

## LACONIA COASTAL BIKING TOUR



COUNTRY: Greece

LOCATION: Laconia – South Peloponnese

DEPARTURES: 2019, every Saturday from April to October.

DURATION: 8 days

PRICE: **€740p.p.** +€60p.p. on high season (May 16<sup>th</sup> - June 13<sup>th</sup>, September 5<sup>th</sup> – October 17<sup>th</sup>) excluding flights, for double, triple, quad room or apartment.

ACCOMMODATION: 3\* hotel or apartments (depending on availability)

ADDITIONAL CHARGES: Single supplement 140€, Bike rental: Trekking bike 80€/week, Road bike 120€/week, E-bike 230€/week.

TRANSPORTATION FROM/TO ATHENS AIRPORT\*:

1. Transfer by public Bus (National Transportation)

2. Direct transfer by us:

- Athens airport-Sparta €220 (up to 4 persons) / Monemvasia-Athens airport €280 (up to 4 persons).
- Kalamata airport – Sparta €100 (up to 4 persons) / Monemvasia-Kalamata airport €180 (up to 4 persons).

Bike transfer €10 (one way).

## **About this holiday**

Explore the beautiful South-East part of Peloponnese, Laconia, with a bike trip that combines the golden Greek beaches, with the Greek history and culture. Beginning from the famous military city-state of ancient world, Sparta, you will head south and pass by Elafonisos, with one of the most beautiful beaches in the Mediterranean Sea, you will end up to the unique Castle-town of Monemvassia. Suitable for anyone with an intermediate level of fitness, the tour is easy enough with mostly flat roads and everyday distances no more than 50Km. Idyllic landscapes, turquoise water, endless beaches and history will keep you company in every step of this exciting ride.

## **Self-guided tour**

During this trip, you will cycle on your own without the presence of a guide. We will provide to you all the necessary equipment, maps (in printed form or on GPS) and information about the routes and points of interest so you can easily take the tour. In addition, we will take care of the transportation of your luggage so you will find them in the next hotel when you arrive. In this way, you will be totally independent and free to cycle any time you wish (morning or afternoon), make a stop anywhere you want (beaches, archaeological sites, taverns etc.) and spend there as much time you prefer. At the same time, we provide 24h emergency phone support. Just give us a call and we will find the best way to help if anything occurs!

## **Responsible travel holiday**

Responsible travel is a new way of travelling for all those who prefer authenticity of experiences, life and culture instead of mass tourism. It's about respecting and benefiting local people and the environment – but it's about far more than that. Responsible travel is about bringing you closer to local cultures and environments by involving local people in tourism. It's about doing this in a fair way that helps ensure that they will give you an even warmer welcome. For example, a local guide from the destination will open your eyes to their cultures and ways of life far better than an expat guide could ever do.

The responsible travelers want to get a little bit more out of their travels, and to give a little bit back to the special places and people that they encounter. They want deeper and more real travel experiences. The responsible traveler values authenticity –

experiences integral to local people's traditions, cultures and rituals - rather than those created for tourism, or those whose existing meanings and uses have become lost as they have been packaged up for tourism.

Choosing our holidays, you choose responsible holidays. One of our biggest concerns is to secure that tourism will not affect negatively our area in ecological and also socio-cultural way, and also that the locals will mostly benefit from your travel. Our company which is the organizer and operator of this package is local-based, all our employees are locals and the overwhelming majority of the hotels that we cooperate with are owned by locals too. In this trip, you will be given printed material about how to apply maximum responsibility during your holidays. We also, as a company, offer €5 per person for the environment, for offsetting the carbon emissions caused by this trip. This money are going to be used, in cooperation with the local Forestry Office, the Greek Climbing Club of Tripoli and the Tripoli Ecologist Club, for reforestation in our mountains, that have been hit by great fires in the summer of 2007.

## Day-by-day itinerary

### DAY 1: ARRIVAL - SPARTA

Arrival in Athens National Airport and transfer upon request to Sparta, the capital of Laconia. It is well known as the kingdom of King Leonidas whose statue stands imposing in front of the stadium of the town, and for the 300 brave Spartans who fought against the numerous Persian armies in Thermopylae back in 480 BC. Sparta is built on foot of mount Taygetos in an altitude of 216 meters next to Evrotas River and a valley full of orange, olive, lemon and other trees extends around the city.



