

THE HOLY TRINITY PILGRIMAGE MINISTRY



CRADLE OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION
FORTRESS OF THE ORTHODOX FAITH
2026 PILGRIMAGE

SEPTEMBER 28-OCTOBER 9, 2026



PILGRIM'S GUIDE

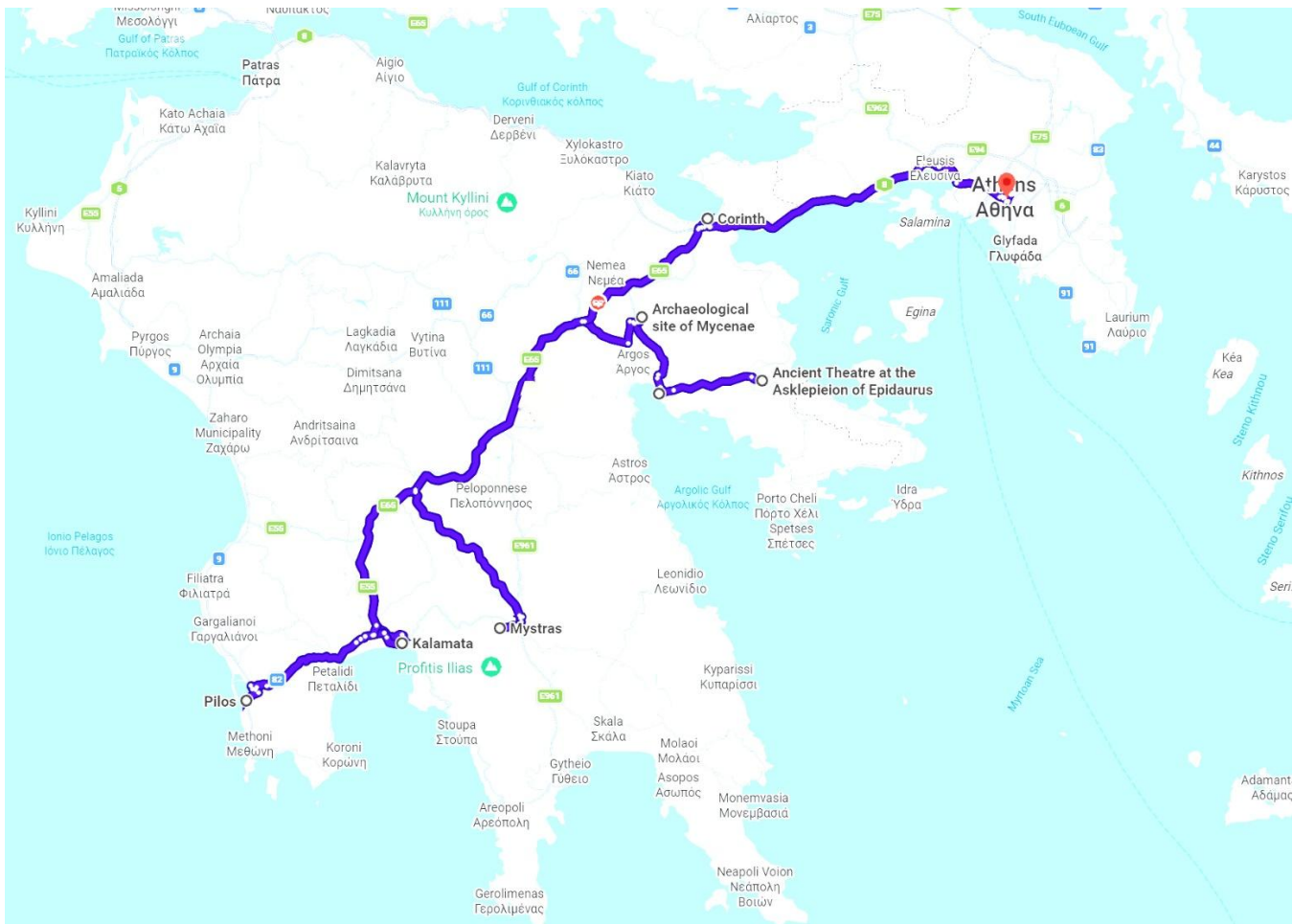
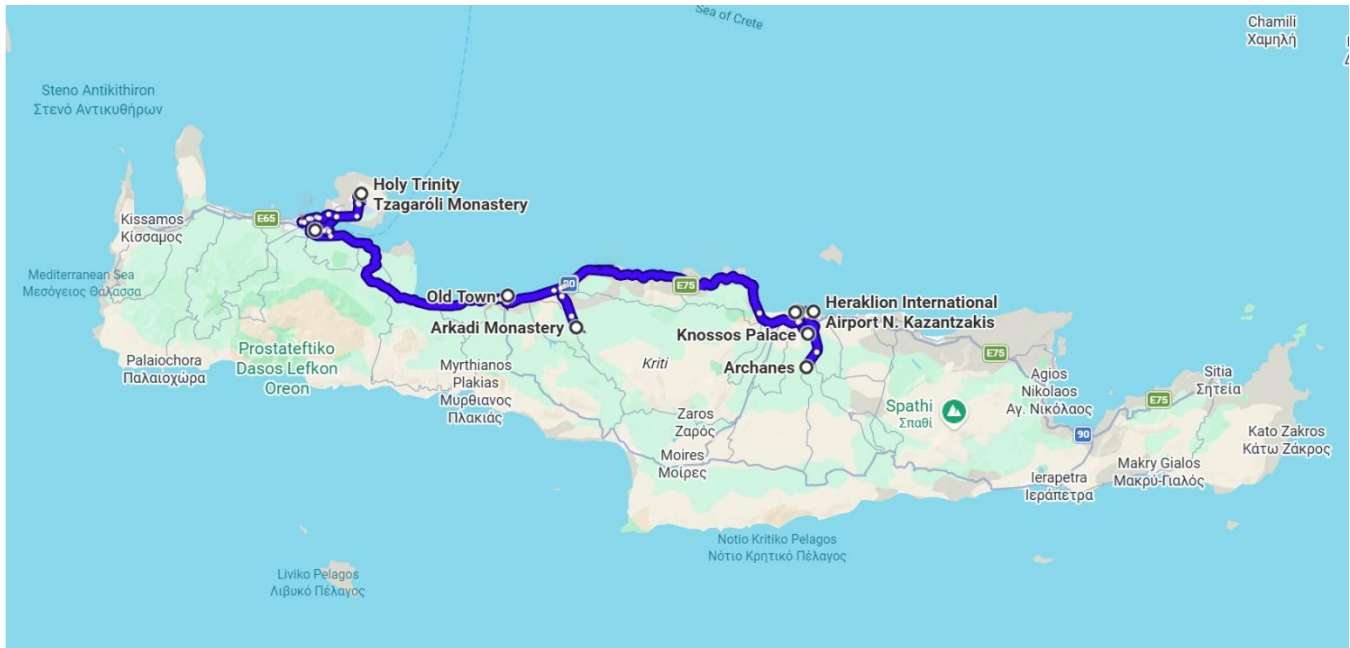
FOLLOW ONLINE EDITION

THE PILGRIMAGE MINISTRY
OF
HOLY TRINITY GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH
PITTSBURGH, PA

SEPTEMBER 28 – OCTOBER 9, 2026

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CLOUD TOURS, PROFESSIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Greece 2026 Travel Map



Greece Through the Ages 2026 Pilgrimage

Pilgrim's Guide

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Pastoral Welcome



Dear Fellow Pilgrims,

Greetings in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

Welcome! By popular demand, our Pilgrimage Ministry is once again setting our sites on Greece! Knowing that there are many of you that participated in the 2024 “Greece By Faith” pilgrimage, great care has been taken to make sure this custom-designed pilgrimage offers destinations personally and specifically chosen to create an all-new panoramic once-in-a-lifetime experience of the faith, history, culture, beauty and tastes of Greece. We will be walking together through the Minoan, Mycenaean and Greek Revolution ages in order and in depth.

This guide is designed to help us prepare for, be inspired by and reflect on each of the holy and/or historic places we will visit. There is collection of historical information, hymns and/or scripture readings for each site. You may want to prepare for each day by reading through the material for the upcoming sites, and you may want to keep it with you along the way so we more fully appreciate the information and insights offered by our excellent professional tour guide, Stavros.

You are also receiving a small booklet for keeping a journal of reflections at the end of each day to remember the experiences and personal impact of the day and of the places we have visited. You will be asked to contribute some of those comments for inclusion in a commemorative photo album which will be produced after our return.

As is the case with each Holy Trinity pilgrimage, this is not a boilerplate “off the shelf” package from a tour company, though we are grateful to our long-time friends at Cloud Tours for their assistance, planning and logistics. We are thankful for the experience and information offered by our professional guide, Stavros Stavroulakis. And we will once again offer a selection of restaurants and menus have been carefully selected to create unforgettable moments you will savor forever. It is truly my joy to share and walk this journey with you.

May the Lord guide, protect, inspire and illumine us with the light of His divine knowledge!

In Christ,

Father John Touloumes
Proistamenos, Holy Trinity Church
Pilgrimage Spiritual Advisor

Greece: Sacred Land of Saints, History and Beauty

Greece's significant place in the history of the world cannot be overstated. Greece is considered the birthplace of Western civilization, with the first advanced civilizations in Europe emerging there. These include the Cycladic culture, the Minoan civilization, and the Mycenaean civilization. Ancient Greece is the birthplace of democracy. Greece's contributions to the fields of language, politics, educational systems, philosophy, art, and architecture are voluminous. The Greeks have been pioneers in mathematics, sculpture, philosophy, science, and medicine.

Greece's role in the development of Christianity also cannot be overemphasized. It is a country with a significant place in the narrative of the early Christian faith. It is intertwined with the travels and teachings of the Apostle Paul as recorded in the New Testament. His journeys, which are foundational to



Christian heritage, brought him through various regions of Greece, leaving behind a trail of sites that continue to draw pilgrims and historians alike. The country's many ancient sites, like the city of Corinth where Paul spent considerable time, and Athens, with its Mars Hill where Paul preached, are significant destinations for those interested in the roots of Christian faith, especially in the formation of many of the New Testament communities.

Greece is also an enduring beacon of Orthodox Christianity for the world. Though the society, like much of Europe, has become increasingly secularized, Orthodoxy remains a key component of daily life. From the magnificent Cathedral of Athens to tiny chapels of the islands to the sacred monasteries of Mount Athos, the chime of church bells and the fragrance of incense shape the sounds, scents and daily life of the land. The Orthodox faith informs festivals, art, music, and the very ethos of the Greek people. Greece's Orthodox legacy is a timeless journey of faith that has navigated through empires, invasions, and cultural revolutions. It is at the heart of the Greek spirit - resilient and passionate - and the eternal flame of Orthodoxy burns brightly, guiding generations of devout followers.

It must also never be forgotten that Greece has not always been a free land or a free people. Concurrent with the fall of the Byzantine Empire, a dark period of 400 years Ottoman oppression known as the "Tourkokratia" (or "Turkish rule") brought persecution, enslavement and martyrdom throughout Greece. It lasted from the mid-15th century to the successful Greek War of Independence that started in 1821, when Bishop Germanos proclaimed the Greek national uprising against the Ottoman Empire and blessed the flag and freedom fighters of the revolution at the Monastery of Agia Lavra, leading to the establishment of the Hellenic Republic in 1822. ("Tourkokratia" or "Turkish rule")

As we walk in the footsteps of history and faith during this journey, we should engage our minds and hearts in the perspective that pilgrimage is not tourism. What kind of journey makes you a pilgrim and not just a tourist? Pilgrimage always connects you to something larger than yourself. Pilgrimage connects you to those longings for God that come from the deepest places in the human heart. For us as Orthodox Christians, these travels through Greece are designed to provide an living encounter with a land and a people rooted in our faith and history, from the magnificent churches and monasteries to the ancient icons to the little candles burning on the roadside memorials. Though Greece has many beautiful landscapes, mountains and beaches that tourists flock to every year, we are going to Greece to experience a land, life and people drenched by prayer and tears of suffering, grief, gratitude and joy.

Prayers Before, During and After a Pilgrimage

PRAYER BEFORE AND DURING A PILGRIMAGE

Lord Jesus Christ my God, be my Companion, guide and protector during my journey. Keep me and all those journeying with me safe from all danger, misfortune and temptation. By Your divine power grant me a peaceful and successful journey and safe arrival. Travel also with me and gladden my heart with Your presence.

I know, Lord, I am a pilgrim on this earth, seeking my true citizenship, which is in heaven. During my pilgrimage, surround me with Your holy angels to guide me and keep me safe from seen and unseen dangers.

Enlighten me by Your holy will that I may fulfill the plans You have set forth for this journey. Illumine my mind with Your uncreated light and fill my heart with faith and joy.

Help me to humbly approach Your holy places and people in thanks and to worthily reverence the sacred relics of those who have lived and died for their faith in You. Grant that I may see the true beauty of all things and comprehend the wonder of Your truth at all times.

Send Your blessings and divine protection upon me your servant, my family, my loved ones and our churches and all those on this holy pilgrimage and keep them free from all harm.

For You are the way, the truth and the life, and to You do I give thanks, praise and glory, together with Your Father who is without beginning and Your all Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

PRAYER AFTER A PILGRIMAGE

Heavenly Father, we have journeyed together the lands where Your Apostles preached and where so many Saints lived, taught and were martyred as living sacrifices. We thank you for the blessing of walking in their footsteps and we pray You will strengthen us to follow their models of faith, courage and love for You.

Hear our prayers for Your Holy Church in this land that she may continue to bear faithful witness to the Holy Orthodox Faith and sacred traditions. Bless our beloved home parishes, our clergy and faithful of our communities and for all those for whom we have prayed on our journey. May the intercessions of the Holy Theotokos and Ever-Virgin Mary and all the saints whom we have venerated and honored on this pilgrimage be offered as sweet incense before Your Holy Altar on their behalf. Be with us as we continue our earthly pilgrimage toward Your Heavenly Kingdom, to the truly holy land where every tear is wiped away and where your Saints rejoice in the light of Your presence.

We ask all this in Your Name and that of Your Son and Your All-Holy Good and Life-Creating Spirit, now and ever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

(Hymn) We praise, we praise You. And we bless, we bless You. Thanks, we give thanks to You, to You, O Lord. Fervently we pray to You, to You our God.

Daily Schedule

This schedule is subject to change. Adjustments will be announced in the Whatsapp group “HT Greece 2026”

Day 1 – Monday, September 28: PITTSBURGH/LONDON/ATHENS

- 9:50pm British BA170 PITTSBURGH – LONDON 9:57am (7 hr 15 min flight time)
- 11:40am British BA630 LONDON – ATHENS 5:35pm (3 hrs 55 min flight time)

Day 2 – Tuesday, September 29: ATHENS/HERAKLION

- 5:35am Arrive at Athens airport. Entry process through passport control.
- Collect luggage. Recheck at Aegean domestic check-in.
- 11:45pm Aegean A3328 – 11:45pm ATHENS – HERAKLION 12:35am (55 min flight time)
- Shuttle will pick group up and transfer to hotel
- Check in Aquila Atlantis Hotel in Heraklion Old Town. Sleep/recover.
- Day 3 – Wednesday, September 30: HERAKLION
- 7:30am Breakfast at hotel
- 8:30am Depart for Knossos Palace (30 min)
- 9:00am Knossos Palace guided tour (2 hrs 15 min)
- 11:30am Return to Heraklion Old Town (30 min)
- 12:00pm Lunch on own and exploring on own in Old Town (2 hrs)
- 2:00pm Heraklion Archaeological Museum guided tour (1 hr)
- 3:00pm Afternoon rest
- 7:00pm Walk to dinner (15 min)
- 7:15pm Dinner at Notio Archipelagos Seafood Restaurant (2 hrs 30 min)
- 9:45pm Walk back to hotel (15 min)

Day 4 – Thursday, October 1: HERAKLION/RETHYMNO/CHANIA

- 7:30am Breakfast at hotel
- 9:00am Check out of hotel / Bus to Arkadi Monastery (1 hr)
- 10:30am Arkadi Monastery guided tour (1.5 hrs)
- 12:00pm Bus from Arkadi Monastery to Old Town Rethymno (45 min)
- 12:45pm Rethymno Old Town walking tour
- 1:45pm Lunch on own and explore Rethymno Old Town, including visit to traditional baklava workshop (1 hr 45 min)
- 3:30pm Depart for Ancient Aptera (photo stop) (1 hr)
- 5:30pm Arrive at Chania and check in to Samaria Hotel, rest.
- 7:00pm Depart via bus for dinner (30 min)
- 7:30pm Dinner at “Mylos tou Kerata” in Platanias (2 hrs 30 min)
- 10:00pm Return via bus to hotel (30 min)

Day 5 – Friday, October 2 CHANIA

- 7:30am Breakfast at hotel
- 8:30am Depart for Chrysopigi Monastery (15 min)
- 8:45am Visit Chrysopigi Monastery (1 hr)

- 9:45am Depart for Souda Bay Commonwealth Cemetery (15 min)
- 10:00am Visit Souda Bay Commonwealth Cemetery – photo stop (15 min)
- 10:15am Depart for Holy Trinity Monastery (25 min)
- 10:40am Visit Holy Trinity Tzagarolon Monastery (1 hr)
- 11:40am Depart for Sternes (20 min)
- 12:00pm Daskalakis house in Sternes visit (1 hr)
- 1:00pm Depart for Chania (20 min)
- 1:20pm Visit Venizelos graves (photo stop) (15 min)
- 1:35pm Lunch on own (1 hr 25 min)
- 3:00pm Chania Old Town walking tour (60 min)
- 4:00pm Explore Old Town/Return to hotel for afternoon rest
- 7:10pm Depart via bus for dinner (15 min)
- 7:30pm Dinner at Theodosi Restaurant (Paparigopoulou) (2 hrs 30 min)
- 10:00pm Return via bus to hotel (15 min)

Day 6 – Saturday, October 3: CHANIA/ATHENS/EPIDAVROS/NAFPLIO

- 7:00am Check out of hotel / Depart for airport (20 min)
- 9:25am AEGEAN A3333 9:25AM CHANIA – ATHENS 10:15AM (50 min flight time)
- 10:15am Arrive in Athens. Collect luggage.
- 11:00am Depart from Athens airport toward Corinth (1hr 30 min)
- 12:30-1:00pm Brief photo stop and snack at Corinth Canal (30 min)
- 1:00pm Depart for Ancient Epidavros (1 hr 15 min)
- 2:15PM Guided tour of Ancient Epidavros, including
the 4th. BC Theatre of Epidaurus and the Temple of Asclepius. (1hr 15 min)
- 3:30pm Depart for Nafplio (35 min)
- 4:05pm Visit Agia Moni Monastery in Nafplio (30 min)
- 4:35pm Depart for Nafplio Port (10 min)
- 4:45pm Arrive in Nafplio Port; porters transfer luggage to hotel
- 5:00pm Nafplio Trolley Tour (20 min)
- 5:30pm Return to port. Walk to hotel, unpack and rest.
- 7:15pm Walk from hotel to dinner (15 min)
- 7:30pm Dinner at Kellari Restaurant on the Nafplio Waterfront (2 hrs 30 min)
- 10:00pm Evening on own in Nafplio Old Town

Day 7 – Sunday, October 4: NAFPLIO/MYCENAE/ASINI

- 7:30am Depart for Divine Liturgy (30 min)
- 8:00am Divine Liturgy at St. Luke the Blessed Surgeon Church, Lefkakia (2 hrs)
- 10:00am Refreshments/Tour Saint Luke Museum (1 hr)
- 11:00am Depart for brunch (20 min)
- 11:20am Brunch at Kosmos Bakery in Nafplio (50 min)
- 12:10pm Depart for Ancient Mycenae (30 min)
- 12:40pm Guided tour of Ancient Mycenae and Museum (2 hrs 20 min)
- 3:00pm Return to hotel (30 min)
- 3:30pm Rest, shop, explore (3 hrs)
- 6:30pm Depart via bus to village of Asini (15 min)
- 6:45pm Dinner at village top “En Asini” Grill House (2 hrs 30 min)
- 9:15pm Return to Nafplio Old Town for evening stroll

Day 8 – Monday, October 5: NAFPLIO

- 7:30am Breakfast at hotel
- 8:45am Depart from Nafplio Port for Palamidi via bus (15 min)
- 9:00am Guided tour of Palamidi Fortress/Castle (1 hr 30 min)
- 10:30am Depart for Evangelistria Church (15 min)
- 10:45am Attend 11:00am Paraklesis Service and tour Evangelistria Church facilities (2 hrs)
Special visit of Miracle-Working Theotokos Icon from Jerusalem Mount of Olives to Nafplio
- 12:45pm Return to Nafplio port (15 min)
- 1:00-2:30pm Lunch on own (90 min)
- 2:30pm Boat ride from Nafplio Port to Bourtzi Fortress (10 min)
- 2:40pm Guided tour of Bourtzi Fortress/Photo stop (1 hr)
- 3:40pm Return to Nafplio Port (10 min)
- 3:50pm Guided walking tour of Nafplio Old Town (1h 10 min)
 - 5:00pm Return to hotel, rest 12:45pm Return to Nafplio port (15 min)
 - 1:00-2:30pm Lunch on own (90 min)
 - 2:30pm Boat ride from Nafplio Port to Bourtzi Fortress (10 min)
 - 2:40pm Guided tour of Bourtzi Fortress/Photo stop (1 hr)
 - 3:40pm Return to Nafplio Port (10 min)
 - 3:50pm Guided walking tour of Nafplio Old Town (1h 10 min)
- 5:00pm Return to hotel, rest
- 7:00pm Dinner at in Old Town Nafplio. Make arrangements in advance and meet at chosen restaurant or meet in hotel lobby and divide into groups. Choose from the many restaurants there. Each person will be given an envelope with cash to pay for the included dinner. Afterwards enjoy a last evening in Old Town.

