

Athens – Rhodes 12 Days

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Overview

Athens -Rhodes – Athens

- 12 Days
- Age 12+
- Greece

- Not Included:
 - Tips
 - Accommodation tax for the Hotels which will be paid upon arrival by the guests at the reception at each Hotel
 - Porterage service

Tour Plan

01

Day 01: Destination – Greece. Welcome to Athens!

Arrival at Eleftherios Venizelos Airport. Welcome to Athens! According to the Greek mythology, the name “Athens” is came from the goddess of wisdom, Athena. Our transfer will be waiting for you at the airport. After boarding our luxurious vehicle, sit back and relax as the driver transports you to the hotel. Traditional Greek lunch. Check in to the hotel. At the Hotel we will have a presentation of the tour. Then we will dinner at Greek Restaurant in Plaka with Folkore dancing interactive with the clients. Plaka is known as the “Neighborhood of the Gods”. It lies beneath the northeastern slope of the Acropolis and stretches almost all the way to Syntagma Square, in a maze of winding narrow streets laced with shops and dotted with antiquities throughout. Truly, this is one of the most charming and elegant neighborhoods you will encounter anywhere on Earth and it is the oldest historical neighborhood of Athens. In fact, the neighborhood itself was originally developed mostly around the ruins of the ancient Agora and this area of Athens has continuously been inhabited since the days of Ancient Greece. Another amazing fact is that excavations have proven that Plaka’s main artery, Adrianou Street, is the oldest street in Athens which is still in continuous use. Most remarkable of all, it still has the exact same layout as it did in antiquity! Overnight in Athens. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

02

Day 02: Athens – Thermopylae – Volos

Breakfast and today we will transfer to Volos, on the road we will stop at Thermopylae (Hot Gates) with the hot sulfur springs. We will visit the area where the famous battle between the Greeks & the Persians took place in 480 B.C. We will admire the

marvelous statue of King of Sparta, Leonidas who, with 300 Spartans & 700 Thespians, faced numerous Persian forces under the command of King Xerxes A'. It was there that Leonidas told to Xerxes the famous phrase "Molon Lave" which means "Come & Get It". Then we will visit the Centre of Historical Information of Thermopylae. The center aims to inform visitors about the historical events and their importance by navigating through digital information surfaces, but also with 3D projection technology. After a short introductory film, the visitor wears special glasses to watch a virtual reality film which shows historical facts concerning the Battle. In the next hall, named "Thermopylae" the visitor can activate the screens of special interactive tables through touch and get all the information concerning the history of the Battle and the respective historical period, the causes of the Persian Wars, see the Battle of Artemision, learn about the protagonists and who the 300 were, about their armor and the strategies of the two opposing armies and much more in a way that is unexpectedly amusing. Using the virtual reality application of the battle of Thermopylae and the military equipment of Greeks and Persians, our young visitors are transported to the battlefield and actively participate in the preparation of soldiers before the conflict. A museum educator acts as navigator and with the help of a wireless remote control directs visitors. Nowadays, it is important to know what it was that made the Spartans and Thespians stand there and heroically fight. The Battle in Thermopylae is considered one of the most important battles of Greek and World History, showing virtues like bravery, self-sacrifice and obedience to the homeland. Local lunch. Then we will transfer to Volos, a mythical destination. Arrive at Volos and have check in at the Hotel. The area's mythical background captivates the visitor's imagination. Magnesia area, features in some of the most remarkable tales in Greek mythology. The progenitor of its peoples was Magnes, son of God Zeus and Aeolus, yet Magnesia is believed to be the birthplace of a strange race, the Centaurs, beings which were part equine and part human and originated from the union of Nephele and Ixion. The famous Argonaut expedition, one of the greatest epics in the Greek mythological cycle, set sail from the Pagasetic Gulf. We will make a walking Tour at Volos, the jewel of the Pagasetic Gulf. The sea creates a wonderful seafront with picturesque little restaurants, the famous tsipouradika, named after tsipouro, which are the traditional spirit of the area. Local dinner. Overnight at Volos. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

03

Day 3:Day 03: Volos – Kalabaka – Volos–One day Saronic Cruise (Aegina, Hydra and Poros)

Breakfast and today we will make a tour at Kalabaka – Meteora. At Meteora we will visit 3 main monasteries of Meteora and we will discover the natural beauty and the cultural heritage of this area. This Meteora Tour will take you back to the dark ages and the story of the first hermits and monks, who laid the foundations of what later on became the monastic community of Meteora. Lunch. Dinner. Overnight Volos. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

