



# Zakynthos

Photo: MattLake



zolakoma



Photo: Heather Cowper



Photo: zolakoma

The Venetians – who owned it for 600 years – called it 'the Flower of the East.' Zakynthos is still one of the lushest and loveliest Greek islands, with green hillsides covered with flowers in spring and early summer, white cliffs dropping to dazzling turquoise waters, and some of the best beaches in Greece. Even better, it claims to have more sun than any other Greek island – and it has sizzling nightlife to match.

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### Top 5

#### Church of Agios Dionysios

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#### Post-byzantine Museum

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## THE ISLAND

Zakynthos lost much of its centuries-old Venetian architecture to an earthquake in 1953, but Zakynthos Town retains a distinctly Italian feel, with arcaded streets, a wide central piazza and a scattering of grand old buildings. Above the town, a ruined – but still forbidding – Venetian castle looks eastward to the mainland and the Gulf of Corinth. Zakynthos's hilly hinterland can be explored in a rented car, though the island has few visitor attractions as such apart from a handful of small, but historic churches and two small museums.

Like most Greek holiday islands, Zakynthos really comes to life between May – when the first charter flights arrive – and October, when the last package holidaymakers depart. From October through to April, almost every hotel and nightclub on the island closes, and the resorts go into hibernation. Make the most of your summer on Zakynthos with the easy going, laid back beach life by day and party by night.

## BEACH LIFE



Photo: Heather Cowper

Zakynthos has a surprisingly large amount of beautiful beaches, considering that the island is relatively small.

### Alykes

On an east-facing bay, Alykes is midway along the northeast coast of the island and has a long sandy beach, plenty of water sports facilities, a good choice of tavernas and bars, and a handful of small discos. Usually less

crowded than Laganas.

Address: Alykes, Zakynthos

### Argassi

Argassi's north-facing beach is less impressive than those of its island rivals, but it makes up for it with an impressive choice of water sports and facilities for families. The word on the street is that it's due to take over from Laganas as the island's nightlife hot spot.

Address: Argassi, Zakynthos

### Kalamaki

Separated from Laganas by a 5 km stretch of beach designated as part of the National Marine Park (and as such, free of buildings), Kalamaki is less raucous than its near neighbour and is more appealing to families and couples. It shares the same marvellous sands and striking views, and, like Laganas, is very close to the airport.

Address: Kalamaki, Zakynthos

### Laganas

This superb beach – a 14 kilometre long stretch of sand that runs, almost uninterrupted, from Geraki (also called Gerakas) at the southeast tip of the island to Laganas and beyond – is one of the last nesting grounds of the endangered loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*). Parts of Laganas Bay and the beach have been designated as a National Marine Park to protect egg-laying females and hatchling turtles.

Powered water sports are banned within the waters of the NMP. Laganas is the island's biggest and noisiest resort, with dozens of pubs, bars and clubs.

For information on turtle conservation and the marine park:

Address: Laganas, Zakynthos

Internet: [www.earthseasky.org](http://www.earthseasky.org) / [www.nmp-zak.org](http://www.nmp-zak.org)

### **Tsilivi**

This resort lies around 6 km north of Zakynthos Town, and has grown from being a small fishing village, less than 20 years ago, to a full-scale holiday resort. The beach is long and sandy, with stunning views east to the mainland, and there is plenty of mid-range and budget accommodation. Tsilivi also has a good choice of places to eat and drink, and its nightlife is a good deal less frenzied than Laganas.

Address: Tsilivi, Zakynthos

### **Vassilikos**

Close to the southeast tip of Zakynthos and looking west across Laganas Bay, Vassilikos is one of the most attractive and peaceful of the island's beach resorts, with some of the best hotels on Zakynthos.

Address: Vassilikos, Zakynthos

## **DO & SEE**



Photo: zolakoma

For most visitors, the main attractions are Zakynthos's beaches – which include some of the very best in Greece – and it is cheap, cheerful with an unsophisticated nightlife.

