A COMPACT GUIDE TO THE ISLAND

Your Santorini travel guide

Caldera villages, volcanic beaches, island history and the practical details that make a holiday work.

Start with the kind of stay you want

Choose whether your everyday priority is a caldera view, beach time or a village base. Then compare the exact address, room outlook and approach from the vehicle drop-off. An island name or a beautiful photograph does not answer those questions.

The island in a few useful facts

Detail	What to remember
Capital	Fira. Modern Fira and the archaeological site of Ancient Thera are different places.
Airport	Santorini Airport, code JTR. Check the flight with the airline and airport.
Scheduled-ferry port	Athinios. Do not confuse it with Fira Old Port below the town.
Cruise arrival	Follow your ship's own tender, pier and all-aboard instructions.
Landscape	The caldera settlements and the principal beach bases offer different experiences.

Two access updates to know before planning

Ancient Thera: the official operator announced closure from 27 June 2026 until further notice; it remained flagged at our 4 November 2026 check. Red Beach: the municipality publishes a prohibition on passage and approach because of unpredictable rockfalls. This guide does not recommend walking down to it.

01 | MAKE THE WHOLE JOURNEY WORK

Arriving, then getting around

Book around the complete journey: arrival point, onward transfer and final approach to the property. Save the address and arrival instructions before leaving home.

Arrival point	What it serves	Next step to settle
JTR airport	Flights to Santorini	Bus connection with Fira, taxi or a confirmed pickup.
Athinios	Scheduled passenger and vehicle ferries	Road transfer using the vessel and arrival details.
Fira Old Port	Cruise-tender arrangements below Fira	Ship instructions, cable car or the stated excursion plan.

Bus planning

The airport confirms a public bus connection to Fira. KTEL's route information makes Fira a useful planning interchange, but a route in a table is not a promise of a departure on your date. Check the latest outward and return services. Do not assume that an airport bus runs directly to every accommodation area.

Taxis, transfers and the last few steps

Give a driver the correct arrival point, flight or vessel details, passenger count, bags and exact address. Ask where the vehicle stops and how you reach the door afterwards. The cable car connects Fira Old Port and Fira; it is not an Athinios transfer.

If you need assistance

The airport asks passengers to request reduced-mobility assistance through their airline or agent at least 48 hours before departure. That does not establish accessibility of a bus, tender, taxi or property. Confirm each part of the journey separately.

- Reconfirm the actual service shortly before departure.
- For separate tickets, allow flexibility for a delayed first leg.
- Keep the first evening simple enough to absorb a late arrival.

02 | THE EXACT ADDRESS MATTERS

Choose your base with confidence

Choosing where to sleep and choosing where to visit need not be the same decision. Start with the things you expect to do repeatedly, then choose a property that supports that routine.

Place	A reason to consider it	Detail to check
Fira	Capital-town setting, museums and caldera scenery	Which part of town; entrance and room view.
Oia	Cave houses, maritime heritage and caldera views	Specific terrace/room outlook and access.
Imerovigli	An elevated caldera setting near Skaros	Drop-off, steps and final approach.
Pyrgos	Hillside lanes and the Kasteli area	Walking slopes and the services you need.
Megalochori	Village square, church towers and vineyards	Seasonal opening and transport plans.
Emporio	A fortified core with enclosed lanes	Whether the stepped route fits your group.
Kamari or Perissa	An established black-sand beach base	Exact coast position and route to the beach.

Ask the property these questions

- Which room category and view does this booking include?
- Is the outdoor space private, shared or a common terrace?
- Where can a transfer stop, and what remains of the route to the entrance?
- How are bags handled? What are the relevant steps and surfaces?
- Which nearby dining and everyday services will be open on my dates?

A view and an access route are different features

A caldera outlook does not guarantee a direct view of the setting sun. A central address does not guarantee step-free access. Ask for precise answers for the actual property and room.

03 | AKROTIRI, ANCIENT THERA AND FIRA

Understand the island's history

Keep the names distinct. Akrotiri is the prehistoric town near modern Akrotiri village. Ancient Thera is the later city on Mesa Vouno. Fira is the modern capital. They are not different labels for one attraction.

Akrotiri: see a town, not just an old building

Eruption deposits preserved streets, multi-storey buildings, drainage and evidence of decorated interiors. The excavation is presented beneath a protective roof with designated routes. Look at how a town worked: movement, water, houses and the objects once inside them.

Use the official venue information for hours, admission and exceptional notices. Do not turn a seasonal timetable or printed price into a permanent promise. Specify the archaeological site when arranging transport.

Museum of Prehistoric Thera, Fira

The museum complements Akrotiri through objects and wall paintings. Visiting them on separate days can give each enough time. The ministry lists a ramp, lift and accessible toilets at the museum; confirm the whole route and the particular facilities you need directly.

Ancient Thera: official closure notice

Hellenic Heritage's 26 June 2026 notice closes the site from 27 June 2026 until further notice. It was still flagged on 4 November 2026. No reopening date is established here. A generic timetable does not confirm reopening.

