

Athens

Athens overview:

Population: 664,046 (City); 3,153,147 (Urban)

Located in the region of Attica, Athens is a sprawling city established among seven historic hills and surrounded by remarkable mountains.

Inhabited for more than 3,000 years, Athens is widely known as the cradle of Western civilization and the birthplace of democracy. As the largest and capital city of Greece, Athens is also the political, commercial, financial and cultural center of Greece. It was birthplace of Socrates, Pericles and Sophocles.

Consisting of a large city center, an urban district and metropolitan area, Athens presents a confusing blend of historical and modern features. The city is famous for its archaeological ruins and monuments such as the famous Acropolis, the Parthenon, the Ancient Agora and the Theater of Dionysos just to name a few. However, Athens is not just about ancient ruins. This bustling city is also an important center for business, culture, nightlife and sports. At the heart of Athens is its town square, Syntagma Square, which features the Parliament buildings, shops, cafes and green spaces.

Picture:

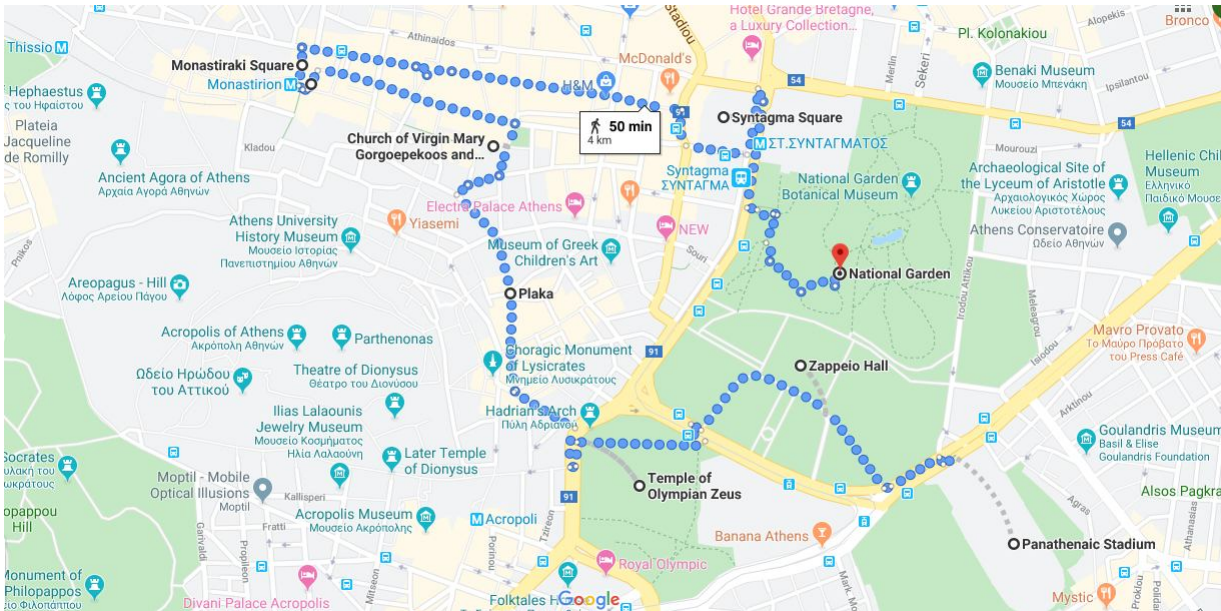


Itinerary

DAY 1

[Directions](#)

<https://bit.ly/2YeRRvg>



09:00 – 10:15

Panathenaic Stadium

It is one of the most spectacular attractions in Athens. Built in 330 AD during the era of Herodes Atticus with capacity of 60,000 spectators. It was updated in 144 AD and made completely of white marble. The venue hosted the Panathenaic Games where runners competed in races around the track. The 204-meter-long track was designed with four double herms, where runners would turn in the races.

From the remains of an ancient Greek stadium, it was completely reconstructed to host the first modern Olympic Games in 1896.

Entrance Fee:

Adults: €5

Children under 18: Free

Opening Times:

March - October: Monday to Sunday 8am - 7pm.

November - February: Monday to Sunday 8am - 5pm.

Transport:

Stop: Stadio

Bus: 209, 550

Trolleybus: 2, 4, 10, 11

Website:

<https://www.introducingathens.com/panathenaic-stadium>

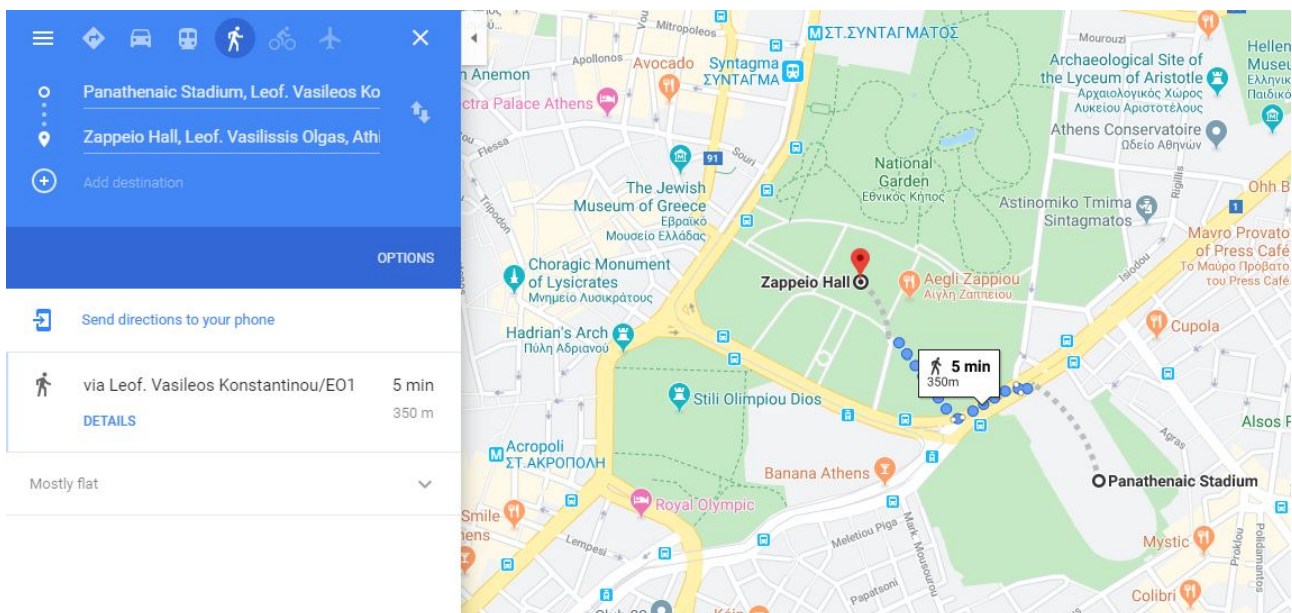
Picture:



10min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/2PaZoY5>



10:30 – 11:00
Zappeion Hall

The Zappeion was built in 1870 and was used during the 1896 Summer Olympics as the main fencing hall. A decade later, at the 1906 Intercalated Games, it was used as the Olympic Village. The Zappeion is currently being used as a Conference and Exhibition Center for both public and private purposes.

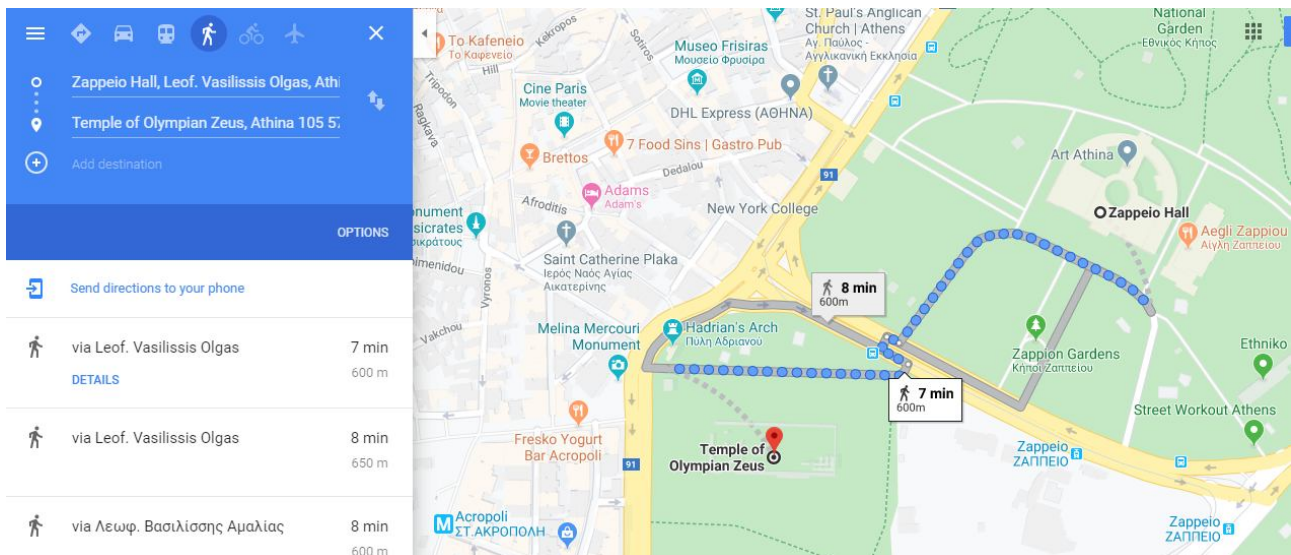
Picture:



10min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/33KyMSN>



11:15 – 11:45

Temple of Olympian Zeus

Though only 15 columns remain of the Temple of Olympia Zeus in Athens it does not take much imagination to realize that this was one gigantic temple. The Temple of Olympian Zeus was an even more monumental structure in its day as better preserved Parthenon. Once one of the largest temples in the Greek world, the temple was completed in 132 AD, under Emperor Hadrian, who erected a huge statue to Zeus. The monument had 104 15-meter Corinthian columns.

