

Greece, Meteora and Rome

14 days - 12 nights

**Athens, Tolo, Olympia, Delphi, Meteora (Kalambaka), Mini Cruise to the Greek Islands of Aegina, Poros and Hydra, Rome, Vatican
Faith, Art, History, Culture, Fun**

Day 1 – USA, Athens

Depart USA on overnight flight to Athens. Dinner and breakfast served on board.

Day 2: Athens, Tolo

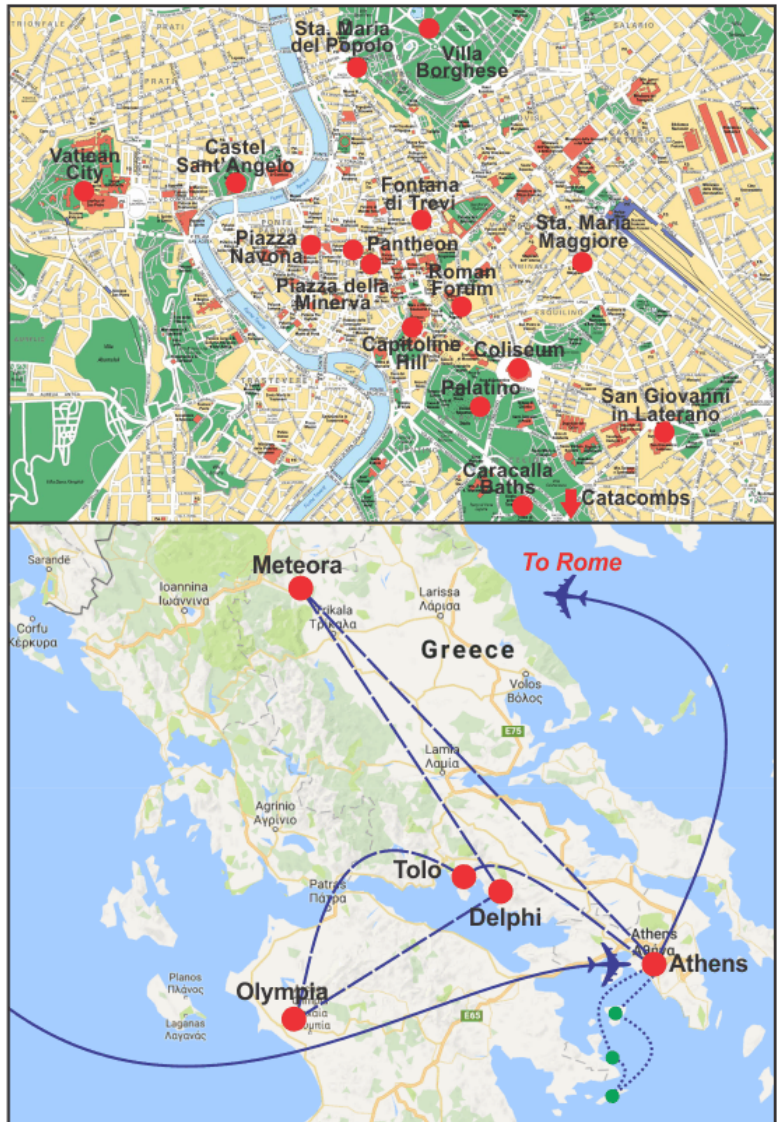
Upon arrive to Athens, meet with your guide and board the bus for a drive to Tolo (Nafplion), ancient Epidaurus. Rest of the day to rest and relax. Dinner and overnight in Tolo. [D]

Day 3: Tolo, Olympia

Drive through the region of Argolis and visit Corinth. At the foothills of the Corinthian Acropolis, ST. Paul lived, worked as a tent maker and taught the word of God for 18 months. We will visit the ruins of the ancient city, walking in the same paths that he walked thousands of years before while our guide reveals the ruins of the 6th century BC Temple of Apollo, the Fountain of Peirene, the Agora where Paul's trial by Gallio took place and where the famous Bema stands. Afterward we will pass by the ancient port of Kechries, where Paul departed from for Ephesus and later on we'll marvel at the engineering feat of the Corinth Canal, designed in Paul's time, but finally realized in the late 1890s. From her we leave for Mycenae, the largest and most important center of the civilization that was named "Mycenaean" after this very citadel. Mycenaean is the culture that dominated mainland Greece, the Aegean islands, and the shores of Asia Minor during the late Bronze Age era (circa 1600-1100 BCE). The Mycenaean Era occupies the tail end of the Helladic Civilization, which flourished in mainland Greece since 3000 BCE. Then, continue to Epidaurus, one of the most popular archaeological sites in Greece famous for its Ancient Theatre constructed in the late 4th century BC to host religious ceremonial events in honor of god Asclepius, whose healing center was located few steps away. The day will end up in Olympia where you'll have dinner and overnight at the hotel. [B/D]

