



**visits4u itineraries:**  
**History and Heritage Route**  
**Rhodes, Greece**

## Rhodes, Greece: History and Heritage Route

### Description of the city

The island of Rhodes/ Greece is on the South East of the Aegean Sea. The island occupies an area of approximately 1,400 square kilometers and has an actual population of 116.000 people. Rhodes Municipality is the administrative authority of the whole island. The city of Rhodes has a history of 2400 years. The different people who settled in the island left their mark in all aspects of the island's culture: art, language, architecture. The Medieval city of Rhodes, built by the Knights of St. John, is one of the best preserved Medieval Cities in Europe and it is an UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1988.

Rhodes is a popular international tourist destination. The economy of the island is tourist-oriented. Almost 75% of the active population is engaged in the tertiary sector and tourism. Rhodes island with a total of 3.291 hours of sunshine annually (2012), is the sunniest Greek city and one of the sunniest worldwide thus being ideal for tourism activities all year long. It is within the Municipality's strategy to develop alternative forms of tourism while capitalizing the comparative advantages of the island (natural and cultural recourses).



Rhodes is a big city composed of lots of districts. The most interesting ones are the Medieval City - an UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1988 - and the Historic Centre, both full of monuments and historical places. For wheelchair users or people with mobility needs, these are the most accessible areas.

The map on the right shows the city of Rhodes: the Medieval City surrounded by the moat walls and the Historic Centre along the seaside at Mandraki port, (7<sup>th</sup> of March Avenue), up to the north end of the island and the Aquarium building, cape Coubournou.





## Rhode's History and Heritage Route (distance 2,2km)

### Landmarks

- 1) Best Western Plaza Hotel
- 2) D' Amboise Gate
- 3) Cleovoulou sq. -The Palace of the Grand Master
- 4) Sissitio café -Socratous str.
- 5) Ippocratous sq. - Aristotelous str.
- 6) Evreon Martiron sq.

(continued in the next page)

- 7) Church of our Lady of the Burgum
- 8) Virgin Gate -wooden pathway
- 9) Marine Gate - Colona port
- 10) Arsenal Gate - Auvergne cafe

### **There is a taxi station outside Marine Gate**

#### **★ WC facilities**

- a) Best Western Plaza Hotel
- b) The Palace of the Grand Master
- c) Public WC - Orfeos str.
- d) Public WC -Evreon Martiron sq.
- e) Public WC - Marine Gate

## Description of the route and general access information

The historic route takes you through the medieval city and along the sea front of Cruise port and Colona port (distance 2,2km).

The Medieval City of Rhodes, was declared an UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Monument in 1988. Part of the enormous Hellenistic city of Rhodes, it came under the Order of the Knights of St John of Jerusalem from 1309 to 1522. Construction of prominent buildings and progressive strengthening of the fortifications, still standing in their greatness, took place. It is one of the biggest residential historic complexes in the world.

The route begins from the Best Western Plaza Hotel, towards D' Amboise Gate, named after Grand Master Emery D'Amboise, one of the gates to the medieval city and the closest one to the Palace of the Grand Master (distance 800m).

Cleovoulou square in front of the Palace entrance leads, through Orfeos and Panaitiou streets, to Socratous street, the main street of the Medieval city, place of the agora (the market centre) since antiquity. The street, full of shops and restaurants, leads to Aristotelous and to Evreon Martiron squares, featuring medieval and ottoman monuments (distance 900m).

Getting out of the Virgin gate, one strolls along the wooden pathway, a pedestrian way along the sea side, connecting all ports of Rhodes, namely the Mandraki port on the north and the touristic and commercial ports, in the east. It provides beautiful views of the medieval walls and gates of the area, namely the impressive Marine gate and the Arsenal (Tarsana) gate. St Paul's bastion, at the northern end of the pathway, protected the passage towards Mandraki port, the war port of the city (distance 500m).



