

# Magna Grecia 15 Days



## Overview

Magna Grecia (Greater Greece)

- 15 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**

### Welcome to Greece! Welcome to Athens!

Greece is home to stunning beaches, whitewashed homes, charming towns and centuries of rich history. During this program we will get to experience everything Greece has to offer. We will arrive at Eleftherios Venizelos Airport. Our transfer will be waiting for you at the airport. After boarding our luxurious vehicle, sit back and relax as the driver transports you for lunch, according your arrival time. Check in to the hotel and then you will enjoy dinner at the Hotel. After the dinner you will have a presentation of all the tour from an official archeologist. Overnight in Athens.

**02**

### Day 02: Athens – City tour – Sounio - Athens

Breakfast and get ready for the most amazing city tour through history, we will meet the town of the philosophers and we will go back in time almost 4,000 years where Western civilization was born and the new ideas about philosophy, government, and democracy thrive! We will start our tour with the Panathenaic Stadium where the first Olympic Games of modern times were held in 1896. We will continue and pass by the Prime Minister's residence (ex-Royal Palace), guarded by the Euzones in their colorful uniform, the Temple of Olympian Zeus - one of the largest in antiquity, the Hadrian's Arch - the symbolic entrance to the city, the Parliament and the memorial to the Unknown Soldier, the Academy, the University, the National Library, the Syntagma - Constitution Square. Then we will stand on the top of one of the most Acropolis with the Architectural Masterpieces in the world of the Golden Age of Athens: The Propylaea, the Temple of Athena Nike, the Erechtheion and finally "the harmony between material and spirit", the monument that "puts order in the mind", the Parthenon. Only 300m. away from the sacred rock of Acropolis stands the impressive

New Acropolis Museum where at last 4000 priceless statues found their home and admire the wonders of the classical era. Local lunch in Plaka area, the neighborhood of the Gods. After lunch we will depart for Cape Sounio, which is located on the southernmost tip of Attica, there the horizon meets the Aegean Sea. It is the end point of the Athenian Riviera, at a 69km distance from Athens and there we will visit the temple of Poseidon, which is the ancient Greek god of the sea. The view across the Aegean is superb with one of the most breathtaking panoramic views in the world, extending all the way to Kea and the Peloponnese on a clear day. The Temple of Poseidon was built in 44 B.C., and many of its original Doric columns are still standing. One of the columns has a graffiti left by Lord Byron in the early 1800s. According to the myth, this is the spot where king Aegeus fell into the sea and died, believing that his only son Theseus had been killed. Then we will have dinner in restaurant and return to our Hotel. Overnight Athens.

**03**

## **Day 03: Argosaronikos Tour (Poros, Hydra, Aigina)**

Early in the morning breakfast and transfer to the port to take the boat and have a full day cruise at Argosaronic Gulf with lunch on board (Mediterranean buffet), there we will explore three small gems, Hydra, Poros and Aigina. First stop is Hydra, which is built in the shape of an amphitheatre, which is one of the most romantic destinations in Greece. Traditional stone mansions, narrow cobblestoned streets, secluded squares and above all the banning of cars and the use of around 500 donkeys as means of public transportation, explain the reason why Hydra preserved its distinctive atmosphere through the passage of time. The island experienced exceptional economic growth in the past thanks to its great naval and commercial activity. The Hydriots contributed significantly also to the 1821 War of Independence as their powerful fleet participated in crucial sea battles. It is rather impressive the fact that such a tiny island is the birthplace of five Greek Prime Ministers! Second stop is the island of Poros. The town of Poros is built in the shape of an amphitheatre over two hills. In antiquity Poros consisted in fact of two islands, but the last explosion of the Méthana volcano in 273 BC radically changed the morphology of the area. The one island was cut off from Méthana aerea, and in this way Póros took its present-day form. Lush pine trees vegetation, crystal clear beaches, a lively waterfront adorned with shops, cosy cafes and restaurants, a picturesque capital (it has been declared protected settlement) with grand traditional mansions and picturesque cobbled streets, as well as a wide selection of entertainment venues are the ingredients of this quiet, yet cosmopolitan, destination that attracts visitors from all age groups. The last stop is the island of Aegina and it is one of the most popular tourist destinations as it is the closest island to Athens. According to the myth, the island took its name from a nymph, whom Zeus fell in love with and took with him to the island! From 11/1/1827 until 3/10/1829 Aegina town was the temporary capital of the newly founded Greek state. It was during that period when Governor Ioannis Kapodistrias had impressive neoclassical mansions built to house his headquarters that today are important tourist attractions. In the afternoon arrive at Athens and have dinner in restaurant. Overnight in Athens.

**04**

## Day 04: Athens – Kalambaka

Breakfast and we will depart for Kalabaka. In the way we will make a stop at Thermopyles area for around 4 hours with stops through a great landscape. At this area in ancient days it was a bottleneck, a small stage set for a big drama. In this place one day in the summer of 480 BC, with the sun darkened by the arrows of the Persian army, the Greeks gained strategic and tactical advantage. They delayed the Persian and gained an advance for a few days. A betrayal, a battle that resulted in execution. 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. Then arrive at Kalambaka and have local lunch. Then visit the monasteries at Meteora, which are 400 metres above the ground, one of the most spiritual places. Metéora is one of Christianity's holiest places as well as a landscape of outstanding natural beauty. In 1988 Metéora was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Then we will check in at the Hotel and Greek buffet dinner in hotel. Night visit to Trikala city. Overnight in Kalabaka.

