

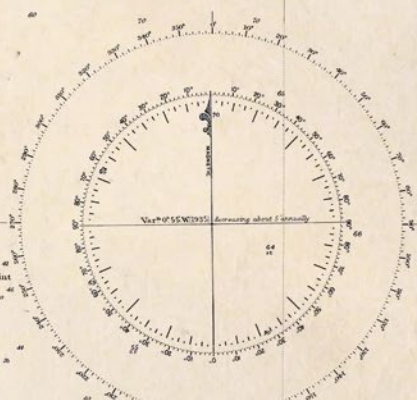
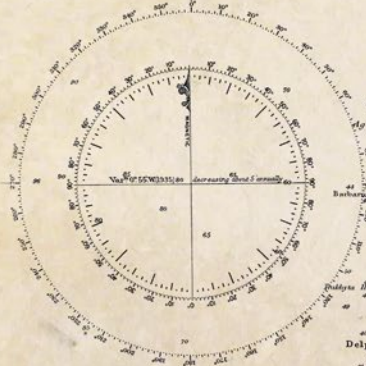
SYROS

more than an island





New Lazaretto



SYRA ISLAND

SURVEYED BY COMMANDER OWEN STANLEY

1835

I will never forget the dreamy snowy white color, which got in my eyes when I landed in Syros at dawn. Steamers always arrive at dawn, at this all-white swan of the Aegean Sea that is as if it is sleeping on the foams, with which the rainmaker is sprinkling. Kaikias, the northeast wind; on her eastern bare side, the renowned Vaporia, which is always anchored beyond St. Nicholas, a fine piece of a crossway, and immortal Nisaki downtown, the swan's proud neck, with Vafiadakis's buildings, and the solid towers of the Customs Office, where the waves alive, as if they are hopping, laughing, running, chuckling, hunting, fighting, kissing, being baptized, swimming, brides white like foam.

At such time and in this weather, I landed on my dream island. I don't know why some mysteries lie in man's heart, always remaining dark and unexplained. I loved Syra, ever since I first saw it. I loved her and wanted to see her again. I wanted to gaze at her once more. It seemed to me that sometimes, I would write the immortal song of life, the eternal song of Progress, whose harmonic prelude is sung by golden-winged angels of culture, with the strokes of their wings, who lead the people in flower-sown meadows of welfare; in fact the meadows of life.

There was something left within my heart since then, which was often telling me:

— Go to Syra! Go to Syra!

Alexandros Moraitides
Me tou Vorea ta Kymata, 1902

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Discovering Syros

Syros dominates the heart of the Aegean Sea with its dynamic character and the cosmopolitan grace of a Lady. A dominant power, with its headquarters in Hermoupolis, the capital city of the island and the Cyclades, which maintains and elevates the glamour of another era. A story that unfolds through the rambling alleys, the numerous old mansions and neoclassical buildings, medieval Ano Syros and the traditional Cycladic villages, the Orthodox and Catholic churches, the lacy coastline, the azure of the sea and the fabulous natural rocky landscape.

The image we see, when we are approaching the island of Syros, is unique: two hills on the background overhanging Hermoupolis, and its natural harbour, which was once the most commercial port in the Mediterranean Sea, full of ships and yachts anchoring or finding shelter in it.

In Syros, all the senses are mobilized... We listen to the sounds of lyrical operas, theatrical performances, rebetiko and island music; we smell the sweet scents of loukoumi and nougats; we taste the traditional local cuisine; we touch the carved stone and the marble of the mansions; we enjoy the intoxicating aroma of thyme and sage of the Cycladic nature.

Cycladic and bourgeois, famous yet unexplored, Syros can be identified with the best Greece has to offer...



Coordinates:
37° 26'33" N, 24° 54'21" E

Archipelagos: Aegean Sea
Island group: Cyclades
Area: 84,069 km²

Region of the South Aegean
Prefecture of Cyclades
Capital: Hermoupolis

Population: 21,390 (2011 census)
Density: 254 inhabitants/km²

How to visit...

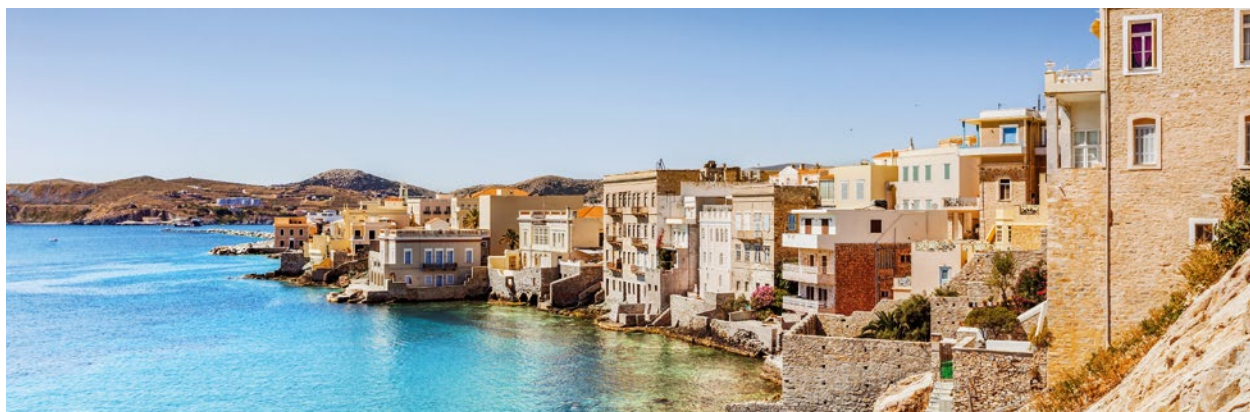
By ferry, daily, from Piraeus, Rafina and the Cyclades islands. By plane from Athens International Airport "Eleftherios Venizelos" but also with a transit via Mykonos or Santorini.

Where to stay...

