



Journey through Greece

Athens to Corfu

Embark with us on a journey across history and civilizations as our small group travels from Athens, birthplace of democracy, north to the plains of Macedonia, birthplace of Alexander the Great. Along with the stunning ruins at Delphi, the astonishing monasteries of Meteora, and the idyllic isle of Corfu, it's a glorious Grecian odyssey.

Itinerary

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Day-by-Day Itinerary

DAY 1: Depart U.S. for Athens, Greece

DAY 2: Athens

After our arrival in the Greek capital, there's time to relax at our hotel. As guests' arrival times may vary greatly, we have no group activities or meals planned for today.

DAY 3: Athens

On this morning's tour we visit the city's most important sites, including the 5th-century BCE Acropolis and Parthenon, and the renowned Acropolis Museum, housing artifacts only from the site itself. Then the afternoon is at leisure for independent exploration; ancient sights, monuments, and museums abound. Tonight we enjoy a welcome dinner at our hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 4: Athens/Cape Sounion

Today's excursion takes us to Cape Sounion, where we explore the ruins of the ancient Greek Temple of Poseidon, dating to the 5th century BCE. Dedicated to the mythical god of the sea, the temple poses a stunning sight, standing high on a rocky headland surrounded on three sides by the cobalt waters of the Aegean. Following our visit, we enjoy lunch along the Athenian Riviera before we return to Athens, with the remainder of the day free for independent exploration. Dinner tonight is on our own in this cosmopolitan city.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 5: Athens/Delphi

This morning we tour Athens' National Archaeological Museum, housing the world's finest collection of Greek antiquities, including sculpture, pottery, bronzes, and jewelry, from the Neolithic Period to the Hellenistic Age. Then we leave Athens bound for Delphi. En route, we stop in the mountain resort of Arachova, where we have free time for lunch on our own. We reach our hotel early this afternoon and dine together tonight.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 6: Delphi/Kalabaka

We immerse ourselves this morning in the allure of Delphi, site of the 4th-century BCE pan-Hellenic Temple of Apollo, the Oracle of Delphi in antiquity and today a UNESCO site. An extensive archaeological site whose ruins also include the Temple of Athena Pronaia, the Sacred Way, and an ancient stadium and theater in a stunning mountain setting, Delphi was once believed to be the “navel of the world.” Next, we visit the Archaeological Museum of Delphi, one of Greece’s most important museums, whose holdings include the famed *Charioteer* statue, friezes, statuary, and relics excavated from Delphi. Then we continue our journey north, stopping for lunch along the way. Mid-afternoon we arrive in the town of Kalabaka on the plains of Thessaly and our hotel, where we dine together tonight.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7: Kalabaka/Meteora

Sitting at the foot of the Meteora massif, Kalabaka offers stunning views of the 14th-century Eastern Orthodox monasteries perched atop the natural pillars and boulders above. Some 24 monasteries once functioned here; today, six are still active and open to visitors. We embark on a tour highlight today as we visit two of the open monasteries, most likely Agios Stefanos and Roussanou. Before returning to our hotel, we stop to view Byzantine icons at a local shop. Then the remainder of the day is at leisure, with lunch and dinner on our own.

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 8: Kalabaka/Dion/Thessaloniki

En route to Thessaloniki today, we stop in the town of Dion, the ancient “city of Zeus” at the foot of Mount Olympus and the religious center of Macedonia in antiquity. Here we visit the open-air Archaeological Park that depicts life in ancient times, as well as the St. Dionysios Monastery of Olympus. We have lunch together in Dion then continue on to the vibrant Aegean port of Thessaloniki, Greece’s second largest city and capital of the Macedonia region. After checking in at our hotel, we enjoy dinner together tonight at a local restaurant.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 9: Thessaloniki

This morning’s city tour begins at the acclaimed Archaeological Museum of Thessaloniki, housing masterpieces of Greek art from prehistoric times to late antiquity. Next, we visit the Rotonda, a UNESCO site dating to 306 CE and one of the city’s most important Roman monuments, known especially for its superb mosaics of religious, floral, and geometric motifs. We also tour the White Tower, built by the victorious Ottomans in 1430 as a fortress and now a symbol of Thessaloniki housing a museum chronicling the city’s history. Then we’re free for lunch on our own and time at leisure. Later, we enjoy a small group highlight as we join in a cooking class that begins with a visit to a local market to select fresh ingredients for the Greek specialties that we’ll prepare together for dinner tonight.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 10: Thessaloniki/Vergina/Corfu

Leaving Thessaloniki this morning, we travel to the Archaeological Site of Aigai (Vergina), ancient capital of Macedon and UNESCO site. This is also the site of the Royal Tombs of Phillip II, father of Alexander the Great, as well as those of Alexander's son and half-brother. We tour Aigai's underground museum that houses Philip's burial cluster and other royal tombs, as well as relics from the graves that continue to be excavated to this day. Among the highlights: Philip's golden oak wreath. Following our excursion here, we travel on to Igoumenitsa, where there's time for lunch on our own before we board the ferry to the Ionian island of Corfu, our home for the next three nights.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 11: Corfu

We begin our discovery of this celebrated island known for its stunning natural scenery and rich multicultural heritage in the capital of Corfu Town, another UNESCO site. On our morning tour, we visit the Venetian-styled Old Fortress built on a promontory jutting into the sea. Our explorations continue at the 16th-century St. Spyridon Church, and the acclaimed Corfu Museum of Asian Art, housed in the Palace of St. Michael and St. George. After lunch together in a local restaurant, the remainder of the day is at leisure to enjoy this idyllic island as we wish.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 12: Corfu

It's a luxuriant day as we board a private yacht for a cruise along Corfu's eastern coastline, enjoying breakfast and a Greek lunch on board. We catch stunning views of Corfu's Old Town and Old Fortress from the sea as we cruise the crystal-clear waters of the Ionian Sea to secluded coves to swim off the boat or simply enjoy the beautiful scenery. We disembark our yacht midafternoon and are free for dinner on our own tonight.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 13: Corfu/Athens

This morning we get two distinctive tastes of Greece, with the first at a 15th-century olive oil mill, where we enjoy a tour and tasting of this quintessential Greek product – Greeks lead the world in olive oil consumption. Then we visit a kumquat liqueur distillery for another tour and tasting. Similar to Italy's *limoncello*, kumquat liqueur is produced only on Corfu and boasts a distinctive sweet and tangy taste. After time for lunch on our own, we transfer to the airport for the flight to Athens. Tonight, we celebrate our Grecian odyssey at a farewell dinner.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 14: Depart for U.S.

We transfer to Athens' international airport this morning, where we connect with our return flight home.

Meals: Breakfast

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