

SUN-DRENCHED SANTORINI CAN BE KID-FRIENDLY, TOO

Not just a honeymooners' paradise, Greek isle offers getaways for families

MHAIRRI WOODHALL

The Greek island of Santorini is a dazzling scene of whitewashed buildings and blue-domed churches stacked upon kaleidoscopic cliffs that rise up from the Aegean Sea.

Its most popular tourist towns, Fira and Oia, are a hodgepodge of winding pathways bursting with boutique hotels, casual cafes, fine-dining restaurants and shops selling everything from high-end treasures to token trinkets. Outside of Santorini's bustling hubs, you'll discover hidden coves boasting crystal-clear water and volcanic red and black sand beaches. Ancient storied sights and a highly regarded wine scene complete the hallmark attractions.

At first blush, the island once known as Kallisté, meaning "most beautiful one," seems best suited for honeymooners. However, with the right activities and accommodation choice, it may just become the next bucket-list adventure for your family.

While many of Santorini's iconic caldera-view hotels are geared toward couples and typically don't allow children, the recent opening of Katikies Garden is a game-changer for families. It's also the first property in the luxury Katikies Resorts & Club portfolio to welcome guests under the age of 13.

Located in the heart of Fira's restaurants, shops and museums, Katikies Garden offers accessible pathways that are void of the area's standard steep, uneven stairways — often built without guardrails — which can be dangerous for little legs. Special touches, including a kid's dining

menu, pool toys and turndown service with pint-sized robes, slippers and bath amenities are a few of the family friendly highlights. For parents seeking a date night, the resort offers nanny services at an additional cost. Dine on the property or use the complimentary car service to experience the exceptional Mikrasia, the signature eight-table restaurant at Katikies Santorini in Oia. On our splurge evening, we feasted on succulent smoked beef carpaccio (my favourite rendition of all-time), heirloom tomatoes with goat ice cream and lobster atop lentils, fennel and truffle. The romantic five-star sunset meal was a highlight of the trip.

Another exceptional culinary experience can be found at Sunset by Paraskevas tavern in Ammoudi Bay, below Oia's vibrant red cliffs.

The restaurant, which was opened in the 1980s by Paraskevas Birigkos and his wife Margarita, is an Ammoudi institution and a favourite among visitors, locals and celebrity guests. We loved the waterfront setting and Margarita's famous, freshly caught lobster pasta so much that we ate here twice during our week-long stay. Bring the kids, but be sure to reserve a table in advance, especially if you plan on dining at sunset.

Wine touring with the family is also possible. Book a driver for a private excursion that allows you to pick the wineries and go at your own pace. My favourite spot with kids is Venetsanos Winery for its patio tastings with sweeping caldera views. Within moments of your seating, the gracious and knowl-

edgeable staff will bring paper and markers for the children to colour. We enjoyed our tasting paired with local cheese, cured meat, olives and sun-drenched tomatoes. The whites definitely outshine the red varietals, which is a common theme throughout the island.

Other worthwhile wineries include Santo Wines, Estate Argyros and Domaine Sigalas. If you're a craft beer fan, be sure to stop by Santorini Brewing Company to try a flight of donkey-themed ales and lagers.

For a day by the sea, rent a car and drive to Perivolos Beach on Santorini's southeast shore. While en route take a slight detour to Akrotiri and visit the ancient Minoan archeological site that was covered in ash during a massive volcanic eruption in 17th century BC. Arrive early to avoid the crowds and Santorini's scorching afternoon heat. I recommend taking the guided tour through the archeological remains for a deeper understanding of this sophisticated prehistoric settlement.



Stunning caldera views await visitors in the popular tourist town of Fira in Santorini. The Greek island offers ample adventure for families.

CURT WOODHALL

Afterward, the kids will be thrilled to cool down with a dip in the Aegean.

