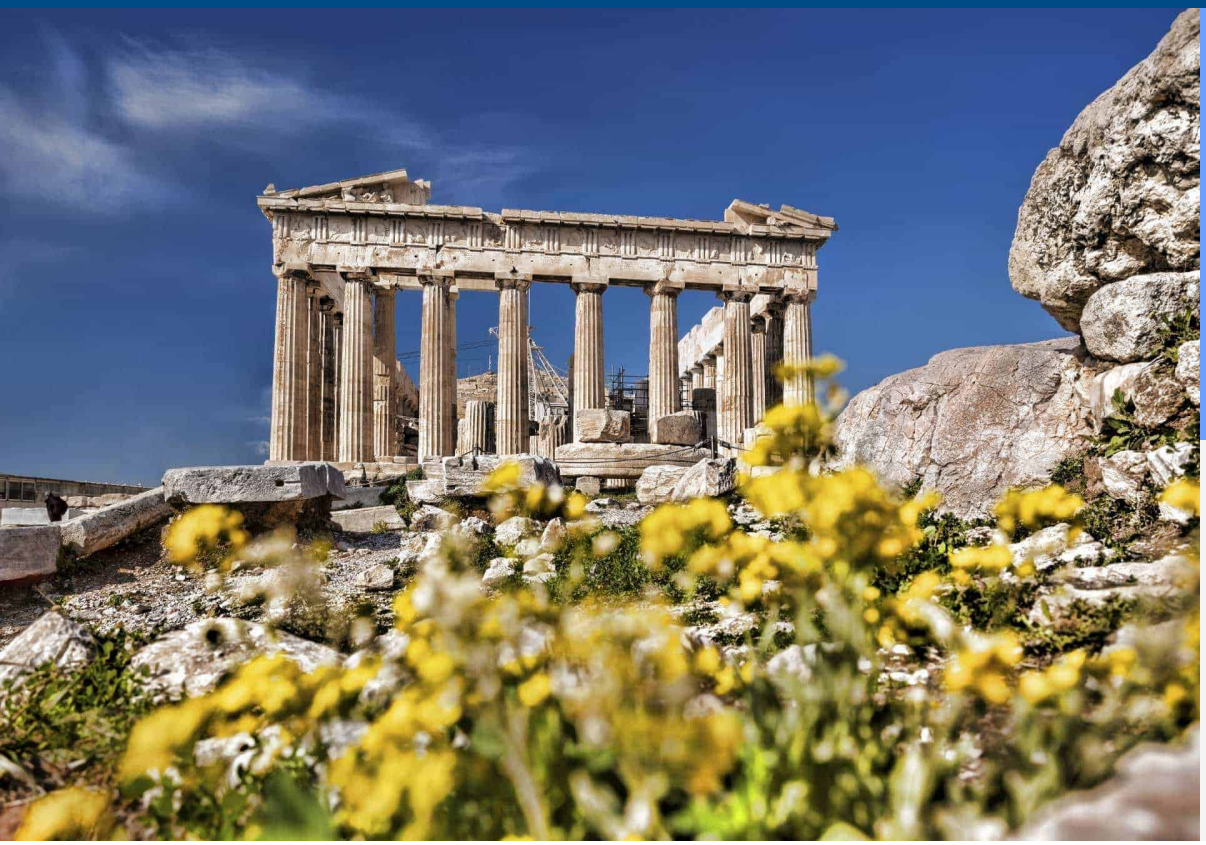
Australia 1300 888 225
New Zealand 0800 440 055
info@odysseytraveller.com