Syros Hoteliers Association: www.syroshoteliers.gr
Syros Lodgements Association: www.visitsyros.com

*Syros from the sea,
is like an exquisite
watercolor...*

Kostas Ouranis





From myth to history

The oldest legend about Syros is that of Kiranos. He shipwrecked off the coast of Paros and Naxos and was rescued by a dolphin which transferred him to Syros. There, he found refuge inside a cave, the "Kiranion Andron", as it was renamed later, when Kiranos was proclaimed king of the island, thanks to his skills.

Traces of human presence in Syros during prehistoric times have been found in Chalandriani (2700 - 2300 BC) and the neighboring hill, Kastri (2300 - 2200 BC), on the northeastern side of the island. They belong to the First Cycladic Civilization, namely the Early Bronze Age, which has internationally been named by experts "The Civilization of Keros-Syros". Surveys have identified traces of settlements in other parts of the island (Talanta, Sa Michalis, Azolimnos, Galissas, Mallia, Manna).

In the 9th and 8th centuries BC, Ionians seem to have settled on the island, whereas in Homer's *Odyssey* the island is mentioned as "Syrie", which is located near Delos and is the homeland of Eumaeus.

In the 6th century BC, when Syros was occupied by the Samians, the philosopher and cosmologist Pherecydes, teacher of Pythagoras, was born on the island. He is considered to be the inventor of the sun-dial (heliotropion), the first solar clock, an ancient and accurate solar observatory that signaled the time and the 4 seasons depending on the movement of the sun. It is said that Pherecydes used to spend most months of the year inside the cave, which survives to this day between Richopo and Plati Vouni in Apáno Meria (the northern part of the island), in a magical landscape, where earth and sky become one.

During the Roman period (184 BC - 324 AD), the capital of Syros was situated in today's Hermoupolis, where remains of buildings, walls and tanks, scriptures, the pedestal of the bust of Hadrian, the Agora, the Prytaneum and theatre seats have been discovered. Several of them are kept in the Archeological Museum of Syros. Also, the circulation of copper and silver coins indicates the development of the island, while the names "Syra" and "Syros", which are still used today, are found on them.

In the early 13th century, after the occupation of Constantinople by the Crusaders (1204), Syros, like other islands, was seized by the Latins and was subject to the Duchy of Naxos, founded by the Venetian Marco Sanudo. At the same time, the existing settlement of Ano Syros was fortified and experienced a peculiar feudal regime, with leadership controversies and pirate raids.

Prehistory

Ancient Times

Roman Period



With the outbreak of the 1821 revolution, the port of Syros, protected from the mayhem of war, became the safest haven in the turbulent Aegean Sea. Here, the first refugees from Smyrna and Cydonia, as well as Chios, found shelter, when the persecutions of the Greeks began. They were housed by the locals in Ano Syros, inside houses and churches. However, due to the increased new arrivals from Asia Minor, Rhodes, Crete and Samos, they began to occupy the alleys. After the destruction of Chios, in April 1822, tens of thousands of refugees found safe haven on the island, whereas the destruction of Psara, the occupation of Kassos and the suppression of the uprisings in Crete sent a new wave of refugees. In 1828, the inhabitants of Hermoupolis reached an approximate number of 13,800, while 1,100 more refugees were registered in Ano Syros.

With the return to normality (1830), the port of Syros became the centre of transit trade in the Eastern Mediterranean. Along with the trade, crafts, shipping, construction activity, tanning, farming and public works were developed. Until 1860, Syros was the first commercial port of Greece. During that period, the first residences and the first Orthodox church of the Transfiguration of the Savior were built in Hermoupolis, transforming it into a city - jewel, with a hectic pace of life, architectural splendor and spiritual freedom, by establishing schools, clubs and theatres. The Apollon Theatre, the neoclassical buildings, the squares and the churches, began to reflect the cultural boom of the island that was increasingly growing.

Syros starts to be recognized for its great firsts; the first opera, the first Commercial Court of Greece (1826), the first High School (1833), from which Eleftherios Venizelos graduated, the Court of First Instance (1834), the first Lazaretto (pest house), the first Chamber and Printing House, the first Shipping Company (1857) and the first mechanized industries, such as textile and tanning.

At the end of the interwar period, factories began to close down and the port died. The Italian occupation troops landed in Syros in May 1941, while in September 1943 the island came under the jurisdiction of the Germans, experiencing the worst hunger of the occupation period and counting 6,000 - 8,000 dead. After World War II, Hermoupolis was deeply wounded, as most of the factories closed down and the city lost 30% of its population, who followed the immigration route...

The two Doctrines

One of the great peculiarities of Syros is the unique coexistence of the Orthodox and the Catholic doctrine, which reflects the liberal character of the island. From one end to the other, Orthodox churches, Catholic churches and chapels seem to hover between the earth and the sky, calling the faithful to prayer and experiencing absolute tranquillity. Among them, the following stand out:

Orthodox Doctrine

The **Transfiguration of the Saviour** (Cathedral), a church-monument built in 1824 by refugees from Psara and Chios. In the churchyard, in an open meeting, the decision was made to name the new city, Hermoupolis. There, the bell of St. Nicholas church was transferred from the burnt island of Psara, as well as a great number of relics salvaged by the refugees. In the western part of the churchyard, the burial place of Anthimos Gazis is situated, whereas next to the Church it is worth visiting the ecclesiastical museum that hosts sacred vessels, books and manuscripts.

The **Dormition of Virgin Mary** was built behind the harbour in 1828. What stands out is the icon of the Dormition of Virgin Mary (1562), crafted by Dominikos Theotokopoulos (El Greco), which makes the church one of the most important sights of Syros.

The Church of **St. Nicholas**, patron saint of Hermoupolis, was founded in 1848 according to the designs of G. Metaxas and was inaugurated in 1870. It is known as Saint Nicholas the "rich", due to the expensive materials and the impressive architecture of its construction, the icon of St. Nicholas that was silver-plated in Moscow, the marble episcopal throne, the pulpit and the marble temple that was designed by G. Vitalis. Many Greeks from abroad, as well as shipowners, contributed for the construction of the temple.

