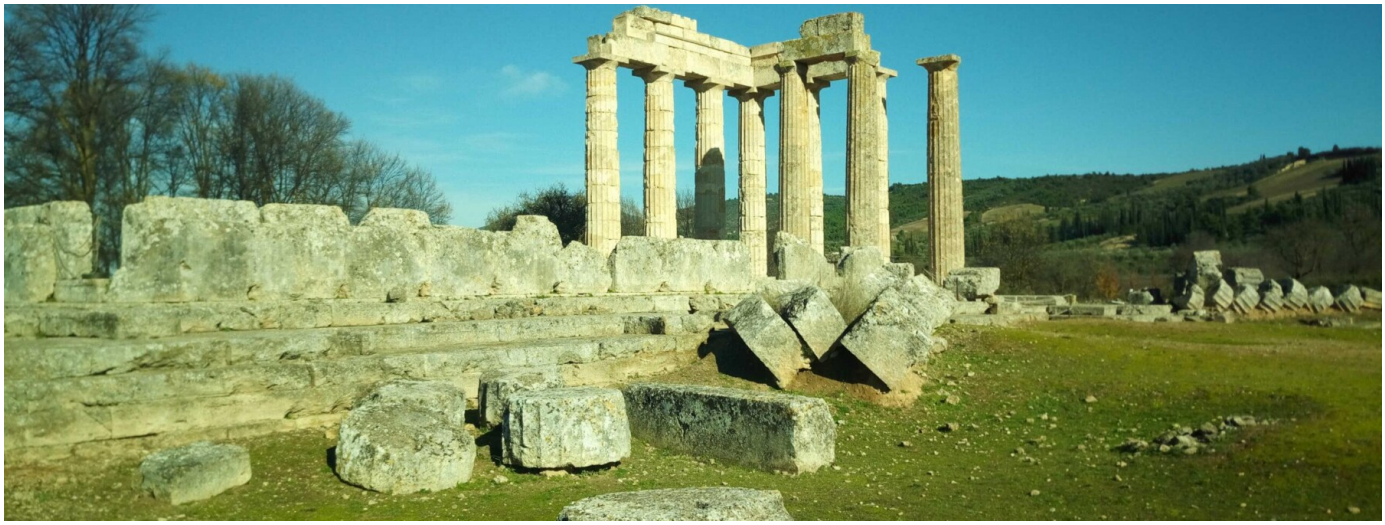
GUIDE · CORINTHIA

Nemea: Wine, Archaeology and Flavours in One Unmissable Destination



About

Nemea sits in a valley 30 km south of Corinth, surrounded by vineyards, and is one of the most rewarding half-day or full-day trips in the Peloponnese. It combines a significant ancient sanctuary, a well-run regional museum and some of Greece's most celebrated wine production — all within a few kilometres of each other.

Nemea Wine

The Nemea Protected Designation of Origin covers a plateau-valley at 250–900 m altitude, where the Agiorgitiko grape produces the most important red wine in Greece by volume and reputation. Dark-fruited, full-bodied, with natural tannins and good ageing potential — the grape performs differently at different altitudes, and the better producers make a point of separating vineyard parcels by elevation. At 900 m, the resulting wine is more structured and age-worthy; at lower elevations, softer and more immediately approachable.

Several estates offer tastings: Gaia Wines (well-known internationally, modern facilities), Papaioannou (family estate, excellent single-vineyard bottlings), Skouras (larger producer, good for a first overview of the appellation), and Ktima Palyvos among others. Most welcome visitors without advance booking except in high season — a phone call the day before is always appreciated. Tasting fees vary; some include food pairings, some don't. English is spoken at all major estates.

Ancient Nemea

The Sanctuary of Zeus at Nemea was one of the four great Panhellenic sanctuaries of ancient Greece, hosting the Nemean Games every two years. The site today includes three standing columns of the Temple of Zeus (4th century BC, partially reconstructed), extensive foundations, a bath complex and a well-preserved tunnel

leading to the original ancient stadium. Walk through the tunnel and emerge at the starting line — the grooves worn by ancient runners' feet are still visible in the stone threshold.

The stadium is the detail most visitors don't expect: intact starting blocks, the parallel grooves of the balbis (starting mechanism), and the remains of the banking where spectators sat. The Nemean Games were revived in the 1990s and still take place periodically — foot races in ancient Greek dress through the original stadium. If your visit coincides with this event, it's worth rearranging your schedule to see it.

The Museum

The Nemea Archaeological Museum sits next to the sanctuary and contains finds from the site spanning the early Bronze Age through the Byzantine period. The highlights are the athletic equipment — strigils, bronze vessels, lead jumping weights — and the architectural sculpture from the Temple of Zeus. The museum is small enough to visit in an hour and focused enough to leave you with a clear picture of what the sanctuary meant in its time.

Combining Nemea With the Rest of the Region

Nemea sits 30 km southwest of Corinth city, easily combined with Ancient Corinth and Acrocorinth for a full-day Corinthia archaeology-and-wine itinerary. Alternatively, combine with a morning at Lake Stymphalos (20 km south) and an afternoon of tastings for a nature-and-wine day. Both combinations work well and avoid backtracking.

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Enjoy exploring Corinthia!