



LOCAL AREA GUIDE

NORTH ZAKYNTHOS

WHAT TO EAT, DRINK & DO

INDIGO ROCK

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I. WELCOME

With copious amounts of nature and endless blue seas to take your breath away, Zakynthos is a true summer escape. Indigo Rock properties reside in the untouched northern areas which feel far removed from the rest of the world. Here you'll discover peaceful coves, pretty hilltops and a tranquil Greek island life - a marked contrast to the buzz of the island's popular southern resorts.

Also known by its Italian name, Zante, the island is the third largest of the Ionian islands located approximately 300km west of Athens (50mins by plane). Renowned especially for the famous Navagio Beach, where lies a popular tourist destination, the Shipwreck. However, many hidden gems lay strewn across this beautiful island and this Area Guide is here to help you go and find some removed from the hubbub of other particularly popular spots.

Our Concierge is on hand to help tailor your itinerary and ensure you get the most of your stay with minimal hassle, it's your holiday after all! Fancy doing some watersports or keen to visit an old monastery? Don't hesitate to ask and they will do their best to arrange it.

II. ZAKYNTHOS MAP

NORTH ZAKYNTHOS



INDIGO ROCK

III. USEFUL INFORMATION

BANKING

Most shops, supermarkets, bars, tavernas, tourist attractions do take credit cards but there are a few which don't so we suggest you have also cash with you. There is a small ATM down in the port. Please ask our villa manger for full directions if you wish to find one.

GETTING AROUND

Having your own car is the best way of getting around the island. If you haven't already organised a hire car, our Concierge will be able to advise you about getting one (or a boat). There are police on the roads monitoring speed so keep to the limits, especially in the south of the island. You must always carry your driving license and the car papers as the police can fine you if you are stopped and don't have them with you.

PETROL STATION

The nearest petrol station is in the local Agios Nikolaos port.

POST OFFICE

Post to the UK can take anything from 5 days - 2 weeks! It is always best to post your cards in one of the yellow post boxes in a main street in Zakynthos town or at the airport. The most reliable post box closest to the villas is outside the post office in Katastari, where you can buy stamps as well.

OPENING TIMES

Shops & businesses usually open from about 9am – 2.30pm and then from about 5.30pm – 9pm (except Wednesdays when they are closed in the evening), but you will find that tourist shops and mini markets in the port will stay open all day, every day. Banks are only open in the mornings Mon-Fri.

IV. LOCAL FOOD & DRINK

ORIZODES

Renowned for its new and improved SkyBar, you won't be able to miss it along the main road. A wonderful setting with a nice breeze out on its balcony, you'll find good local Greek dishes here and a cocktail bar to boot.

NOBELOS

This restaurant is all about the setting. With its own private beach with sunbeds, it's hard not to want to spend a lot of time here. Perfect for a day of relaxing (50€ minimum spend), you can turn up for a fresh orange juice and while away the morning in the sun and then settle in to a long lunch with a bottle of Whispering Angel! Finish that off with a homemade ice cream as a palate cleanser and you're set for the afternoon.

Alternatively, arrive for a dinner in time for a sundowner on the beach before watching the lights of the boats get brighter as it gets darker. The food here is exciting (albeit some over the top presentation), fresh and the service is of a very good standard. House favourites are the 'Lamb in the Oven', 'Spicy Mushrooms' and 'Prawn Saganaki', not to be missed.

LA STORIA

The biggest restaurant in the port of Agios Nikolaos, this is a wonderfully authentic, charming spot. Whilst you eat calamari and moussaka, there's a sandy beach that the kids can play on and walk in to the water whilst you watch. A hearty Greek Salad, some local fish and a souvlaki is the order of the day here.

'SOFIA'S OR THE ART CAFE

A real showstopper. Sofia Michou is a renowned artist who has exhibited all over the world. Now, having come back to Zakynthos with her two sons Giorgos (bartender extraordinaire), Ian (also a fantastic artist) and her daughter Dionysia (professional violinist in the Greek National Orchestra), this bar oozes personality. Not only that, but Sofia herself is the most wonderful cook. There's no menu, she decides what she wants to cook for you on the day and goes and sources fresh ingredient from all over. Only open in the evenings and a 24hr (at least) advance booking is essential, The Art Café is not one to leave off your list. Stunning fish croquettes, famous meatballs and unbelievable briam are regular house classics. And if it's the last thing you drink, try one of Giorgos' Frozen Mojitos.