Day 4: Olympia, Delphi

Birthplace to the Olympic Games, and the home of the Olympic Flame, Olympia is a site that every visitor to should visit. The whole region of Olympia is one filled with immense history and beauty, and it is not difficult to imagine the atmosphere of the ancient games all those many years ago. With the museum exhibiting a selection of findings from the area, Olympia truly is one of the most interesting



and educational sites you will find in this part of Greece. After a visit to the Museum and the Archeological Excavations, proceed to Delphi considered one of the most famous relics of classic Greece. Dinner and overnight in Delphi. [BD]

Day 5: Delphi, Kalambaka

Delphi where the unique setting of the Fedriades rock formation is found, created by Zeus' thunderbolts indicating the navel of the earth. Start the day by visiting the Monastery of Osios Lukas, one of the earliest and most important Greek-Byzantine Monasteries located near the Sanctuary of the Oracle of Delphi and the nearby Parnassos National Park; the Archeological Museum and the excavations including: ruins of the Sanctuary of Apollo, the Temple, the Treasury, the Theater and the Stadium. Depart Delphi to Kalambaka for dinner and overnight. [BD]

Day 6: Kalambaka, Athens

When you awaken to see the awe-inspiring rock formations unfold before your eyes, you will easily understand why we call this place Meteora, which means "suspended in the heavens above." Today we will climb above the charming mountain villages of Kastraki and Kalambaka to visit two of the six surviving Monasteries of Meteora, a UNESCO world heritage site and one of the most important complexes of Eastern Orthodox monasteries in the world. Though Paul passed through Greece long before hermits began cave-dwelling here in the 9th century, one cannot deny that the message of his mission is alive and is exceptionally well preserved here. We will see how the monks live today and enter some of the most captivating Byzantine basilicas in Greece. In the afternoon we'll head south to the world-famous capital city of Athens for dinner and a several nights stay. [B/D]

Day 7: Athens

Today we will explore the fascinating city of Athens, a city whose deeply spiritual citizens have dedicated themselves to Gods for over 4,500 years, leaving behind countless places of worship to visit. We will begin our morning climbing up the rock of the Acropolis, while our experienced guide uncovers the stories behind the Temple of Athena Nike, the Erectheum, the Propylae, and perhaps the most perfect piece of architecture ever built, the majestic Parthenon. Afterward, we will ascend the Areopagus, Mars Hill, where Paul spoke to the Athenians who were gathered in the Ancient Agora below. We'll continue on to the Panathenaic Stadium, the Temple of the Zeus and Hadrian's Arch. To follow we will see the National Gardens, the Parliament and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Syntagma Square, the University of Athens, and finally the National Library. Take a walk through the enchanting Plaka and pass by some of the city's most precious Byzantine churches afterward. Dinner and overnight in lively Athens. [B/D]

Day 8: Athens (Poros, Hydra, Aegina Cruise)

Take a day cruise from Athens setting sail for the island of Poros, where you'll have free time for strolling and shopping. Next, it's on to the island of Hydra that once served as a safe shelter for Saronic Pirates. From the decks, you will be able to admire the very special architecture and dramatic landscapes of this island, whose old traditional stone houses and mansions silently stand witness to a long and turbulent history. In Aegina (Aegina) join an excursion to the Temple of Aphaia presenting you the most important periods of Greek History through classical and Byzantine Aegina miracles. Then, from there we take you to the center of the island to the Church dedicated to Saint Nectarios, a healer of the Greek Orthodox Church. After sailing back to Piraeus port you'll be transferred to Athens.

Day 9 – Athens/Rome

Transfer to Athens airport for your flight to Rome where, on arrival you'll be met and transferred to your hotel. The rest of the day is at leisure to start discovering the Eternal City on your own. Dinner and overnight in Rome. [B/D]

Day 10: Rome – The Ancient Christians

Have breakfast at the hotel and enjoy a morning at leisure to start discovering the neighborhood and the city's lively streets and colorful districts on your own. You can use your 48-hour sightseeing pass

to have an overlook of the most important monuments and sites of the Eternal City. After lunch on your own, you will join your first tour with an expert guide to follow the historical paths furrowing the Italian capital. Firstly, you will reach the Esquiline Hill, where you will discover the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore and its treasures. The tour will continue to the Scala Sancta (Holy Staircase), the Lateran Palace with a thorough visit to the Basilica of San Giovanni, the cathedral of Rome. You will proceed along the Ancient Appian Way, passing by the Chapel of "Domine Quo Vadis", and you will arrive at the Catacombs, an ancient hiding place and then Christian and Jewish underground cemeteries, dating back to the first centuries of Christianity. There, you will access the Catacombs of San Callisto, Santa Domitilla or San Sebastiano (depending on the season – entrance tickets included). The tour will end at the magnificent ruins of imperial Baths of Caracalla. Free evening. Dinner and overnight at the hotel. [B/D]