In front of the Olympieion, not far from the entrance, stands remarkable 18m Hadrian's Arch, that once separated the old city (city of Theseus) and the new city (city of Hadrian). It was built in 131 AC to commemorate the Roman Emperor.

The Olympieion, destroyed by the barbarians, was used as a stone quarry in the Middle Ages.

Entrance Fee:

Adults: €6

Combined Ticket: €30

Opening times:

April – October: 8am – 7:30pm.

November - March: 8:30am - 4pm.

Website:

<https://www.introducingathens.com/temple-of-olympian-zeus>

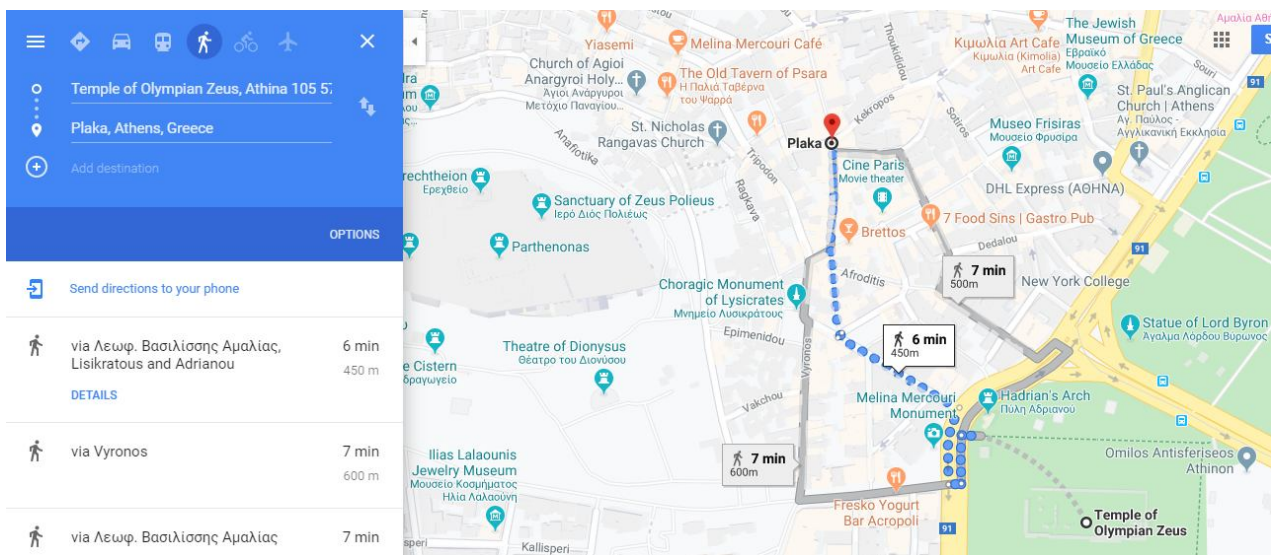
Picture:



10min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/200gM5H>



12:00 – 13:15

Pláka

Between the northern slopes of the Acropolis and Ermóú Street, the picturesque Pláka neighborhood is a tourist hot spot. Pláka forms a picturesque web of small peaceful roads and alleys, small squares and terraces linking flights of steps. Narrow pedestrian streets and the cheerful little squares of the Pláka quarter are lined with lovely bougainvillea-trimmed pastel-painted houses, restaurants, and shops. A few small Byzantine churches alternate with old houses with round-tiled roofs and wooden balconies, sometimes surrounded by hidden gardens. Views of the town or the Acropolis are revealed here and there. At night Pláka comes to life. In the taverns which light up, you can taste Greek cuisine washed down with retsina, and dance the sirtáki.

Website:

<https://www.introducingathens.com/plaka#>

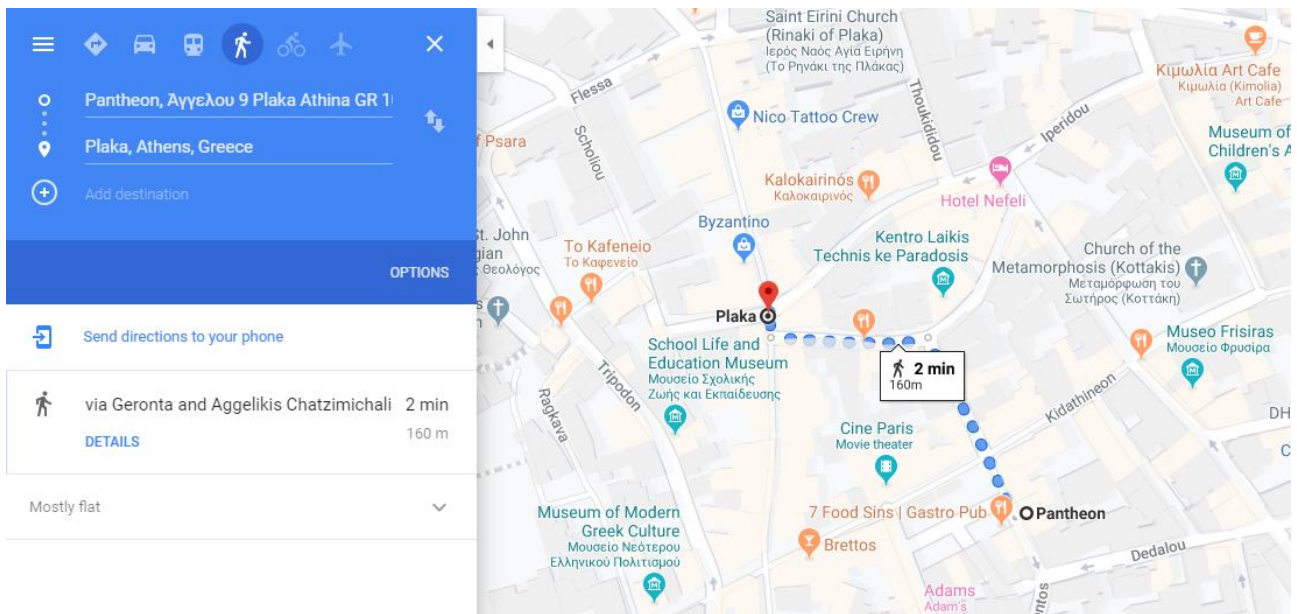
Picture:



5min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/2YeFNdF>



13:15 – 14:45

Lunch at Pantheon restaurant

References:

https://www.tripadvisor.sk/Restaurant_Review-g189400-d14183897-Reviews-Pantheon-Athens_Attica.html

Address:

Aggelou Geronta 9, Athens, 10558

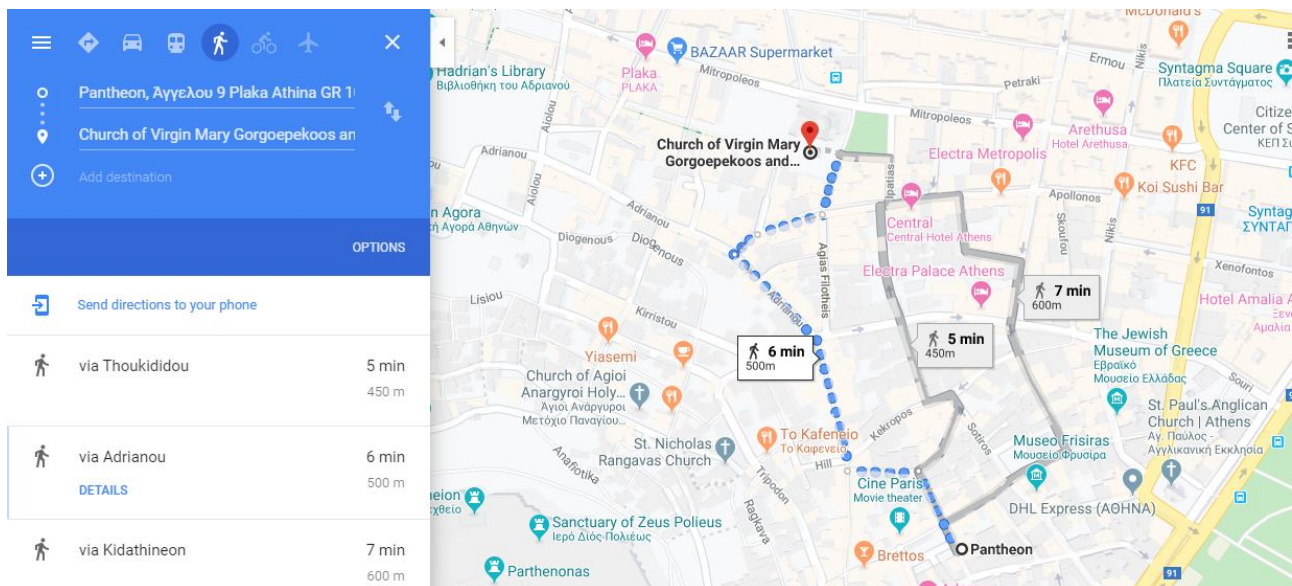
Website:

<https://www.facebook.com/PantheonHouse/>

10min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/2RhTZ3U>



15:00 – 15:30

Metropolitan Cathedral & Little Metropolis Church

Little Metropolis Church

Also known as Agios Eleftherios Church. Measuring just 25 feet by 40 feet and shadowed by the surrounding buildings, many tourists mistake the Church of St. Eleftherios as one of the many stabilized ruins standing in the ancient city.

Commonly called the “Little” Metropolis Church, purported dates of it’s creation vary widely with scholars arguing anywhere from the 8th century to the 15th. The reason for the confusion is due to the repurposed use of building materials, mostly marble blocks from non-Christian temples, that were cobbled together to build the church.

Website:

<https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/little-metropolis-church>

Picture:



Metropolitan Cathedral

The cathedral was finally completed in 1862. Architecturally the church belongs to the type of three-aisle domed basilica and is a combination of the neoclassical and the Greek-Byzantine style, as a result of the changes that occurred in the plans during its construction.

