

# Know Before You Go



## ...GREECE



The following information is related to travel in Greece. Thank you for booking with 206 Tours

We promise to do all within our power to assist you with any questions or concerns you may have.

Please feel free to contact us, *please note should any problems arise during your trip you should first contact your local emergency contact, and then 206 Tours.*

We pray that your pilgrimage will meet and exceed all of your expectations.

### How to Prepare for Your Pilgrimage:

Thank you for your desire and readiness to visit these places of grace and prayer. May the Almighty God, through the intercession of our Heavenly Mother, reward you for all the efforts you undertake to come! As we would like your trip to be as pleasant and helpful as possible. It is important to note that 206 Tours pilgrimages are packed full of spiritual activities and sightseeing. We do not include much free time for recreation, such as shopping. This is because our desire is to offer you the most comprehensive pilgrimage possible. However, all tours/activities are optional, and if you feel you are unable to keep up with the pace of the tour, manage the terrain, or would like free time for your own interests, you are welcome to refrain from participating in any aspects of the program you desire (of course, no refund can be issued for any aspects of the the tour which you choose not to participate in).

It is also important to note that the amount of walking is significant, and the terrain varies greatly through out our tours. You will encounter hills, mountains, unpaved streets, cobblestone streets, etc. Please prayerfully consider whether or not you are up to such physical activities prior to registering. For this reason, we would like to offer you some recommendations, and we ask you sincerely to read them carefully.

A couple of weeks before your pilgrimage, one should begin preparing physically as well as spiritually.

- 1 - If not accustomed to physical activity begin walking "briskly" 1-2 times a day; build up to 2-3 miles with no discomfort.
- 2 - If possible attend daily mass or attempt to spend quiet time in church during lunch or after work.
- 3 - Pray for Jesus and His Blessed Mother to open your heart and mind to be responsive to new perspectives, ideas, their words laid on your heart, etc.
- 4 - Begin praying the rosary daily ( [Learn How to Pray the Rosary](#) ) or at least the Apostle's Creed, 7 Our Father's, 7 Hail Mary's & 7 Glory Be's as Our Lady has requested; this takes about 5-7 minutes. Please share with us your positive and constructive feedback upon your return!

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### **New Security Procedures:**

All liquids, gels and aerosols must be in three-ounce or smaller containers. Larger containers that are half-full or toothpaste tubes rolled up are not allowed.

Each container must be three ounces or smaller.

All liquids, gels and aerosols must be placed in a single, quart-size, zip-top, clear plastic bag. Gallon size bags or bags that are not zip-top such as fold-over sandwich bags are not allowed.

Each traveler can use Only \* one, quart-size, zip-top, clear plastic bag.

Each traveler must remove their quart-sized plastic, zip-top bag from their carry-on and place it in a bin or on the conveyor belt for X-ray screening. X-raying separately will allow TSA security officers to more easily examine the declared items.

[Visit the TSA](#) (Transportation Security Administration) for complete details.

General Info About Your Documents, Flights, Arrival & Travel:

### **Final Documents:**

206 Tours will ship your final documents to the address provided on your reservation application approximately 2-3 weeks prior to your scheduled departure date. The package will be delivered by FedEx (can not be delivered to a PO Box). Your final documents will include your airline tickets, hotel confirmations, emergency contacts, general trip information, luggage tags, portfolio of travel documents, flight bag, and more. Carefully review your tickets to ensure that your name on the tickets are an exact match to that of your passport. Please note that the name field on your tickets is Only \* 19 characters long, therefore names exceeding this length will be cut off (this is not a problem, as your actual reservation contains your full name). Please also carefully review the itinerary provided to ensure that all departure and destination cities, as well as dates, are correct. Please contact 206 Tours immediately should any discrepancies be found.

\* Please note that late payment/bookings can cause delay in the shipment of your final documents.

