

GREECE

Yesterday and Today

May 17 - 28, 2007

September 6 - 17, 2007

October 4 - 15, 2007

Experience and learn not only about Greece's ancient traditions and culture, but also gain insights into the contemporary local customs and the current social, economic and political situation of Today's Greece.

Explore the civilization of ancient Greece as reflected in the monuments and archeological sites which cover the Greek landscape. Athens, the National Archaeological Museum, the Acropolis, and the world-renown temple of the Parthenon are the perfect starting place for this program, providing an introduction to the country's long and complex history. The exquisite monuments of Athens will illustrate the finest artistic achievements of the Classical Age. At Olympia, visit the remains of the Temples of Zeus and Hera, and the site of the first Olympic games. Take an optional cruise of the Greek Islands.

UNESCO World Heritage Sites: The Archaeological Site of Delphi, The Acropolis, Athens, Meteora, Archaeological Site of Epidaurus, Medieval City of Rhodes, Archaeological Site of Olympia, Mystra

People to People Experiences: Meet the Greek people at a specially arranged dinner at a local taverna in the Plaka, Athens.

Sample Lectures: "Contemporary Greece and the Greek Personality," "Greek Politics," "The Working Greek Press," "Ancient Greek Polytheism."

Day 1 - Thursday

USA / Athens, Greece

Depart on a regularly scheduled flight to Athens, Greece.

Day 2 - Friday (D)

Athens

Mid- morning arrival at Athens Airport where you will be met by our representative and escorted to the first-class Electra Hotel. Spend the rest of the day at leisure. Evening lecture, then after dinner enjoy a walk of the Plaka, which is the old Turkish quarter of Athens located on the northeastern slope of the Acropolis. Electra Palace Hotel

Day 3 - Saturday (B, L, D)

Athens

Visit the famed Acropolis and the Parthenon. The Acropolis (meaning "high city") saw the construction of temples during the Mycenaean Age. These were destroyed by the Persians in 480 B.C. Pericles began to rebuild the city of temples, which was regarded as the zenith of Classical Greece and the Golden Age of Athens. The crowning temple is the Parthenon, designed with mathematical genius. To achieve perfect form, the foundation was built slightly concave with the fluted Doric columns slightly convex, to make both look straight. Visit the Acropolis Museum, which houses a splendid collection of Archaic and Classical Greek sculpture. A lecture on Greek politics is planned for the evening. A people-to-people experience is planned at a local taverna. Electra Palace Hotel

"Each day was so different from all others emphasizing the diversity and complexity of this amazing land and its many cultural aspects.

Venetia (a national treasure in her own right!) made the history, art, legends, religion, flora and fauna, food and households of Greece, past and present, come alive. It was a privilege to have been one of the group."

Greece - B. Brown, TN

Day 4 - Sunday (B, D)

Athens / Kalambaka

Begin your journey of exploration to the great sites of classical Greece by traveling through the countryside to Kalambaka. This city was destroyed by the Nazis in WWII. It is now a modern city close to Meteora and its rock-top monasteries. Since the 11th century, solitary hermit monks have lived in the

caverns of Meteora. Access to the monasteries was first controlled by removable ladders, then windlasses hauled monks up in nets. Steps have now been hewn into the rocks. Hotel Divani Meteora

Day 5 - Monday (B, L)

Kalambaka / Delphi

Visit the Church of the Metropolis dating back to the 14th century. Wall paintings dating back to the mid-18th century still exist. Then begin your journey to Delphi. Built on Mt. Parnassos, overlooking the Gulf of Corinth, Delphi's setting is stunning. According to mythology, Zeus released two eagles at opposite ends of the world, and they met here. Visit the Archaeological Museum, which includes one of the most famous statues of ancient Greece, the Charioteer (a life-sized bronze statue), and the statue of Antinoos and the Naxian Sphinx. Delphi Amalia Hotel or Delphi Palace Hotel

Day 6 - Tuesday (B, D)

Delphi / Olympia

Visit the sanctuary at Delphi, dedicated to Apollo. Pilgrims bearing gifts came to ask advice of its oracle. The Delphi oracle was believed to be Apollo's mouthpiece and was the most powerful in Greece. Battles were fought, marriages contracted, journeys embarked upon, and business deals closed on the strength of its guidance. In 191 BC Delphi was taken by the Romans, and the oracle's power dwindled. It was consulted on personal rather than political matters. Travel to Olympia. Europa Hotel Olympia

Day 7 - Wednesday (B, D)

Olympia

Olympia, the most holy place in ancient Greece and site of the first Olympic Games. View the remains of the great Temple of Zeus; the Temple of Hera, one of the earliest known examples of the Doric style of architecture; the famed Museum with one of the world's major sculptures, "Hermes" by Praxiteles; and the Stadium that gave birth to the Olympic Games. Europa Hotel Olympia

Day 8 - Thursday (B, L)

Olympia / Kalavrita / Nauplia

Early morning departure for Patras. After a short stop, continue on to Diakofto where you will leave your motor coach and board a funicular train for the ride to Kalavrita. Visit the Aghia Lavra Monastery then return to Kalavrita for lunch at a local taverna on the square. Visit the Mega Spileon monastery. Continue on to Nauplia, the first capitol of Greece. Hotel Grande Bretagne

"We saw and experienced wonderful highlights of Greek history, art, culture, geography and people. I liked the archaeological sites and artifacts, art, sculpture pottery and architecture. Meteora was fascinating - products of man and nature!"