04

Day 04: Volos – Pelion – Dion – Olympic Riviera

Breakfast and today we will have a tour at Pelion, which is amazing any time of the

year. At Pelion, there was a siege, a war event on 335 BC, during which the young king of Macedonia Alexander the Great besieged and occupied the Illyrian fortress of Pelion to secure the northwestern border of Macedonia before heading south for Greece for the rebellion of Thebes. Lunch. Then we will depart to Dion, which stands at the foot of Mount Olympus and it was the most important sacred city of the Macedonians. Brilliant festivals and celebrations were held by Archelaos, Philip II and Alexander. It is best known for its ancient Macedonian sanctuary of Zeus and city, visible in the archaeological park and the Archaeological Museum of Dion. Dinner. Overnight at Olympic Riviera. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

05

Day 05: Olympic Riviera – Vergina – Pella – Salonica

Breakfast and we will make check out from the Hotel and today we will have a magical journey through time visiting Vergina, the ancient first capital of the Kingdom of Macedonia and Pella, the glorious kingdom of ancient Macedonia. Departure to Vergina, the ancient capital of the Macedonian Kingdom, where nowadays is one of the most beautiful museums of Greece. The town is better known for its remains of Aigai, capital of the kingdom of Lower Macedonia. It was here in 336 BC that Philip II was assassinated in the theatre and Alexander the Great was proclaimed king. The place became internationally famous in 1977, when the Greek archaeologist Manolis Andronikos unearthed the royal tombs, including the tomb of Philip II, father of Alexander the Great. Its discovery is considered to be one of the most important archaeological events of the century. The site of the Royal Tombs under a modern roof hosts the main excavation, as well as an exhibition of the major finds from the burials. It is protected by UNESCO as world cultural heritage and comprises a unique discovery of an enormous universal impact. In the same area, inhabited continuously since the 3rd millennium BC, are also the ruins of an acropolis, palace, theater, shrines and private buildings, and hundreds of common graves of an extensive necropolis of the ancient city of Aigai until Roman times. The exhibition's shelter has the external form of the Great Tumulus, a man-made mound, while the underground building has been housing since November 1997 tombs and treasures found in them. This sheltered group includes three Macedonian tombs: the intact tomb of Philip II (II) – Alexander's father- with a hunting scene fresco painting. Intact is also the so-called Tomb of the Prince (III), which may belong to Alexander IV, grandson of Philip II and his son Alexander the Great and another ruined and plundered Macedonian tomb (IV) of the third BC century. The visitor will also see a plundered a cist family tomb (I), known as the "Tomb of Persephone". Some of the major finds exhibited here are the two golden urns, containing the bones of Philip II and one of his wives, two oak and one myrtle golden wreaths worn by the royal dead. On display is also the rare gold-and-purple embroidered cloth, which wrapped the bones of the royal wife, along with her golden diadem of a unique art, two ivory symposium beds, weapons and armor of Philip II, valuable symposium utensils of the royal family and the silver urn of "Prince." Lunch. Next stop is Pella, the birthplace of Alexander the Great, there we will visit the archaeological site and the museum. The excavations have brought to light the interesting findings of the ancient city, exhibited at the local museum. You will certainly be impressed by the outstanding mosaic floors that used to decorate the city's grand mansions – the most famous are the ones depicting the Abduction of

Helen, Rapture, the Amazonomachy (the battle of Amazons), and the Deer Hunt. Then we will be transferred to Salonika, the pearl of Macedonia and the second-largest city of Greece, which took the name from the half-sister of Alexander, Salonika. Dinner. Overnight Salonika.(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

06

Day 06: Salonica

Breakfast and today we will have a City tour at the beautiful town of Salonica. We will see the Galerius Arch (Kamara), the Rotunda monument, the Citadel and the City Walls, from where you will have a marvelous view of Salonica. Then we will see the White Tower, which is the most commonly known monument of Salonica and the symbol of the city because of its prominent position, long history, and imposing architecture. Continue walking towards the Nea Paralia to see the statue of Alexander the Great and admire the famous umbrellas – a true ornament of the City. Then we will see the historical Aristotelous square. Then we will see the ancient Roman Agora and the Dikasterion Square which can't be forgotten. Lunch. We will visit the Archeologic museum. The Archaeological Museum of Salonica is one of the largest museums in Greece and the central museum of northern Greece. All visitors are welcome to experience its unique collections of ancient artefacts as well as its rich and extrovert cultural activities. There you will see the entire history of ancient Macedonia in one museum. Dinner. Overnight Salonica. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

