GREECE & THE AEGEAN

Itinerary

Day 1 Arrive in Athens, Greece
Check into your hotel. The rest of the day is free for you to start exploring the Greek capital. Later, meet your Tour Director and fellow travelers.

Day 2 Athens
A day to do just as you please. You could also join an optional day cruise to the islands of Aegina, Hydra, and Poros. In the evening, free time to enjoy the lively atmosphere of the tavernas and nightclubs in the old Plaka district with its narrow streets and sound of bouzouki music. (B)

Day 3 Athens–Corinth–Epidaurus–Nauplia
Join the included sightseeing tour of Athens, featuring the highlights of this ancient capital and a visit to the ACROPOLIS. Next, westward to the CORINTH CANAL. Journey into the Argolis to make a stop in EPIDAURUS. Visit the OPEN-AIR THEATER, which can still seat 14,000 spectators, then head for the coast and overnight in Nauplia. (B)

Day 4 Nauplia–Mycenae–Sparta
This morning, enjoy the included excursion with a Local Guide to MYCENAE, a city fortress cursed by the gods but rich in gold and warrior kings. Motor south in the afternoon deep into the Peloponnese to Sparta for an overnight. (B,D)

Day 5 Sparta–Mystra–Olympia
Your morning highlight will be the included sightseeing of the medieval BYZANTINE CITADEL OF MYSTRA, at one time known as the “Florence of the East.” In the afternoon, drive to Olympia. (B,D)

Day 6 Olympia–Patras–Delphi
Focus on Olympia, where the athletes of antiquity performed in honor of the king of deities. Learn more about the history of the Olympic Games on the optional sightseeing tour. In the afternoon, drive north towards Patras, the capital of the Peloponnese and the west coast’s largest port. Then, proceed through the picturesque fishing villages along the south coast of the mainland to mythical Delphi, crossing the spectacular RIONANTIRION BRIDGE. (B)

Day 7 Delphi–Kalambaka
Optional morning sightseeing of the archaeological site of Delphi. In the afternoon, drive north by way of Lamia and on to Trikala in Thessaly for an overnight in Kalambaka. (B,D)

Day 8 Kalambaka–Meteora–Athens
A short drive to Meteora, which is a cluster of MONASTIC BUILDINGS perched in an unforgettable manner on a set of rising rock formations. Your included visit is certainly the day’s highlight. Later, drive south via Lamia to Athens for an overnight. (B)

Day 9 Athens
A full day at leisure to explore the unseen parts of the city, or maybe even join an optionals excursion. (B)

Day 10 Athens–Piraeus (Embarkation)–Mykonos
Early morning embarkation and an afternoon spent cruising in the Aegean. Evening arrival in Mykonos, a granite island and the most typical of the Cyclades. Its cubic houses, windmills, and chapels seem to make the island’s light even more translucent. Spend some time visiting a taverna or just wandering around the town, enjoying its timeless beauty. (B,L,D)

Day 11 Kusadasi, Turkey & Patmos, Greece
Two ports of call today. First, Kusadasi on the Turkish coast. An optional morning excursion takes you to the

fascinating Greek, Roman, and Byzantine excavations of Ephesus. Next, discover the tiny Greek island of Patmos, where St. John the Divine wrote the Revelation. The 11th-century monastery with its valuable manuscript collection is well worth a visit. (B,L,D)

Day 12 Rhodes
Dock in Rhodes, largest of the Dodecanese Islands and site of the Colossus of Rhodes, a 105-foot statue destroyed by an earthquake in 224 BC. All day is dedicated to the island of Rhodes. Explore the sights in the historic Old City with its ramparts and palaces built by the Knights of St. John during the Crusades. Another possibility: join an optional excursion to Lindos and the fabulous Temple of Athena. And if sightseeing is not your thing, Rhodes' sun-drenched beaches and colorful shopping districts are within easy walking distance of the port. Sail from Rhodes around dinner time. (B,L,D)

Day 13 Crete & Santorini
Morning at Heraklion on the island of Crete. A few miles away is Knossos, the center of the 3000 BC Minoan civilization; an optional excursion can be booked. Next port of call (weather permitting) is Santorini, the "Black Pearl of the Aegean." The optional shore excursion here takes you up to the cliff-top village of Oia for one of the world's most breathtaking panoramas. (B,L,D)

Day 14 Piraeus (Disembarkation)–Athens
Early morning arrival in Piraeus; drive to Athens. More time to explore the unseen parts of the city or to do some last-minute shopping. (B)

Day 15 Athens
Your vacation ends with breakfast this morning. (B)

Transportation:
Scheduled transatlantic flights and airport transfers in Athens if Cosmos issues the air tickets. Touring by private first-class air-conditioned motorcoach. Cruise in fully air-conditioned inside cabins with private shower and toilet. Supplement for outside cabins are listed under Dates & Prices.