GUIDING TOUR IN THE TOWN OF ITEA

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| 1. | PIER | | Itea is situated on the north coast of the Gulf of Itea named after it, a northward projection of the Gulf of Corinth, near Delphi, Amfissa –the capital of Fokida Region-, Galaxidi and 200 kilometres away from Athens the capital of Greece.  It is a relatively new town. It was found in 1830 after the first Governor of Greece Ioannis kapodistrias voted for it. The systematic building of the town began in 1852 and it was based on a very careful planning of blocks that you can see today and make finding your way around the town very easy. During the Ottoman Rule the area belonged to the widow of the sultan Omer and she offered it to a man from Galaxidi to be given as dowry for his daughter’s marriage to a man from Lidoriki! In the area of Itea there was the famous “Itia” as is the Greek word for the tree “wipping willow” with the only fountain of the area and there were sheep sheds and pottery workshops. Gradually it started to be inhabited with the first buildings being storehouses and a customs office for the port. This little settlement gradually developed into a small town.  Today it is a town of about 6 thousand inhabitants, a quiet place with a beautiful landscape and one of the sunniest places in Greece.  The little islands you can see at the gulf of Itea were used as shelters in earlier times and also people suffering from contagious diseases used to be sent there.  On one of them, there is beautiful little church dedicated to the saint Konstandinos which is a very usual name in Greece for boys. On the day of the celebration of this saint a lot of people get in boats and visit the little island to pray in the small church! |
| 2. | BAKERY | | This Dimitropoulos bakery is our hangout. When we have some free time we come here and meet our friends. We have coffee, we eat cheese pie and we play board games or cards.  Greek people in general don’t have a big breakfast. In the morning they usually have coffee. Older people are used to drinking a kind of coffee called “Greek coffee” which you may like to try while you are here. It was the only kind of coffee for many years in Greece. However, nowadays, you can have all types of coffee. Greek people like to make changes to coffees so they have created the unique “frappe” which cold ness café with ice cubes!  People in Greece follow a Mediterranean diet! For lunch they usually have pulse, cooked vegetables with meat or fish. They always have salad with their meals, feta cheese and bread. In the evening some people eat a proper meal again but most people eat a light snack.  Greek people love eating out! That’s why there are many taverns, restaurants and fast food restaurants in Greece. Young people prefer fast food takeaway, with the most popular being the famous “pita gyros” which is meat rolled up in a pita with extras such as chips, tomatoes, tzatziki sauce-the choice is yours! We highly recommend this takeaway, make sure you don’t leave Greece without having tasted it! |
| 3. | The old mills | | The Mills of Papalexandris, the name of the owner of this business is situated in the north east of Itea. It used to be a factory where wheat was processed and it offered lots of jobs to local people. However, the mills caused air pollution and people working there had serious breathing problems. So, there were protests from people and they eventually closed down. Today it is standing there as a monument of local cultural heritage.  A lot of people in Itea are farmers. There is a very big olive grove, which you will see when we visit Delphi as the view from up there is really amazing. Others are occupied with fishing, there are many fishing boats and three marinas in Itea, they own local businesses or they work at the mines nearby where bauxite is extracted. As Itea is a rather touristic place a lot of people find a job in the touristic service industry as chefs, hotel assistants, waiters and waitresses and so on. Lots of teenagers have such summer jobs to get some extra money! |
| 4. | The church of Evagelistria | | Here you can see a typical Greek church. It is dedicated to Virgin Mary. The church was built in 1898.  In Itea each neighbourhood has its own church. In Greece the majority of people are Christian Orthodox. The average Greek manifests their religious faith by going to church on Sunday to attend the morning Service. The greatest religious holidays in Greece are Christmas and Easter. We celebrate Christmas in a similar way to the rest of Europe but Easter celebration is very special and unique in Greece.  Greek people go to church for weddings, christenings and funerals as well. It is becoming more and more common for young couples to get married at the City Hall and then after their first baby is born they have a religious wedding as well together with the christening of their child. After all these ceremonies, Greeks are used to having big parties with plenty of food, drinks and dancing! |
