

OCEANIA'S ANCIENT GREECE AND WINERIES 3 NIGHT PRE-CRUISE ATHENS
\$1999 PER PERSON BASED UPON DOUBLE OCCUPANCY

Gain a remarkable understanding of the ancient world by browsing key archaeological ruins and historical sites that will reveal the complexities of that Greek civilization, while pausing along the way to sample superb Greek wines. This is a small group program and thus limited to 14 participants.

NOTE: there are lengthy drives on this program and guests with mobility issues may have difficulty with the terrain at the ruins of Delphi

ALSO NOTE: Initially, a decision was taken during the peak pandemic period to undergo an extensive widening of the canal at Corinth. Works commenced and were scheduled to be completed already; however, according to the relevant authorities, the suppliers for this project are now very far behind schedule. There are hopes to have the canal operational for transit mid summer 2024 however this cannot be guaranteed. Should your program date be affected, a photo stop will be made to see the Canal in lieu of the crossing. Your final cruise documents (21 days before sailing) will have the most up to date information for your program.

DAY 1

Upon arriving at the Athens International Airport, you will be met and transferred to your hotel in the Kolonaki neighborhood. Following check-in, the afternoon will be free to explore the area on your own. Kolonaki is known for its upscale shopping and trendy bars, so you will have plenty of choices.

This evening, you will dine at the seaside restaurant Varoulko at the Microlimano marino. Michelin-star chef Lefteris Lazarou created the restaurant menu, so expect a fantastic dining experience. Afterwards, you will return to the hotel to spend the night.

DAY 2

Following breakfast at the hotel, you will depart for the Peloponnese area, where you will board a boat and transit the Corinth Canal. The canal connects the Gulf of Corinth with the Saronic Gulf in the Aegean Sea, separating the Peloponnese from the Greek mainland. The canal was dug at sea level and has no locks, unlike many other canals. During the transit, you will learn about early attempts to construct a canal in this location, including a failed attempt during Nero's reign in 1st century.

You will then proceed to an ancient section of Corinth to view an archaeological site with a surprising mix of ruins. Some of the remains are from a 6th-century BC Greek city, while others are from a 44 BC Roman colony built at the end of Julius Caesar's reign. Some of the more fascinating highlights include a Christian basilica, the starting lines of a Greek

racetrack, a sacred spring with bronze lion's-head spouts, and the elaborate Roman fountain of Peirene, which according to myth was where Pegasus drank.

The Nemea wine region is among Greece's most important red-wine appellation. The mountains and valleys surrounding the village of Nemea have been producing wine for centuries, mostly from the native Agiorgitiko grape. A wide range of wines are made with this red grape variety, including dry wines and lighter, sweeter ones. While visiting a nearby wine estate, you will sample a selection of distinct wines and enjoy a light lunch.

Continuing on, you will cross the Rio-Antirrio Bridge, one of the world's longest multi-span cable-stayed bridges and the longest of the fully suspended type. The bridge spans the Gulf of Corinth near Patras, linking the town of Rio on the Peloponnese peninsula, to Antirrio on mainland Greece.

Once on the mainland, you will stop at Nafpaktos, a seaside town known for its lengthy beach and an impressive Venetian castle. The naval Battle of Lepanto occurred just off the coast in 1571. The Ottoman fleet was soundly defeated, marking the end of the western expansion of the Ottoman Turks. Miguel Cervantes, who later wrote "Don Quixote," lost the use of his left arm during the battle.

Ahead, lie the the small coastal towns of Galaxidi and Itsea, which you will pass on the way to Arachova. You will spend the evening there at the Anemolia Hotel. Dinner will be offered at the hotel or a restaurant in Arachova.

NOTE: Should the canal not be ready for transit, the group will have a photo stop instead.

DAY 3

After an American breakfast at the hotel, you will begin an immensely scenic drive into central Greece, eventually stopping in Delphi. The ancients believed the site to be the physical and spiritual centers of the earth.

You will walk along the Sacred Way, following the same path up Mount Parnassus that the ancient pilgrims took to seek advice from the Oracle of Delphi. The pilgrims would ask the oracle questions about the future, and she would answer somewhat cryptically. Even so, the oracle was famous throughout Greece and far beyond.

You will also browse a museum at Delphi with a superb collection of votive offerings and statues, including the glorious Charioteer, one of the finest bronze statues from ancient Greece.

A short drive will bring you to the village of Distomo and on towards the Monastery of Ossiou Loukas, which dates to the 10th century. UNESCO declared the walled monastery a

World Heritage site for its outstanding Byzantine religious architecture. Please note that women must wear clothing that covers their knees and shoulders to enter.

Upon returning to the hotel, the remainder of the day will be at your leisure with dinner on your own.

NOTE: This program includes walking over steep and uneven terrain with steps in places at the ruins of Delphi (the Sacred Way) with no places to sit, other than on rocks. The area also offers very little shade. Make sure to have a hat and sunscreen. Guests with mobility restrictions may find it difficult to make it to the top however the museum is accessible.

DAY 4

After breakfast at the hotel, you will drive to Athens with a small deviation to visit the spectacular, family-owned winery Domaine Hatzimichalis. You will enjoy a tasting of its award-winning wines before continuing on to the port of Piraeus to board the cruise ship.