Many of the streets within the medieval city have uneven surfaces in places and are quite steep. There are a number of alternative routes which can be taken to suit individual preferences. There is limited seating available due to the narrow streets and opportunities for resting are only generally available within the squares.

There are a number of shops, cafes and restaurants within the city but the majority do not provide level access. Many have displays outside their premises and will assist where possible.

The route along the coast is a new wooden pathway providing a wide level route

Public WC facilities are available within the medieval city. These have an attendant assisting with access and supervising while the facilities are open. There is a charge for use. It should be noted that within these facilities the wheelchair accessible WC is often located within the male WC facilities but is available to anyone who needs it.

### **Municipality information office**

Papagou str., Mandraki port, Rhodes 85131

Level access is provided into the information office through a single glazed door. The information desk provides both a high and low level section suitable for all visitors. Seating is available in the office.

There are two accessible infokiosks next to the tourist office, one about monuments and sites information and one about public transportation itineraries .

There is a taxi station within twenty metres on the left hand side, as well as the central bus station within twenty metres on the right hand side.

Public WC available next to the tourist office. These include male, female and a wheelchair accessible WC.

Guide dogs are welcome.

## What to visit

### 1. Palace of the Grand Master of the Knights (map no 3)

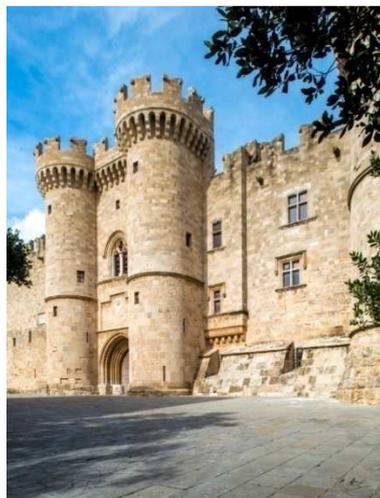
Kleovoulou Sq., Medieval City, Rhodes 85131

tel.:+30 22413 65270,

e-mail: [efadod@culture.gr](mailto:efadod@culture.gr), web: <http://odysseus.culture.gr>

The Palace is a rectangular building, with a large inner courtyard. It was constructed in the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, by the knights of St John, at the northwest end of the street of the Knights, the site of the ancient and byzantine acropolis. It was an integral part of the city's fortifications, with active role in its defense, being the last refuge of its population. By the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the upper storey of the palace had collapsed completely, due to the 1856 explosion of gun powder, stored in the basement of the nearby church of St John. The Palace was reconstructed by the Italian occupation in the 1930s, to accommodate the Italian governors, undergoing drastic interventions and refurbished with exquisite post-Hellenistic pebble mosaic floors from the island of Cos, ancient columns, chandeliers and furniture.

Today the Palace functions as a museum, hosting the collection of the Classical and Hellenistic periods of Rhodes and the Byzantine Icons Collection of the city.



## Access information

The main entrance has no stairs and provides a level entrance.

The pavement is fairly smooth and without gaps.

The main door is a double-wooden door, always open during visiting hours with a 2.40m wide passage. Short but not steep ramps leading from the entrance to the inner atrium or a single step.

The venue spaces on the ground floor are all accessible and comfortable to move around.

There is a 4.00m wide, 40-step stone staircase leading to the first floor of the museum. No handrails.

There is a lift to access the first floor but this can only be accessed up two short flights of stairs.

Most of the venue spaces on the first floor are accessible and comfortable to move around. One area is accessible by steps only.

The information desk is next to the main entrance, on the right side. It is 1.20 m high and does not allow frontal approximation of wheelchair users.

WC: one available for visitors on the ground floor. This is reached by a ramp and is a small room. The door opens both ways to improve access.

WC pan is raised on a plinth with handrails to each side.

Shop accessible to visitors.

No audio -guide to the works of art. No signs indicating itinerary or the location of the WC. Guide dogs are welcome.

Signage and labels on the exhibitions are in very small font size.

