




THESSALONIKI SURVIVAL GUIDE



Contents



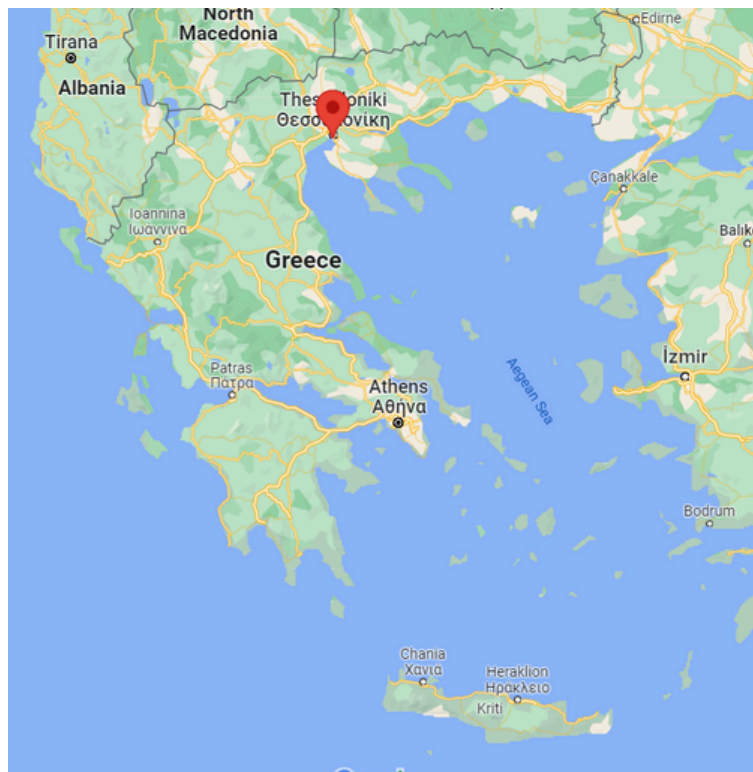
<u>About Thessaloniki</u>	3
<u>Universities of Thessaloniki</u>	4
<u>Arrival to Thessaloniki</u>	5
<u>Transportation in Thessaloniki</u>	6
ESN Thessaloniki Partners and ESNcard	7
<u>ESNcard</u>	8
<u>ESN Offices</u>	10
<u>International Relations Offices</u>	11
<u>Accommodation</u>	12
<u>Food</u>	13
<u>Nightlife</u>	15
<u>Culture & Events</u>	19
<u>National Celebrations</u>	28
<u>Sightseeing and Museums</u>	36
<u>Trips</u>	45
<u>Useful tips</u>	49
<u>Emergency Contacts</u>	50
<u>ESN contact</u>	51



About Thessaloniki

Thessaloniki, Greece's second largest city, holds an uninterrupted history of 2,300 years. Named after the sister of Alexander the Great, the city was founded as the major port of the Macedonian kingdom.

It is located in the North part of Greece by the sea.



It was the historic meeting point of five different cultures: the Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, Ottoman and Jewish, which despite some turbulent encounters merged and flourished peacefully, creating a truly cosmopolitan city in South East Europe, with a population today of more than one million people.

The second largest city of Greece, Thessaloniki, is famous for its lively streets, vibrant nightlife and cultural signature. It is the perfect cosmopolitan destination for any visitor and the most student city in Greece.

Universities of Thessaloniki

Thessaloniki has 3 Higher Education Institutions that are public.

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH):

It is the biggest University in Greece. About 88.283 students study at Aristotle University, 77.198 in undergraduate programmes and 6.588 in postgraduate programmes. There are also 3.952 at Doctoral level. The main campus is located in the city centre, and it has some branches in other areas like Stavroupoli and Themi, as well as in the city of Serres. It has been named after the Ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle. www.auth.gr/en/university/.



University of Macedonia (UoM):

The University of Macedonia is the second and “youngest” University of Thessaloniki and it specialises in economic and social sciences. Today, more than 12.000 students study at the University of Macedonia in economic, administration, social and political related fields. The university is located in the city centre. <https://www.uom.gr/en/about>.



International Hellenic University (IHU):

International Hellenic University consists of 9 schools and 33 departments in various cities of Northern Greece. In Thessaloniki there is a campus of IHU at the area of Sindos, which is accessible by bus line 52 from the Train Station. There is also a campus in Themi, which is accessible through bus lines 2K and 3K that lead you to IKEA and from there you can take bus lines 87E or 67. ecs.ihu.edu.gr/.



Arrival to Thessaloniki



Flights to Thessaloniki

Thessaloniki Airport "Makedonia" is located about 20 km away from the city centre of Thessaloniki. The airport operates both domestic and international flights all year round. At the entrance of the airport, you will find taxis and buses that can transfer you anywhere you wish.

Bus line from and to airport: **01X, 01N** (night bus)

Train to Thessaloniki

You can easily reach Thessaloniki by train from many places on the Greek mainland and from Athens, too. You can get further information about routes, timetables and ticket prices on www.trainose.gr

Buses

You can travel by KTEL buses to Thessaloniki from various locations around the whole Greece.

Thessaloniki - Athens: www.ktelthes.gr

Thessaloniki - all the destinations: <https://www.ktelmacedonia.gr/en/home/list/>

Thessaloniki - Halkidiki: <https://ktel-chalkidikis.gr/en/index.html>

Car

The recently constructed National Road Athens - Thessaloniki and Egnatia Motorway make the trip to Thessaloniki easy and fast from any place on the Greek mainland. The distance between Athens and Thessaloniki is about 500 km.

Ferry to Thessaloniki

The port of Thessaloniki is the largest port in Macedonia and one of the largest ports all over Greece. There is a ferry connection between this port and the island complexes of Cyclades and Sporades.

Transportation in Thessaloniki

Public buses and taxis are the main means of transportation of Thessaloniki, while bicycles have become increasingly popular over the past years.

You can find the application for public transportation (Organization of Urban Transportation of Thessaloniki- OASTH) here:

<https://oasth.gr/en/oasth-mobile/>

Also, there is a website for OASTH

<http://m.oasth.gr/>

During the summer period, there are also **boats** from the port or the White tower for close destinations.

*All students receive a discounted ticket with a student ID card.



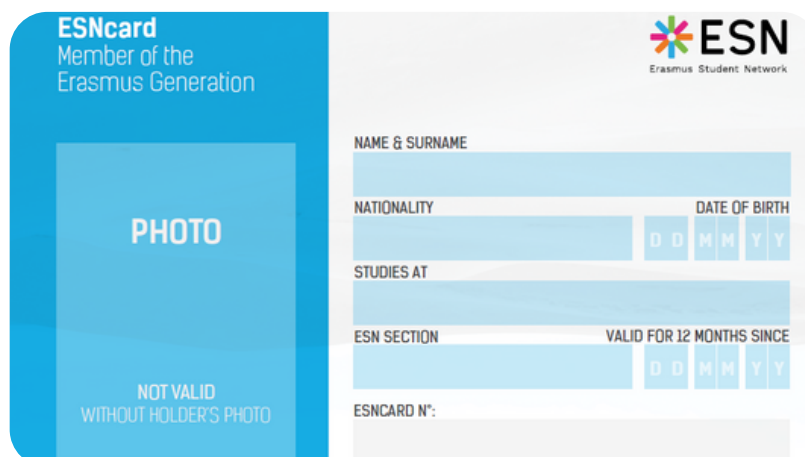
ESNcard

What is the ESNcard?