| 5. | ANAGNEIKA-the old marina | | This is the beach where young people love going swimming in the summer. It is usually full of people swimming, sunbathing and playing ball games. We meet our friends here and play volleyball. Also, there are certain points on those rocks over there where we can dive from. We don’t come here only in the daytime. At night we meet our friends there and talk, sing, listen to music and have fun!  Summer is a very special season for Greek people. The weather is good so they like being outdoors all day and during the night. In the summer, the Greeks sleep very late at night even if they work the next day! Most of them go swimming every single day as it si a very popular activity in Greece. |
| 6. | The anchor | | This anchor was placed here in memory of an important historical event which is connected to the Greek Revolution in 1821 when the Greeks were trying to gain independence from the Ottoman Rule. On the 17th of September 1827 in this little gulf called “Agali” there was a naval battle between 9 ottoman ships and 6 ships of the Greek British alliance with the British admiral Hastings in charge. The victory of the Greek ships in this battle contributed greatly to the eventual defeat of the Ottomans in the great ship battle in Navarino on the 20th of October 1827 which signaled the end of war and the declaration of Greece into an independent nation.  Greece has a long history since ancient times. In the beginning there were city-states in Greece but they all shared a common language and religion. In the 4th century after the Great Peloponese War mainly between Athens and Sparta, city-states were weakened and gradually conquered by Alexander from Macedonia who created a big empire. Greek territory used to be part of this Empire which then was conquered by the Romans and eventually was turned into what our History books call The Byzantine Period. In 1453 the capital of this Byzantine Empire was conquered by the Ottomans and since then the Greek territory was under the Ottoman Rule for almost 4 centuries Largely due to the revolutionary ideas of the French Revolution and the ideals of freedom and democracy which started taking on in the 19th century the Greeks were organized and started fighting to gain their freedom and independence. In 1830 this came true with Greece being the first instance of an independent nation in Europe with many to follow. |
| 7. | Monument to the unknown soldier | | We are at the central square of Itea at the monument of the unknown soldier. It is a very usual type of monument in Greece in memory of soldiers who fought and lost their lives in various wars. The last was Greece was involved was the Second World War. We come here on the National Holidays of Greece which are the 25th of March, when we celebrate the announcement of the revolution against the Ottoman Rule in 1821 and the 28th of October when we celebrate the decision of the Greeks to resist to the Nazi and Fascist Regimes which wished to occupy the whole Europe.  On national celebrations we lay a wreath, speeches are made and there is a parade of students and special music. |
| 8. | A traditional Greek house | | After the Second World War a lot of building in Greece were destroyed and many people were poor. So they were given money from the state to build their houses from scratch. In big cities like Athens most of the old houses were demolished and in their place high block of flats were built. The same goes for smaller towns such as Itea where old houses were demolished and new ones took their place. In some towns. Like Galaxidi which we are going to visit on Thursday there were special laws to protect old traditional houses and retain a common type of buildings. In Itea this didn’t happen so everyone could build their house the way they wanted and so there is no uniformity making the place kind of impersonal. Nevertheless, some people wanted to keep their old traditional houses and renovate them. Here you can see such a traditional Greek house.  Traditional Greek houses in general are made of stone and have a triangular roof made of tiles. There were bedrooms, a kitchen and a special room called “saloni” which was locked and nobody could enter as it had to be kept clean for the special days of the year. The bathroom used to be outside the house so in winter you had to put your jacket on to go to the toilet! In the old houses you could see a religious picture above the beds which shows people’s deep religious faith. They also used to have a garden. Greek people like having flowers and they take good care of them!  Nowadays most houses are made of brick, there are usually two floors in a detached house, there is no tiled roof but a “taratsa” which is a flat roof, there is no saloni any more but a cozy living room connected to the kitchen where all the family sits and watch TV, eat and talk. The special feature of Greek houses today is their big windows and big balconies especially in seaside places like Itea. In the Greek islands of the Aegean Sea however, the windows are very very small as it is really windy there! |