It measures 130 feet (40 m) long, 65 feet (20 m) wide, and 80 feet (24 m) high. Workers used marble from 72 demolished churches to build the Cathedral's immense walls.

Website:

<https://www.athenskey.com/metropolis-cathedral-of-the-annunciation.html>

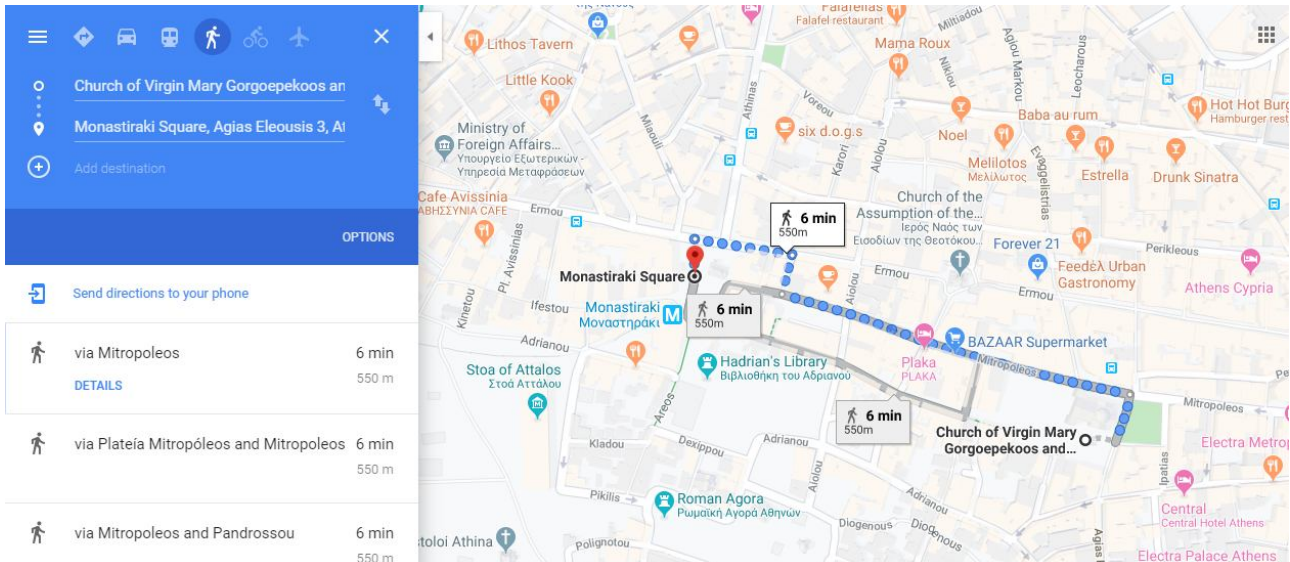
Picture:



10min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/2TNhbZn>



15:45 – 16:30

Monastiraki square

Narrow streets lined with shops selling everything from jewelry and trinkets to clothing and everyday goods is what you'll find in the Athens Flea Market in Monastiraki. Monastiraki's Flea Market is lively bazaar, overflowing with hundreds of stalls that sell from handmade jewelry, relics, carpets, typical souvenirs, clothes and accessories. Just like in Istanbul's popular Grand Bazaar, tourists will have to bargain to get the best prices possible.

The area is home to clothing boutiques, souvenir shops, and specialty stores. Monastiraki Square is an open area, surrounded by a mix of old and new buildings. This is one of the neighborhood's main draws, but this area has a very unique vibe and is a nice place to just relax at an outdoor patio or wander about.

On the square corner is ottoman Tzistarakis Mosque, built in 1759. It is now functioning as an annex of the Museum of Greek Folk Art.

Website:

<https://www.introducingathens.com/monastiraki>

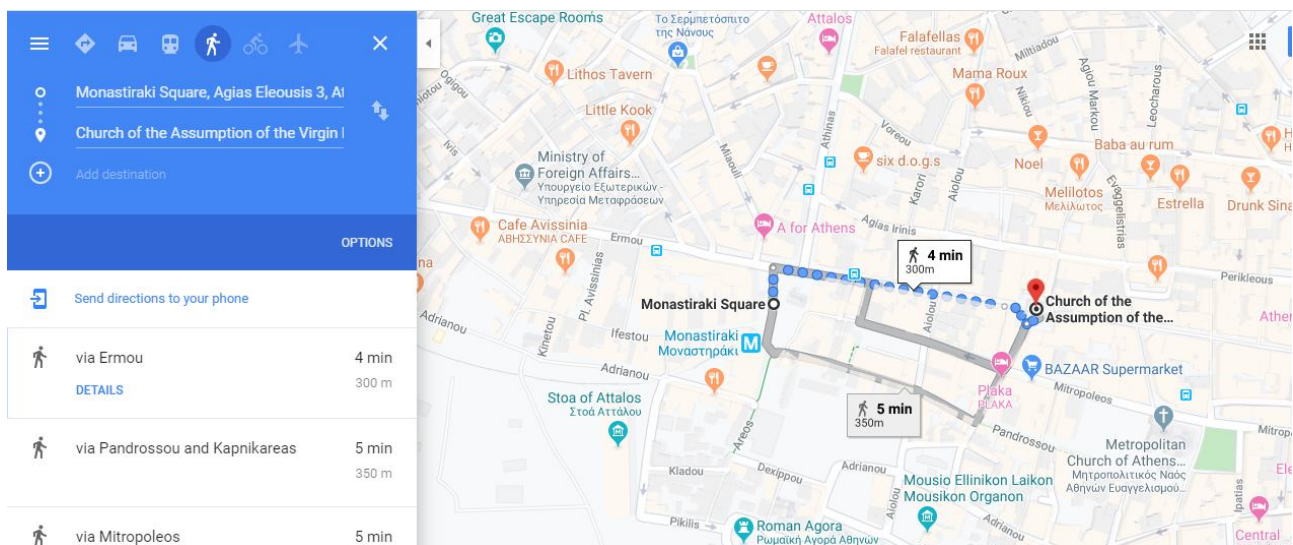
Picture:



20min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/2Yipixh>



16:50 – 17:10

Panaghia Kapnikaréa Church on Ermou Street

Gracing a little square that opens onto a pedestrian-only section of busy Ermou Street (one of the city's main shopping streets), the Panaghia Kapnikaréa Church is a delightful place to visit and a site you are likely to walk past. This church is a splendid example of architecture from the 11th-century Byzantine era and a stark contrast to the modern architecture that surrounds it. It was saved from demolition in the 19th century by the intervention of King Ludwig I of Bavaria.

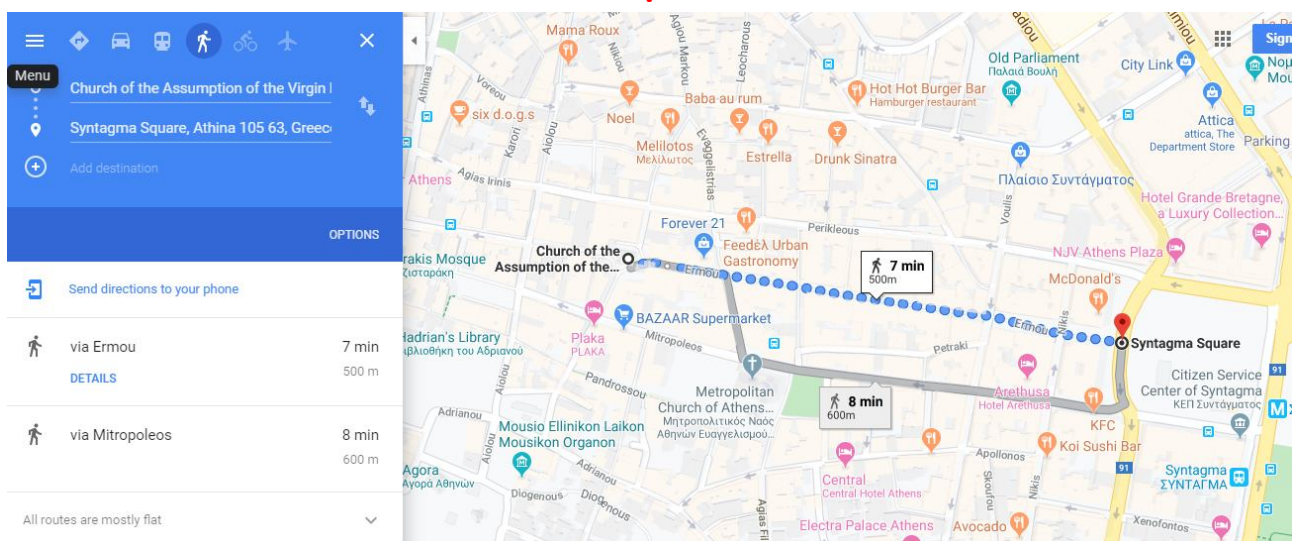
Picture:



20min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/34RFBDs>



17:30 – 18:00

Syntagma square

It is the oldest and socially most important square of modern Athens, at the epicentre of commercial activity during the nineteenth century. The Old Royal Palace is the former royal palace in Athens, Greece. The palace faces onto the Syntagma Square and now houses the Hellenic Parliament.

Syntagma Square is also known as Constitution Square, as it is where the Athenians rose up against King Otto of Greece on 3 September 1843 to demand a constitution. Hellenic Parliament is an imposing building erected between 1836 and 1842 as the Royal Palace for the first king of Greece, King Otto.

Syntagma Square is one of the most popular parts of the city. It is also the starting point of most of the city's demonstrations and it also houses concerts and festivals. The square is always full of life, packed with people in its bars, discovering the square's stands, wandering around or making the most of the free WIFI.

