

Self-Guided Cycling on Kefalonia

Trip Code: SGKF

Version: SGKF Self-Guided Cycling on Kefalonia



CYCLE



SELF-GUIDED



MODERATE



HIGHLIGHTS

- Enjoy the ambience of picturesque Fiscardo at one of its harbour-side cafes
- Ride the dramatic coast road to the viewpoint above Myrtos Beach
- Cycle the Omala Valley, visit a winery and sample the Robola white wine
- Take a boat out onto the weird and wonderful Melissani Cave Lake

AT A GLANCE

- Self-guided
- 6 days cycling and sightseeing
- BIKE HIRE INCLUDED
- E-bike upgrade available
- Daily departures available
- Join at Kefalonia Airport

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- 7 Breakfasts
- 3 nights Hotel with swimming pool
- 4 nights Hotel

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

Introduction

West of the Greek mainland, Kefalonia is one of several islands in the Ionian Sea and the perfect location for a self-guided cycling holiday. Quiet fishing villages, olive groves, dramatic coast roads, pristine beaches (like Myrtos and Antisamos) and sipping a glass of Robolo wine with the locals in an authentic tavern are just some of the elements that make this self-guided cycling holiday so special. Famously, Kefalonia is the setting for Louis de Bernieres' novel, *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* and the subsequent movie starring Nicolas Cage and Penelope Cruz. During your time on the island you should be able to spot several of the places that feature in the film.

With a high point at Mount Ainos (1628m), a generally quite rugged landscape and a shoreline that alternates between rocky cliffs and sandy coves, Kefalonia is one of the more spectacular Greek islands. It is a large island with more than sufficient route options to fill a rewarding week of cycling. You'll stay at three different hotels to make the most of the island and to ride all of the best roads. From a base at Mousata, you'll explore the hilly landscape of the south, with views to the island of Zakynthos. Then, heading up to Agia Efimia, you'll be close to the mysterious Melissani Cave Lake and have the chance to cycle up to picturesque Fiscardo at the northern tip of the island. A final day of cycling will take you back across the island via the Ainos Pass and the vineyards of the Omala Valley, to spend the last night of the trip in Argostoli, Kefalonia's lively capital. If you are looking for a self-guided cycling holiday in a fantastic 'film-set' location, this is one we can highly recommend.

Is this holiday for you?

This is an ideal holiday for those looking for a relatively challenging week of cycling. Six carefully chosen day-rides will allow you to explore most of the beautiful Greek island of Kefalonia. There's a total of 275 kilometres of cycling (an average of 46 kilometres per day) and on most of the days you can expect to be cycling for about 4 hours. There will be plenty of time to enjoy the experience, stopping to take photos and for coffee at some of the many hostelrys on the route. Most of the day-rides involve cycling out from and back to the same hotel. Staying in comfortable 3* accommodation throughout, you will have everything you need to relax after busy days of exploring.

Itinerary

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DAY 1

Arrival on Kefalonia and transfer to Mousata.

We provide a transfer from the airport to the first night's hotel in Mousata, just a short drive away. In the afternoon, a representative from the bike shop in Argostoli will come to the hotel with your bike and make sure it is fitted to your satisfaction. Apart from this, you can relax by the hotel pool or do some exploration on your bike down to the coast and the tiny harbour at Pessada which is just a couple of kilometres away. When you have finished exploring you can return to your hotel to enjoy your first evening meal on the island.



Accommodation

Hotel with swimming pool

DAY 2

Explore from Mousata to Argostoli and the Monastery of Agios Andreas.