### **Church of Agios Dionysios**

This small church, built in 1925, contains the silver-encrusted sarcophagus of St. Dionysios, the island's patron saint. It survived the 1953 earthquake – proof, say devout islanders, of the Saint's miraculous powers.

Address: Markovitz 1, Zante, Zakynthos

More Info: South side of Zakynthos Town harbour

### **Post-byzantine Museum**

The main attraction here is the collection of fine Orthodox icons and wall-paintings from the churches and monasteries that were levelled by the earthquake in 1953. A model of Zakynthos Town prior to the quake shows what the town looked like pre-1953.

Address: Plateia Solomos, Zakynthos

### **Solomos Museum**

This modest museum celebrates the life and works of Dionysios Solomos, the Zakynthian author and poet who penned the Greek national anthem, along with other notable islanders.

Address: Plateia Agiou Markou, Zakynthos

### **Monitis Panagias (monastery of The Virgin)**

Virtually the only historic building left standing intact on the island, this monastery near the northwest tip of the island was the home of St Dionysios, who, before being canonized, was the abbot here during the 17th century. His cell, with his few possessions, can still be viewed.

Address: Moni tis Panagias Anafonitrias, Zakynthos

More Info: Near Volimes

### **Round The Island Cruises**

Excursion boats leave daily (buy tickets the night before at the quayside or at your hotel) from all the island resorts in summer. They take trips to the Blue Grotto, a marine cave carved out of the white limestone cliffs by thousands of years of wave action, and to the so-called 'Smugglers Wreck' – the rusting hulk of a Syrian cargo vessel that ran aground in the 1980's on a spectacular white beach overlooked by towering cliffs – it is almost impossible to reach except by sea.

### **Ancient Olympia**

The spectacular ruins of ancient Olympia, birthplace of the Olympic Games, are located only an hour away from

Killini, the small port on the Greek mainland opposite Zakynthos. There are several ferries and hydrofoils daily in summer, taking around 90 minutes, so a day trip is possible.

Travel agents in Zakynthos also offer escorted coach tours to Olympia.

Address: Ancient Olympia, Zakynthos

### Seaplane Flights

There are no direct ferries from Zakynthos to other islands – but you can island-hop by seaplane with a new service operated by AirSea Lines. For prices and bookings:

Internet: [www.agoudimos-lines.com](http://www.agoudimos-lines.com)

Email: [info@agoudimos-lines.com](mailto:info@agoudimos-lines.com)

## DINING



Photo: Heather Cowper

Greeks understand good food and they truly take their time to appreciate it. You could say eating is a national pastime in Greece, and some typical dishes from a Greek table could be tzatziki, seafood, olives, cheese, fresh meat and vegetables.

Zakynthos' resorts are not short of cheerful, affordable and family-run places to eat. Like night spots, restaurants and tavernas in the island's resorts may appear for a couple of seasons, then vanish when the lease runs out or when they fail to make a profit – so last summer's favourite diner may not be there on your next trip.

### Olympic Cuisine Bar

This is an exclusive restaurant with an elegant feel. The menu contains traditional Greek cuisine, international dishes and Mediterranean inspired food. They use only ingredients of the highest quality and the chef strives to capture the warmth of the sun in his creations - fresh, light and pure.

Address: Alykes, Zante, Zakynthos

Phone: +30 269 508 3507

Internet: [www.olympicbar.com](http://www.olympicbar.com)

### Horizon Restaurant Bar Steak House

Horizon has a roof garden overlooking the Laganas Gulf, a brilliant view accompanied by tasty food. The menu consists of Greek and international cuisine.

Address: Laganas, Zakynthos

Phone: +30 269 505 2791 / +30 697 736 9554

Internet: [www.horizonzante.gr](http://www.horizonzante.gr)

### Mantalena Restaurant & Barbecue

This taverna has been up and running since the 70's. They offer homemade wine produced at the family's own vineyard to their traditional home cooked dishes, among others charcoal grilled steaks and fresh souvlaki.

Address: Tassos Pilarinos, Alykanas, Zante

More Info: Located in the centre of the Alykanas resort

### Paradise Taverna Pizzeria

Paradise Taverna started out as an Italian restaurant, famous for their pizza. Today their menu has expanded to include traditional Greek cuisine as well. The atmosphere is cosy with Greek music in the background and friendly service.

