



Greece and the Greek Islands

Detailed Itinerary

Friday May 12- Arrive in Athens, Overnight in Delphi

Arrive today in Athens, the capital of Greece and the birthplace of western civilization. Upon arrival, you'll embark on a three-day road excursion to the classical cities of mainland Greece. On the way to Delphi, you'll pass through several ancient towns, including Thebes (home of King Oedipus). En route to Delphi, majestically set on the slopes of breathtaking Mt. Parnassus. On an included guided excursion, explore the ancient site of Delphi, the most beautiful and celebrated ancient site of all. This is where the Oracle representing the revered god Apollo presided over the ancient world. Marvel at the ruins of Sanctuary of Apollo, walk the marble Sacred Way and admire the 4th-century BC theater still in use today. You'll also visit Delphi's museum that houses the famous bronze Charioteer, one of antiquity's greatest statues. This evening, you'll enjoy an included welcome dinner. Amalia Hotel (B,D)

Saturday May 13 - Delphi/Nafpatkos/Olympia

This morning, depart Delphi for Olympia, the birthplace of the Olympic Games, passing through the beautiful medieval town of Nafpatkos. Arrive in Olympia and enjoy a tour with a local expert of the archaeological site and museum at Olympia, where the Olympic games were conceived as a tribute to Hercules, son of Zeus. These games were the most important international event in the Hellenic world and continue today with the lighting of the Olympic flame that is carried by runners throughout the world. View the impressive remains of the Gymnasium and the Temples of Hera and Zeus. You'll also visit the museum and see Praxiteles' magnificent statue of Hermes. Later, enjoy an included dinner. Arty Grand Hotel (B,D)

Sunday May 14 - Olympia/Mycenae/Athens

After breakfast, en route to Athens, visit the amazingly well preserved 2300 year-old theater of Epidaurus. Continue to ancient Mycenae, which, according to the poets, was founded by Perseus and built with the aid of the mythological Cyclops. Marvel at the excavations that reveal impressions of the splendors so vividly described by Homer. Admire the Beehive Tombs, the Treasury of Atreus, Lion Gate, Europe's oldest known monument, remains of Agamemnon's Royal Palace, and the impressive fortifications of the Citadel. Later, arrive back in Athens and enjoy a night at leisure. Athenian Callirhoe Hotel (B)

Monday May 15 - Embark Cruise/Mykonos

After a sumptuous breakfast journey to the port of Piraeus, embark your cruise ship and settle into your cabin. Over the next four days you'll sail the deep blue waters of the Aegean Sea and explore the fascinating Greek Isles. Spend the afternoon settling into the cruising routine of enjoying the sun, sea breezes, the pool and other shipboard facilities. Later arrive at the spectacular island of Mykonos renowned for its characteristic windmills and dazzling whitewashed houses. Mykonos is also famous for the stylish crowds that flock to the island's beautiful beaches by day and to the trendy restaurants and clubs by night. Enjoy leisure time to stroll through the picturesque town with its labyrinth of narrow alleys, striking buildings and inviting shops. You can relax at a seaside cafe or a local taverna and enjoy a drink as you view the passing scenery before heading back to the ship. Set sail later tonight. Celestial Cruises (B,L,D)

Tuesday May 16 – Kusadasi – Ephesus / Patmos (Greece)

Dock this morning at the Turkish port of Kusadasi located a short driving distance from the ancient city of Ephesus. Considered the world's best-preserved classical city and famous throughout history for its Temple of Artemis, Ephesus is one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world. Return to the ship in time for lunch and set sail towards the lively Island of Patmos, Greece, known as the site of the apocalyptic revelations of St. John the Divine, written here during his exile from the Roman Empire. Here you may join an optional excursion to visit St. John's Monastery. Return to the ship for dinner and overnight. (B,L,D)

Wednesday May 17 – Island Cruise: Rhodes

Today's port of call is Rhodes, the beautiful "Island of Roses". In the heart of the port city of Rhodes is the largest inhabited medieval town in Europe, a fascinating web of Byzantine, Turkish and Latin ruins. Its mighty fortifications provide the finest surviving examples of defensive architecture of all time. Rhodes most picturesque town is Lindos where whitewashed houses are clustered beneath a soaring castle-capped

acropolis dedicated to the goddess Athena. New in 2017, enjoy an included shore excursion to beautiful Lindos and the Citadel of the Knights. Set sail later today. (B,L,D)

Thursday May 18 - Greek Island Cruise: Crete (Heraklion)/Santorini

Early morning arrival to the island of Crete, rich with history and culture. Awake to the island's bustling capital, Heraklion, where you can visit one of the island's most picturesque places: the Lion's Square. Stop in a local cafe where you can savor a "bougatsa," a local Cretan pastry. You may also join an optional excursion to see the ruins of the Palace of Knossos. Return to the ship in time for lunch and continue sailing to Santorini, a volcanic crater immersed in the sea and perhaps the most breathtaking of all the Greek Islands. In the town of Thira whitewashed houses, narrow streets, outdoor cafes and glittering boutiques line the steep cliffs, accessible by foot, cable car or mule. Join an included tour to explore the spectacular Oia Village. Return to the ship for a final night at sea on board your cruise ship. (B,L,D)

Friday May 19- Disembark/Athens

After breakfast bid farewell to your cruise ship and its wonderful staff and arrive in Athens. An included guided tour features a visit to the awe-inspiring Parthenon, the crowning beauty atop the Acropolis. This massive Doric temple was dedicated to Athena, the divine patroness of Athens. Just north of the Parthenon view the Erechtheum with its graceful Porch of Caryatids. You'll also see the ruins of the Temple of Zeus before descending the Acropolis for a panoramic drive to view the Royal Palace, government buildings and elegant homes in the modern city that stand in a striking contrast to the remains of Athens' glorious past. Check into your city-center hotel and enjoy a night at leisure in Athens. Royal Olympic Hotel (B)

Saturday May 20 - Athens

Enjoy a full day at leisure to explore Athens independently. Your hotel is located within easy walking distance to Athens' lively and inviting old town, the Plaka! (B)

Sunday May 21– Depart Athens

Following breakfast, check out of the hotel. Depart for the airport for your flight back to the USA (transfer not included). (B)