

Accompanying Persons' Program

Wednesday July 4th, 2007
Full day tour

Nissyros Island Tour

Tour Information

Tour starts:	08.00 hrs
Arrive in Nissyros	10.30hrs
Visit to volcano	11.00-12:30 hrs
Visit "Panagia" monastery	13.00 – 13:45hrs
Depart Nissyros island	15:30hrs
Return to hotels:	17.00 hrs

Price per person: € 40

PRICE INCLUDES:

- Boat ticket to Nissyros
- Entrance Fees to volcano
- Experienced English Speaking Guide
- Transfer from and to hotel in A/C coaches
- Taxes



Following departure from your hotel, we will drive to Kardamena village from where we will take the boat to Nissyros. A pleasant 1-hour cruise down the east coast of Kos will lead us to the volcanic island of Nissyros.

Nissyros is a very fertile island and, although very rocky, many vegetables,

olives, and almonds grow here. One of the most traditional drinks in Nissyros is a very sweet but also very refreshing (when mixed with water) drink, called "Soumatha," that is made from almonds.

Our day to this breathtaking island includes a tour by bus, through the mountain villages, up to one of the last surviving active (but dormant) volcanoes in Greece. The volcano is 260m in diameter and 30m deep with steps leading down to its centre. The smell of sulphur fills the surrounding air, while the scenery could belong to the moon. You can walk right down into the crater where you can see 'blow holes' where steam escapes from the ground and also where the mud has been bubbling away under the surface. The sulfuric crystals make an interesting display and it is even possible to stand



Volcano



Sulphuric crystals

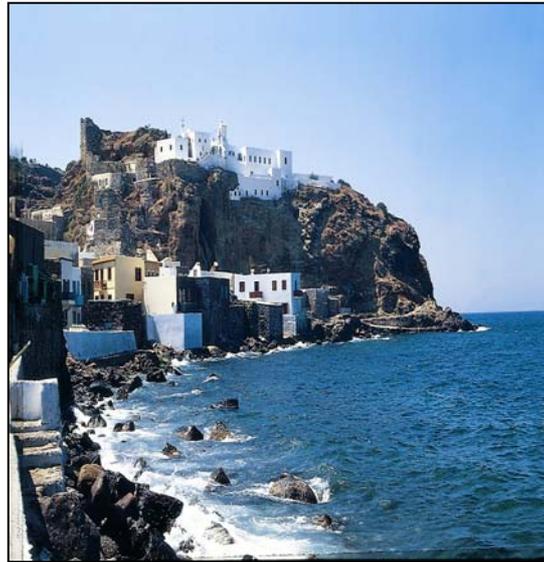


Volcano blow-hole

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over the top of a geo-thermal spring and hear the water running away below you.

Next, it is time to explore the harbour town of Mandraki, where the majority of the population lives. It is a busy little town, with whitewashed houses, as well as quite a few traditional natural stone houses. The centre of the town boasts a charming square where locals and tourists sit in the evenings to enjoy the culinary delights in the many tavernas. East from Mandraki are the spa springs of Loutra which still operate today.



"Panagia" monastery in Nissyros

Finally we will visit the picturesque monastery of Panagia Spiliani (The Virgin Mary of the Caves). It is the second castle-monastery (previously a cave) in the Dodecanese and is located on the opposite side of the harbour (northwest) situated on a 30m high rock. Built around 1600 A.D., it has a basilica with a beautiful iconostasis from the 18th century and also houses a small library with Greek and Turkish documents. A total of 270 steps, lead up to the holy cave where the miraculous icon of the Blessed Virgin hangs.

According to local myth, at around 1400 A.D. a farmer discovered the miraculous icon of the Virgin Mary in a cave near the hot springs of Mandraki and he took it to the church of Panagia Potamitisas (The Virgin Mary of the Rivers.) The next day the icon was missing. A few days later it was found by local inhabitants in a cave on the 30m high rock and they brought it back to the church of Panagia Potamitisas. This happened three times and so the inhabitants decided to transform the cave into a holy church. The silver-encased icon of the Virgin Mary is double-sided. Saint Nicholas is depicted on one side and the Virgin Mary is depicted on the other.

The monastery has superb views of the harbour and out to Kos and Gialli, a small island close to Nissyros where pumice stone is quarried, processed and loaded.

Here, at the monastery, there will be time to have lunch and do some shopping, before getting back on the boat for the return journey to Kos.



Nissyros city centre