You will have the chance to walk around and explore the night life of the city. You can visit the ancient Greek theater of the Spartans, which has a capacity of 16.000 spectators and the temple of the Chalkoikos Athena together with the other ancient Greek and



Byzantine remains in the Acropolis of the city. For the lovers of gastronomy and food and also of the tradition and culture, the olive oil museum is another interesting choice! There you can see exhibits that narrate the evolution and development of the production of olive oil and olive harvest, two products

that are so connected to Greek culture. In case you arrive late in Sparta and you will not have time to visit any of the above, you can do it probably in the next morning before your departure. Overnight Sparta.

## **DAY 2: SPARTA – MYSTRAS– GYTHEIO (67Km/+830 m/ - 1026 m)**

In the morning, we will deliver to you the bikes with your equipment at the hotel. Making sure that everything is ready and you are comfortable with your bike, you will leave the capital of Laconia and head to the great Byzantine city of Mystras, the “Wonder of Morea” as it is said. Mystras which is the second Castle town of Laconia after Monemvassia that stands in a beautiful total green landscape on the top of a 260m hill overlooking Sparta just 6 km northwest. The settlement was formed during the times of



crusaders’ invasion to the Byzantine land of Peloponnese and just the year 1962 it came under the Byzantine control. Breathtaking medieval ruins, Byzantine churches, partially preserved mosaics, monasteries and palaces while wandering through the narrow streets will surely impress you. Bear in mind that if you wish to explore



completely this corner of magnificent Laconia you will need 2 to 3 hours.

You continue cycling southern among orangeries and olive groves before you arrive to Gythio, a small seaside fish town with a picturesque port full of traditional fish taverns. The inhabitants who are in majority

fishermen provide on daily basis these taverns with fresh fish so you can taste it straight from the sea, by the dock. North of the town, on the foot of the cliff, the ancient theater stands where cultural events take place

while south in Kranai island you can face the endless deep blue sea from the marble octagon lighthouse built in 1872. According to Homer and Pausanias, Paris and Helen spent the night in Kranai Island before their journey to Troy. Small fishing boats and three-



storey neo-classic buildings dominate the place giving a multicultural and Aegean glamour to it. Overnight at Gythio.

### **DAY 3: BEACH TOUR – GYTHIO (39.1 km/+590m/-590m)**

This day is dedicated to the marvelous beaches that surround Gythio. You roll southerly to Mavrovouni, Vathi, Kamares and Skoutari beach and do not hesitate to dive in the crystal water of the Laconian Bay or just sunbathe on virgin pebbly beaches. Just pick the



beach

that you like the most and make a stop! Alternatively, if you prefer not to cycle a lot, you can spend the whole day on the beautiful beach of Mavrovouni where you can find taverns, beach bars,

watersports etc. and relax by the sea. Overnight at Gythio.



**DAY 4: GYTHEIO - ELIA  
( 38.4 km / +287 m )**

Today you leave Gythio and cycle by the sea heading east to Elia, passing by traditional settlements such as Asteri and wandering through the fertile Laconian land which is filled with

orangeries and olive groves.

Elia is a small fish village known for the deep blue coasts, the incomparable natural beauty and the unique sunset for the romantic at heart. At the small picturesque port you can see scattered fish boats and the local fishermen returning from a fishing day. A visit to the Byzantine tower located on top of the cliff is suggested as the view from up there is ecstatic! Overnight at Elia.



**DAY 5: ELIA - NEAPOLI  
(51 km +708 m / -707 m)**

After a good breakfast you step on your bike and keep cycle southerly to Neapoli. On your way along the country road, you roll through villages and diverse crops experiencing a unique tour. For those who are more fit,



alternatively they can choose to ride along an almost undiscovered part of a unique coastal beauty for 10 km! It is a demanding route with an average difficulty but you will be fully satisfied by the experience as you will roll right by the amazing deep blue of Laconian Bay feeling the smooth touch of Greek sun on your face. Neapoli or Vatica is the extreme of continental Europe. It is a town



with great nautical tradition and an island aura as white traditional buildings dominate the place.

Its long tree-lined strip of land at the seafront is full of taverns, cafes and bars where you can stop and take a break after biking. Apart from that, Neapoli is the base for sightseeing in the vicinity. Maybe one

of the most impressive monuments is the Petrified Forest of Agia Marina, approx. 15 km east of Neapoli, between Agios Nikolaos and Cape Malea. Right by the sea you can literally explore a forest of palm trees turned to stone due to a rather rare natural process and numerous fossilized seashells. If you would like to visit it, you could either ride or go by taxi. Overnight at Neapoli.

