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THE WEEKENDER – SANTORINI

Your guide to the gem in the Greek island crown

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Saint Kate

Prenota ora →

Prezzo a partire da 195 USD

Cancella gratis*

*Su tariffe selezionate. Prezzi soggetti a cambiamento

BY GUEST WRITER
(/AUTHOR/GUEST/)



This Greek gem – especially tourist-free – has **Mary Lussiania** in raptures. The chance to see Santorini normally jostle down its narrow, white-washed, streets is (we hope) a once in a lifetime opportunity. The traditional American and Chinese market absent and cruise ships to the island banned, Santorini is low uncrowded, best.

The Weekender: Santorini

The sunsets still dazzle each night, the mesmerising, azure blue, caldera still shimmers beneath the perch high up on the volcano rim in Oia and Imerovigli, and the octopus still hang out to dry in the fiercer to visit parts of the island you normally can't reach due to bumper to bumper traffic, like the off-the-radar where ornate bell towers straddle the winding alleys and the winery of Gavalas offers a selection of the wine, a welcome respite from the heat of the day.

Restaurants abound, with menus that deliver a sophistication way beyond other Greek Islands whilst no grown ingredients of white aubergine and cherry tomatoes, fava beans (split peas), capers and crunchy Greece which remains authentic while encapsulating that dream in shades of blue and white that lures

STAY

If you want the dream, it has to be Oia. Situated on the north-west of the island, this little town brims with shops, blue-domed churches and excellent restaurants all of which come with a view onto the caldera. steep slope with twisting stairs and tiny swimming pools cut into the rock as they go. New hotels open the view that old-timers [Andronis Luxury Suites](https://www.andronis-suites.com/) (<https://www.andronis-suites.com/>) and [Katikies Santorini](https://www.katikies.com/katikieshotelsantorini) (<https://www.katikies.com/katikieshotelsantorini>) have.

Katikies Santorini is all sugar-white with occasional walls of dark volcanic stone, its entrance marked by a tiny white-washed church, topped by a single bell and a white stone cross that stands proud against the blue sky – a perfect deconstruction of the Greek flag. One level down sits bougainvillea-clad [Mikrasia](https://www.mikrasiasantorini.com) (<https://www.mikrasiasantorini.com>) where fresh lobster a la Palita eaten as the sun goes down is a memorable experience. The three swimming pools guarantee a peaceful dip and settling down beside one, on a cabana, with the sea sparkling beneath you is what holidays are all about.

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The C&TH Guide to the Caribbean (<https://www.countryandtownhouse.co.uk/travel/best-hotels-caribbean/>)

Adronis Luxury Suites is a little further along the volcano rim, in the midst of the boutiques and galleries. Step off the street though and down the stairs to find suites like ours where the smooth varnished grey cement of the spacious bedroom spills out onto a terrace complete with a large hot tub, from where views of the caldera surround you. Lean over and you can see tables being set for dinner at [Lycabettus](https://www.lycabettusrestaurant.com) (<https://www.lycabettusrestaurant.com>), the gourmet restaurant which juts out over the sea. Service is exemplary here – with taxis (not always easy to find, as there are only 39 on the island) always arriving in minutes and everything done with a smile.