St. Athanasios, a beautiful stone-built church, dominates a deep ravine, surrounded by platans and running spring water on the back of Ano Syros.

The holy Monastery of **St. Barbara** dominates the hill of Kini since 1900 and is bathed daily by the unique sunset. Today, a workshop for hand-woven textiles, a camping centre and the kindergarten of the Diocese of Syros are operated in the Monastery.

Catholic Doctrine

St. George, the Catholic cathedral of Syros, was built around 1208 on top of the hill of Ano Syros. It is a large complex that includes the Church, the hospitality hall, the Historical Archives and the episcopal palace. Visitors will certainly be impressed by the organ, the oldest one currently operating in our country, which as such has the sound of the instruments of the time, while its curved wooden construction makes it a work of art. The International Organ Festival "Ano" is organized there.

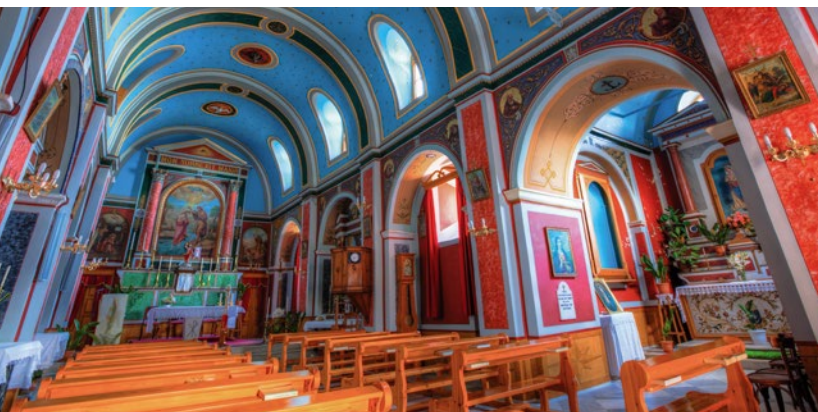
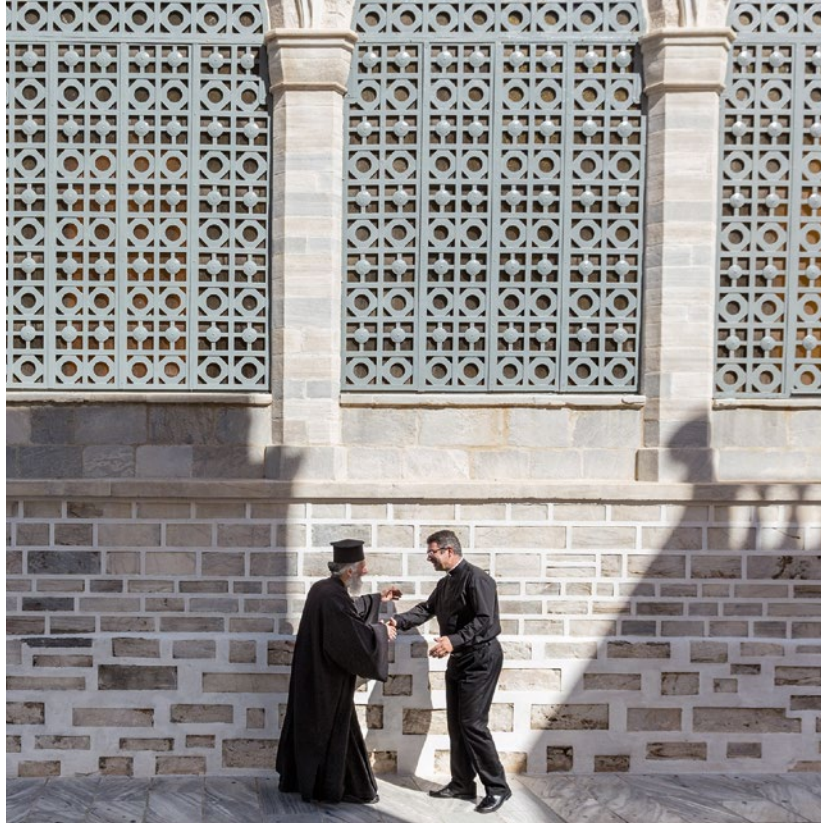
The Church of **Faneromeni** constitutes a place of Pilgrimage to Virgin Mary for all the inhabitants of the island. The enormous churchyard invites visitors to feel filled with delight at the sight of the majestic landscape.

St. Stefanos is a beautiful and picturesque chapel among the rocks in Galissas area. The chapel was built by a fisherman, who was saved from the tentacles of a large octopus, after a vow made to the Saint.

The **Order of Capuchins** settled in the Church of **St. John the Baptist** in Ano Syros in 1639. The Capuchin monks took this name from the long hood on their heads (cappuccio), which was in the mantle worn by the first brothers of this reform of the Franciscan order. The Capuchin monks have managed a lot, including the establishment of the first school of Syros.

Easter in Syros

Easter in Syros is a unique experience that deserves to be felt by the visitors. Here, at the "heart" of the Aegean Sea, one of the few corners of the world is situated, where two different Christian communities, Orthodox and Catholics, celebrate together the most important day of Christianity, in a gesture of utmost symbolic importance, unity, harmony and solidarity. Easter is the best opportunity to experience the "other" side of Syros, the quieter one, Syros of the two doctrines, love and unity.



Two equal tribes this fertile land divide, where two fair cities rise with equal pride...

Ano Syros

Ano Syros, the first Castropolis, was founded in the early 13th century by the Venetians and is still inhabited, maintaining its Catholic identity and medieval character. The countless stairs that cross the white houses, the arches and the alleys, lead to the top of the settlement where the Catholic Cathedral of St. George is situated.

