All about Ancient Greece

Have you ever wondered what life was like in Ancient Greece? Well, you’ve come to the right place. Read on to find out more information...

Clothing – what did they wear?

The ancient Greeks weren’t terribly interested in fashion! The clothing they wore was simple. Although you often see paintings with Greeks dressed in all white, it is believed that their clothing was actually very colourful. Drawings and carvings from ancient Greece also show clothing with many kinds of patterns on them.

Most clothing was made at home. The fabric used for clothing was also spun and dyed at home. The same piece of fabric could be used for numerous things. It could be used as both clothing and bedding. The garment was usually simply a square or rectangular piece of cloth, which could be pinned or belted different ways. These garments were usually made from a type of linen or wool. Greece has a mild climate with very hot summers, and so the simpler their clothing, the better.

You might be surprised to find that Greeks generally did not wear shoes. They might occasionally wear slippers or other soft-soled shoes, but usually preferred to go barefoot. Boots or leather sandals could be worn for special occasions. It was possible for a person in ancient Greece to go their entire life without wearing shoes!

Babies and small children in Greece might not wear any clothes at all!

**Food – What did they eat?**

Vegetables were a huge part of the Greek diet. Most Greeks ate a diet that was almost vegetarian. Among the most common vegetables and plants eaten by Greeks were asparagus, fennel, cucumbers, chickpeas, and celery. They also gathered and boiled dandelions to eat.

Fruits and nuts were also a large part of the Greek diet. Apples, pears, cherries and mulberries grew wild and were available throughout Greece.

Perhaps the most important food to the ancient (and modern) Greeks was the olive. It was not simply a food. It was also a big part of Greek history. Olives were used in many recipes.

Honey was another important Greek food. It was used much like we use sugar, as a sweetener in many different foods. It could also be used as a medicine.

Ancient Greeks didn’t eat much meat. But since Greece is surrounded by water, fish were easy to get. Many varieties were available in the markets.

**Olympics**

The Greeks loved sport and the Olympic Games were the biggest sporting event in the ancient calendar.

The Olympic Games began over 2,700 years ago in Olympia, in south west Greece. Every four years, around 50,000 people came from all over the Greek world to watch and take part. The ancient games were also a religious festival, held in honour of Zeus, the king of the gods.

There were no gold, silver and bronze medals. Winners were given a wreath of leaves and a hero's welcome back home. Athletes competed for the glory of their city and winners were seen as being touched by the gods.

Only men, boys and unmarried girls were allowed to attend the Olympic Games. **Married women** were barred. If they were caught sneaking in, they could be thrown off the side of a mountain as punishment!

However, women could still own horses in the chariot races at the Olympics and unmarried women had their own festival at Olympia every four years.

**Education**

The Greeks loved to learn! They believed that learning was one of the best ways you could spend your time. They didn’t see going to school as a chore at all. They looked forward to the chance to improve their minds.

In Greece’s very early history, only wealthy men were educated. Young boys usually had their own tutors who taught them math, writing, and military training. The things children were taught also depended on where they lived in Greece. As boys grew older, they were also taught music, literature, astronomy, and rhetoric.

Greek girls were not taught the same subjects as boys. They were usually taught reading and writing, but were not taught other subjects. Instead, they were taught skills that would help them be good homemakers. They were taught to cook, sew, and care for children. Like boys, girls were sometimes given a different education depending on where they lived.