Greece - J. Henderson, PA

Day 9 - Friday (B, D)

Nauplia - Mycenae and Epidaurus

After breakfast, embark on a sightseeing program of Nauplia. Orchards laden with ripe fruits stand in the foreground. Beyond them lies the calm Bay of Nauplia with a picturesque Venetian fortress in between. The first Greek school and Parliament were established in Nauplia. In the church of Agios Georgios, Capodistrias, the first Governor of Greece, was sworn into office and the first King of Greece took the oath of allegiance. Visit the famous citadel of Mycenae, inhabited since 3,000 B.C., from which Agamemnon set forth for the war with Troy. Visit the ruins, including the famous Lion Gate and the Tomb of Agamemnon. Travel to Epidaurus, one of the great centers of medicine in the ancient world. It was the sanctuary of Aesculapius, the god of medicine and antiquity. Designed by Polyclitos to accommodate over 14,000 spectators, the theater in Epidaurus will provide a highlight of the visit to this site. This magnificent theater is one of the marvels of Greece with its remarkable acoustics. Return to Nauplia for a walking tour of the city. Hotel Grande Bretagne

Day 10 - Saturday (B, L)

Nauplia / Corinth / Athens

Travel to Corinth and view the columns of the Temple of Apollo. In the afternoon you will have lunch in Loutraki followed by sightseeing. A lecture on the Greek press will be presented in the evening. Electra Palace Hotel

Day 11 - Sunday (B, D)

Athens

Visit the National Archaeological Museum containing a collection of priceless treasures from the past. The museum should provide an excellent review of the various periods of Greek history. You will also view the imposing Temple of Olympian Zeus, largest of the ancient temples of Athens; Hadrian's Arch, dating from Roman times; and the Temple of Theseus, the best-preserved Doric temple in all of Greece. A special farewell dinner is planned at the Dionysius Restaurant, which faces the Acropolis. Electra Palace Hotel

Day 12 - Monday (B)

Athens / USA

Transfer with assistance to the airport for your flight back to U.S.A.

PROGRAM EXTENSION
GREEK ISLAND CRUISE

Day 12 - Monday (B, L, D)

Athens / Piraeus / Mykonos

Transfer to Piraeus, the seaport of Athens, where you will board your deluxe cruise ship and travel westward through the Saronic Gulf and out into the waters of the Aegean Sea. Arrive at Mykonos, one of the most charming of the Aegean Isles; with its quaint streets lined with white-washed houses, its charming boutiques with their Greek handicrafts, and its thriving night life.

Day 13 - Tuesday (B, L, D)

Mykonos / Santorini / Heraklion

Morning arrival at Santorini, the volcanic crescent-shaped island believed to be the legendary lost city of Atlantis that disappeared beneath the sea. Sail to Heraklion, Crete's capital and home of the Minoan civilization. Travel through the countryside on an optional excursion to the famed Palace of Knossos, center of the brilliant Minoan civilization where the legendary Minotaur once prowled the Labyrinth. These ruins, which range from 3,000 to 4,000 years in age, long predated the cities of mainland Greece and existed more than 1,000 years before the building of the Parthenon. If you wish, you may ask to be dropped off and visit the Heraklion Museum; an easy walk back to the ship.

Day 14 - Wednesday (B, L, D)

Rhodes

Dock at Rhodes, home of the Sun God Apollo. Rhodes' harbor was once dominated by one of the Seven Wonders of the World, the Colossus of Rhodes. Explore the walled medieval city of the Knights of St. John, swim and sunbathe on the glittering Elli beaches, or take an optional excursion to the ancient Acropolis of Lindos, dominated by a majestic fort overlooking the bay at St. Paul.

Day 15 - Thursday (B, L, D)

Kusadasi / Patmos

Early morning arrival at this popular Turkish port and doorway to a rich ancient history. Take an optional excursion to Ephesus, a marbled city of libraries, temples, the Great Amphitheater, and the fabled Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Sail to the sacred island of Patmos, and visit the monastery of St. John the Evangelist and the grotto where he wrote "The Revelations" while in exile.

Day 16 - Friday (B)

Piraeus / Athens / USA

Transfer with assistance to the airport for your flight back to U.S.A.

PROGRAM FEATURES

Services of a specially selected professional English-speaking national guide throughout the program.

All air and land transfers with assistance. All gratuities and taxes for hotels, meals, and services as indicated in the itinerary. Transfers, including baggage handling, by private motor coach to and from airports.

PROGRAM PRICE

\$2,295 per person double occupancy Land Only

\$625 single-room supplement

EXTENSION PRICE \$

695 per person double cabin - Inside

\$795 per person double cabin - Outside

\$995 per person double cabin - Stateroom

\$350 single-cabin supplement - Inside First class accommodations and meals as listed in detailed itinerary on the Oceanic II.

All shore excursions are optional and are purchased on the ship. Price does NOT include the \$95 port taxes per person (subject to change). Cruise itinerary or vessel may change without notice. B - Breakfast L - Lunch D - Dinner Drinks are not included.

B - Breakfast

L - Lunch

D - Dinner

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Drinks are not included.