Day 9 - Tuesday, October 6: NAFPLIO/MYSTRAS/KALAMATA

- 7:30am Breakfast at hotel / Check out
- 8:45am Walk to bus at Nafplio port
- 9:00am Depart via bus to Mystras (2 hrs 15 min)

- 11:15am Arrive at Mystras for Guided Tour of the Archaeological Site of Mystras (3 hours)
(Upper Gate, Agia Sofia, Pantanasa, Agios Dimitrios and Holy Trinity)
- 2:00pm Group lunch at Xenia Mystras (1 min from entrance; included)
- 3:30pm Depart for Kalamata (1.5 hrs)
- 5:00pm Arrive at Kalamata and check in to Pharae Palace Hotel. Rest or walk the harbor.
- 7:50pm Depart via bus to dinner (10 min)
- 8:00pm Dinner at Taverna Krini, Kalamata (2.5 hrs)
- 10:30pm Walk back from dinner (10 min)

Day 10 - Wednesday, October 7: KALAMATA/PYLOS

- 7:30am Breakfast at hotel
- 8:30am Depart for Palace of Nestor (1 hr 30 min)
- 10:00am Guided tour of the Palace of Nestor (1hr)
(best preserved palace from the Mycenaean period)
- 11:00am Depart for Pylos (30 min)
- 11:30am Lunch on own at Pylos waterfront. Can also visit the in-town castle.
- 1:30pm Depart from Pylos for return to Kalamata (1 hr 30 min)
- 3:00pm Arrive at Kalamata Metropolis Cathedral of Ypapanti for visit (30 min)
After visit, transfer to hotel by choice of either taking 45 minute walk through historic district back to hotel or riding bus back to the hotel
- 7:00pm Depart via bus for dinner (30 min)
- 7:30pm Evening dinner at Kastraki-Meteoro Restaurant overlooking Kalamata (2 hrs 30 min)
- 10:00pm Return via bus to hotel (30 min)

Day 11 - Thursday, October 8: KALAMATA/CORINTH/ATHENS

- 7:00am Breakfast at hotel
- 8:30am Check out of hotel and depart for Ancient Corinth (2 hrs)
- 10:30am Tour Ancient Corinth (1 hr 30 min)
- 12:00pm Lunch on own in Ancient Corinth (90 min)
- 1:30pm Depart for Daphni Monastery (Athens) (1 hr)
- 2:30p Daphni Monastery in Chaidari (1 hr)
- 3:30pm Depart for Athens (30 min)
- 4:00pm Arrive at Athens and check into NJV Plaza Hotel/Rest/Repack for early morning flight
- 6:00pm Walk to Farewell Dinner at Thea Terrace Restaurant with view of the Acropolis
- 8:30pm Walk (6 min) to Plaka and Monastiraki for last evening of exploring

Day 12 - Friday, October 9: ATHENS/JFK/PITTSBURGH

- 4:00am Breakfast at hotel / Check out
- 5:00am Depart hotel for airport
- 5:30 Check in for return flight and pass through security to gate
- 10:05am Delta DL203 ATHENS – JFK 2:11PM (10 hrs 46 min flight time)
- 2:11pm-7:30pm – US Passport Control/Collect & Recheck luggage/Layover
- 7:30pm DL5741 JFK – PITTSBURGH 9:26PM (1 hr 56 min flight time)
- 9:26pm Arrive in Pittsburgh

Day 1 – Monday, September 28: PITTSBURGH/BOSTON/ATHENS



ARRIVAL AT AIRPORT: 7:30AM



Itinerary

This morning, you will depart on an unforgettable and fulfilling odyssey of faith, history and culture!

Please be at the Pittsburgh International Airport **by 7:30 am** for ample time to check in and clear all procedures and security. Meet the group at Delta check-in. We will all check luggage and go through security together – please do not do so before the group.

Depart on Delta flight DL5678 at 12:16 pm Arrive in Boston at 12:16 pm and connect to Delta flight DL240 departing at 3:30 pm (Meals will be served on board your international flight) (Attire: Casual).



General Notes about the Itinerary

Departure times: These are listed at the top of each day and are **firm** unless a change is announced at the end of the previous day. Reminders will be sent via the groups WhatsApp message group. Please be respectful of others and be on time.

Packing: Pack light to facilitate yourself with check-in/check-out at hotels and throughout the pilgrimage.

Attire:

Touring/Historic sites:

- Wear comfortable shoes (sneakers or rubber-soled shoes) because there will be a decent amount of walking and paths are not always smooth.
- Casual attire is best. Comfortable. Weather will be temperate at the end of September/beginning of October. Warmer during daytime touring hours, and maybe cooler when the sun goes down.

Churches and Monasteries

- Your dress should be appropriate and respectful. No shorts or t-shirts. For women, no shoulders exposed and no skirts above the knees. It is ok to have a “monastery skirt” to wrap around your pants. Men should wear long pants and a collared or polo shirt. No t-shirts.
- You may want to keep a light jacket handy for entering churches or monasteries.

Day 2 – Tuesday, September 29: ATHENS/HERAKLION



Itinerary

Arrive in Athens at 8:30 am After clearing passport control, collect your luggage. Wait as a group to exit the baggage area. We will walk together up to check in as a group at the Aegean desk for the 11:25am flight to Heraklion, Crete.

Arrive at Heraklion Airport. Collect luggage and board private charter bus to the Aquila Atlantis Hotel for check-in at 3:00. Porters will handle luggage and deliver to rooms. Rest, relax and recover from overseas travel. At 7:25pm, walk to dinner (15 min) at Parasties Restaurant. Walk back to hotel after dinner.



Destination: Crete

Welcome to Crete, the largest of the 227 inhabited Greek islands. Ancient Crete is the place where the Minoan civilization, one of the most important civilizations of the world (2600-1150 BC), started. Huge palace-states were built, such as the famous and superb palaces of Knossos Palace, Phaestos Palace, and Zakros Palace, and the Minoans established a strong naval empire in the Mediterranean. This great civilization was stopped by a natural disaster: the huge waves caused by the eruption of the volcano of Santorini in 1450 BC covered the northern coasts of Crete with lava ashes. Followed by the invasion of the Achaeans and the Dorians, tribes from Northern Europe, the Minoan civilization never revived.

Crete later fell under the domination of the Arabs, in 824, and stayed under it for 137 years. During those years the city of Heraklion was founded, first called Handak. During the early Byzantine years, several churches and structures were constructed. In 1204, the Venetians founded newly fortified cities and conquered the island of Crete. They fortified the old castles built by the Arabs and built new castles.

Rethymno town and Chania town remain intact since the Renaissance, with their beautifully decorated squares, the superb fountains and its fine churches and palaces. During those years, the arts flourished such as painting and literature. The famous painter El Greco (Domenicos Theotocopoulos) started his carrier in this period and other artists and scholars from Constantinople came to Crete. In 1669, the island fell under the Ottoman rule which lasted until 1897, when the great statesman of Greece, Eleftherios Venizelos, negotiated the independence of Crete. Crete was declared an autonomous state and, in 1913, it was united with the independent Greek State.

During World War II, Crete played a major role in the war. The resistance that the Germans encountered caught them completely off guard. Eventually, all Crete fell under German occupation. Many of the local residents were executed for their participation in the Resistance War against the German invasion and many villages were massacred. But the war was continuing and from the southern suburbs of Crete, ships would secretly come at night to board people to Egypt, so that they could continue the war against the Germans from there.

Today Crete is a large island that gets most of its income from agriculture, cattle breeding, and tourism. Although there are tourist places all over the island, the inhabitants still keep their old traditions and customs. In fact, tradition is very important for them even in their everyday life.



Destination: Heraklion

Heraklion is located in the island of Crete, on the north coast. The largest city in Crete, it ranks fourth in the country, with a population of nearly 200,000. Built on the north coast of the island overlooking the Cretan Sea, it seems to be protected by its old Venetian walls, the most important monument inherited from the Venetian occupation, which underlines the city's adventurous past.

History connects the place with antiquity and Europe. During the Minoan era, Heraklion was probably the port for Knossos, the cradle of Minoan civilization (2000-1450 B.C.). References to Heraklion were made by ancient historians such as Strabo, who in his writings of the first century A.D. refers to the port of Knossos as Herakleium, obviously so named in honour of Hercules (Heracles) who had come to Crete to capture a wild bull and thus fulfill the seventh of his Twelve Labors.



During the 9th century A.D. the Arabs occupied Crete and founded at the site of Heraklion a new city called Rabdh al Khandak (Castle of the ditch); the name Handakas is still used by some of the older residents of Heraklion. In the 10th century the Byzantines took control of the island and managed to stay in power till the beginning of the 13th century. During the 14th century, the city fell into the hands of the Venetians. The Venetian period lasted four and a half centuries and it was a period of great progress for the city in terms of development in areas such as trade and architecture, literature and art. The world-famous painter Dominicos

Theotokopoulos (El Greco) was born in Heraklion where he first worked. Many Venetian monuments still exist in Heraklion, such as the old walls which surround the old part of the city, the port fortress (Koules), the Loggia, Morozini's fountain etc. Following the siege of Heraklion by the Turks (which started in 1648 and lasted for about 25 years) the Venetians were forced to surrender the city to the Turks. Cretans rose in revolt many times against the Ottoman Turks, in 1770, 1821, 1866 and 1895. In 1898 the island of Crete gained its autonomy from the Ottoman Empire and in 1912, it joined Greece.

Contemporary Heraklion is a cosmopolitan city, the third port in the country and one of the major



Mediterranean harbors. It is linked by sea with Athens (Piraeus), Thessaloniki, the Aegean Islands, Cyprus and Egypt. There are also frequent flights connecting Heraklion with other Greek cities (e.g. Athens, Thessaloniki, Rhodes) throughout the year, as well as direct flights to European Community and Scandinavian destinations for most of the year. A variety of cultural activities with local, European and international dimension and appeal take place in Crete. Art exhibitions, theatre, literary events, international conferences and scientific meetings put their seal on its

daily life. Crete's location (at the cross-roads of East and West) and its mild climate have turned it into one of the major tourist centers of the country.

Day 3 – Wednesday, September 30: HERAKLION



DEPARTURE: 8:30AM



Itinerary

Enjoy included breakfast at hotel . Meet in the lobby of the hotel for an 8:30am departure for Knossos. Take a professionally-guided tour of Knossos Palace, the ceremonial, political, religious, and economic center of the Minoan civilization.

After Knossos, return to Heraklion Old Town for lunch on your own and casual exploring. At 2:00pm meet at the Heraklion Archaeological Museum for one hour guided tour.

Explore and shop or rest for the afternoon. Meet in the lobby at 7:00pm to walk to Notio Archipelagos Seafood Restaurant. After dinner, walk back to the hotel.



Destination: Knossos Palace

Knossos Palace is Greece's largest and most important archaeological site, with a rich history dating back to the 7th millennium BC. The palace served as the ceremonial, political, religious, and economic center of the Minoan civilization. Its intricate structure, magnificent murals, and distinct sections make it a must-visit attraction on the island of Crete. The mythological tales of the Minotaur, Daedalus, and Icarus are closely associated with Knossos Palace.

Knossos is a place of history, legends, and Crete's most extensive and important archaeological site. The Minoan palace is the largest, most complex, and most fancy of all in Greece. It is located about 20 minutes south of Heraklion. Knossos Palace was inhabited for several thousand years, starting somewhere in the



7th millennium BC. It was abandoned after its destruction in 1375 BC, which also marked the end of the Minoan civilization.

Knossos Palace was the ceremonial and political center of the Minoan Civilization during the Bronze Age. Considered Europe's oldest city, Knossos was once the city-state of Crete, with the town surrounding the hill the Minoan palace is on. The area actually has a very long history of human habitation, from the first Neolithic settlement around 7000 BC, until 1500 BC, when the surrounding city had a population of

100,000. The palace suffered through an earthquake but then was reconstructed. It's believed that the palace was abandoned around 1380 to 1100 B.C. for largely unknown reasons. The excavation and exploration of the site have provided historians with a wealth of knowledge and insight into the Minoan Civilization. Tools like clay and stone incised spools and whorls point to a cloth-making industry, and curvaceous female figurines indicate the worshipping of mother goddesses. The Minoan palace structure

we see today is not exactly as it looked in its original time due to reconstruction and renovation throughout the years, and some archaeologists consider it a facsimile. The Minoan palace complex is not believed to have just been the residence of the monarch but also the civic, religious, and economic center of Knossos.

The Minoan palace of Knossos is divided into several sections, each of which has a separate use. It was multi-story, built with carved structures, and decorated with magnificent murals depicting possibly religious ceremonies. It was accessible from three entrances located on the north, west, and south sides. Four wings develop around the central courtyard. Thus on the west wing of the Minoan palace, there are the ceremonial halls on the upper floors and the public storerooms. Additionally, there are the sanctuaries, the treasuries as well as the throne room. In the southwestern part of the Minoan palace are the Western Courtyard and the Western Entrance leading to the Procession Corridor. The latter was decorated with frescoes. On the left side of the corridor are the Propylaea and the famous Double Horns. The Double Horns are one of the sacred symbols of the Minoan religion. On the east side were the royal apartments, which led to a large staircase, staff rooms, and a sanctuary. Among the most important rooms are the Double Ax and the Queen's Apartment with the dolphin mural. To the queen's apartment, north and east, are the main warehouses and the Zatriki Corridor. In the Zatriki Corridor, the ancients used to play a type of chess called 'Zatriki.' Further east were the various workshops, as well as the royal warehouses. The north wing of the Minoan palace is dominated by the "Customs," a tank of purges, and a stone theater. From the theater starts a Cobble Road that leads to the small palace. Finally, in the south wing, there was the majestic south Propylos. Apart from its construction and architecture, the Minoan Palace of Knossos is most famous for its connection to Greek mythology. Namely, the tale of the Labyrinth and the Minotaur and the one of Daedalus and Icarus. We'll unfold these mythological tales that relate to Knossos later on.

The first major excavation of Knossos was carried out in 1878 by the wealthy art lover from Heraklion Minos Kalokairinos, while Crete was still under Turkish occupation. Minos Kalokairinos excavated part of the western warehouses and brought to light many large 'pithos.' In March 1900, **Arthur Evans** excavated not only the palace but also the wider area of Knossos. The excavation lasted until 1931, while the palace complex was excavated in 5 years, a time that is considered minimal with current methods and techniques.

Arthur Evans proceeded with the restoration of the palace with cement, a technique that is today criticized as arbitrary and aggravating for the Minoan edifice. Since then, archaeological research has been ongoing, and a program has been launched to **protect the palace from damage**.

From the findings of the excavations, we find that a female deity was worshiped in Knossos. The figures with a topless woman holding snakes in her hands are believed to have been the goddess of the ancient Cretans.

Another was the sacred symbol of the double ax and the bull that was also worshiped here. There were toys, the bullfights, where young men and women jumped over the bulls, while many works of art with horns and bullheads have been found in Knossos. In March 1900, Arthur Evans excavated not only the palace but also the wider area of Knossos. The excavation lasted until 1931, while the palace complex was excavated in 5 years, a time that is considered minimal with current methods and techniques. Arthur Evans proceeded with the restoration of the palace with cement, a technique that is today criticized as arbitrary and aggravating for the Minoan edifice. Since then, archaeological research has been ongoing, and a program has been launched to protect the palace from damage. From the findings of the excavations, we find that a female deity was worshiped in Knossos. The figures with a topless woman holding snakes in her hands are believed to have been the goddess of the ancient Cretans. Another was the sacred symbol of the double ax and the bull that was also worshiped here. There were toys, the bullfights, where young men and

women jumped over the bulls, while many works of art with horns and bullheads have been found in Knossos.

The archaeological site of Knossos Palace comprises about 20,000 square meters and over 1,500 rooms, as well as old village ruins in the surrounding hillsides of the palace complex. Be prepared to walk a lot!

The most important part of the site is the Great Palace. The palace's wings are arranged around a central courtyard containing the royal quarters, workshops, shrines, storerooms, repositories, the throne room, and banquet halls. Then there's the Little Palace, located west of the Great Palace and the second biggest building at Knossos. The Bull's Head, a famous archaeological find made of steatite, was found in one of its chambers and is now exhibited in the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion. In the House of the High Priest, a stone altar was found, surrounded by double axes. The Caravan Serai is located opposite the Great Palace, and it was the official entrance to the palace. It served as public baths with running water so that the traveler or visitor of Knossos could bathe before visiting the legendary King. The Royal Temple Tomb-Sanctuary is located south of the Palace, and it is considered to have belonged to one of the last Minoan Kings.



About The Archaeological Museum of Herakleion

The most magnificent collection of Minoan art and culture in the world, unique in beauty and completeness is housed in the Museum of Herakleion; One of the largest, most important and most visited museums in Greece, and among the most important in Europe. The museum's exhibition contains more than 15,000 artefacts, covering a period of 5,000 years, from neolithic era to Graeco Roman period.