Address: Alykes Zante, Zakynthos

Phone: +30 269 508 3664

Internet: [www.alykes.com/tavernas/paradise](http://www.alykes.com/tavernas/paradise)

### Fidelio Restaurant Snack Bar

No matter what time of day you choose to visit Fidelio's, there will be a tasty meal waiting to be prepared for you.

Breakfast, lunch and dinner - the menu is varied and highly appreciated.

Address: Alykes Crossroads, Zakynthos

Phone: +30 269 508 3765

Internet: [www.fidelio.com.gr](http://www.fidelio.com.gr)

## BARS & NIGHTLIFE



Photo: zolakoma

Laganas is the raucous epicentre of Zakynthos' nightlife – rocking until dawn from May until September – with more than 50 clubs, music bars and pubs. But the other resorts, especially Argassi, have plenty of nightlife to offer, too. Names, management, music and door policy may change from season to season, but a hard core of well-established stalwarts can be relied on.

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### Rescue Club

This is an outside bar known for fire breathing and bottle flaring holding 500 people. After midnight the party moves inside where the music and the experience is amplified by an impressive sound and light system.

Address: 1015 Laganas Main Road, Laganas, Zakynthos

Internet: [www.rescueclub.net](http://www.rescueclub.net)

### Planet Pub

The Planet Pub is located inside the Tsilvi's resort. They have a spacious bar with an adjacent dance floor, live DJ and widescreen TV's showing sports events.

Address: Tsilivi Zante, Zakynthos

Phone: +30 697 299 8659 / +30 269 504 5106 / +30 269 504 8958

Internet: [www.planetpub.gr](http://www.planetpub.gr)

### Enigma Cocktail Bar

Enigma Bar is a lively venue playing the latest hits and offering an array of exotic cocktails. Sip on a cooling drink and just enjoy the atmosphere.

Address: Alykes, Zakynthos

### Molly Malones Irish Pub

Molly Malone's has a wide variety of draught beers and cocktails. There are 2 live DJ's every night spinning a mix of 70's, 80's, 90's and of course, Irish tunes. After midnight the mood changes into electrifying party.

Address: Tsilivi, Zakynthos

Phone: +30 697 366 7749

Internet: [www.mollymalonesirishpub.gr](http://www.mollymalonesirishpub.gr)

### Zeros Club

Zeros is famous for professional flair bartenders, fire breathers, exciting events and crazy bar games. The club has some excellent DJ's kicking up the party mood another notch.

Address: Main Road, Laganas, Zakynthos

Internet: [www.zerosclubzante.com](http://www.zerosclubzante.com)

## SHOPPING



Photo: MattLake

Shops and stalls offer the visitor plenty of opportunities to buy cheap and colourful beachwear, designer knock-offs and conventional souvenirs. The main shopping street in Zakynthos Town is Odos Alexandras, two blocks back from the harbour esplanade, which has a plentiful array of shops selling leatherwear and gold and silver jewellery, all of which are well made and well designed. Elsewhere, the shopping streets in the resorts concentrate on souvenir towels and tops, beach toys and other essential holiday requirements such as sunblock, dive masks, snorkels, tequila and imported English beer.

## ACCOMMODATION



Photo: Heather Cowper

Even though most of your time will be spent sun bathing, shopping and partying, it's still important to find comfortable accommodation. Here are a few tips:

### **Contessina Hotel**

"Contessines" is what the rich and beautiful ladies of the 1820's proudly used to be called. Contessina Hotel lies 4 km away from the city centre of Zante, and no more than 80 meters from the tranquil Tsilivi beach. Their 90 rooms each have its own unique style and feng shui colour.

Address: Tsilivi, Zakynthos

Phone: +30 269 50225 0810

Internet: [www.contessinahotel.com](http://www.contessinahotel.com)

Email: [info@contessinahotel.com](mailto:info@contessinahotel.com)

### **Archontiko Kyotsis**

This is a great option if you're travelling with friends or family. Three luxurious stone villas set in amazingly landscaped gardens with easy access to the airport and local hot spots.