Did you know that each year more than **150,000** international students get their ESNcard? But what is the ESNcard and what is it used for?

Well, simply put, ESNcard is the membership card to the Erasmus Generation. A card that will carry the memories of your best times spent abroad with constant new experiences and lots of international friends. And a card that will grant you access to all ESN's events and over 1500 discounts all around Europe!

You can find more info as well as all the benefits and discounts around Europe [here](#).



ESNcard



How do I get my ESNcard?

It's pretty simple!

- Fill the online form.
- After filling the form, you will shortly receive an email with a payment link. Keep in mind that it may require a few days cause it's not sent automatically.
- After you receive the payment link, you can either pay online following the instructions of the e-mail or in cash in the Office during the Office Hours.
- After you receive the payment confirmation email you should wait to receive an email with your ESNcard number shortly after the payment. Keep in mind that it may require a few days because the ESNcard is not issued automatically.
- Pick up your physical ESNcard from the ESN Office during the Office Hours.
- Activate your ESNcard by creating an account here and make the most of your Erasmus+ experience!

*In case you wish to pay in cash, you can skip steps 2,3,4.

**In case you don't study or work in none of the three ESN sections (ESN AUTH, ESN UOM Thessaloniki , ESN IHU), you may put ESN IHU in your application form.

***Online payment is not supported for UOM students.

How much does it cost ?

The ESNcard costs **12 euros** in all the three sections of Thessaloniki (ESN AUTH, ESN UOM Thessaloniki, ESN IHU).

ESN Offices

There are **three ESN sections** in Thessaloniki, one for each University, and you can find their offices on the following locations:

ESN AUTH is located in Egnatias with Tritis Septemvriou Corner, Ano Foititiki Leschi of AUTH (Upper Student Restaurant), Thessaloníki, Greece

 [Google Maps](#)

ESN UOM Thessaloniki is on the ground floor of the University of Macedonia, close to the ceremonial Hall. More specifically, when you enter the building (from the entrance of the Egnatia street) you turn to your left, you walk straight and there it is!

 [Google Maps](#)

ESN IHU Thessaloniki is on the ground floor of the Agricultural Department of IHU Thessaloniki in Sindos.

 [Google Maps](#)



However, the three sections cooperate, so no matter in which university you're studying, you can visit any office that holds office hours in order to get your ESNcard, register to events, solve your queries, or just hang out!

International Relations Offices

Erasmus+ Offices

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Website: <https://eurep.auth.gr/en>

Email: erasmus-incoming@auth.gr

Location: 1st floor of the Administration building

 [Google Maps](#)

International Hellenic University

Sindos

Website: <https://www.ihu.gr/>

Email: erasmus.in@the.ihu.gr

Location: 2nd floor of the Central Corridor on the Classroom 314

 [Google Maps](#)

Thermi

Website: <http://ecs.ihu.edu.gr/co/erasmus/erasmusplus>

Email: erasmus@ihu.edu.gr

Location: International Hellenic University Building B, 1st floor

 [Google Maps](#)

University of Macedonia

Website: [erasmus-office](#)

Email: erasmus@uom.edu.gr

Location: 1st floor Building of Administration (Z 102)

 [Google Maps](#)

Accommodation

Some ways we suggest for accommodation search are to:

- **Our trusted partners:** <https://www.stay-dom.com/>



Find your ideal
Erasmus
Accommodation

Short-term accommodation

Long-term memories



Stay-Dom.com

More Info



Please note that for any transaction is being made, ESN is not responsible.

Accommodation

Some ways we suggest for accommodation search are to:

Our trusted partners: <https://nostus.com/>



Meet our new Partner!

Book now for a chance to WIN
your booking fees!

nostus

Scam free
Verified stays 

Please note that for any transaction is being made, ESN is not responsible.

Accommodation

Some ways we suggest for accommodation search are:

- **UOM** offers accommodation to its students (Student Dormitory) for a small price (5€/month), but it's far from the city centre and from the University building. You would have to wait and submit a form in the beginning of the semester to get a room there and it might take a while until you get accepted. You'll find the form posted by the Student Welfare Department. You can contact them in order to find more information. (Their email is merimna@uom.gr)

Some useful tips:

- Rent with flatmates. It's cheaper, way more fun and convenient in plenty of ways.
- Beware of the prices. Usually a shared apartment should be around 300-400 euros per person, bills included. Make sure the price of the apartment corresponds to the comforts it offers.
- Check the apartment's distance from the university and the city centre.
- If you cannot check the apartment in person, prefer to rent through an agency or ask for a video call with the owner and try to contact previous erasmus students who stayed there. Don't transfer money to unknown sources!!
- It is illegal for owners to rent without a contract. We wouldn't recommend risking it, as you could be scammed.
- Usually a deposit of one or two rents in advance is required. Depending on what you'll agree with the owner, you'll either not pay the last remaining rents or get the amount back at the last days of your stay.

Source: <https://auth.esngreece.gr/find-your-ideal-accommodation>

Food

Universities' Student Canteens

Students at **Aristotle University** can eat for **free** at the student Canteen which is located on Egnatia and 3is Septemvriou street, in the campus of the university. The students should apply first for a card at the Upper Student restaurant, in the building where the office of ESN AUTH is located.

Students of the **University of Macedonia** are eligible for **free** breakfast at the student canteen, and with 3.5 euro per day can eat both lunch and dinner. There are several packages with different prices (weekly/monthly). Also, you could apply to eat for free by consulting the Student Welfare Department and the Erasmus Contact Person of your department on how to apply for free meals. The student canteen is located inside the university building.

The **International Hellenic University** has one student restaurant at the campus in Sindos and another one in the area of Dioikitiria i (Danaidon 7). With around 3 euros per day students are eligible for all meals. At specific periods of time, students can apply for free food. Keep in mind to contact the university for further information.

Food areas

Around the area of Rotunda you can find lots of pizza places where you can eat a slice of pizza for 1.5 euros.

In the area of Navarinou Square, in Dimitriou Gounari street you can find a wide variety of cheap food options. From Gyros and crepes, to Falafel and salads, you can find anything you want to eat.

In the area of Ladadika, after your night out you can find some fast food restaurants that are open until the early morning.



Food

Traditional Delicacies

Don't forget to try Bougatsa with cream, a type of pie with crust filled with sweet cream. You should also try bougatsa with cheese. Another snack typical of Thessaloniki is Koulouri, you can find it almost everywhere with 0,50-1 euros. Also, trigono panoramatos is a must, a delicacy with a triangle shape made of crust with sugar filled with cream.



Food partners

Cookie Man

You can find a variety of cookies with a 20% discount with your ESNcard.



Greek Natural

Salads, fruit salads, juices and smoothies with a 10% discount with your ESNcard.



Join Juice bars

Salads, snacks, juices and smoothies with a 15% discount with your ESNcard.

Μπακαλικον Tavern

Typical greek tavern with a variety of dishes with a 15% discount with your ESNcard.