MICRO NISI

Tucked away, down a small steep road in the hamlet of Mikro Nisi, is a restaurant, aptly named, Mikro Nisi. 'Micro' meaning 'Small' and 'Nisi' meaning 'Island' you'll see exactly when you arrive. Paper tablecloths, electric blue décor and a secret little beach with the clearest water, this is the closest you're going to get to being on the set of Mamma Mia. Once again, fish is a must, along with some of the most delicious pitta bread which can only be paired with Taramasalata (white, not luminous pink!). If you talk to Nico, you can hire one of his boats for the afternoon and go for a potter down the coast. Or, do it in reverse and end your morning, mooring up to the restaurant for a well-earned lunch after a lazy few hours at sea. Heavenly.

THE WINDMILL

In the charming village of Askos, surrounded by cypress trees and the sounds of peacocks (yes, really!) lies a fabulous restaurant called The Old Windmill. Panos is the man to talk to, he's running the front of house, whilst his wife, Tonga, runs the kitchen. This spot separates itself from the rest by not having a menu that's 47 pages long with photos of every dish. This is Greek food, well made, and well thought through. There's items here you won't see anywhere else on for at least a few miles and we haven't found somewhere to beat it. Cocktails are beautifully presented (negroni with candied orange, always a good idea) and there's wine from Panos' father's vineyard in Volimes which unlike some local wine, is very drinkable.

KAMINAKI

A 25 minute drive up in to the hills will bring you to Volimes where you will stumble upon Kaminaki, a fantastic local restaurant and an experience that is not to be missed. Dennis, the owner, has never left Volimes or the island and it's somewhat prevalent in his nature. A small warning, he is slightly bonkers! He'll get you to come and have a look at the wonderful kontosouvli that will have been roasting there for a few hours before your arrival. He'll slice some off for you whilst deafening you with its ingredients. Return back to the table and make sure you order the briam and some cheese saganaki and you won't be disappointed. This is an experience that the kids and adults will all equally find a magical evening and absolutely hysterical.

THE DELI

From the founders of The Peligoni Club and Indigo Rock, The Deli is a beautiful and breezy spot to sit and have Lunch or Dinner. The pizza oven gets fired up and the chefs start preparing gorgeous fresh pasta. The mushroom risotto followed by the lavender crème brûlée would be our go to dishes but everything on this menu is as delectable as the next. Oh and don't miss out on a salmon salad. After lunch, peruse the shop for some delicious takeaway items. Everything from Provençal wine to the perfect ingredients to host a villa BBQ, the Deli is fully stocked for everything you could want at home. If there's something you don't see, just ask! No doubt they'll be able to rustle you up a hamper along the lines of what you were thinking.

V. EXCURSIONS & TRIPS

NEARBY

BLUE CAVES & SHIPWRECK BAY

Definitely the main tourist attraction on Zakynthos, the iconic Blue Caves and Shipwreck Beach are definitely worth a visit. The blue caves are famous for their beauty with arches through the white cliff and beautiful turquoise sea. They get their name from the reflection off the water when you're inside the cave. Most trips to the Shipwreck will stop off and let you snorkel and swim inside them as well, however we think the best way to do it is hire a skipper for the day and do it at your own pace.

The Shipwreck is what's left of a cigarette smuggler's ship wrecked in the 1970's. The white shingly sand, turquoise blue sea and high white cliffs are really unmissable. Boats bring you as close to shore as they can and you wade/swim into the beach. You usually get about half an hour on the beach if you're on a boat with others and then you come back around via the caves. But as mentioned above, the best way to do it is to hire a boat and get up and go early in the morning, before every other boat gets there.