From
€8,126 EUR

Single Room
€9,284 EUR
Twin Room
€8,126 EUR

Prices valid until
30th December 2024

22 days
Duration

Greece
Destination

Level 2 - Moderate
Activity

Greece small group escorted history tour

Sep 08 2024 to Sep 29 2024

Greece Small Group Tour

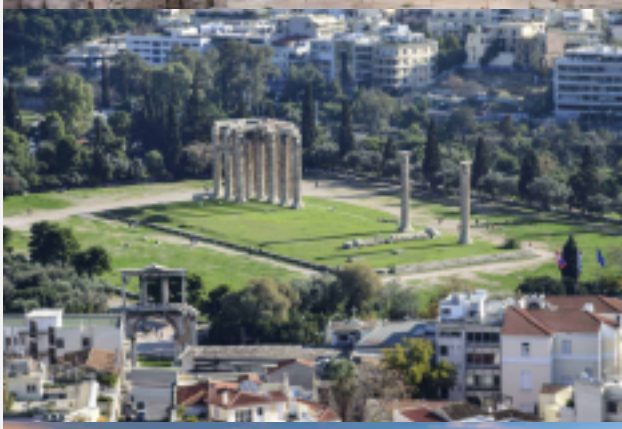
Odyssey Traveller's 22-day Greece small group tour begins and ends in Athens. This Greece tour explores the wonders of the Ancient World and is designed for seniors and mature-aged travellers.

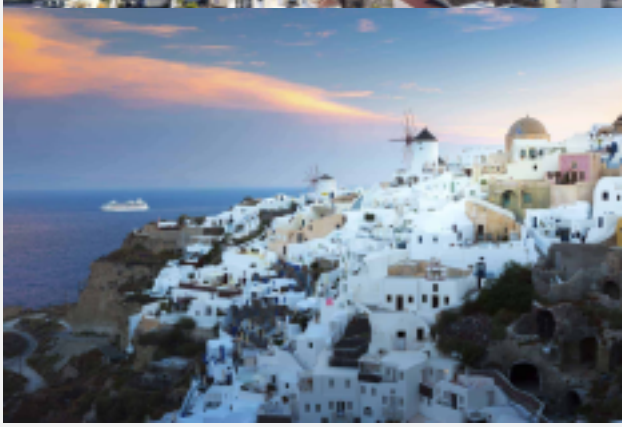
Greece (Greek: ?????, Hellas) is located in sun-drenched southern Europe, on the southernmost tip of the Balkan peninsula. It has extensive coastlines and hundreds of inhabited islands in the Aegean Sea, Ionian Sea, and Mediterranean Sea. Greece is famous for giving

birth to democracy, for its ancient culture that has had a significant influence on the world, and for its mountainous mainland and the blue waters of its idyllic island beaches.

Ancient Greece laid the foundation for many of the empires that followed. As we know, the Romans imitated Greek engineering and architecture. In addition, Greece gave the world great literature and thought via its playwrights, historians, and philosophers. Ancient Greece also made major contributions to the sciences, notably via Pythagoras and Archimedes.

On this fully escorted guided tour, we visit various destinations in Greece with our Program Leader and tour guide and wonder at what remains of its ancient civilisation whilst exploring its ancient ruins, monuments, and natural beauty. On our excursions, we will also sample the best of Greek cuisine.





Greece Small Group Tour Highlights & Itinerary

On our trip to Greece, we explore the birth of Western civilisation and mythology. As such, we experience first-hand the icons and heritage of Ancient Greece. This guided tour of Greece is fully escorted, with a program leader for the duration. Together, we draw on the knowledge of local experts and historians to understand the historic townships we visit. In doing so, we deepen our knowledge of the culture and heritage of modern Greece.

During the 22 days of our educational sightseeing tour, we stop in 9 different locations, staying between 1 to 4 nights in each. The small group tour commences in Athens. Several of these locations go well beyond the usual tourist route. As such, we will have the chance to explore areas where few other tourists venture on their Greek vacation. This is particularly true of the Kalamata region.

This journey also takes travellers into the mountainous interior and the rugged coastline of the Peloponnese. Here, we see the diversity of the

Greek isles. We experience the fertile Ionian island of Corfu, with its rugged mountains. Afterwards, we take in the rocky sun-drenched island of Mykonos. Finally, the group visits the Island of Delos in the Aegean. In addition, we also visit the ancient cities of Corinth, Delphi, and Olympia. Each of these is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, protected for their cultural value. There will also be ample time in Athens to discover the ancient Acropolis and Acropolis museum, as well as the Parthenon.

This tour is paired with the Odyssey Traveller program to Turkey. We also offer a tour of the Eastern Mediterranean Islands, which visits Santorini, Crete, and Cyprus.

You can learn more about Greece with Odyssey's country profile, where all other tour departures are listed as well. For more details on this tour, click the 'Top 5' or 'Itinerary' buttons above! If you're keen to experience this tour, please call or send an email. Or, to book, simply fill in the form on the right hand side of this page.