Nightlife

Nightlife in Thessaloniki

If there's a city that's become synonymous with nightlife and entertainment, this is it! Its diverse neighbourhoods keep finding new ways to "enchant" visitors, with everything from traditional tavernas to concept bars for every taste, from small to huge nightclubs with dance music, and of course, Bouzoukia, where you can experience Greek music and dancing. During the summer, one can also find beach bars with lively music and serving drinks throughout the whole day and night, located at the city's southeast suburbs. The city's most known nightlife district is "Ladadika", where together with the many tavernas and restaurants, you will find the most known nightclubs and bars housed in old warehouses next to the port, while the area around Kamara (the Arch of Galerius) is home to many cheaper cafe's and bars, popular with the city's student population.

It is really hard, even impossible, to describe each and every club/bar in the city. Therefore, we gathered the areas where most of Thessaloniki's nightlife is located below.



Ladadika

One of Thessaloniki's most popular neighbourhoods and the definition of urban cool. Located west of the city centre, near the port, Ladadika was a commercial district known for its oil-product shops (ladi means oil in Greek) before gradually becoming rundown. In the 1980s came a renovation project on and around Egiptou Street, transforming warehouses into tavernas, bistros, pubs, wine bars and even nightclubs and, in so doing, forming one of Thessaloniki's coolest neighbourhoods.

Valaoritou Street

The fun goes on long into the night in Valaoritou, the ultimate reference point of the city's young people. You'll find a whole range of bars and clubs, each with a distinct musical style and decor, and buildings whose architecture represents the old Thessaloniki.

Nightlife

Aristotle Square (Aristotelous)

Being in the centre of the city, some of the most popular cafes and bars are located here. One can find quiet cafes or even noisy ones that are usually preferred by younger people.

Bit Bazaar

A little treasure you might miss if you don't know where to look. Bit Bazaar is a tiny district that used to house Greek refugees returning from Asia Minor back in the 1920s. It's hidden somewhere between Olympou, Venizelou and Tositsa streets, in a central square with small houses. Some of the antique shops for which the bazaar was famous are still there, but you'll also find some that have been converted into cafes, tavernas and bars with alternative music. If you can't find it, just ask. It has become a famous student hangout.

Nikis avenue

Thessaloniki's central seafront avenue is full of crowded cafeterias, available for coffee in daytime and beer or drinks at night. Many bars also feature balconies with views towards the sea.

Proxenou Koromila Street

Parallel to the seafront Nikis avenue, many cafes, bars and a few trendy jazz clubs can be found here.



Nightlife

Iktinou Street

Another place in the city with cafes, bars and a couple of restaurants that spill out onto pedestrian streets. A popular hangout area for many people living in Thessaloniki.

Boat bars

For a drink on a boat and wonderful evening or late night views of the city, there are many "floating bars" that depart from the White Tower and make a short trip around the Thermaic Gulf. Most of them play ethnic and alternative music.

Ano Poli (Upper City) and The Castles

For a different view of Thessaloniki, head to the narrow streets and Venetian castles of the Upper City. Take your time to explore the traditional Macedonian architecture in one of the city's oldest districts. It will make the delicacies in the traditional cafes and tavernas of the Tsinari neighbourhood, and around the Trigoniou Tower, Pasha's Gardens and Eptapyrgion, even more enjoyable. For an extra special treat, find yourself an ouzerie, tavern or bar with a terrace and drink up the view of the city and Thermaic Gulf.



Nightlife

ESNcard Partners:

To Podilato

A small, cozy all-day cafe/pub right next to the city landmark of Rotonda. Perfect for studying in-between classes at day, or enjoying a beer and a game of pool with friends at night. Is also the place where a lot of Erasmus events take place and it has special prices for ESNcard holders.

<https://esnthessaloniki.gr/partners/podilato>

Eightball

One of the places you will surely visit as an Erasmus student! Eightball is the number one rock club located in the center of Thessaloniki, as well as the most famous erasmus meeting point in the city. Great music, amazing international atmosphere and special prices for ESNcard holders. ESN Thessaloniki announces every Erasmus party on their Facebook page.

<https://esnthessaloniki.gr/eighthball-club>

Fun fact:

Thessaloniki was ranked 9th on National Geographic's list among travellers' favourite nightlife destinations around the world, while Lonely Planet listed Thessaloniki as the world's 5th best "ultimate party city".



Culture & Events



Festivals, festivities, and good times in Thessaloniki.

Time to focus on the festivals that take place in Thessaloniki! The cultural identity of the city is an important part of its development and so it is great to see the authorities embrace annual festivals such as the ones below. There are so many different types of festivals that you will surely find a favourite according to your interests and preferences. So, let us introduce you to the main festivals of Thessaloniki you must attend.

Thessaloniki Animation Festival: In 2015, an interesting festival was organised and held in the city: the Thessaloniki Animation Festival. Since then, every year visitors get the chance to watch animated films from around the world free of entrance. The best participant submissions are awarded based on the quality of their work. The festival takes place in the middle of October.

Asterokosmos: 'Asterocosmos', the fairytale Christmas land, at Thessaloniki International Exhibition Centre, brings festive cheer to the city every year during the Christmas season. The many happenings and events include everything from amusement park activities and ice-skating to interactive games and workshops in "elf village", concerts, theatre performances, shadow puppet theatre and more. A must-visit for all the Christmas lovers!



Culture & Events



Street Mode Festival: The festival celebrates the end of the summer season through music, street art, dance performances and even sports.

Thessaloniki International Book Fair: Bookworms will certainly enjoy visiting the Thessaloniki International Book Fair, which is held annually during the month of May.



Thessaloniki Dance Festival: The Thessaloniki Dance Festival is the largest dance event in the Balkans. It features dance competitions in a plethora of disciplines, including Latin music, contemporary and jazz music, hip-hop and street dance, tango and even salsa. The agenda includes parties and workshops where you too can participate, so don't forget to bring your dancing shoes!

Reworks Music Festival: Held in Thessaloniki in September, this festival encompasses a wide array of music genres ranging from EDM and experimental sound to classical music, contemporary dance, and more. It welcomes artists and DJs from both the local Greek scene and abroad and attracts thousands of music lovers from around the world. Side events, such as workshops, talks and concerts, are organised throughout this festival.

International Festival of Photography: It is organised by the Museum of Photography of Thessaloniki and artists from all over Greece and abroad take part. Events and exhibitions are held in various places all around the town, like museums, galleries, bookshops, or cafeterias.

Culture & Events



Thessaloniki Biennale of Contemporary Art: Established in 2007, is a major art event in Greece. With the aim of promoting contemporary art to the masses, the art festival usually focuses on a specific theme and explores its interpretation through the eyes of a wealth of artists.



Urban PicNic Festival: The Urban Picnic Festival takes place every summer in the Roman Agora, allowing visitors to enjoy this archaeological treasure beyond a simple visit. The festival combines a passion for great music, good food and enthralling cinema, which includes open-air screenings and concerts while picnicking in a place that was once the heart of social life in Thessaloniki.

Thessaloniki Food Festival: As the culinary capital of Greece, it is not surprising that the city's food festival is one of the most anticipated events of the year. The festival explores the rich, traditional gastronomy of the city, a remnant of its diverse cultural past, with several restaurants participating.