Website:

<https://www.introducingathens.com/syntagma-square>

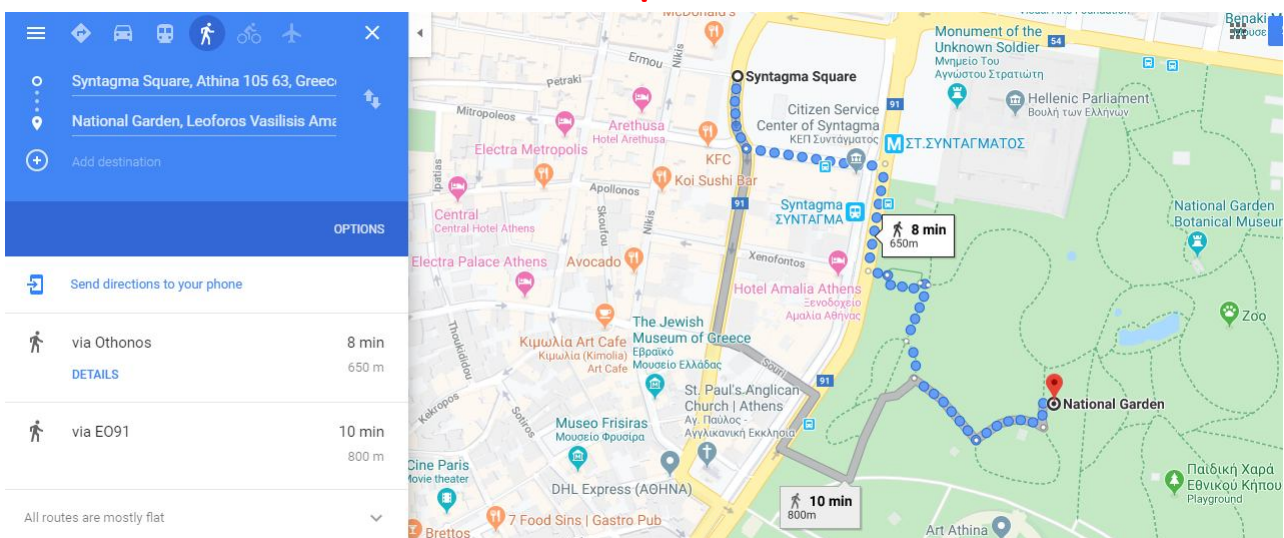
Picture:



15min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/33Vive8>



18:15 – 19:30

National Garden

Just a few metres away from Syntagma metro station and right next to the Greek parliament lies the national garden which, together with the Zappeion hall garden, covers 24 hectares full of vegetation, rare kinds of plants, saplings and birds.

The gardens were designed in 1839 by order of Queen Amalia of the Greeks, but were not open to the public until 1923, when they were renamed “National Garden”.

The National Garden’s most famous sights include a small pond, which is home to numerous water birds, a botanical garden, the remains of historical monuments and even a small zoo.

Opening Times:

From sunrise till sunset

Transport:

Stop: Syntagma

Subway: 2, 3

Tram: 4, 5

Bus: 227, 230, 790, 856, A2, B2

Trolleybus: 1, 2, 4, 5, 11

Website:

<https://www.introducingathens.com/national-garden>

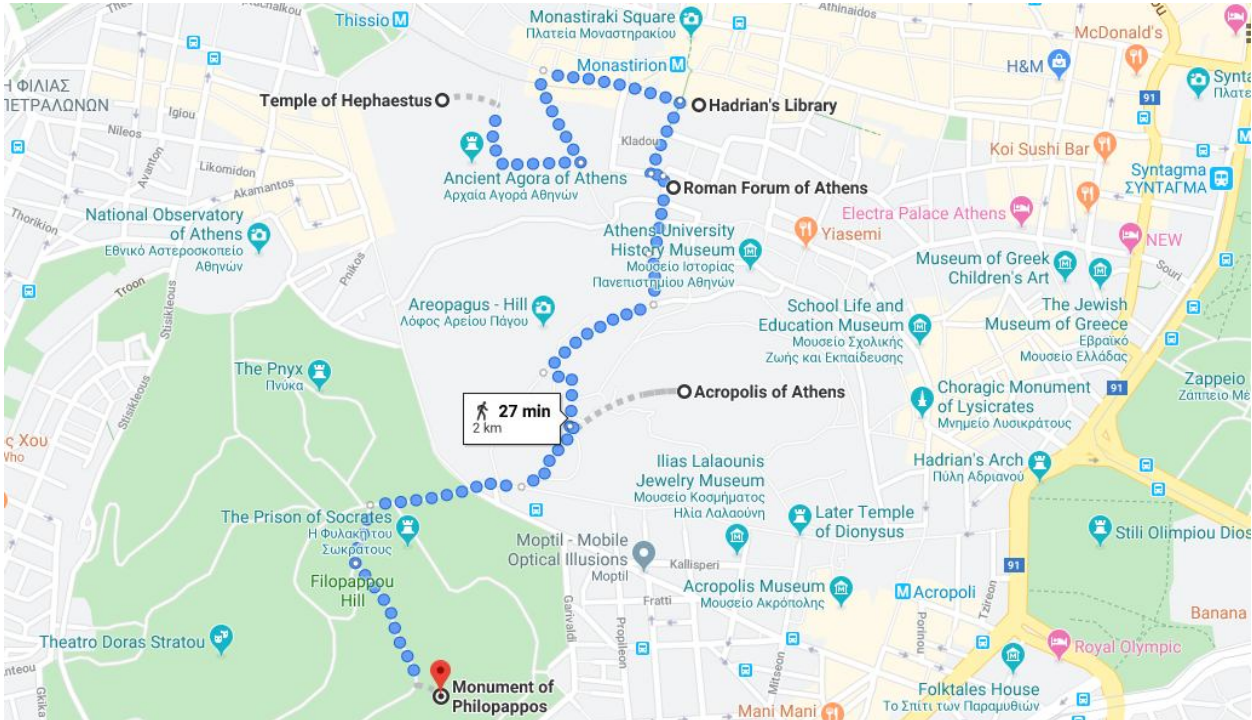
Picture:



DAY 2

Directions

<https://bit.ly/382IKU5>



08:30 – 10:00

Ancient Agora

The ancient Agora was the marketplace and the center of everyday life in ancient Athens. For an impressive view of the Agora from afar, head to the north wall of the Acropolis or the roads from the Areopagus. The best place to enter the Agora is at the north gate off Adrianoú Street (near the Church of Saint Philip).

Agoras in Ancient Greece were public squares where the inhabitants would meet to discuss politics and their quotidian lives. The Greek word "Agora" means to "gather and orate," indicating that this site was a location of public speaking.

The first excavations in the Agora area took place between 1859 and 1912. During the following years, important remains, including large sculptures, were found in a deep trench when the railway tracks were being installed.

Temple of Hephaestus

Located about 500 meters north-west of the famous Acropolis, The Temple of Hephaestus is the best-preserved Greek temple in the world. This Doric temple (built 449-415 BC) overlooks the Agora. In the Byzantine epoch it became a church, then a cemetery until the last century. The sculptures evoke the adventures of Heracles and Theseus.

The temple was designed on a classical plan with six rows of 13 columns, and the Ionic friezes appear to be modeled on the Parthenon.

Picture:



Stoa of Attalos

One of the most striking features of the Ancient Agora is the Stoa of Attalos, originally built by King Attalos II and reconstructed in the 1950s. The stoa may have been the scene of Socrates' trial in 399 BC.

Picture:



Entrance Fee:

Adults: €10

Students: €5

Combined Ticket: €30

Opening Times:

8am to 3pm

Transport:

Stop: Monastiraki

Subway: 1, 3

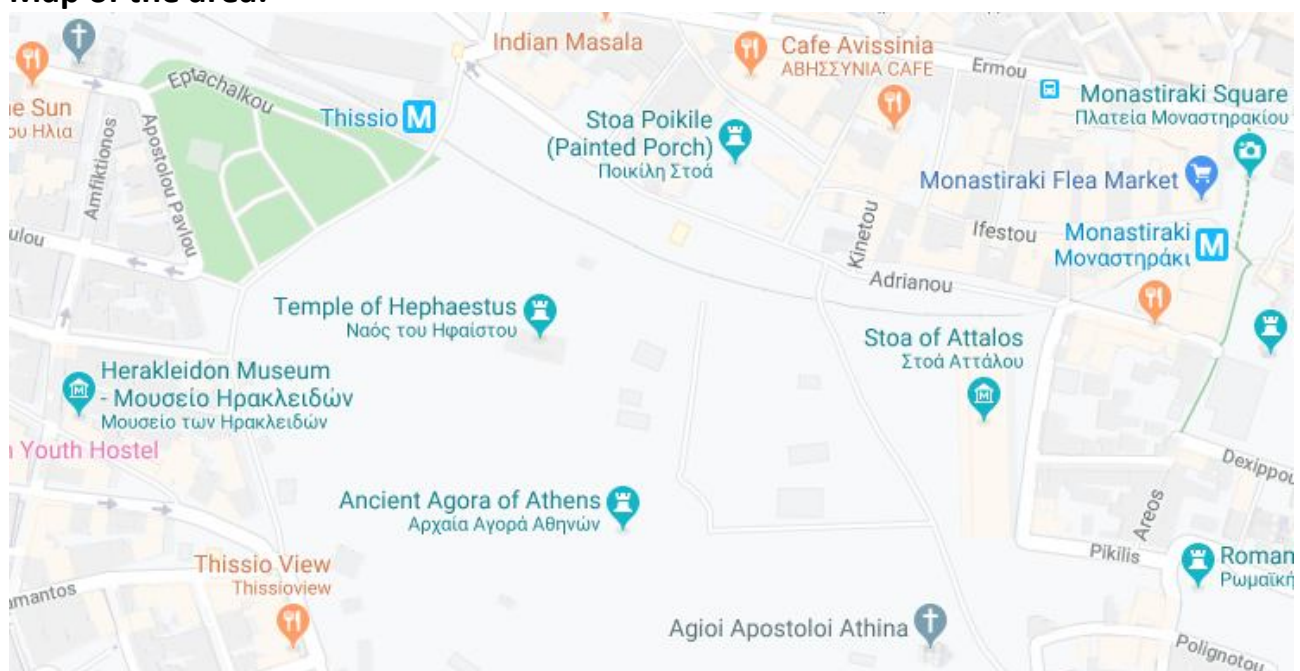
Bus: 25, 26, 27, 35, 227, 500

Stop: Thissio

Subway: 1

Website:

