

Documents Required for Religious Wedding in Santorini, Greece.

For your wedding in Santorini, Greece to be legally valid worldwide, the following documents must be submitted:

Note that both parties must be Christians. Either or both the bride or/and groom must be an Orthodox Christian. If one of the parties is not an Orthodox Christian, a "Christening" or "Baptism" Certificate is required.

1. **Valid passports of the bride and groom.** A simple photocopy of each passport is required. It is not necessary to obtain an Apostille or a translation.
2. **Birth Certificates of the bride and groom.** Documents should be authenticated and validated with an Apostille* seal and translated into the Greek language.
3. **Certificate of family status for groom and bride.** These documents should be authenticated and validates with Apostille*seal and translated into Greek language.
4. **"Letter of Celibacy" of the bride and groom.**
This document is acquired from the Greek Orthodox Church and gives consent and freedom for a person to marry. Each party must obtain this document and have it signed and stamped by the priest of their parish. A Greek translation of the document must also be submitted. Validation of the priest's signature on this document *must* be obtained from the Bishop of your local church.
5. **If any of the parties has changed his/her name by Deed Poll, written proof must be obtained.**
A Greek translation¹ of the document must also be submitted.
6. If any of the parties is a widower/widow, **the death certificate of the previous spouse must be obtained.**
A Greek translation of the document must also be submitted.
7. **"Adoption" Certificate.** If any of the parties are adopted, this document is required.
A Greek translation of the document must also be submitted.
8. A documents verified from the police or a notary office that says that **both Bride and Groom are not married with other persons.** That document must also be translated in Greek language and have the **Apostile Stamp².** Different document for the bride and groom.
9. **Copies of Passports of the 2 Witnesses.**
Copies of these passports should be submitted at the Santorini Town Hall.

¹ **Greek Translation:** must be obtained at your local Greek Embassy or Consulate or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Athens Greece. Translation by any other authority or independent translator with a notary stamp will NOT be accepted.

² **Apostille:** must be issued by the state/country where the document was issued, regardless of your current place of residence (for example, if you possess a British Birth Certificate, the Apostille seal must be issued in Britain). ALL documents must be authenticated with an Apostille Seal.

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Additional Santorini Wedding Information:

- Some documents may have an alternative name in your country/state. Make sure that you receive the appropriate document with the required information.
- Kindly fax or email all the documents and their apostilles to us so that we may review them prior to translation. Upon our confirmation that they are all in fact, you may proceed with their translation.
- The Greek authorities require that ALL documents requested (apart from the Divorce Certificate) must be issued NO more than 3 months prior to the wedding date.
- **All documents with Apostille seals, etc, and their translations must be faxed or by email to us at least 30 days prior to the date of the wedding.**
- Have the original documents with you when you come to Santorini to submit to the town hall or church. If you would like to keep the originals, you must obtain certified copies of the original documents, and have those apostilled and translated instead.
- The following day of your wedding ceremony, you will receive an official Marriage Certificate in Greek. A translation of the Marriage Certificate is an internationally-valid document, which you can obtain when you return to your country of residence from the authority had all the other documents translated.
- Both the bride and the groom are required to pay €15 each to the tax office in Greece.

A marriage cannot take place in Santorini Greece if:

- An existing marriage has not been cancelled
- The couple has a blood relation up to the fourth degree of kinship
- Have an affinity by marriage up to the third degree of kinship
- The marriage is between a father and his illegitimate child or its descendents
- The marriage is between a parent and his/her adopted child and its descendents, even in the event that the adoption is annulled
- The marriage is between a guardian and his/her ward less than ten months have passed since the solution or cancellation of the previous marriage.

Apostile Stamp

An Apostille is a stamp that validates a document, ensuring that it is recognized in all foreign countries that have signed The Hague Convention Treaty. Generally speaking, a document is only valid in the country it was issued. In the past, the process of getting a document validated and recognized in another country was extremely complicated and time-consuming, involving a number of authorities in the country where it was issued and validation by the consulate of the country in which the document was to be recognized.

The Hague Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization of Foreign Public Documents, popularly known as the Hague Convention, which was established in 1961, deals in this matter, replacing the certification process that was used up till that time, i.e. going to four different authorities to get certification of a document. For the purpose of making this process easier and quicker, many countries, including the U.S.A. and Australia, signed an international treaty concerning the mutual recognition of documents, called the Hague Convention, as previously noted.

According to the Hague Convention, a document that has been issued in any county that has signed the treaty, is recognized in all other such countries if it bears an Apostille stamp, which marks the validation of the document by the superior office in the country and state (province) where it was issued. In the U.S.A, an Apostille is provided by the Secretary of State, as well as the Deputy Secretary of State in each individual state.

An Apostille can be used in the event that a copy of an official document from another country is required. It is an official certification that a document is a true copy of the original. Apostilles are often requested for documents that are required in the event of: international marriages, contracts, adoptions, and inheritance matters.