You may also wish to visit these external links on Greece to extend your knowledge and understanding:

- Is the Greek financial crisis over at last? – The Economist explains
- Syntagma Square – Athens Survival Guide
- Biggest Cities In Greece – WorldAtlas.com

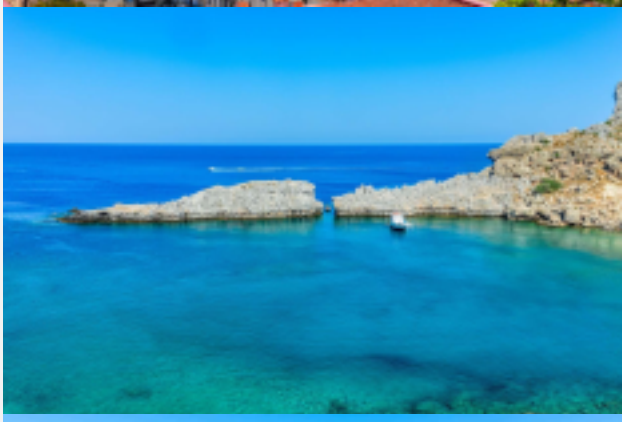
Tour Notes

- Group size is limited to a maximum of 18 participants.

Highlights

1. Visit centres of mythology such as Mycenae, Mystras, and Olympia.

2. See Corinth and the Corinth Canal.
3. Explore Delphi and its Oracle.
4. Explore The Greek Millionaires' Islands, once home to shipping tycoons such as Onassis and Niarchos.
5. In Athens explore the place where Western Civilisation began: the Parthenon and its museum.



Itinerary

Day 1

Locations: Athens

Overview:

Upon arrival in Athens we will make our way to the hotel individually. Our tour begins with a welcome meeting with our Tour Leader at the hotel, followed by dinner.

Athens is the home of the Acropolis and ancient archaeological sites, such as the Plaka with its mix of neoclassical, Turkish, and Greek island architecture. Athens features a mixture of classical Greek, Byzantine, Ottoman, and modern architecture.

Ringed by mountains and conveniently located near Piraeus (its Mediterranean port), Athens epitomises both ancient and modern Greece. Here we are introduced to Greek history as we experience this ancient city. We will learn about the influence of past civilisations and experience the many examples of ancient monuments which give testimony to the richness of the Ancient Greek culture.

Accommodation:

Novotel Athens or similar.

Day 2

Locations: Athens

Overview:

Today we learn about Greek history and culture with a visit to arguably the city's most famous archaeological site, the Acropolis, dominated by the Parthenon. We also view the city's major icons, including Constitution Square and the Plaka, with its medieval town and Byzantine monuments. The evening is free for us to explore the city at leisure.

Accommodation:

Novotel Athens or similar.

Day 3

Locations: Nafplio

Overview:

We depart Athens and and cross the famous Corinth Canal to the virtual island of the Peloponnese. We overnight in the beautiful port town of Nafpolio. There will be time to wander through the Old Town cobblestone alleys and admire the neoclassical buildings.

Accommodation:

Agamemnon Hotel or similar.

Day 4

Locations: Kalamata

Overview:

Today we experience Epidaurus, famed for its UNESCO World Heritage Listed theatre, arguably the most outstanding in the ancient world. We then continue to Mycenae, site of the Lion Gate and Agamemnon's tomb. We then continue to our base in the Peloponnese, the city of Kalamáta, where we will have dinner at the hotel.

Kalamáta, the most important city in the Peloponnese, has been occupied by the Franks, Angevins, Venetians, Byzantines, and Ottoman

Turks. The area played an important role in the struggle for Greek independence. Its location enables convenient exploration of the southern Peloponnese and allows us to learn about the rich history and independent people of the southern Peloponnese.

Accommodation:

Hotel Messinian Bay or similar.

Day 5

Locations: Kalamata

Overview:

Today we have a full day's field trip to ancient Sparta, which was at the height of its power between the 8th and the 4th centuries BC, and Byzantine Mystras, with its many churches and Despots' Palace.

Accommodation:

Hotel Messinian Bay or similar.

Day 6

Locations: Kalamata

Overview:

A full day's field trip takes us from the Acropolis of Sparta to the 13th century BC Palace of the Mycenaean King Nestor. We then skip forwards through more than a millenia of western history to visit Venetian port of Methroni, followed by the the stylish town of Pylos, dominated by its medieval castle and fine natural harbour. We finish the day with dinner at our hotel.

