

Aegean Dental Conference 2019

Kastellorizo, Greece

8th – 12th July, 2019

Information (from a local!) for Attendees

Kastellorizo (“Kas-tell-o-rizo”), Kastelorizo, Meyisti, Megisti, are all names for this island. We tend to refer to it as Kassie (pronounced “Kazzie”) for short. The permanent population is around 350 people but there is a military garrison on the island that swells the numbers from time to time. During the summer months, Tourists raise the numbers on the island to around a thousand at any time.

A good website for general information is the Friends of Kastellorizo website at www.kastellorizo.com. On this website you will find transport details for getting to Kassie, as well as other links for weather, customs of the island, a photo gallery etc.



Getting to the island (and leaving)

Kassie is best reached via Athens or Rhodes, though the more adventurous may seek to come via Turkey. I would suggest that the best way to come to the island is via ferry. The ferry is actually more like a small cruise ship operated by Blue Star Ferries, that also takes transport vehicles. It can be boarded from Athens or from Rhodes.

If travelling from Athens, the Ferry is boarded from Piraeus (the port of Athens) and it takes approximately 23 hours to get to Kassie. So if you come from Athens, it is suggested that you book a “Luxe” cabin as it is an afternoon departure from Piraeus and you do not arrive on Kastellorizo until the following day around midday/1pm. The ferry makes quite a few stops at various picturesque islands on the way to Kastellorizo. One of the islands it stops at is Rhodes and so the ferry can also be boarded from the Rhodes. In that case, you probably need to have stayed overnight in Rhodes as the departure is early (approx 8am). A cabin is not needed as the trip is usually between 4 and 5 hours. Arriving at Kassie by ferry is easy, exciting and a lot of fun !



If you are coming from other places in Europe, you may be able to get a direct flight to Rhodes and then have a stopover there while you wait for the days that the ferry departs for Kassie. This is actually a nice way to come to Kassie, as Rhodes is a large Greek island and its mediaeval architecture and history is of great interest (It is also a party destination for those so inclined)

You can also travel by plane to Kastellorizo with Olympic/Aegean. These flights are only from Rhodes and take about 25minutes. The flights are usually 6 days a week in the Summer and mostly twice per day.



However, please note that the flights will sometimes be cancelled if the weather becomes too windy as the runway on Kassie is quite short and the strong winds can make landing difficult. So if you choose to fly, try to book the morning flight as by the afternoon, the wind could get up and then the flight may be cancelled and deferred until the next day.

Leaving Kassie is also by Ferry or by air. The more reliable departure is again the boat and it can take you to Rhodes where you can connect with flights either to Athens or other European cities. However, many people do fly off the island, and if you decide to fly out of Kassie, it would be best to allow at least a 24-hour stopover in Rhodes as a backup, in case of cancellation of your flight. Boat timetables are often not listed until Spring (March), however they usually follow the pattern of the previous year's timetable and you can find them on Blue Star ferries website www.bluestarferries.gr

Transfers to and from Kastellorizo are not part of the conference package and attendees need to make their own arrangements for travel to and from Kassie.

Accommodation

Kassie has two hotels, several Pensions and many houses available to rent, but they tend to fill quickly in the months leading up to summer. The Conference Registration fee includes 4 nights in a standard Double Room (in on Monday 8th, out on Friday 12th July) but this is very much on a first come basis. When the standard rooms have filled, we will endeavor to place delegates in the next best accommodation options – prioritizing Airconditioning, view and location over “breakfast included” options.



You also have a choice to upgrade your accommodation to a Pension or rented house (small additional cost depending on the venue). Please email us at info@ceodental.com.au to confirm your accommodation choice. If you wish to bring your family, this might be a nice means to accommodate additional people.



Family Friendly

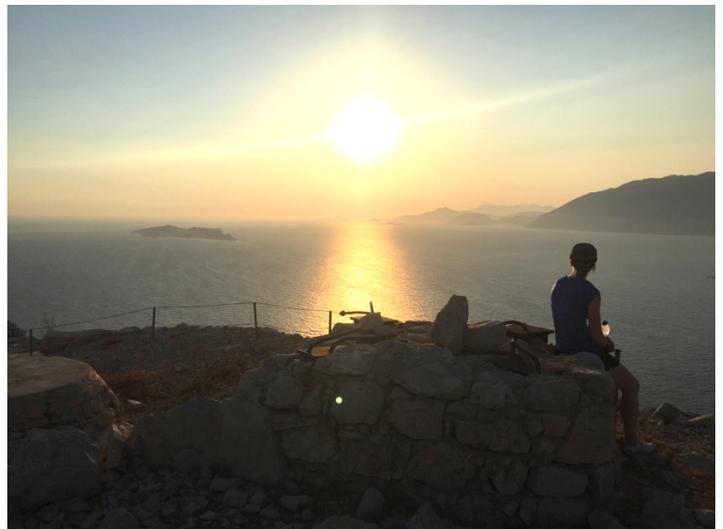
The Conference Registration fees are applicable to Dentists and their spouses. The Accompanying person fee is for a spouse and affords the same meals and excursions, but not the CPD program (or Certificate). If you are bringing children, then please let us know and we will arrange alternate accommodation to house your family. There may be a small additional cost for the alternate accommodation and also to include some of the excursions (pending how well we negotiate with the local proprietors), but this is likely to be a few hundred dollars only and not the Accompany Person fee.



