


GREECE

GRAND TOUR OF MAINLAND GREECE

(TOUR CODE: 15844)
STARTS AND ENDS

in Athens

TRAVEL PERIODS

07 May 26 - 24 Sep 26

EXPERIENCE

 Escorted
Cultural

TRAVEL STYLE

Escorted Group Tour

Journey through Greece's heartland from ancient Olympia and sacred Delphi to the soaring monasteries of Meteora and vibrant Thessaloniki.

Highlights

- Explore Epidaurus' famed theatre and the legendary **Mycenae**, home of Agamemnon, with its **Lion Gate and royal tombs**
- Discover **Delphi's sacred sanctuary, oracle**, and the **Charioteer statue** at the archaeological museum
- Marvel at Meteora's monasteries atop rock pillars and traverse the scenic Thessalian Plain and Tempi Valley
- Visit Olympia's **sanctuary of Zeus**, the ancient stadium, and museum, birthplace of the Olympic Games
- Explore **Vergina's royal tombs, Aristotle's School in Naoussa**, and **Pella, Alexander the Great's birthplace**

Discover the very essence of Greece on this immersive Grand Tour of Mainland Greece, tracing the rise of ancient civilisations and legendary landscapes. Travel from Athens through the Peloponnese to Olympia, Delphi and Meteora, exploring iconic sanctuaries, royal tombs and dramatic natural scenery. Travel north through Macedonia to vibrant Thessaloniki, birthplace of emperors and saints, before following the footsteps of Alexander the Great back to Athens. A richly layered journey through history, culture and myth.



- ENTIRE Cooling-Off Period
- ENTIRE AUD Prices
- ENTIRE Change of Mind
- ENTIRE Industry Accredited
- ENTIRE On Ground Support
- ENTIRE Australian Owned

INCLUSIONS

- 1 night in Olympia at Amalia Hotel Olympia - 4* or similar
- 1 night in Delphi at Amalia Hotel Delphi - 4* or similar
- 1 night in Kalambaka at Amalia Hotel Kalambaka - 4* or similar
- 3 nights in Thessaloniki at Electra Palace Thessaloniki - 5* or similar
- Transportation by air-conditioned deluxe coach
- Breakfast and dinner at the hotel
- Guided visit to the archaeological sites and museums of Olympia, Delphi, Vergina, and Pella
- Visit to the ancient theatre of Epidaurus, Mycenae, Meteora monasteries, and Dion Archaeological Park
- Visits to the Corinth Canal, Thermopylae (photo stop), and Thessalian Plain
- Entrance fees to archaeological sites and museums as per the itinerary (Epidaurus, Mycenae, Olympia, Delphi, Meteora monasteries, Vergina, Pella, Dion)
- Free Wi-Fi on the bus and at the hotel
- English-Speaking Only Tour Director throughout the journey

ITINERARY

Day 1

Athens Nauplia Olympia

Starting from **Athens** we drive westwards along the scenic coast, until we reach the **Corinth Canal** with its breathtaking views (short stop). The Corinth Canal is a junction of international sea transport and serves ships coming from the western Mediterranean and Adriatic en route to eastern Mediterranean and black sea ports and vice-versa.

Continue along the coastal road of the **Saronic Gulf** to and a visit to **Epidaurus**. On the headland called "Nesi" at Palaia Epidaurus, the theatre of the ancient city is quite well-preserved, in the shape it acquired during the latter years of its function. Apart from a few rows of seats, the cavea is made of limestone with poros staircases. The theatre is marveled for its exceptional acoustics, which permit almost perfect intelligibility of unamplified spoken word from the proscenium or scene to all 12,000 spectators, regardless of their seating.

Then depart for **Nauplia**, first capital of Greece in 1829 (short stop), drive to **Mycenae** for a visit. "Mycenae 'Rich in Gold', the kingdom of mythical Agamemnon, first sung by Homer in his epics, is the most important and richest palatial centre of the Late Bronze Age in Greece. Its name was given to one of the greatest civilisations of Greek prehistory, the Mycenaean civilisation."

In the afternoon depart for **Olympia**. Enjoy dinner at the hotel and the rest of the night is at your disposal.

Overnight stay in Olympia at **Amalia Hotel Olympia** or similar.

Dinner



Day 2

Olympia Delphi

Olympia the most celebrated sanctuary of ancient Greece. Dedicated to Zeus, the father of the gods, it sprawls over 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 worldwide, which was held every four years to honour Zeus.

Visit the **archaeological site & the museum** and then drive via **Patrasto Rion**, across the channel to Antirrio on the "State of the Art" new suspended bridge considered to be the longest and most modern in Europe.

