

CITIZEN FEMME

The Stylish Guide for the Female Traveller



CF Hot Hotels

Finding Arcadia On The Greek Island Of Santorini



By: Lucy Halfhead

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One of the most romantic destinations on the planet, the Cycladic island of Santorini is known for its rugged volcanic landscape, scattered with pretty white houses, windmills and blue-domed churches.

On its north-westerly tip, the famous town of Oia overlooks a magnificent crescent-shaped bay, or caldera, created by a volcanic eruption 3,500 years ago and its narrow, cobbled streets are lined with boutiques, tavernas and hotels.



Those in the know look to stay at **Andronis Arcadia**, the newest member of **Greece's** renowned hospitality group, Andronis, whose chic collection of hotels, restaurants and shops have been winning fans for the past six years. Each has a distinct style and USP – for Andronis Arcadia it's an all-suite luxury offering named after the mythical home of the Greek god of the wild, Pan. Although just a five-minute walk to the heart of Oia, the hotel is far enough away from the crowds to offer a sense of peace and privacy, and the most sublime sunset views.

WHAT TO PACK



**SEAFOLLY SEA DIVE SLIDE TRI -
WHITE**



**ANCIENT GREEK SANDALS -
ELEFThERIA BRAIDED-LEATHER
FLAT SANDALS**



**LOEWE SMALL BASKET BAG IN
PALM LEAF AND CALFSKIN**



**WOERA HIGH-WAIST ELASTICATED
TROUSERS**



**ALIGHIERI CASELLA AND THE
MUSIC EARRINGS**



**CHRISTOPHER ESBER BANDEAU
CUTOUT MAXI DRESS**

THE VIBE

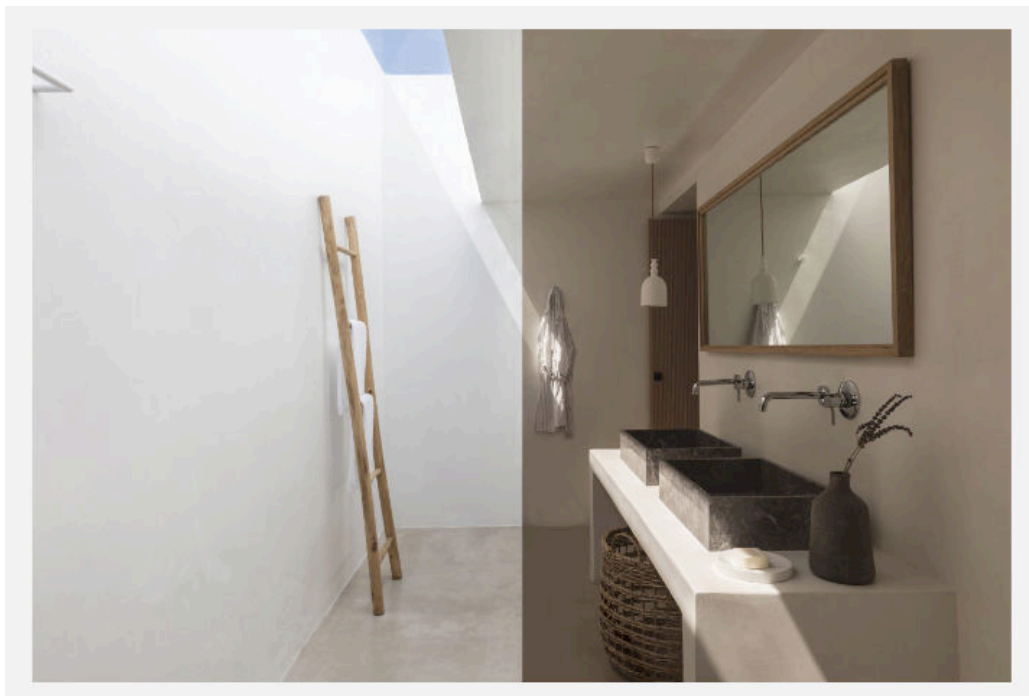
Checking in to Andronis Arcadia you immediately feel your shoulders drop and a wave of calm wash over you. Conceived by the local firm Kapsimalis Architects, the aesthetic here is boho-luxe rather than the type of high-octane glamour that requires heels at dinner (and can make it hard to relax on holiday). In keeping with its name, the hotel's design leans in to nature with lush planting, stone architecture, abstract art and wall murals, plus natural linens and fabrics in earthy colours to bring the outdoors in.