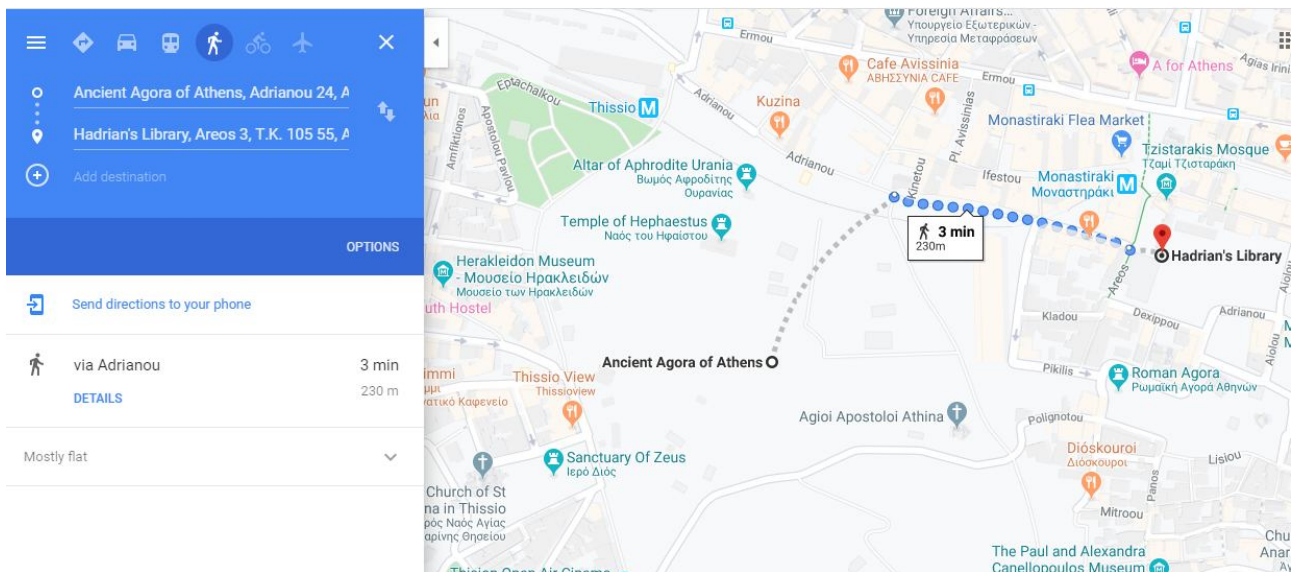
<https://www.introducingathens.com/ancient-agera>

Map of the area:

15min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/2OUXknS>



10:00 – 10:30

Hadrian's Library

Hadrian's Library, founded by Emperor Hadrian in 132 AD, was also known as the “One Hundred Column Library”.

The historic landmark was once an imposing rectangular building, measuring 122 by 80 meters. It was surrounded by a gallery decorated with one hundred columns.

The Library was destroyed when the Heruli invaded Athens in AD 267, but was later restored by the prefect Herculius.

Entrance Fee:

Adults: €6

Students: €3

Combined Ticket: €30

Opening Times:

8am to 3pm

Website:

<https://www.introducingathens.com/hadrians-library>

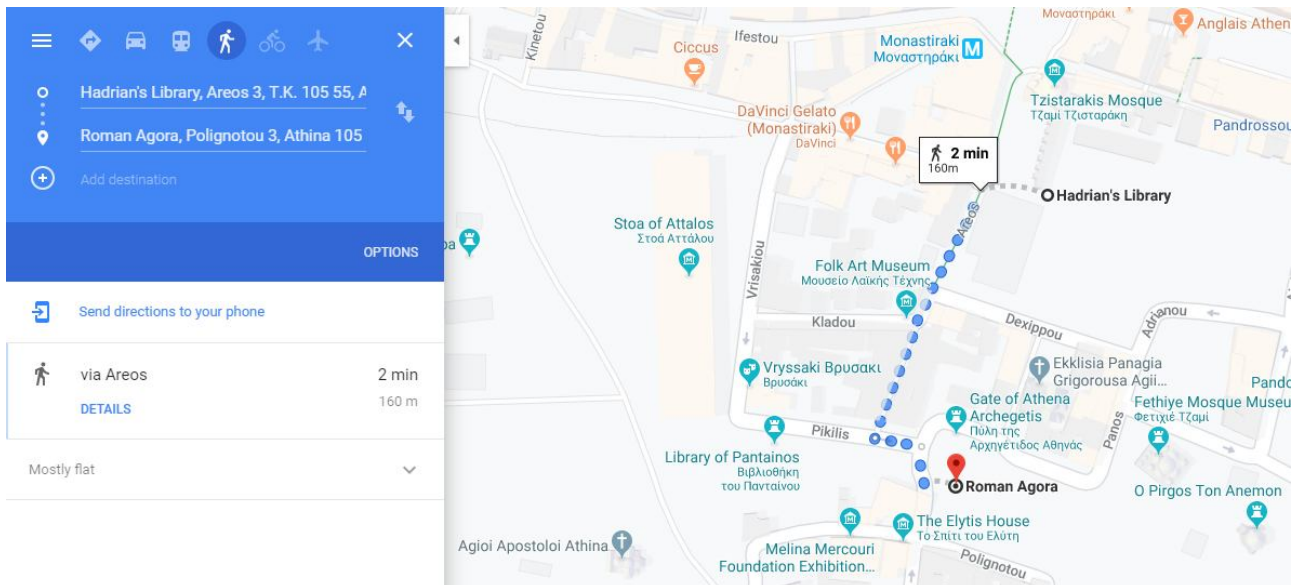
Picture:



5min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/2OSuhkX>



10:30 – 11:30

Roman Agora

The Roman Agora was the ancient public square raised during the Roman period in Athens. It was one of the main meeting points in the city and it once housed the central market. Roman Agora was first founded between 19 BC and 11 BC. It was commissioned by the first Roman Emperor Augustus and then enlarged by the Emperor Hadrian.

During its golden age, the Agora was a type of courtyard that measured 100 square meters. It was home to the central market, which had been moved from the Ancient Agora. The open space was surrounded by a marble Ionic colonnade and the patio was also completely covered in marble.

One of the easily recognizable sites here is the Tower of the Winds. The “Tower of the Winds”, found on the western side of the Agora, is practically intact. This polygonal monument sheathed in marble slabs was built during the second century BC and was used as a water clock and sundial. The building remained intact because it was transformed into a chapel during the sixth century.

Entrance Fee:

Adults: €8

Students: €4

Combined Ticket: €30

Opening Times:

8am to 5pm

Website:

<https://www.introducingathens.com/roman-agora>

Picture:

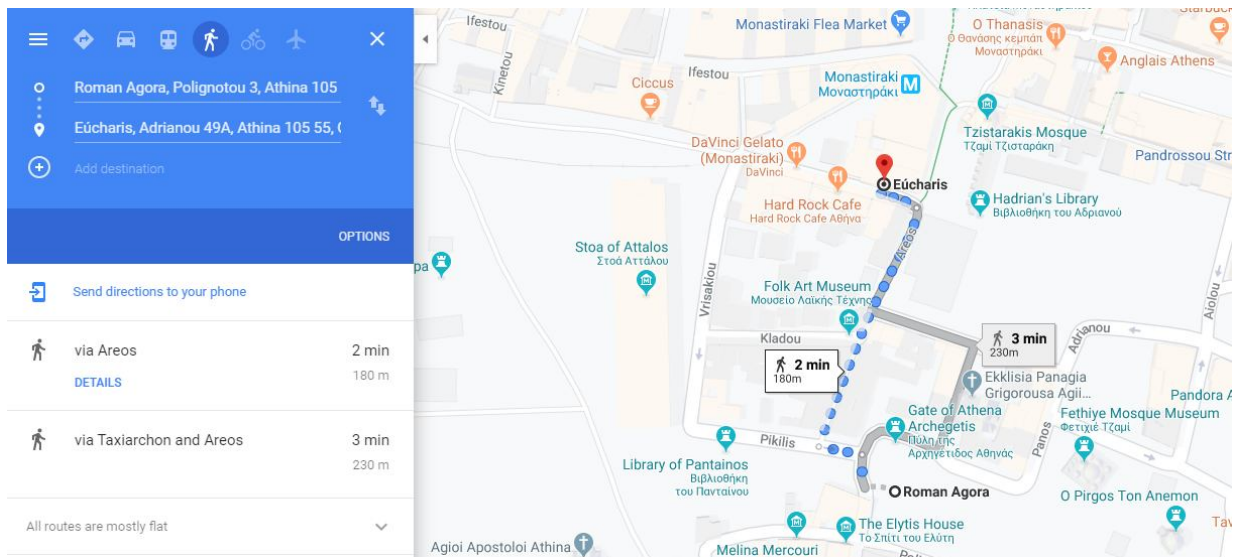


•
5min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/2rgl9MQ>

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11:30 – 13:00

Lunch at Efcharis restaurant

References:

[https://www.tripadvisor.sk/Restaurant_Review-g189400-d4746098-Reviews-Efcharis-Athens Attica.html](https://www.tripadvisor.sk/Restaurant_Review-g189400-d4746098-Reviews-Efcharis-Athens_Attica.html)

Address:

