

Our country is Greece!

Greece, officially the Hellenic Republic, is a country in Southeast Europe. Located on the southern tip of the Balkan peninsula, Greece shares land borders with Albania to the northwest, North Macedonia and Bulgaria to the north, and Turkey to the east. The Aegean Sea lies to the east of the mainland, the Ionian Sea to the west, and the Sea of Crete and the Mediterranean Sea to the south. Greece has the longest coastline on the Mediterranean Basin, featuring thousands of islands. The country comprises nine traditional geographic regions, and has a population of over 10.4 million. Athens is the nation's capital and largest city, followed by Thessaloniki and Patras.



The native name of the country in Modern Greek is Ελλάδα (Elláda^①, pronounced [eˈlaða]). The corresponding form in Ancient Greek and conservative formal Modern Greek (Katharevousa) is Ἑλλάς (Hellas, classical: [hel.lás], modern: [eˈlas]). This is the source of the English alternative name Hellas, which is mostly found in archaic or poetic contexts today. The Greek adjectival form ελληνικός (ellinikos, [eliniˈkos]) is sometimes also translated as Hellenic and is often rendered in this way in the formal names of Greek institutions, as in the official name of the Greek state, the Hellenic Republic (Ελληνική Δημοκρατία, [eliniˈci ðimokraˈti.a]). The English names Greece and

Greek are derived, via the Latin Graecia and Graecus, from the name of the Graeci (Γραικοί, Graikoí; singular Γραικός, Graikós), one of first ancient



The Parthenon on the Acropolis of Athens, icon of classical Greece

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Cuisine

Main articles: Greek cuisine and Greek wine

A Greek salad, with feta and olives

Greek cuisine is characteristic of the Mediterranean diet, which is epitomised by dishes of Crete. Greek cuisine incorporates fresh ingredients into local dishes such as moussaka, pastitsio, classic Greek salad, fasolada, spanakopita and souvlaki. Some dishes can be traced back to ancient Greece like skordalia

(a thick purée of walnuts, almonds, crushed garlic and olive oil), lentil soup, retsina (white or rosé wine sealed with pine resin) and pasteli (candy bar with sesame seeds baked with honey). People often enjoy eating from small dishes such as meze with dips such as tzatziki, grilled octopus and small fish, feta cheese, dolmades (rice, currants and pine kernels wrapped in vine leaves), various pulses, olives and cheese. Olive oil is a widespread addition.



Sweet desserts include melomakarona, diples and galaktoboureko, and drinks such as ouzo, metaxa and wines including retsina. Greek cuisine differs from different parts of the mainland and island to island. It uses some flavorings more often than other Mediterranean cuisines: oregano, mint, garlic, onion, dill and bay laurel leaves. Other common herbs and spices include basil, thyme and fennel seed. Many recipes, especially in the northern parts of the country, use "sweet" spices in combination with meat, for example cinnamon and cloves in stews Koutoukia are an underground restaurant common in Greece.



Our town is Argyroupolis.

Argyroupoli is a town of the Municipality of Ellinikos - Argyroupoli of the South Sector of Athens, 9 km southeast of Athens, on the southern outskirts of Ymittos, an area of about 8 sq. km. It borders the municipalities of Glyfada, Alimos and Ilioupoli. Spatially, it has developed southeast of the center of Athens and north of Vouliagmeni Avenue. Since July 2013, Argyroupoli is served by the Athens metro station of the same name, located on Vouliagmenis Avenue, very close to the city's central square. In the past, Argyroupoli was an autonomous municipality, but since 2011 today it is the capital and headquarters of the municipality of Ellinikos-Argyroupoli. Argyroupoli has emerged as a particularly popular city due to its privileged position on the mountain and next to the sea.





OUR SCHOOL

The 1 Kindergarten of Argyroupoli is a Single-Type All-Day Kindergarten, which consists of: two sections, which follow the Mandatory Morning Program, with operating hours 8.15-13.00 and one section that follows the Optional All-Day Program with operating hours 13.00-16.00.