### **International Flights:**

We recommend that you check in for your international flight three hours prior to the scheduled departure time. Passengers must personally check their luggage at the airline counter. Please advise the airline representative of your final destination upon check in so that you will not need to claim your baggage and recheck it during flight connections. Please note that our pilgrims travel from across the USA. You will be traveling independently for all flights until your arrival at your final destination. You will not have a tour escort with you during your flights. Please be advised that 206 Tours attempts to centralize as many pilgrims as possible on the same flights, so you may arrive/depart on the same flights as many of your co-pilgrims (for additional information see "Arrival Procedure" below).

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### **Airline Connections:**

206 Tours must book your airline reservations based on the routings provided to us by the airlines, including connection time, cities for connections, and partner carriers. Airlines determine the standard for the required minimum connecting time to transfer from one gate to another for each specific airport. At times, the connection times provided by the airlines are quite tight (i.e. 45 minutes) and require passengers to make haste during their connections. At times the airline connection times are quite long, due to the flight availability at the time of booking. While we wish we could determine the connection times for each of our clients, we are subject to the rules, regulations, and availability of the carriers we work with. We also must ensure that all reservations correspond so that each participant is able to meet the group transfer to/from the airport to hotel and hotel to airport. We promise to do all in our power to provide you with the most convenient flight schedule available to us at the time of your booking, however, we must still follow all appropriate airline rules and regulations.

### **Airline Tickets:**

Most airlines now require that we provide e-tickets in place of paper tickets. At check-in, you should be ready to provide your flight itinerary and passport to the agent. In a few cases where e-tickets cannot be issued, you will receive your tickets in a paper form. Please note that paper tickets, and boarding passes, must be present in order to check in, and or board the plane.

### **Code-share Flights:**

Many airlines participate in alliances and special agreements with other airlines which permit passengers to travel from one point to another using more than one carrier. While your ticket may indicate that you are flying with one carrier (eg: Air France), you may find that you are actually seated in a plane belonging to another carrier (eg: Delta). Please review your airline itinerary carefully to determine which airline you should go to for check-in; if your flight is operated by a carrier other than the primary airline indicated on the itinerary, your itinerary will state "Flight Operated by (Airline)." If you have any concerns regarding which airline to check-in with, you may contact the airline directly or 206 Tours for clarification.

### **Airline Mileage Accounts:**

Please contact the airline directly to open a mileage account and to obtain credit for the miles flown on this trip.

### **Health Precautions:**

No inoculations are necessary when arriving Europe, Israel or Egypt from the US. But consult with your health care provider before traveling. Although the water in Europe is completely safe in order to prevent "Montezuma's Revenge", avoid the tap water, including ice cubes. Your stomach may still become upset due to the change in diet. Bring anti-diarrhea medicine just in case. For the latest overseas travel health information, call the Center for Disease Control's travelers' hotline at 404-332-4559. Or visit their web site at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

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### Travel Warnings:

US State Department Travel Advisories: For up to date US State Department travel advisories you may visit: [http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/tw/tw\\_1764.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html)

### Arrival Procedure:

After disembarkation from the plane you will clear immigration, and proceed to claim your luggage. You will exit the baggage claim into the arrival lounge where you will be greeted by driver and/or your Tour Escort displaying a board or sign with your name and/or "206 Tours", and then you will be transferred to your hotel where you will meet your guide and the rest of your group. Please remember to look for the sign!

**If your plane arrives late, or you are re-routed** you will probably miss the group transfer which is included in your package. In such circumstances you will need to pay for your separate private transfer, which you may submit a claim to the airlines for reimbursement upon your return to the USA. For destinations such as Fatima, Lourdes, Medjugorje, La Salette, and Assisi, where public and taxi transportation is difficult to obtain from the airport, 206 Tours will do all possible to arrange for a private transfer to meet you upon your arrival (if we are aware of your misconnection/arrival flight), however, you will be responsible to remit payment to your driver upon drop off at your destination. If you arrive in one of the previously mentioned destinations, and we have not been able to arrange for a driver to meet you, please call your local emergency contact (listed in your Final Instruction Booklet) so that they may dispatch a transfer for you. In major cities such as Rome, Paris, Tel Aviv, Warsaw, Budapest, it is best for you to take a taxi directly to your hotel upon arrival should you miss the group transfer. Please remember to save your receipts. We strongly recommend the purchase of Traveler's Insurance for this reason ([www.206tours.com/insurance](http://www.206tours.com/insurance)).