Thessaloniki International Film Festival: The International Film Festival of Thessaloniki takes place every year in autumn (end of October first week of November). Films are shown in various cinema theatres in the centre of Thessaloniki, although the head office of the festival is located in Olympion Theatre.

Thessaloniki International Trade Fair: The Thessaloniki International Trade Fair is an annual commercial exhibition that takes place every September for 10 days. This fair is inaugurated by the prime minister and it is common that he announces the policies of the government for the next year during the trade fair, showing the political and economic importance of this event.

Culture & Events

Dimitria: The festival took its name from Saint Demetrius, who is the saint patron of the city. Also, it takes place every year during October, as the 26th of October is the memorial of Saint Demetrius. Every year the city's authorities promise to show all the cultural aspects of the city through the festival's events. Those consist of theatre plays, music concerts, dance performances, and art exhibitions. All these events have one particular purpose, to show the audience the cultural heritage of the city, but also to connect it with the contemporary world, giving an extrovert element to the organisation.

Thessaloniki International Documentary Festival: The aim of the festival is to present documentaries from all around the world that tend to inform and motivate the audience over crucial social issues. The Documentary Festival takes place in the warehouses of the port of Thessaloniki at the beginning of March, every year.



Street Food Festival:

An April weekend in Thessaloniki is the paradise of flavours or as it is officially named Thessaloniki Street Food Festival. The City Hall holds a huge market, where you can try products and foods from around the world. But it is not only food! In the evening, DJ sets offer entertainment to the plethora of visitors. Also, there are many workshops for little ones where you can learn and enjoy learning more about different flavours from around the world.

Culture & Events

Moni Lazariston Festival: Moni Lazariston Festival is a major organiser of cultural activities in the city of Thessaloniki over the past decade. The greatest artists of the Greek and International music industry, with a variety of music ranging from World to Rock 'n Roll music, constantly win the audience's acceptance and cheerful applause.

Thessaloniki Pride: Thessaloniki Pride, like any LGBTQIA+ visibility event, is an important and experiential "LESSON IN ACCEPTANCE". Seizing the opportunity of the ongoing educational reform we aim to trigger the discourse about the importance of inclusive education and a safe school environment, open to all people, without discrimination, prejudice, stereotypes, and narrow regulatory standards for homogenising normativities. Based on the annual topic, there are various events in the program such as exhibitions, discussions, information kiosks, music and other artistic events, interactive games in the city and of course the grand parade. The purpose of the event is to inform, raise awareness, entertain and to spark the debate on burning issues.



Vegan Life Festival: The aim of the Vegan Life Festival is to spread the vegan lifestyle, through talks, workshops, children's activities, art events, as well as the largest exhibition of vegan products and services in Greece.

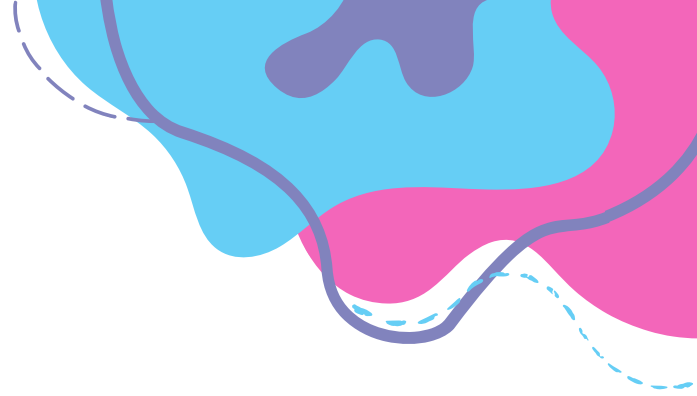
Culture & Events

Open House Thessaloniki:

Open House is one of the most important global institutions for the promotion of architecture. The Open House project invites the public to explore and understand the value of architecture. Every year for one weekend, private and public buildings open their gates to everyone for free and the city is transformed to a big museum, with its buildings and architecture being the exhibits. Open House started in Thessaloniki in 2012 and now is organised every year, with great response from the public



National Celebrations



January 1st

The first day of the year starts with presents under the tree, as Agios Vasilis (Greek Santa Claus) visits the houses on the New Year's Eve and not on Christmas Eve, as in most western countries. For this day there are many different customs all over the country but two of the most widespread and well known are Vasilopita and smashing a pomegranate for good luck.

Vasilopita is a pie, usually a sweet one, that in its dough contains a coin. Vasilopita must be cut into as many pieces as the members that are going to share it. The person that has the piece with the coin wins luck for the whole year.

The pomegranate is a symbol of abundance, fertility, and good luck. In many parts of Greece after the Great Liturgy of the New Year, they throw a pomegranate with force on the threshold of the house to break it into a thousand pieces and say: "Happy new year" and then they enter the house with the right foot.

Of course, this day is an opportunity for huge family and friends gatherings, with a lot of food, alcohol, dance and sometimes lucky games such as cards and the lottery.

January 6th

Epiphany is a major annual Christian celebration of the Baptism of Jesus Christ in the Jordan River by Saint John the Baptist. There are two main Epiphany ceremonies:

1. The Great Consecration, which takes place inside the Churches.
2. The Immersion of the Holy Cross, which follows the Great Consecration.

A custom of the day is the "grasping of the Cross" by swimmers, the so-called Voutichtades, during the Holy Cross Dive ceremony. Young people, mainly, dive into the icy waters to first catch the Cross and receive the blessing of the priest, but also to accept the honors and wishes of their fellow citizens. In Athens, the raising of the Cross by divers has been prohibited since the pre-war years, after a deadly fight between them. Nowadays, the lifting there is done by the Bishop with the ribbon carried by the Cross.

National Celebrations

Tsinkopempti

The Thursday of the second week of Triodion (a liturgical book that contains the propers for the fasting period preceding Easter) is called Tsiknopepti, because on this day all the houses roast meat or render the fat from pigs and the fragrant smoke (tsikna) is diffused everywhere.

The custom is lost in the depths of the centuries, without knowing its origin. It is assumed, however, that it comes from the Bacchic festivals of the ancient Greeks and Romans, which survived Christianity. This is the day that the events of the Carnival actually begin, which culminate in the Kouloumas on Clean Monday.

Apokries (Greek Carnival)



Apokries is the three weeks before Clean Monday when Great Lent (the most important fasting season of Eastern Christianity) begins. Apokries are special days for the Greeks because they symbolize the coming of spring and the preparation of people for the passions of Christ.

These days are full of feasting, entertainment and "masquerade", which has its roots in the ancient "Dionysian festivals" of the Greeks, where people used to disguise themselves, dance and sing while drinking wine in the honor of Dionysus.

In the past, the carnival took place everywhere in Greece with groups of masquerades, dances, feasts, satire and various special customs in each place. It was a great opportunity for alcohol and spree.

Today, the cities that are the most famous for their carnival events are Patras, Xanthi, Rethimno, Kozani and Naousa.



National Celebrations

Kathara Deftera (Clean Monday)

Clean Monday is the first day of Great Lent, the Easter fast. It is considered by the folklorists to be the epilogue of the Bacchic festivities of Apokries, which actually begin on Tsiknopempti and end on Clean Monday.

