
YANNIS ATHANASIOU

Mountain Leader

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Profile:

- Experienced mountain leader with a passion for outdoor adventures and a deep understanding of diverse mountain landscapes.
- Dedicated to promoting the profession of Mountain Leader worldwide and setting high standards of qualifications.
- Equipped with extensive hiking experience in Greece and abroad (Europe, S. and N. America, Africa, N. Zealand).
- Customer-oriented, having successfully led multi-day custom-made excursions for international clients.
- Multi-disciplinary competence in a wide range of mountain activities, including competition trail running, climbing, alpinism, cycling, canyoning, via ferratas, and paragliding.
- Complemented by a background in Biochemistry and an MBA degree from the United States, offering a unique blend of scientific knowledge and business acumen.

Education:

- Union of International Mountain Leader Associations (*UIMLA*): Completed the rigorous coursework and currently awaiting the relative diploma. Dedicated to representing the profession globally and fostering collaboration among various countries –2023
- Master of Business Administration (MBA) : University of Illinois at Chicago, IL, USA -1994
- Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry: University of Illinois at Chicago, IL, United States -1992
- Diploma in Biochemical Technology: Red River College, Winnipeg, MB, Canada -1985

Professional Experience:

Mountain Leader, Greece and abroad

- Collaborate with top agencies for alternative tourism and outdoor activities, with reach and actions throughout Greece and beyond its borders (1995-2024). Multi-day hiking and bicycling excursions for international clients to Mount Olympus, Peloponnese, N. Greece and the Cycladic islands.
- Geographic Expertise: Familiarized with most Greek mountains such as Parnassos, Vardousia, Oiti, Giona, Taygetos, Mainalon, Ziria, Pindos, and Olympus.
- Extensive Hiking Experience (30 years) across diverse mountain ranges in Greece, Patagonia, Andes, Alps, Caucasus, Morocco, Canadian Rockies, N. Zealand and the Pyrenees.

Commercial Banker: Bank of Nova Scotia, Piraeus Bank, First Business Bank, National Bank of Greece, Chicago IL and Athens Greece.

General Manager: BX Financial Services, Greece

References: International client references attached with their kind permission

Joanie Parsons U.S.A.

I have traveled many places and hired guides to support us on our journey. Hands down, Yannis was the best guide we have ever had. We is knowledgeable, energetic and, of course, fun. We loved him and he made our trip to Greece just fabulous.

David and Pauline Norwood Stoke on Trent, England.

We spent a week in Greece with friends being hosted by Yannis on a sailing / walking Holiday, his commitment to our wellbeing during the week far exceeded our expectations, he was professional but very personable, he made for great company, we would have no hesitation in booking him again, we would highly recommend him to any one considering using his services.

Julie Hancock, Stoke on Trent, England

Yannis was the most amazing guide. He tailored and adapted walks to ensure they always matched the ability of our group as a whole. He involved us in decisions, if there were any options in the route, or about where and for how long we had rest stops. His knowledge of the area, wildlife and Greek history and mythology was absolutely outstanding, he shared many interesting stories, in a very engaging manner. He was also a very caring person and great fun to be with. Some of his stories over dinner in the evening had us all laughing out loud.

Elaine Bernstein London, United Kingdom

Yannis is a really excellent guide in many ways. He is extremely kind and courteous, intelligent and informative, and moreover has the ability to laughs often! Of course his level of fitness and ability is second to none, so not only will you feel completely looked after, you'll also keep being inspired and challenged. It was lovely spending time with Yannis during the few days that I was with him and I highly recommend him.

Janet Patricia Grant, Scotland

We met Yannis when he was engaged as our guide on a sailing tour of the Greek Cyclades island. Yannis quickly understood the aspects of the tour which our party was most interested in and displayed extensive knowledge of the Greek Cyclades islands, their history, culture, and natural features. We discussed our itinerary in advance and Yannis offered routes to suit our capabilities as a walking group and our sailing schedules.

Yannis was able to offer a variety of landscapes and sights at each stop, clearly setting out the duration of walks, and the difficulty levels to ensure they matched our preferences.

Yannis was keen to promote responsible tourism and respect the natural and cultural heritage of the Cyclades islands by prioritizing sustainable practices and minimizing our impact on the environment. Yannis was full of local insights on dining options and we had a younger member in our party which meant these recommendations were tricky to tailor to all tastes, but he made it look easy! Yannis was particularly inspiring to this younger explorer. They swapped Greek myths and history and fascinating insight into the geology of the islands. This was a life changing trip for us and that was in no small part due to Yanni's genuine intentions to offer the best possible tour to our party.