The exhibits, collected from excavations carried out in all parts of Crete, come mainly from the prehistoric era (which takes its name from the legendary Cretan king, Minos) and form a valuable record of the artistic, social and economic life of the island during the ancient period. They include examples of pottery in a variety of

practical yet imaginative shapes ; stone carving of exceptional artistry ; seal engraving - one of the miniature arts at Minoan excelled; miniature sculpture of great sensitivity; gold work remarkable for the excellence of its technique and the variety of its subjects ; metalwork - household utensils, tools, weapons and sacred axes, carefully and ingeniously made ; and, finally, frescoes, which, with their harmoniously drawn figures and colorful compositions, give us an insight into a world characterized by tenderness, vitality, sensitivity and charm, a world which took a simple yet intense joy in life and nature.

Day 4 – Thursday, October 1: HERAKLION/RETHYMNO/CHANIA



DEPARTURE: 9:00AM



Itinerary

HOTEL CHECKOUT: follow the on-site instructions provided the night before regarding having your luggage ready for the porters. Be sure you visually see your luggage being loaded on to the bus. After included breakfast at the hotel, be in the lobby no later than 8:45am for a 9:00am departure.

Take a one hour bus ride to the historic Arkadi Monastery for a 1.5 hour guided tour. After that, travel 45 minutes to Old Town Rethymno for a one hour guided walking tour, then enjoy lunch on your own and exploring. Visit a traditional baklava workshop.

At 3:30 depart for ancient Aptera for a photo stop. Continue to Chania and check in to the Samaria Hotel on arrival at 5:30pm. Unpack and rest, then depart via bus for dinner at 7:00pm. Enjoy dinner at “Mylos tou Kerata” in Platanias, then board the bus at 10:00pm for return to hotel.



Destination: Rethymno

On the northern coast of Crete, Rethymno is the third largest city on the island, located between Chania and Heraklion. Built between the imposing Mount Psiloritis and the Cretan Sea, it is one of the best-preserved medieval towns in Greece, a place where history and tradition blend harmoniously with the present.



On one side stretches the old town, graceful, charming and mysterious. On the other, a vast beach full of hotels, restaurants and cafés teeming with life. In between, the small Venetian harbour with the Egyptian lighthouse —the guardian and symbol of the city— is reminiscent of bygone eras. The Fortezza, the Venetian fortress that overlooks the Aegean Sea and stands witness to Rethymno's centuries of history, dominates the old town.

In the alleys of the old town, Venetian fortifications blend harmoniously with Orthodox

and Catholic churches, imposing Venetian residences, arches and vaults, minarets and old hammams, and gardens with bougainvilleas and jasmine. A mosaic of cultures, scents and colours, where traditional crafts come alive in small workshops, while the aromas of Cretan cuisine waft everywhere.

Of course, the heart of Rethymno extends far beyond the city, into its mountains and wild nature. Traditional villages, gorges, famous beaches, seaside resorts, historic monasteries and archaeological sites compose an inexhaustible landscape. The imposing Psiloritis, the highest mountain on Crete and a recognised UNESCO Global Geopark, stands out for its fascinating geology, endemic plants and the living traditions that survive in its hamlets. In the untrodden mountains and quiet villages of the inland nests the Cretan soul: untamed, hospitable and unique.



Destination: Ancient Aptera

A once-mighty city-state overlooking Souda Bay, Aptera still speaks through Roman cisterns, a spellbinding theater, and myths that stir the Cretan breeze. Among the most striking sights in the archaeological site of Aptera are the Roman cisterns – and an enormous public infrastructure project that still inspires awe today. The three grand barrel-vaulted chambers, supported by elegant arches, were originally built to serve a purely utilitarian purpose: collecting and storing rainwater to supply the nearby Roman baths. Yet their scale and symmetry leave a deep impression. Located atop the hill of Paliokastro at an elevation of approximately 230 meters, Aptera commands sweeping views over Souda Bay, just 15 kilometers east of the city of Chania. Its elevation and proximity to the coast made it one of the most powerful city-states in western Crete in antiquity.



Over the centuries, Aptera has been shaped not only by the ancient Greeks and Romans, but also by Byzantine monks who settled in the monastery built on the site, 20th-century European travelers, and even German military archaeologists during the WWII occupation.

Aptera's long history is marked by repeated cycles of prosperity and decline. The city-state flourished primarily between the 4th century BCE and the 4th century CE. One place

where both cycles are visible is the Roman baths. The marble wall cladding and intricate pebble mosaics on the floors clearly speak of affluence. Yet the discovery of large sacks filled with cattle bones in the same space suggests something quite different – that after the devastating earthquake of 365 CE, people sought shelter within these abandoned bathhouses, bringing their entire domestic lives under the vaulted ceilings. Aptera's long history is marked by repeated cycles of prosperity and decline. The city-state flourished primarily between the 4th century BCE and the 4th century CE. One place where both cycles are visible is the Roman baths. The marble wall cladding and intricate pebble mosaics on the floors clearly speak of affluence. Yet the discovery of large sacks filled with cattle bones in the same space suggests something quite different – that after the devastating earthquake of 365 CE, people sought shelter within these abandoned bathhouses, bringing their entire domestic lives under the vaulted ceilings.

Day 5 – Friday, October 2 CHANIA



DEPARTURE: 8:30AM



Itinerary

Enjoy included breakfast at hotel. Meet in the lobby of the hotel for an 8:30am departure for nearby Chrysopigi Monastery. Enjoy a 1 hour tour of the monastery, then depart for short ride to Souda Bay Commonwealth Cemetery for a photo stop.

Depart the cemetery at 10:15am for a 25 minute ride to Trinity Tzagarolon Monastery. Enjoy a 1 hour visit at the monastery, then depart for a brief stop at the home of Father George and Presvytera Evangelia Daskalakis in the small village of Sternes.

At 1:00pm return to Chania. Visit the grave of Eleftherios Venizelos, a Greek statesman and leader of the Greek national liberation movement. Enjoy lunch on your own in Chania Old Town, followed by a guided walking tour of Old Town.

Return to the hotel at 4:00 to rest, then meet in the lobby at 7:00pm for a 7:10 departure via bus to dinner at Theodosi Restaurant (Paparigopoulou). After dinner, return at 10:00pm via bus to the hotel.



Destination: Chania

Chania lies on the northwestern coast and was the capital of Crete from 1841 to 1971. The area has been inhabited since Neolithic times and was a center of Minoan civilization. The Romans took the city in 69 BC, and it subsequently passed to the Byzantines. Arabs established control of the region by about 824 BC, but the Byzantines ousted them in 961. The name Chania appears to have come into use in the early 13th century. Venetians occupied the city in 1252 and held it, except for a brief period under the Genoese (1267–90). After two months of siege in 1645, the town surrendered to the Turks and all the Catholic churches were turned into mosques. The Turks also added new ones, such as the Kucuk Hasan Mosque, and built fountains, bathhouses, inns, hospitals, barracks and other military installations.

After many battles and revolutionary acts of the inhabitants of Crete against the Turkish fleet, the island was declared autonomous in 1897 and became the capital of the Cretan State. Following this, Chania was transformed into a great administrative, commercial and cultural center. The city expanded outside the walls, and embarked on a process of modernization, with the construction of beautiful neoclassical buildings, such as the residence of the MP Manousos Koundouros, the palace of the High Commissioner, the house of Eleftherios Venizelos and the Russian-style church of Agia Magdalini. In 1913, Crete was reunited with the rest of Greece thanks to the many efforts of Eleftherios Venizelos, governor of Crete and later prime minister of the country.

The extensive damages from the constant attacks against Crete wiped out the traces of earlier periods. From the Minoan Kydonia, only remnants of buildings and ceramics have been unearthed by excavations. However, a large part of the old town of Chania dating from the Venetian and Turkish periods has survived. The Venetian port and the historic alleys with their tall mansions create a nostalgic atmosphere. The history of Chania has had a huge cultural impact on the lives of the Cretans. In 1965, the town was declared a heritage monument, and efforts have been made to preserve and highlight its beauty so that it now attracts millions of tourists.



Destination: The Holy Monastery of Chrysopigi

The Holy Patriarchal and Stavropegic Monastery of Chrysopigi is situated in Chania, Crete, 3km away from the city center, on the road to Souda Harbour. The Monastery is dedicated to the Mother of God of the Life-Giving Spring (“Zoodohos Pigi”), popularly known as ‘Chrysopigi’ (the Golden Fountain), and celebrates its feast day on Bright Friday. Every year on this day thousands of pilgrims come to the Monastery to venerate the wonderworking icon of The Virgin Mary.



The Monastery of Chrysopigi, which since 1976 has been a convent, was originally founded at the end of the 16th century as a monastic community of men. Over the course of centuries, the Monastery of Chrysopigi went through periods of both prosperity and decline. During the time of Venetian rule (1211-1669), it was an important spiritual centre for the whole of Crete with many monks and a rich library. Under Ottoman rule (1645/1669-1899), despite all the afflictions it suffered at the hands of the Turks, the Monastery continued its spiritual tradition, contributing in particular to the education of the enslaved nation, and in 1654 it became

a Patriarchal Stavropegic Monastery. (A Patriarchal and Stavropegic monastery is one directly dependent on the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople, which in turn protects and ensures the rights and the laws of the monastery.)

In 1821, at the beginning of the Greek Revolution, Chrysopigi was completely destroyed and deserted. Later in the 19th century the Monastery was renovated and new monks came to stay. During the Second World War the Germans turned the Monastery into their administrative headquarters, forcing the monks to leave and causing grievous damage to the Monastery’s architectural structure. After that there followed a period of what appeared to be terminal decline.

In 1976, Mother Theosemni (†2000), along with the first two sisters of the present-day sisterhood, came and settled at Chrysopigi, which had been in a state of ruin since the German occupation, and thus the Monastery was transformed into a community of nuns. During the following years, the sisters reconstructed all monastery buildings using the existing old stones from the destroyed buildings and incorporating other natural materials from the environment. Alongside, the two Museums of Chrysopigi (the Ecclesiastical and the Folk Museum) were established, where the surviving historical treasures of the Monastery are now safeguarded and preserved.

In the 1990’s the Chrysopigi community also rebuilt its old monastic dependency of St Kyriaki, located in an area with countless natural caves, some of which over the centuries had been inhabited by monk ascetics. The reconstruction of St Kyriaki and the regeneration of the wider area revived the long ascetic tradition of this sanctified place. Here the community also built its new monastic complex dedicated to the Transfiguration of the Lord. Today the Monastery is a large community of sisters receiving a multitude of pilgrims, many of whom are young people discovering the authenticity of life in the worship and the tradition of the Orthodox Church. The sisterhood also welcomes young women from around the world (from Western Europe, the Americas, Africa, Korea and other countries) who seek for a lived experience of Orthodox monasticism. Staying at the Monastery they take part in the daily life of the sisterhood (liturgical worship, prayer, and work activities), learn Greek language and traditional ecclesiastical arts, such as icon painting, embroidery, etc., as well as organic land cultivation. In this way they feel the living presence of

the Orthodox monastic tradition, which, by the grace of God, continues throughout the centuries, calling each one to a life with true meaning.

Hymn: Apolytikion of the Theotokos the Life-Giving Fountain (Tone 1)

English: O Theotokos, your church is like the Garden of Paradise, since it pours out healings and cures like ever-living rivers. We come to it with faith, and we draw strength and eternal life from its water, through you who are the Spring that received Life himself. For you intercede with Christ our Savior, who was born from you, and you entreat Him to save our souls.

Greek: Ὁ ναός σου, Θεοτόκε, ἀνεδείχθη παράδεισος, ὡς ποταμούς ἀειζώους, ἀναβλύζων ἰάματα· ὧς προσερχόμενοι πιστῶς, ὡς ζωοδόχου ἐκ Πηγῆς, ῥῶσιν ἀντλοῦμεν, καὶ ζωὴν τὴν αἰώνιον. πρεσβεύεις γὰρ σύ, τῷ ἐκ σοῦ τεχθέντι Σωτῆρι Χριστῷ, σωθῆναι τὰς ψυχὰς ἡμῶν.



Destination: Souda Bay Commonwealth Cemetery

In the Vlites region of Souda bay, within a wonderful natural environment, one will find the allies' cemetery; of the soldiers that died fighting for freedom during the WWII. The cemetery was built and is preserved by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and owns the graves of all the soldiers that died fighting in Crete. The architects were Louis De Soissons. On the monument of the war cemetery of Faliro are engraved those whose names are unknown. The graves in the cemetery are :UK-862 soldiers, Canada-5 soldiers, Australia-197soldiers, New Zealand -446 soldiers , South Africa-9 soldiers, India-1 soldier, Other-7 soldiers .Total: 1527 soldiers.



Destination: The Holy Monastery of Holy Trinity (Tzagarolon)

Located on the Akrotiri Peninsula, around 15 kilometers from Chania Town, the Monastery of Agia Triada



Tzagarolon is one of the most important religious complexes of the late period of the Venetian occupation of Crete. This is a prime example of the Cretan Renaissance, which became a model for a whole series of other monasteries in the wider area.

The convent was built in the early 17th century by Ieremias and Lavrentios Zangaroli at the site of a pre-existing smaller one. The two brothers came from a Venetian-Cretan family with considerable influence on both Orthodox and Catholic local residents. The friar Ieremias had received extensive Greek and Classical education and had also studied architecture, so he decided to make a bigger complex, which he designed

himself. After his death in 1634, the construction was carried on by his brother, who was also a monk; however, in 1645, it was interrupted by the Ottoman occupation of Chania. During the 1821 Greek War of Independence, it was burned down by the Ottomans, and many of its relics were destroyed. Yet, nine years later, permission was given for the works to be resumed, so that the domes and the chapels were eventually completed in 1836. The belfry was erected in 1864. Between 1892 and 1905, it functioned as a seminary, while during the 1896-1897 Cretan revolt, it served as a hospital and as headquarters of the insurgents. During the Second World War, it was first used as a supply depot by the Greeks, and then by the Germans, who set up an anti-aircraft artillery school there in 1942.

The first thing visitors can see is a monumental staircase leading to the imposing front gate and the bell tower. On either side of the gate, there is a pair of high Ionic pillars supporting the entablature, while above them there are another two pairs of Corinthian pillars forming a semicircular arc. At the top, there is a large pediment bearing an inscription in Greek, while two smaller pediments have been sculpted above the Corinthian columns. From there, an arched corridor leads to an ample patio, where stands the main church (the katholikon), which is dedicated to the Holy Trinity. Built in the Byzantine cruciform style and boasting a narthex and three domes, the katholikon has an elaborately adorned stone facade, with two large Doric and one smaller Corinthian column on either side of the main entrance.

The main church is flanked by two smaller domed chapels with beautiful 17th-century altarpieces. One is dedicated to Zoodochos Pigi (the Life-giving Spring) and the other to Saint John the Theologian, while an elegant little temple dedicated to Christ the Savior also stands in the courtyard. Of particular interest are the underground domed ossuary, the refectory, the former Abbot's quarters, as well as the subterranean domed oil mill, the big water tank and the wine cellars. The eastern wing consists of a large building that used to house the Ecclesiastical School, while the northern side is taken up by the new oil mill and other ancillary structures.

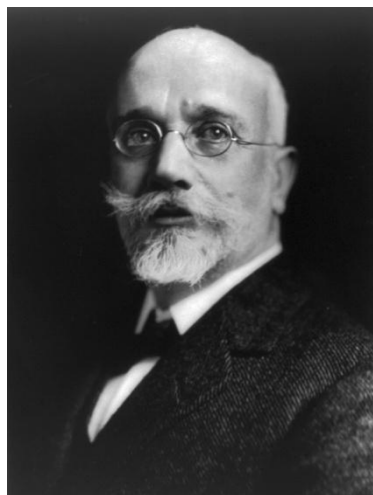
Besides, there is a library containing rare books, as well as a small museum comprising a marvelous collection of wood carvings, icons and codices. Important exhibits include a portable icon of Saint John the Theologian dating back to the early 1500s, the Last Judgement, a 17th-century work by the notable Renaissance painter Emmanuel Skodilis, and a plethora of impressive 19th-century masterpieces. In the museum, visitors can also marvel at surplices embroidered with gold, manuscript scrolls from the 12th century, books, crosses and other religious relics.

Today, the Monastery is engaged in organic farming and produces exquisite wine, raki, olive oil and honey, as well as vinegar and olive soaps. Many of its products have received awards in international competitions.



About Eletherios Venizelos

Born in Mournies, Chania on August 23, 1864, Eleftherios Venizelos served seven times as Greece's prime minister. For most people, he was viewed as the country's most important politician because he expanded Greek borders and brought Constitutional reforms that modernized Greece. Others believe he was responsible for dividing the Greek people.



In 1866 Venizelos' family was exiled to Kythera because his father, Kyriakos, had taken part in the Cretan Revolution. They then fled to Syros, where the young Eleftherios went to school. Although his father intended for him to become a merchant, Eleftherios studied at the Law School of Athens, where he earned a Ph.D. in 1886. In 1887 he returned to Chania and began to practice law while he entered the island's political arena. That year, he published the newspaper Lefka Ori and was elected an MP representing Kydonia. However, the Turkish rulers soon dissolved the Greek Parliament.

In the 1897 Cretan Revolution, Venizelos was especially active, establishing the revolutionary camp of Akrotiri. On August 25, 1897, Venizelos made a petition to the Great Powers for the Union of Crete with the rest of Greece. Ultimately, what he achieved was to declare Crete an autonomous state, with Prince

George II as High Commissioner. On March 23, 1905, with the revolution of Therissos, Venizelos declared Union with Greece. The Great Powers were not happy with this particular development, however, and they intervened, leading to the resignation of the prince.

Alexandros Zaimis, who replaced him, worked closely with Venizelos and on October 12, 1908, the Cretan Assembly proclaimed the independence of Crete and the Union with Greece. With the suggestion of his politician friends, Venizelos was elected an MP in Athens. In 1910 he founded the Liberal Party and won the election, forming a government on October 15, 1910. In 1912, Venizelos was re-elected in triumph, soon putting in motion his ambitious plan to remove the Turks from European territories. With Venizelos as head of the Greek Army in the Balkan Wars, Greece literally doubled its territory with the liberation of Thessaloniki from the Ottomans in 1912.

With the outbreak of World War I, his disagreements with the Palace began to show, especially because of the neutral attitude King Constantine wanted to maintain. Venizelos wanted to join the United Kingdom-France alliance, the Entente Cordiale, and fight on their side. The disagreements led to Venizelos' resignation and his refusal to participate in the 1915 elections, reasoning that the dissolution of the Parliament by the King was unconstitutional. In 1916, when Constantine was ousted and replaced by his successor, Alexander, Venizelos reconciled with the Palace and Greece entered the war on the side of the Entente. At the end of the war, Venizelos signed the Treaty of Neuilly and the Treaty of Sevres, creating a "Greece of the two seas and of the five continents." However, as he returned from Paris, two retired royalist army officers attempted to assassinate him. The Palace began a war of slander against him, leading to his political defeat in 1920. King Constantine then returned to the throne; that development forced Venizelos into self-exile in Paris.

After the Asia Minor Disaster, the Greek Army under Nikolaos Plastiras took over on September 11, 1922, declaring a Revolution. The Revolutionary Officers instructed Venizelos to negotiate with Turkey. With the "Evros Army" that was formed on his suggestion, Venizelos went to Lausanne to sign the Treaty of Lausanne with Turkey, gaining territories in Thrace and establishing the Evros River as the natural border with Turkey. He also signed an agreement for the exchange of populations between the two countries.