The town was created gradually and amphitheatrically onto the rocks, like a natural fortress for the inhabitants, while the outer walls of the houses formed a natural fort, protecting the locals from pirates. The narrow cobblestone streets gave the opportunity to the inhabitants to hide from the various attacks, while the wooden doors at Portara, Epano & Kato Terma, Skalakia and Sa Bastias completely sealed any entrance to the town.

Ano Syros was and still is a town with a distinctive special character, a town which, through its monuments and historic buildings, invites visitors to look back in time, via the Centre for Historical Studies of the Catholic Diocese and other points of interest, such as the bust of the local martyr, Don Ioannis Dalezios, and the spring of St. Athanasios. A city with a catholic identity that unfolds through the Jesuit and Capuchin monasteries, the Church of Our Lady of Carmel and others.

By 2010, Ano Syros was the capital of the municipality, while today it constitutes the island's historic seat, offering a variety of restaurants, taverns, cultural attractions and sights, including the gates of the old Castle leading to the old town, the bust of the great rebetis Markos Vamvakaris, his museum and the Town Hall. Ano Syros is just 3.5 km from the port of Hermoupolis, a distance which is worth walking.

Hermoupolis

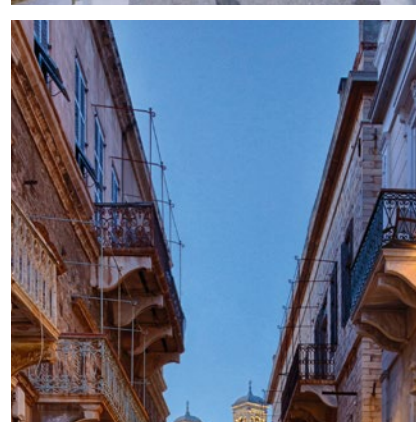
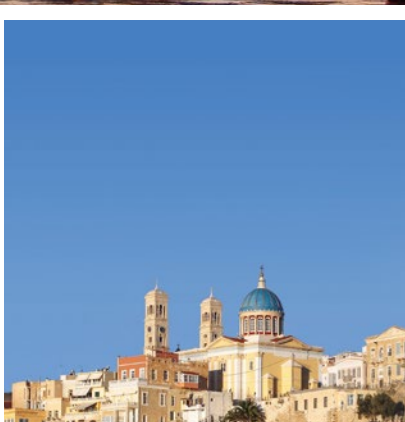
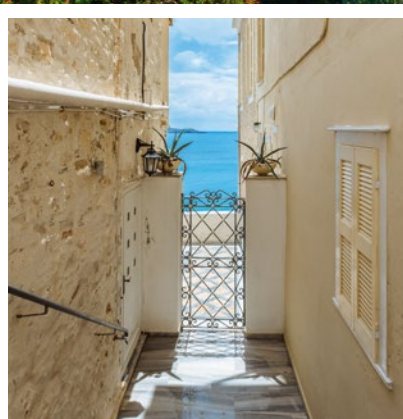
Hermoupolis is the peaceful creation of the Revolution: neutral ground, reference point and a place for hosting refugees. It is considered as the most important commercial and shipping centre of free Hellenism and a bridge for exchanging products and ideas between the East and the West.

A birthplace of bright personalities over the years, such as Dimi- trios Vikelas, Emmanuel Rhoides, George Souris, Rita Boumi Pappas; also, especially famous for its high educational level, it was spiritual food for eminent alumni, such as Eleftherios Venizelos, Yannoulis Chalepas, Constantine Volanakis, Aristomenes Prove- lengios, Petros Protopapadakis, etc.

The architecture of Hermoupolis is unique in the middle of the Aegean Sea. In the 19th century, Greek architects and engineers, in collaboration with German and Italian colleagues, created the big architectural dowry, according to the principle of "roman- tic classicism", the one we call today Neoclassical Architecture. They built the capital, based on a plan drafted by Wilhem Von Weiler in 1837, and decorated it with splendid public buildings throughout the Historic Centre, a magnificent square and im- pressive mansions, thus sealing its special character. The image of Hermoupolis refers to something much more than the capital of a beautiful island; it refers to an open-air museum that is worth exploring from end to end.

The magnificent Town Hall, the first Junior High School in Greece, the Historical Archives, the Cultural Centre, the Municipal Library with very rare books, the masterpiece Apollon Theatre, the Va- poria district with a magnificent view of the Aegean Sea and the resplendent churches and museums, are the most important wit- nesses of the history and mystique of the island.

A cosmopolitan capital city, a vibrant city full of life throughout the year. It has an excellent tourist infrastructure for accommo- dation, dining, entertainment and relaxation of all visitors, with various accommodation options, cafés, restaurants and bars, as well as plenty of cultural, sporting and other activities. It consti- tutes the administrative core of all the Cyclades and the South Aegean Region, bringing together all Public Services, Courts, a Department of the University of the Aegean and the Merchant Marine Academy, always exuding the air of an aristocratic bour- geois.



Stroll in the countryside

Azolimnos is the closest seaside destination to Hermoupolis, with tourist infrastructure along the beach, while at the same time offers breathtaking views of Tinos, Mykonos and the islet of Aspro. In the area of Azolimnos, it is worth visiting the cape Fokiotripa, which attracts a wealth of marine life, such as seals, cormorants, seagulls and falcons.

Apapo Meria stretches in the mountain scenery, where peace and tranquillity embrace the scattered farmhouses with fragrances of fennel, thyme and olive trees. The breathtaking view, the images as if plucked from other times and a few small taverns that pop up here and there, invite visitors to travel through local flavours in everyday life of a bygone era. The settlements of Mytakas, Papouri, Chalandriani, Plati Vouni and Sa Michalis, with the picturesque small churches, look like they have been forgotten in time, while the inaccessible beaches will surely enchant every visitor.

The beautiful village of **Vari** is a popular destination with many tourist services. Visitors can enjoy a swim in the sunny beaches of Fabrika, Achladi and Santorinioi, and admire the residence of Goulandris that looks like a tower.