07

Day 07: Salonica – Delphi

Breakfast and we will depart from Thessaloniki and travel to Delphi. Arrive at Delphi and have Lunch. At the foot of Mount Parnassos, lies the Pan-Hellenic sanctuary of Delphi, which had the most famous oracle of ancient Greece. Delphi was regarded as the centre of the world. According to mythology, it is here that the two eagles sent out by Zeus from the ends of the universe to find the navel of the world met. The sanctuary of Delphi, set within a most spectacular landscape, was for many centuries the cultural and religious centre and symbol of unity for the Hellenic world. The history of Delphi begins in prehistory and in the myths of the ancient Greeks. In the beginning the site was sacred to Mother Earth and was guarded by the terrible serpent Python, who was later killed by Apollo. First stop is a tour of the Delphi archeological site – a UNESCO World Heritage Site and easily one of the most important digs in Europe. There we will see famous monuments like the monument of the Argive Kings, the treasury of the Athenians, the Athenian Stoa, the Polygonal Wall, the monument of Platea and the Temple of Apollo famous for its oracle. Second stop is Delphi museum, with its spectacular exhibits include the frieze of the Treasury of the Sifnians, the Naxian Sphinx, the Statue of Antinoos the metopes of the Athenian treasury, the famous bronze Charioteer, originally created to commemorate a victory during the 476 B.C. Pythian Games, and many other artifacts. Be sure to check out the bronze Charioteer of Delphi and the Sphinx of Naxos. Dinner. Overnight Delphi.(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

08

Day 08: Delphi – Olympia

Breakfast and we will check out and transfer to Ancient Olympia. In the western Peloponnese, in the beautiful valley of the Alpheios river, lies the most celebrated sanctuary of ancient Greece. Dedicated to Zeus, the father of the gods, it lies on the southwest foot of Mount Kronios, at the confluence of the Alpheios and the Kladeos rivers, in a lush green landscape. Although secluded near the west coast of the Peloponnese, Olympia became the most important religious and athletic centre in Greece. Its fame rests upon the Olympic Games, the greatest national festival and a highly prestigious one world-wide, which was held every four years to honor Zeus. The origin of the festival goes back centuries. Lunch. Dinner. Overnight Olympia. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

09

Day 09: Olympia – Nafplio – Athens

Breakfast and check out and transfer to Athens. On the way we will stop to the romantic city of Nafplio. Nafplio was the first capital of the newly born Greek state between 1823 and 1834. According to mythology, the town was founded by Nafplios, the son of god Poseidon and the daughter of Danaus (Danaida) Anymone. The town's history traces back to the prehistoric era when soldiers from here participated in the Argonautic expedition and the Trojan War alike. The town declined during the Roman times and flourished again during the Byzantine times. Frankish, Venetian and Turkish conquerors left their mark in the town and strongly influenced its culture, architecture and traditions during the centuries. Ancient walls, medieval castles, monuments and statues. Lunch. Departure for Athens. Arrive Athens. Dinner. Overnight Athens. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

010

Day 10: Athens

Breakfast and today we will discover the city of the philosophers, Athens. In this tour we will see the Panathenaic Stadium, which is also known as Kallimarmaro Stadium, where the first modern Olympic Games took place in 1896. The Panathenaic Stadium is the world's only major stadium that was built entirely of white marble. It's also one of the oldest in the world. In ancient times, the stadium on this site was used to host the athletic portion of the Panathenaic Games every 4 years in honor of the Goddess Athena. In 329 BC it was rebuilt in marble and in 140 AD was enlarged and renovated, giving a seated capacity of 50,000. We'll also see the Greek Parliament, the building that houses the Hellenic Parliament was once the old palace of the Greek Royal Family and completed in 1840. The building now houses the offices of the President of the National Assembly, along with archives and other services. To the front is the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, guarded by an elite regiment called the Evzones. The changing of guard by the Evzones takes place on the hour and is a popular tourist attraction. The traditional outfit and the ceremony are something not to miss! Then we will see the National Library, which confirmed as the intellectual heart of modern Athens. The building of the Academy is one of the major landmarks of Athens and the University of Athens. Next stop will be the Acropoli, the greatest and finest sanctuary of ancient Athens, dedicated primarily to its patron, the goddess Athena, dominates the centre of the modern city from the rocky crag. These unique masterpieces of ancient architecture combine different orders and styles of Classical art in a most innovative manner and have influenced art and culture for many centuries. The Acropolis of the

fifth century BC is the most accurate reflection of the splendour, power and wealth of Athens at its greatest peak, the golden age of Perikles. The Parthenon, dedicated by the Athenians to Athena Parthenos, the patron of their city, is the most magnificent creation of Athenian democracy at the height of its power. It is also the finest monument on the Acropolis in terms of both conception and execution. Built between 447 and 438 BC. We will see also the Erechtheion, Propylea etc. Then we will visit Acropolis Museum, which is another highlight on this tour, a perfect follow-up to exploring the sights at the Acropolis itself. Recognized as one of the top museums in the world, you'll find yourself up close to the impressive marble masterpieces found on the Acropolis. Lunch. Free time for last shopping. Dinner. Overnight Athens. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

011

Day 11: Athens – Departure flight

Breakfast and check out and transfer to the airport to take your flight back home.