On January 4, 1924, Venizelos formed a new government, but he soon began having disagreements with the royal family once more, causing him to leave Greece one more time. He returned to Athens in 1928 to secure another electoral victory. In 1934, there was another failed assassination attempt against him. This time he decided to retire from politics altogether. A year later, however, he resurfaced from retirement to support a military coup, which failed. This time he left for Paris for good. On March 18, 1936, he died of a stroke there. He was buried in Akrotiri, Crete with all the honors of the great statesman that he was.

Today, Venizelos is widely considered a national hero, and countless sculptures of the former Prime Minister have been erected across the country. The country's largest international airport, the Athens International Airport Eleftherios Venizelos, is named after him.

Day 6 – Saturday, October 3: CHANIA/ATHENS/EPIDAVROS/NAFPLIO



DEPARTURE: 7:00AM



Itinerary

HOTEL CHECKOUT: follow the on-site instructions provided the night before regarding having your luggage ready for the porters. Be sure you visually see your luggage being loaded on to the bus. Be in the lobby no later than 6:45am for a 7:00am departure.

Enjoy early breakfast, then be in the lobby no later than 6:45am for a 7:00am departure and a 20 minute ride to the Chania Airport. Take the 9:25am 50 minute flight to Athens. On arrival, claim luggage and board a private bus to the Old Corinth Canal Bridge for a photo and rest stop.

At 1:00pm depart for Ancient Epidavros for a guided tour of the Theatre of Epidaurus and the Temple of Asclepius. On leaving Epidavros



Destination: The Corinth Canal

Fascination with the Corinth Canal has remained from its conception until this very day. Every year countless tourists visit the Isthmus of Corinth to see this technological marvel with their own eyes. If you stand on one of the five bridges spanning the canal and look down at the steep rock face and water below, you will immediately see what an incredible achievement the construction of this canal is.



The rock-cut walls of the 6.3 km long canal rise to 84 m - a hugely impressive sight. The canal has a conical shape, being considerably narrower at the bottom than at the top: The width at the bottom is only 21 m, increasing to 24m at the water surface and 75 m at the top. In order to transport the unbelievable masses of rock out of the canal during the construction, a railway line was built at the bottom of the canal. Of course, water now flows through the entire canal, though only 8 m in depth. At both ends of the canal there are submersible traffic bridges that sink into the water to allow vessels to pass.

As the canal is so narrow, it only allows ship traffic to pass through in one direction at a time. The entrance is controlled by the Isthmus Port Authority by way of a traffic light. The passage usually takes half an hour. For very large ships that have to be towed, it can take up to an hour and a half.

Historians agree; without the Corinth Canal, Central Greece would be a different place today. Its construction was responsible for the emergence of the port of Piraeus as one of the most important trading ports in the Mediterranean. Thus, the canal is likely to have had a considerable influence on the size of the city of Athens today. However, due to the further developments in shipping, the canal has long since lost its former importance. It is nevertheless still a thriving tourist attraction, which is responsible for the relatively high volume of traffic through the canal. To date, an average of 30 ships pass through the canal every day, which corresponds to around 11,000 ships per year. Surprisingly, passage is still not simple for tourists, so most travellers have to be content with an - admittedly very impressive - panoramic view of the canal from one of the bridges above.



Destination: Ancient Epidavros

Epidaurus was an ancient religious site and settlement located on the fertile Argolic plain of the east Peloponnese in Greece. Blessed with a mild climate and natural springs, the sanctuary of Asclepius at Epidaurus was an important sacred centre in both ancient Greek and Roman times. The site, which includes the massive theatre of Epidaurus, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Epidaurus was named after the hero Epidauros, son of Apollo. Inhabited since Neolithic times, the first significant settlement was in the Mycenaean period. Fortifications, a theatre and tholos tombs have been excavated dating as early as the 15th century BCE, although it was in the 12th century BCE that Epidaurus Limera, with its harbor linking it to the Aegean trade network, particularly flourished.

Greek mythology holds the belief that Epidaurus, the son of Apollo was born in this area. Asclepius is the god of medicine, the god of healing. In ancient times, many people would travel here to be healed from various ailments. Both physical and also psychological. They believed the god of medicine had divine powers to heal. In the 4th century BC the Sanctuary of Asclepius was built. This was a sacred center of healing. As a matter of fact, the temple was the most popular healing center in ancient times. With the hopes of being healed, people traveled here from all over the Mediterranean. As time passed, medicine practiced in Epidaurus evolved from faith healing to actual medical interventions. This is why it is the birthplace of modern medicine. Although simple, the knowledge and techniques practiced here became the basis for modern medicine.



At the height of the site's importance in the 4th century BCE (370-250 BCE), major buildings included two monumental entrances (Propylaia); a large temple (380-375 BCE) with the typical 6 x 11 column Doric layout, containing a larger than life-size Chryselephantine statue of a seated Asclepius (by Thrasymedes) and with pediments displaying in statuary the Amazonomachy and the Siege of Troy; temples dedicated to Aphrodite (320 BCE), Artemis and Themis; a sacred fountain; the Thymele (360-330 BCE) - a round marble building originally with 26 outer Doric

columns, a 14 Corinthian columned cella and a mysterious underground labyrinth, perhaps containing snakes which were associated with Asclepius; the columned Abato (or Enkoimeterion) in which patients waited overnight for divine intervention and remedy; other temples, hot and cold bath houses, stoas, stadium, palaistra and large gymnasia; and a 6000 seat theatre (340-330 BCE). These latter sporting and artistic buildings were used in the Asklepieia festival, founded in the 5th century BCE and held every four years to celebrate theatre, sport and music.

The theatre of Epidaurus, with 2nd century CE additions resulting in 55 tiers of seats and a capacity of perhaps 12,300 spectators, would become one of the largest ancient theatres ever built. The theatre has exemplary acoustics which allowed performers to be heard even at the very top rows of seats. Other Roman additions to the site in the 2nd century CE under the auspices of the Roman senator Antonius, included a temple of Hygieia, a large bath building and a small odeum.



Destination: The Holy Monastery of Agia Moni (Zoodohos Pigi)

On the eastern foothills of the fortress of the fortress of Palamidi, near the village of Aria, at a distance of approximately 3km from Nafplio, is the monastery of Areia or Nea Moni or Agia Moni, as it has been called since the 17th century. It is dedicated to Zoodohos Pigi (Life Giving Source) and its catholicon is one of the

most beautiful and well preserved Byzantine churches in Greece, a representative example of the so-called “Greek School” of architecture of the 12th century.

The church was built in 1149, as mentioned by the founding inscription that survives walled-in on the



southwest corner of its narthex. The expenses for its construction were covered by the Leo, bishop of Argos, who in his “Memorandum” provides significant information regarding both him and the monastery. During the Latin Occupation (1212-1389) the monastery remained in Orthodox worship, as a matter of fact it received significant privileges by the Latin bishop of Argos, Segundo Nani. In 1679, during the Turkish Occupation it was granted to the Patriarchate of Jerusalem as a metochi of the Holy Sepulchre. For many centuries it was an important centre of the intellectual life in Argolis and hosted a lot of scholars and scribes who copied manuscripts. It was dissolved in 1833, with an edict by the Regency of Otto, but it operated again in 1875, when it was dedicated to Zoodochos Pigi.

The catholicon of the monastery belongs to the type of complex, four-columned, cross-in-square church with a dome and a triconch bema. On the west there is a narthex and exonarthex, while two propyla are shaped on the northern and western sides, from which the western one has been reconstructed. The bell tower has been added at a later date. The building is over a crepidoma and on its side walls there stone decorative crosses, a characteristic of the architecture of the 12th century. The rest of the walls us built with the know cloisonné masonry system of the Middle Byzantine period, with the middle apse of the alter area being rather carefully erected. The dome is an octagonal one with limestone columns on the corners. The church is characterized by the especially rich ceramic decoration, another characteristic of the 12th century. At its interior nothing survives from the initial decoration of the wall paintings and the marble screen.



Destination: Nafplio

At the head of the Argolic Gulf, in a naturally fortified position, lies one of the most beautiful cities in Greece, Nafplio. It served as the first capital of the newly established Greek state from 1827 to 1834 and possesses a history that is lost in the depths of time.

The city was conquered by many and they all left marks that are clearly visible to this day throughout its neighbourhoods: Franks, Venetians, and Turks bestowed glamour upon Nafplio and made it one of the most important cities of the Peloponnese. Ancient walls, medieval castles, monuments, statues, Ottoman fountains, and Venetian and neoclassical buildings compose a city of inexhaustible charm.

Palamidi, an imposing castle, stands tall at the highest point. Carved into the slope, it offers a panoramic view of the sea and the red roofs of the city. A little lower, crowning the old town, spreads the peninsula of Akronafplia. At the foot of the two castles stands Anapli, the old town with stone-paved narrow streets, blooming bougainvilleas overflowing from balconies and courtyards, and elegant, well-preserved mansions. However, Nafplio also has a modern city, with neoclassical buildings, parks, and squares that compose a beautiful destination. The much-photographed Bourtzi, a fortress built on the islet of Agioi Theodoroi, just off the coast of the city, remains its trademark. In the past, under the Venetians, a huge chain connected it to Akronafplia, closing off and protecting the city from enemy ships.

The city of Nafplio was named after Nafplios, mythological son of Poseidon, and home of Palamidis, their local hero of the Trojan war and supposedly the inventor of weights and measures, lighthouses, the first Greek alphabet and the father of the Sophists. The small city state made the mistake of allying with Sparta in the second Messenian War (685-688BC) and was destroyed by Damokritos the king of Argos.

Because of the strength of the fort that sits above the bay, the town of Nafplio became an important strategic and commercial center to the Byzantines from around the Sixth century AD. In 1203 Leon Sgouros, ruler of the city, conquered Argos and Corinth, and Larissa to the north, though it failed to successfully conquer Athens after a siege in 1204.



With the fall of Constantinople to the Turks, the Franks, with the help of the Venetians captured the city and nearly destroyed the fortress in the process. In the treaty the defenders of the city were given the eastern side of the city, called the Romeiko and allowed to follow their customs, while the Franks controlled the Akronafplia, which was most of the city at the time. The Franks controlled the city for 200 years and then sold it to the Venetians. The Venetians continued the fortification of the upper town and completed their work in 1470. That same year they built a fort on the small island in the center of the harbor called the Bourtzi. To

close the harbor the fort was linked by chains and the town was known as Porto Cadenza, meaning Port of Chains. During this period people flocked to the safety of the fortified city in fear of the Turks and forced the expansion of the city into the lagoon between the sea and the walls of the Akronafplia. The new additions to the city was surrounded with walls and many major buildings were erected including the Church of Saint George. But these new walls didn't matter because in the treaty with Suleiman the First, Nafplio was handed over to the Turks who controlled the city for 100 years and made it the primary import/export center for mainland Greece.

In 1686 the Turks surrendered the city to a combined force of Venetians, Germans and Poles, lead by Vice Admiral Morozini and this began a second period of Venetian rule in which massive repairs were made to the fortress and the city including the construction of the fortress in Palamidi. When the Peloponessos fell to the Venetians, Nafplio became the capital. But after just thirty years the Turks once again took control of the city, almost totally destroying it, looting it and killing almost all its defenders. Most of the survivors chose to leave and the city while the Turks built mosques, baths and the homes in the eastern style, which can still be seen.

In April of 1821 Greek chieftains and Philhellenes surrounded the city of Nafplio and liberated it from the Turks under the leadership of Greek hero Theodore Kolokotronis. Nafplio became the center of activities which would result in the formation of Modern Greece. In 1823 it became the capital of the state, which was then recognized by the "Great Powers" (England, France and Russia) in 1827.

In January of 1828 Ioannis Kapodistrias was recognized as the first governor of the new Greek state and arrived in Nafplio. In 1831 King Otto is chosen as the first King of Greece but a month later Kapodistrias was assassinated on his way to worship at the Church of Agios Spiridon, an event that changed the course of Greek history. In 1833 King Otto arrived at the city of Nafplio where he remained as ruler until 1834 when the capital of Greece is moved to Athens.

In 1862 there was a rebellion in Nafplio against the monarchy. A siege by the royal army followed. The rebels were given amnesty in 1862. In 1834 Kolokotronis was jailed in the Palamidi fortress. His cell at Palamidi can be visited to this day. After the capital moved to Athens, the city of Nafplio became less politically important, but it still continues to attract visitors to this very day because its history is virtually the history of modern Greece and because every occupying power has left its mark. The city of Nafplio is like a living museum.



Day 7 – Sunday, October 4: NAFPLIO/MYCENAE/ASINI



DEPARTURE: 7:15AM



Itinerary

This morning we will **depart the hotel at promptly at 7:15am to walk down to the port bus pickup point and depart at 7:30am via bus** for Divine Liturgy at the Church of St. Luke the Blessed Surgeon Church in Lefkakia. The church, located in a field outside of Nafplio, is a replica of his church in Crimea, where he was a bishop in the 20th century. In addition to being a beautiful church adorned with magnificent icons, one of the most notable features is the collection of holy relics offered for veneration around the square columns of the nave. There are literally hundreds, all identified with inscriptions of the names of the saints. After Liturgy there will be time to visit the museum on the lower level. It chronicles in photos and documents the amazing life of this beloved saint and wonderworker.

At 11:00 we will depart for Kosmos Bakery in Nafplio, a uniquely stunning building on the outside, and the best bakery and coffee shop in all of Greece on the inside. We will have 50 minutes to get coffee, brunch and other treats. Because of limited seating you may want to eat on the bus on the way to Mycene.

After Kosmos we will depart at 12:10pm for a 30 ride to Ancient Mycene. There we will enjoy a guided tour of this notable site and also tour its museum.

At 3:00 we will return via bus to Nafplio, where there are a number of hours to rest, explore and prepare for the evening. At 6:30 we will meet at the bus departure point at the port for a brief travel to the village of Asini, where we will enjoy a delightful outdoor evening dinner at En Asini Grill House. At 9:15 we will return to the port drop-off spot, after which we are free to return to the hotel or to enjoy strolling through Old Town.



Destination: Saint Luke the Blessed Surgeon and his Nafplio Church

On April 27, 2014, the cornerstone was laid for the Church of Saint Luke the Blessed Surgeon in Lefkakia on the outskirts of Nafplio. The Church was finished the spring of 2017 on the occasion of the 140th birthday of St. Luke (April 27th 1877). How did this unique church come to be? Not even two weeks passed since Metropolitan Nektarios' enthronement in Argolida in 2014, when completely unexpectedly there appeared Ioannis Saoulides, a wealthy man of Greco-Russian descent, and his children George and Demetrios, who live and work in St. Petersburg, but who also have ties with Argolida, and who are known for their piety and deep faith. They felt called to build the Church of St. Luke in Lefkakia and received the blessings of the new Metropolitan to do so. The church architecture, iconostasis with its icons, and bells are all Russian in design, creating a beautiful and unique hybrid of Russian and Byzantine design to the church. Below the church is a museum dedicated to St. Luke, with many articles and pictures from his life.

Who was Saint Luke? Valentin Felixovich (Voyno-Yasenetsky), was born on April 14, 1877 in Kerch, and was the third of five children. Valentin's father, Felix Stanislavovich, was a Roman Catholic and a pharmacist by profession. His mother, Maria Dmitrievna, was an Orthodox Christian. According to the mores of that time in Russia concerning the upbringing of children of mixed marriages, Valentin's personality was formed in keeping with Orthodox traditions. His father did not object, nor did he impose his own beliefs on his son. His mother taught him the basic tenets of the Orthodox Church.

In 1889, the Voyno-Yasenetsky family moved to Kiev. There, with God's help, Valentin graduated from two educational institutions: the gymnasium and an art school. Thinking about choosing a career, he had two

options: to become an artist or a doctor. As he was about to enter the Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg, he changed his mind and decided to devote his energies to medicine. His most important consideration was his desire to alleviate people's suffering. Furthermore, he believed that he would benefit society more as a doctor. In 1898, Valentin entered the University of Kiev, the Facultet of Medicine. He studied well, as befits a person who has made a deliberate choice regarding his future profession. He graduated from the University in 1903. A promising career lay ahead of him, of which many of his less talented peers could only dream. But to everyone's surprise, he announced that he wanted to become a doctor for the poor.



At the start of the Russo-Japanese War, Valentin went to the Far East with other doctors to serve in the activities of the Red Cross detachment. There he headed the Department of Surgery at the hospital of the Kiev Red Cross, and was deployed in Chita. In this position, Valentin acquired a great deal of medical experience. During the same period, he met and was attracted to a Sister of Mercy, a kind and gentle Christian, Anna Lanskaya. By that time, she had turned down proposals from two doctors, and wanted a life of celibacy. But Valentin managed to win her heart. In 1904, the young couple were married in the local church at Chita. Over a period of time, Anna became a faithful assistant to her husband, not only in family matters, but also in his medical practice.

After the war, Valentin fulfilled his long-standing desire to become a doctor for poor people. In the period from 1905 to 1917 he worked for a year in urban and rural hospitals in different regions of the country: in Simbirsk province, then in Kursk, Saratov, the territory of Ukraine, and finally, in Pereslavl-Zalessky. In 1908, Valentin arrived in Moscow and got a job in the surgical clinic of P. Dyakonov as a student. In 1916 he wrote, and successfully defended, his doctoral dissertation. The work turned out to be so important and relevant, and its content so deep and elaborate, that one of the scientists in compared it to the singing of a bird. At that time, the University of Warsaw honored Valentin with a special prize.



The first years after the October Revolution were very bloody. During that difficult time, the state had a special need for medical workers. So, despite his commitment to his faith, Valentin was not persecuted.

From 1917 to 1923 he lived in Tashkent, worked in the New City Hospital as a surgeon. He willingly shared his experience with his students, and taught at a medical school (later reorganized into a medical faculty). In 1919 his beloved wife died from tuberculosis, leaving their four children without a mother's care, which was a severe trial for Doctor Voyno-Yasenetsky, but he never remarried. In 1920, Valentin accepted an offer to head the department at the Turkestan State University, which had recently opened in Tashkent. During this period, in addition to his official and family duties, Valentin took an active part in Church life, and attended meetings of the Tashkent brotherhood. Once, after he presented a successful report at the Church congress, Bishop Innocent of Tashkent told him that he wanted him to become a priest. Valentin, who had never thought about following such a path, replied that he would agree, if it was pleasing to God.

In 1921 he was ordained a deacon, and a few days later he was ordained as a priest. Father Valentin was assigned to a church in Tashkent, where he served and pleased God. At the same time, he did not give up his medical practice or his teaching. In 1923, Father Valentin, moved by zeal and piety, was tonsured as a monk. At first, Bishop Andrew (Ukhtomsky) of Ufa intended to name him Panteleimon, in honor of the Unmercenary Physician; but then, after listening to his sermons, he changed his mind and chose the name of the Holy Apostle and Evangelist Luke. So Father Valentin became Hieromonk Luke.



That same year, the renovationist "Living Church" movement reached Tashkent. For a number of reasons, Bishop Innocent left the city without appointing anyone to replace him. In this difficult time for the clergy and the flock, Father Valentin and Father Michael Andreev made every effort to unite the local clergy, and even took part in the organization of the congress (sanctioned by the Г.П.У). At the end of May, Hieromonk Luke was secretly consecrated as Bishop of Penjikent, and a few days later, he was arrested because of his support for Patriarch Tikhon. Today the charges against him seem not only far-fetched, but also absurd: the authorities accused him of a counter-revolutionary connection with some Orenburg Cossacks, in cooperation with the British.

