

THE **TRAVEL CLUB**

THE GREEK ISLANDS

Mykonos, Santorini & Crete

Wednesday, August 22-Tuesday, September 4, 2018

\$4,559 per person double occupancy; \$5,059 for single reservations

Take in the rich culture and history of Greece's storied islands. It's nearly impossible to get a true taste of Greek culture without sampling its flavorful isles. Experience the relaxed lifestyle and vibrant locals that color all the islands, discovering the character and history unique to each locale. Absorb Hellenic heritage in ancient Athens before soaking in Crete's legendary landscapes. Cruise on the Aegean to the volcanic shores of Santorini and anchor on the beaches of lively Mykonos.

Your tour package includes

- 12 nights in handpicked hotels, 12 breakfasts, 5 dinners with beer or wine
- 3 guided sightseeing tours, Expert Tour Director & local guides, Private deluxe motor coach

Included highlights

- The Acropolis, the Parthenon, Temple of Zeus, windmills in Mykonos Town, black-sand beaches in Santorini, the Akrotiri excavations, ruins of Knossos,

Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for about 1.5 hours daily across uneven terrain, including paved roads and cobblestone streets, with steep hills and stairs.

Day 1: Travel day

Board your overnight flight to Athens today.

Athens

Day 2: Arrival in Athens

Included meals: Dinner

Welcome to Greece! Meet your fellow travelers at a welcome dinner tonight.

Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Athens

Included meals: Breakfast

A local guide introduces you to the highlights of this bustling ancient capital, home to the world's first democracy. • Pass by the Olympic Stadium, Syntagma Square, and the Arch of Hadrian • View the sixth-century Temple of Zeus • See the classically inspired Old Royal Palace, home of the Hellenic Parliament,

and drive through the Plaka district • Set off on a walking tour around the ancient Acropolis, site of the Parthenon, Temple of Athena Nike, and Erechtheion Enjoy a free afternoon in Athens or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion Cape Sounion \$45/pp

Journey to the southern tip of the Attic Peninsula to take in the sights of the Poseidon Coast, including sandy beaches, natural and manmade harbors and, of course, the Aegean Sea itself. High above the sparkling shoreline, the Temple of Poseidon dominates the landscape. Of the original structure, 16 elegant Doric pillars remain. Afterward, decide how you'd like to spend your free time. Take a moment to look out from the lofty cliffside vantage point, where you can see five Aegean islands on a clear day. You may also choose to enjoy a coffee, stop in the souvenir shop, or stroll through the area. Please note: This excursion involves some walking on uneven terrain. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$55)

Day 4: Free day in Athens

Included meals: Breakfast

Enjoy a full free day in Athens or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion Delphi \$89/pp

Journey to the slopes of Mount Parnassus and the town of Delphi, home of the mystical oracle. Embark on a guided tour featuring the Temple of Apollo, where, according to legend, the god Apollo once communicated with mortals. Greece's ancient military leaders customarily left gifts here in hopes of good fortune in battle. After an included lunch, visit the Delphi Museum. Take time to explore the collection on your own, which includes a huge bronze charioteer among its ancient treasures. Please note: This excursion involves some walking on uneven terrain and hills. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$99)

Mykonos

Day 5: Transfer to Mykonos

Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Travel by ferry to Mykonos, and follow your Tour Director on an orientation of Mykonos Town when you arrive. • See the iconic windmills in Mykonos Town, built as early as the 16th century • View Little Venice, the charming neighborhood right along the Aegean Sea • Pass the Church of Panagia Paraportiani and admire its unique architecture

Day 6: Free day in Mykonos

Included meals: Breakfast

Enjoy a full free day in Mykonos soaking up the sun and unique island culture, or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion Mykonos Cooking Demonstration & Lunch \$95/pp

Your first stop is the village of Ano Mera, where you'll pay a visit to the 18th-century Monastery of Panagia Tourliani and enjoy free time to explore the surrounding town square. After you've worked up an appetite in town, make your way to a local farm where you'll learn how to make traditional dishes such as Mykonian pie and tzatziki. Then, sample three different Greek wines during a tasting as you enjoy a light lunch. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$105)

Day 7: Free day in Mykonos

Included meals: Breakfast

Enjoy another day exploring Mykonos at your leisure or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion Delos \$79/pp

Journey by boat to the island of Delos, rich with mythological history and once one of Greece's most sacred spots. Your guided tour of the island's ancient city will transport you to the time when this was an important center for trade in silk, spices, and slaves. You can explore the ruins of the Sanctuary of Apollo, the Sacred Cave, the Lion Terrace, and the House of Dionysus, where you'll find a breathtaking mosaic of the god of wine. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$89)

Santorini

Day 8: Transfer to Santorini

Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Take a ferry to Santorini, then enjoy free time to discover the island's volcanic black-sand beaches, cliff-lined shores, and stunning whitewashed architecture.

