



Only 6.5 Km away of Aegina we found the ruins of the abandoned city of Palaiohora following the road Aegina-Ag. Marina. The old city is opposite the monastery of Agios Nektarios of the beginning of the last century.

Palaiohora was the capital of this island from the 9th to 19th century. The extension was considerable because the ruins covered a whole hill crowned by a medieval castle. Full of churches, the best is Omorfi Ekklesia ("the beautiful church") owing to its important frescoes. Two destructions, 1537 by the Turks and later by the Venetians, hadn't completely destroyed this perfect trip to the past.

Going to the south of the island and following the Marathonas' road we find the Monastery of the Virgin Chrysoieontissa.

This Monastery is dated from 1600 and has a surprised style that remembers the fortified Mount Athos' Monasteries. It is worthy to try to go inside the church to enjoy the carved iconostasis.

Following this costal road to the south we reach the fishers' village of Perdika that is 9 km away from the village of Marathon. Once you are there you can choose between relaxing in a lovely tavern (of course their specialties are the fish dishes) and trying one of the crystal beaches that make Perdika famous. Also another alternative is to take the boat to the picturesque islets of Angistri and Moni.

Just 10 minutes away from Perdika by boat is located the island of Moni. Once this island belonged to the Monastery of Chrysoleontissa and from there it came the name "Moni", although now it is owned by the Touring Club of Greece. A real paradise for animal wild life (full of rabbits, Cretan Mountain goats and peacocks) and a rocky inhabited island only covered with natural bushes is waiting for you. But only it has a small sandy beaches, anyway it is perfect for those who enjoy swimming between rocks. If you have time to follow a mountainous path until the summit, you can see a view of the whole Saronic Gulf next to an old German post of the Second World War.

Following the northeast road we found the best pistachio and olive crops. Between them the village of Kipseli with the small basilica of St. Theodore (1282) appeared. If you continue in this road the next town is Souvala, only 10 minutes from the main port of Aegina. Nowadays Souvala is a tiny port with a lot of charm, but it was during the first half of 20th century the main port of Aegina due to its exportations of grapes, sponges, carob... Anyway its taverns around the harbor are the right place to relax. Besides Souvala is famous for their alkaline hot springs that are said to be good for the skin.

If you continue a bit on the same road you will end in the port of Vaghia (4 km. away from Souvala). There you can find swimming places off the beaten track.

Following the road between Aegina and Aghia Marina the most mountainous landscapes of the whole island can be found. At the south of Messagros a house built in local style can be found. It is called the "House of Rodakis" built by Alexis Rodakis in 1880. Strange design with four small statues on each corner of its flat roof: one pig as the luck, one clock representing the time, a snake as the evil and a dove as the peace.

Only 30 minutes by bus away from the Aegina's port it is located the most touristic restored of the island, Aghia Marina. In old times it was an extension of the close village of Messagros and its name came from the small church of Aghia Marina. This is the most fertile part of the island. That is why it is covered with vineyards, olive trees and pine forest. Although, Aghia Marina is

no longer a quiet touristic centre. It is full of apartments, hotels, shops, and taverns, all you need to be happy in your holidays if you are not looking for quiet places. Tourists come here for its famous wide sandy beach, although some preferred to visit the fantastic and close temple of Aphaea.

Three kilometers away from Aghia Marina, on the top of a hill surrounded by forest, is located the Doric temple of Aphaea, who was the oldest patroness of Aegina and was replaced by Athena after the Athens' victory. This temple is built in local style and it is famous for being the only surviving example of a Hellenic temple with a second row of small-superimposed columns in the interior the sanctuary. The actual temple is dated in 490 B.C. and it was erected in celebration of the victory at the battle of Salamis, anyway there are oldest remains of other temples (the first temple was erected in 570 B.C. and destroyed sixty years later) and religious activities (idols of the third millennium). This temple formed a triangle of religious meaning with the temple of Sounion and the Acropolis and it is one of the most beautiful examples in Greece. The marbles with scenes of the Trojan War are actually displayed in the Munich Glyptothek after being taken away in 1811 and sold to the king of Bavaria. If you are interested, the rests of the modern excavations are exposed in the near Archaeological Museum of Aegina.