### Luggage:

It is suggested that you attempt to travel with Only \* one piece of checked luggage and one carry-on. International air carriers are becoming stricter about the size and weight of baggage and carry-on luggage. Please contact your air carrier or travel agent for specific information prior to departure as size and weight limitations vary from airline to airline and even according to destination. For your own comfort and that of fellow passengers, please limit the size of your hand luggage to 17x14x8 in. (43x36x20 cm) for easy storage on the motor coach. Porterage for one suitcase on tour is included in the tour price. Due to limited coach capacity, this single bag should have dimensions not exceeding 45 in overall dimensions (length+width+height) and weight not exceeding 50 lbs (23 kg). A charge of USD 3 per traveling day will be collected by the Tour Director if a second piece of baggage is carried, or if the suitcase exceeds the established weight and/or dimensions. For health reasons, porters may refuse to carry very heavy suitcases.

Carry all documents and money on your person but not all in the same place to limit the inconvenience in case of loss; do not keep money, important documents, medicines or jewelry in your suitcase; please leave valuable jewelry at home. We recommend a money belt worn inside your clothes, while touring.

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On departure from your hotel, remember to double check that you have your money belt with you, and that you have collected any items left in the hotel safe. Please, at all times, be as vigilant as you would be in any major city, especially in crowded places such as subways, squares or churches/cathedrals. Never leave your hand luggage unattended or out of sight in public areas, including airports, hotel lobbies or dining rooms.

Be sure to keep ALL medications in your carry-on bag during your trip in case your suit case should be lost. Keep a separate list of important numbers, i.e. passport, traveler's checks, and credit cards, in your luggage, together with photocopies of airline tickets and the relevant pages of your passport/visas. Keep a separate list of important numbers, i.e. passport, traveler's checks, and credit cards, in your luggage, together with photocopies of airline tickets and the relevant pages of your passport/visas. The same common-sense rules of safety and security apply here as to anywhere else:

- Avoid excessive displays of jewelry or cash (Only \* carry sufficient for daily needs)
- Use room safes or leave items with the hotel manager
- Make certain that any valuables are insured against theft
- Avoid exploration on your own of unfamiliar streets or areas
- Be especially cautious if gypsies approach you begging

### How to Overcome Jet Lag:

Rapid travel through multiple time zones can take its toll on your physical and mental well-being. "Jet Lag" is the phrase used to describe the condition when an individual's internal body clock is out of sync with the actual time in the region to which you have traveled. It is important to try to adjust your internal body clock to receive the most out of your tour. Here are some tips on how to adjust your body to local time.

On the day of the flight/arrival:

- Get out of bed earlier than usual.
- Eat a high carbohydrate dinner (e.g. pasta, potatoes, etc.)
- Drink a lot of water to compensate for the dehydration that is common on long flights.
- Shortly after your evening meal on your flight, set your watch ahead to Portugal's actual time.
- Try to rest or sleep as soon as possible on your flight.
- When you arrive in it will be late afternoon (local time). (Keep active, and go to bed around 10:00 PM)

### Insurance:

Please note that traveler's insurance is **STRONGLY** recommended for all 206 Tours pilgrims. Be advised that traveler's insurance can not be purchased after you have paid in full for your trip. For those who have purchased Tripmate Travelers Insurance through 206 Tours a pamphlet will be included in your final documents. Please refer to this brochure for specific stipulations or questions. For more information you can also visit [www.206tours.com/insurance](http://www.206tours.com/insurance).