Today's ride leads north on quiet roads, passing through the traditional farming villages of Keramies and Metaxata, en route to the island's capital Argostoli. Sitting alongside an impressive natural harbour, Argostoli is a colourful and cosmopolitan town and a great place to explore. You'll certainly want to find a suitable sea-front café to sit and relax with a typical Greek frappe. Look out for turtles in the harbour near the fishing boats. Before leaving, you can pick up some items for a picnic lunch, or grab a snack for lunch at one of the many eateries. Leaving the town, you'll cycle steadily up to a 200 metre-high ridge from where there are superb views towards the south coast and to the island of Zakynthos beyond. Then, passing through the village of Lakithra, you'll descend into a valley and to the nunnery of Agios Andreas. There has been a nunnery on this site for many hundreds of years, and it has been rebuilt several times, most recently following the 1953 earthquake. There's a short section of smooth dirt road from Agios Andreas to Karavados and from there it's back to the hotel at Mousata with plenty of time for a dip in the pool.

Meals: **B**



Accommodation

Hotel with swimming pool



Ascent

420M



Descent

420M



Distance





43KM

DAY 3

Discover the southern part of the island on a ride to Pastra, Skala and Katelios.

Setting out from the hotel, today's route follows a fairly level road towards the south-east across the coastal plain, with breath-taking views over the Ionian Sea to the neighbouring island of Zakynthos, less than 15 kilometres away. Beyond the small village of Markopoulo, the road turns away from the coast and cuts between low hills to the village of Pastra before turning back towards the coast again. You have the option at this point to add on a short loop to the small resort of Skala at the southern tip of the island. This is a good place to take a break, spend some time on the beach or go in search of the town's Roman villa with its well-preserved mosaic flooring. Continuing on your ride, we recommend making time to stop at the pretty fishing village of Katelios where there is a loggerhead turtle information centre; nearby Mounda Beach is important for nesting turtles. From Katelios, there's a final 10 kilometre stretch back to Mousata with the sparkling sea now on your left hand side.

Meals: **B**





	Accommodation Hotel with swimming pool		Ascent 550M		Descent 650M		Distance 50KM
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DAY 4

Cycle north to Myrtos Beach, then across the island to overnight at Agia Efimia.

Your route today will take you around Argostoli Bay with views across to the town and then you'll reach a striking stretch of coastline with the sea far below and to the left. At a viewpoint, you can look down to the pure white strip of Myrtos Beach, one of Kefalonia's finest sights. There are several small hamlets in this area, including the village where Pelagia lived (in the film Captain Corelli's Mandolin). From Myrtos Beach you'll head inland and cross the island through a wide break in the mountains that presents a pretty pattern of small fields and olive groves. A final easy descent leads to the idyllic fishing village of Agia Efimia, your home for the next three nights. Plenty of free time in the afternoon and a good opportunity to go for a swim or simply to relax on the pebbly beach. There is a choice of restaurants overlooking the picturesque harbour and boat landings. NOTE for the 2024 season: The main coastal road from Argostoli to Myrtos Beach is closed after the village of Agkonas, with works scheduled until the end of the year. You will cycle a diverted route from the village of Drapano inland to reach the village of Divarata, from where you will pick up the original route to Agia Efimia. Diversion route: 43km / 885m ascent / 1020m descent

Meals: **B**





	Accommodation Hotel		Ascent 600M		Descent 750M		Distance 49KM
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DAY 5

Sample the delights of Karavomylos Bay, including Melissani Cave and Antisamos Beach.

Feeling refreshed you can enjoy a relaxed breakfast before exploring a network of peaceful roads with views across the bay. Agia Efimia sits beside a wide bay at the southern end of the Strait of Ithaca which separates Kefalonia from the small island of Ithaca. The roads lead amongst olive groves and vineyards to authentic villages such as Poulata and Chaliotata where you can stop to sample a Greek coffee in a local café. Then, dropping down to the coast, you can visit Melissani Cave Lake and even take a small boat (Greek: kaiki) out onto the blue waters of this limestone grotto. Drogarati Cave is also nearby and here you can take a guided walk amongst the stalactites and stalagmites. If you choose to visit either of these caves, there will be a fee of approximately 5 to 7 euros to pay locally. At the southern end of the bay are the small villages of Karavomylos and Sami and the latter of these has a pleasant promenade with shading trees and a number of tavernas overlooking the harbour. It is possible (and recommended) to continue the ride across a wooded headland to reach the lovely limestone pebble beach of Antisamos, another place that featured prominently in the movie, Captain Corelli's Mandolin and a great spot for a swim. There are a couple of beach bars here where you can enjoy some refreshment to the soundtrack of the ocean. Once you have recrossed the 150 metre-high ridge back to Sami, it's an easy cycle back to your accommodation in Agia Efimia.

