CITY OF PATRAS

It is the largest city in Peloponnisos (165.000 residents), and one of the most important cities of Greece. The capital city of Achaia is an important commercial, industrial, naval, transporting and touristic center of the whole region. It has a unique beauty and interesting town planning and a plenty of remarkable buildings (neoclassical, middle war and industrial buildings) and distinctly separated to Ano Poli and Kato Poli (separation between the upper neighborhoods to lower). In the center of the district “Psila Alonia” with cafes, bars and restaurants, brings youth.
Patra attracts visitors throughout the year, mainly because it is one of the major ports of the country but also because of major events like the famous Carnival. In 2006, the city was nominated as the "Cultural Capital of Europe".

The ancient city has been created by the unification of three ionic settlements (Arois, Mesatis, Anthia) and it took its name by Patrea , leader of the Achaeans of Sparta who settled here after their expulsion from the Dorians. In the 3rd century BC Achaeans organized the famous Achaean League, which was the first organized form of government in Greece. Here taught Apostle Andreas (68 AD) but was finally tortured and died. He is the patron saint of the city. Patras played a significant role in the Revolution of 1821, but was destroyed completely. After liberation, has developed rapidly and became an important commercial and industrial center, forming the main point of exports to Western Europe. Today with more than 50 ferries to Italy every week, almost all trade in Greece to the European Union passes through the port. With Athens is connected by train and bus. The city lies 219 km west of Athens.

Walk in the city

- In the **Upper (Old) City**, which is kept almost intact, giving the flavor of previous eras. You will climb the stairs to the scenic routes of Patreos, Gerokostopoulou and St. Nicholas, which is one of the trademarks of Patras. The visitor should navigate the streets to find picturesque old houses and certainly make a stop in neighborhoods and Tritakis Vlatero, north of the castle. In the street Boukaouri a **Turkish bath** (one of the few in Europe) which for more than five centuries of work in the traditional way, and nearby also is the old City Hospital (1857), which now hosts cultural events.

- The **medieval castle**. Built during the second half of the sixth century. AD with ancient building material. A built torso statue with the head of man of the Roman period associated with the legend of “Patrinela”. In the inner courtyard is the movable theater (640 seats), which hosts cultural events every summer. By the street of Frouriou you get to Dasylio, pine grove with stunning views and tourist booth .
- The **Roman Odeon** (160 AD). West of the acropolis (2300 seats) next to the beautiful little square of 25th Martiou. It is the headquarters of the **Internationa l Festival of Patras**

, involving top names in art. Around Odeon exhibited sarcophagus, mosaics and other archaeological finds.

- A **Roman Amphitheatre** (1st century AD.), has been excavated near the **Conservatory** (Ifaistou Road). This is a rare archaeological monument and like this, double arch, exist only in Rome and Asia Minor.

- The **Roman Nymfaia** (4th century AD.) Lying in the Germanou street 36-40 and from Vlachos 3 Kanari street. Around the first has been developed recreation area with gardens and water jets.
- The **Sources of Romanos** the aqueduct from the area of Aroi as the castle. The aqueduct was 6.5 km long and most of the water carrying a built underground pipeline on arches, parts of which survive today.
- The **Square Vasileos Georgiou** the 1st which is surrounded by several traditional buildings, with prominent **Apollo Theater**, built in 1872 designed by German architect Ernst Ziller and miniature of La Scala of Milan. Today, in addition to plays, hosting dances such as the “Bourboulia”, in the event of the carnival.

- The commercial streets of **Maizonos**, **Agiou Nikolaou, Ermou, Kolokotroni** and **Korinthou** .
At the first road, the City Hall is located (near Vasileos Georgiou 1th Square), housed in an impressive neoclassical building of 1880.

- In **Gounari Street** (between Maizonos and Korinthou Streets) there is the impressive complex of the Courts of the City (1931) with Doric columns and pediments on facades.

