

Footsteps of Paul with Greek Islands Cruise

Led by Dr. Hays McKay

13 days, March 11-23, 2019

Only \$3995 from Dothan, Alabama (and other cities of departure)



Left to right, top to bottom: Acropolis/Parthenon, Honor Guard at Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Delphi Temple of Athena, Mykonos Island, Pinnacle Monasteries of Meteora, Fishing Village Neapolis/Kavala where Paul first landed in Europe.

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Day 1, Monday, March 11: Deluxe coach to ATL airport, then fly to **Thessaloniki**, Greece's northernmost major city, capital of the Macedonia region of Greece, set on the beautiful Thermaic Bay of the Aegean Sea.

Day 2, Tuesday, March 12: Arrive in Greece's second city, **Thessaloniki**, where St. Paul stayed and preached several weeks on his Second Missionary Journey in about 50 AD, converting so many souls the local authorities kicked him and his companions out of town for having "turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6). Paul continued the care of his Thessalonian flock with the earliest two epistles in the New Testament. Our deluxe hotel for two nights is near the harbor and old city. Breakfast and dinner are included each day of the land tour (all meals on the cruise).

Day 3, Wednesday, March 13: After Paul received the vision of preaching to the Europeans, beginning in Macedonia (northern Greece, Acts 16), he landed in the **Neapolis** harbor, which is modern day Kavala that we will visit. From Neapolis, Paul went to **Philippi** (16:12ff), where we will see the traditional site of the baptism of Lydia, first European convert, and the ruins of the city of ancient Philippi, including the site that remembers the cell where Paul and Silas were imprisoned before the Lord miraculously freed them and the family of the Philippian jailer was baptized. Return to Thessaloniki for dinner and overnight.

Day 4, Thursday, March 14: Once Paul had been given the left foot of fellowship from Philippi and Thessalonica, he traveled to **Berea** where men and women of noble character, both Jews and Greeks, believed the Word (Acts 17:10-14). At Berea study and worship at the *bema* or raised stone from which Paul preached. We then visit nearby **Vergina** to see royal tombs of the family of Alexander the Great, the richness of which is staggering as we will experience descending into the actual tombs to see the sculptures, painting, and gold jewelry. Travel through dramatic countryside to **Meteora** and the amazing Byzantine monasteries perched atop gigantic rock pinnacles in one of the world's most bizarre and fascinating geological formations. Overnight and dinner at a lovely four-star hotel in the village of Kalambaka.

Day 5, Friday, March 15: Interesting rural scenery along the way to **Delphi**, which the ancient Greeks considered the *omphalos* (navel or center) of the world. Here the Delphic oracle muttered cryptic prophecies as sacred vapors issuing from the underworld cast her into a trance from her seat in the Temple of Apollo, the grand remains of which still stand on a mountaintop overlooking breathtakingly green hills and valleys. The museum at Delphi is a gem, small enough to be enjoyed quickly but every exhibit truly striking. Overnight in the village of Delphi.

Days 6 and 7, Saturday and Sunday, March 16 and 17: Drive through hills and fertile valleys to Athens, birthplace of Western civilization's culture of democracy and the philosophical tradition of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. The grandeur that was Greece is summed up in its architecture, most strikingly the Parthenon atop the Acropolis that dominates nearly every view in the bustling modern city. Experience all the highlights of **Athens** including the iconic **Sytagma (Constitution) Square**, right across from the **House of Parliament** guarded by photogenic tassel-festooned wooden-clogged guards. Stop at the **Panathenaico Stadium**, where the first modern Olympics were held in 1896. And, of course, ascend the **Acropolis**, the very symbol of the Grandeur that was Greece. The two areas of Athens most associated with the Apostle Paul are **Mars Hill** (or Areopagus) and the Agora (Acts 17:15ff). We will go down into the ancient **Agora** or market place, where a recreated ancient shopping mall with a porch called a *stoa* shows us what gave rise to the name of the Stoic philosophers with whom Paul debated at that very spot. When Paul's claims about the resurrection intrigued the city's leaders, he was taken to the top of the **Areopagus** to argue his belief in the famous sermon about "the unknown God" (Acts 17:19-31). Those who wish will have the opportunity to climb to the top of the famous hill, re-affirming with Paul the Gospel of the Risen Christ. Time for some shopping in the famous **Plaka** tourist area at the base of the Parthenon. Two nights at a well-located 4-star hotel.

