

Santorini, Greece in 3 Days: Living like a Local



Santorini's Fira Town nestled into volcanic cliffs overlooking the Aegean Sea

By Megan Magee

Table of Contents

[About the Author](#)

[Day 1](#)

- 1) [Nea Kameni Volcano & Palea Kameni Hot Springs Tour](#)
- 2) [Return to Fira Town](#)
- 3) [Lunch in Fira Town](#)
- 4) [KTEL Bus to Oia Village](#)
- 5) [Walk from Oia Bus Station to Ammoudi Beach and Port](#)
- 6) [Ammoudi Bay and Port](#)
- 7) [Return to Oia](#)
- 8) [Dinner at 1800](#)

[Day 2](#)

- 1) [Ancient Akrotiri Archaeological Site](#)
- 2) [Walk from Ancient Akrotiri to Akrotiri Beaches](#)
- 3) [Red Beach](#)
- 4) [Optional Activity: Boat from Red Beach to White Beach/Time at White Beach](#)
- 5) [Boat to Red Beach Bus Station; KTEL Bus to Fira Town](#)
- 6) [Dinner at Koukoumavlos in Fira Town](#)
- 7) [3km Sunset walk from Fira to Imerovigli along Caldera](#)

[Day 3](#)

- 1) [Shopping in Fira Town & Museum of Prehistoric Thira](#)

- 2) [KTEL Bus from Fira Town Main Station to Perissa](#)
- 3) [Relax at Perissa Beach](#)
- 4) [Taxi to Exo Gonia Village](#)
- 5) [Art Space Gallery and Winery](#)
- 6) [Walk from Art Space Gallery to Metaxi Mas](#)
- 7) [Dinner at Metaxi mas](#)

[Things You Need to Know](#)

[FREE Travel Guide!](#)

About the Author



Megan Magee

Megan studied International Relations and History at the University of California at San Diego. She lived in Madrid and Berlin during the summers of 2010 and 2011, backpacking in her free time. In San Diego, she enjoys the good surf, tacos, and impromptu trips to Mexico. Megan also serves as Editor in Chief of UC San Diego's Journal of International Affairs, which you can read here: <http://prospectjournal.ucsd.edu/>. Happy travels!

=====

Day 1

=====

10:00 am -- Nea Kameni Volcano & Palea Kameni Hot Springs Tour

- **Price:** EUR €20.00 (for a single adult)
- **Duration:** 3 hours
- **Address:** Located in Athinios Port

Duration: 3 hours (but arrive at least 15-20 minutes early)

Phone: +30 22860 24355

Website: www.santorini-sea-excursions.com

Here, you can find seven possible tours total (be sure to book tour 2), an overview of the fleets, and even wedding services. Use the "contact" tab to communicate with the company about available times and dates for your preferred tour, or book in person with them at Athinios Port.



Getting there: From Fira Town's Main Square or the Fira bus station, walk up the hill past the shops (Hotel Atlantis should be on your left) and walk right for about 200 meters. At the top of the pathway (depicted as a black zig-zagging line on maps), there are three options: walking, cable cars, and donkeys. (See map)

If you walk (to save money or for more time to enjoy the gorgeous views), make sure to plan at least 25 minutes for the winding trek, and wear sturdy shoes to help you navigate donkey poop. A one-way **cable car** ticket costs €4-6 for adults (depending on the season) and €2 for children (and luggage); it takes about 4 minutes total. Cable cars depart every 15-20 minutes, but leave extra time in the high season because there may be a long queue. Cable car schedules can be found online, but they're so frequent you can just show up. Taking a **donkey** ride-an old Santorini tradition-could spice up your trip (see above photo), and these rides are usually priced at €5 per person. Larger groups may be able to negotiate a discount - but hang on tight and be patient if your beast won't budge!



The tour: The sea tour is perfect for getting a glimpse of everything Santorini is about. (Above: Ships docked at the volcano.) Take an old fashioned ship from Athinios port to the dormant volcano Nea Kameni. Sit on the top deck for the best views and avoid staying below deck if you're prone to sea sickness. When you dock at Nea Kameni, walk around the craters and all the way up to the rim of the largest crater if you can keep up a decent pace before the ship departs in about 45-60 minutes. Listen to your group's tour guide or grab a self-guided tour brochure after paying the €2 entrance fee (because it is a protected and monitored scientific site). Next, you will sail around an islet to the "hot springs," which are advertised as 35oC (95oF), but feel much colder as they mix with the colder sea water. On windier days, you'll need to be a decently strong swimmer to make it from the boat, through a few yards of waves, and into the Palea Kameni hot springs. Enjoy the boat ride home and grab a mid-

priced snack from the bar if you're starving.



(**Above:** Athinios port. The red circle indicates where your boat will be docked.)

Bring: Your transaction receipt to be shown upon boarding, bathing suit, towel, flip flops, sturdy walking shoes, sun screen, sun glasses, a few Euros for volcano entrance fee/snack, and protective clothing.