Kassie is a parent's paradise as kids can roam around the village freely and safely while their parents relax and enjoy some down time. You needn't worry about your children getting lost or fear strangers on Kastellorizo. There are many safe places to swim, and most have a vantage point that serves drinks and food for the parents !

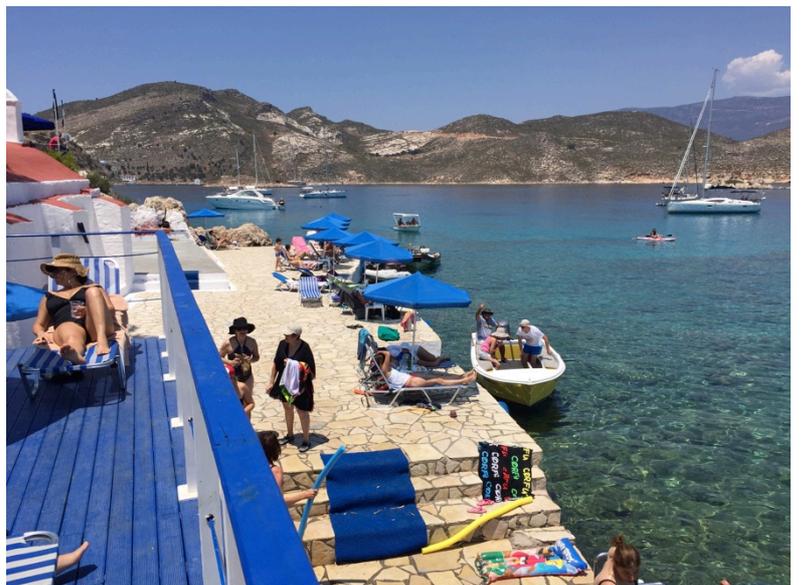
Weather

Summer in Greece can be very hot (but at least the humidity is not high). It rarely rains in Greece in Summer and it is normal to see no clouds at all in the sky above Kastellorizo. The usual precautions are therefore needed so please use sunscreen and drink plenty of water. Evenings though can sometimes be a bit cooler and a light cardigan or a pashmina could be needed.



Activities

Besides the Academic Program, swimming, snorkeling, walks, fishing, sunbaking and exploring the island and its ruins, are the major pastimes other than relaxing at the local cafes and restaurants. The walks are very good but it is important to wear good walking shoes. Shorts are fine unless you wish to go "off track" case lightweight long pants would be a good idea too as there are low briar-type plants. Snorkeling in the crystal clear Aegean waters is a must and many sea turtles abound. If you don't bring your own equipment, you can buy cheaper gear on the island. At night time, Mythos, Retsina, Ouzo and Greek dancing are all part of the fun.





Most importantly, do not wake late and miss the included trip to the famous “Blue Cave” (Parastasi Trip). This grotto is one of the best in the world, and the adventure getting in is part of the excitement.



Language

Although Kastellorizo is a remote Greek island, most of its shopkeepers and residents speak some English. Another point of interest is that the Australian accent is prevalent on the island. It is not unusual to walk past a group of people sitting at one of the many tavernas and hear them discussing, the latest rugby or footy results in a strong Aussie accent. This is because the island had a mass migration after the First World War, and most came to Australia settling in Perth, Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide. It is their descendants that visit and stay on the island today.

Visiting Turkey

The town of Kas in Turkey is only 30 minutes away by private charter boat. The Conference registration includes a side-trip to Turkey for a morning to browse the local markets and shops. Although close, this trip still involves crossing an international border and so passports are needed for the journey. If you do not hold an Australian passport, then please ensure your passport allows for multiple entries into countries, as when you leave on this trip, you will be leaving Greece and arriving in Turkey. When you return just a few hours later, you will be entering Greece for the second time and Immigration will stop you from entering if you do not have a passport with a multi-entry visa.



When you go on this trip, your passport will be collected by the boat's captain the day before, and a temporary entry card to Turkey will be prepared. Don't worry about this, it is normal practice and your passport will be returned to you upon boarding the boat back to Kassie.

Kas offers many sights including many small bazars and other good shopping for leather and Turkish souvenirs. If you like to haggle, then this is your place. Worth doing is the optional trip to the ancient relics in Myra and the real home of Santa Claus (the cathedral of St Nicholas). These are just over an hours drive from Kas by private transfer.

Other General Information

There is one ATM on Kassie and one bank (The National Bank of Greece). There are a couple of grocery shops, a bakery, a travel agency, lots of places that sell souvenirs and clothing and more than a dozen restaurants and bars. There is a small hospital including a dental clinic. If the Dentist is in attendance, we may be able to arrange a small tour of the facility. If you have materials or instruments you no longer use, consider bringing them and donating them to this little clinic.

The island seems to thrive on a cash economy so you will need cash (Euros) to pay for your other meals and incidentals. Hotels take credit cards. Some meals are included in the conference package and when you are eating out at other times, you will find that the cost of meals is very reasonable. However, should you choose whole grilled fish or large prawns, expect to pay quite a bit for these. It is always best to ask the price beforehand when ordering this kind of seafood. Calamari, "little shrimp" (a must-try), Octopus are always good, fresh and cheap.

Finally, BYO insect repellent as this is harder to buy when you arrive, although the grocery stores have citronella candles. Once you do arrive, we will show you where you can buy some surf/reef shoes (for about \$15) These are very useful when swimming as the rocks can be sharp and sometimes there are sea urchins on the seabed.