Lighting levels are good and consistent throughout the building.



## 2. Church of our Lady of the Burgum (map no 7)

Virgin Gate, Medieval City, Rhodes 85131

The Church of our Lady of the Burgum was built in the late 14th - early 15th century. The three arches of the sanctuary are preserved to their entire height, as well as the west wall and remnants of the side chapels. It is approximately 30m long, about 14m wide and quite possibly had a transept.

The church was restored to its full length, during the last decade by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture. Musical concerts and events often take place in it.



### Access information

The church remains can be viewed from the market area.

The main entrance has a small steep ramp with a gradient of 22% (1:4.5) and then a small step at the top of the ramp.

The pavement is fairly smooth and without gaps.

WC: not available in the venue.

Public WC available for visitors in Evreon Martiron Square (50m distance). Access via a steep 8.00m ramp, clearly signed, suitably equipped, free, open from 8 am to 1pm, employee present all day. Guide dogs are allowed.

No audio -guide or signs indicating itinerary.

Guide dogs are welcome.

## Where to sleep

### 1. BEST WESTERN Plaza Hotel (map no 1)

7, Ierou Lochou Str. , PO Box 246, Rhodes 85131

tel.: +30 22410 22501, e-mail: [info@rhodesplazahotel.com](mailto:info@rhodesplazahotel.com),

web:<https://www.rhodesplazahotel.com>

The **BEST WESTERN Plaza Hotel** is a welcoming and relaxing four 4star hotel in the centre of the modern **Rhodes Town**, just 400m from the famous **Medieval Walled Town of Rhodes** and **Mandraki Marina**, 200 m from the beach and the **Rodos Casino**. Close to all amenities and main attractions of the island, it is the ideal location for your holiday or if you are just only visiting on a business trip.



### Access information

Best Western Plaza Hotel is accessible for older and less mobile guests and wheelchair users.

Stations and bus services are near the entrance and they are accessible.

There are accessible parking bays for drivers in the street (Free and paid) near the entrance, which they are posted clearly.

The main entrance is accessible with a level approach.

There are clear spaces without obstacles.

There are no tactile paths.

There is adequate contrast between floors, walls and doors.

The reception desk's height is not accessible to disabled people.

The floor inside is marble so quite reflective.

The path is accessible without obstacles.

The lighting is very good.

There are convenient, spacious, accessible sitting areas (main bar and living room). All the areas are spacious to turn a wheelchair 360°.

There is an accessible restaurant on the ground floor and two accessible conference halls.

There is a lift available on all floors. The lift door is small so a wheelchair is available for use if needed.

Metal handrails with curved ends are provided on one side in each stair.

There are 2 accessible rooms with showers provided. The bathrooms provide rails next to the WC and in the shower area. There is good knee space under the basin.

The room is large so provides good circulation around the bed.

Shower seats and equipment are available to use.

There is one (1) accessible WC on basement accessible by lift. It is signposted clearly and it is next to the conference hall.

There are audio and visual announcements in case of emergency in the corridors but not the bedrooms.

Guide dogs are welcome.

There is no Braille signage, only the lift buttons have Braille labels.

There are signs (some with graphic symbols) logically placed. Information on access facilities and features are available at the reception.

The swimming pool can be accessed from reception over a small threshold step.



## Where to eat

### 1. Sissitio café-restaurant (map no 4)

Ippodamou 179 & Socratous str., Medieval city, Rhodes 85131, tel.: +30 22410 35773

There is a taxi station at 400 m, across D' Amboise Gate and another at 800m outside Marine Gate while the venue is accessible by Bus (lines 2-3-6).

There are parking bays in front of the gates, free and paid clearly posted.

The lighting is adequate and there are no obstructions. The pavement is smooth and without gaps.

There are two entrances to the venue. The main entrance in the open air space of the café, on Socratous str., has no stairs but there is an accessible ramp. The side entrance inside the venue has one step level. No handrails.