- To the tree-lined **Olga’s Square** (Ethnikis Antistasis) in which culminate the events of Carnival.
- The **new Archaeological Museum** (opened in summer 2009) located at the north entrance of City (to the new national road Athens – Patras) is the second largest museum in the country (area 8,000 sqm) after the **Acropolis Museum** (Athens) and one of the most modern in Europe. The very interesting exhibits guide the visitors in the city's history from prehistoric times to late Roman times, while the exhibition is divided into three thematic areas that unfold in their respective halls of the museum. It is the Hall of Private Life, the Hall of Necropolis and the hall of public life. The surroundings (area about 20 ha) is formed to a green space and park culture.

- The **Historical and Ethnological Museum** (Square King George I), with exhibits from 1821 until World War II.
- The **Press Museum** (Maizonos 200), unique of its kind in Greece, including newspapers, periodicals and rare books since 1815.
- The **Museum of Folk Art**, housed in a building **Skagiopouleio** (Koritsas and Maurokordatou street), and where utensils and agricultural tools are exhibited.

- The **Municipal Library** (on the road Philopimemenos, and Maizonos Votsi), one of the

largest in the country. In the basement room of the Library, you can visit the **Municipal Gallery of Patras**
.

- The **Saint – Andrews Church** (in the coastal zone) one of the largest in the Balkans. The large dome has a height of 46 m and are surrounded by twelve smaller, representing the disciples of Christ. Tradition says that the Saint was crucified next to a source which we call “holy water” of St. Andrew.
- The **Psila Alonia Square,** also called the “balcony” of Patras because of the view to the city, where the statue of Palaion Patron Germanos stands and the bust of the poet Kostis Palamas, who was born here. It is united with the region of Agios Andreas (St. Andrew) through the **pedestrian street of Trion Navarchon,** spacious and tree-lined central boulevard of the city.

- The **ex Bari raisins stores**, in the port, operates as an exhibition space. In the coastal highway are also important industrial buildings of the **former mill “Ladopoulos”** in Akti Dymaion and, nearby, the **old municipal slaughterhouses** (1903), which are reconstructed into a **cultural space (Politeia)**
.

- The **lighthouse** on the beach (a registered trademark of the city), which has recently been remodeled and is suitable for walking.
- The **city’s marina** (Capable of docking 450 boats) in coastal zone (Iroon Politechniou street) In the same area, there is an open 500-seat theater, a playground and a walkway by the sea and entertainment in bars and cafes with superb views.
- The **first cemetery** of the city (region Zavlani), which was founded in 1880 and has extremely grave sites and design standards of cemeteries Italian cities.

- The **city's municipal beach** (Iroon Polytechniou), where there are special facilities for sports in the sand (beach volley, beach handball, etc.), windsurfing, etc.

Short Excursions

- The **Meilichus Bridge**, of the roman period (at the intersection of New Highway with road Aretha).
- The **"Mycenaean Park"** in Vounteni (7 km from Patras), where in an area of 80000 square meters 65 Mycenaean tombs with rich findings were excavated.

- The premises of wine **"Achaia Clauss"** (founded 1861), in a lush green hill (8 km SE of town, near the village Petroto). Here you will find very old objects and barrels with Mavrodafni of 1873, wines of 1885 and cognacs of 1887. It is one of the major tourist attractions in the area (with tastings, wine shop, etc.)
- **Omplos Monastery** (14th century), 9 km south, and the **Monastery of St. Nicholas (Pal eomonastiro)**
near the village of Balas.

- **Vrachneika** (15 km west of the city), popular summer resort of Patras. The region combines the charm of the coastal landscape busy with the many restaurants, super malls, bars and cafes operating here.

Events

- The **Carnival of Patras**, internationally renowned and one of the most important in Europe, attracts tourists from around the world (www.carnivalpatras.gr).

- **Patras International Festival** (summer), with performances, concerts, exhibitions, etc., bringing together world class stars (www.depap.gr).
- **Ancient Drama Institution** with major theatrical performances each summer focusing on the Ancient Odeon.
- **International Festival of Film and Culture** with film screenings, photo exhibitions and artists, etc.
- **International Puppet Theater Festival** with many events taking place at the initiative of the Municipality of Patras.

Achaia Prefecture website: www.achaia.gr