Meals: **B**





 Accommodation Hotel	 Ascent 450M	 Descent 450M	 Distance 35KM
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DAY 6

A super day ride, out and back, to Fiscardo at the northern tip of Kefalonia.

This is the longest, most challenging and most spectacular ride of your holiday, heading up to Fiscardo at the northern tip of the island. Your route crosses back to the west coast and leads northwards past the peninsula of Assos with its colourful houses and fortress (optional detour to Assos). Continuing, the road twists and turns and passes through a number of villages on the crest of this green and forested part of the island. There are views to both sides of the island at times. Fiscardo is reckoned to be the prettiest village on Kefalonia, in part because it largely escaped significant damage during the 1953 earthquake. With its several bars and cafes and colourful fishing boats, the harbour area is a great place to stop, find something to eat and watch the world go by. After a leisurely lunch, you'll cycle back to Agia Efimia in part on minor roads towards the east coast with a few small villages and splendid views of Ithaca and a spectacular final descent. You will have earned a beer and a double order of dessert today.

Meals: **B**





 Accommodation Hotel	 Ascent 1000M	 Descent 1000M	 Distance 61KM
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DAY 7

An excellent final ride across the island to Argostoli via the vineyards of the Omala Valley.

After breakfast at the hotel, you'll once again cycle down the coast road to Karavomylos and from there head up through the olive trees to the villages of Poulata and Chaliotata with views back to Sami and its prominent headland. Still gaining height amongst the cypress trees, the road crosses the spine of the island at the Ainos Pass and descends into the Omala Valley, the most important area for wine producing on Kefalonia. This is where the internationally known white wine known as Robolla originates. If you wish, you can stop at the local wine cooperative to learn a bit more about the wine making process and, of course, try some! In this fertile valley, next to the winery, in fact, is the important monastery of Agios Gerasimos, the patron saint of the island. Continuing the descent and looping around towards Argostoli from the south, a final highlight of the ride is the ruined Byzantine fortress of Saint George on its hill above Peratata. After checking in at your hotel in Argostoli, there will be time to chill out or to do some exploring in this pretty seaside town.

Meals: **B**

 Accommodation Hotel	 Ascent 800M	 Descent 800M	 Distance 43KM
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DAY 8

Departure day. A transfer to Kefalonia Airport is provided.

On your departure day you may have time to visit the archaeological museum of Argostoli or relax with a coffee in the lively town square. Your driver will meet you at your hotel to take you to the airport in time to check in for your onward flight.

Meals: **B**

Holiday Information

What's Included

- All accommodation as described
- Kefalonia Airport transfers
- Luggage transfers
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Self-guided information pack containing your map and route notes
- Welcome briefing
- Bike hire

What's not Included

- Travel to / from Kefalonia Airport
- Tourist taxes may apply and are usually under 5 Euros per room per night
- Travel insurance
- Visas (if applicable)
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Personal equipment
- Any additional activities/excursions indicated as optional

Your Self-Guided Pack & Route Notes

Each self-guided holiday comes with comprehensive route notes and a map or pocket guidebook of the area you are exploring. The route notes contain information about the places you will visit, about the local transport you might need, along with the detailed route notes for your daily walks or cycle rides. We even include some tips for the best places to stop for lunch.

You can expect to receive your Self-Guided Pack containing your route notes, a map or guidebook and all your relevant documents no later than 3 weeks before your holiday start date. We will send your documents using signed for courier so that you can track your package and know that they are safely on their way to you. For bookings of more than 4 people we will send an additional Self-Guided Pack. If you do not need this additional pack please inform our sales team. Your pack will be sent to the lead booker so please remind them to pack it before you set off.