## **DAY 6: NEAPOLI - ELAFONISOS ISL. – NEAPOLI (57.3 km /+304 m / -304 m)**

Today you will bike up to the small port of Pounta from where you



take the ferry and after a few minutes you arrive in Elafonisos, a small island of 19sqm and total perimeter 31km with few inhabitants situated just opposite Neapoli. A top destination in Peloponnese, a real gem of South

Greece, with the most beautiful sandy beach (Simos Beach) in the Mediterranean Sea as many people believe! On arriving at the port of Elafonisos, the first thing you see is the picturesque church of Saint Spyridon and you can smell the freshly made traditional food in the taverns nearby where you can always find fresh sea food thanks to local fish boats. You can cycle through the island, swim, or relax on the lace sandy beach. It is a real heaven on Earth! Opposite Elafonisos on the bottom of the sea, the ancient submerged settlement of Pavlopetri, the oldest sunken city of the world,lays.The most courageous people dive to see the ruins of the

proto-Hellenic civilization discovered in 1968. Return back and overnight Neapoli.

**DAY 7A: NEAPOLI – MONEMVASSIA (27.3 km +427 m / -392 m)**

In the morning, you start your today's ride. You will take the new coastal road from Neapoli to Monemvasia which is a wonderful route through dense vegetation and amazing view along your way before you reach the highlight of this trip, the Castle-town of Monemvasia.



Optionally (Day 7B), if you are fit and confident enough you could try riding your bike to reach to the top of Kryovrisi, at an altitude of 600m., although this might be demanding for the most. From Kryovrisi, you start a wonderful downhill route through beautiful vegetation and breathtaking view along your way before you reach the unique

Castle-town of Monemvasia. It is time to explore the final touch on the portrait of Laconia, the cross-road of civilizations through centuries, as Byzantines, Franks, Venetians and Ottomans have left marks of their domination on the rock. Even though cars and bikes are not allowed inside the castle-town, a tour on foot is absolutely necessary. Once you enter the castle through the unique entrance, you will be impressed by the walls, the old mansions, the narrow cobblestone alleys, the churches, old short arches and marble imperial thrones. An image of the setting sun while almost kissing the endless blue sea will ideally close your day. Overnight at Monemvasia.

## DAY 8: DEPARTURE

After a good breakfast, you will take your luggage, and get ready for the transfer back to the airport. If you wish, you can add some more activities in this trip, like a guided tour to the Acropolis of Athens or just stay a couple of days in Athens. In addition, you can check the rest of our programs and combine another one if you are interested such as our Archaeology Tour of Greece or spend some days relaxing at a sea-side destination.

### Price includes:

Accommodation for 7 nights with breakfast, luggage transfer between hotels, maps and information about the area, 24h emergency telephone support.

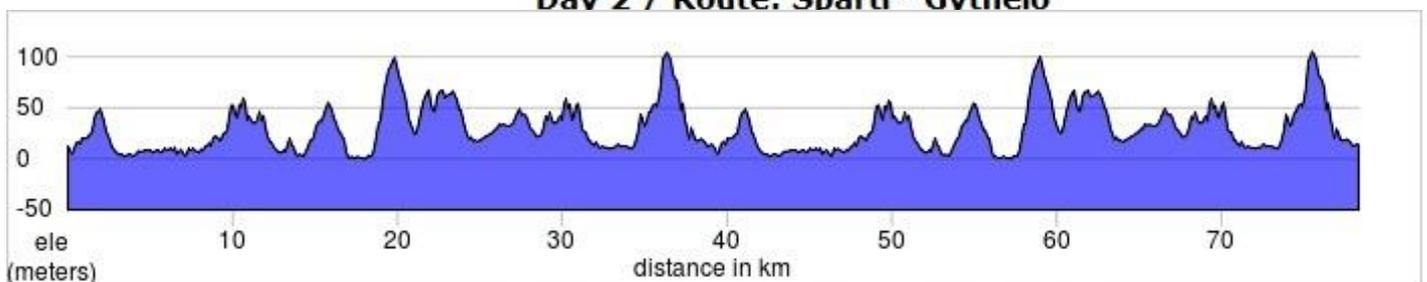
### Price does not include:

Flight tickets, transfers from/to airport, bikes, lunch or dinners, tickets for sights museums etc