The dish of the day includes fasting foods, as a detox from the rich feast of Apokries. Halva, taramas, olives, pickles, seafood and beans are always on the menu. The fasting meals are accompanied by lagana, a type of unleavened bread, elliptical in shape and flattened for easy baking.

The celebration of Clean Monday in the countryside is called Koulouma.

A necessary complement of Clean Monday is the flying of the kite, with the various colors and designs, probably to fly away any worries of the winter, since spring is coming and everything is happier because of flowering and the improvement of the weather.

March 1st

Martis or Martaki is the custom in which a bracelet made of red and white threads that have been twisted or woven is worn on March 1 in Greece and many other Balkan countries.

Martis is an ancient custom. It is believed to have its roots in Ancient Greece, specifically the Eleusinian Mysteries. The mystics of the Eleusinian Mysteries tied a thread, the Crocus, on their right hand and left foot.

Children in Greece wear their Martis the whole month of March because according to an old belief, Martis protects children's faces from the first sun of Spring, so they don't burn. They make it on the last day of February and wear it on the first day of March, before leaving the house.

National Celebrations

March 25th

The anniversary of March 25th has a dual character: It is the National Anniversary but also the Annunciation of the Virgin Mary, a particularity that makes it an important day and is therefore celebrated with numerous events throughout the country.

The celebration of the Greek Revolution of 1821 takes place in Greece, Cyprus and around the world by the Greeks of the diaspora every year. This day is a public holiday in Greece and Cyprus. Celebration events usually include parades and other festivities on the same day or the day before.

In essence, we are referring to the armed rebellion of the Greeks against the Ottomans with the aim of establishing an independent state after 400 years of slavery.

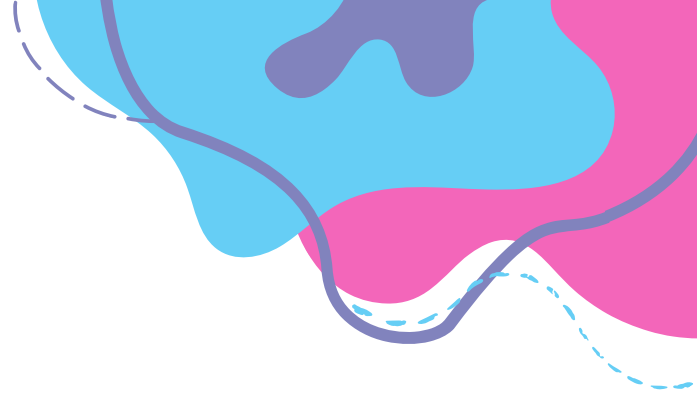
The biggest events are a military parade in Athens and in Thessaloniki on March 25, while the previous day, on March 24, is a student holiday for the Greek schools. In other municipalities there are parades of military units, students, clubs, etc. as well as eulogies in churches.

The traditional dish of the day is cod.

The Church and folklore say that during the fast of Lent, a fishy and fatty meal will stimulate the body of the believers and they will be able to continue the fast reverently until Palm Sunday, when one more day of eating fish is allowed, until the evening of the Resurrection, when they will be able to enjoy whatever they want.



National Celebrations



May 1st

Since May 1886, the first of May has been established as Labor Day. For most people nowadays this day is just an occasion to be close to nature and have a break from the routine of everyday life.

The celebration of May Day, however, has its roots in antiquity as the events held either for the Goddess Demeter or for Dionysus were meant for the world to celebrate the fertility of the fields, the fruitfulness of the earth, the flowering of nature, the end of winter and the coming of summer. Since ancient Greece, many festive ceremonies took place on May Day, many of which have remained to this day.

The most widespread custom is the creation of the May Day wreath from flowers cut from the fields.

Holy Week

Holy week for most people means two things: countdown to Easter and fasting.

1. On Holy Monday throughout Greece, preparations begin in homes for the celebration of Easter. In the villages mainly, the yards are whitewashed with lime and the pots are painted red. Also, nowadays, on Holy Monday, many begin the fast of Holy Week until they receive Communion on Holy Saturday.
2. Holy Tuesday is dedicated to cleaning the house. In some regions of Greece, cookies and buns are made earlier.
3. On Holy Wednesday, in some regions of Greece, women go to the Great Anointing with a bowl of flour. On this they fasten three candles, which burn during the performance of the Sacrament. This flour is used to make Easter cookies the next day.

National Celebrations

4. Holy Thursday is the Last Supper, where Jesus communes with his disciples by giving them a piece of bread that symbolizes his body and wine that symbolizes his blood. In the evening, the Twelve Gospels are sung and the Cross with Jesus walks around the church. One of the main customs of Maundy Thursday is dyeing red eggs and kneading buns. On this day housewives do not wash, iron or do other household chores.

5. Good Friday is the day of Christ's Passion. In the evening, the procession of the Epitaph is performed, while the bells ring mournfully throughout the day. For believers, the fast of the day is very strict and forbids even oil, while custom forbids any work on this day. Many make tahini soup and others use to drink a little vinegar in memory of what they gave to Jesus.

Orthodox Easter

It is the most important religious celebration in Greece.

At Holy Saturday night just before the church bells ring, the believers put on their formal clothes, take their Easter candles (lampades) to light them with the Holy Light and go to watch the Resurrection Service. Returning from the Resurrection, they cross the upper part of the front door with the Holy Light.

On Easter Sunday believers can finally have a great lunch after many days of fasting!

Lamb or goat is usually the main dish of day, but the most characteristic food of the Greek Easter is the red eggs.

Red eggs are a traditional part of the Greek Easter Sunday celebration. They are usually made, either with onion skins or dye. They are used as table decorations, and are the key piece to a fun game called tsougrisma, which tests the eggs' strength—and perhaps the players' strategy.



National Celebrations

The word *tsougrisma* means "clinking together" or "clashing." The cracking tradition symbolizes Christ's resurrection from the dead and birth into eternal life. To play *tsougrisma*, each player holds a red egg, and one taps the end of their egg lightly against the end of the other player's egg. When one egg's end is cracked, the person with the unbroken egg uses the same end of the egg to try to crack the other end of the opponent's egg.

While cracking the eggs, one person says, "Christos Anesti" (Christ has risen!), while the other person says, "Alithos Anesti" (Indeed he has risen!), symbolizing Christ's emergence from the tomb.

The typical dessert of the day is *tsoureki*, a delicious three-braided sweet bread signifying the Holy Trinity, and aromatic orange and *mastiha* (traditional type of gum) cookies.

October 26th

October 26 has a double meaning for Thessaloniki, as it is both the feast of Saint Dimitrios, the city's patron saint, and the date of its liberation during the "Great Expedition" of the First Balkan War. Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria and Montenegro formed an alliance in the summer of 1912 with the aim of liberating the enslaved Christian peoples of the Balkan Peninsula from the Ottoman Empire.

This day is an official holiday for Thessaloniki.

October 28th

October 28th is one of the official holidays of the Greek state and is celebrated every year by the entire territory. The day that marked Greece is connected to the 1940 war and became known as the anniversary of "OHI", meaning the anniversary of "NO".

The "NO" Anniversary commemorates Greece's rejection of Italian claims contained in the ultimatum delivered by Italian ambassador Grazzi to Greek dictator Ioannis Metaxas on October 28, 1940.