Saint Luke languished in the dungeon of the Tashkent GPU for some time, and then he was taken to Moscow. Soon he was allowed to live in a private apartment, but then he was taken into custody again: first in Butyrka prison, and then to Taganskaya. Then the sufferer was sent into exile to Yeniseisk. In Yeniseisk, he served at home. In addition, he was allowed to operate, and he saved the health of more than one resident. Several times the Saint was transferred from one place to another. But even there he used every opportunity to serve God and to heal people. After the end of his exile, Bishop Luke returned to Tashkent

and served in the local church. But the Soviet authorities were not going to leave the Bishop alone. In May of 1931, he was subjected to another arrest and spent several months in prison, Then he was exiled to



Arkhangelsk for a period of three years. At Arkhangelsk was also treating patients.

In 1934, upon his return from prison, he visited the city of Tashkent, and then settled in Andijan.

There he performed his duties as a bishop and a doctor. A fever caused some misfortune for him: the loss of his sight. The Saint went to surgery (as a patient), and as a result, he became blind in one eye. In December 1937, he was arrested again. A new sentence followed, and a new exile, this time to Siberia. From 1937 to 1941, the convicted Hierarch lived in the town of Bolshaya Murta, in Krasnoyarsk Territory. At the beginning of the Great Patriotic War (World War II), he was relocated to Krasnoyarsk and was involved in treating the wounded.

In 1943 the Saint ascended to the Krasnoyarsk Archiepiscopal cathedral, and a year later he was appointed as the Archbishop of Tambov and Michurinsk. During this period, the attitude of the authorities toward the Saint seemed to have changed. In February 1946, he was awarded the Stalin Prize for scientific developments in the field of medicine. In May 1946, Saint Luke was made Archbishop of Crimea and Simferopol. At this time his eye disease progressed, and in 1958 he became completely blind. However, as eyewitnesses recall, the Saint not only did not lose his courage, nor did he lose the ability to come to church on his own, to venerate shrines, and to participate in the Divine Services.

On May 29/June 11, 1961, the Lord called Saint Luke to His heavenly Kingdom. He was buried in the Simferopol cemetery. On November 22, 1995, Archbishop Luke of Simferopol and Crimea was numbered among the locally venerated Saints of the Crimea. His relics were transferred to Holy Trinity Cathedral in Simferopol (March 17–20, 1996). At the last Memorial Service, His Eminence Bishop Lazarus, Archbishop of Simferopol and the Crimea noted: "For the first time on the Crimean land there is an event of exceptional importance. The radiant personality of Archbishop Luke seems to us today as a saving beacon, toward which each of us must direct our gaze."

Hymn: Apolytikion of Saint Luke the Blessed Surgeon – June 11 (Tone 1)

English: O herald of the way of salvation, confessor and archpastor of the Crimean flock, faithful keeper of the traditions of the fathers, unshakeable pillar and teacher of Orthodoxy, pray unceasingly to Christ our Saviour to grant salvation and strong faith to Orthodox Christians, O holy hierarch Luke, physician wise in God.

Greek: Νέον άγιον, του Παρακλητου, σε ανεδειξεν, Λουκα ή χάρις, εν καιροις διωγμων τε και θλιψεων· νόσους μεν ως ιατρος εθεραπευσας, και τας ψυχάς ως ποιμήν καθοδηγήσας· πάτερ τίμιε, εγγάμων τύπος και μοναστών, πρέσβευε σωθήναι τας ψυχάς ημών.



About Kosmos Bakery

Since 2021, Kosmos Bakery has changed the landscape in Nafplio, transforming the “gateway to the city” into a standout culinary destination. With a philosophy that “blends” modern architecture with culinary creativity, Kosmos Bakery has succeeded in creating a holistic experience of taste, aesthetics, and hospitality. Every product, every corner of the space, every detail of the presentation attests to the fact that we’re not just talking about “a few more everyday baked goods and pastries.” We’re talking about quality that’s evident, design that stands out, and an identity that rightfully establishes Kosmos Bakery as one of Nafplio’s most distinctive destinations.



Kosmos Bakery’s contemporary aesthetic is a fundamental part of its philosophy. The clean lines, natural light, and carefully selected materials (wood, metal, earthy tones), the minimalist approach, and the modern elements create a space reminiscent of a boutique café in a European capital. The open kitchen is the “heart” of the shop. There, in full view of guests, pastry chefs and bakers create fresh products, delighting the senses with the aromas of baking dough, melting chocolate, and fresh butter. The experience of “visiting a bakery” becomes a living experience here,

as the customer feels like part of the process. Kosmos Bakery exudes a premium yet warm atmosphere that makes visitors feel as though they’re in a space with a distinct identity, consistency, and aesthetic appeal—ready to choose their favorite sweet and savory snacks.

Kosmos serves as an “all-in-one” destination for those seeking high-quality options at any time of day. Whether you’re craving something in the morning, afternoon, or evening, here you’ll discover wonderful flavors to accompany you 24 hours a day and for any occasion. The variety of baked goods covers every need for breakfast or a quick snack. From rustic and multigrain breads to sourdough rolls and fluffy baguettes, the bakery’s products stand out for their natural fermentation and proper aging. The pastries—croissants, kourou, and pies—have an authentic flavor and just the right crispiness. Highlight: The variety covers every need for breakfast or a quick snack. The display cases are filled with aesthetically pleasing cakes, pastries made with premium ingredients, tarts that strike the perfect balance between flavor and appearance, and cakes for every occasion. Highlight: The emphasis is on the right textures, pure flavor, and exceptional craftsmanship.



Destination: Ancient Mycenae

This site of Ancient Mycenae is over 3,000 years old. It dates back to around 1600 BC, making it one of the oldest major archaeological sites in Europe. It flourished during the Late Bronze Age—around the same time the Egyptian New Kingdom was building temples and tombs of its own. Mycenae was famously excavated by German businessman Heinrich Schliemann in the 19th century and is recognized for its cultural importance and well-preserved Bronze Age architecture as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1999, together with nearby Tiryns, it tells the story of Greece’s earliest advanced civilization.

Believed to have been inhabited since Neolithic times, Mycenae flourished into a fortified city and was ruled at one time by the famous King Agamemnon. At its peak, Mycenae was one of the most important cities in Ancient Greece and is linked to several works of cultural significance, including the Odyssey and the Iliad. Today, Mycenae contains several well-preserved sites, including the Lion’s Gate and the North

Gate, which form parts of its fortified walls and which once stood 18 metres high and 6 to 8 metres thick. The walls, made of huge limestone boulders, are characteristic of the Cyclopean masonry that the Mycenaeans used to construct their wall circuits.

A few other dwellings can also be seen at Mycenae, together with a granary and some guard rooms. Other important structures include Mycenae's Terraced Palace, which was abandoned in the 12th century, the religious structures which comprise several shrines and temples, a large underground cistern and the grave sites, which date back throughout Mycenae's history. The most impressive of the burial sites and arguably the most remarkable of Mycenae's sites is the Tomb of Agamemnon, also known as the Treasury of Atreus. This once elaborate 13th century BC tomb is carved into Mycenae's hills. There is also the Tomb of Clytemnestra, another monumental tholos-like tomb constructed in c.1200 BC.

With its towering citadel and majestic walls, Mycenae left an indelible mark on the cultural and political landscape of ancient Greece. It was a hub of innovation, where new architectural styles and artistic forms flourished, shaping the very essence of Greek civilization. But Mycenae's significance extends beyond its physical grandeur. It permeates the realm of myth and legend, as the city's origins are intricately intertwined with the mythical hero Perseus. According to ancient tales, it was Perseus who founded this illustrious city, setting the stage for centuries of prosperity and glory. When the bards sang of Mycenae, they spoke of its "broad-streeted" avenues and "golden" treasures, a testament to its immense wealth and opulence. It was a place of power, adorned with palaces and tombs that whispered stories of kings and queens, warriors and heroes.

Mycenae stands as a testament to the enduring legacy of a civilization that once reigned supreme. Its significance is not just in its physical remains, but in the echoes of its past that continue to captivate our imaginations and illuminate the pages of history.

Features to look for at Mycenae

The Lion Gate sculpture is Europe's oldest: Constructed around 1250 BCE, the Lion Gate features the earliest known monumental sculpture in Europe. Its Cyclopean stonework and heraldic lions make it the most iconic entryway of the ancient Greek world.

The Treasury of Atreus: The beehive tomb, built around the same time as the Lion Gate, has a corbelled dome that rises 14.5 meters. It was the largest of its kind for over a thousand years and rivals the scale of Roman architecture.

The Mask of Agamemnon: In the 1870s, Schliemann excavated Grave Circle A and discovered a golden burial mask he believed belonged to Agamemnon. While historians now dispute the claim, the mask remains one of the most famous artifacts in Greek archaeology.

Linear B Tablets: One of the earliest forms of Greek, Linear B was a syllabic script used primarily for administrative purposes. Found on clay tablets and storage tags, it records inventories, offerings, and land allocations—giving us rare insights into Mycenaean bureaucracy and economy over 3,000 years ago.

Artifacts unearthed at Mycenae include Egyptian scarabs, Minoan-style frescoes, and pottery with Levantine influences. These finds suggest the Mycenaeans were deeply embedded in a vast trade network that connected major Bronze Age powers across the Mediterranean.

The Mycenae Archaeological Museum Warrior Frescoes: Inside the on-site museum, you'll find fragments of frescoes showing armed warriors and chariots. These images help reconstruct the militaristic and elite nature of this Bronze Age power.

Day 8 – Monday, October 5: NAFPLIO



DEPARTURE: 8:30AM



Itinerary

This morning, after included breakfast at the hotel, **depart the hotel 8:30am** for a walk to the Nafplio port bus meeting point for am 8:45am bus departure.

We will take a brief ride to the panoramic peak of Nafplio to visit the Palamidi Fortress. (This will save us the time and effort it take to climb the fabled “999 steps” to the top from the base of the path in Old Town!) After a 90 minute guided tour we will return to the bus and travel down the hill to Evangelistria Church, where we will participate in a special Paraclesis to the Theotokos Service in front of a miraculous icon of the Theotokos, which on a special visit with the blessing of Patriarch Theophilos of Jerusalem. After the service we will have time to tour the amazing Evangelistria complex.

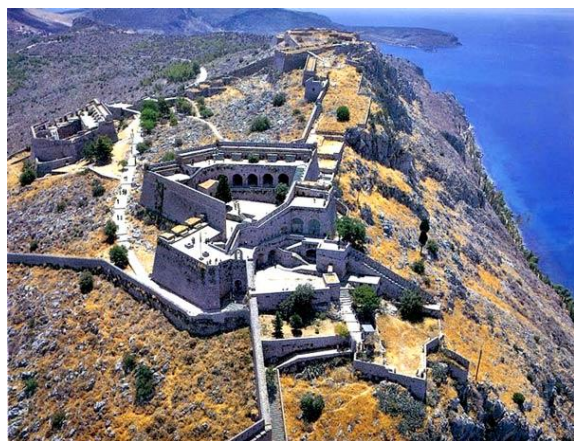
At 11:45am we will depart via bus back down to the Nafplio Port bus spot and have 90 minutes to enjoy lunch on our own at any of the many restaurants and just a few steps away. After lunch we need to be back at the bus meeting point, which is right next to the Bourtzi boat shuttle. We will take a 5 minute ride over the water to Bourtzi Fortress for a tour. After time for some amazing scenic photos we will return via bus shuttle at 2:40pm to the port and enjoy a guided walking tour of Old Town Nafplio.

From 4:00pm on there is time to rest, shop and enjoy Old Town. In fact, the rest of the evening is yours to spend as you wish. Envelopes with money for dinner will be given to everyone, as we are not having a group dinner but your meal is still included. Enjoy your last night in Nafplio your way! Explore! Have fun!



Destination: Palamidi Fortress

Nowhere captures the spirit and history of Nafplio quite like Palamidi. Perhaps the finest fortification of its



time in Greece, built at the start of the 18th century in an incredibly quick three years, its size represented the value placed on Nafplio by the Venetians. Unsurprisingly, it was quickly adopted by the Ottomans who converted one of its bastions into a much-feared prison. And symbolically, it was stormed by Greek revolutionaries in one fateful night in November 1822, marking Nafplio’s return to Greek hands – and, soon, its position as Greece’s first capital.

Palamidi is the fortress that dominates the city, in the sense that it almost floats on a steep hill (216 m) over Nafplio. Between 1711 and 1714 the Venetians built the castle (an amazingly short time), and this is in fact the final fortress of

importance the Venetians built outside their own country. It’s also considered one of the most impressive. Yet, in 1715, one year after completion, the Turks defeated the castle and held it for just over 100 years,

On November 29, 1822, after months of siege, Staikos Staikopoulos led 300 men to take the castle — a soldier from Moschonisia named Dimitrios was first to set foot inside, at the Achilles bastion. The date coincided with the feast of Saint Andrew, which is why the chapel inside the fortress is dedicated to him; the commemoration is still held every year. From 1840 and for nearly a hundred years, Palamidi was used as a prison, and in conjunction with this the stairs up to the castle was built. It is often said that there are

999 steps, but it's actually "only" 857. The walk is well worth the effort, the view of Nafplio and the Argolic gulf just gets better and better. Start in the morning, when the shadow falls on the stairs, and bring water! If 857 steps are a little too overwhelming, you can drive up to the "back" of the castle via 25. Martiou Street.

Palamidi is very well preserved, and it's evocative and beautiful to walk on the worn stones, between the massive walls and buildings...but be careful...the smooth stones can be slippery! Among other things you can try sitting in the jail cell of Greek freedom fighter General Theodoros Kolokotronis, visit the Agios Andreas Church, and admire the eight bastions within the sturdy castle walls.

stunning.



Destination: Bourtzi Fortress

The Venetians built the small fortress Bourtzi, located in the Argolic gulf and close to Nafplio, in 1471. Bourtzi was originally part of the city's defenses, and thick chains ran from the castle to the mainland to prevent enemy ships from docking.

Between 1865 and 1935 Bourtzi was the executioner's residence. The reason, of course, was that no one wanted to be neighbors with people in this profession. Later, Bourtzi became a hotel / restaurant – what a contrast! Lately it's purely a tourist attraction, and has become the symbol of Nafplio. But in 2023 Bourtzi was thoroughly renovated, and is now both easier and more fun to explore, with historic displays and amazing views. There's also a very good museum shop.



Small boats head out to the fortress, leaving from the port near Filellinon Square fairly regularly, depending on the season. The trip lasts only a couple of minutes, and the view towards the city is stunning.



About Old Town Nafplio



The Naus Hotel, perched up a short incline overlooking Nafplio, makes daily access Old Town just a few minutes' walk. Everything is within easy reach—lively squares, bustling cafés, waterfront tavernas, and the winding lanes of the old town, each corner steeped in history. Stroll cobble streets draped with bougainvillea, explore imposing fortresses, and savor leisurely meals in sun-dappled squares. Neoclassical buildings line the waterfront, home to bustling cafés and inviting tavernas, while quiet alleyways reveal local shops, markets, and traces of the town's layered past. The pedestrian-friendly streets invite leisurely exploration without the rush of typical tourist

destinations. You'll find locals greeting neighbors from their balconies, family-run tavernas serving recipes passed down through generations, and artisan shops where craftspeople still practice traditional techniques.

The Old Town showcases an extraordinary concentration of architectural styles that reflect its tumultuous history. Venetian fortifications stand alongside Ottoman fountains, while neoclassical mansions painted in ochre and terracotta create a Mediterranean color palette that changes with the light.

Syntagma Square forms the heart of the Old Town, surrounded by elegant buildings that once housed government offices during Nafplio's brief stint as the Greek capital. The square's cafes provide perfect vantage points for watching daily life unfold while admiring the surrounding architecture.



During nearly 150 years of Ottoman control, mosques were built and converted, fountains were installed at strategic corners, and the urban fabric absorbed Eastern influences. The Vouleftiko (former mosque) on Syntagma Square now serves as a concert hall, its elegant proportions testament to Ottoman architectural sophistication. Traditional wooden balconies still project from several buildings, creating shaded walkways below. These architectural elements blend seamlessly with the Venetian structures, creating Nafplio's unique aesthetic that sets it apart from other Greek cities.

When Nafplio became Greece's first capital, wealthy families built grand neoclassical mansions that still grace the Old Town's most prominent streets. These buildings, painted in warm Mediterranean hues, feature symmetrical facades, ornate balconies, and classical proportions that reflect 19th-century European taste. Many of these mansions have been converted into boutique hotels, museums, and cultural centers, allowing visitors to experience their interiors. The attention to architectural detail—from hand-painted ceilings to marble staircases—demonstrates the craftsmanship of the era.

The Old Town's labyrinthine layout was designed for defense, not convenience, creating a delightful challenge for modern explorers. Getting lost in these streets is part of the experience, as unexpected discoveries await around every corner. Stadiou Street serves as the main commercial artery, lined with shops, cafes, and restaurants in historic buildings. This pedestrian thoroughfare connects Syntagma Square with the waterfront, providing an easy reference point for orientation.

The Old Town's compact size means you're never far from a landmark, making aimless wandering both safe and rewarding. Allow yourself to follow intriguing alleyways, peek into hidden courtyards, and discover tucked-away churches that rarely appear in guidebooks. Nafplio's Old Town contains dozens of churches, each with its own history and architectural character. The Church of Agios Spyridon holds particular significance as the site where Ioannis Kapodistrias, Greece's first governor, was assassinated in 1831—the bullet hole remains visible in the doorway. The Catholic Church of the Transfiguration reflects the Venetian presence, while numerous small Orthodox chapels tucked into neighborhoods serve local communities. The diversity of religious architecture mirrors the town's multicultural past.



Nafplio's Old Town offers exceptional dining opportunities, from traditional tavernas serving family recipes to contemporary restaurants reimagining Greek cuisine. The proximity to the sea ensures fresh seafood, while the surrounding Argolid plain provides excellent produce.

Many restaurants occupy historic buildings with atmospheric interiors or romantic courtyard seating. Dining here becomes an experience that engages all senses—the architecture, the aromas, the flavors, and the sounds of Greek conversation and music. Family-run establishments have operated in the same locations for generations, maintaining traditional cooking methods and authentic recipes. These tavernas source ingredients locally and change menus seasonally based on availability. The warmth of Greek hospitality shines in these settings, where owners often visit tables to explain dishes or share stories. This personal touch transforms meals into cultural exchanges that visitors remember long after leaving.

Nafplio has earned its reputation as Greece's most romantic town through the combination of architectural beauty, intimate scale, and seaside setting. Couples find endless opportunities for memorable moments among the historic streets. Evening strolls along the waterfront promenade, candlelit dinners in hidden courtyards, and sunsets viewed from fortress walls create natural romance. The town's unhurried pace encourages lingering over coffee and savoring shared experiences. The town's beauty provides a backdrop that enhances every shared moment, from morning coffee in a sun-dappled square to late-night conversations over local wine. Nafplio Old Town also ranks among Greece's most photogenic locations, offering endless compositions of architectural details, street scenes, and atmospheric light. The varied textures, colors, and perspectives reward photographers at all skill levels. Golden hour—the first hour after sunrise and the last before sunset—bathes the town in warm light that enhances the ochre and terracotta buildings. The changing light throughout the day creates different moods and photographic opportunities.

