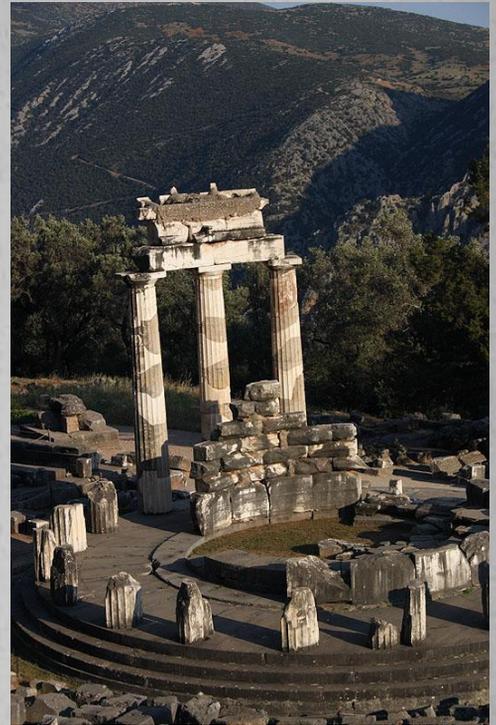


# Greece – Classic Sites of the Ancient Greeks

Tour Code GR

Greece is regarded as the cradle of European civilisation and this cultural journey visits the wonderful sites of the Classical period. Delphi was the centre of the world for the ancient Greeks, where mortals, via the 'oracle', communicated with Apollo. Olympia, birthplace of the Olympic Games, set in an idyllic pine-forested valley and Epidaurus, the greatest healing centre and finest theatre in the ancient world. Then there's Mycenae, and a very different experience, a place of myths and legends and of a fierce, untamed people so vividly depicted in Homer's epics. The tour also includes the amazing Christian monasteries at Meteora; 700-year old frescoed Byzantine structures perched precariously atop sheer pinnacles of rock. The six monasteries are still very much in operation, with their black-robed monks living a traditional, simple and ascetic way of life. Finally in Athens we visit the iconic Parthenon and the hugely acclaimed new Acropolis Museum. Along the way we enjoy the nation's world renowned cuisine, the beautiful scenery of the Peloponnese region and the warmth of its peoples and climate!



Sanctuary of Apollo, Delphi  
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## ITINERARY

### Day 1 Fly to Athens. Drive to Nauplia

Morning flight from Heathrow with British Airways. Arrive in Athens, the capital of Greece and transfer to Nauplia, a delightful historic port town. Three nights stay at the centrally based Rex hotel. Welcome dinner at a traditional restaurant (D)

### Day 2 Visit Tiryns and Mycenae

We start the day at the acropolis of Tiryns, impressively sited on a rocky hilltop. We continue to Mycenae, reputedly Agamemnon's capital, with the finely preserved beehive tomb of Atreus and fabulous Lion Gate. We return to Nauplia to enjoy a leisurely afternoon wandering in the old historic quarters (B,D)

### Day 3 Visit Epidauros and Nauplia Archaeological Museum

This morning we drive to Epidauros. The cult of Asclepius first began there in the 6th century B.C., but the principal monuments, particularly the theatre considered one of the purest masterpieces of Greek architecture date from the 4th century. The vast site is a tribute to the healing cults of Greek and Roman times, with temples and hospital buildings devoted to its gods. Later we visit the Venetian built Archaeological museum of Nauplia with its fascinating collection of Classical Antiquities (B,D)

### Day 4 Visit Arcadia and Bassae. Drive to Olympia

We drive across the centre of the Peloponnese, through the beautiful plateau of Arcadia to the Temple of Apollo at Bassae. We continue along breathtaking scenery to Olympia, the birthplace of the Olympic Games. Overnight at the Olympia Palace hotel with dinner (B,D)

### Day 5 Visit Olympia. Drive to Delphi

The original Olympic Games were held in 776 BC and our tour includes the Olympic stadium and gymnasium. We also see the Temple of Zeus, which once housed a 40 ft statue of the God and the museum with famous statue of Hermes. We continue our journey crossing the Gulf of Corinth to ancient Delphi. Two nights at the Parnassos hotel (B,D)

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### **Day 6 In Delphi**

Delphi is a tour highlight, the most evocative of ancient Greek sites set in a spectacular location. During Classical times this mountain sanctuary was regarded as the centre of the universe and pilgrims travelled from across the Hellenic world to worship Apollo and consult the famous oracle. Our morning tour starts at the beautiful Sanctuary of Athena with its circular temple. We also visit the museum with its fine collection of sculptures. The afternoon is left free for independent exploration to enjoy this beautiful valley setting and charming town (B,D)

### **Day 7 Visit the Monasteries at Meteora**

Today we drive north to Meteora, one of the most dramatic locations in Greece, where early 14<sup>th</sup> century Christian monasteries were built on the summits of almost vertical natural sandstone outcrops. This afternoon we visit two of these to discover wonderful wall paintings and ecclesiastical treasures and icons. Overnight at the Odysseon hotel with dinner (B,D)

### **Day 8 Drive to Athens**

We drive south to Athens and check in to the Astor hotel for three nights, close to the picturesque quarter of Plaka with its fine selection of restaurants and shops. Afternoon at leisure (B)

### **Day 9 Visit Acropolis and Parthenon**

The morning tour is spent on and around the Acropolis, the foremost site of Classical Greece. The Parthenon, built 5<sup>th</sup> Century BC is an architectural masterpiece. We include the hugely acclaimed new Acropolis museum with its fine sculpture. The afternoon is left free for personal exploration around the Acropolis area (B)

### **Day 10 Visit the National Museum of Athens**

The morning is spent at the country's National Museum. It is the most important archaeological museum in Greece and one of the richest in the world concerning ancient Greek art. Its collections are representative of all the cultures that flourished in Greece. Afternoon at leisure. Farewell restaurant dinner in Plakia (B,D)

### **Day 11 Fly UK**

After breakfast we transfer the short distance to Athens airport for our flight home to our chosen UK airport (B)

**Cost £1595.00** per person in a twin room (excluding international flight)

Single supplement cost £240.00



#### **Price includes –**

- ▶ Tour accompanied from London by Patrick Syder
- ▶ Specialist Greek guide for the duration of the tour
- ▶ All transportation by A/C bus
- ▶ Full sightseeing programme including entrance fees
- ▶ Quality European three+ star hotels with breakfast and restaurant dinners
- ▶ Airport transfers
- ▶ Bottled water daily
- ▶ Porter, hotel and restaurant staff gratuities

PLEASE NOTE – personal travel insurance, visa fees, alcoholic drinks, guide and driver gratuities, international flights are not included in the land tour cost (from £180.00 through Flight Centre UK) (Included meals denoted by B Breakfast, L Lunch, D Dinner)