Accommodation:

Hotel Messinian Bay or similar.

Day 7

Locations: Kalamata

Overview:

Today we explore the spectacular natural phenomenon of The Diros Caves, as well as the coastal villages and outstanding scenery of the Mani Peninsula. Dinner is again provided at the hotel.

Accommodation:

Hotel Messinian Bay or similar.

Day 8

Locations: Olympia

Overview:

En route to the northern edge of the Peloponnese, we learn about the local production of wine and famed Kalamata olives at the Mercury Estate.The Mercury family is one of Greece's most respected vintners. We learn about the production of cava in the wine cellar and small private museum and taste the Ktima Mercuris vintages. After we take a walk through the vineyards, we travel to Olympia, ancient home of the Olympic Games, to visit the Olympia Archaeological Museum and the Courbertin Monument. We will have a group dinner at our new hotel.

Accommodation:

Amalia Hotel or similar.

Day 9

Locations: Corfu

Overview:

We start our day with a short introduction and tour of Patras, the largest town in the Peloponnese and second port of Greece. We visit St. Andrew's Church, dedicated to Patras' patron Saint. The town of Patras was converted to Christianity by St. Andrew during the reign of Nero. From here we cross the new Rio-Antrio Bridge over the the Gulf of Corinth back to mainland Greece. We travel north to the Island of Corfu. Our journey takes us past Mesolongi, where Byron's heart is buried,

Agrinio, and the traditional market town of Arta, before we board our ferry at Igoumenitsa to Corfu. We will finish the day with a meal at the hotel.

Accommodation:

Hotel City Marina or similar.

Day 10

Locations: Corfu

Overview:

Today we visit we will have a tour of the main sights of Corfu Town. We take a guided walk through the city, where we learn how it has enjoyed unspoiled renovation since many of its finest buildings were destroyed in World War II.

The island of Corfu, located in the Ionian Sea between Italy and the west coast of mainland Greece, is renowned as a popular tourist attraction. Its history reflects Western European influence with occupation since the 14th century by Venetians, French, and British. It is verdant with olive groves, mountains, and woodlands, providing a setting for picturesque scenery. Corfu's massive forts and fine buildings reflect the architectural styles of Venetian, French, and British occupation, and we learn about the island's place in European history. Today's field trip allows us to explore some of the island villages such as scenic Palaiokastritsa with its 17th century monastery.

Accommodation:

Hotel City Marina or similar.

Day 11

Locations: Corfu

Overview:

This morning we will have a guided tour of Palaiokastritsa, including its famous Monastery. On the way back to Corfu Town we will stop off at

Achilleion Palace.

Accommodation:

Hotel City Marina or similar.

Day 12

Locations: Kalambaka

Overview:

After a return ferry to the mainland, we travel via the Ottoman stronghold of Ioannina into the mountainous heartland of Greece. Here we enjoy a short city tour and visit to the Island. We then continue to the mountain town of Metsovo before arriving at our hotel in Kalambaka for dinner.

Accommodation:

Hotel Kosta Famissi or similar.

Day 13

Locations: Kalambaka

Overview:

From the vicinity of Kalambaka we visit two of the ancient Meteoran monasteries, among the most memorable sights of mainland Greece. These monasteries, perched precariously on rock pinnacles, have been used by religious communities since the late 10th century. In previous times access was by ladder or rope, but roads and pathways provide better access today. Here we learn about their ancient origins and history and observe their rich collections of frescoes and icons.

Accommodation:

Hotel Kosta Famissa or similar.

Day 14

Locations: Arachova (near Delphi)

Overview:

En route to Delphi we pass the typical market town of Lamia before stopping at Thermopylae – the place of the hot springs – the location of Leonidas of Sparta's famous resistance against Xerxes I, which has since become one of the defining stories of the classical era.

Accommodation:

Hotel Ellinion Thea or similar.

Day 15

Locations: Arachova (near Delphi)

Overview:

Believed by the Ancient Greeks to be the centre of the earth, Delphi is set on the slopes of Mount Parnassos. One of the most important religious centres in Greece, it is here that the Ancients consulted the "Oracle" at the sanctuary of Apollo. The rocky slopes, strewn with ruins, where olive, pine, and cypress tenuously seek out an existence, add to the mysterious aura which pervades the area, providing one of the most impressive experiences in Greece. Here we learn about the cultural significance of Delphi as we experience this ancient site.