Drive through **Nafpaktos** then continue to **Delphi**. Dinner at the hotel.

Overnight stay in Delphi at **Amalia Hotel Delphi** or similar.

Breakfast, Dinner



Day 3

Delphi Kalambaka

Situated 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. 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.

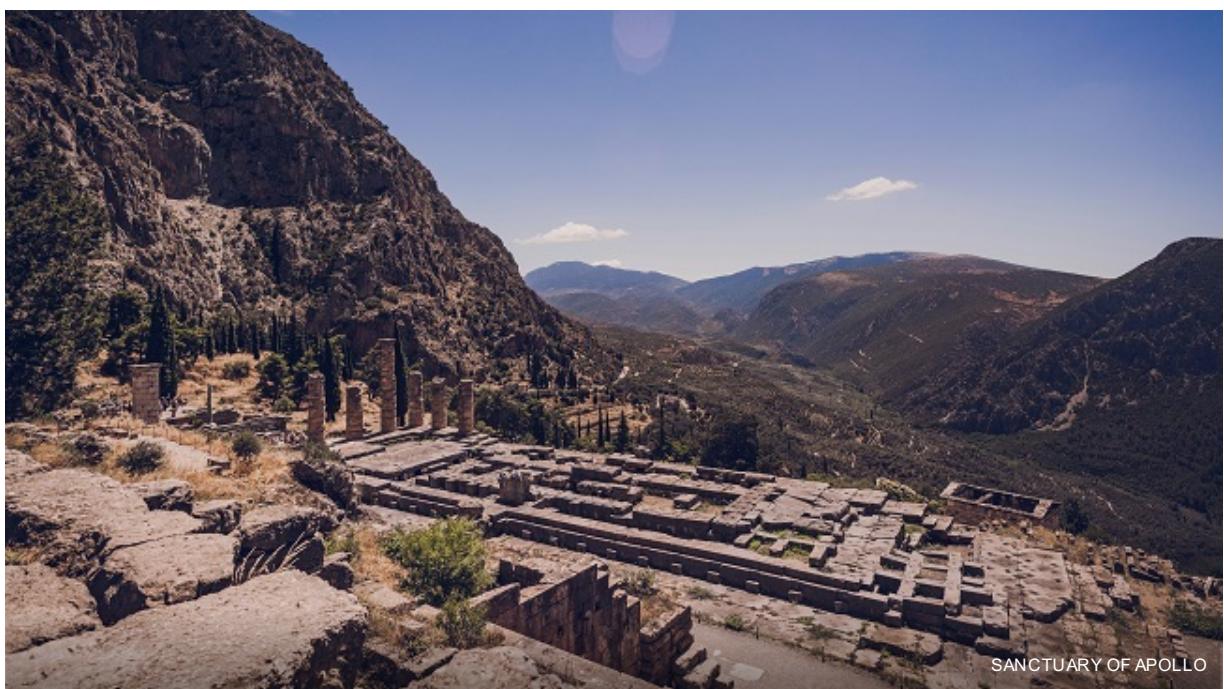
The sanctuary of Delphi, set within a most spectacular landscape, was for many centuries the cultural and religious centre and symbol of unity for the Hellenic world and seat of the Pythian Games, the second most important games in Greece after the Olympics, which were held every four years.

Visit of the **archaeological site** and the **museum** where one can see among other archeological treasures, the unique **bronze statue of the Charioteer dedicated to Apollo** by Polyzalos, the tyrant of Gela, in 478 B.C. when he won the chariot-race at the Pythian Games. This incomparable statue is a representative example of the "severe" Attic style, certainly the work of a major artist.

After visits depart for Kalambaka. Dinner at the hotel.

Overnight stay in Kalambaka at **Amalia Hotel Kalambaka** or similar.

Breakfast, Dinner



Day 4

Kalambaka Meteora Thessaloniki

Visit the **Meteora**: perched on top of huge rocks, which seem to be suspended in mid-air, stand ageless Monasteries, where you can see exquisite specimens of Byzantine art.

Depart from Kalambaka, drive through the striking plain of Thessaly and the **Valley of Tempi**, and admire the gigantic figure of **Mount Olympos**, the highest mountain in Greece and home of the 12 Gods in Greek Mythology. Changing bus to continue your tour to Thessaloniki.

Arrival at **Thessaloniki**, the second largest and the most vibrant city in Greece. Dinner at the hotel.

Overnight stay in Thessaloniki at **Electra Palace Thessaloniki** or similar.

