian dynasty) as a gift to his birthplace. You reach the **Old Lighthouse** (Thassos is visible on a clear day) and for the energetic, just beyond the Old Town, you'll find **Tobacco Warehouses** (some derelict but some restored into shops and cultural spaces), from Kavala's commercial heyday.

Take a tour of Kavala Old Town

Stop 2

An afternoon lazing on the beach

An afternoon lazing on the beach

You've earned it. There are beaches right on the doorstep of Kavala as well as down the coast. Just before leaving town, you find **Batis** and **Kalamitsa**, which more than do the job for a first swim. But it's worth exploring further down the west coast, especially if you have a car. Nea Iraklitsa and Nea Paramos are 20-30 minutes away. Our choice was **Ammolofi** beach (27km from Kavala), with an island feel and all the facilities to unwind. But if remote is more your beach style, 10 minutes further down the coast is **Pyrgos Apollonias**, with nothing but sand and the feeling of total escape.

Discover 5 reasons you can't miss Kavala

Stop 3

A seafood meal to savour

A seafood meal to savour

The first day of your holidays in Kavala ends in perfect style, with a seafood meal. You'll find plenty of **fish tavernas** and restaurants in Kavala, but our choice was **Savvas taverna**, in **Perigiali**, a quaint marina on the eastern side of the city. With tables right by the marina, you dine looking at the bobbing ***kaikia*** (small fishing boats that are the staple of Kavala's fishing tradition). Prawn spaghetti, grilled squid, pelagic fish ... do we need to go on.

photo credits: @savvas.seafood

DAY 2 · OVERVIEW

Kavala

75 km Car, Foot 3

You couldn’t imagine three more different experiences for your second day on holiday in Kavala. After travelling to the birthplace of Christianity in Europe and a pivotal site in Macedonian history, you move on to wine-tasting in one of the region’s many vineyards before – wait for it – you let go of all your cares with a therapeutic mud bath.

Stop 1

The Archaeological Site of Philippi ⊖

The Archaeological Site of Philippi

Philippi is one of Greece’s most important archaeological locations. It was occupied by **Philip II of Macedon** (father of Alexander the Great) in the 4th century BC, was a cornerstone of the **Roman Empire** and was where **Apostle Paul** first preached in Europe. You'll find evidence of all three as you explore the site, including the remains of **Byzantine churches** (with architecture inspired from Constantinople), an **Ancient Theatre** and **Forum**, and the baptistery where St Lydia became the first woman to be christened in 49-50 AD. Make sure to visit the **on-site museum**, with exhibits from prehistoric to Roman times as well as early-Christian artefacts.

Take a tour of the Archaeological Site of Philippi

Stop 2

Wine-tasting and a vineyard tour ⊖

Wine-tasting and a vineyard tour

Heading north from Philippi, the scenery changes as you enter the prefecture of Drama and visit the Château Nico Lazaridi Winery, in a fertile plane flanked by three mountains (Falakro, Menikio and Pangeon). Touring the 6,500 m2 estate (including cellars and wine-tasting facilities) you'll learn how the region grows your favourite European grape varieties such as *Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay, Syrah* and *Merlot*. So far, so familiar. But how much do you know about *Assyrtiko, Moshato, Mavroudi* and other Greek grapes? It's about time you found out. And as for the quality ... the vineyard's are labelled as Protected Geographical Indication Drama and Agora. The collection of artwork on the wall is a nice touch.

photo credits: @nicolazaridiwinery

Stop 3

The Mud Baths of Krinides

The Mud Baths of Krinides

Now for the bit you weren't expecting. Wading body-deep in therapeutic mud baths is as about as far from the classic image of Greece as you can get and yet this is what the Mud Baths of Krinides (19km from Kavala) gives you. Up to you whether you immerse yourself fully or only partially but the 'mature clay' is said to help heal strains, aches and rheumatoid pains as well as cardiovascular and skin conditions. And if slathering yourself in mud isn't your style, there are Hammam baths and rejuvenating massages. There's an on-site restaurant or you can return for dinner in Kavala, as we did at Epicure restaurant by the port.