An exclusive suite at Adronis

EAT

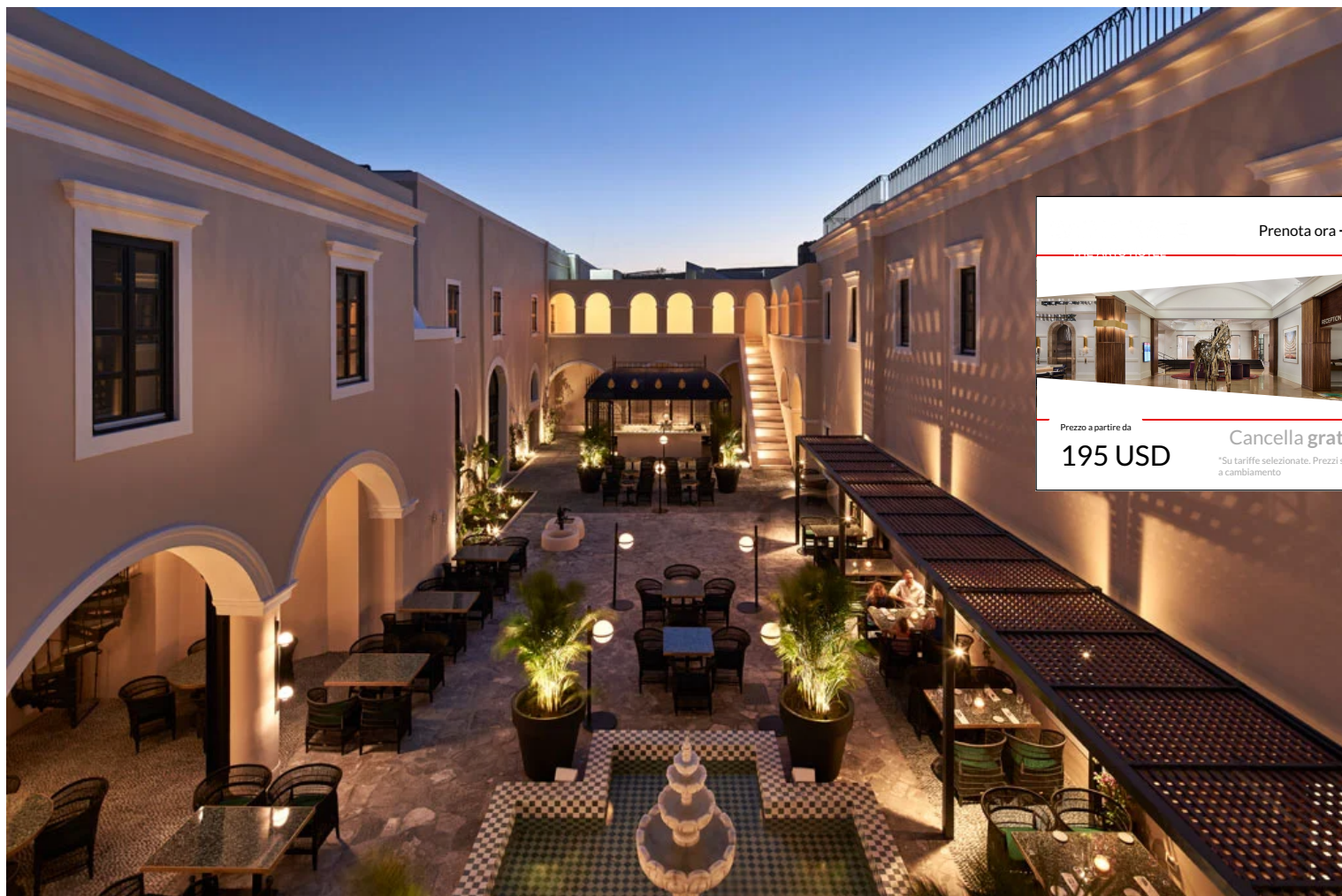
To get a proper overview of the impressive range that the island offers, you need to try modern and traditional, foreign and local, gastronomic fare and simple homecooking. Start in a tiny ouzeria (tavern) called [Penelope's](https://www.facebook.com/OuzeriPenelopes) (<https://www.facebook.com/OuzeriPenelopes>), where just a few tables are tucked in under the church tower in unspoilt Pyrgos. Order the moreish melted cheese saganaki, served with a squeeze of lemon juice. At sleek [Seaside](https://seasidesantorini.com/) (<https://seasidesantorini.com/>) – which is just that, on the south eastern coast: a black volcanic beach between you and the sea – try the zingy tuna tartare and the sea bass ceviche with passion fruit, which resonate with the cool, contemporary vibe.