Day 8, Monday, March 18: This morning board a ship from the Celestial Cruises line and sail to the world-famous island of **Mykonos**. The town is a small

architectural miracle, with its gleaming whitewashed buildings and windmills--and one of the most cosmopolitan places in the world. Guided walking tour of the city is included, led by the tour escort who will be with the group throughout the cruise.

Celestyal cruise line is proudly Greek. While not floating palaces like an American cruise ship, Celestyal ships are clean, comfortable, with good food and amenities—great reviews from recent groups. Three meals a day are included, plus unlimited beverages at meals and throughout the day. Nearly every daylight hour is spent at the interesting ports, just meals and sleep on board. For special value, shore excursions are included in Ephesus, Patmos, and Rhodes--along with free guided walking tours of Mykonos and Santorini. All tips are included throughout the tour, including on the cruise.

Day 9, Tuesday, March 19: After the overnight cruise to the Turkish coast, the included shore excursion drives through the colorful town of Kusadasi to reach biblical **Ephesus**. Paul spent a major part of his missionary journey here (Acts 19) and of course wrote the Letter to the Ephesians (one of the Seven Churches of the Revelation). Your guided walking tour takes you through one of the most magnificent excavations in the world. See the Odeon (concert hall), the Fountain of Trajan, the heated Baths of Scolastika, the Temple of Hadrian and the Latrines, the Library of Celsus, and The Great Theatre, the largest one in antiquity with a capacity of 24,000 where Paul caused a riot (Acts 19:22ff). Walk along the Arcadian Way, where Mark Anthony and Cleopatra once rode in procession. Before returning to the ship, free time in the shopping city of Kusadasi, specializing in oriental carpets, jewelry, and leather goods.

Later, sail for the craggily beautiful isle of **Patmos**, where St John received The Revelation. The included shore excursion visits the cave where tradition says St John had his vision as well as the imposing Monastery of St John built over it. The picturesque port village of Scala is a pleasant place to enjoy some free time shopping and wandering.

Day 10, Wednesday, March 20 Spend the day on the sunny island of **Rhodes**, where once seafarers were greeted by one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the Colossus of Rhodes (a “colossal” harbor statue of the sun god Apollo). The shore excursion is included. The old Walled City of Rhodes is most famous as the medieval fortress-kingdom of the Knights of St John. You could easily spend the full day wandering around in the Old City, filled with shopping and cafes and a magnificent palace of the knights—but your included

tour will also drive across the countryside to the **Bay of Lindos**, where Paul is remembered having stopped on his way back to Jerusalem at the end of the Third Missionary Journey (Acts 21:1).

Day 11, Thursday day, March 21: Morning arrival at **Heraklion, Crete**, with optional shore excursions including the Minoan Palace of Knossos, home to king Minos and the legendary Minotaur. The Minoan culture was the highest in the world (the first throne in Europe is still there) till it vanished seemingly overnight, perhaps a victim of the tsunami caused by the volcanic destruction of Atlantis.

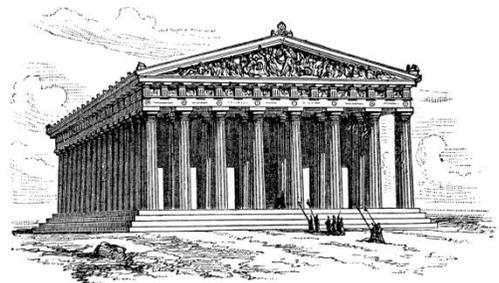
Then, sail north to the isle of **Santorini**, the most breathtaking of all the Greek islands—and which may have been ancient Atlantis since half of the island sheared off from a volcano. The exquisite whitewashed villages, including the town of Fira, or Thira, cling to volcanic cliffs, accessible only by cable-car or mule. After you reach the cliff peak, a guided-tour of the city is included.

Day 12, Friday, March 22: Arrive back in the port of Piraeus, Athens, early in the morning and, after breakfast, disembark and begin your trip to Ancient **Corinth**, the once glorious city near the Isthmus, where Paul met Aquilla and Priscilla and spent a year and a half working and preaching the Gospel (Acts 18). You visit the Archaeological Museum, the Forum, the Temples and the famous Bema, where Paul stood before Gallio accused by the Jews of Corinth. Lunch on your own on the deck of a restaurant beside the drawbridge that opens and closes to let yachts through the scenic Corinth Canal dug to link two oceans. Then, drive to **Cenchreae**, the little harbor from which Paul sailed back to Asia, thus ending his second missionary journey. Back to Athens for a farewell dinner at an authentic Greek restaurant in the Plaka area and hotel overnight.