Should your self-guided trip be part of a longer adventure requiring you to leave home more than three weeks before your holiday start date, please do inform our sales team so that we can make alternative delivery arrangements.

Self-Guided Families

Our Self-Guided Holidays are perfect for your next family holiday and are suitable for children of all ages.

Our partner hotels and accommodations are able to provide cots for young children, and some offer family rooms. We can also arrange hire of children's bikes and tag along bikes for most of our self-guided cycling trips and with trips such as Lake Constance and the Danube offering routes on designated cycle paths you can rest assured in keeping your family safe.

As a parent we trust that you know your own child's capabilities, so please read the itinerary details to ensure the distances covered each day are suitable for your family. If this is a first time walking holiday for your family, a centre based trip is a fantastic option as it allows you to easily opt out of a days walking if a day of building sand castles, swimming in the pool or visiting museums is calling instead.

Please discuss this further with our sales team who will be happy to assist in picking the best trip for your family.

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Joining Arrangements & Transfers

All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a land only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. This trip starts at Moussata and ends at Argostoli and is most easily accessed through Kefalonia Airport which is served by several low-cost airlines from the UK.

You will be met on arrival at Kefalonia Airport on Day 1 and taken to the first night's hotel in Moussata. The transfer takes just a few minutes. At the end of the holiday you will be taken back to the airport from the hotel in Argostoli.

Meal Plan

This trip is on a bed and breakfast basis to allow you the opportunity to enjoy the experience of dining in local tavernas and restaurants.

Food & Water

Greek food is excellent with its mix of tasty Mediterranean dishes alongside a fantastic range of fresh vegetables and salads. Local menus include fresh seafood, fava beans, olives, aubergines, fresh cheeses, filled filo pastries, lamb and poultry plus don't forget the excellent breads to dip in taramasalata and tzatziki. Breakfasts are continental in style with tea, coffee, cereals, bread, jam, yoghurt, honey and occasionally cheese. As there will be a wide range of restaurants and traditional Greek Tavernas to choose from each evening and lunchtime, serving an array of mouth-watering delights, it makes sense to leave the choice of menu and budget to you. Kefalonia also produces a very drinkable white wine (Robola) and anywhere in Greece you can find Mythos beer, the aniseed aperitif of Ouzo, and Retsina (white wine infused with pine resin).

Many places on this holiday have drinkable water from the tap to fill your personal water bottles. Please check with the proprietors at the various locations. Please take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a Water-To-Go bottle) for days when drinking water out of the tap is not available. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

Accommodation

During this trip we spend 3 nights in Moussata, 3 nights in Agia Efimia and 1 night in the capital, Argostoli. Each of the small, family-run hotels and holiday apartments we use has been chosen for its location and for its standard of service. Each of them offers a great buffet breakfast to fuel you on your rides and at the hotel in Moussata there's a pool for you to cool off in after a day on the trails. At some of the apartments we stay at, twin-bedded rooms are limited, or not available. At these locations, twin occupancy is usually offered with a double bed and a sofa bed.

It is possible to arrange additional nights accommodation if you would like to extend your stay on Kefalonia. Please speak to one of our sales team for further details.

During high season you may be booked into an alternative accommodation of a similar standard in the area.

Bike Hire

Bikes are provided locally within the cost of the holiday. These are hybrid-type bikes with triple chainsets (24 gears), Shimano v-brakes and RST 60mm suspension forks. The bikes are supplied with repair kit, mini pump, bicycle lock, led lights, cycle computer, first aid kit, inner tube, elastic straps, bottle holder and a single rear pannier. The bikes are fitted with flat pedals, but the local bike shop will fit your own pedals if you normally ride clipped-in. Please provide us with your height when you book, so we can reserve a bike for you. A helmet is provided with hybrid bike hire however we strongly recommend you bring your own helmet with you for the best comfort.

Upgrade to an E-bike

If you are looking for a bit of extra support whilst in the saddle, you can upgrade to an e-bike to make your ride even more leisurely.

Equipped with a battery and motor, these electric bikes give you a helping hand whilst you are pedalling, making it easier to climb hills, and travel further with less effort and more comfort.