Our field trip today visits UNESCO World Heritage Listed Delphi Archaeological Site and Museum with its famous bronze Charioteer. There will be some free time to explore ancient Delphi.

Accommodation:

Hotel Ellinion Thea or similar.

Day 16

Locations: Mykonos

Overview:

Today we will board our ferry in Rafina to Mykonos, where there is free afternoon allocated for to enjoy the town at your leisure. We will meet

back at the hotel for dinner in the evening.

Accommodation:

Hotel Petinos or similar.

Day 17

Locations: Mykonos

Overview:

Mykonos is one of the major islands of the Cyclades. With its blue-domed Orthodox churches, white-washed villages and windmills, it is the archetypal postcard image of Island Greece. The island was under Venetian rule for many centuries, but flourished as a self- sufficient society under the community of Mykonians. The island once attracted a considerable number of European writers, intellectuals, and painters, but now is regarded as one of the glitziest islands of Greece. We explore the island and learn about its history. We also include a field trip to UNESCO World Heritage Listed Delos, with its famous Lion Terrace. There will be free time this afternoon in Mykonos to explore Mykonos town and island.

Accommodation:

Hotel Petinos or similar.

Day 18

Locations: Mykonos to Athens

Overview:

We have a morning at leisure in Mykonos town, a maze of dazzling white alleys, fisherman’s dwellings, and convoluted streets, nooks, and crannies designed to confuse 18th and early 19th century pirates. Today the town’s layout has the same effect on visitors and getting lost in Mykonos town is all part of the experience. We may like to explore the Folk Museum with its collection of ceramics, embroidery, and Mykonian textiles plus the nearby 16th century Vonis windmill or visit the asymmetrical hodgepodge of 4 chapels which make up the oldest church in Mykonos – the Paraportiani – and stroll through Little Venice

with its arcaded Venetian houses built to the water's edge.

In the afternoon we transfer to Athens, in time for dinner at the hotel.

Accommodation:

Novotel Athens or similar.

Day 19

Locations: Athens

Overview:

Today we explore the National Archaeological Museum. It is the largest museum in Greece and one of the world's great museums. Although its original purpose was to secure all the finds from the 19th century excavations in and around Athens, it gradually became the central National Archaeological Museum and was enriched with finds from all over Greece. Its abundant collections, with more than 11,000 exhibits, provide a panorama of Greek civilisation from the beginnings of Prehistory to Late Antiquity.

The museum is housed in an imposing late 19th century neoclassical building, which was designed by L. Lange and remodeled by Ernst Ziller.

Accommodation:

Novotel Athens or similar.

Day 20

Locations: Athens

Overview:

After a morning at leisure we have an afternoon's field trip to Cape Sunion, Homer's "sacred headland," dominated by the Temple of Poseidon. Our included dinner is at a local restaurant at the Cape.

Accommodation:

Novotel Athens or similar.

Day 21

Locations: Athens

Overview:

Today we explore sights of Athens at leisure and perhaps have the opportunity to explore the small tavernas of the Plaka. Tonight we take a coach to a local restaurant, where we will have a lively farewell meal surrounded by local music and entertainment.

Accommodation:

Novotel Athens or similar

Day 22

Locations: Athens

Overview:

The tour concludes after breakfast in Athens.

Inclusions / Exclusions

What's included in our Tour

- 21 nights of hotel accommodation.
- 21 breakfasts and 12 dinners.
- Transport, ferry travel and field trips as indicated.
- Applicable entry fees and services of local guides.
- Services of a Tour Leader.
- Service charges and gratuities.
- Detailed tour information booklet.

What's not included in our Tour

- International airfare and departure taxes.
- Comprehensive travel insurance.

- Items of personal nature such as laundry and telephone calls.

Level 2 - Moderate

Participants must be able to carry their own luggage, climb and descend stairs, be in good health, mobile and able to participate in 3-5 hours of physical activity per day, the equivalent of walking/hiking up to 8 kilometres on uneven ground.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any requests for further information about this tour or any others offered by Odyssey Travel.