photo credits: @Krinides Mud Baths

DAY 3 · OVERVIEW

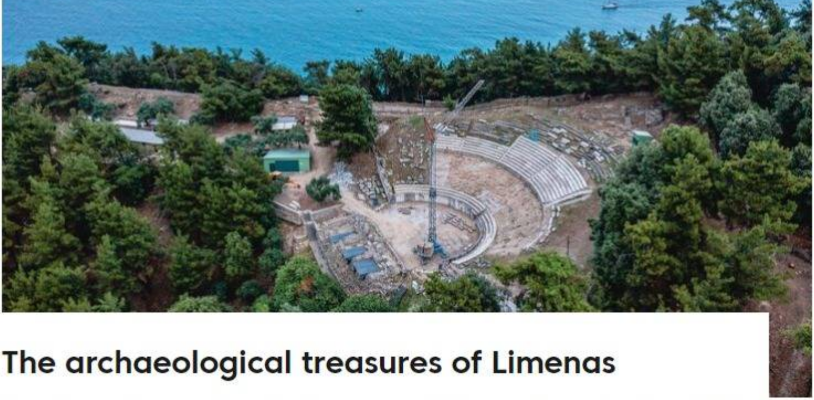
Thassos

79 km Boat, Car, Foot 2

Time for island life now as your holidays continue in Thassos. There are ferries that go directly from Kavala to Prinos (1hr20min), a small port in north-western Thassos, or you can drive to Keramoti (35min), just past Kavala Airport, and take the shorter crossing (40min) to Limenas. Get an early ferry because there's a lot lined up, including a cultural walking tour and an introduction to the tastes of Thassos.

Stop 1

The archaeological treasures of Limenas



The archaeological treasures of Limenas

There's no better way to get to know a new destination than on foot, so that's what we have in store as you arrive on the green-and-blue isle of Thassos. **Limenas** is built on the island's ancient city, which was a valuable catch for Phoenicians, Macedonians, Romans and others due to Thassos' rich gold and marble deposits. There's a wonderful 3.5km route from the Old Harbour, following a path around the tree-filled peninsula, past the **Acropolis of Thassos** and **Temple of Athena**, as well as the **Ancient Theatre** and **Agora**. Climbing the hillside above Limenas, you get beautiful views of Thassos' port capital. End your historical tour at the **Archaeological Museum of Thassos**.

Stop 2

The colourful pasta tradition of Thassos ⊖

The colourful pasta tradition of Thassos

Soak up the atmosphere in Limenas (grab a coffee, watch the local life go by…) before your next experience, which is a short drive away. San Allote (Like the Good Old Days) is a shop just outside the village of Prinos, with a wonderful collection of **pasta**. The colours alone are enough to make your mouth water (made with ingredients such as beetroot, tomato, carrot, peppers, spinach, smoked paprika, curry and Cayenne pepper). But the real secret here is to ask if the owners can arrange a **cookery class** for you. You'll never look at pasta in the same way. It's up to you whether you sneak in a cheeky swim in Skala Prinos (around 4km away).

photo credits: @sanallotepasta

DAY 4 · OVERVIEW

Thassos

79 km **Boat, Car, Foot** **3**

Let's be straight here. The beaches of Thassos need a lot more than a day to do them justice. And you're hardly going to want to move once you've arrived at one. But as far as your 5-day trip to Kavala and Thassos is concerned, we're proposing a beach-hopping boat trip to sample some of the best. Most are on the south coast, so we start by driving to the village of Limenaria and hiring a boat and skipper.

Stop 1

A boat trip to Thassos' magical beaches ⊖

A boat trip to Thassos' magical beaches

The irony is that the most-photographed swimming spot in Thassos isn't actually a beach. **Giola Lagoon** features a natural rock pool known as Aphrodite's tear (myth has it that Zeus created it for his lover Aphrodite to bathe in) and it's the island's go-to Insta spot. This is where our **Thassos Daily Cruises** skipper took us first. That said, the dreamy expanse of beachfront at **Arsanas** (our second stop) was just as memorable. But there are so many other beaches on Thassos' south coast to choose from ... **Metallia**, **Paradise** and **Aliki** (with its backdrop of pine and olive trees and nearby ancient marble quarry... pure Thassos!). And others, of course.