National Celebrations

Every year on this day, the official celebration takes place in Thessaloniki with all its splendor, in the presence of the President of the Republic and other officials, with a large military parade, which coincides with the celebration of the liberation of the city during the First Balkan War and memory of the patron saint of Agios Dimitrios (2 days earlier). In Athens and other cities, student parades take place, while public and private buildings raise the Greek flag.

November 17th

The Polytechnic Uprising was a mass manifestation of popular opposition to the military dictatorship, which took place in Greek territory between November 14 and 17, 1973. It began on November 14 with the occupation of the National Technical University by students. This escalated into an anti-dictatorship uprising that later incorporated citizens, workers, and protesting farmers.

This day is a holiday only for school and universities.

December 25th

Christmas day is a big celebration in Greece, as in most Christian countries. This day is spent with family and friends around a table full of food (usually meat with a lot of side dishes). Melomakarona and kourampiedes are a must dessert after the Christmas lunch! Also it's worth mentioning that although most Greek people decorate a tree for Christmas, an old traditional custom on Greece's islands and its coastal regions dictates that people should decorate a small wooden boat.



Sightseeing and Museums

The historical figure of Thessaloniki has its beginning to the Hellenistic years and is mainly linked to its Byzantine life. Wandering through the city, which is justifiably considered an open-air museum of Paleochristian and Byzantine art, it is worthwhile to see the 15 monuments included in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Byzantine Walls

The Walls of Thessaloniki are the 4 km-long city walls that surrounded the city of Thessaloniki during the Middle Ages until the late 19th century, when large parts of the walls, including the entire seaward section, were demolished as part of the Ottoman authorities' restructuring of Thessaloniki's urban fabric.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walls_of_Thessaloniki

Rotunda of St. George

The Rotunda of St. George is located just north of the junction of the two main axes of the city, where the Arch of Galerius ("Kamara") can be found. The name Rotunda came from its round shape. It was constructed in the early 4th century AD, probably as a temple for ancient cult worship or as a mausoleum for Constantine the Great (306-337).



Both Rotunda and Arch of Galerius are part of the "Galerian Complex", the most important monumental group in Thessaloniki, which was built at the turning-point of two worlds, the Roman and Byzantine. Its erection began in the late 3rd century-early 4th century AD, when Caesar Galerius (260-311) chose Thessaloniki as the seat of the eastern part of the Roman Empire. <http://galeriuspalace.culture.gr/en/>

Sightseeing and museums

Church of St. Sophia

The cathedral and pilgrimage church of St. Sophia (Agia Sophia in greek) is at the historical centre of Thessaloniki, at the square with the same name, at the intersection of Agia Sophia and Ermou streets and is dedicated to the Wisdom and Word of God. At nighttime the area around Agia Sophia is crowded with young people hanging out.

Church of St. Demetrios

This is the city's largest church, dedicated to its patron saint, St. Demetrios. The monument is a five-aisled basilica, with a narthex and a transept. Underneath the church is the place where St Demetrios was martyred. It now functions as a Museum and displays a collection of sculptures, capitals, closure slabs, and vessels from the church.

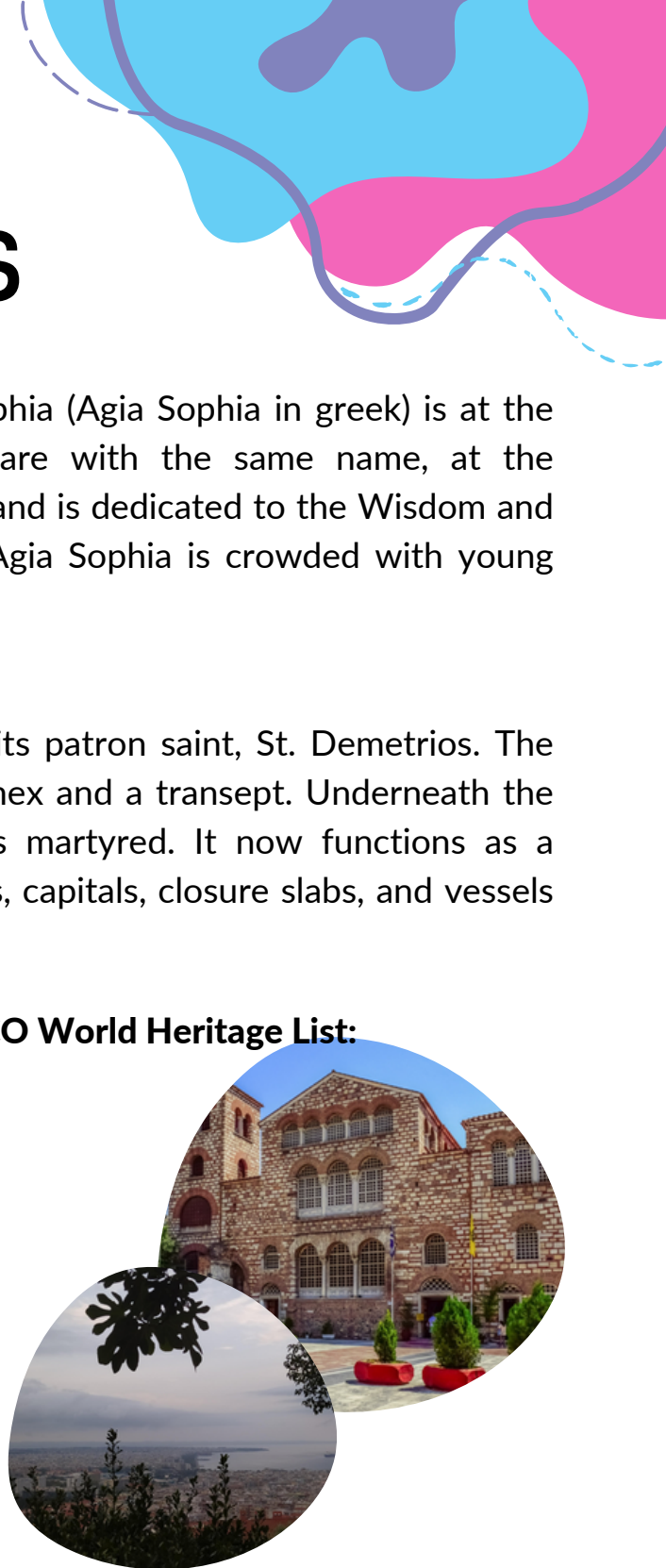
Other notable churches included in the UNESCO World Heritage List:

- Church of Acheiropoietos
- Church of Panagia Chalkeon
- Church of St. Panteleimon
- Church of the Holy Apostles
- Church of St. Nicholas Orphanos
- Church of St. Catherine
- Church of Christ Saviour
- Church of Prophet Elijah
- Church of Osios David (Latomou Monastery)

Vlatadon Monastery

Vlatadon Monastery was a stauropegion, that is a monastery attached directly to the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople. It is now the only Byzantine monastery in Thessaloniki still functioning. Monastery functions:

- Accommodation for researchers and Theology student at the Aristotelian University of Thessalonica, postgraduates and undergraduates, from abroad
- Patriarchal Institute of Research on the Fathers
- Skevophylakion - Museum
- Bookshop



Sightseeing and Museums



Byzantine Baths

The Byzantine baths in the Upper City are one of the rare samples of Byzantine Baths still existing in Greece. The building is dated in the late 13th century. It is small but consists of all the basic rooms for baths since the Roman or early Ottoman years (hot rooms, water tank, warm water, fire area).

https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/456/multiple=1&unique_number=528

You also wouldn't want to miss:

Trigoniou Tower in the city's Byzantine walls

The Trigoniou Tower is the most famous and impressive tower of the wall. It was built in the late 15th century to prevent an invasion of the city and help during a siege. In the Trigoniou Tower, which is also called "the balcony of Thessaloniki", you'll have the chance to enjoy panoramic image of the city hugging the sea. On a clear day you'll also be able to see Olympus Mountain located 150km away.