The purpose of our kindergarten is the all-round (physical, social, emotional and cognitive) development of the child, his well-being and the formation of the identity of the democratic citizen. Kindergarten education, taking into account the developmental characteristics of this age, promotes the development of abilities that help the child to respond critically and creatively to the challenges of the environment. It lays the foundations for the future and consolidates fundamental values that promote human rights, social justice and individual and collective responsibility, in an inclusive perspective. Our kindergarten introduces the child to compulsory education and helps him gradually form the identity of a "student".







CHRISTMAS IN GREECE



Christmas is an amazingly warm and bright holiday with a special atmosphere of fairy tale and wonder. It is celebrated almost all over the world, and Greece is no exception. On December 25, it begins with a prayer, which gradually turns into a "tasty" and joyful celebration.

However, many are preparing for Christmas on the eve of December 24, children go caroling: they visit friends, relatives, neighbors, singing the song "Good morning lords" and other carols. For their effort, the children receive small gifts and sweets. The decoration of the streets starts even earlier than the winter holidays. A few weeks before Christmas, the shop windows are transformed, the streets bloom with colorful lights, boats and of course Christmas trees are decorated.

In addition, the tradition of decorating ships in Greece appeared much earlier than the tradition of decorating Christmas trees. Earlier, the Greeks carved

special ships out of wood, decorated them and took them with them to carols. Today, dressed up ships can be found in the streets and squares.



The Christmas Boat 🚢

Modern Greek homes are now decorated with Christmas trees, but this is a tradition that entered Greek homes after the time of Otto. Before that, the Greeks had a unique tradition of decorating a boat during the holiday season, a choice appropriate for a maritime nation, especially in coastal areas. In fact, when children sang carols, they carried the boat with them and the housewives filled it with kourabiedes and other traditional sweets. Despite its beauty, however, the boat became identified with the separation between sailors and their loved ones, evoking a bittersweet feeling, and so over time, the tree, which symbolizes life, replaced the Greek boat.



The main dish on the table is considered turkey or pork. Also, housewives bake Christ bread, butter bread with dried basil, often add dried fruits, spices, alcohol, nuts. Christopsomo looks like a cross between a Christmas cake and an Easter cake.



Vasilopita 🍰

Another delightful custom that we have preserved unchanged is the beloved Vasilopita. The custom comes from Basil the Great of Caesarea who invented a trick to help the poor: he hid coins inside pies and offered them to them. Now, the fluori is one and in every house we all look forward to the moment when we will cut it to reveal this year's lucky person! In some parts of Greece, instead of the classic sweet Vasilopita that resembles a cake, they usually make its savory version, with cheese or meat.



Honey and nuts are placed on the table as a symbol of happiness and prosperity. You can often find pomegranates among the treats, which in Greece are considered a symbol of starting a new stage in life. By the way, a pomegranate can also be acquired as a gift for Christmas - in this case, we are not talking about a natural fruit, but a souvenir made of wood or other materials, decorated with semi-precious or precious stones.



Breaking the pomegranate 🍷



In many homes in Greece, welcoming the new year and of course the famous "podariko", is accompanied by breaking the pomegranate. But why do we do it? This particular fruit symbolizes prosperity and fertility and so, we break it to scatter the seeds and bring good luck to our family and home. It is said that the number of seeds that are thrown is equal to the share of good luck that the family will have in the coming year, while some even assign this act to the children of the house, because it is believed that this brings even more luck!

The fire that is kept 🔥

According to legend, leprechauns live in the bowels of the earth and come up to earth on Christmas days. So, one way to chase them away is to keep a log

permanently lit in the fireplace because they are afraid of fire. In fact, this custom requires the fire to remain lit from December 24 to January 6



Merry Christmas in the language of the student!

KALA XRISTOUGENA

ΚΑΛΑ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥΓΕΝΝΑ

Description of what the mission class wants for 2025

Our class of 2025 wishes for peace in the whole world, love, and for all the children of the world to have a home, care, food, warmth, toys and love!

What decorations did your school make and why?

A candle

The candle symbolizes the love and peace that should characterize every Christian, because the candle burns when it illuminates, but also comforts man with its light in the darkness. When lighting a candle, we must remember that we must live in the light that we received with our baptism.



Christmas Candles and Lights

Candles were added to the Christmas tree to represent the stars at the birth of Jesus during the Christmas season in the Middle Ages, where a large candle symbolized the Star of Bethlehem. Also, a lit candle at Christmas was a symbol of luck and the future of the home. Therefore, tree lights are a modern version of these candles.