05

## Day 05: Kalambaka – Metsovo – Kalambaka

Breakfast and then we will depart for the beautiful Metsovo. Metsovo is a mountain town, built in 1200 m, and in the winter it is half hidden in the fog or wrapped in a snow blanket and practically looks like a painting. When we will arrive we will make a walking tour and then we will try the famous local wines and cheese like Katogi Averof wine. Lunch in local restaurant with wine. Afternoon visit to Elati village (92 km). It is the largest mountainous village of the district of Trikala and the most touristic of them all. Return in Kalambaka. Dinner. Overnight Kalambaka.

06

## Day 06: Kalambaka – Delphi – Arachova – Delphi

Breakfast and departure for Delphi. At the foot of Mount Parnassos, within the angle formed by the twin rocks of the Phaedriades, 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. This is where priestess Pythia would fall into a trance and then utter omens, offering Apollo's guidance to kings and city-states as well as to plain civilians seeking advice – even non Greeks. The Pythian Games took place in the area and they were the second most important games in ancient Greece after the Olympics. Arrive at Delphi and have lunch in local restaurant with amazing view. Then we will visit the Archaeological Museum of Delphi– a UNESCO World Heritage Site and easily one of the most important digs in Europe. As you walk around the evocative ruins with your guide, 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. Afternoon visit to Arachova (8 km distance) and dinner in local restaurant. Overnight in Delphi.

**07**

## **Day 07: Delphi – Nafpaktos – Olympia**

Breakfast and we will depart for Olympia via Nafpaktos. At Nafpaktos we will stop to see the Castle port. The small, picturesque port has the shape of a horseshoe with an opening of 35 meters. Left and right to the entrance are two towers. After the city's liberation in 1829 the port still remained an important transportation and commercial centre that gave life to the city. Then we will depart to Olympia, the birthplace of Olympic games and the sanctuary of Zeus. Olympia lies in a verdant valley of the western Peloponnese at the confluence of the rivers Alpheios and Kladeos. A landscape of great natural beauty, the whole valley was in ancient times thickly wooded and full of wild olive trees, from the leaves of which were made the wreaths that crowned the Olympian champions; hence the site was named Altis, meaning grove. It was also named Olympia after mountain Olympus, the abode of Zeus. Lunch in Olympia, local food and then visit the archeological monuments of the famous city. The archaeological site of Olympia includes the sanctuary of Zeus and the various buildings erected around it, such as athletic premises used for the preparation and celebration of the Olympic Games, administrative buildings as well as other buildings and monuments. Dinner in Greek buffet in the hotel. Overnight in Olympia.

**08**

## **Day 08: Olympia – Patra**

Breakfast and departure from hotel for the city of Patras. The biggest port of Greece connecting Greece to Italy. There we will visit the famous winery Achaia Clauss to see how the special local sweet wine Mavrodafni is made (Wine tasting is included). City tour of Patras and local lunch. At 18.00 we will embark in the boat for an amazing cruise to the port of Bari in Italy. Overnight in boat at double cabins and dinner inside boat.

**09**

## **Day 09: Bari – Matera – Taranta – Lecce**

Arrival to Bari port at 9 in the morning after having breakfast in the boat. Welcome to Italy. First, we will have a city tour of Bari. City tour of Bari and visit the famous St Nikolas church where the body of Saint Nikolas( Santa Clauss story) is kept. We continue our trip to the city of Matera, Taranta and Lecce( called also the Florence of the south) where we will sleep. We will see the cathedral of Lecce, central square with the Roman amphitheater as also the throne of the governor of the ancient times. In Tarantas ( founded by the Spartans) we will see the archeological museum and the amazing city center. ( lunch in Tarantas and dinner in Lecce). Overnight in Lecce.

**010**

## **Day10: Catania - Syracuse**

Early departure and bus trip to Messina where we will catch the ferry, ( 1,30 hours) to pass to Sicilia. We will visit Catania city for a guided tour, local lunch. Afternoon arrival to Syracuse. Overnight in Syracuse.

**011**

## **Day 11: Syracuse- Palermo**

in the morning we will visit the great archeological site of Syracuse. We will see the temples of ancient Greek Gods Athena and Apollon, the Acropolis of Epipolon and the ancient Greek theater. Lunch and departure to Palermo. Hotel check in Palermo area. Dinner in a good local restaurant.

**012**

## **Day 12: Agrigento**

Full day guided tour of Agrigento. Lunch and Dinner. Overnight in Palermo

**013**

## **Day 13: Palermo city tour - Flight to Rome**

Today after the city tour of Palermo we will have lunch and depart with flight from Palermo to Rome. ( around 1,5 hours). Arrival to Rome. Check in hotel and dinner in restaurant.

**014**

## **Day 14: Rome**

Guided tour of Rome including Vatican, Capela sixtina chappel and Vatican museum. Lunch in local restaurant & free time for shopping in Rome center via Cavour, Fontana di Trevi. Dinner in local restaurant in Trastevere the old part of Rome. Overnight in Rome

**015**

## **Day 15: Departure day**

Breakfast and transfer to the airport of Rome.