Villa number one has three floors and is suitable for eight people.

Villa number two is suitable for six people and boasts for example an open fireplace and lounge furniture.

Villa number three is also suitable for six people, with three separate bedrooms and Jacuzzi bath in the bath room.

Address: Agrilia, Zakynthos  
Phone: +30 694 737 3168  
Internet: [www.archontikokoytsis.com](http://www.archontikokoytsis.com)

### **Poseidon Beach Hotel**

Poseidon Beach Hotel is a 3-star hotel situated 500 meters from the centre of Laganas town and 7 km from Zante town. The close proximity to the sandy beach makes it a harmonious choice.

Address: Laganas, Zakynthos  
Phone: +30 269 505 1830 / +30 269 505 1831  
Internet: [www.poseidon-zakynthos.gr](http://www.poseidon-zakynthos.gr)  
Email: [info@poseidon-zakynthos.gr](mailto:info@poseidon-zakynthos.gr)

### **Athenea Villas**

These villas are suitable for 2-6 people, each of them tastefully decorated, with air conditioning. The view is amazing and you can truly enjoy your holiday here at these private villas.

Address: Keri Lake, Zakynthos  
Phone: +30 210 600 7207 / +30 698 433 8079 / +30 697 832 0396  
Internet: [www.atheneavillas.com](http://www.atheneavillas.com)  
Email: [atheneavillas@gmail.com](mailto:atheneavillas@gmail.com)

### **Jupiter Hotel**

Jupiter Hotel lies in the lively Tsilivi resort. With 300 meters to the beach and close proximity to bars, restaurants and tourist shops, the location is perfect. Great for families and couples alike. If you crave an activity, you can always play billiards or bingo in the evening.

Address: Planos, Tsilivi, Zakynthos  
Phone: +30 269 504 8015  
Internet: [www.jupiterhotel.gr](http://www.jupiterhotel.gr)  
Email: [info@jupiterhotel.gr](mailto:info@jupiterhotel.gr)

## **ESSENTIAL INFORMATION**



Photo: Heather Cowper

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### **Zakynthos International Airport**

Zakynthos Airport is midway between Kalamaki and Laganas. It is around 1 km (10 minutes by coach or five minutes by taxi) from each area.

There is no public transport from the airport, though plenty of taxis meet each flight.

In addition to summer charter flights, there are several daily flights to Athens.

Address: Zakinthos  
Phone: +30 2695 023 970

### **Public Transport**

Regular bus services connect all the main resorts with Zakynthos Town. The central bus station is at 42 Odos Filitas. You can buy tickets on board.

Car rental is widely available and affordable, as is fuel. Scooters and motorcycles may also be hired, but inexperienced riders should take great care!

### **Taxi**

Taxis are plentiful, cheap and professional. Most taxi drivers speak English and taxis carry up to four passengers. The main taxi station is in the central square of Zakynthos Town. Taxis can be booked by the day for island tours.

Airport transfers by taxi can also be booked:

Phone: +30 269 504 8400  
Internet: [www.zantetaxi.gr](http://www.zantetaxi.gr)

### **Pharmacy**

There are several pharmacies in Zakynthos Town and at least one in most resorts. If you require medicine after midnight, a doctor must contact the pharmacy first. For the location of the nearest pharmacy, ask at your hotel.

### **Telephone**

Country code: 30  
Island/Area code: 26950

### **Electricity**

230 v  
50 Hz two-pin (southern European) plug.

### **Population**

40,000

### **Currency**

Euro, €1 = 100 cents

### **Opening hours**

In summer, normally 8.00-12.00 and 16.00-20.00.  
Government offices and businesses: 8.00-12.00 and 16.00-20.00 Monday-Friday.

### **Newspapers**

Athens News (in English)  
Athens News Agency (in Greek and English)  
Ekathimerini (in English)

### **Emergency numbers**

100 General Emergencies  
199 Fire  
166 Health emergencies

### **Tourist information**

There is no official tourist office on Zakynthos