Add a different historical setting

Pyrgos and Emporio introduce fortified village fabric; Oia's captains' houses and maritime collection add another chapter. Choose one because its story interests you, and check any interior visit rather than assuming every door is open.

04 | CHOOSE A CONTRAST TO THE CALDERA

Coast, villages and a slower day

Setting	A useful starting point	Plan around
Kamari	Waterfront village and black volcanic sand	The precise property and facilities on your dates.
Perissa / Perivolos	Southeast-coast beach time	The exact stretch, collection point and return.
Vlychada	Pale sculpted cliffs and a distinctive landscape	Permitted access and current local conditions.
Inland village	Pyrgos, Megalochori or Emporio	Terrain, time to wander and any confirmed venue visit.

Red Beach: respect the published prohibition

The municipality's notice describes a ban on passage and approach because of unstable slopes and sudden rockfalls. The notice is older, but no official rescission was established in our research. Do not plan a walk down or treat a boat excursion as permission to land or swim.

Make a beach outing comfortable

- Check shade, toilets, changing and other facilities for your actual travel dates.
- Confirm the complete route if mobility or a pushchair affects the choice.
- Do not assume Kamari and Perissa form one continuous promenade.
- Separate a beach day from a tightly timed flight or ferry unless bags and transfers are resolved.

Give a village a meaningful part of the day

Pyrgos's hillside lanes, Megalochori's square and Emporio's enclosed fortified core are different experiences. Choose one or two for their own character. A relaxed meal and time to notice the architecture can be more rewarding than a sequence of brief transfers.

05 | INGREDIENTS, WINE AND LOCAL PRODUCTS

Eat and taste with a little context

Name to recognise	What it means	Useful question
Fava	A legume puree; the protected local product uses Lathyrus clymenum, not broad beans.	Is this made with Santorini fava?
Tomatokeftedes	Tomato fritters with recipes that vary by kitchen.	What is in this version?
White aubergine	A local crop used in different preparations.	How is it prepared today?
Chloro	Fresh goat cheese made in limited quantities.	Is it available and how is it stored?
Melitinia	Small cheese-filled sweets associated with Easter.	What is the filling and is it made here?

Build a meal you can enjoy

Start with a manageable order and ask about portions before adding more. A dish name does not establish allergens, dietary suitability or local origin of every ingredient. Tell the kitchen what matters to you and ask for a clear answer.

Wine begins in the landscape

Assyrtiko is central to Santorini's white-wine identity. Traditional kouloura training keeps vines low and coiled; Vinsanto is a distinct style associated with sun-dried grapes. Read the individual bottle and designation rather than assuming all island wine is alike.

- Distinguish a tasting from a cellar visit or vineyard walk.
- Confirm the programme, language, group size and appointment.
- Arrange the onward journey before the tasting.
- For food gifts, retain producer and storage information.

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06 | ADAPT THE PLAN TO YOUR ARRIVAL AND PACE

Build a holiday with breathing room

These are original planning suggestions, not a fixed tour or a claim that every attraction is open. Confirm the routes and venues you choose. Drop a secondary stop if the main one deserves longer.

A three-day introduction

Day	Main interest	A flexible supporting idea
1	A caldera settlement: Fira, Imerovigli or Oia	A museum, architecture stroll or an evening view.
2	Prehistoric Akrotiri, if confirmed open	A relaxed meal or a permitted coastal visit. No Red Beach walk.
3	One inland village or a beach base	Food, wine heritage or another small interest that fits the route.

With five days

Give one day to a clearly specified caldera boat programme or Thirasia visit, with landing points and return confirmed. Keep another part of the stay less structured. More nights can give you time to revisit a place instead of requiring more transfers.

Final checks before leaving the accommodation

- Check opening and any exceptional restriction for the main stop.
- Know the outward and return transport, not only the route name.
- Save the meeting point and accommodation contact offline.
- Ask about the full access route if steps or surfaces matter.
- Check the forecast and follow local instructions for conditions.
- Keep cruise all-aboard times and separate onward flights outside a crowded sightseeing plan.

The last important connection deserves flexibility

If a ferry feeds a separately booked flight, consider arriving at the departure island or mainland earlier. No single number of connection hours is safe for every route, season and consequence of a missed booking.

07 | RESEARCH, CHECKED DATES AND UPDATES

Planning checklist and updates

Published by Denis, who lived on Santorini for two years and maintains local connections. Most of the guide stems from personal experience, supplemented by personal research and AI assistance where more information is needed. Planning suggestions do not guarantee current services.

Sources were checked on 4 November 2026. Timetables, prices, venue opening, weather and restrictions can change after that date. Follow the current responsible operator or authority for operational decisions. No current sailing times, taxi tariffs or cable-car fares are invented here.

For the full guide and travel enquiries, visit www.visit-santorini.com. When reporting an error, include the place, the detail and the date it changed.