You'll find a string of beach bars along Perivolos, including our favourite, Seaside Santorini. Reserve a daybed in advance if you're travelling during July and August. In June or September, you'll have no problem securing an impromptu spot. Relax on the black sand beach and enjoy spectacular views of the sparkling Aegean Sea.

If you're looking for a unique perspective of Santorini's dramatic coastline, take a sunset catamaran cruise with Spiridakos. With kids, we opted for

the private tour, which includes round-trip transfers and allows for a more flexible itinerary. The five-hour experience begins with a swim at Red Beach in Akrotiri, then a snorkel in the reefs in front of White Beach and the natural thermal springs of the island's volcanic crater.

A Mediterranean barbecue dinner of chicken, fish and seafood, served with salad, rice and local wine and beer, follows. The evening ends just after sunset, which, when viewed from the catamaran, rivals even Fira's best fiery display.

Visit arrivalstravel.com to follow Mhairri's family adventures.

Leading Tour Operator serving North America since 1996
 • More than 100,000 clients travelling with us every year
 • 20 offices worldwide with own operation centre

11 Days Fascinating PERU & the Amazon with Machu Pichu

Prices Starting From

\$3899 40% OFF ~~\$5859~~

Airfare & Taxes Included

Lima - Puerto Maldonado - Amazon Jungle - Cusco - Sacred Valley - Moray - Saqsaywaman Ruins - Cusco

Bolivia Extension

6 Days from \$1999

Argentina & Brazil Extension

8 Days from \$2999

Extra Savings! Up to \$1,050/Room (Limited Time Offer)

- ★ Free Upgrade to 7 Nights First Class Boutique-Style Hotels (USD300)
- ★ Free Upgrade to Luxury Amazon Lodge (USD350)
- ★ Free Maras & Moray Tour in Sacred Valley (USD120)

Departure Dates ★ Small Group Tour

2019: Nov 15/29, Dec 6
 2020: Jan 10/24, Feb 7/21, Mar 6/20

Special Feature

- Discover the astonishing ancient citadel of Machu Picchu via Inca Rail Train
- Admire the might of the Inca empire in the Sacred Valley (Two nights)
- In Amazon canopy walkway, walk through the treetops along suspension bridges and enjoy unimaginable landscapes and vistas from below.
- Experience the untouched, evergreen splendour of the Amazon rainforest. Stroll along jungle trails on the lookout for monkeys, parrots, and medicinal plants
- Staying in a cosy nature lodge, you'll be immersed in the ambience of the jungle, waking up to the twitter and buzz of exotic birds (Two nights)
- Cruise down the Amazon in a canoe and stalk across lakes in search of rare animals
- Take a guided stroll through Cusco, where Inca temples and Spanish cathedrals alike line the cobblestone streets
- City Tour of Lima with its 2000 years of history

Package Includes

- Direct roundtrip flights Calgary/Edmonton - Lima • Airline taxes & fuel surcharges • All intra-flights: Lima-Puerto Maldonado, Puerto Maldonado - Cuzco & Cuzco-Lima • 9 nights accommodations: 2 nights Amazon Lodge, 2 nights Lima, 2 night Sacred Valley, 3 nights Cuzco • Hotel taxes, fees & service charges • All transfers • 13 meals: 8 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 2 dinners • Sightseeing per itinerary in modern motor coach • Services of English-speaking local guides • Entrance fees per itinerary • Inca rail train tickets

FREE TOUR PRESENTATIONS

PLEASE RSVP BOOK NOW

Oct 20 (Sunday) at Calgary **Oct 27** (Sunday) at Edmonton

Toll Free 1-888-285-5088 | 604-247-1788

Visit nexus holidays.ca for great air inclusive deals or contact your travel agent

Office: 210-8010 Saba Road,
Richmond, BC, V6Y 4B2

@NexusHolidaysCanada

- ✓ Best price guarantee
- ✓ Award-winning service
- ✓ Top-rated resorts and excursions
- ✓ With you every step of the way

Vacation Better this Winter

PRICE DROP GUARANTEE

Get up to **\$600 CASH BACK** per couple*

+

Save up to 25%

on all inclusive winter vacations

Bonus Offer!