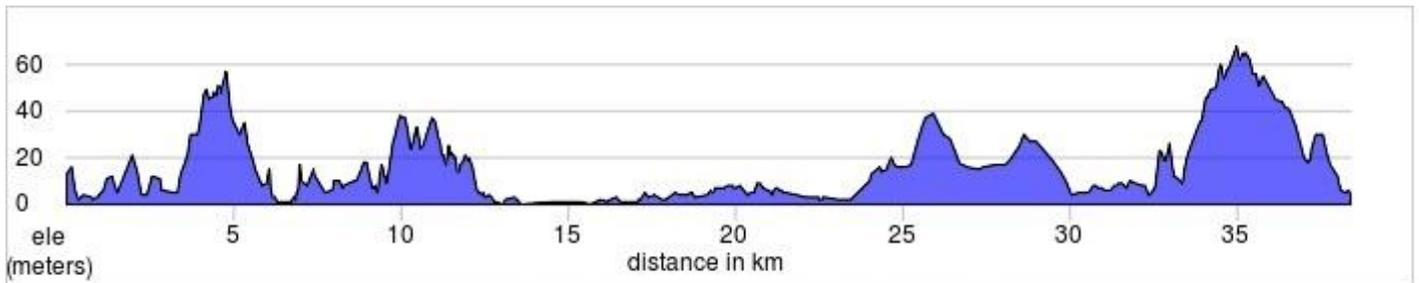
### **Elevation Profiles:**



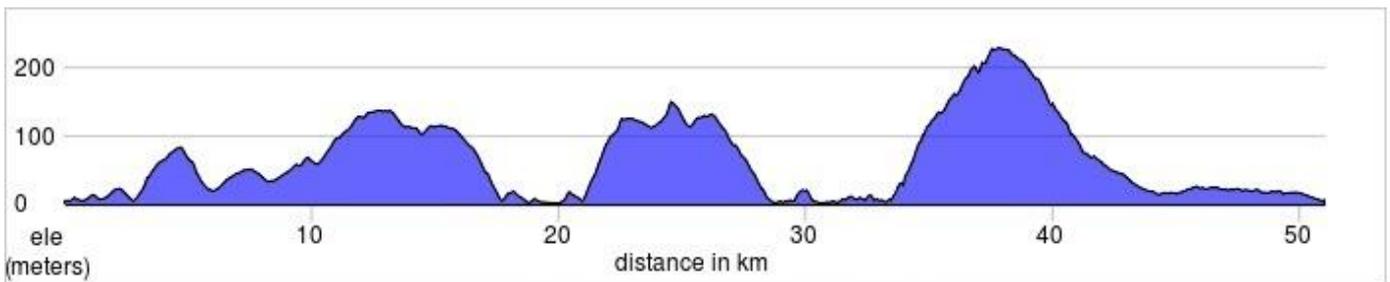
**Day 2 / Route: Sparti - Gytheio**



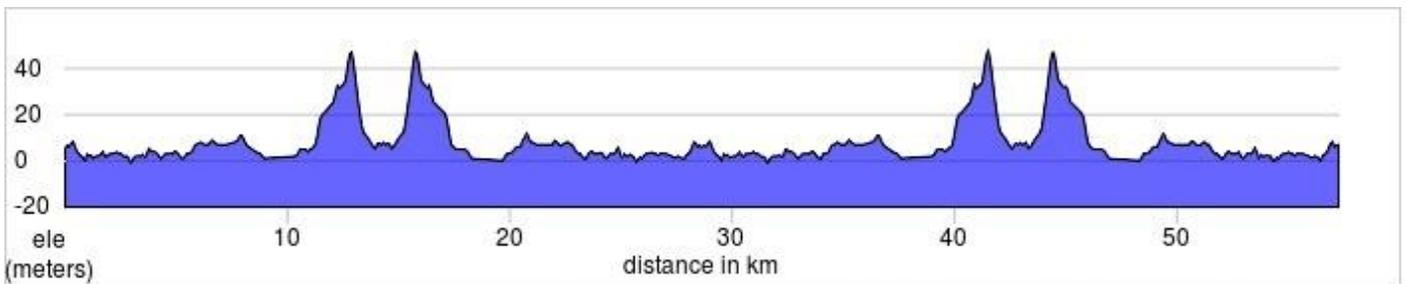
**Day 3 / Route: Beach tour - Gytheio**



**Day 4 / Route: Gytheio - Elia**



**Day 5 / Route: Elia- Neapoli**



**Day 6 / Route: Neapoli- Elafonissos- Neapoli**



**Day 7 / Route: Neapoli - Monemvasia**