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### Transportation:

Distances between points in Europe range extensively depending on your itinerary. Some days may include Only \* 1 or two hours, while other days may include up to 8 hours of driving. During travel days with extensive driving the coach will stop for bathroom/stretch (approximately every 2 to 3 hours) breaks as well as a lunch stop.

### Money:

American Express can fill most banking needs. Most banks in Europe are open Monday through Friday from 9am to 4:30pm, and a few are open Saturday; ask at your hotel for the location of the one nearest you. For the best exchange rate, cash your traveler's checks at banks or foreign-exchange offices, not at shops and hotels. Most post offices will change traveler's checks or convert currency. Currency exchanges are also at airports and train stations and along most of the major boulevards.

They charge a small commission. Make sure to bring along a credit card for convenience and security. Make sure to bring along a credit card for convenience and security. Credit cards offer a very reasonable exchange rate and can be canceled should it be lost. Visa or MasterCard are the best options as American Express is not accepted in many stores. Please be aware that Discover Card is not accepted in almost all European and Middle Eastern countries. You may also choose to bring traveler's checks, however, not all shops/restaurants accept them due to the devaluation of the US dollar. We recommend that you exchange US dollars (USD) at your local bank prior to departure if possible, in order to obtain the best exchange rate. It is also practical and cost effective to withdraw local currency using your ATM/Debit card during your trip. ATMs are readily available in most of the destinations we service, and are very similar to those in USA. Most offer English as a language option. It is recommended that you contact your local bank and credit card companies before departing on your trip to advise them that you will be traveling. Be advised that exchanging money at airports will result in higher fees. We strongly recommend that you refrain from exchanging money at your hotel or local change booths, as the fees are extremely high.

We are frequently asked, "How much money should I bring with me?" This is an impossible question to answer as each person is different. The type of lunches you prefer can make a big difference (restaurant vs cafe). Are you planning on purchasing mementos for yourself or loved ones?

We recommend that the minimum spending money you should bring with you / budget for, in addition to the suggested tips, is the equivalent of EUR 25.00 per day. Remember, you can always spend less, or bring money home!

### Currency Exchange:

The EURO is the currency of Portugal, Spain, France, Italy, Germany, Vienna, Ireland, Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, etc. As of January 25, 2010 the exchange rate is approximately 1 USD = € 0.706885 (EURO). Keep in mind that this is the "pure" exchange rate, any form of currency exchange has some fees associated. For up to date currency exchange rates please visit [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com). Please note that the currency fluctuation has been particularly volatile in the last year, so we strongly urge you to check the current exchange rates prior to departure and prior to exchange.

### Currency Exchange:

Dollar / Euro Converter: [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com)

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### ATM Machines:

ATM machines (distributeurs /guichets automatiques) can be found at most bank branches, post offices, train stations, airports, shopping centers, etc. and are accessible 24 hrs/day. Most banks charge a commission when you withdraw money, especially if it is from the network of another bank. You should ask your bank for information about where you can use your card and what commissions are charged for withdrawing money. **Note:** You need a four-digit personal identification number, or PIN (six digits won't work), to use ATMs in Europe. If you have a six-digit code, you have to get a new one for your trip. Be sure to find out your daily withdrawal limit before you depart. Also keep in mind that many banks impose a fee every time a card is used at a different bank's ATM, and that fee can be higher for international transactions (up to \$5 or more) than for domestic ones. On top of this, the bank from which you withdraw cash may charge its own fee. For international withdrawal fees, ask your bank before you go. You can also get cash advances on your credit card at an ATM. Credit card companies try to protect themselves from theft by limiting the funds someone can withdraw outside their home country, so call your credit card company before you leave home. And keep in mind that you'll pay interest from the moment of your withdrawal, even if you pay your monthly bills on time.