49A Adrianou, Monastiraki, Athens, 10555

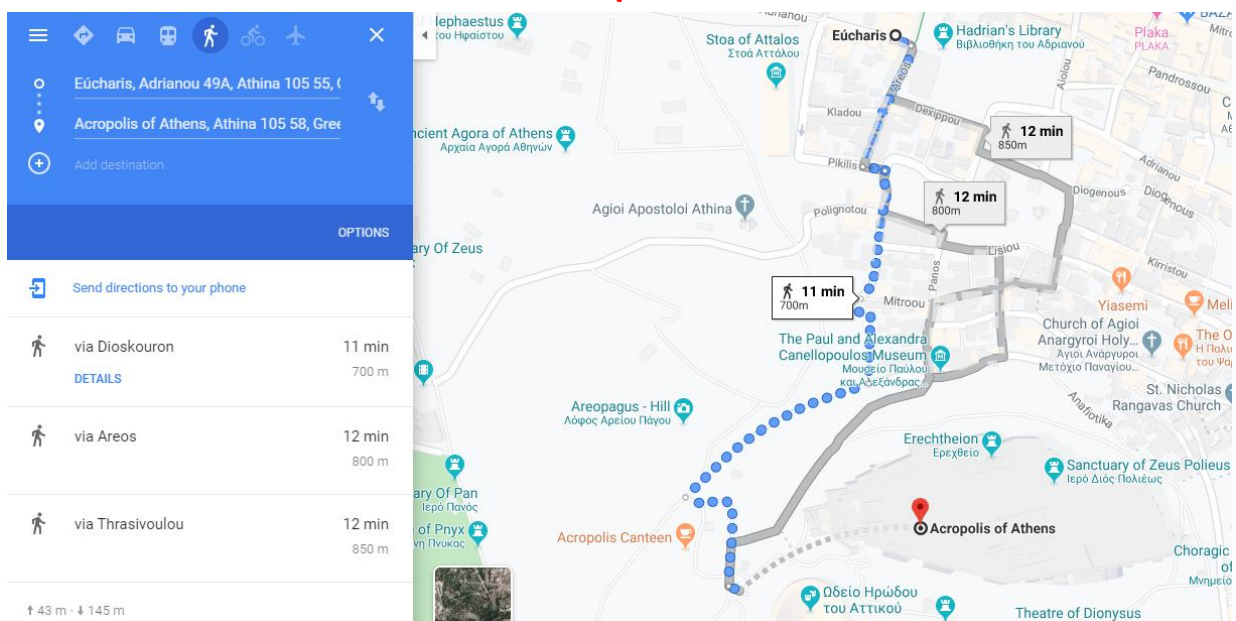
Website:

<http://efxarisathens.gr/en/>

30min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/2OQhTBY>



13:30 – 17:00

Acropolis

The Acropolis is one of the world's most breathtaking ancient ruins, and the city's exceptional museums display fascinating artifacts uncovered at local sites. Few sights in the world compare to Athens' Acropolis, with its Parthenon temple perched high on a rocky crag keeping watch over centuries of civilization. A reminder of the glory of ancient Athens, the Acropolis was the center of the ancient city and functioned as a citadel in its protected hilltop location.

The Acropolis is home to some of the most famous classic Greek monuments including the Parthenon, Erechtheion, Temple of Athena Nike and the Propylaea, all built of white marble. The monuments on the Acropolis have been damaged numerous times and sacked by various invaders throughout the centuries; however, the ruins were restored after the Greek War of Independence and now give a good idea of how the landmarks were when they were first built in the fifth century BC.

For beautiful views of the Acropolis from below, head to the north side of the hill. Streetside restaurants line the pedestrian street of Apostolou Pavlou and look up to the Acropolis. Some of these restaurants also have rooftop dining, with incredible views across to the Acropolis, showing the grand entrance, the Temple of Athena Nike, and the Parthenon, all of which are lit up in the evenings.

Website:

<https://www.introducingathens.com/acropolis-of-athens>

Entrance Fee:

Adults: €20

Students: €10

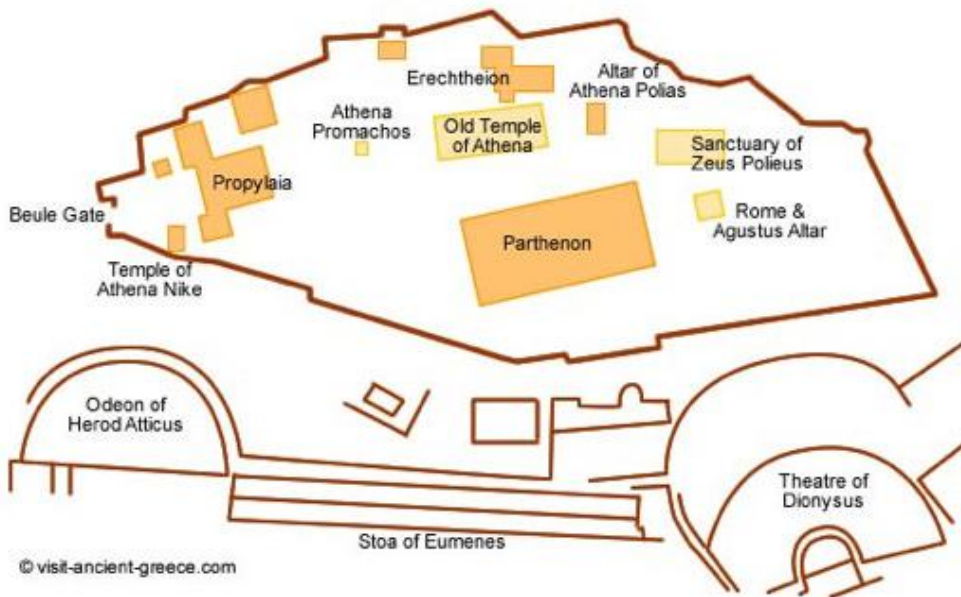
Combined Ticket: €30

Opening Times:

8am to 5pm

Map of area:

ACROPOLIS OF ATHENS



Picture:



Parthenon

The most emblematic building is the Parthenon, the largest temple of the classical antiquity period dating from 447 BC to 338 BC. The construction of the Parthenon started in 447 BC, replacing an older temple that was destroyed by the Persians, and completed in 432 BC. With its monumental rows of Doric columns and stunning sculptural details, the temple is an awe-inspiring sight. In the frieze on the eastern side, reliefs depict the birth of the goddess Athena.

The large temple is 70 meters long and 30 meters wide. When it was first built, it had a colonnade surrounding the whole edifice, with eight columns standing on its main façades and seventeen on each side.

During its long life the Parthenon has served as a temple, fortress, a church, a mosque and even as a powder magazine. It preserved most of its sculptures until an explosion of the gunpowder store in 1687 destroyed many of them.

Website:

<https://www.introducingathens.com/parthenon>

Picture:



Propylaea

Erected between 437 and 432 BC, the Propylaea is a mammoth gateway to the Acropolis and its landmarks. This monumental marble entrance of the Acropolis was built by Mnesicles. From the 12C to the 15C, it was converted into a palace for the bishops and dukes of Athens. It was only in 1878 that the Frankish Tower, overlooking the right wing, was demolished.

This rectangular building has a Doric-column façade and is located at the top of numerous step steps. The portal with five entrances was once used to control the access to the Acropolis.

Picture:



Erechtheion

Erechtheion is an ancient Greek temple built in Ionic style. This complex of ancient sanctuaries was built between 421 BC and 395 BC. This Ionic style temple was erected on the most sacred area of the Acropolis, where Athena's sacred olive tree grew. The most famous feature of the Erechtheion complex is the Porch of the Caryatids, with six statues of maidens in place of Doric columns. This elegant 5C BC temple, with many places of worship, was a church, a palace, a harem and then a military magazine.

Picture:



Temple of Athena Nike

The Temple of Athena Nike is the smallest temple of them all. The designation “nike” means victory. It was built in 420 BC to commemorate the victory of the Greeks in the Battle of Salamis against the Persian Empire. This graceful Ionic temple just out in front of the Propylaea, overlooking the Sacred Way. Rebuilt by the Bavarian archaeologists of King Othon, it consists of a cella between 2 porticos with monolithic columns which once concealed a statue of Athena victorious. Only the outer frieze contains original parts (eastern and southern sides).

Picture:



Theater of Dionysus

The Theatre of Dionysus was used as a theatre from the sixth century BC onwards. It was the first and largest theatre to be built in Athens and could seat up to 17,000 people.

When the Theatre of Dionysus was first built, it probably had wooden seating that were later replaced by stone. The first row was reserved for the most important citizens of Athens, who would sit on more comfortable marble seats and were next to an altar dedicated to Dionysus.

During early Ancient Greece, it is believed that the Athenians would have sat on the cliff side of the Acropolis, where the current theatre stands, to worship Dionysus. It is thought that during the rule of Peisistratus, the first festivals in honor of the same god were held, consisting of contests by mimes, musicians and dancers. These were the first plays in Athens.

Website:

<https://www.introducingathens.com/theatre-of-dionysus>

Picture:



Odeon of Herodes Atticus

The Odeon of Herodes Atticus is a breathtaking theatre originally built in 161 AD for music concerts. Situated next to the Theatre of Dionysus, at the foot of the Athenian Acropolis, the Odeon of Herodes Atticus was erected under the supervision of the Roman senator Herodes Atticus. The façade is typically Roman and quite well preserved, and the restored interior has been developed to welcome the spectators of Athens summer festival.

The Odeon of Herodes Atticus was first built with walls sheathed in marble with a seating capacity of over 5,000 spectators. The benches were also made of white marble and had mosaic floors. The ancient Roman style venue had a beautiful cedar roof, which was probably the most surprising aspect of the concert hall, now non-existing.

The Odeon remained in use until 267 AD, when the Herules invaded the city. It was restored in 1950.