The venue is on the ground floor, in the open air space of the café -all spaces accessible and comfortable to move around.

The floor surfaces are pebbles but quite safe.

No accessible WC within the venue.

There is a public accessible WC within reasonable distance, in Orfeos str.

Guide dogs are welcome.

There are audio and visual announcements in case of emergency.

Lighting levels are good and consistent throughout the building.

The service counter is opposite to the main entrance. It is 1.20m high and does not allow frontal approximation of wheelchair users. Table service is provided.

No large print menus available.

## 2. Auverne café-restaurant (map no 10)

Great Alexander Sq., Medieval city, Rhodes 85131, tel.: +30 22410 76100

There is a taxi station at 100 m, in Symis sq. and another at 400m outside Marine Gate while the venue is accessible by Bus (lines 2-3-6).

There are parking bays in front of the gates, free and paid clearly posted.

The lighting is adequate and there are no abstractions. The pavement is homogeneous and without gaps.

There are two entrances to the venue. The main entrance in the open air space of the café, has no stairs but there is an accessible ramp. The entrance inside the venue has no step level. No handrails.

The venue is on the ground floor, in the open air space of the café -all spaces accessible and comfortable to move around.

The floor surfaces are pebbles but quite safe.

No accessible WC within the venue.

There are two public accessible WC's within reasonable distance, in the New Market building and outside Marine Gate.

Guide dogs are welcome.

There are audio and visual announcements in case of emergency.

Lighting levels are good and consistent throughout the building.

The service counter is opposite to the entrance inside the venue. It is 1.20m high and does not allow frontal approximation of wheelchair users.

Table service is provided.

No large print menus available.

## Further information on tourism accessibility in Rhodes

### Asklipiades

- a) accessible tourism services in Rhodes
- b) information on accessibility of places and businesses on the island

[www.pwdservices.gr](http://www.pwdservices.gr)

### Greece4all - directory

<http://greece4all.eu/en/destinations/rhodes>

### Prosvasis - directory

<http://www.prosvasis.co/?lang=en&search=Rhodes&category>

### Tourism Office, Municipality of Rhodes

[www.rhodes.gr/?page\\_id=4777&lang=en](http://www.rhodes.gr/?page_id=4777&lang=en)

### Rodos Tourism Promotion Organisation

[www.rodosisland.gr](http://www.rodosisland.gr)

## About visits4u

visits4u is an 18 month project that focuses on developing and deliver inclusive tourism training and capacity building to improve user experience and sustain inclusive design in tourism.

[www.visits4u.eu](http://www.visits4u.eu)

## Partners

Centre for Accessible Environments, UK (coordinator)

[www.cae.org.uk](http://www.cae.org.uk)

Asklipiades South Aegean Regional Social Protection and Solidarity Network, Greece

[www.pwdservices.gr/en](http://www.pwdservices.gr/en)

Dimos Rodou (Municipality of Rhodes), Greece

[www.rhodes.gr](http://www.rhodes.gr)

Domspain Consulting LTD, Spain

[www.domspain.eu](http://www.domspain.eu)

Istituto dei Sordi di Torino, Italy

[www.istitutosorditorino.org](http://www.istitutosorditorino.org)

Nikanor LTD, Bulgaria

[www.nikanor.bg](http://www.nikanor.bg)

Nodibinajums Invalidu un Vinu Draugu Apvieniba Apeirons, Latvia

[www.apeirons.lv](http://www.apeirons.lv)

## About this document

This document has been produced as part of the **visits4u** project. The information on accessibility for each place and the itinerary has been based won access assessment and inspection visits by the partners involved. Although every effort has been taken to provide accurate information for visitors, it is widely recognised that access can vary over time due to changes to the building, the mode of operation or last minute circumstances. For this reason, anyone with specific access needs is advised if possible to contact with the venues, hotels and local tourism authorities prior to their visit to verify that circumstances have not changed.



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