Vissas is a small settlement, where the inhabitants are engaged in agricultural crops and livestock. In the area, there is a significant number of greenhouses and the only oil mill of the island.

In a picturesque location, around a natural harbour with golden sand, is the village of **Galissas**. It is one of the favourite tourist destinations, where someone can visit the stone pier with palm trees, the chapel of St. Pakou, the ruins of ancient Galissos, the chapel of St. Stephen and the nudist beach of Armeos.

Built on the slopes of a pine-covered hill, **Episkopio** or Piskopio is one of the richest sources of green on the island. The residence of the Catholic Bishop was here, hence the name of the settlement. It was the first resort of the wealthy people of the island, who built impressive and imposing mansions with lush gardens. The church of Prophet Elias that dominates the hill, Panagia Piskopiani and the Kokkinospito (Red House) that inspired M. Karagatsis to write the novel "The Great Chimera", are some of the main attractions of the settlement.

Ano and Kato Manna are both parts of the scattered settlement surrounding a small plain. Ano Manna stands out for its neoclassical mansions and the chapel of St. Emilianos, which is situated in the position of an ancient temple of Apollo.

The picturesque fishing village of **Kini** is a seaside settlement, where visitors can enjoy a variety of tourist facilities. From the golden beach, one can see the fishermen make fast their boats and go by boat to one of the small beautiful beaches in the north of Syros, as well as the beautiful beaches of Delfini and Lotos. Other places worth visiting in the area are the monastery of St. Barbara, the monument of the Mermaid Virgin Mary at the beach and the Aquarium.

The seaside settlement of **Megas Gialos** is an attraction for travellers, who are invited to discover the small beaches of the settlement and swim there, as well as at the beach of Ambela.

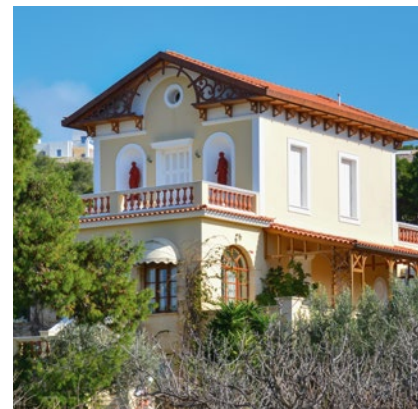
Pagos, a purely agricultural settlement, with fertile land, tree crops and vineyards, owes its name to the word "Baos" that means passage. In the centre of the settlement, there is a statue of the Dutch agronomist Paul Cooper, who helped in the development of the greenhouse cultivation in the region.

Parakopi is a small holiday resort that is well-known for the country mansions and the charming building of the Club.

Posidonia, formerly known as Delagrazia, named after the Catholic Church of Madonna delle Grazie, is the most exclusive resort of Syros. The settlement is dominated by country mansions with turrets and gardens travelling visitors to the glamour of a bygone era, while Agathopes with the sea lilies, the beaches of Fetouris, Voulgaris and Komito attract plenty of holidaymakers.

Finikas got its name from the ancient port of the Phoenicians that had been established in the bay and continues to accommodate private boats, sailing races and water sports to this day. At the settlement of Finikas, one can also visit the nearby beach of Kokkina.

Chroussa is a charming settlement with picturesque chapels, grand mansions, villas, Orthodox and Catholic churches, paths and alleys, which pop up through a magnificent pine forest that is worth exploring.



Economy of Syros

The island has a developed economy based on various sources.

Tourism and Services

The prime location of the island, its developed tourist infrastructure and particular character, make it an ideal destination for original and alternative holidays. Syros is an attraction throughout the year, as each season dresses the already breathtaking scenery with its own colours and flavours, its own beauty and contrasts, always offering a special and unique experience to all visitors.

Investing in cultural, sports, religious, sea, conference and educational tourism, encouraging investment initiatives and implementing systematic and aggressive promotion of the island, using new and innovative technologies, Syros claims and earns its place in the international tourist map.

Agricultural Production and Crafts

The **loukoumi** (delight) produced in Syros has roots in Asia Minor and first appeared on the island around 1832, on the arrival of refugees from Chios. Loukoumi is a sweet made of water, starch and sugar, through a very difficult and time-consuming process and is available in various flavours such as rose, mastic, bergamot and almond.

The **chalvadopita** (nougat) is a confection-like round pie, between two wafer sheets (thin wafer), wherein a mixture of basic ingredients is enclosed, aromatic local honey and freshly baked whole almonds.

The local **thyme honey** is pure and raw honey without any preservatives, with special texture and flavour, so it is used in various traditional sweets.

The **capér** grows on steep cliffs and rocky soils of Syros. It has a special flavour and texture, as it is affected by sunshine, the drought of the island and the sea breeze. It is preserved in brine and used in food, especially the Greek salad.

The **dairy products** of Syros are known for their excellent quality, the cheese San Michalis, which has been named after the vil-

lage San Michalis, being the most characteristic with Protected Designation of Origin since 1996. It is a hard, pale yellow cheese from pasteurized cow's milk that stands out for its unique spicy flavour.

The **louza** is a traditional local pork snack, made from sirloin that is marinated in red wine with pepper, allspice, clove and cinnamon and then dried in the open air.

The local **sausages** are made with pork and have a very special flavour due to the fennel. However, there are also spicy sausages, which are equally tasty, due to the use of garlic.

The **pastelaries** are dried and baked figs with sesame and cinnamon. They are an excellent choice for energy.

The crushed **olives** of Syros are a traditional product preserved in fennel and brine.

Among the **horticultural products** of Syros, what stands out is the cultivation of "arid" fruit and vegetables, due to lack of water, which are considered to be of very high quality.

The **aromatic plants and herbs** in mountainous areas of Syros, are characterized by their intense flavour and their special aroma and colour.