### Value Added Tax (VAT):

There is 19% value added tax on most goods and services in Greece. At retail stores, this tax is always already included in the price. Upon making a purchase of € 175 (EURO) / \$274.54 USD or more at a gift store that has an agreement with the VAT authorities, you should fill out a form at the store and have it stamped there. You will be eligible, upon presenting the form and the item, for a 19% refund at the airport prior to departure. Do not pack these gift items in your luggage. They should be kept in your carry on luggage. By the way, tourist services, such as hotel accommodations and meals taken in hotels, paid with foreign currency are exempt from VAT tax.

### How to Get Your VAT (Value Added Tax) Refund:

Greece sales tax, or VAT (value-added tax), is 19%, but you can get most of that back if you spend € 175 (EURO) or (\$274.54 USD as of March 27, 2008) or more at any participating retailer. You must be over 15 years old, and you must present a passport. The name of the refund is *détaxe*, meaning exactly what it says. You never really get the full 19% back, but you can come close. After you spend the required minimum amount, ask for your *détaxe* papers. Fill out the forms before you arrive at the airport for departure. Be sure to have the forms stamped at the airport customs desks. The customs official may ask to see your purchases so it's best to have them in your carry-on bag. Mail the stamped forms at the airport (the store provides an envelope) and the refund process has begun (note - this is Only \* if Greece is your final point of departure back to the U.S.). For additional information on the VAT refund [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Value\\_added\\_tax](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Value_added_tax). All refunds are processed at the final point of departure from the E.U., so if you're going to another E.U. country, you don't apply for the refund in Greece. Mark the paperwork to request that your refund be applied to your credit card so you aren't stuck with a check in Euros. Even if you made the purchase in cash, you can still get the refund on a credit card. This ensures the best rate of exchange. You can get cash in some airports, but if you don't take the cash in Euros, you'll lose money on the transaction. If you're considering a major purchase, ask the store policy before you get too involved -- or be willing to waive your right to the refund.

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### **Weights and Measures:**

The metric system is used exclusively through out Europe and the Middle East. A kilometer is a bit over 1/2 mile (.62 miles). A kilogram equals 2.2 pounds.

### **Time:**

Most of Europe and the Middle East operate on a 24 hour clock. This means that 6:00 pm is 18:00, etc.

### **Tipping:**

Tips are an important part of earnings for your escorts, guides and bus drivers. Due to devaluation of US dollar, we noted that general tipping for this year has changed to as follows (for budgeting purposes we recommend that you anticipate a total of approximately EUR 6.00 - EUR 8.00 per person per day):

- Your tour escort who is with you throughout your tour or for the whole day should be tipped approximately EUR 4.50 per person per day (or depending on the level of the satisfaction).
- Your bus driver EUR 2.00 per person per day (or depending on the level of the satisfaction).
- If you have a sightseeing tour with a local guide, which lasts approx 2 1/2 hrs, it is standard practice to tip your local tour guides and bus drivers after an excursion, or tour, generally EUR 1.00 – EUR 2.00

Tip envelopes are enclosed for your convenience. Almost all restaurants include tax and a 15% service charge (service compris) in their prices. If a meal or service has been particularly good, leaving another EUR1 (or 2) is customary, as is leaving the waiter the small change from your bill if you pay in cash. If service is not included a 15% tip is appropriate. In hotels, tip porters is included of EUR 2 for each bag and chambermaids. If you are using a Taxi, drivers should be given 10-15% of the metered fare. Tip hairdressers 10%, assistant 5%. Small tips are reasonable for cloakroom and washroom attendants, ushers and museum tour guide. When and if your group has a completely free day(s) and escort sees them Only \* for a couple of hours or during the dinner time, then it is really at your discretion what amount you should tip them. As normally most clients calculate a total amount of tip for escort for total days serviced - when, escort does less hours it normally compensates the days with longer hours, which often happens when escorts are touring.