Day 9 – Tuesday, October 6: NAFPLIO/MYSTRAS/KALAMATA



DEPARTURE: 8:30AM



Itinerary

HOTEL CHECKOUT: follow the on-site instructions provided the night before regarding having your luggage ready for the porters. Be sure you visually see your luggage being loaded on to the bus. Be in the lobby no later than 8:30am for an 8:45am departure.

Today we depart Nafplio for a 2.5 hour bus trip to Mystras, the incredibly preserved Byzantine city-state. On arrival we will enjoy a guided tour of this amazing and historic complex. If anyone is unable to navigate the difficulties walking up and down the stairs, there will be a place at the base to relax.

At 2:00pm we will enjoy an included group luncheon at Xenia Mystras, then at 3:30pm we will depart for a 1.5 hour bus ride to Kalamata. On arrival at 5:00pm we will check in to the hotel and either rest or stroll along the beautiful port's waterfront.



Destination: Mystras

Mystras is a late-Byzantine city-state with an illustrious past. It has been uninhabited since 1953, but many of the old houses and churches are exceptionally well-preserved, meaning you can “step back in time” and get a real sense of life here over the centuries. In its heyday it was one of the most important cities in Byzantium, and was ruled by Constantine XI Dragases Palaiologos who became the last Byzantine Emperor and who died defending Constantinople from the Ottomans. Mystras thrived under his



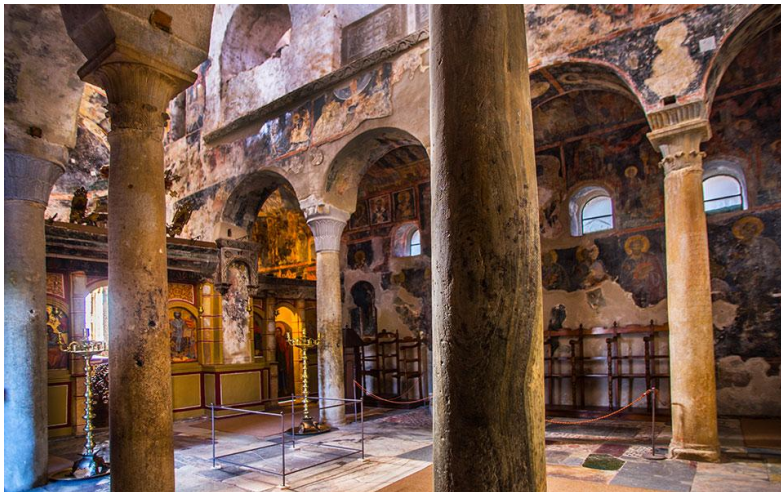
rule and was home to a renaissance movement when science, philosophy and art flourished here. Mystras was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1989. The history of Mystras is one of the most fascinating stories of Byzantium. The city was founded in 1249 and its Byzantine history came to an end in 1460 when it was surrendered to the Ottomans without a fight by the last Despot, Dimitrios Palaiologos. The castle itself, however, never fell.

The original strong wall and the castle were built on isolated Myzithra hill in 1249 by the Frankish prince William II Villeardouin, to whose family the Peloponnese had been granted after Constantinople fell to the Crusaders of the Fourth Crusade (1204). The hill was an ideal point for controlling the valley of Eurotas, where the Melingoi, a Slavic tribe, also lived. In the battle of Pelagonia in 1259 the prince was taken prisoner by the Byzantines and Emperor Michael VIII demanded the castles of Mystras, Monemvasia, Mani and Geraki as ransom. The request was finally met in 1262 and the nucleus of the subsequent Despotate was formed. Byzantine territory expanded rapidly, and the constant wars between the Byzantines and the Franks began. In 1289 the provincial capital of the Byzantine territories in the Peloponnese was moved

from Monemvasia to Mystras, and in 1349 Mystras became the capital of the semi-autonomous Despotate of the Morea. The first Despot was Manuel Kantakouzinos (1349-1380), son of Emperor Ioannis VI.

From 1382 to 1460 the Despotate was ruled by the Palaiologos family. During these years they maintained very close relations with Constantinople and the emperors supported Byzantine interests in the region, but the Palaiologos rulers also drew up their own policies. The Despotate flourished under the Palaiologos despots who became the dominant force in the Peloponnese and implemented expansionist policies.

Constantine XI was the best known and most remarkable of the Palaiologos Despots. He was involved in Hellenism's last attempts to resist the coming Ottoman invasion and in addition to his administrative, diplomatic and strategic skills, his name is associated with the Palaiologan Renaissance - a time when many thinkers, artists and historians lived in the city. This movement had spread from Constantinople to Mystras and contributed to the development of science, philosophy and art just before the fall of the Byzantine Empire. Constantine was crowned Emperor of Byzantium and was killed in 1453, fighting in the siege of Constantinople before it fell to the Ottomans.



The golden era of the Despotate of Mystras came to an end with his death. His brothers who succeeded him in 1449 caused chaos and anarchy with their quarrels, and the only beneficiaries were the Ottomans. In 1458, Mohammed II occupied the NE Peloponnese and advanced directly to Mystras. On May 30, 1460, Dimitrios finally handed Mystras over to General Mahmut Pasha. This was the end of the Byzantine period in Mystra's history, and was not long before this story was repeated in the other castles in the Peloponnese.

By 1540, Mystras had become the capital of Ottoman Peloponnese and one of the most important silk production and trading centres in the Eastern Mediterranean. Between 1687-1715 the city was controlled by the Venetians, but then returned to Ottoman rule. The city joined the Orlov revolt against Ottoman rule in 1770, with the result that the city went into a steep decline as it was destroyed by Ottoman Albanians. Mystras continued to decline: In 1834, the inhabitants began to move to the new city of Sparta, but it wasn't until 1953, when the area was expropriated by the Greek state, that the last people left the city. It was declared a prominent Byzantine monument by royal decree in 1921.

One of the many things that makes Mystras special is that it is a remarkably well-preserved Byzantine city, something which has given experts the opportunity to study the architecture and art of the time. The church buildings are particularly important as many of them are in a very good condition. The fortified city is built on the slopes of a hill and had three districts, the Upper City, the Lower City and the Outer City, which were all packed with monasteries, churches, chapels, houses and palaces.



In the past all the churches were part of monasteries, but today only the Pantanassa Monastery is still inhabited. Architecturally speaking, most of the churches are “mixed form”, i.e. a basilica combined with a cross-in-square, five-domed gallery. This style of architecture was created here and is now known as the “Mystras type”. When it comes to the church interiors, you will see excellent decoration from the Palaiologos era, frescoes from the 17th-18th century and also Western-influenced sculptural decoration. As well as the larger churches, there are also 20 chapels in the city.

Agios Dimitrios Cathedral (around 1270) is the oldest church in Mystras. This was a functioning cathedral from the time it was built until shortly after the city was liberated from Turkish rule. According to tradition, the last emperor of Byzantium, Constantine XI Palaiologos, was crowned here in 1449.

Vrontochi Monastery: Includes the Church of Our Lady Hodegetria and Agious Theodoros. The monastery is in the Lower City and was the oldest and largest monastery in Mystras. It was founded in the 13th century and was directly under the Patriarch of Constantinople. The monastery became very wealthy, with important libraries, and became the centre of spiritual life in Mystras. Plethon, one of the main figures in the Byzantine renaissance, taught here. Agioi Theodoroi, an octagonal church with 4 chapels, dates back to before 1296. There are fragments of impressive frescoes showing saints, the passion and the Resurrection of Christ etc. The representations of Saint Theodoros are considered to date from the 13th century.

Agia Sophia Mystra (Palace district). The church is thought to have been the main church of Zoodotis Christos Monastery (Life-Giver Christ), which was founded by the first Despot of Mystras, Manuel Kantakouzenos in the middle of the 14th century. Pantanassa (1428). This church has a three-aisled basilica on the ground floor and a five-domed cross-in-square church with a dome on the first floor. You can still see the original frescos (from around 1430) on the domes and the ceiling. This is still a working monastery, and if you are lucky, the nuns will welcome you with homemade traditional sweets.



Evangelistria. This is a domed, cross-in-square church. It has an interesting iconostasis and wall paintings from the 15th century. Perivleptos (mid 14th c.), was the main church of the Panagia Monastery and is believed to have been built by Manuel Kantakouzenos. The frescoes in the main church are from the third quarter of the 14th century, and are the work of four painters.

Agios Nikolaos Mystras (17th century, Palace district). This is the only church of this size in Mystras, and was built after the city was surrendered to the Turks in 1460. Only a few wall paintings, which are typical of Laconian painting during the 17th century, have survived.

Day 10 – Wednesday, October 7: KALAMATA/PYLOS



DEPARTURE: 8:15AM



Itinerary

Enjoy your included breakfast – the view from the banquet room is amazing. Dine outdoors on the balcony if the weather is comfortable! **Be in the lobby no later than 8:15am for an 8:30am departure** via bus to the Palace of Nestor near Pylos, widely recognized as the best preserved Mycenaean era palace.

After a guided tour of the palace, we will depart for lunch at the Pylos waterfront. We will depart for our return to Kalamata at 1:30pm. On arrival at 3:00pm we will visit the Metropolitan Cathedral of Ypapanti (The Presentation of the Lord). After the visit, you may transfer to the hotel by choice of either taking 45 minute walk through historic district back or riding our bus back.

The afternoon is free until 6:45pm, when we will meet in the lobby to depart for a wonderful dinner at Kastraki-Meteoro Restaurant overlooking the Kalamata waterfront. The bus will bring us back to the hotel at 10:00pm.



Destination: The Palace of Nestor

The Palace of Nestor is an amazing monument, a testimony to ancient Greek knowledge and learning that has survived three thousand years. The fact that the palace is excellently preserved because it was destroyed by fire is a bit of a paradox. The fire, moreover, baked the clay tablets in the palace's archives and these provide invaluable information about the language, religion, and economic and social life in the palace itself and the area surrounding it. The site has recently undergone extensive renovation, and now, near the entrance, there is a small visitors' center with interactive displays and friendly staff available to answer questions.

As is the case for many sites in Greece, the existence of Nestor's palace was long thought to lie more in myth than actual history. Scholars had long been aware of references to 'Sandy Pylos' in Homer's Odyssey, and in his Iliad, Homer lists Pylos as sending 90 ships to join the expedition to Troy. Schliemann looked for Pylos at Paleonavarino at the end of the nineteenth century without success. Luckily, however, the indefatigable Greek archaeologist Konstantinos Kourouniotis, having already excavated two nearby Tholos Tombs, formed



a joint Hellenic – American expedition in 1939 and made the amazing discovery of the palace together with his friend and colleague Carl Blegen of the University of Cincinnati. The team also located and investigated several other prehistoric sites. Excavations continue today under the auspices of the University of Cincinnati, and recently Jack Davis and Sharon Stocker discovered a Bronze Age shaft grave dating to around 1450 BC, which they named "The Grave of the Griffin Warrior". The rich finds from the grave include weapons, jewels, and silver and gold artefacts that are still being studied and it is hoped that these will be put on display sometime in the near future.

The palace dominates the ridge of Epáno Englianos and offers sweeping views toward the coast, Voidokilia Beach, and the modern town of Pylos. New raised walkways enable visitors to walk above the finds and fully understand the palace's floor plan without causing any damage to the site and, of course, to also appreciate the stunning views.



Destination: Kalamata

Kalamata, the capital and central port of Messinia, reveals itself at the head of the Messinian Gulf. The shadow of Mount Taygetos, the vast silver-green olive groves that brush against the coast, and an endless beach paint this charismatic city with the most beautiful colours. After liberation from the Turks, it developed into a wealthy urban centre and an important port, thanks to the products of the fertile Messinian land, such as olive oil, raisins, and figs.



Framed by the deep blue waters of the Messenian Gulf and the imposing slopes of Mount Taygetos, Kalamata is a city that offers far more than a seaside escape. It is a place where history unfolds in ancient stone and living churches, where culture thrives year-round, and where local flavors tell the story of the land as vividly as any monument.

Layers of History in the Urban Landscape:

Kalamata's past is etched into its cityscape, beginning with the Castle, which stands on a low hill in the northern part of the city, with the Nedon River flowing below. Built on the site of the ancient acropolis of Pharae, later hosting a Byzantine church in the 6th century, the fortress took its present form during the Frankish period of the 13th century under the Villehardouin dynasty. Venetian and Ottoman additions followed, creating a fortification that reflects centuries of rule and resistance. Equally emblematic is the Church of the Holy Apostles, located in 23rd March Square, a symbolic site linked to the start of the Greek War of Independence. Dating to the 11th-12th century, the church marks the liberation of Kalamata from Ottoman rule on March 23, 1821, giving the city a unique place in modern Greek history.

The Rhythm of a Living City: At the heart of modern Kalamata lies Vasileos Georgiou II Square, the city's central gathering point and commercial hub. First constructed in 1928 and renovated in the early 2010s, the square is surrounded by cafés, patisseries, and shops, with fountains and greenery offering moments of pause amid daily bustle. From here, Aristomenous Street stretches southward toward the sea. Built in 1871 to connect the city center with the waterfront, it remains Kalamata's main axis, lined with stores, public buildings, and cultural spaces. Along this route and nearby streets, visitors encounter elegant neoclassical buildings dating from the city's most prosperous years (1880-1920), many of which now

house municipal services. In contrast, the Historic Center, particularly the area known as Paplomatadika around 23rd March Square, offers a more intimate atmosphere. Pedestrian streets, traditional shops, ouzo taverns, cafés, and bars create a lively yet picturesque setting that comes alive from morning until late at night.

Faith, Craft, and Cultural Expression: Dominating its namesake square is the Church of Ypapanti, Kalamata's Cathedral. Built between 1860 and 1873, it stands as a focal point of religious life and a landmark of architectural presence in the city. Nearby, the Kalograion Monastery, founded in 1796 and dedicated to Saints Constantine and Helen, highlights another facet of Kalamata's heritage. For centuries, the nunnery was renowned for its silk production, particularly the famous handmade Kalamata handkerchiefs, preserving a craft tradition closely tied to the city's identity. Cultural life continues at the Municipal Railway Park, a 54,000-square-meter open-air museum that combines historic steam locomotives and carriages with green spaces, playgrounds, sports courts, and an open-air amphitheater. Since 1986, it has served both as a recreational park and a venue for cultural events. Modern artistic expression finds its home at the Dance Hall, which opened in 2013 with European Union funding. It hosts the internationally renowned Kalamata International Dance Festival each July, as well as performances and events throughout the year, drawing leading figures from the global dance scene.

A Taste of Kalamata: Kalamata's identity is inseparable from its traditional products, which reflect the richness of Messinian land and culinary heritage. World-famous Kalamata olives PDO are the region's most iconic export, prized for their rich, fruity flavor and central role in Mediterranean cuisine. Local gastronomy also includes sfela PDO cheese, a semi-hard sheep- or goat-milk cheese traditionally cut into strips; lalaghia, thin fried dough strips often enjoyed at breakfast; and pasteli, a sesame-and-honey sweet that showcases the region's exceptional honey production. The slopes of Taygetos yield a variety of honeys – from thyme and sage to fir and pine – each reflecting the mountain's biodiversity. Seasonal and artisanal products further define the local table: sun-dried figs (tsapeles), Poliani apples, wild artichokes from nearby villages, Alagonia potatoes, mung beans (psilofasoula), traditional cured pork (pasto), sausage flavored with orange, aromatic herbs, vinegar aged from grape must, locally grown peanuts, and regional wines. Together, these products offer visitors an authentic taste of Kalamata and its surroundings.

Nature, Sea, and Memorable Excursions: From the city's port, summer boat cruises allow travelers to explore the Messinian coastline, passing seaside villages, rocky islands, and imposing Venetian castles that rise dramatically from the sea. Just east of the city, Mount Taygetos dominates the horizon. Rising to 2,407 meters and stretching some 115 kilometers, it forms the natural border between Messinia and Laconia. Rich in flora and birdlife and marked by deep canyons such as Vyros and Rintomo, Taygetos is a year-round destination for hiking, climbing, and mountaineering, with picturesque villages dotting its Messinian slopes. (Source: *The National Herald*)

Day 11 – Thursday, October 8: KALAMATA/CORINTH/ATHENS



DEPARTURE: 8:15AM



Itinerary

HOTEL CHECKOUT: follow the on-site instructions provided the night before regarding having your luggage ready for the porters. Be sure you visually see your luggage being loaded on to the bus. Be in the lobby no later than 8:15am for an 8:30am departure.

After the included breakfast at the hotel, be in the lobby no later than 8:15am for an 8:30am departure via bus for a 2 hour ride to Ancient Corinth. Enjoy a 90 minute guided tour of Ancient Corinth, then at noon have lunch and relax in Ancient Corinth. Depart at 1:30pm for the historic 11th century Holy Monastery of Daphni at Hiadari on the outskirts of Athens. Take a 1 hour guided tour of some of the best-preserved Byzantine icons in the world. Depart at 3:30pm for Athens and check in to the NJV Hotel on Syntagma Square. At 6:00pm walk just minutes away to the rooftop Thea Restaurant for dinner with a view of the Acropolis. After dinner at 8:30pm enjoy a walk to nearby Plaka to wrap up our last evening in Greece.

IMPORTANT: YOUR LUGGAGE SHOULD BE PACKED BEFORE YOU GO TO BED TONIGHT!



Destination: Ancient Corinth

The Greek city of Corinth was founded in the Neolithic Period sometime between 5000-3000 BC. It became a major city in the 8th century BC and was known for its architectural and artistic innovations including the invention of black-figure pottery. One of the most famous style of ancient Greek vase painting, black-figure ware depicts human and animal forms in black silhouettes on a cream or red background. During this time, the Corinthians excavated the fountain grotto and embellished it with a six chambered structure.

In 146 BC, the Corinthians were defeated by the Romans at the Battle of Corinth. Taking this victory as a starting point, Rome soon controlled all of Greece. Declaring Corinth the capital of Roman Greece in 44 BC, Julius Caesar ordered his people to rebuild the city and its famous fountain. The Romans decorated the Fountain of Peirene lavishly, painting lively frescoes of aquatic life around the walls of the original Greek grotto and adding an elaborate facade in the 3rd century AD that is still in evidence today.

Around the year 400 AD, as the Western Roman Empire was in sharp decline, Corinth came under the political control of the Greek-speaking Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire centered in Constantinople. Subscribing to the Eastern Orthodox Christian Church, the Byzantines built a small chapel in one corner of the Fountain of Peirene in the late 10th century. By the 14th century, after years of neglect and earthquakes, the columns of the fountain had sunk into the ground.

Americans began excavating the Fountain of Peirene in 1896, digging through the many layers of later occupation to find the ancient Roman and Greek architecture beneath. Today, the Greek people view the Fountain of Peirene as a national treasure. Due to ongoing excavation efforts, the Fountain of Peirene in Corinth is not currently open to the public. Digital documentation allows visitors to tour the site virtually, giving them unprecedented access to an ancient architectural marvel. Cataloging the site, which is under constant threat from earthquakes, also preserves what remains of the ancient Greek and Roman architecture for future generations.