DAY TRIPS ON OUR VINTAGE YACHT ODYSSEY

Indigo Rock is very lucky to have access to a beautiful 55ft, Cacique style yacht built in the Peloponese in the 70s. This is one of the most special trips you can do on the island. Subject to availability, your Concierge can organise either a half day or a full day for you. Both include lunch and drinks (with reason!) and it can accommodate for up to 10 people. It's fully hosted by a Skipper and his First Mate and you can choose where to trundle along to. Whether you want to go around to the Shipwreck or just moor up by a beach and have lunch, this trip is sure to not disappoint.

PRICES

Half Day with lunch: 10am – 2pm OR 2:30pm – 6:30pm 950€

Full Day with lunch & afternoon tea: 10am – 6.30pm 1,850€

VOLIMES

This is a village steeped in history – when the earthquake hit Zakynthos back in the 50's, Volimes, due to its location, was one of the only villages to remain relatively unharmed. We'd suggest a visit to Madina's before dinner at Kaminaki – for the last 30 years, Madina has been toiling away at a loom, making wonderful rugs of all shapes, colours and sizes. Set in her own courtyard, she also has some of her cousin's beautiful pottery and family's cheese and olive oil. A very easy way to spend some spare euros at the bottom of your bag!

EXO CHORA

Located on the West of the Island, Exo Chora is a small village with a lovely square, across the road is supposedly the oldest Olive tree on the Island. There are more tavernas here also.

MARIES

Maries is a village on the other side of the island, the Alexandra taverna on the main road is recommended for its food and friendly service, it has a nice terrace for sundowners.

PORTO VROMI

Porto Vromi can be reached from Maries, and is a picturesque cove at the bottom of a long winding road 10 minutes from Maries. It is a pretty bay but can get busy in July and August, a trip to the Shipwreck beach is also possible from here. The beach has a small cafe but the toilet facilities are very basic!

KAMPI

Just past Exo Chora is a turning to Kampi, a fantastic place to watch the sunset, try one of the tavernas perched high on the cliff for dinner and drinks. The road leads to a dead end with a taverna and an amazing bay - a truly lovely spot to see the sun go down.

PORTO LIMNIONAS/PORO ROXA

These are rocky inlets with lovely swimming from both as the water is crystal clear. There is a high diving board into the sea at Roxa and tavernas at both, but the taverna at the end of the road at Limnion is in a stunning position (definitely worth a visit.)

FURTHER SOUTH

The main coast road south – to Zakynthos town and then on to Laganas or Keri – will take you firstly through Micro Nisi (there is a small island off the coast ‘micro nisi’ or little island). There are some tavernas here (see Eating Out) and a decent sized shingle/sand beach.

After Micro Nisi you come to ‘Sulphur’ beach (as we call it - you will smell it as you drive by!) The sea water here is supposed to be very healing. Then you come to Xigia beach, which you have a bit of a steep walk to. Both these beaches are sandy/shingle and incredibly beautiful. The road carries on through the mountains (past the quarry) to the town of Katastari, with roads off the main road down to the beach resorts of Alykes & Alikanas, with big sandy beaches. There are a couple of small shingle beaches before you get to Micro Nisi if you are prepared to explore but you cannot drive right down to them.

KATASTARI

The closest town to the villa (about 25 mins drive). Here you will find the local police station (they do not speak much English here – there is a Tourist Police office in Zakynthos town), post office, chemist, a few bars/tavernas, a large village square/church, garden centre, hardware store, etc.

ALYKES/ALIKANAS

These are the closest big tourist resorts to the northern area. They have many tavernas, bars, internet cafes, doctors, chemists, supermarkets and nightlife. There are also long stretches of sandy beach and safe shallow swimming for children.

(The tourist town of Tsilivi is between Alykes & Zakynthos town).