Traditional Shipbuilding

Intertwined with the maritime tradition of the island, the Karna-gio or Tarsanas (Boatyard) first appeared in the mid-19th century to the south of the harbour, next to the large shipyard Neorion, due to the smooth slope of the soil that initially allowed the lifting and launching of small boats and larger ones over the years. Greece always had an advantage, due to its geographical position, as a hub of three major seas, thus featuring an abundance of shipyards. Until today, both Mavrikos's and George's boatyards, as they have been known for many years, carry on the long shipbuilding tradition with new modernized equipment.

The Shipyard "Neorion" is the largest industrial unit of Hermoupolis and one of the oldest machine shops in Greece. It has been in operation since 1860 and has gone through successive phases of prosperity and decline.



Authentic beauty

Syros is a unique place of natural beauty that is worth devoting time to explore...

Beaches

Asteria: Scenic beauty, clear blue waters, walking distance, dives from the rocks.

Agathopes: Bustling cosmopolitan beach, organized, shallow waters, golden sand.

Aetos: Breathtaking picture, turquoise waters, sheltered, secluded, ideal for hiking.

Azolimnos: Refreshing getaway near Hermoupolis, organized, easy access.

Ambela: Secluded, sheltered, golden sand, crystal clear waters.

Armeos: Unique beauty, secluded, ideal for hiking, nudism, pebbles and sand.

Achladi: Summer pleasures, family, organized, clear water.

Varvarousa: Desert beauty, secluded, ideal for hiking.

Vari: Popular choice, family, organized, beach volley, beach racket, facilities for disabled people.

Voulgaris: Family, picnic, water sports.

Galissas: Immense beauty, organized, popular choice, water sports, easily accessible.

Grammata/Gria Spilia: Green oasis of historical/archaeological interest, secluded, ideal for hiking.

Delfini: Boundless charm, organized, beach bar, sheltered.

Kini: Blue supremacy, picturesque scenery, organized, easily accessible, sunset, fishing, boats to northern beaches.

Kokkina: Crimson scrim, sheltered, calm and isolated.

Komito: Tranquil atmosphere, beach bar, umbrellas, turquoise waters, water sports.

Lia: Ultramarine beauty, secluded, blue waters.

Lotos: Seductive, serene, sheltered blue waters.

Marmari: Blue lull, secluded, ideal for hiking, sandy, quiet.

Megas Gialos: Scenic nostalgia, sheltered, organized, easily accessible.

Santorinioi: Secluded beach, golden sand, picturesque.

Fabrika: Golden beauty, tranquillity, fishing and spearfishing.

Finikas: Golden breeze, sheltered, sailing infrastructure, organized.

Flora and Fauna / Habitats

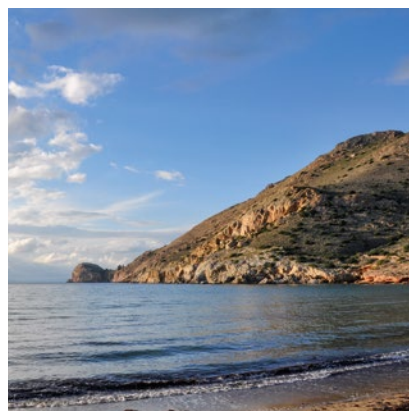
Syros, albeit small in size, exhibits strong biodiversity and offers a unique natural and manmade environment with primary vegetation on rocky surfaces, with native plants and characteristic reptiles, insects and birds of the Greek countryside. The part of the island from Mount Syringas to the coast is integrated into the Natura 2000 network, while Northern Syros has been designated as CORINE habitat, an important place for migratory birds of prey. Also, Gyaros is an important habitat for the Mediterranean monk seal *Monachus monachus*, hosting the largest population of the species in the Mediterranean Sea.

Climate

The combination of mountains, the Cycladic landscape and the sea, has resulted in the temperate climate of Syros. It is characterized by mild winters and windy summers.

Geotourism

Syros is a scenic jewel in the middle of the Aegean Sea, as well as a geological museum of inestimable scientific value, as it has rare rocks (eclogites, blue slate). From a geotectonic point of view, the island is structured by metamorphic rocks of Attica-Cycladic mass and slates of various types and varying degrees of transformation, gneiss, metamorphic volcanic rocks, marble, white quartz (especially at the beaches) and quaternary deposits are found; these rocks have plenty of data to offer over time. Syros attracts geologists and university students who wish to study these rocks.



Culture, twelve months a year

A city - outdoor museum, Hermoupolis, the medieval town of Ano Syros and dozens of cultural sights make Syros the top destination for those who choose to combine relaxation with the pursuit of history and culture at their every step.

Architecture

The Lady of the Cyclades stands out due to its impressive architectural culture, with the first signs of architectural progress appearing after 1821, by the refugees who settled on the island, bringing the typology of traditional urban architecture of their home regions. With the gradual predominance of European classicism, the traditional building type recedes from the city centre to the popular neighbourhoods. In 1837, Wilhelm von Weiler implemented the first street plan in accordance with the requirements of modern urban planning and established the monumental neoclassical architecture of Hermoupolis with the main streets, the squares and the positions of public building. During the 1840-1860 period, Bavarian, Italian and Greek architects, influenced by Classicism and Romanticism, invented a new architectural structure, also known as Neoclassical Architecture of Hermoupolis, consisting of stone buildings with marble slabs supported by arches. From the mid-19th century, the Neoclassical Architecture of Athens appeared, with plastered surfaces, striking marble facades, clay pillars and statues and wooden French frames.

Tradition

The traces of popular culture are regenerated through various local customs, such as Fotarides, Klidonas, Koulouma, Chirofagia, the Carnival and Easter celebrations.

Theatre

The historic Apollon Theatre, an emblem of the cultural heritage of Hermoupolis, hosts various artistic and cultural events throughout the year, such as international festivals, delightful operas and theatrical performances of local and international troupes.

Literature

Syros is an island with a strong artistic history. Among the writers who have left their mark on Greek Literature are Em. Rhoides, Dim. Vikelas, G. Souris, L. Koukoulas, K. Bastias, R. Boumi Pappas and M. Eleftheriou.