Heptapyrgion - Yedi Kule

Heptapyrgion, also popularly known by its Ottoman name "Yedi Kule", is a Byzantine and Ottoman-era fortress situated in the Upper City. To the Greeks, Heptapyrgion is haunted by memories of turbulent periods within their recent history. The fortress held political prisoners during times like the fascist dictatorship of 1936, the years of Nazi occupation and the civil war that followed it, and the seven year-long military junta that began in 1967. Those interned there faced harsh conditions. Torture was common, and hundreds of inmates were executed at an infamous spot not far from the fortress. The prison closed in 1989.

Statue of Aristotle

Aristotle, ancient Greek philosopher and scientist, is one of the greatest intellectual figures of Western history. The statue stands in the central square of Thessaloniki, which is named in honour of Aristotle, the Aristotle square.



Sightseeing and Museums

Alexander the Great Monument

The imposing statue of Alexander the Great riding his faithful companion, Bucephalus, dominates Thessaloniki's Nea Paralia, a few steps away from the White Tower.

Teloglion Fine Arts Foundation A.U.Thessaloniki

The Teloglion Fine Arts Foundation occupies an impressive, modern building with a panoramic view of the Thermaic Gulf and Olympus, set in a large green park on the outskirts of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki campus. Consisting of more than 7000 works, its extensive collection can to a large extent tell the story of modern Greek art up to the present day.

Vasilisis Olgas Historic Mansions

At the end of the 19th century, the city of Thessaloniki expanded towards the “east side”, then known as the “Exohes”. There, many citizens began building new, elegant houses called “pirghi” (towers, due to their majestic appearance), which multiplied following the liberation of the city. The city’s most beautiful buildings can be seen there, a lot of which have been repurposed into galleries, museums or public services’ buildings.

The Umbrellas

The "Umbrellas" is an impressive work of art by the famous sculptor Giorgios Zoggolopoulos and is one of the main attractions in Thessaloniki that catches the eye of every visitor.

Thessaloniki Concert Hall

The Thessaloniki Concert Hall provides a contemporary cultural and conference center with the capacity to host various events, including concerts, ballet, theatre and opera, cultural and art expositions and conferences. It also houses a Music Library and a Museum of Musical Instruments in its new building (M2). <https://www.tch.gr/>



Sightseeing and museums



Other noteworthy attractions are the City's famous museums:

Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki

The Museum permanent exhibitions include numerous artefacts dating from the Prehistoric era to the end of antiquity. They come from excavations conducted throughout Macedonia since 1912, along with handed-in antiquities. The Museum often presents temporary exhibitions too, be sure to check them out!

<https://www.amth.gr/en>

Museum of Byzantine Culture

The 11 galleries of the Museum's permanent exhibition can travel you back to the world of Byzantium through thematic sections concerning the daily private and public life, worship and the burial customs, architecture and art, the commercial and business activity. You'll get to discover the continuity and the relationship between past and present. Don't miss out on the temporary exhibitions here as well!

<https://www.mbp.gr/en/>

War Museum of Thessaloniki

The museum is a department of the War Museum of Athens. Starting with the pre-revolution years and ending with the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, in 1974, visitors have the opportunity to relive the Greek War of Independence, the Balkan Wars as well as the two World Wars.

<https://warmuseum.gr/en/war-museum-of-thessaloniki/>

Museum of Contemporary Art

This Museum is located in the area of the Thessaloniki International Fair. The permanent collection comprises 2000 works by Greek and foreign contemporary artists and is constantly being augmented by gifts from collectors, artists, gallery owners, and private individuals that are constantly presented in the museum's new wing.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/MOMus%E2%80%93Museum_of_Contemporary_Art#The_permanent_collection

Sightseeing and museums

State Museum of Contemporary Art

It is located in the northeast section of the Monastery of Lazariston in the area of Stavroupoli, in the western part of the city. The exhibition halls of the museum permanently house part of the Costakis Collection, which alternates periodically.

Museum of the Macedonian Struggle

The museum's collection consists of rare 19th and 20th century artefacts related to everyday life in Macedonia, the weaponry and personal objects of fighters, as well as rare original documents from the period between 1770 and 1912. Part of the collection is displayed in the permanent exhibition, while the remaining artefacts are kept in the Research centre for Macedonian History and Documentation (KEMIT) and used in the Museum's periodic exhibitions.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Museum_for_the_Macedonian_Struggle_\(Thessaloniki\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Museum_for_the_Macedonian_Struggle_(Thessaloniki))

http://www.museumsofmacedonia.gr/History_And_War/Mma_Thessalonikhs.html

Museum of Photography

The Thessaloniki Museum of Photography is the only museum dedicated to the art of photography in Greece and is supervised by the Ministry of Culture and Sports. It is located in Warehouse A on the First Pier of the Port of Thessaloniki and every two years, it hosts an international photography festival.

Cinema Museum

The Thessaloniki Cinema Museum was founded in 1997, when Thessaloniki was selected as the Cultural Capital of Europe. It is located in a warehouse on the first wharf of the port. The museum's mission is the collection, preservation and museological display of the elements constituting Greece's Cinema development.

<https://www.filmfestival.gr/en/museum/museum-exhibitions>

Sightseeing and museums

White Tower

The emblematic White Tower is both a monument and a museum, whose exhibition summarily presents aspects of the city's history. The present tower replaced an old Byzantine fortification (12th century) that the Ottoman Empire reconstructed to fortify the city's fortress after Sultan Murad II captured Thessaloniki in 1430. During the period of Ottoman rule, White tower became a notorious prison and scene of mass executions. In 1912, Greece took again into custody the city of Thessaloniki and the White Tower was substantially remodelled and its exterior was whitewashed. The White Tower has been adopted as the symbol of Thessaloniki.



Water Museum of Thessaloniki

It is located in the historic building complex of the old Central Pumping Station of Thessaloniki, which belonged to the former local Water Supply Company. The aim of the Museum is to highlight the importance of water as a natural source and to present Thessaloniki's water supply network.

Olympic Museum of Thessaloniki

Thessaloniki Olympic Museum is the unique Olympic Museum of Greece and is situated next to the Kaftanzoglio National Stadium and the Aristotle University. Among others, its exhibitions include "Olympic Games: Moments in History", "Paralympics" and "Science of Sports".