For traditional fare head to [Ammoudi Fish Tavern](http://ammoudisantorini.com/) (<http://ammoudisantorini.com/>), a restaurant at the little harbour of Ammoudi, which sits under the town of Oia way above and from where cruise ship passengers normally clamber onto donkeys to begin the arduous climb upwards, and order sun-dried octopus, simply grilled. Or try [To Psaraki](http://www.topsaraki.gr/), (<http://www.topsaraki.gr/>) a charming husband-and-wife-run restaurant perched high up above the sea on the east of the island, where boneless sardines melt in the mouth. Or [Pelakanos](http://www.pelekanosrestaurant.gr/) (<http://www.pelekanosrestaurant.gr/>) on a rooftop in Oia town which serves excellent Greek mezze with the typical smoked aubergine puree. For sophistication, sushi and views of the sun setting try [Naos](https://naosويا.gr/) (<https://naosويا.gr/>), housed in an old 19th-century mansion with an impressive wooden door in Oia's narrow streets.

C&TH's Guide to Greek Island-Hopping (<https://www.countryandtownhouse.co.uk/travel/cth-guide-to-greek-island-hopping/>)




For a taste of Greek gastronomy try the aforementioned Mikrasia and Lycabettus, and the acclaimed [Selene](https://selene.gr/) (<https://selene.gr/>), named after the Greek goddess of the moon. Set within an old monastery, dishes dazzle from fish soup with smoked fresh eel and saffron ice cream to lamb 'Kleftiko' with 'galeni' Cretan cheese. Indulge in the equally impressive local wine pairing to immerse yourself in the culinary landscape.



Selene restaurant

Prenota ora -



Prezzo a partire da **195 USD**

Cancella grati

*Su tariffe selezionate. Prezzi sc a cambiamento

BUY

Buying an evil eye necklace or bracelet in order to ward off bad luck and protect yourself might seem less tacky while we are in the eye of the Covid-19 storm – in which case there are plenty to choose from. But do browse through the gold jewellery shops such as [Alexandros](http://www.alexandrosjewellery.gr/) (<http://www.alexandrosjewellery.gr/>). They have wonderful examples of the Greek Byzantine style, elegant hammered gold earrings and heavy, gem studded rings. Dip into [Poniros](https://www.poniros.com/) (<https://www.poniros.com/>), if only to look, for his volcanic flower collection is inspired by the colours of Santorini – black, Aegean blue or cognac diamonds.

Wine is an obvious souvenir to bring back (see below), for the local wines from Santorini are extremely good and little known outside Greece. Easily transportable are sponges, cut from the seabed, and little boxes of Greek delight. Chic boutiques entice with clothes, kaftans and endless sandals.

DO

Wine tasting has to top the list. Book a slot at [Vassaltis Winery](https://vassaltis.com/) (<https://vassaltis.com/>) where you must come away with Greece's first Petillant Naturel or at [Venetsanos](http://venetsanoswinery.com/) (<http://venetsanoswinery.com/>) (also worth visiting for its dramatic cliff side location alone) which has a good new rosé, Anagallis. Hook up with [Santorini Walking Tours](http://santoriniwalkingtours.com/) (<http://santoriniwalkingtours.com/>) for a real 'under the skin' experience. These are locals who can tell you the history of the island and show you off-the-beaten-track places, from unspoilt villages to tiny churches, in a brilliantly informative and enjoyable way.

Amateur archaeologists should visit the ancient ruins of Akritori, a town preserved by volcanic ash after the big eruption which has been called the Pompeii of the Aegean. Lastly, take a step back and view the island from the water with [Explorer Yachting](https://explorer1-yachting.com/) (<https://explorer1-yachting.com/>), who have speed boats, catamarans and motor yachts in which to do so, as well as trips visiting the volcano, the red beach and white beach.





BOOK IT:

Fly with [Aegean Airlines](http://en.aegeanair.com/) (<http://en.aegeanair.com/>), who fly from London Heathrow via Athens to Santorini (0871 200 8040).

[Katikies Santorini](https://www.katikies.com/) (doubles from €450 B&B) [katikies.com](https://www.katikies.com/) (<https://www.katikies.com/>)

[Andronis Luxury Suites](https://www.andronis-suites.com/) (doubles, from €657 B&B) [andronis-suites.com](https://www.andronis-suites.com/) (<https://www.andronis-suites.com/>)

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