

History of the Greek Flag

The number of the lines is based on the number of the syllables in the Greek phrase: Eleutheria H Thanatos (Freedom or Death). Freedom or Death was the motto during the years of the Hellenic Revolution against the Ottoman Empire in the 19th century [There are claims that the number of lines reflects the number of letters in the Greek word for Freedom which equals 9]. This word stirred the heart of the oppressed Greeks, it created intense emotions and inspired them to fight and gain their freedom after 400 years of slavery. The line pattern was chosen because of their similarity with the wavy sea that surrounds the shores of Greece.

The interchange of blue and white colours makes the Hellenic Flag on a windy day to look like the Aegean Pelagos. Only the quaint islands are missing! The Greek Square Cross that rests on the upper left-side of the flag and occupies one fourth of the total area demonstrates the respect and the devotion the Greek people have for the Greek Orthodox Church and signifies the important role of Christianity in the formation of the modern Hellenic Nation.

During the dark years of the Ottoman rule, the Greek Orthodox Church helped the enslaved Greeks to retain their cultural characteristics: the Greek language, the Byzantine religion and generally the Greek ethnic identity, by the institution of the Crypha Scholia (hidden schools). The Crypha Scholia were a web of schools that operated secretly throughout Greece and were committed in transmitting to the Greeks the wonders of their ancestors and the rest of their cultural heritage. Today, Christianity is still the dominant religion among Greeks. Therefore the existence of the Cross is justified.

Blue and White! These two colours symbolise the blue of the Greek Sea and the Whiteness of the restless Greeks waves! According to the mythic legends, the Goddess of Beauty, Aphrodite emerged from these waves. In addition, it reflects the blue of the Greek Sky and the White of the few clouds.