Breakfast, Dinner



Day 5

Thessaloniki

In the morning visit the city that throughout the era of the **Byzantine Empire** was the "co-reigning" city, second in population and prestige only to Constantinople. Visit unique monuments and feel the glorious Byzantine past in some of the oldest and most characteristic **church of St. Demetrios, White Tower, Roman Forum, Ottoman Marker** and the **Byzantine walls**.

Short walking tour includes the ruins from the Palace and Arch of Galerius. Visit Rotunda with fine early –Christian mosaics.

Rest of the day free, to enjoy time in the lively centre of the city and enjoy dinner at the hotel.

Overnight stay in Thessaloniki at **Electra Palace Thessaloniki** or similar.

Breakfast, Dinner



Day 6

Thessaloniki Macedonia Thessaloniki

Depart in the morning for a unique approach to historical **Macedonia**.

First stop at picturesque **Edessa** where we see the town's famous landmark, **the Waterfalls**. Then proceed to **Naoussa**, to a site of exceptional beauty and importance: **Aristotle's School**, the picturesque site where the great philosopher taught 'the doctrines of morals and politics' to Alexander the Great and the Macedonian youth.

Then drive to **Vergina (ancient Aigai)**, to live the experience of a visit to the unique museum, created in the Great Tumulus covering the royal tombs of Macedonia. See the astonishing findings from the **tomb of King Phillip II**, Alexander's father, and feel the thrill of the greatest discovery of the 20th century. In only a few miles away is **Veria (Biblical Beroea)** to visit **Saint Paul's Bema**, and then stroll through the old Jewish neighbourhood and the colourful market area. A walk in a city where past is present and around.

Return to Thessaloniki, and enjoy dinner at the hotel.

Overnight stay in Thessaloniki at **Electra Palace Thessaloniki** or similar.

Breakfast, Dinner



Day **7**

Thessaloniki Pella Athens

Drive to **Pella**, the capital of Alexander the Great. See the exquisite floor mosaics of the 4th century B.C. villas, in situ as well as in the new museum.

Then proceed and visit the **Archaeological Park of Dion** (sacred city of the Macedonians, at the foot of mountain Olympos).

After the visit we shall start driving south and through **Thessaly**, **Lamia**, **Thermopylae** (see the Leonidas' Monument) and **Thebes**. Arrive in Athens late in the afternoon.

End of services.

Breakfast



DION ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK

ACCOMMODATION

Amalia Hotel Olympia

Olympia

Surrounded by nature and close to ancient sites, this welcoming hotel offers a peaceful retreat with easy access to cultural attractions and outdoor activities. Guests can enjoy comfortable rooms, lush gardens, a large swimming pool, a restaurant, and a marble lobby with cosy fireplace corners.



Amalia Hotel Delphi

Delphi

Amalia Hotel Delphi is situated in an ideal location where you can have the best of both worlds: a calming place to recharge as well as a convenient location that allows you to explore the famous archaeological attractions and museums of the area, fun outdoor activities and interesting towns nearby. Comfortable rooms, a large swimming pool, extensive gardens, the main restaurant, a cozy café-bar and a lobby lounge with a fireplace will result in the best holiday getaway!



Amalia Hotel Kalambaka

Kalambaka

Amalia Hotel Kalambaka, a 4-star hotel, is situated in a privileged location, just minutes away from the town of Kalambaka. The hotel extends on 14 acres of greenery and has been built with traditional materials to match its surroundings. This hotel is one of the best hotels to stay in Kalambaka due to its excellent location, incredible facilities and comfortable rooms. You can enjoy the best of both worlds: a comfortable and pleasant environment as well as the ideal location where you can explore the monasteries, museums and fun activities that will make your stay very memorable! Beautiful rooms, extensive gardens, a large swimming pool, a restaurant serving all kinds of treats and a spacious lobby with cosy corners around a fireplace, will afford the most relaxing and carefree getaway.



Electra Palace Thessaloniki

Thessaloniki

A landmark on Aristotelous Square, this iconic hotel has been a symbol of Thessaloniki for over fifty years. Renowned for its elegant atmosphere and legendary status, it has long been a preferred choice for celebrities and a focal point of the city's social, cultural, and business life.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Greek

LOCAL CURRENCY

Euro(€)

Excluded

- International airfares and taxes
- Domestic airfares and taxes, unless otherwise specified in our holiday package
- Visa expenses, processing and issuance fees
- Meals other than as specified in our holiday package
- Travel Insurance or expenses of a personal nature (mini-bar, phone call, laundry, etc.),
- Tips or gratuities to guides, drivers, porters, hotel, restaurant or boat staff, etc.
- Or any other travel expense that has not been included in our holiday package