### **Hotels / Accommodations:**

Rooms may be smaller than you are used to based on European standards. Mini-bar items and access to pay TV channels are at your own expense. King / Queen size beds are rare in Europe. In some hotels, key cards operate the room lighting systems and/or the elevator. Fixtures in bathrooms and bedrooms are not standardized. While most hotels do offer a hair dryer in the bathroom, we recommend bring one if it is essential to you. Most hotels do toiletries (shampoo, lotion), we strongly recommend that you bring an adequate supply with you.

Please note that while we do request non-smoking rooms for our clients, European and Middle Eastern hotels are less stringent about enforcing these rules.

Remember to frequently check your hotel bulletin board for important information, suggestions, or any last-minute changes from your tour escort.

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### Electricity:

The voltage used is 220 volts AC, single phase 50 cycles (the U.S. uses 110/120 volts). Unless you use a good quality electric current converter, the heavier voltage will instantly burn out any electrical equipment you wish to use abroad. Before leaving home, you will need to purchase an international adapter so your two-prong plug will connect to the various local electrical supply outlets (check that it is sufficiently powerful for your appliance), and a converter to convert the 220 volts to 110 volts. Adapter/converter kits that include the entire range of plugs can be purchased at better electrical supply stores. Stores such as Radio Shack, Walmart, K-Mart, Target sell adaptor/converter kits readily. Buying electrical devices in foreign places is not recommended unless you are sure that the current they use is compatible with the current at home. It will likely cost you more than the original price to have an appliance converted.

### Telephones:

The telephone country code for Greece is +30 (from US 011 + 30 followed by the city code and telephone number)

### Cell Telephones:

You may bring your cellular phone, but make sure to contact your wireless phone provider and inform them, that you will be traveling out of the country (giving them destinations). Most have an "international plan" if not get one for the trip. This will allow you to make calls to the United States while you are out of the country using your wireless phone.

### Hotel Telephones:

While telephones offer convenience, they do tend to cost substantially more than public phones. You may choose to utilize a calling card to be more cost efficient, however, be advised that most hotels charge a connection fee which ranges from EUR 1.00 to EUR 5.00 for such calls.

### Public Telephones:

Public phones are found in cafes, restaurants, Métro stations, post offices, airports, and train stations, and occasionally on the streets. Finding a coin-operated telephone in Europe is an arduous task. A simpler and more widely accepted method of payment is the télécarte, a prepaid calling card available at kiosks, post offices, and Métro stations and costing € 7.50 (EURO) - € 15 (EURO) (\$9.75-\$20) for 50 and 120 units, respectively. A local call costs one unit, which provides you 6 to 18 minutes of conversation, depending on the rate. Avoid making calls from your hotel, which might double or triple the charges. To make a direct international call, first dial 00, listen for the tone, and then slowly dial the country code, the area code, and the local number. The country code for the U.S. and Canada is 1. A reasonable way to communicate.

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### **Public Toilets:**

Known as WC, and available in most tourist locations. Be prepared with tissues in your pocket at all times. Also, be aware that some public toilets are manned/ womaned by attendants who ask for a small "user's fee".

### **Photography:**

If you are bringing a digital camera, make sure to bring extra batteries. If not digital, remember to bring plenty of film (200 or 400 speed is recommended for outdoor and indoor-flash photography).

Photography is not allowed in some museums and in some security-conscious facilities.

### **Terrain:**

Europe is based on a myriad of old buildings, and there are split-levels and uneven surfaces everywhere; please watch your step! Due to the structure of old buildings, access to some establishments may not be convenient for wheelchair use, and facilities for the disabled in general may be limited. Many areas are pedestrian Only \* and have cobblestones. High-heeled shoes are not suitable for cobblestone streets; rubber-soled walking shoes are recommended. Many streets in Europe and the Middle East are narrow, and due to strict traffic regulations, the buses are not always permitted to drop groups off directly in front for their destination. Please be prepared to walk.

### **Taxis:**

Be wary of any person approaching you offering unofficial taxi services. If you do not have an airport transfer included and you need transportation, make your way to the official taxi desk or to the regular taxi line outside the terminal; choose Only \* those vehicles with a meter and a taxi sign.