Back on the main road to Zakynthos town, after you pass through Katastari you drive on a fairly straight, flat road all the way into Zakynthos town/port. On the way you will pass several supermarkets (AB & My supermarket in particular are good). From the port in Zakynthos you can catch ferries to the mainland (Killini) and from there drive to Korinth or Athens. There are also coach trips you can get to these places. Zakynthos town has many shops/boutiques, churches, museums and squares. You can park along most of the streets in town (unless marked otherwise) but finding a space can be difficult so you can use one of the car parks in the centre of town. You leave the car, with the key in it, get a hand written ticket from the attendant and pay when you return. The main shopping street is called Alexandrou Roma, and several streets run parallel to this (and to the sea) with more shops. There is a big 'Boots' style shop called the Hondos Centre which is very good. At the end of Alex Roma there is a large square – St Mark's square – which has many bars/cafes and is a popular meeting place and a great place to sit with a drink and watch the world go by. You can also get 'round the island' boat tours from the port. If you look up from the town you will see the fort/castle at Bochali, which you can visit. There are amazing views down on the town/port from Bochali, and a couple of cafes.

If you carry on driving past Zakynthos town you head down to the tourist areas of Argassi, Vassilikos and Gerakas (where the turtles are). Note that there is another Agios Nikolaos and Porto Roma here – the same as those in the north – so don't get them mixed up!

On a different road out of Zakynthos town you can get to Kalamaki, Lake Keri and of course the biggest tourist resort of Laganas. You can also get back to Agios Nikolaos on the inland roads out of Zakynthos town which will take you along pretty wooded roads and mountains. The first stop is Macherado, where you can buy the typical Zakynthos pottery. After Macherado the road will take you up into the mountains (with stunning views) through to the old mountain village of Kiliomenos (there is a nice taverna here) with its beautiful bell tower and then you will drive back through Exo Chora, Maries and Volimes to Agios Nikolaos.

FURTHER AFIELD

KEFALONIA

From most of the villas, you can see wonderful views of the neighbouring island: Kefalonia. In the main Summer season, ferries run daily to the island from the local port. Please speak to our Concierge if you fancy visiting the island and she can advise you on ferry times etc.

VI. CONCIERGE DETAILS

ABOUT OUR CONCIERGE

Based in The Deli, our Concierge is on hand to handle all of your day to day logistics so you can focus on enjoying your holiday.

CONTACT DETAILS

Email: concierge@indigo-rock.com

Tel: +44 7947 972 881

SERVICES

Throughout your holiday our Concierge will happily arrange the following:

BOAT TRIPS & BOAT HIRE

If you'd like to book a trip to Shipwreck, rent a boat or take a trip on our vintage yacht Odyssey, our Concierge can arrange this for you.

CAR HIRE & AIRPORT TRANSFERS

In the event a car has not been hired prior to your stay, our Concierge can arrange that with our trusted partners, Avis, along with airport transfers if needed.

CHILDCARE & BABYSITTING

If you haven't pre-booked a space at The Deli creche, it can be arranged on for you if it is available. In-villa babysitting can also be arranged should you wish to head out for dinner. Please note this is subject to availability and advance booking is highly recommended.

GROCERY DELIVERY TO YOUR VILLA

You can order food, wine, hampers and meal boxes to your villa from The Deli. Our Concierge will give you a shopping list and you can order directly with them.

RESTAURANT BOOKINGS

If you'd like to try one of our recommended restaurants, our Concierge can recommend the best time to go and arrange a reservation for you.

SPA TREATMENTS

We can arrange massage and beauty treatments, please ask the Concierge for a menu and price list.

WATERSPORTS

From water skiing to windsurfing, we can happily arrange a session or two for you.

VII. USEFUL CONTACTS

AIRPORT ZAKYNTHOS

Information Desk: 0030 26950 29500 or 0030 26950 28322

POLICE STATION

0030 26950 83217

AMBULANCE

Call 166

AVIS CAR HIRE

0030 26950 33209

mary.plessa@avis.gr

0030 21068 79947

alexandros.georgoulas@avis.gr

BRITISH VICE CONSULATE

0030 26950 22906

DOCTOR

Ave Medical – Dr Nikitas Spinou – Medical Doctor in Tsilivi / Argassi / Laganas

0030 26950 55030

0030 6937 446240

EMERGENCY

Call 112

Police 100

FIRE BRIGADE

0030 26950 22161

HOSPITAL

Nearest hospital in Zakynthos town, open 24/7

0030 26953 60500