If your idea of heaven is lying by the swimming pool with a good book and a cocktail then Andronis Arcadia is the place for you, with not one but three pools to cool off in – the main pool is in fact the largest on the whole island so never feels busy or crowded. The laid-back, boho vibe here is set off by white crocheted umbrellas and hammocks, giant beach bags rather than loungers, and inbuilt Jacuzzis to soothe tense muscles after a day of sightseeing.

THE ROOMS

Housed in modern, cube-like structures dotted down the hillside towards the ocean, the guestrooms at Andronis Arcadia each have their own plunge pool, perfectly positioned for sunset – so that you can soak up the magical views of the Aegean Sea as the sun dips below the horizon. The aesthetic is peaceful and cocooning, with varnished cement floors, low-slung bed frames, bamboo detailing and straw lampshades suspended from the ceiling. Bathrooms are delightfully spacious with a double sink, huge bathtub and rain showers big enough for two.



Making their debut this year are the new **Natura** and **Oasis** Suites, crafted from local wood and materials and with rustic interiors. The 500-square-foot Natura Suites have king-sized beds and a living area that leads to a private terrace with a plunge pool. The four Oasis suites offer the luxury experience across 1,000 square feet with a large pool, private courtyard, king-sized bedroom, living space and private shower and bathtub area.

The hotel also features the **largest villa on the island** with three floors, six bedrooms, two pools, a mini spa and private kitchen. The **three** and **four-bedroom villas** are great for family groups travelling together.

THE FOOD + DRINK

Andronis Arcadia is a true foodie paradise, with two incredible restaurants and a level of gastronomy that you would expect from the world's most celebrated gourmet destinations. **Pacman** overlooks the upper infinity pool, with a sunken bar and covered restaurant area – great for laidback lunches of Greek salads, flatbreads and dips or juicy burgers. There are two menu options served in the evening, Greek and sushi. Both offer delicious dishes but don't miss the signature salt-crusted seabass – a whole fish that is served up tableside with theatrical flair. The restaurant also provides a chilled party ambience that attracts a cool crowd, with a resident DJ spinning tunes and weekly live music events.

This summer has seen the successful launch of **Santorini's first Beefbar**, the Monte Carlo-born steakhouse concept by Riccardo Giraudi that's become the latest hotspot on the island. Everyone can enjoy its prime location overlooking the panoramic sea views: as well as offering fine, quality meats sourced from around the world, the restaurant caters to seafood-lovers, vegetarians and vegans too.



Wonderful breakfasts can be enjoyed at either eatery, featuring a lavish bread basket with homemade treats such as traditional sesame seed koulouri, warm from the oven, accompanied by a selection of fruity jams. If you want to sample more local fare, then call over the yoghurt trolley where you can help yourself to a heavenly bowl topped with chia seeds, goji berries, pumpkin seeds and honey. Guests are also encouraged to visit the restaurants at the nearby sibling **Andronis hotels**: the nine-course menu at the stunning al fresco cliffside spot, **Lauda**, is big on local seafood, artful presentation and fabulous flavours.

THE LITTLE EXTRAS



The **Evexia Spa** fuses modern techniques (and dreamy products from the luxury skincare brand **ila**) with ancient traditions, and a sprawling outdoor relaxation area to chill out at after your visit. Before your treatment, try walking the Kneipp Path, a hydrotherapy experience that alternates hot and cold water for legs and feet designed to stimulate blood flow and the metabolic system, while strengthening the immune system. For those who like to keep fit you'll find a state-of-the-art gym and it's also worth noting that the hotel is **family friendly**; there's a kids' spa (with super-cute tiny slippers and robes), family cookery classes, an outdoor tennis court and even yoga classes for children.

THE TO-DO LIST



For any trip to **Santorini**, it's worth packing your walking boots because there are some amazing trails to discover, including the hike along the edge of the caldera from Oia to the two other main villages on the island – Imerovigli and Fira. The route is about six miles and can take three to five hours depending on your pace and, while there are some inclines up and down the hillside, most of the way is well paved and you'll be rewarded with breathtaking views. You can also make a detour to photograph one of Santorini's most popular blue-dome churches, Agios Theodori, located in Firostefani. If you want to swim in the ocean, then the beautiful black sand beaches of Perivolos and Perissa, lined with small shops, cafes and beach bars, are both great spots to spend the afternoon.

Rates start from £560 per night.

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