We recommend you pre-negotiate the fare, as taxi drivers in some countries may attempt to overcharge unwary travelers.

### **Capital:**

Athens is the capital of Greece. Other major cities are Attica, Central Greece, Central Macedonia, Crete, Epirus, East Masedonia & Thrace, and Peloponnese. The country has borders with Albania, the Republic of Macedonia and Bulgaria to the north, and Turkey to the east.

### **Local Customs:**

A different way of life in some countries on tour may take you by surprise, but if you travel with an open mind and respect local customs and culture, you should find it easier to adapt to and enjoy your new surroundings. Standards of living may not be quite what you are used to, but there are compensations – a closer sense of reality and a more authentic feeling of locale. Due to cultural differences in Europe and the Middle East you may not be greeted quite as cheerfully as back home; smiling is generally reserved for intimate friends! So be especially wary of people presenting themselves as “instant friends” and never accept any offer of food or drink from strangers.

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### Shopping Hours:

Department stores are open Mon-Sat 9:00-6:30. Some shops close 12:00-2:30. Food shops open 7:00-6:30 or 7:30. Some food shops (particularly bakers) open Sunday mornings, in which case they will probably close Monday. Many shops close all day Monday or Monday afternoon. Hypermarkets are normally open until 9:00 or 10:00.

### Shopping:

Most stores and businesses are closed on Sundays through out Europe. Many stores in the Middle East are also closed from sundown on Saturdays. Stores are open daily from Monday to Saturday. Some observe a "siesta" from 1pm to 4pm, re-opening until 7pm. Some malls close later in the day and are open Saturdays after sundown. Ask your tour escort for regional specialties products which the countries/cities in your itinerary are known for (i.e. Paris is known for fashion, Venice is known for hand blown glass, Santiago de Compostela for the pilgrim shell, etc.).

Enjoy some stress-free Christmas shopping during your travels; small, light items that you can easily carry home make splendid and festive gifts. Don't forget to buy something nice for yourself too, to take home to evoke pleasant memories of your vacation abroad.

If you purchase a video or DVD, please check very carefully that it is compatible with your home viewing system (for USA and Canada – VHS NTSC and DVD region 1; for Australia, New Zealand and Pacific – VHS PAL and DVD region 4).

Sales tax or VAT (value added tax) is already included on price tags; VAT refunds, if applicable, may sometimes take up to three months to process.

Whenever traveling abroad, be aware of your personal belongings when shopping in crowded areas.

### U.S. Customs:

U.S. citizens who have been in the Middle East and Europe for more than two days may return to the United States with up to \$800 worth of merchandise duty-free. For those who wish to bring more home with them, a flat rate of 3% duty is levied on the next \$1,000 worth of purchases. It's a good idea to retain the receipts from your purchases should they be requested by a Customs Inspector upon your return to the United States. For details visit the U.S. Customs and Border Protection website <http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel>.

### Meals / Food:

Most European and Middle Eastern countries tend to dine later than we are accustomed to. Please expect that your dinners will be scheduled around 7:30 pm to 8:00 pm. Most breakfasts are buffet style. Unlike in the USA, it is frowned upon to take food out of the breakfast room. Most dinners will be served "sit down" with a pre-determined 3 or 4 course meal. Your meals include iced tap water and coffee or tea. All other beverages, including bottled water, will be at additional cost.

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### Meals / Food: (cont.)

While some restaurants may be able to provide for a special diet, such as vegetarian or salt-free, there is no way for us to guarantee this. Please note, vegetarian meals tend to lack variety and imagination. Check with your tour guide or concierge for a list of good restaurants. Food is generally safe to eat. Should you want to feel "at home", many American franchises now operate in Portugal and France: Burger King, McDonalds, Subway, Pizza Hut, Domino's Pizza, Kentucky Fried Chicken, and more.