| 9. | MIAMI beach | | It is an organized beach which has been awarded a blue flag meaning that it is clean and safe for swimming. On the pedestrian area along the beach you can see traditional fish taverns and restaurants. There were to be bars here too but not anymore as it is a residential area. The picture of the beach is very different in the summer when it is full of people swimming and lying around! The beach used to be sandy but many years ago a mayor took a strange decision and threw stones all over it! So, it became a stony beach as well to match the rest of the beaches of the area! What a pity! |
| 10 | XENIA BEACH | | The project of Xenia hotels which you can see here started in 1951 when the Greek state decided to start a state building programme in order to the boost touristic development of Greece and make it into a well-known destination for tourists around the world thus boosting Greek economy which was in a very bad condition after the second World War.  So, a number of these hotels called Xenia from the Greek word Filoxenia which means hospitality were built around Greece. Eventually the program wa abandoned as many state programs are in Greece, the Xenia was left to pulled apart and later it was bought by a local businessman.  Here we will take a break, have a snack and take a rest! |
| WALKING TO KIRRA by the SEASIDE ROAD | | | |
| 11 | KIRRA-medieval tower | Kirra is an ancient town with a history dating back to antiquity. It is actually the most ancient city of the area with excavations from 3000 BC. It developed finically because it was the only sea access point to the sanctuary and oracle of Delphi. Here you can see the ruins of a medieval tower which probably served as a light house in the past. Inside the sea you can see the ruins of the ancient port. | |
| 12 | Visit a traditional kafenio (café) | As Kirra is an old and traditional place it has retained a feature from the old times the so called “kafenio” which is a kind of café where only men used to go in the past, drink their Greek coffee and talk about pubic issues, such as politics, sports and make comments on current affairs. Greek people are quick-tempered so arguments or even fights were also very usual in these cafes!  In the evening the kafenio turned into a bar and only men came here, too, to drink some wine or ouzo, a very strong traditional drink! | |
| 13 | Archeological site of Kirra | The first inhabitation of the area in Kirra dates back in the Protoeladic period. The ruins you can see here is an extended trade center in the Mesoelladic period. It is called Neorio, a storage area for equipment of ship-port facilities. The historian and geographer Pausanias refers to Kirra as one of the nine cities of Fokida that took part in the Troian War. The city of Kirra decline due to a very strong earthquake that forced the inhabitants to abandon the place. Earthquakes are a very common geological phenomenon in Greece. Some of them are quite strong but fortunately there have not been any victims in recent years.  Today Kirra is a small village of about 1300 people. | |
| 14 | The River | As we approach the end of our tour we would like to show you this beautiful river. It comes from the Mountain Parnassos which is the highest mountain of the area. Opposite you cabn see the church dedicated to saint John. Locals call this “the river of Kirra”. Its water is exceptionally cold and is said to have healing properties. So people who suffer from pains or circulatory problems come here and stand in the river | |
| 15 | Vrahakia beach | So here we reach the end of our tour with this well known beach called Vrahakia which means little rocks. It is a quiet place which used to be a busy spot in the past as there were three camping sites full of people in the summer. Unfortunately the craze for camping gradually faded away so two of the three camping sites were abandoned and the only one still in operation is the Camping of Saint John here in Vrahakia beach. People in Greece are not very fond of camping, as today most of them prefer to stay in hotels or rooms to rent when they go on holiday. The camping of Saint John does not have many visitors any more but there are still foreign visitors who like to stay here and enjoy the peace and quiet of the area with the beautiful view! Tourism is the main source of income for many areas in Greece and on islands there are still a lot of camping sites which offer up to date facilities for those who like staying near nature while on holiday! | |

**EVALUATION SHEET**

1. Do you feel you know Itea and Greece a little better after having taken part in this guided tour? (underline)  
     
   YES /NO / I DON’T KNOW
2. Which of the places of the tour made the biggest impression on you?  
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3. Did you hear something that is the SAME or SIMILAR to your country?  
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4. Did you hear something that is completely DIFFERENT in your country?  
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5. Do you remember any of the Greek words you have heard during this guided tour?!  
     
   YES/ NO/ I DON’T KNOW  
     
   If the answer to question 5 is YES you are the winner of this guided tour and you will be awarded an wreath like Greek people in ancient times used to award the winners of competitions!