This cosmopolitan city was the one that Saint Paul the Apostle visited around 50-52 AD after leaving Athens, a sleepy oasis of pleasure and leisure. Here, Saint Paul found refuge among his fellow Jews and

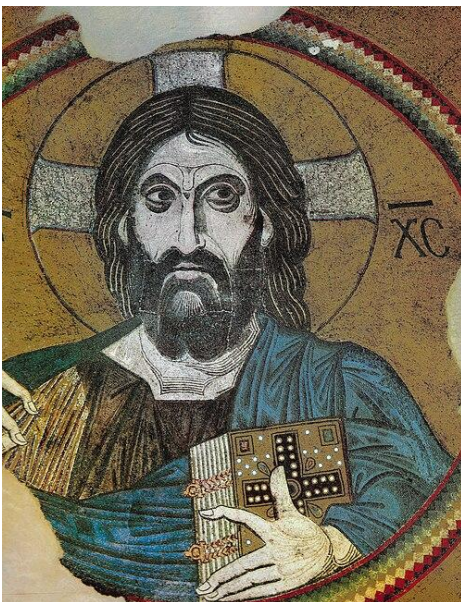
started his proclamation of the Cross. It seems that the city was very attractive to him and a logical place to establish a Christian community, for its numerous connections would assure the rapid propagation of the new religion. Saint Paul remained in Corinth for about one and a half years, the longest period than in any other city in Greece. It is believed that he was in Corinth when he wrote some of his Epistles to the Romans, the Galatians, and the Thessalonians, while later during his missionary activity, he sent out more epistles, two of which are part of the Canon of the New Testament (the 1st and 2d Corinthians).

A visit to Ancient Corinth is defined by the contrast between its powerful past and its open archaeological landscape. Walking through the remains of temples, agoras, and public spaces creates a clear sense of the city's importance in the ancient Greek and Roman world. The combination of historical significance, strategic location, and surrounding landscape makes Ancient Corinth one of the most accessible and meaningful sites to explore in Greece.



About the Holy Monastery Daphni Monastery

The Holy Monastery of Daphni is believed to have been established in the 6th century AD; its katholikon (the equivalent of a conventual church) was a three-nave basilica, as was usual at the time. It was enclosed by strong, almost square defensive walls, along the inner side of which there were two-storey buildings, containing the cells of the monks. This original monastic complex, of which several archaeological remains have survived, was probably abandoned during the Slavic invasions of the 7th and 8th centuries.



The building preserved today dates to the end of the 11th century, when it was reconstructed, at a period of renewed prosperity, probably at the initiative of some person of high status from the Byzantine capital, as attested by influences of the tradition of Constantinople on its architecture. The basilica was destroyed and replaced by a cross-in-square octagonal church with a broad and high dome. It features a narthex, while an exonarthex was added later, in the early 12th century, incorporating columns from the ancient sanctuary.

In the 13th century, the area was conquered during the Fourth Crusade, and the monastery was bequeathed to the Cistercian Abbey of Bellevaux, who added their own cloister and remodeled the narthex and the wall of the enclosure. In the 16th century, following the Ottoman conquest, the Latin monks abandoned the monastery, which was again bestowed to orthodox monks. Due to

raids by pirates and marauders, the monastery was again gradually abandoned, and was completely deserted by the early 19th century; it was later briefly used as an outpost and a mental asylum. After the building had sustained extensive damages, the Ministry of Education undertook a massive restoration in the late 19th century. Restorative works have since often taken place on the site, especially after the devastating earthquake of 1999. In 1990, the monument was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List.

Daphni is a premier example of a cross-in-square type church with a high and wide central octagonal dome. Its floor plan is very complex and architecturally sophisticated, with the inside appearing very open and airy. The massive dome appears to merely float on eight points as the arches link the four corners with the four openings around it. The four corners that support the dome appear to be carved into the wall, which gives open space for beautiful mosaic decoration that still survives to this day. The mosaic

decoration of Daphni is some of the finest in Greece that hails from the middle-Byzantine period. The stunning architectural plan and high quality mosaics leads many to believe it was built on orders of the Emperor himself, and that highly skilled artisans were sent from the capital Constantinople to execute the decoration of the monastery.

The mosaic decorations that cover the upper walls adhere to the iconographic formulae of the Middle Byzantine period; the inside of the dome is adorned with an imposing figure of Christ Pantokrator (Almighty) flanked by prophets, the mosaic of the apse portrays the Virgin Mary accompanied by angels, while pendentives under the dome depict the Annunciation and the Birth, Baptism and Transfiguration of Christ. The perfectly proportioned figures stand out against the gold background, and are reminiscent of classical and sculptures. The expression on the faces of the saints is characterised by courtesy and their representation is carried out with unusual skill.



Destination: Athens

We will be arriving later in the day and staying only one night in Athens. The 2024 Pilgrimage covered Athens extensively, but here is some information for those who are there for the first time.



With a history of over 3,000 years, Athens is one of the most ancient cities in the world and is famous as the birthplace of democracy. The city took its name after Athena, the Goddess of Wisdom and daughter of Zeus. She was the protector of the city and in fact, the temple of Parthenon on the Acropolis is dedicated to her. From as early as the 8th century BC, Athens was gradually developing into an important city-state for Greece, giving emphasis on culture and its naval power.

But it was in the 5th century BC when great political formations were made and new buildings were constructed, including the Acropolis, the Temple of Poseidon at Sounion, and the Ancient Agora, and victorious imperial wars took place so that the Athenians would obtain new economic sources.

Athens became the official capital of the country in 1834, after King Otto's decree. At that time, Greece had survived a long fight for independence, the modern Greek state had just been formed and the people needed a symbol to connect modern Greece to the glorious ancient years.

However, Athens is not all about the past. In the multicultural center, the past harmoniously coexists with the present. A great selection of fashion boutiques, sophisticated restaurants, cool bars, and traditional taverns create a truly modern European vibe. Overall, the capital of Greece is a city full of flavors, aromas, amiable people, colors, and surprises



Destination: The Plaka

After an early dinner on Thursday evening, **if you are mostly packed for an early departure on Friday**, there will be ample time to walk to the nearby Plaka district for a night in Athens.

Plaka is one of the oldest neighborhoods of Athens, located right below the Acropolis Hill and a short walk from our hotel. It is extremely beautiful and picturesque, standing out for its authentic character and traditional layout. The largest part of Plaka consists of neoclassical houses that date back to the 19th century, although archaeological findings suggest that the region has been continuously inhabited since prehistoric times. This is the only part of Athens that has been untouched by modern urban development,

allowing you to get a glimpse of the city's past. Not much has changed in Plaka for the past 100 years. Wander through the narrow cobblestone alleys of this neighborhood at the foothills of the Acropolis. You'll find quaint shops selling jewelry, clothes, ceramics, and souvenirs, plus sidewalk restaurants and family-run tavernas.



Day 12 – Friday, October 9: ATHENS/JFK/PITTSBURGH



DEPARTURE: 5:00AM (YES, YOU READ THAT CORRECTLY...5:00AM) 🕒



Itinerary

This morning, despite our early departure, the hotel has kindly arranged for us to have an early light breakfast at 4:00am. **IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOUR LUGGAGE IS PLACED OUTSIDE YOUR ROOM BY 4:00AM FOR THE PORTERS TO TAKE IT TO THE LOBBY.**



IT IS CRITICALLY IMPORANT FOR EVERYONE TO BE IN THE LOBBY AND READY TO DEPART BY 5:00AM. WE RECOMMEND PACKING BEFORE GOING TO BED ON THURSDAY EVENING. THIS EARLY DEPARTURE MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO TRANSFER THROUGH ATHENS AND NEW YORK AND LAND IN PITTSBURGH ON THE SAME DAY. IT MAKES FOR AN EARLY AND VERY LONG DAY, BUT IT HELPS US AVOID ADDING ANOTHER DAY TO THE TRIP.

SO...SEE YOU AT 5:00AM, OR EARLIER IF YOU WANT BREAKFAST!

Why so early? International departure from the Athens Airport rarely breezes through. Over the past two years I have seen 3 hour waits to get through check-in, then boarding pass clearance, then passport control, then security. It's just not worth risking depending on short lines and missing our flight.

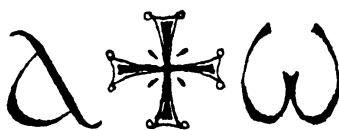
The airport has plenty of coffee, snacks and excellent duty-free shops, so feel free to wait to get there to purchase alcohol, chocolates or other Greek-origin items. Prices are comparable to the outside for some popular things.

Depart on Delta flight DL203 at 10:05am and arrive at JFK in New York at 2:11pm (10 hrs 46 min).

On arrival at JFK, you will have to go through passport control, collect your luggage, go through customs and then re-check your luggage for the flight to Pittsburgh.

At 7:30pm depart from JFK on Delta flight DL5741 for Pittsburgh. Arrive at 9:26pm

Amen!



Glory to God For All Things

(St. John Chrysostom, 4th c.)

APPENDIX A: Pilgrimage Morning Group Prayers

Priest: Blessed is our God always now and ever and unto the ages of ages. Amen.

Pilgrims: Amen.

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3 times)

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. (3)

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Priest: For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

Pilgrims: Amen. Lord, save Your people and bless Your inheritance. Grant victory to our rulers against their adversaries and protect Your commonwealth by Your Cross.

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

You were lifted up upon the Cross of Your own will, Christ our God. Grant Your mercy upon the people that bear Your name. In Your strength make glad the Orthodox leaders, giving them victory over their adversaries. May they have Your alliance as a weapon of peace and an invincible trophy.

Now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen.

O awesome and ever-present protection, do not overlook, O gracious one, our supplications. Most-praised Theotokos, establish the Orthodox people, save those whom you have called to govern and grant them victory from above, for you, blessed one, have given birth to God.

Priest: Have mercy on us, O God, according to your great mercy; we pray to you, hear us and have mercy.

Pilgrims: Lord, have mercy. (3 times)

Priest: Again let us pray for pious and Orthodox Christians.

Pilgrims: Lord, have mercy. (3 times)

Priest: Again let us pray for our Archbishop and Father, Savas, and all our brotherhood in Christ.

Pilgrims: Lord, have mercy. (3 times)

Priest: For You are a merciful and loving God, and to You we give glory, to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.

Pilgrims: Amen.

Priest: Christ our God, You who at all times and in every hour are worshipped and glorified in heaven and on earth, long suffering, generous in mercy and rich in compassion, loving to the righteous and merciful to the sinner. You who call all to salvation through the promise of blessings to come. Lord in this hour accept our prayer and direct our lives according to Your commandments. Sanctify our souls, purify our bodies, correct our thoughts, cleanse our minds and deliver us from all affliction, evil and distress. Encompass us with your holy angels so that guided and guarded by their power we may reach the unity of the faith and come to the knowledge of Your unapproachable glory for You are blessed forever.

The Morning Prayer of Saint Philaret of Moscow

Pilgrims: Amen.

Pilgrims: O Lord, grant me to greet the coming of the day in peace. Help me in all things to rely upon Your holy will. In every hour of the day reveal Your will to me. Bless my dealings with all who surround me. Teach me to treat all that comes to me throughout the day with peace of soul and with firm conviction that Your will governs all. In all my deeds and words, guide my thoughts and feelings. In unforeseen events, let me not forget that all things are under Your care. Teach me to act firmly and wisely without embittering or embarrassing others. Give me strength to bear the fatigue of the coming day with all that it shall bring. Direct my will, teach me to pray. Pray Yourself within me. Amen.

Priest: Glory to You, Christ our God and our hope, glory to You. May Christ our true God have mercy on us and save us as a good, loving, and merciful God, through the intercessions of His most pure and holy Mother; the power of the precious and life-giving cross; the protection of the honorable, bodiless powers of heaven, the supplications of the honorable, glorious prophet and forerunner John the Baptist; the holy, glorious, all-praised, and first-called apostles, Peter and Paul, and all the holy apostles; the holy, glorious, and triumphant martyrs; our holy and God-bearing Fathers; the holy and righteous ancestors Joachim and Anna; (Saints of the day*) whose memory we commemorate today, and all the saints. Through the prayers of our holy fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us and save us.

Pilgrims: Amen.

Apolytikion of Holy Trinity Church

English: Blessed are You, O Christ our God, Who has shown forth the fishermen to be most wise by sending down upon them the Holy Spirit. And through them, You drew the world into Your net. O merciful One, glory to You!

Greek: Ευλογητός ει Χριστέ, ο Θεός ήμων, ο πανσόφους τους αλιείς αναδείξας, καταπέμψας αυτοίς το Πνεύμα το άγιον, και δι' αυτών την οικουμένην σαγηνεύσας, φιλάνθρωπε, δόξα σοι.

Phoenetics: Ev-lo-yi-tos i Hri-ste o The-os i-mon. O Pan-so-fous tous a-li-is a-na-di-xas ka-ta-pemp-sas af-tis to Pnev-ma to A-yi-on, ke di af-ton tin i-kou-men-in sa-i-nef-sas, fi-lan-thro-pe, do-xa si.

*** Daily Saints During the 2026 Pilgrimage:**

Sep. 29: Kyriakos the Hermit of Palestine; Petronios the Martyr; Malachi the New Righteous Martyr of Lindos

Sep. 30: Gregory the Illuminator, Bishop of Armenia; Mardonios & Stratonikos the Martyrs

Oct. 1: The Holy Protection of the Theotokos; Ananias, Apostle of the 70; Romanos the Melodist;

Oct. 2: The Holy Hieromartyr Cyprian and the Virgin Martyr Justina; Theophilos the Confessor

Oct. 3: Dionysios the Areopagite; Rustikos and Eleutherios the Martyrs; John the Chozebite, Bishop of Caesaria

Oct. 4: Hierotheos, Bishop of Athens; Domnina the Martyr and her daughters; John the Hermit

Oct. 5: Charitina the Martyr, Methodia the Righteous of Kimolos, Eudokimos the Unknown of Mount Athos, Peter, Alexis, Jonah, Hermogenes & Tikhon, Metropolitans of Moscow

Oct. 6: The Holy and Glorious Apostle Thomas; Eroteis the Martyr of Cappadocia; Makarios the Righteous of Chios

Oct. 7: Sergius & Bacchus the Great Martyrs of Syria; Polychronios the Martyr; Julian the Presbyter & Caesarius the Deacon; John the Hermit of Crete

Oct. 8: Pelagia the Righteous; Pelagia the Virgin-martyr of Antioch; Phillip, Bishop of Gortyna; Taisia the Harlot of Egypt

Oct. 9: Iakovos the Apostle, son of Alphaeus; Andronicus & his wife Athanasia of Egypt; Poplia the Confessor of Antioch; The Righteous Patriarch Abraham and his nephew Lot

APPENDIX B: Trisagion Service for the Departed

	English	Greek
Priest:	Blessed is our God always now and ever and unto the ages of ages.	Ευλογητός ο Θεός ημών, πάντοτε, νυν, και αεί, και εις τούς αιώνας των αιώνων.
Pilgrims:	Amen. Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us. (3 times) Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen. All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, forgive our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for Your Name's sake. Lord, have mercy. (3) Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.	Αμήν. Ἅγιος ὁ Θεός, Ἅγιος Ἰσχυρός, Ἅγιος Ἀθάνατος ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς (γ'). Δόξα Πατρί καὶ Υἱῷ καὶ Ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι· καὶ νῦν καὶ αἰεὶ καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν. Παναγία Τριάς ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς. Κύριε ἱλάσθητι ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ἡμῶν. Δέσποτα συγχώρησον τὰς ἀνομίας ἡμῶν. Ἄγιε ἐπίσκεψαι καὶ ἴασαι τὰς ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν, ἕνεκεν τοῦ ὀνόματός σου. Κύριε, ἐλέησον (γ'). Δόξα Πατρί καὶ Υἱῷ καὶ Ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι· καὶ νῦν καὶ αἰεὶ καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν. Πάτερ ἡμῶν, ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου. Ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου. Γενηθῇ τὸ θέλημά σου, ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς. Τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον. Καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφίεμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν. Καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν, ἀλλὰ ῥύσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.
Priest:	For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.	Ὅτι σοῦ ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία καὶ ἡ δύναμις καὶ ἡ δόξα τοῦ Πατρὸς καὶ τοῦ Υἱοῦ καὶ τοῦ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος, νῦν καὶ αἰεὶ καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων.
Pilgrims:	Amen.	Αμήν.
All:	Among the spirits of the righteous perfected in faith, give rest, O Savior, to the souls of Your servants. Bestow upon them the blessed life which is from You, O loving Lord. Within Your peace, O Lord, where all Your Saints repose, give rest also to the souls of Your servants, for You alone are Immortal. Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. O Savior, You are our God who descended into Hades and delivered from suffering those who were bound there. Grant rest also to the souls of Your servants.	Μετὰ πνευμάτων δικαίων τετελειωμένων, τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν δούλων σου, Σῶτερ, ἀνάπαυσον, φυλάττων αὐτὴν (αὐτάς), εἰς τὴν μακαρίαν ζωὴν, τὴν παρὰ σοί, φιλόανθρωπε. Εἰς τὴν κατὰπαυσίν σου, Κύριε, ὅπου πάντες οἱ Ἅγιοί σου ἀναπαύονται, ἀνάπαυσον καὶ τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν δούλων σου, ὅτι μόνος ὑπάρχεις ἀθάνατος. Δόξα Πατρί καὶ Υἱῷ καὶ Ἁγίῳ Πνεύματι. Σὺ εἶ ὁ Θεός ἡμῶν, ὁ καταβὰς εἰς Ἅδην, καὶ τὰς ὁδύνας λύσας τῶν πεπεδημένων· αὐτοὺς καὶ τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν δούλων σου, Σῶτερ, ἀνάπαυσον.