Day 11: Rome – The Ancient Romans

Have breakfast at the hotel and, then, start your visit of the Ancient part of Rome, accompanied by an expert guide, including the Coliseum, one of the most famous monuments in the world, the Palatine Hill, the most exclusive district with the opulent palaces of emperors and patrician families, and the Roman Forum, the center of Roman public and economic life (skip the line entrance tickets included). Explore Rome's picturesque churches and charming piazzas, breathing the air of mystery and romance. The 17th century Rome was the cradle of Illuminati, one of the most influential secret societies of all times. Leaders of this society were Galileo Galilei and Gian Lorenzo Bernini who created the Path of Illumination by depositing clues around the city that, once solved, would reveal the way to enter a hidden place. You will visit some key places of the city and of Dan Brown's bestseller from a different perspective, such as Santa Maria del Popolo church, St. Peter's Square, Santa Maria della Vittoria Church, Piazza Navona, Castel Sant'Angelo, and also the Passetto (from outside), a secret passageway of popes connecting the Vatican and Castel Sant'angelo (transfer will be by air-conditioned coach). Free afternoon. Dinner and overnight at the hotel. [B/D]

Day 12: The Vatican and Religious Rome

After breakfast at the hotel start a visit of Religious Rome beginning with the Vatican Museums and its unique treasures: the Candelabra, the Tapestries and the Geographic Maps Galleries, the Raphael Rooms and Michelangelo's magnificent masterpiece: the Sistine Chapel. Continue to St. Peter's Basilica, the largest church in Christendom and its incredible statues and altar by Bernini with an expert English guide ("skip the line" entrance tickets included). You will arrive at the imposing St. Peter's Square and then proceed to visit the three major Basilicas: St. Mary Major, one of the oldest shrines dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, a shrine containing a relic from the manger of the infant Jesus; St. John in Lateran, the former residence of the Popes prior to their return to Rome in 1377; St. Paul Outside the Wall, which houses the remains of St. Paul under its main altar. Dinner and overnight at the hotel. [B/D]

Day 13: Rome

Unless id Sunday* or Wednesday* enjoy the day at you leisure to discover Rome by your own: time for last minute shopping or to reflect on the many years of Christian continuity in the world center of the Western Church. Dinner and overnight at the hotel. [B/D]

**IF SUNDAY: attend the Sunday mass in St. Peter's Square and the Blessing given by His Holiness Pope Francis;*

IF WEDNESDAY: attend the weekly Papal Audience in St. Peter's Square and the Blessing given by His Holiness Pope Francis.

Day 14: Rome-USA

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel and be ready to be picked up for your private transfer from the hotel to Fiumicino International Airport and board your flight back home. [B]

[B] = Breakfast | [D] = Dinner | [B/D] = Breakfast and Dinner

Tour Includes:

- Round trip flight between the USA and Rome
- Arrival and departure transfers
- Accommodation in select hotels:
 - Tolo 1 day
 - Olympia 1 day
 - Delphi 1 day
 - Kalambaka 1 day
 - Athens 3 days
 - Rome 5 days
- Meals
 - Breakfast daily
 - Dinner daily
- Mini cruise:
 - Lunch on board the cruise
 - Greek dance show and music

- Excursion to Temple of Aphaia
- Visits as described in the Itinerary
- Entrance fees for visited monuments
- English speaking guide
- All local taxes and service fees

Tour does not include

- Airfare fees and taxes
- Airfare difference between New York and another USA gateway
- Travel Insurance
- Expenses of personal nature
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Tips to guides or drivers
- Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
- Tips to guides or drivers

Hotels in your Tour:

City	Hotel Name	Tripadvisor
Tourist Class		
Tolo	Frini Hotel	4.5
Olympia	Hotel Kronyo	4.5
Delphi	Hotel Acropole	4
Kalambaka	Dellas Boutique Hotel	5
Athens	Inn Athens	5
Rome	Albergo del Senato	5
First Class		
Tolo	Asteria Hotel	4.5
Olympia	Hotel Kronyo	4.5
Delphi	Amalia Hotel Delphi	4
Kalambaka	Amalia Hotel Kalambaka	4
Athens	AVA Athens	5
Rome	Martis Palace Hotel	5
Deluxe		
Tolo	Apollon Hotel	4.5
Olympia	Hotel Europa	4.5
Delphi	Epavlis Boutique Suites	4.5
Kalambaka	Divani Meteora Hotel	4
Athens	Hilton Athens	4.5
Rome	Elizabeth Unique Hotel	5

MEAL PLAN: Normally we include daily breakfast and dinner for all groups. However, the meal plan may vary depending on the organizer's request

- All hotels will be requested after discussion with the group Organizer

Group Prices:

The price for the group will be quoted based on the number of passengers, season, hotel type and meal plan.

Group organizers always travel for free if the group has 15 or more paying passengers.

Inclusion of tour conductors must be considered at time of request.

- If you wish to use this program for your group please either call us (1-855-55-TOURS or use the web Group Quote Request.
- In either case our specialists will work with you to refine all the details and they will get you a quote with 2 business days. Quotes may be obtained for the air and land portions of just for the

land journey.

- Booking both air and land with us will represent savings for you because of our special Leisure Fares, buying power and longtime relationship with the airlines.
- We will also may have the choice between regular fares and special leisure fares not available to the public.

Tour Code: GR03ATH20VT

Other Options

- Lunches and dinners can be arranged for groups at top restaurants or any restaurant requested by you.
- We can revise the itinerary to spend more time and provide more depth in those areas that you are interested on.
- Any other changes to the itinerary will be accommodated depending on the facilities available in the area.