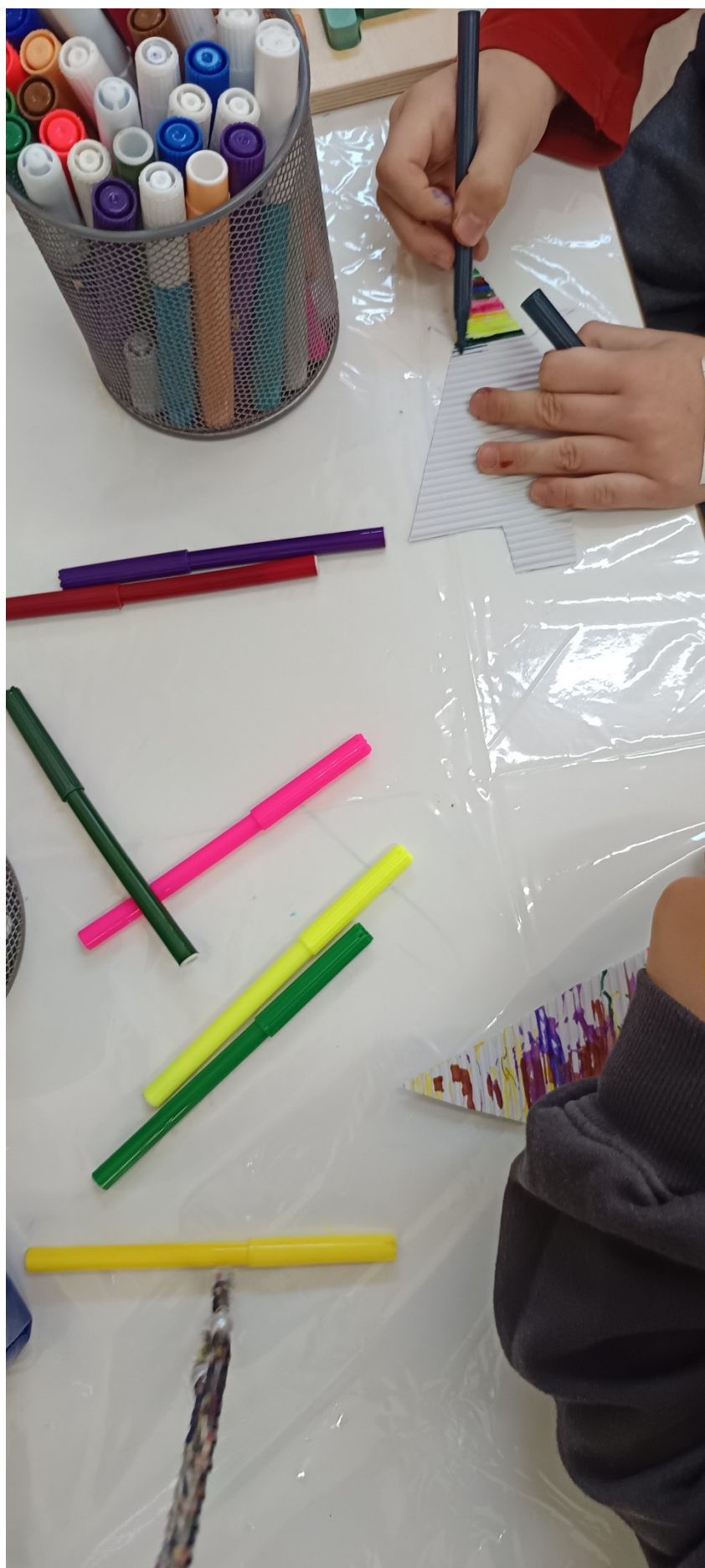
The Christmas tree...

Christmas treeFirst of all, the fir tree, which is also the traditional tree that we decorate, has a property: its leaves do not wither and never fall. Even in the depths of winter, it is green and "alive".

This is no coincidence and symbolizes the eternal life of Christ.

Now, if you notice the shape of the Christmas tree - the fir tree - it is triangular. What is symbolized in this way is the Holy Trinity.







Snowmen

Children always hope that it will snow at Christmas and they will go outside to play in the snow!

We wish you MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!