

NZSA's 25th Annual Conference – Athens, 2–5 July 2019

Practical information – travelling to the hotels/conference venue from the airport

The conference hotels – the Best Western Plus and the Athinai – are located very close to the conference venue, which is the Alba Business School, a downtown campus/ building for the American College in Greece (ACG). Please note that we are not employing any of the facilities at the main campus of ACG. Alba is a modern building between 270-120 metres from the Best Western Plus and Athinai hotels, which are on the other side of a main road. The address for Alba is Xenias 6.

* I am assuming that the majority of delegates will be arriving into Athens at the International Airport. As you exit the airport, about 50 metres opposite you will see a modern train system designed as an extension to the Athens metro. Board the train – the airport is the end of the line, so whatever train you take will be correct as they are all heading out in the same direction.

* Positives: the train is fast, efficient, comfortable and a great connection for travelling to the conference hotels and Alba. Negative: it is relatively expensive and will cost you €10 one way. However, if there are two of you travelling together you can purchase a ticket for 2 people for €18; for 3 people it is €24. Better still it is just €5 if you are a student aged under 25, a youth aged 6-18, or you are aged over 65. The ticket counters at the station are helpful and I suggest you buy your ticket/s at these desks found at the train station concourse.

* Train departures are every 30 minutes (6.30am to 11.30pm), and once on board there is no need to change trains. Just stay on the same train (the blue line) that you board at the airport and get off at the station Megaro Moussikis. From the airport to Megaro metro it is about 35 minutes. Then from Megaro it is an easy walk of about 8 minutes to either of the conference hotels.

Please see the attached map. The red arrow on the far left shows the direction you will walk from the Megaro metro station. The red star to the north west of the arrow is the Alba conference venue. The purple square to the north of the arrow is the Best Western Plus Hotel and the smaller purple square to the South West of the Best Western is the Athinai Hotel. The address for the Best Western Plus is Timoleonos Vassou 22. The Athinai is at 99 Vassilissis Sofias Avenue (ie. the main road).

Local food

There is a good café on the ground floor foyer of Alba, which will serve food and drinks throughout the day on each day of the conference. Note that the conference will be providing complimentary teas and coffees as per the schedule but lunch is not included. There are, however, numerous recommended food options within a 3-10 minute walk of Alba and the conference hotels and I have marked these on the accompanying map. All of these restaurant and café options are circled – those in green would be my primary choices and those in blue, secondary. I would ignore those restaurants that appear on this map that are not circled, for reasons such as being too expensive.

Conference excursion

We have a full coach of 55 people for the excursion, with all delegates bar one attending. Note that the coach will leave promptly at 11am from near to Alba. Best to be at the keynote sessions (or meet in the Alba foyer) that morning, whereupon we can then guide everyone to the coach. We will be providing lunch for all delegates at a restaurant very near to the Corinth archaeological site. Dinner will be later that evening at 6.30 in the picturesque

coastal town of Nafplio. In order to attend the dinner, you will definitely need to be on the coach excursion. The options for lunch and dinner will be circulated soon.

Tourism in Athens – a few recommendations

There is a wealth of sites to visit in Athens and we are very fortunate to have a conference venue and hotels that are perfectly situated for being a tourist of the city.

- If you have never been to Athens before then the number 1 place to visit is undoubtedly the **Acropolis**. However, all tourists are thinking the same and it is **extremely** popular. I visited in December and it was packed. Definitely aim to visit as early as possible in the day with the site opening at 8am. I would also highly recommend that you book tickets online. Here, you will find great information on what to do (plus step by step online booking guidance) at the following site <https://archaeology-travel.com/travel-tips/buying-tickets-for-the-acropolis-and-other-ancient-sites-in-athens/>. Note that there are discount and multi-ticket options. Tickets for the Acropolis only are €20 but anyone of the following can gain free entry: under 18 years old and university students within the EU. Also, 50% reduction – ie €10 – for those over 65, and students studying outside the EU. From Megaro to the Acropolis by taxi it takes approximately 12 minutes. By metro it is 2 stops from Megaro to Syntagma station and then about 12 minutes walking through the tourist district, where you can find all the local souvenirs you desire.
- I would definitely recommend seeing the changing of the guard, which happens on the hour every hour at Syntagma Square. Right next to Syntagma metro station. One of the best changing of the guards you will find anywhere. Try and arrive at least 10 minutes before the hour to secure a good spot as again this is very popular with tourists.
- My third recommendation would be the Panathenaic Stadium, slightly under midway between the Acropolis and Megaro. This is the original Olympic stadium and entry is just €5. Inside you have the chance for a great photo opportunity standing on the winner's podium.
- A 15 minute walk from the conference venue/hotels is Mount Lycabettus – the highest point in all of Athens with spectacular views across the city. You can walk up (don't take the taxi option) or there is the option of a funicular (which, of course, I recommend).
- Within walking distance of the conference venue/ hotels (20-35 minutes) are the following museums, all recommended (listed here in order of proximity to Alba): Byzantine and Christian Museum, Benaki Museum (Greek art, culture, history), National Historical Museum, Museums of the City of Athens (Greek history and culture of the last 200 years), National Archaeological Museum. Also, at the foot of the Acropolis is the excellent Acropolis Museum – tickets can be bought for this in combination with the Acropolis, but again it can get very busy inside.