Website:

<https://www.introducingathens.com/odeon-of-herodes-atticus>

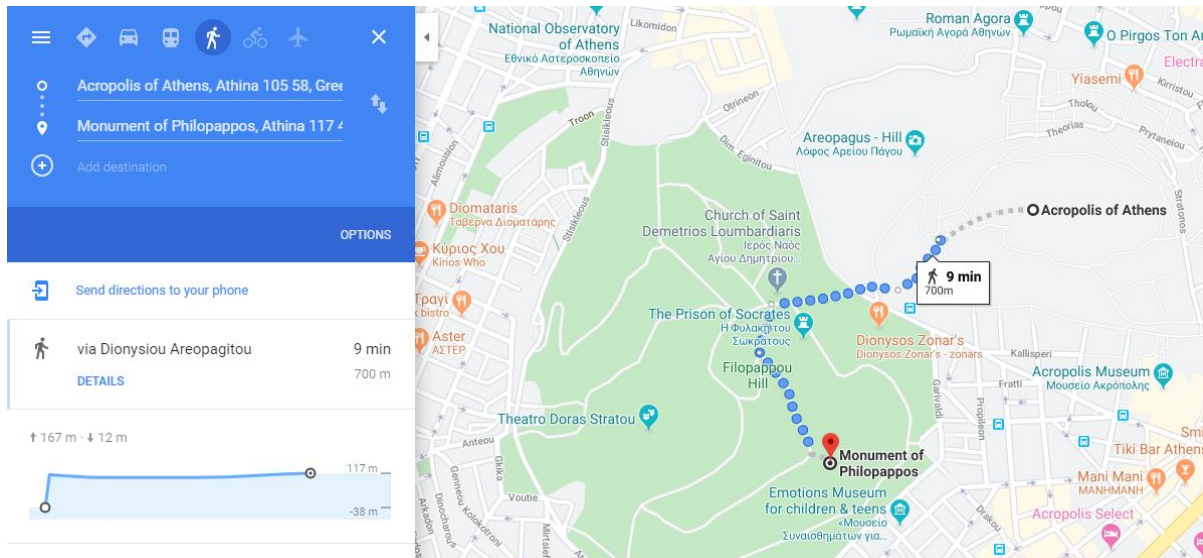
Picture:



30min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/2sJT8yM>



17:30 – 18:30

Philopappos Hill

Philopappos Hill offers tourists one of the most popular viewing platforms of the city. This hill (147 m high) was in Antiquity consecrated to the Muses and named Mouseion. Ascending Filopappou Hill is extremely agreeable, as the footpath is not very slanted, and it is flanked on both sides by abundant vegetation. On the way up, note a troglodytic dwelling for a long time identified as Socrates' prison.

The hill is dominated by Philopappos' monument (116 AD), built in memory of a prince of Syrian origin, a Roman consul and benefactor of Athens. Fine views of the Acropolis, Athens, the Hymetus and the Attic go as far as the Saronic Gulf.

In a verdant setting on Philopappou Hill is located tiny 12th-century Byzantine chapel, called Church of Demetrius Loumbardiariis. It offers an opportunity for an enchanting spiritual experience. The building was constructed at the Diateichisma Gate because of the ancient belief that divinity protected the gates. Inside, the church has a single-aisle vaulted basilica form, and the walls are adorned with frescoes dating to 1732.

Transport:

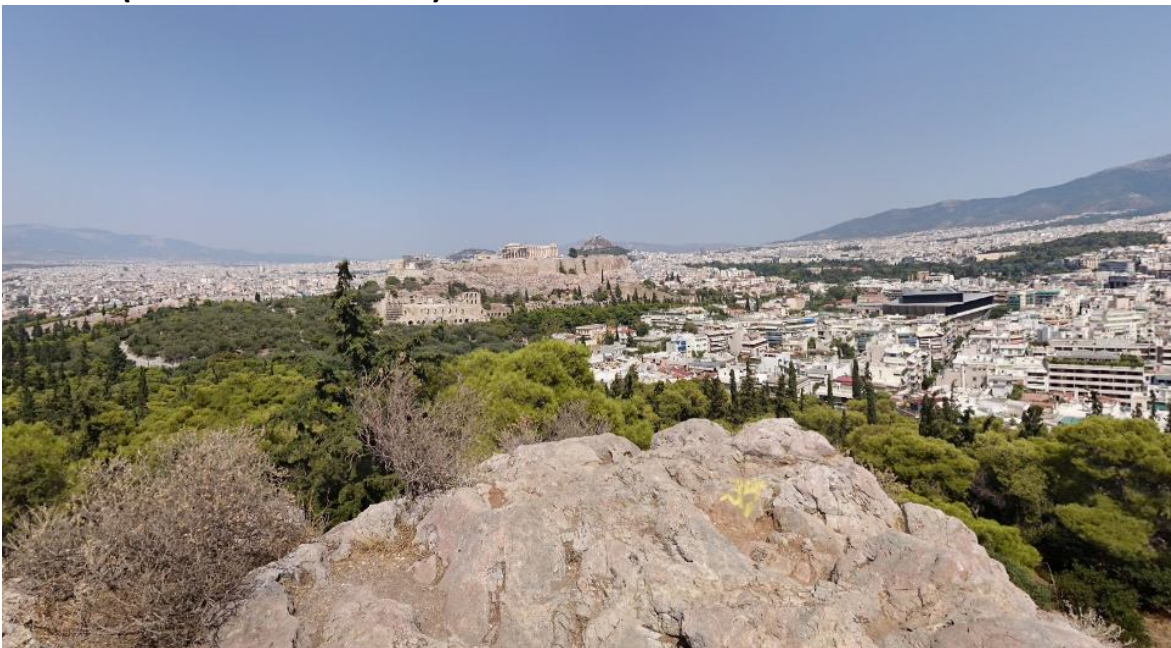
Stop: Acropoli

Subway: 1

Website:

<https://www.introducingathens.com/filopappou>

Picture (a view from the hill):

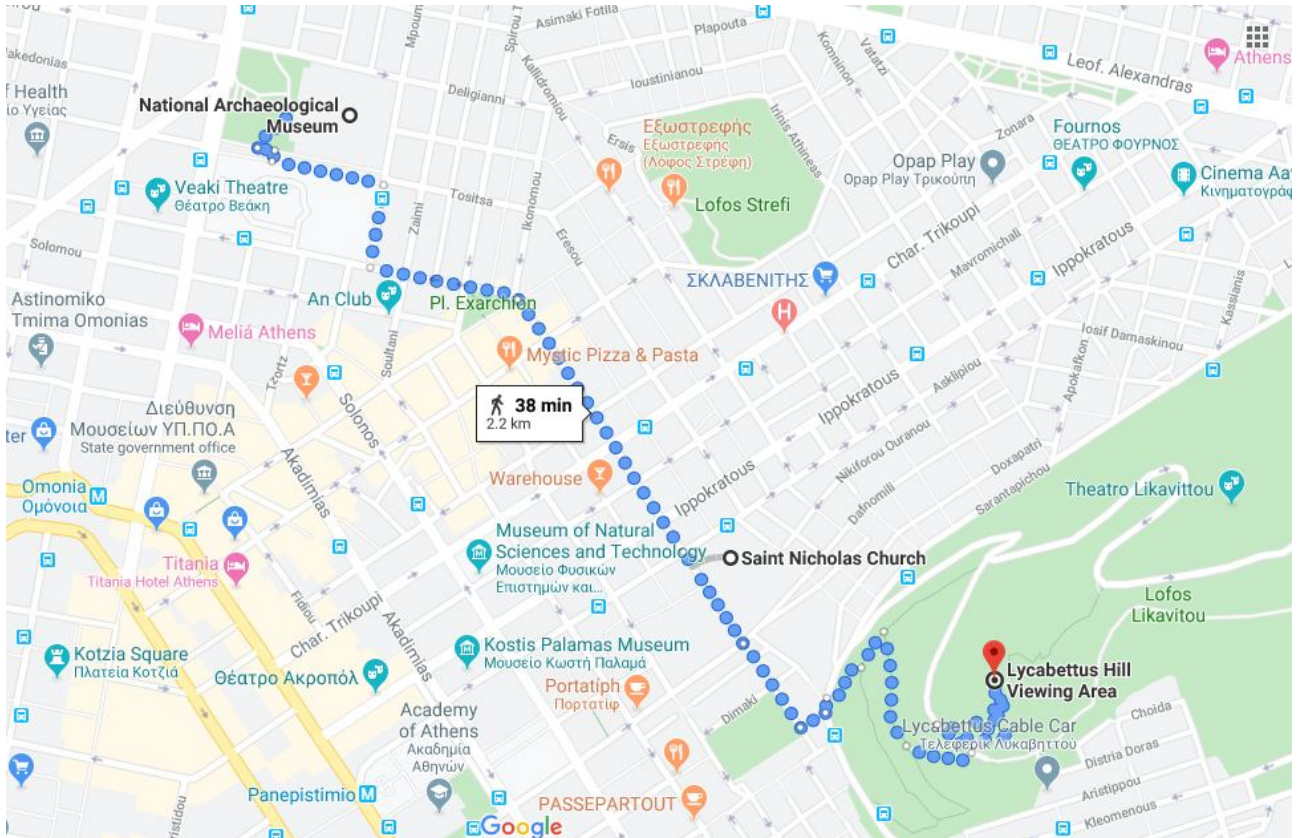


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DAY 3

Directions

<https://bit.ly/2Lo5MKn>



09:30 – 12:45

National Archeological Museum

The National Archaeological Museum of Athens, built between 1866 and 1889, is not only the largest archaeological museum in Greece, but its collection of Ancient Greek art is considered one of the finest in the world. It houses some of the most important artifacts from a variety of archaeological locations around Greece from prehistory to late antiquity. It is considered one of the great museums in the world and contains the richest collection of artifacts from Greek antiquity worldwide.

The museum is housed in an impressive Neoclassical building with 8,000 square meters of exhibition space. On display are five permanent collections with more than 11,000 exhibits, offering a comprehensive overview of Greek civilization from prehistory through the classical period to late antiquity.

The Prehistoric Collection covers the sixth millennium BC to 1050 BC (the Neolithic, Cycladic, and Mycenaean periods) and presents findings from the prehistoric settlement at Thera. The Sculpture Collection exhibits ancient Greek sculptures from the sixth century BC to the fifth century BC, including rare masterpieces. The Vase

and Decorative Objects Collection showcases ancient Greek pottery from the 11th century BC all the way until the classical Roman period. The Stathatos Collection features minor objects from a wide range of historical periods. Exquisite little statues and figurines sculpted from metals are on display in the Metallurgy Collection.