E-bikes are available on this holiday at an additional supplement of £305. Just request this upgrade option with our sales team at the time of booking.

Baggage Allowance

Your main luggage will be transferred between each of your hotels while you are out on your ride. We ask that you please ensure your luggage is under 20KG and that your luggage is ready for collection each morning. You will also need a daypack to carry your daily essentials with you.

General Information

Passport & Visas

Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders. A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday. Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations.

GHIC / Medical cover

UK residents should carry a free Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). This entitles you to state provided medical treatment when you're visiting an EU country or Switzerland. This is not a substitute for medical travel insurance which is vital when travelling overseas.

Severe Allergies

Please inform our KE Sales and support team of any severe allergies you may have before travel. We will always do our best to help but we are unable to guarantee an allergy free environment on our KE trips. We advise that you always carry your own treatment for the allergy with you such as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' if required. We also recommend that you discuss this with your accommodation on arrival so that they can better assist you.

Preparing for your Holiday

The advantage of a self-guided cycling holiday is that you decide the pace. This trip is designed for regular leisure cyclists as the routes do contain some slightly hillier terrain. You should be comfortable with cycling 40-60 km a day on rural roads, side roads and cycle paths. It is always sensible to get some additional exercise before going on an active holiday and we advise you to dust off your bike and head out on a few rides before your holiday. After all, the fitter you are the more enjoyable your cycling will be.

Climate

The Ionian Islands, including Kefalonia, are blessed with a typically Mediterranean climate; basking in warm sunshine from late spring through to the autumn. The optimum time for cycling on Kefalonia is either side of the hottest months of July and August. In May and October the maximum daytime temperature will be around 22 degrees C, falling to 15 degrees or a little lower at night. In September it is likely to be 5 degrees warmer than this. There is usually very little rain in May or September and slightly more in October. Temperatures in July and August are hot, reaching around 27-28 C during the day.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that prior to travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates direct from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

- Greece - Ionian Islands. Lonely Planet
- Zakynthos and Kefalonia Pocket Guide. Berlitz
- Captain Corelli's Mandolin - Louis de Bernieres

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

SelfGuided Cycling Equipment List

- Cycling shorts
- Cycle helmet
- Functional base layer
- T-shirts
- Scarf
- Hat
- Windproof jacket
- Fleece / extra layer
- Rain protection
- Rucksack (approx. 20 l)
- Small first aid kit for your rucksack
- Sunscreen

- Water bottle or hydration pack
- Camera (batteries/memory card)
- Mobile Phone (ensure your data package covers your destination)
- Handlebar mount that is compatible with your smartphone
- Power bank
- Waterproof phone cover
- Sun glasses
- Personal wash kit
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping to avoid the use of plastic bags
- Tupperware for picnics

Cotswold Outdoor



Many of the Equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive 12.5% discount voucher from Cotswold Outdoor and other retailers. [>> Find out more](#)

Land Only Information

Please note our 'from price' listed is based on 4 persons on double occupancy, however we can quote for any number of travellers including solo travellers, contact our sales team for a quote.

This trip is available for departures on any day throughout the dates listed.

All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. You may even wish to make this holiday part of a bigger adventure or pair it with one of our other holidays. We can arrange additional nights accommodation before or after your self-guided trip, ask our sales team to find out more about this.

Our sales team will be happy to provide you a quote for scheduled flights or alternatively you may wish to book your own flights with a low cost carrier from your nearest regional airport.

Please DO NOT book your flights before you have received your booking confirmation and your deposit has been taken.

We provide arrival and departure airport transfers. Please refer to the 'joining arrangements and transfers' for further details for this trip.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

With over 35 years experience of all aspects of adventure travel, there's no-one better qualified than KE to provide you with your next active holiday. We know what works and we know that this loop-ride around the beautiful and historic Greek island of Kefalonia is a winner. Bike hire is included on all of our self-guided cycling holidays.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 07/10/2024 and the trip is subject to change