	Now and forever and to the ages of ages. Amen. Most pure and spotless Virgin, who ineffably gave birth to God, intercede with Him for the salvation of the souls of your servants.	Καὶ νῦν καὶ αἰεὶ, καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν. Ἡ μόνη ἀγνή καὶ ἄχραντος Παρθένος, ἡ Θεὸν ἀφράστως κυήσασα, πρέσβευε ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἐλεηθῆναι καὶ συγχωρηθῆναι τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν δούλων σου.
Priest:	Have mercy on us, O God, according to Your great mercy, we pray to You, hear us and have mercy.	Ελέησον ἡμᾶς ὁ Θεὸς κατὰ το μέγα ἔλεος Σου, δεόμεθα Σου, ἐπάκουσον καὶ ἐλέησον.
Pilgrims:	Lord, have mercy (3x)	Κύριε ἐλέησον (γ')
Priest:	Again we pray for the repose of the soul(s) of the departed servant(s) of God (commemorate here) and for the forgiveness of all his (her, their) sins, both voluntary and involuntary.	Ἔτι δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ ἀναπαύσεως τὰς ψυχὰς των κεκοιμημένων δούλων τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ ὑπὲρ τοῦ συγχωρηθῆναι αὐτοῖς πᾶν πλημμέλημα ἐκούσιόν τε καὶ ἀκούσιον.
Pilgrims:	Lord, have mercy (3x)	Κύριε ἐλέησον (γ')
Priest:	Again we pray for mercy, life, peace, health, salvation, visitation, and forgiveness of the sins of the servants of God, the pilgrims on this holy journey, the faithful of Holy Trinity Church and all the communities from which we come, our families, all pious and Orthodox Christians, those who live in and visit here, those who serve and protect this holy church (sacred place) and all those whom we prayerfully call to mind.	Ἔτι δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ ἐλέους, ζωῆς, ειρήνης, υγείας, σωτηρίας, επισκέψεως, συγχωρήσεως καὶ ἀφέσεως των αμαρτιῶν των δούλων του Θεοῦ, των προσκυνητῶν του ιεροῦ προσκυνηματος ἡμῶν, των πιστῶν της Εκκλησίας της Αγίας Τριάδας καὶ ὅλων των κοινοτήτων ἡμῶν, των οικογένειῶν ἡμῶν, καὶ πάντων των ευσεβῶν καὶ ὀρθοδόξων χριστιανῶν, των κατοικούντων καὶ παρεπιδημούντων ἐν τη κώμῃ ταύτῃ, των ἐνοριτῶν, ἐπιτρόπων, συνδρομητῶν καὶ ἀφιερωτῶν του ἁγίου ναοῦ (χώρου) τούτου.
Pilgrims:	Lord, have mercy (3x)	Κύριε ἐλέησον (γ')
Priest:	May the Lord God grant that their souls rest where the righteous repose. Let us ask Christ, our immortal King and God, for the mercies of God, the kingdom of heaven, and the forgiveness of their sins.	Ὅπως Κύριος ὁ Θεὸς τάξῃ τὰς ψυχὰς αὐτῶν ἔνθα οἱ δίκαιοι ἀναπαύονται, τὰ ἐλεῇ τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν, καὶ ἄφεισιν τῶν αὐτῶν ἀμαρτιῶν, παρὰ Χριστῷ τῷ ἀθανάτῳ Βασιλεῖ καὶ Θεῷ ἡμῶν αἰτησώμεθα.
Pilgrims:	Grant this, O Lord.	Παράσχου Κύριε.
Priest:	Let us pray to the Lord.	Τοῦ Κυρίου δεηθῶμεν.
Pilgrims:	Lord, have mercy.	Κύριε ἐλέησον.
Priest:	O God of spirits and of all flesh, You have trampled upon death and have abolished the power of the devil, giving life to Your world. Give rest to the souls of Your servants, (commemorate here) who have fallen asleep, and establish them in a place of light, in a place of repose, in a place of refreshment, where there is no pain, sorrow, and suffering. As a good and loving God, forgive every sin	Ὁ Θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός, ὁ τὸν θάνατον καταπατήσας, τὸν δὲ διάβολον καταργήσας, καὶ ζωὴν τῷ κόσμῳ σου δωρησάμενος· αὐτός, Κύριε, ἀνάπαυσον τὰς ψυχὰς των κεκοιμημένων δούλων σου, ἐν τόπῳ φωτεινῷ, ἐν τόπῳ χλοερῷ, ἐν τόπῳ ἀναψύξεως, ἔνθα ἀπέδρα ὀδύνη, λύπη καὶ στεναγμός. Πᾶν ἀμάρτημα τὸ παρ' αὐτῶν, πραχθὲν ἐν λόγῳ ἢ ἔργῳ ἢ διανοίᾳ, ὡς ἀγαθὸς καὶ φιλόανθρωπος

	they have committed in thought, word or deed, for there is no one who lives and does not sin. You alone are without sin. Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your word is truth. For You are the resurrection, the life, and the repose of Your servants who have fallen asleep, Christ our God, and to You we give glory, with Your eternal Father and Your all-holy, good and life-creating Spirit, now and forever and to the ages of ages.	Θεός, συγχώρησον· ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἄνθρωπος, ὃς ζήσεται καὶ οὐχ ἁμαρτήσῃ· σὺ γὰρ μόνος ἐκτός ἁμαρτίας ὑπάρχεις, ἡ δικαιοσύνη σου δικαιοσύνη εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα, καὶ ὁ λόγος σου ἀλήθεια. Ὅτι σὺ εἶ ἡ ἀνάστασις, ἡ ζωὴ, καὶ ἡ ἀνάπαυσις τῶν κεκοιμημένων δούλων σου, Χριστέ ὁ Θεός ἡμῶν, καὶ σοὶ τὴν δόξαν ἀναπέμπομεν, σὺν τῷ ἀνάρχῳ σου Πατρί, καὶ τῷ παναγίῳ καὶ ἀγαθῷ καὶ ζωοποιῷ σου Πνεύματι, νῦν καὶ αἰεὶ καὶ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων.
Pilgrims:	Amen.	Αμήν.
Priest:	Glory to You, O Christ God, our hope. Glory to You. May Christ our true God, Who as immortal King has authority over the living and the dead and who rose from the dead, have mercy on us and save us, through the intercessions of his most pure and holy Mother, the holy, glorious, and praise-worthy Apostles, our holy and God-bearing Fathers, of the holy and glorious forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; of His holy and righteous friend Lazarus, who lay in the grave four days; and all the saints, and may He establish the soul of His servants who have fallen asleep in the dwelling place of the saints; give them rest in the bosom of Abraham; and number them among the righteous as a good and loving God.	Δόξα σοὶ ὁ Θεός ἡμῶν, δόξα σοι. Ὁ καὶ νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἔχων, ὡς ἀθάνατος Βασιλεὺς, καὶ ἀναστὰς ἐκ νεκρῶν Χριστὸς, ὁ ἀληθινὸς Θεὸς ἡμῶν, ταῖς πρεσβείαις τῆς παναχράντου καὶ παναμώμου ἁγίας αὐτοῦ μητρὸς· τῶν ἁγίων, ἐνδόξων καὶ πανευφήμεων Ἀποστόλων· τῶν ὁσίων καὶ θεοφόρων Πατέρων ἡμῶν· τῶν ἁγίων ἐνδόξων προπατόρων Ἀβραάμ, Ἰσαάκ καὶ Ἰακώβ, τοῦ ἁγίου καὶ δικαίου φίλου αὐτοῦ Λαζάρου τοῦ τετραήμερου, καὶ πάντων τῶν Ἀγίων, τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν ἐξ ἡμῶν μεταστάντων δούλων, αὐτοῦ ἐν σκηναῖς δικαίων τάξει, ἐν κόλποις Ἀβραάμ ἀναπαύσαι, καὶ μετὰ ἁγίων συναριθμήσαι, ἡμᾶς δὲ ἐλεῆσαι ὡς ἀγαθὸς καὶ φιάνθρωπος.
	May your memory be eternal, our brothers and sisters worthy of blessedness and everlasting memory (3x).	Αἰωνία σας ἡ μνήμη, ἀξιομακάριστοι καὶ ἀείμνηστοι ἀδελφοί ἡμῶν (3x).
All:	Memory eternal, memory eternal, may their memory be eternal! (3x)	Αἰωνία ἡ μνήμη, αἰωνία ἡ μνήμη, αἰωνία αὐτῶν, ἡ μνήμη. (γ')
Priest:	Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ our God, have mercy on us and save us.	Δι' εὐχῶν τῶν Ἁγίων Πατέρων ἡμῶν, Κύριε Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ, ὁ Θεός ἡμῶν, ἐλέησον καὶ σώσον ἡμᾶς.
Pilgrims:	Amen.	Αμήν.

APPENDIX C: Meals and Curated Restaurants Guide

Breakfasts: Breakfast at our hotel is included every morning except for Sunday, Oct. 4. On that day since we will head straight for Divine Liturgy at Saint Gerasimos, instead of morning breakfast we will enjoy Sunday brunch at the amazing Kosmos Bakery. As this meal we included in the price of your trip, you will be provided with an envelope with cash to cover the cost of your meal.

Lunches: All lunches are on your own and not included in the cost of the trip, with the exception of Tuesday, October 6, at Mystras. There will be enjoying a group lunch at Xenia Mystras, a pleasant garden restaurant at the base of the historic site. The cost of the lunch is included.

Curated Dinners: One of the highlights and great joys of the trip is the nightly dinners. Rather than settle for standard fare at our hotels, each meal has been carefully arranged at select restaurants with menus curated to offer the best of Greece's varied regional cuisines. All highly rated, some are recognized as "must enjoy destinations" rather than simply restaurants. The locations, the variety and the menus have been chosen to make them evenings and meals you will remember for a lifetime. Here are some reviews and descriptions to prepare you:

Tue 9/29: "Parasties" (Heraklion waterfront)

A 2026 TripAdvisor Traveler's Choice winner. "Beautiful building, gorgeous view of the ocean and a sea breeze, satisfying, well presented local food, great wine, friendly wait staff, what's not to love?"

Wed 9/30: "Notio Archipelagos Seafood Restaurant" (Heraklion waterfront)

Another 2026 TripAdvisor Traveler's Choice winner. "We had the catch of the day, a grouper! It was so fresh and perfectly cooked. The service was out of this world! Unbelievably friendly and professional ready to cater to all of our needs!"



Thu 10/1: "Milos tou Kerata" (Platanias)

"O Mylos tou Kerata" is one of the oldest restaurants of Crete. It is located in Platanias Chanion at a distance of 11km from the city of Chania, on the main road headed to Kisamos. It first opened its doors back in 1960 when the owner of that time Dimitris Kavros converted the area around the water mill and the old inn to a taverna called "Keratas" (which means cuckold or someone with horns). The name comes from the fact that the inn used to be a quiet spot for cheating husbands and wives and the fact that the walls were decorated with animal horns that the owner sometimes wore to tease people. Back in that time, the taverna became well renowned for its quality and it remains that way today. In 1999 it rewarded as the finest restaurant in Crete by the Greek Tourism Organization & one of the four finest in Greece. In the courtyard there is the Venetian 14th century water mill and next to that, the inn, that offered its hospitality to the tired travellers. The old inn has been transformed to a marvellous interior with a decoration that is renewed everyday with materials derived from nature: fresh and drained flowers, fruits and vegetables (tomatoes, artichokes, huge coloured pumpkins, sculpted watermelons and more). The courtyard is a paradise filled with trees, scented plants and flowers. The cuisine is Cretan



traditional and mediterranean. All of the dishes are prepared from carefully selected materials and cooked in virgin olive oil.

Fri 10/2: “Theodosi Restaurant” (Chania waterfront)

Yet another 2026 Traveler’s Choice winner! “The location is dreamlike, the food tastes great, and we were more than full! The staff is competent and nice. By far the best restaurant we have visited here.”

“Absolutely wonderful experience! Not only was the atmosphere fantastic, the service left nothing to be desired! Christina was amazing, very welcoming and hospitable. The food was not only presented with an elegance but the flavor is unmatched. Don’t miss this experience.”

Sat 10/3: “Kellari” (Nafplio Waterfront)

Are you tired of 2026 Traveler’s Choice winners yet? Well, here’s another! “Here, on Miaouli Street, the most picturesque link between the harbor and the old town, on the ground floor of a beautifully restored mansion, is housed the famous “Kellari” (Cellar) of the Skouras brothers, Dimitris and Panagiotis. On a carefree Sunday afternoon, the sunlight gently caresses the large windows in an olive hue, casting a sweet ochre tone on the walls – a color combination perfectly suited to the aesthetic palette of the old town. Just outside the establishment, on the edge of the pedestrian walkway, tables adorned with checkered tablecloths and blue-white chairs are filled with people enjoying the Sunday breeze.



Sun 10/4: “En Asini” (Village of Asini)

This delightful village-top restaurant is just a few minutes from Nafplio but feels like taking a trip to a little town in a movie. Surrounded by old buildings with a view of Prophet Elias Church way up and looking down over the town square, it is run by a delightful couple, Christo and Sophia. Their meats are grilled to perfection, spiced wonderfully and always too much. Don’t look for them on the web: only the locals eat here!



Mon 10/5: Dinner on own in Nafplio Old Town

On Monday evening, October 5, you will have the delightful experience of choosing a restaurant for dinner with your chosen company at one of the many excellent restaurants in Old Town Nafplio. Because the cost of this meal has been included in the trip, you will be given an envelope with cash to pay for your meal. Choose whatever appeals to you, because all the restaurants are good, but for specific recommendations see Appendix D: Nafplio Restaurant Recommendations

Tue 10/6: “Taverna Krini” (Kalamata)

Nothing like dining with friends! Thanks to Dimitris and Maria Kraniou, their friend Chrysanthos, the owner of Taverna Krini, has closed his restaurant for the evening to give it entirely to us. He sat with us to plan a custom menu and sincerely wants to provide us with the best experience and meal possible. Great food, beer and wine and even live Greek music will all combine to take us to a genuine local “Greek Taverna” evening. Others apparently agree: “It is one of the best, if not the best taverna in town. Fantastic food, nice environment, perfect service.”



Wed 10/7: “Kastraki-Meteoro Restaurant” (Verga, Kalamata)



Having seen a lot of castles and fortresses on our trip, it’s time to dine in one! Kastraki (or, “Little Castle”) is located high up the hill just outside Kalamata town and is built in the style of an old castle. The restaurant has outdoor dining and an incredible view of the port, the city and the Messenian Gulf. As much of a destination as it is a restaurant, it is bound to make a memorable last night in the Peloponnisos.

Thu 10/8: “Thea Terrace Restaurant” (Athens)

We’ll end up on top...literally “on top” of the Central Hotel in the center of Athens, with a stunning view of the Acropolis. It’s just a few minutes walk from our NJV Athens Plaza Hotel and will wrap up our dining experience with some amazing true Greek specialties, like “Grilled herb-marinated octopus, Santorini yellow split pea purée, caramelized onions, and tomato jam” and “Crispy lamb chops with creamy broccoli puree, baby vegetables and aromatic chili butter.” A great celebration together of the trip of a lifetime!



APPENDIX D: Nafplio Restaurant Recommendations

Nafplio has the dual advantage of being both a small town with local charm and a well-equipped tourism destination with plenty of restaurants, kafenia and tavernas. All the group dinners during this trip are at excellent hand-chosen restaurants and the menus have been custom-designed for us, but we also wanted to offer the opportunity for everyone to do one of the best things about Greek travel in general and specifically Nafplio: exploring on your own! This is just a starter list. There are at least 150 more to try!

As we were told during our 2021 sabbatical and were looking for good restaurants all around Greece, “Don’t worry – if a restaurant in Greece is open, it’s good. There is too much competition; the bad ones close!” So here is a starter list of places to consider for your Monday night out. But there are also lots of others. Gather your group together. Figure out what kind of food you want. And go for it! You really can’t go wrong. (Note: “TC26” = Traveler’s Choice 2026 Winner)

- **Kastro Karima** – Address: Papanikolaou 32; Phone: +30 275 202 5279
 - Consistently rated as one of the top restaurants in Nafplio. Fantastic traditional but creative food. It’s small, so if you are going there it is best to call ahead for reservations at least a day ahead. (TC26)
- **Kollegas** – Address: Staikopoulou 32; Phone: +30 275 202 2299
 - Very good Italian. Excellent fresh pasta. Large portions. Good value. It’s small, so if you are going there it is best to call ahead for reservations at least a day ahead. (TC26)
- **Pidalio** – Address: 25is Martiou 5; Phone: +30 2752 022603
 - Modern interpretations of classic Greek cuisine. The flavors are there, the textures, the presentation, etc. The dishes are tasty and awaken your taste buds. (TC26)
- **To Telonio** – Address: Boumpoulinas 83; Phone: +30 2752 022665
 - Located on the same waterfront strip of restaurants as Kellari. Excellent dinner with a view of the port of Nafplio, Abundant portions, excellent food, kind waiters. Very large so probably do not need reservations. (TC26)
- **Valaora** – Address: Mpanieres, Aktis Miaouli (on the waterfront walk); Phone: +30 698 960 0200
 - Perhaps the most upscale restaurant. Literally on the waterfront facing the Bourtzi Fortress. Artsy interpretations of Greek ingredients, beautiful presentation, excellent wines and cocktails. Definitely call ahead for reservations.
- **Scuola Pizza-Bar** – Address: Mpoumpoulinas 39; Phone: +30 275 202 6000
 - Casual Italian. Great pizzas, pastas and salad.
- **Karamalis Taverna** – Address: Mpoumpoulinas 43; Phone: +30 275 209 7999
 - Good selection of traditional Greek food in an informal setting. Looking for a winner? Hands down the best “Bakaliaros Skordalia” (Fried cod with garlic sauce) in town. Served hot, delicious and large!
- **Trendy Grill** – Address: Mpoumpoulinas 31; Phone: +30 275 202 3666
 - Casual traditional Greek grill food: gyros, souvlakia, chops, burgers.
- **Mama’s Nafplio Burger** – Address: Σιδηράς Μεταρχίας & Thessalonikis 5; Phone: +30 275 202 8080
 - Most casual of all the listings, but a really nice spot on a street corner at the far end of Kolotronis Park. No reservations needed. Burgers, chicken, salads, sandwiches.

BEST GELATO: **Gelarto** – Address: Eth. Antistasis 4. Steps away from Filellinon Square Great flavors, all homemade.

BEST ICE CREAM: **Koustenis** – Address: Vasileos Konstantinou 16. Walk-up, creamy, delicious!

APPENDIX E: MAP OF OLD TOWN NAFPLIO



APPENDIX F: Useful Greek for Travelers

In many popular vacation spots, including Greece, almost everyone speaks basic English, but you'll get more out of your trip if you learn some common phrases, especially in the more rural, less touristy areas. Don't be afraid to try. Many Greeks appreciate the effort as a sign of respect for their culture.

Below, you'll find translations written first in Greek. The phonetic pronunciation follows in parentheses with emphasis placed on the syllables in capital letters.

English	Greek	Phonetic	Note
Hello	Γειά σου / Γειά σας	YAH-soo / YAH-sas	Singular / Plural
Nice to meet you	Χάρηκα πολύ	HA-ree-ka po-LEE	
How are you?	Τι κανείς? / Τι κάνετε?	tee-KAH-nis / tee-KAH-ne-te	
How's it going?	Τι λέει?	tee-LEI	
What are you up to?	Που είσαι?	pou-EE-seh	
Good morning	Καλημέρα	kah-lee-MER-ah	Use until noon, then Γειά σου / Γεια σας afterwards
Good afternoon	Καλησπέρα	kah-lee-SPER-ah	Middday/Late afternoon
Good evening	Καλό βράδυ	Kah-LO VRAH-thee	Early evening to bedtime
Goodnight	Καληνύχτα	kah-lee-NEEKH-tah	
Wishing you a good dawn	Καλό ξημέρωμα!	kah-lo ksee-MEH-roh-mah	Use as the final greeting of the night
Thank you	Ευχαριστώ	eff-kha-ri-STO	
Thank you very much	Ευχαριστώ πάρα πολύ	eff-kha-ri-STO PAR-ah po-LEE	
Please/You're welcome	Παρακαλώ	para-kah-LO	
My name is...	Με λένε...	meh LEH-neh ...	
What is your name?	Πως σε λένε?	pos se LEH-neh	
Goodbye	Γειά σου / Γειά σας	YAH-soo / YAH-sas	Singular / Plural
See/Talk to you later	Θα τα λέμε	thah tah-LEH-meh	
Yes	Ναι / Μάλιστα	Neh / MAH-lee-stah	Informal / formal
No	Οχι	OH-hee	
Excuse me/Sorry	Συγγνώμη	See-GHNO-mee	
Where is the bathroom?	Πού είναι η τουαλέτα?	Poh-EE-nay ee tua-LEH-tah	
Do you speak English?	Μιλάτε αγγλικά?	Mee-LAH-teh ag-li-KAH	
Cheers!	Στην υγεία μας!	Stin ee-YAH-mas)	Literally: "To our health!"
How much is it?	Πόσο κάνει αυτό?	POH-soh KAH-nee af-TOH	
I don't understand	Δεν καταλαβαίνω	Then kah-tah-lah-VEH-noh	
Help!	Βοήθεια!	voh-EE-thee-yah	
Opa!	Ωπα!	OH-pa	Joyful exclamation of enthusiasm for music, dancing, food, and drinks
Water	Νερό	Neh-RO	

Source: <https://www.travelandleisure.com/travel-tips/basic-greek-words-and-phrases-travel>



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“Faith. Family. Community.”

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