Day 13, Saturday, March 23: Fly back to USA, arriving same day.

Registration details on back page

Mid March in Greece is lovely, spring in bloom, with mostly sunny days, temperatures in the 60s and 70s.



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

U.S. passport valid through end of October, 2019, is required; anyone with non-U.S. passport, please contact tour operator.

Payment schedule: \$400 deposit required to guarantee a place on the tour. Second payment of \$1600 is due November 15. Final payment is due January 15. Credit cards may be used for second and final payments with a non-refundable 5% processing fee, which will show up on credit card statements from Expedition and Travel, Athens, Greece. *Space is limited, register early!*

Tour price includes . . .

Air transportation currently scheduled on Lufthansa may be on any regularly-scheduled airline. Cancellations after the air tickets have been issued are subject to a cancellation penalty as imposed by the airline. Current air fuel charge and taxes/fees are included. Please note: frequent flyer miles or credit card points cannot be used to purchase or upgrade air tickets; however, if you arrange your own airfare, you can deduct \$1000 from the brochure price at time of final payment.

Accommodations in 4- and 5-star hotels, inside stateroom on cruise, both with private bath. Anyone staying in a single room on land and cruise additional \$795. Outside staterooms on cruise may be available at additional cost.

Meals daily buffet breakfasts and dinners in hotels, all meals and unlimited non-alcoholic and alcoholic drinks on cruise.

Sightseeing in the itinerary including entrance fees and services of English-speaking guides and tour escorts. **Five shore excursions** are included: Mykonos, Santorini, Ephesus, Patmos, and Rhodes.

One regular-sized suitcase, maximum 50 pounds, is currently allowed free of charge plus one personal item and one "carry-on" that will fit under the seat ahead or in the overhead bin. Tour organizers accept no liability for loss or damage to any baggage.

All tips to guide, driver, hotel, restaurant and cruise ship personnel and porters are included.

Tour price does not include sightseeing or services not specifically mentioned or noted as optional; baggage charges that may be implemented by airlines (none as of this printing).

Cancellation policy: No penalty for written cancellations received before November 1, 2018. Written cancellations received November 1-30 are subject to a \$400 per person cancellation fee. Written cancellations received December 1-31 are subject to a 25% cancellation fee of the total tour price. Written cancellations received January 1-31 are subject to a 50% cancellation fee of the total tour price. No refund for written cancellations received after January 31. No refund made for missed services while on tour. *In addition to the above cancellation fees*, airline tickets are not refundable once issued. *We recommend the purchase of travel insurance*, which covers medical expenses as well as cancellation penalties and other covered eventualities. Please note: Healthcare and Medical Costs outside the USA are not covered by basic Medicare; information on travel insurance available on written request to ron.cansler@yahoo.com.

Brochure price based on minimum 26 passengers and VAT policy and Euro/dollar exchange rate as of September 1, 2018.

Responsibility: Dr Hays McKay, Covenant UMC, Ronald L. Cansler dba Escorted Travel Concepts, LLC, and their agents act only in the capacity of agents in all matters, and as such, are not responsible for any damage, expense, or inconvenience caused by late plane arrival or departure or by any change of schedule or other condition, nor the loss of or damage to any person or property from any cause whatsoever. The sponsoring organization reserves the right to withdraw the tour at any time, or make changes in the published itinerary whenever in their sole judgment conditions warrant, or if they deem it necessary for the comfort, convenience or safety of the tour. Services of any regularly-scheduled jet carrier may be used on this tour. *Payment of deposit by tour participants indicates acceptance of above terms and conditions.*

To register, make out \$400 per person check to "Escorted Travel" and mail to

Escorted Travel Concepts--McKay, 1015 W Kensington Rd, Joplin MO 64801

Important: please include email address and phone number with registration check!

Send copy of passport photo page with registration or when available.

For more information, contact tour operator Ron Cansler: ron.cansler@yahoo.com, 417-499-8685