Pick your Perk!

\$50 Excursion Credit per person

or

FREE Seat Selection

or

FREE Private Round-trip Transfers**

Applicable to select hotels and resorts.

🕒 Book Now with Confidence - Only \$50 Deposit

Departures: Dec 18, 2019 – Apr 30, 2020

For a full list of resorts and tips on how to vacation better visit Sunwing.ca

*All claims will be subject to a \$50 per person admin fee. Each passenger must register within 7 days of making the booking to qualify for the Price Drop Guarantee promotion. **Private round-trip transfers are applicable to vacations booked at Top-rated Luxury resorts. For full terms and conditions visit Sunwing.ca.

Calgary departures. All listed offers (PDG, Only \$50 Deposit, BPG) are limited time offers applicable to new bookings made between Aug 2 and Sep 6, 2019, for departures from Dec 18, 2019 – Apr 30, 2020. "Price Drop Guarantee" (PDG) is applicable to bookings purchased in Canadian Dollars for Canadian or Buffalo departures. PDG is only available on packages in which Sunwing Airlines, Travel Service or TUI Airways are the air carriers and is not applicable to Wild Wednesday, Take Off Thursday promotions, groups, air or hotel/cruise only, cruise packages or vacation product using carriers other than the airlines listed. The booking must be paid in full prior to processing a PDG claim. Only one claim per person allowed which must be filed at least 60 days prior to scheduled departure. "\$50 Deposit". A non-refundable \$50 per person deposit is payable at the time of booking (reduced from standard \$250 per person), which will be deducted from the final payment. Final payment will be due in line with Sunwing's regular policies. Pick Your Perk (Excursion Credit, Seat Selection, Private Transfer) offers are only available to those passengers booking all inclusive vacation packages to Top-Rated Adults, Top-Rated Family, or Top Rated Luxury resorts to qualify. A choice of one perk per qualified booking applies. Perks are only available on packages in which Sunwing Airlines, Travel Service or TUI Airways are the air carriers and is not applicable to groups, air or hotel/cruise only, cruise packages or vacation product using carriers other than the airlines listed. These offers are not transferable and are not redeemable for cash. Pick Your Perk selections must be made by calling the Sunwing Sales Centre at 1-877-Sunwing by Sep 30, 2019. Receive a \$50 Excursion Credit per person applicable on excursions offered by Sunwing Experiences only when you book a vacation package to Top Rated Family or Adult resorts. The credit must be redeemed towards an excursion with a minimum spend of \$100 CAD per person by Sep 30, 2019. Seat Selection is offered on vacation packages to Top Rated Family or Adult resorts and is applicable to standard seating on all flight sectors. Seats are subject to availability. Those who wish to upgrade to Elite Plus must pay the difference of \$30 per person per sector. Seats must be selected by Sep 30, 2019. Private Round-trip Transfers offer is available on vacation packages to Top-Rated Luxury resorts based on double occupancy bookings only. Singles do not qualify. Transfers must be booked by Sep 30, 2019. Savings of up to 25% were calculated comparing current price to originally published rate applicable to Kore Tulum Retreat and Spa Resort in Riviera Maya, Mexico for departure Jan 11, 2020 for 7 nights and were available at the time of printing. These offers are subject to change or can be withdrawn at any time without prior notice. Other conditions apply. For complete details including the Terms and Conditions of all bookings, visit Sunwing.ca. 15957 84th Avenue, Unit #305, Surrey BC, V4N 0W7. British Columbia License #39606 | #4276176. | 08172019

Book with the experts at

403 277 7913

More Quality Tours In Asia, Europe, Africa, South Pacific, Americas, please visit at www.nexus holidays.ca