Music

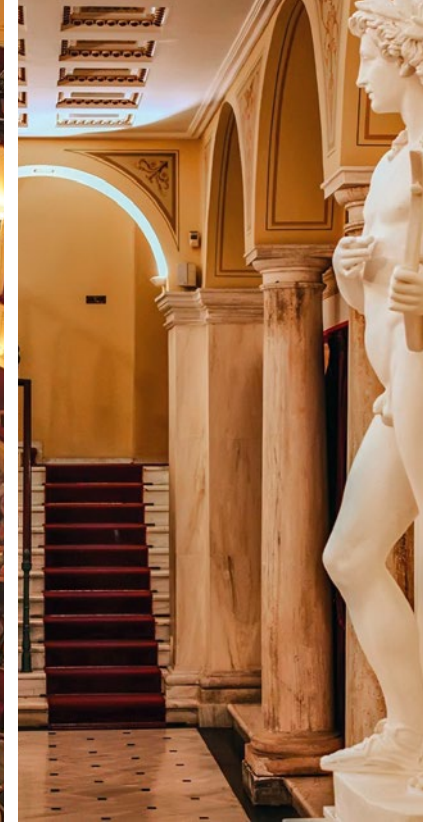
Popular music has existed as an integral cultural feature since the first decades of the 20th century in the musical events of Syros. The Patriarch of Rebetiko and founder of modern popular music, the unforgettable Markos Vamvakaris, was born here. Frangosyriani, Markos's popular 'chasapiko' song, has been played and adapted so many times, that it has travelled the reputation of the island around the world.

Visual arts

Periodical exhibitions by both internationally recognized and local artists are hosted in the atmospheric indoor space of the Cycladic Art Gallery, the art galleries G. & E. Vatis and Em. Rhoides in Hermoupolis, as well as art galleries in Ano Syros and Tsiropinas Mansion in Posidonia.

Gastronomy

Local gastronomy follows a journey of flavours and aromas from all parts of Greece. From the refugees from Chios and Asia Minor, who introduced loukoumi and other sweets to the inhabitants of Syros, to those from Smyrna who brought the spices of the East with them and the Capuchin monks with the prickly pears. Many traditional recipes stand out in local gastronomy, such as fish baked with herbs and raisins, snails with sage, cabbage with raisins, sweet pie with myzithra cheese, fennel pie, sausage with cabbage, sisyra (pork) and other specialties.



Escape to Syros

Unlimited opportunities for fun and recreation, even for the most demanding tastes.

Places to visit / Historical Monuments and Museums

Miaoulis Square is the central square of Hermoupolis, which architecturally composes a fairy-tale setting of the 19th century, with buildings that testify to the existence of a great civilization. The statue of the admiral of the 1821 Revolution, Andreas Miaoulis, dominates the square, while an impressive music platform with relief representations of Apollo and the Muses has transformed the area into the ultimate meeting point of the island.

The **Town Hall of Hermoupolis**, which adorns Miaoulis Square, is one of the largest and most impressive town halls in Greece and was built in 1876 on the plans of Ernst Ziller. It is a very special building with impressive details, protrusions, towers and generally a distinctive architecture inspired by 3 different styles. Other notable figures of the Town Hall are the hanging staircase at the entrance, the statue of D. Vafiadakis and the meeting hall of the Municipal Council.

The Municipal **Apollon Theatre** is a work of art that bears witness to the cultural development of Hermoupolis. Built in 1864 by the Italian architect Pietro Sampo, it has architectural influences from the Italian and the French culture and is often simulated with a miniature of La Scala.

The **Junior High School of Syros** is a historical school, as it was the first high school of the Greek Nation. The vision of a better education was born in 1829, which was realised with the help of Neophytos Vamvas. Famous representatives of literature, art and science, such as Eleftherios Venizelos, Andreas Syngros, Manos Eleftheriou, Giannoulis Chalepas, Kostas Beis and Konstantinos Volanakis, have passed from this school. Today, it houses the Department of Product and Systems Design Engineering of the University of the Aegean.

The **Cultural Centre of Hermoupolis** was built in 1863 under the supervision of the Italian architect Pietro Sampo. Its monumental appearance is distinguished by its marble parapet, the balcony, the walls, the Tuscan columns, the spliced stonework and the cornices. Until 1970, the Hellas Club was housed in its premises,

but since then the Club has granted the building to host the Cultural Centre of Hermoupolis, which was organizing various events until 1998, when it was renovated and began to house the Conference Centre.

The **Municipal Library** is housed on the ground floor of the Cultural Centre and, since 1926, it has been hosting the first collection of books with 2,000 volumes from the library of the Junior High School, I. Rota's library and the Bishop of the Cyclades Anthimos Komninos's library, as well as thousands of books donated by the poet, lyricist and novelist Manos Eleftheriou.

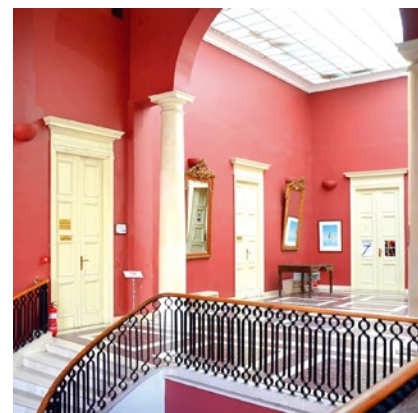
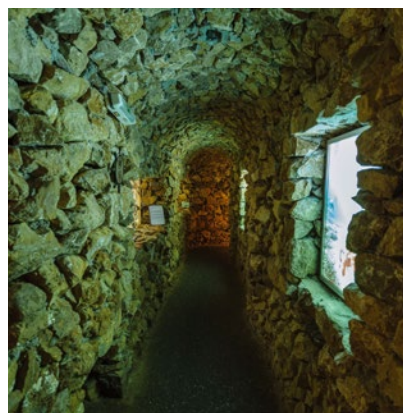
The district of **Vaporía** is known as the most prestigious district. In that area, by the sea, the refugees built unique high-ceilinged mansions with impressive frescoes, wood-carved doors, marble balconies and wooden floors, thus creating their own "steamers" (vaporía) that seemed to hover over the rocks.