Day 9: Sightseeing tour of Santorini

Included meals: Breakfast

Today, take in the local sights on a guided tour of Santorini. • Visit the prehistoric settlements that were unearthed during the archaeological excavations at Akrotiri • Ride to the top of Mount Profitis Ilias for panoramic views of the whole island • Stop in the small, picturesque village of Pyrgos Enjoy a free evening in Santorini or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion Santorini Caldera Cruise & Dinner \$119/pp

Board an elegant, fully equipped catamaran and sail in comfort through Santorini's awe-inspiring caldera on this scenic excursion. You'll cruise around the volcanic island of Nea Kameni for views of the picture-perfect cliffside village of Oia (pronounced "EE-ah"). Situated on the western end of the island, Oia was once a maritime center and stately captains' houses still sit on its high ridges. Spend the afternoon on the open waters as you snorkel in the ocean, sunbathe on the deck of the catamaran, and swim in a natural hot spring that was once the crater of a volcano. You'll enjoy unlimited wine, water, and soft drinks as well as a buffet-style dinner of home-cooked Greek specialties on board the boat as you take in the sunset (on clear days) and the scenery. Please note: We recommend packing a bathing suit. This excursion is seasonal and runs from May through the beginning of October only. It is also weather-dependent. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$129)

Day 10: Free day in Santorini

Included meals: Breakfast

Enjoy a full free day in Santorini or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion Greek Wine Tasting & Lunch \$59/pp

Santorini's volcanic landscape and nutrient-rich soil nurture a wealth of outstanding vineyards. You'll tour a local winery and learn about how the vines are trained to grow close to the ground, which helps protect the grapes from the strong ocean winds. Then, sit down for a lunch and tasting featuring some of

their signature varietals including Assyrtiko and Vin Santo. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$69)

Crete

Day 11: Transfer to Crete

Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

This afternoon, take a ferry to Crete, the largest of the Greek islands.

Day 12: Free day in Crete

Included meals: Breakfast

Enjoy a full free day in Crete or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion Chania \$99/pp

Travel to historic Chania, where a local guide introduces you to the city's Old Town. You'll visit Chania's cathedral before a walk through the Venetian quarter, where you'll step inside Etz Hayyim, the only synagogue on the island of Crete and a symbol of the city's ages-old Jewish community. After exploring the synagogue, spend some time strolling through the indoor market, perhaps sampling local herbs, olive oil, and cheeses. Your guided tour ends at the port where you'll visit an ancient Turkish Ottoman mosque. Lunch is included on this excursion, as well as free time to get to know this beautiful city at your own pace. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$109)

Athens

Day 13: Sightseeing tour of Heraklion & transfer to Athens

Included meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Before returning to Athens, enjoy a guided tour of Heraklion. • Visit the ruins of Knossos, where King Minos imprisoned the Minotaur in a labyrinth, according to the myth • See the Heraklion Archaeological Museum This afternoon, fly to Athens to say goodbye to your group at a farewell dinner.

Day 14: Departure **Included meals: Breakfast (excluding early morning departures)**

Transfer to the airport for your flight home or extend your stay to continue exploring Athens.

Add an extension to Athens from \$299 2 nights

Day 14: Free day in Athens

Included meals: Breakfast

Enjoy a free day in Athens or add an excursion.

Optional Excursion Athens Home-Hosted Dinner \$65/pp

Join a local at their home in Athens to enjoy traditional dishes and dine like a true Grecian. During this dinner, you'll receive an authentic understanding of your host's day-to-day life while learning about Greek culture and traditions from a new perspective. Must book 20 days before departure

Day 15: Free day in Athens

Included meals: Breakfast

Enjoy another free day in Athens or add an excursion. Tonight, gather with your fellow travelers to enjoy a farewell drink.

Optional Excursion Corinth Canal, Epidaurus & Mycenae \$89/pp

Begin the day with a visit to the Corinth Canal. Everyone from Julius Caesar to emperor Nero dreamed of building this canal to connect the Gulf of Corinth with the Saronic Gulf and cut down on the time it took to transport goods by boat. The present-day canal was completed in 1893 and separates the Peloponnese peninsula from mainland Greece. While it's too small for modern boats, the canal symbolizes the vision of these ancient rulers. After, head to the Ancient Theater of Epidaurus and learn about one of the world's best-preserved Greek amphitheaters. End the day with a tour of the UNESCO-listed Archaeological Sites of Mycenae, an important city in the Mycenaean civilization that's linked to Homer's famous Greek epics the Iliad and the Odyssey. Save \$10 when you book this excursion up to 3 days before your tour departs (On-tour price: \$99)

Day 16: Departure

Included meals: Breakfast

Transfer to the airport for your flight home.