<http://www.olympicmuseum-thessaloniki.org/>

Hellenic Pharmaceutical Museum

The History of Pharmacy in Greece as well as the Science of Pharmacology are presented through the display of pharmaceutical instruments, objects, tools, books, recipes, ingredients, forms, botany and drugs. It is the sole Pharmaceutical Museum in Greece.

Sightseeing and museums

Roman Forum

The ancient Roman-era forum of the city, located at the upper side of Aristotelous Square. It is a large two-terraced forum featuring two-storey stoas, dug up by accident in the 1960s. The forum complex also boasts two Roman baths, one of which has been excavated while the other is buried underneath the city, and a small theatre which was also used for gladiatorial games. The underground museum features findings from the Hellenistic era and exhibits from the Ottoman period until the 1917 fire that destroyed most of the city.



Railway Museum of Thessaloniki

A small railway station built in 1894. It was restored in 2001 and now houses the Railway Museum of Thessaloniki.

Museum of Illusions

This museum offers a unique experience to visitors through 60 illusions (“infinity room”, “inverted room”, “chair illusion”, “holograms” among others). Optical, photographic and interactive illusions will fascinate you and also teach you how perceived reality is affected by sciences, vision, perspective and other stimuli.

Selfie Museum

Looking for fun things to do? Look no further! Selfie Museum is the place to go to with unique and authentic Instagram Walls created for ultimate fun, long lasting memories and amazing pictures!

Jewish Museum

The museum preserves a collection of documents and heirlooms which have not been destroyed during the Holocaust, in honour of the victims of the Holocaust and encourages the research about the continuous presence of the Jews in Thessaloniki for more than 2000 years.

Sightseeing and museums



Keep in mind that for young people up to the age of 25 from EU member-states the entrance to archaeological sites, historical sites, monuments and museums owned by the Greek State and managed by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports is free of charge. You only need to present your ID card or your passport!

Also, all visitors can enter for free on the following dates:

- the first Sunday of each month between 01/11 and 31/03
- March 6th (Melina Merkouri Memorial Day)
- April 18th (International Day for Monuments)
- May 18th (International Museum Day)
- the last weekend of September (European Cultural Heritage Days)
- October 28th (National Holiday - "Ohi" Day)

<https://www.thessalonikitourism.gr/index.php/en/history-culture>



Trips

Thessaloniki is located in the northern part of Greece and its location gives the opportunity for many trips.

Chalkidiki

It is the favourite seaside area of Thessalonians for holidays, as it hides beautiful beaches and traditional villages.

Most visited villages: Arnaia, Taxiarchis and Afitos

Most visited beaches:

Closest to Thessaloniki Nea Irakleia-Nea Kallikratia

Favourite among Thessaloniki students: Poseidi

Also famous: Sani, Pefkochori, Diaporos, Kavourotripes

Around Thessaloniki you can also find beautiful and historical cities which are really worth visiting.



Trips

Volos

Famous student city for its “tsipouro” and the small “meze” which served in every restaurant.

It is also close to Pelion, the mountain above the city which someone can visit small traditional villages like Portaria, Makrinitza ect.

Check this website for more: [here](#)

Ioannina

The capital of Epirus is a historical city full of multicultural details.

Check this website for more: [here](#)

Kavala

Kavala is a beautiful city in the east part of Macedonia and the combination of the old town and the beaches close to the city make Kavala unforgettable.

Check this website for more: [here](#)

Xanthi

One more student city in North Greece. Traditional houses in the old town, a puzzle of Balkan cultures and two amazing fests (Old town fests- September , and Karnaval end of February/Beginning of March), make Xanthi an amazing destination.

Check this website for more: [here](#)



Trips

If you are interested in archaeological sites, near Thessaloniki you can find:

Vergina

In Vergina you can find the museum of Vergina, the tombs of Philip II (father of Alexander the Great) and other family members of the great Macedonian dynasty.

Philippi

Founded in 356 BC by the Macedonian King Philip II, the city developed as a “small Rome”. The archaeological Site of Philippi is recognized by UNESCO.

More information: [here](#)

Dion

The archaeological site of Dion is located at the eastern foothills of Mount Olympus. Dion, a place of ancient temple worship of Olympian Zeus, was an important religious centre of the Macedonian kingdom.

Pella

Ancient Pella was the capital of the Macedonian state from the end of the 5th to the beginning of the 4th century BC.



Trips

If you are looking for destinations closer to the nature you can visit:

Pozar- Edessa

The magical location in nature combined with the thermal baths of Pozar attract many visitors every day from all parts of Greece. Nearby is the city of Edessa with its beautiful waterfalls.

Meteora

Meteora is a unique place and a top travel destination, because it is a complex of huge Palaeolithic rocks and Byzantine monasteries on their steep peaks with unique relics and frescoes.

Olympus

Mount Olympus, sacred mountain of the Twelve Gods and a landmark of Greek mythology. It is one of the most popular destinations for hiking in nature, with many different trails.

Skra (Blue lake)

In Skra is the "Greek blue lake", a magical place with an emerald lake, hidden in the green nature.

And last but not least, from Thessaloniki during the summer period you can travel with ferries to Sporades.

Skiathos The party island

Skopelos The green island

Alonissos The alternative island



Useful Tips



- There is only one bus line at night (01N). The bus passes every 30 minutes.
- You can find a lot of copy centres and bookstores at Melenikou Street, near Rotunda.
- Note that if you take a taxi during the night hours, the price will be higher (double starting point fee).
- At Filippou Street, in the area close to the Roman forum, you can find several furniture shops with less expensive student prices.
- The 6th of December is the anniversary of the assassination of a teenage boy by a police officer. On this day every year riots take place. Make sure to avoid the city centre during the evening and night hours for your safety.
- Opening hours of shops & shopping centers:
Monday - Friday: 9am - 9pm
Saturday: 9am - 8pm
Sunday: closed



Emergency Contacts



Emergency Numbers

Emergency	112
Ambulance	166
Fire Department	199
Police	100
Anti-drug Police	109
Coast Guard	108
Tourist Police	171
Pharmacies	107

Counselling and Guidance Centre AUTH

The Centre provides counselling and psychological support to students of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki on issues related to: stress, difficulties adjusting to the university environment or problems with regard to their studies, family and personal problems, sexuality, psychosomatic problems, etc.

The Centre is open from Monday to Friday, 8:00 am-21:00 pm (by appointment). In order to make an appointment please call on Monday & Wednesday, from 12:00 pm to 13:00 pm, Tuesday & Thursday from 18:30pm to 19:00 pm.

Links: <https://kesypsy.auth.gr/>

https://www.auth.gr/en/university_unit/kesypsy-en/

ESN Contact



Don't forget to follow ESN on social media in order to stay-up-to date and don't hesitate to contact us if you need anything!

ESN AUTH

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ESNAUTH>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/esnauth/>

Website: <https://auth.esngreece.gr/>

Email: auth@esntheessaloniki.gr

ESN IHU

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/esnihu>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/esn_ihu/

Website: <https://ihu.esngreece.gr/>

Email: ihu@esntheessaloniki.gr

ESN UOM

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/EsnUomThessaloniki>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/esn_uom_thessaloniki/

Website: <https://uom.esngreece.gr/>

Email: uom@esntheessaloniki.gr





#thesserasmus

Thessaloniki Erasmus. You want it.