Stir up Insta envy in Giola lagoon

Stop 2
A cultural pit stop in Limenaria

A cultural pit stop in Limenaria

Returning to Limenaria, you've got the option of adding a splash of culture to your day. You'll see **Palataki**, a handsome 1903-built mansion and one-time headquarters of a German marble mining company, from the boat. And **Kastro Folk Art Museum** is a quaint little gem in Limenaria itself, with musical instruments and other local artefacts, including original mining equipment.

photo credits: @visit-thassos.com

Stop 3
A sunset dinner at Potos beach

A sunset dinner at Potos beach

You could head back to your hotel, but it's worth making the most of being in southern Thassos. Heading to the west-facing Potos beach, you're in for a treat of a sunset over the Aegean. Our choice of dinner spot was San Antonio Beach restaurant for excellent seafood and views to match.

photo credits: @sanantoniobeach

DAY 5 • OVERVIEW

Thassos

151 km Car, Foot 3

The truth is that if you want to feel the truly authentic side of Greece, you have to head to a village ... and if it's up a mountain so much the better. **Thassos' villages** are found on the slopes of **Mt Ipsarion**, rising 1,204m from the centre of the island. How many you see depends on how long you want to stay in each. We chose a Jeep safari and made a day of it.

Stop 1

Jeep safari around Thassos' villages ⊖

Jeep safari around Thassos' villages

Your first stop is **Kazaviti** – or more specifically Megalo and Mikro Kazaviti (or Prinos), the oldest settlements in Thassos, within 600m of each other. This is your introduction to the stone houses, wooden balconies and village life in Thassos. Further around the western slopes of Mt Ipsarion, **Maries** is a little beauty built by a ravine that will make you want to explore one of Thassos' best hiking paths, especially the nearby Maries Waterfalls. **Theologos** also boasts water features (watermills, wooden bridges and the Kefalogourna waterfalls) as well as more traditional Macedonian architecture and local products (try the thyme honey). We ate at Kosta's taverna (stuffed courgette flowers, *gigantes* beans and other *meze*) in **Kastro** village. And on the other side of Mt Ipsarion is **Panagia**, the capital of Thassos after the 1821 revolution against the Ottomans. Lastly, whilst you're in a Jeep, make sure you climb to the viewpoint at the peak of Mt Ipsarion. There's no better way to appreciate all that greenery.

Discover the mountain villages of Thassos

Stop 2

A final seafood meal in Limenas ⊖

A final seafood meal in Limenas

There's only one way your 5-day trip to Kavala and Thassos ends and that's at a seafood restaurant back in Limenas. What better way to lock in the feeling of your holiday by the Aegean Sea. Our chosen spot was Namaste restaurant by the new port, for grilled fresh fish, summer salads and a final taste of island life.

photo credits: @namaste

Stop 3

A short goodbye (for now)

A short goodbye (for now)

Told you five days wouldn't be enough. But if your holidays in Kavala and Thassos are only five days, it's time to head for home. After the ferry crossing to Keramoti, you'll head straight to Kavala Airport and board your international or domestic flight (or spend the night in Kavala). One thing's for sure, though. You'll have vowed to be back.

Road-testing the itinerary for you

In road-testing the 5-day trip to Kavala and Thassos, we invited a team of German media to live the experience for themselves. Stay tuned for their verdict.

★★★★★

FAQs

How do you get to Kavala in northern Greece?

Kavala has an airport with international arrivals / departures and regular domestic flights to and from Athens (1 hour). You can also reach Kavala by flying to **Thessaloniki Airport** and hiring a car or catching a KTEL bus (171km).

Where do you get a ferry to Thassos?

There are regular **ferries from Keramoti** (40km by car or bus) **to Limenas** (approx. 40mins, from €4 for passengers) and from **Kavala to Prinos** (approx. 1hr20min) on Thassos. More info here.

What is Thassos known for??

Greece's northernmost island is known for its greenery and beaches, making it a favourite holiday destination in northern Greece. In antiquity, it was of strategic importance because of its gold and marble deposits. More than 70% of the island is taken up by Mt Ipsarion (1,204m).