The **Mausoleum of St. George** is the first organized cemetery of Syros since 1824 and reflects the history and magnificent culture of the island on its ornate mausoleums and beautifully decorated tombstones. The marble grave monuments, the shrines, the sculpted angels, the crosses, the chapels, the ciboria, the tombstones and the funerary inscriptions, are all distinguished elements of the Mausoleum.

The **Tsiropinas Mansion**, in Posidonia, is a stone-built historic building, a sample of bourgeois summer residence that reflects the glamour of a bygone era. It was built in 1916 and is a work of art, with reception rooms, living rooms, dining rooms, fireplaces, bedrooms, storerooms, kitchen and unique frescoes. The mansion is surrounded by a verdant garden, as well as ancillary buildings that were created to house the wagons of that time. Today, the Tsiropinas Mansion is a cultural venue that hosts exhibitions and other cultural events.

The **Industrial Museum of Hermoupolis** houses a collection of tools, equipment and machinery of the golden industrial era, from loukoumi-producing laboratories, textile, tanning, printing, mechanical engineering and glassmaking industries, as well as digital image and audio archives. Among the exhibits, one can see the legendary Enfield 8000, the first electric car manufactured in Greece and findings from the wreck of the steamship Patris.

The **Historical Archives of the Cyclades**, at Miaoulis Square, include extensive administrative, technical and financial archives of the Cyclades Prefecture, dating from 1821.



The **Archaeological Museum of Syros**, one of the oldest museums in Greece, has collections that include Early Cycladic and Byzantine exhibits, sculptures and inscriptions. In the museum, there is an exhibition of the archaeologist Christos Tsountas.

The **Museum of Cycladic Art Copies** was founded in 1993 by Giannis and Eleni Vatis and hosts copies of Goulandris Museum in Athens. It organizes educational art projects, play and creativity projects, as well as guided tours to the Cycladic Civilization of the 3rd millennium BC.

The **Museum of Markos Vamvakaris** is housed in a renovated, yet old, house in the heart of Ano Syros and presents the life of the beloved artist of rebetiko through photographs, personal objects, manuscripts and lyrics, but also through a half-hour documentary in his honour, which is displayed throughout the period when the museum is open.

The **Exhibition of Traditional Professions** in Ano Syros includes objects used by the inhabitants of Ano Syros in their everyday life. From the barber's scissors, the fisherman's bench and the carpenter's tools, to the farmer's equipment and the beekeeper's smoker, as well as various household items.

The **Museum of Fishing Boats, Aquatic Organisms and Shellfish** in Kini, is one of the most popular attractions for children and adults, as it allows visitors to become acquainted with the magical marine world of the Aegean Sea and study the marine flora and fauna in detail.

Hiking

The Hiking Team of Syros allows travelers to discover the beautiful hidden secrets of the island in the most delightful way. www.hikingteam.gr

Water sports

The underwater landscape of the island consists of intense life, shipwrecks, reefs and caves that will surely impress the sea lovers. Syros has scuba diving schools for beginners and advanced divers, as well as sailing equipment, thus enabling everyone to travel to the magical world of endless blue.

Sport Events

LG AegeanBall Festival: A great basketball show, where international and renowned athletes of the European and World Basketball, with the pioneer and initiator of the event, the basketball player George Printezis, who comes from Syros, and the participation of amateur athletes of all ages, all of them compete in an Open 3-on-3 Basketball Championship and Skillchallenge competitions.

Syros Trimore Triathlon: Triathletes, open water swimmers, city runners and bold competitors of all ages, travel to Syros in order to compete and live a unique experience.

Syros Run: A great running event, where professional and amateur athletes from Greece and abroad, regardless of age, wear their sports gear and run in the streets of Hermoupolis.

Hellas Beetles Synchro Cup: An international synchronized swimming event, which takes place at the Municipal Swimming Pool "Dimitrios Vikelas" and hosts great athletes.

Syros City Trail: Athletes of all ages run in the alleys and on the stairs of Hermoupolis.


Cultural Events / Festivals

A prolific cultural program "*Syros - Culture*", which is widely known for its renowned international festivals (Argentine Tango Festival, Choir Festival, Dance and Dance Theatre Festival, Syros International Film Festival (SIFF), Festival of the Aegean, Guitar Festival, Eyes Walk Digital Festival, Accordion Festival, Rebetiko Festival, the International Animation Film and Market Festival - Animasyros, etc.), as well as the active role of the Cultural Associations of the island, offer a comparative cultural advantage to Syros.

Entertainment

Many entertainment options scavenge among the bougainvilleas in the picturesque streets of Hermoupolis, scattered along the harbour, gaze at the Aegean Sea in Ano Syros and Apáno Meria and embrace the waves in the coastal villages... From atmospheric cafés and bars to restaurants, pubs and taverns, with high quality dishes and a wide variety of culinary options.





*“Above Ortygia lies an isle of fame, far hence remote, and Syra is the name
There curious eyes inscribed with wonder trace, the sun’s diurnal, and his annual race;
Not large, but fruitful; stored with grass to keep, the bellowing oxen and the bleating sheep;
Her sloping hills the mantling vines adorn, and her rich valleys wave with golden corn.
No want, no famine, the glad natives know, nor sink by sickness to the shades below;
But when a length of years unnerves the strong, Apollo comes, and Cynthia comes along.
They bend the silver bow with tender skill, and, void of pain, the silent arrows kill.
Two equal tribes this fertile land divide, where two fair cities rise with equal pride.
But both in constant peace one prince obey, and Ctesius there, my father, holds the sway.”*

*Homer, Odyssey, Book XV
translated by Alexander Pope, 1725*