Entrance Fee:

April 1st – October 31st: €12

November 1st – March 31st: €6

Opening Times:

April 1st – October 31st: Wednesday – Monday : 8am to 8pm

November 1st – March 31st: Wednesday – Monday : 9am to 4pm

Transport:

Stop: Victoria

Subway: 1

Stop: Polytechnio

Trolleybus: 2, 3, 4, 5, 11

Website:

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

<https://www.introducingathens.com/national-archaeological-museum>

Picture:

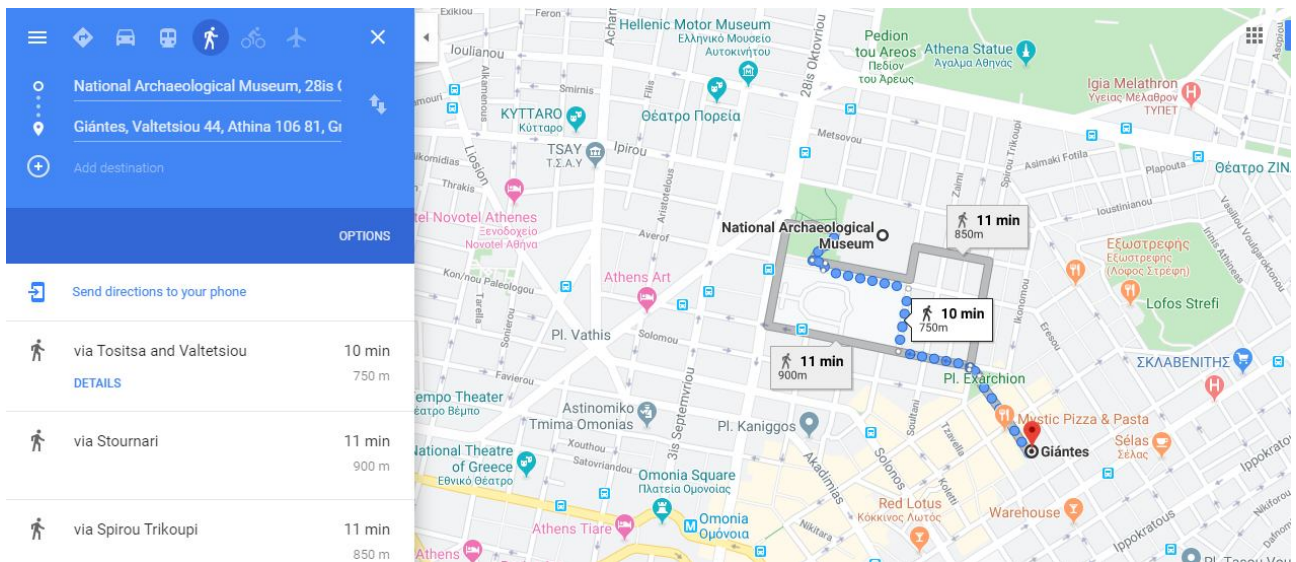


•
15min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/2PdB8EC>

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13:00 – 14:15

Lunch at Yiantes restaurant

References:

[https://www.tripadvisor.sk/Restaurant_Review-g189400-d824609-Reviews-Yiantes-Athens Attica.html](https://www.tripadvisor.sk/Restaurant_Review-g189400-d824609-Reviews-Yiantes-Athens_Attica.html)

Address:

Valtetsiou 44, Exarcheia, Athens, 10681

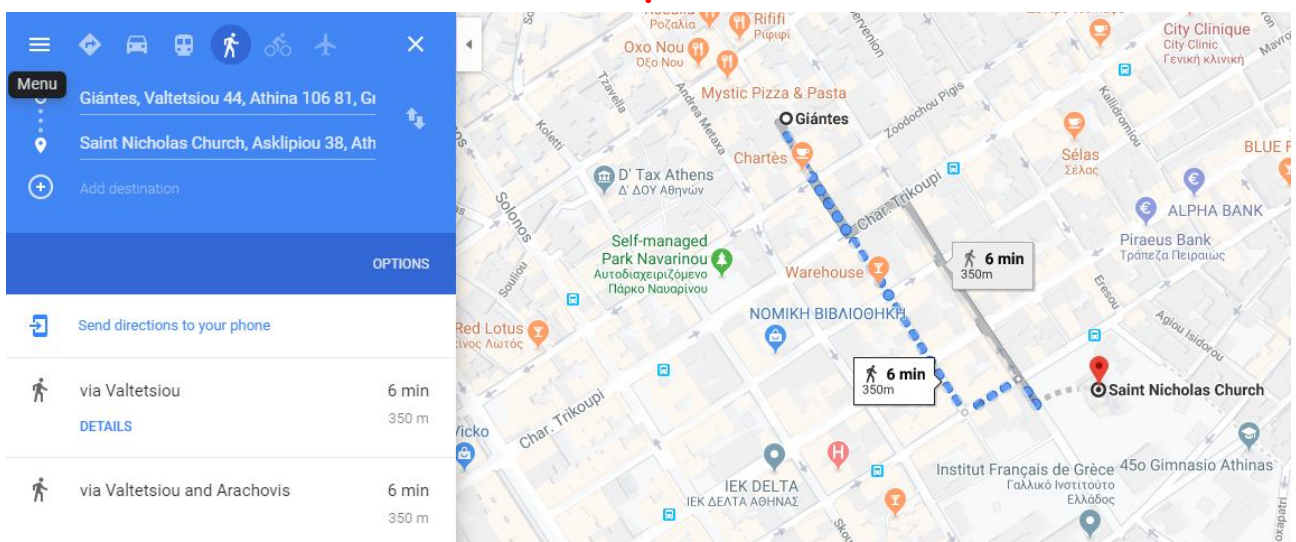
Website:

<https://www.facebook.com/yiantes2000/>

10min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/2LnDdg4>



14:30 – 15:00

Saint Nicholas Church

Saint Nicholas church is a place with unique atmosphere and with splendid interior. Inside you can find Orthodox christian wall art. Next to church is a green park, where you can have a short rest.

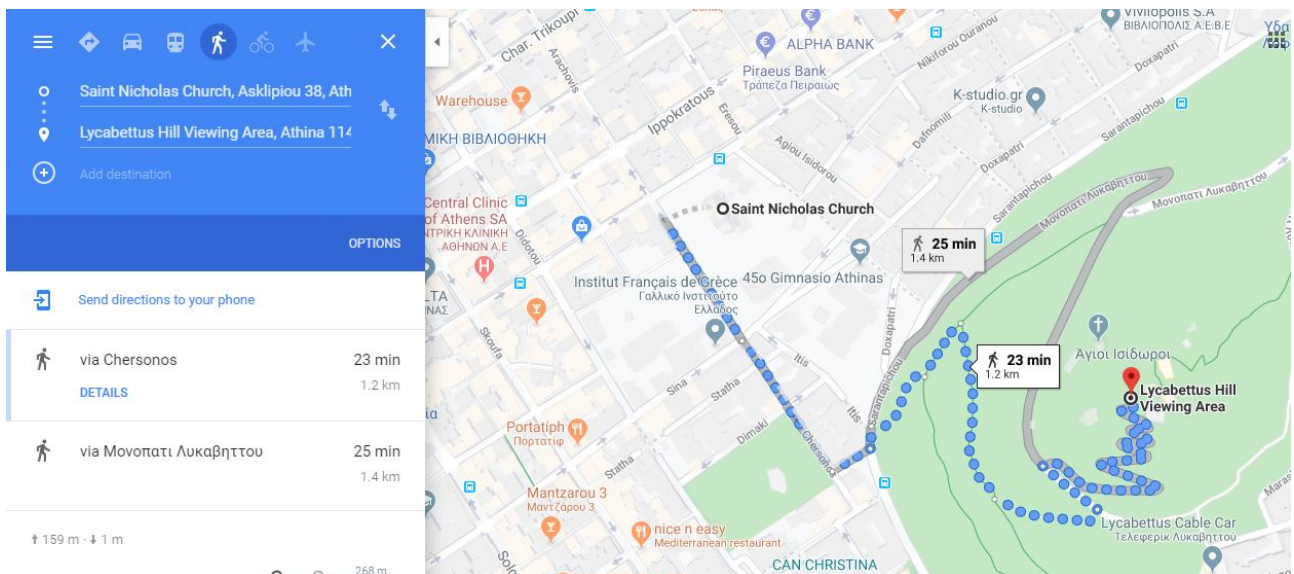
Picture:



30min walk

[Directions](#)

<http://bit.ly/2LqCA5y>



15:30 – 16:30

Lycabettos Hill

Mount Lycabettus (or Lykavittos) stands 278 meters (over 900 ft) tall and is the highest peak in Athens with superb views of the capital. The Lycabettus, or Wolves' Hill, is crowned by Saint George's Chapel. From the neighbouring terraces, a wonderful panorama embraces the city of Athens, the Acropolis, and the Piraeus coast, together with the main surrounding peaks.

During the Classical period, the hill was covered by a dense vegetation and the top was crowned by a temple in honor of the Greek god Zeus. The hill was deserted after the Turkish occupation. Between 1880 and 1915, the area was re-planted and is now a hill full of native trees and plants.

There are various ways to access this tourist attraction. You can either walk up a winding road surrounded by pine trees, by car (not to the top), or on the funicular. We suggest walking up at sunset to gaze down at Athens and the beautifully lit sky. The views of the city at night are also worthwhile.

Transport:

Stop: Lycabettos

Bus: 60

Website:

<https://www.introducingathens.com/lycabettus-hill>

Picture:



The view from Lycabettus Hill:



3 days

Pace: Medium

Currency: eur

Language: Greek

Food: Gyros, Musaka, Souvlaki, Fasolada, Magiritsa