1:15 pm -- Return to Fira Town

- **Price:** EUR €6.00 (for a single adult)
- **Duration:** 30 minutes

Have a quick look around Athinios Port if you like (there are a few souvenir shops, tavernas, convenience stores, and travel agencies where you can check out more sea excursions), but bear in mind that you should return to Fira for better food. Take the cable cars, donkeys, or an uphill trek (only if you still have energy after the volcano walk and "hot springs" swim) back to town.

Duration: 30 minutes (can take less which you should use for lunch or Oia)

Below: Map of Fira Town, which can be found here if you want to print the full size: <http://mappery.com/Fira-Tourist-Map> On the map you'll want to locate the zig-zagging black line down to the port - this is the path you will walk or use to take a donkey. As you can see, Fira can be tricky to navigate at first because of its lack of street names. However, after a few days of walking around, you'll be able to find your way by sense of direction, like a local. For this reason, if you ask a local for directions in terms of street names, you're likely to get a blank stare, a laugh, or look of confusion in return.



1:45 pm -- Lunch in Fira Town

- **Price:** EUR €10.00 (for a single adult)
- **Duration:** 1 hour
- **Address:** Erythrou Stavrou

For lunch in Fira, head to the traditional, inexpensive Taverna Nikolas, which offers a small to medium sized menu but will probably be mostly full of locals and tourists upon your visit due to its predictable, tasty dishes. Try any of the seafood entrees like grilled octopus or the slow cooked lamb, and be sure to mix and match mezedeas like the Greek salad, white eggplant in tomato sauce, tzadziki, and dolmades.

Price: €4-6 for mezedeas (smaller appetizer-esque plates), €10-15 for entrees

Hours: Noon to midnight

Address: Erythrou Stavrou, which runs parallel to the main street Odos Iapantis, also known as “Gold Street.”

From the cable cars, head toward Fira’s main square/bus station. You will know when you are on Gold Street because of the abundance of jewelers. Keep going one more street and you’ll be on Erythrou. The restaurant is located in the middle of the street, but ask any local or business owner for “Nikolas” and you’ll be pointed there very quickly.

2:45 pm -- KTEL Bus to Oia Village

- **Price:** EUR €1.60 (for a single adult)
- **Duration:** 45 minutes

Duration: 20-30mins plus the potential wait for a bus

Address: Fira Town Bus Station

Return to the main bus station, which you’ll probably be familiar with by now. You should always know where you are in relation to it, as it is the hub of easy, quick transport for the whole island. Because bus schedules are very different depending on the season, you’ll need to check the postings at the main window – look for an 8x11 sheet of paper reading Fira - Oia. Buses should come every 20-30 minutes. Bear in mind that the buses that are advertised as “Express” are more prone to cancellation than regular buses. For more on riding KTEL buses, check the Transportation Guide at the end of the document.

3:30 pm -- Walk from Oia Bus Station to Ammoudi Beach and Port

- **Price:** FREE
- **Duration:** 30 minutes



Above, you will see a map (<http://coronaeborealis.com/information.html>) of Oia (pronounced ee-UH and sometimes spelled Ia). The bus station is depicted by a green auto in a red circle. At the station is a restroom which you may use for €0.50. From the station, walk straight towards town, keeping small eateries on your left and a banking kiosk on your right. Take the main pedestrian walkway Nikolaou Nomikou for about 10 minutes towards the ocean, and you will come to a set of 214 wide steps. It takes about 10-15 minutes to descend these stairs (again, you can take a cheap donkey ride), but great swimming, multicolored volcanic bluffs, and a plethora of tavernas await you. Below: A more complicated map of Oia, which can be found at <http://mappery.com/maps/Oia-Tourist-Map.jpg>.



4:00 pm -- Ammoudi Bay and Port

- **Price:** FREE
- **Duration:** 2 hours

Upon reaching Ammoudi “beach” (more pebbles than sand), you will be rewarded with some of the best swimming in Santorini. Because it is later in the afternoon, you’ll have mostly avoided the crowd. Work up an appetite by swimming from the port to the end of the seawall in Ammoudi Bay (to reach the entrance for swimmers, walk left alongside the cliff at the bottom of the stairs). Rest on the manmade rocks behind the lighthouse before returning to the bay for a short stroll around the charming tavernas which grace Ammoudi’s wharf.

6:00 pm -- Return to Oia

- **Price:** FREE
- **Duration:** 35 minutes

When you are ready, **return to Oia proper the same way you came, either by donkey or walking up the foot path.** From there, turn onto Nikolaou Nomikou until you reach the restaurant 1800.

6:35 pm -- Dinner at 1800

- **Price:** EUR €100.00 (for a single adult)
- **Duration:** 2 hours
- **Address:** Nikolaou Nomikou

1800 is a famous Santorini restaurant housed in an old fishing captain’s mansion, along with part of his library collection. This highly acclaimed “slow food” eatery blends traditional and modern cuisine, all the while maintaining a romantic atmosphere. Classy 1800 also offers a wide variety of local Santorini wines.

Price: Up to €100 for the full treatment, including multiple entrees, wine, and tip

Address: Main pedestrian walkway Nikolaou Nomikou through Oia; you can’t miss it

Website: www.oia-1800.com