### Tap Water:

While most local tap water will not hurt you, due to differences in mineral and micro-biotic levels, we recommend that you avoid consuming local tap water (including ice), as it may upset your stomach.

### General Information About Your Pilgrimage Destination(s):

#### Climate:

| City   |      | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|--------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Athens | Low  | 45  | 45  | 47  | 54  | 61  | 68  | 74  | 72  | 67  | 59  | 54  | 59  |
|        | High | 56  | 58  | 61  | 56  | 76  | 83  | 88  | 88  | 83  | 74  | 67  | 59  |
| Rhodes | Low  | 49  | 49  | 52  | 41  | 61  | 68  | 72  | 74  | 70  | 65  | 56  | 52  |
|        | High | 58  | 58  | 61  | 54  | 74  | 81  | 85  | 85  | 81  | 74  | 67  | 61  |

Due to global weather changes, regional temperatures may deviate from the norms. We recommend layered, easy care, loose-fitting clothing, an item or two for rain or unseasonable temperatures and something warmer. Light-weights for summer. Medium-weights for winter with heavier clothing for inland areas. It is a good idea to pack waterproofs at any time of year.

Mid-summer advice: Wear a sunhat and loose-fitting clothing, drink at least one liter (one quart) of mineral water a day if you can (carry a small bottle in your hand luggage); avoid eating too much ice-cream and reduce the amount of ice in drinks. A small battery-operated fan may be useful in warm weather.

### Language:

The official language of Greece is Greek. English is widely spoken, and many signs appear in English too.

# Know Before You Go



## ...GREECE



### Passports:

All foreign (non-Greek) nationals need a valid passport to enter Greece. For an up-to-date country-by-country listing of passport requirements around the world, go to the "Foreign Entry Requirements" page of the U.S. State Department website at

[http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html).

All U.S. citizens must have a valid passport to enter Europe or the Middle East. Please note that for most European and Middle Eastern travel your passport MUST be valid for 6 months after your scheduled return date.

### Visas:

The Greek government no longer requires visas for U.S. citizens staying in Greece for less than 90 days. For longer stays, U.S. visitors must apply for a long-term visa, residence card, or temporary-stay visa. Applications are available from the Consulate Section of the Greek Embassy, 2217, Massachusetts Avenue N.W. , Washington, DC 20007 (tel. 202/939-1300); [www.greekembassy.org](http://www.greekembassy.org), or from the visa section of the Greek Consulate at 69, East 79th Street, New York, NY 10021 (tel. 212/988-5500; [www.greekembassy.org/consular/newyork/index.html](http://www.greekembassy.org/consular/newyork/index.html)).

### Emergency Telephone Numbers in Greece:

100 police emergency  
199 fire department  
166 ambulance

### European General Emergency Code:

112

### Embassy in Greece:

Americans living or traveling in Greece are encouraged to register with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate through the State Department's Travel Registration web site

<https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui/> , and to obtain updated information on travel and security issues. Americans without Internet access may register directly with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. By registering, American citizens make it easier for the Embassy or Consulate to contact them in cases of emergency.

### Address: U.S. Embassy Athens

91 Vasilisis Sophias Avenue  
10160 Athens, Greece

Phone (Main Switchboard/Info): 30-210-721-2951

E-mail: [AthensAmEmb@state.gov](mailto:AthensAmEmb@state.gov)

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National Tourist Office:

Official Web Site: <http://www.gnto.gr/>

For Additional Information About Your Destination:

Please visit the official tourism website as follows: <http://www.gnto.gr/>

US Offices for the Greece tourist board:

New York: 122 East 42nd St, New York, NY 10168 ~ Tel. (800) 651-7010 ~ Fax. (212) 661-7174  
[gntonyc@d-z-t.com](mailto:gntonyc@d-z-t.com)

### What To Pack:

#### Clothing:

Due to global weather changes, regional temperatures may deviate from the norms. We recommend layered, easy care, loose-fitting clothing, an item or two for rain or unseasonable temperatures and something warmer.

*For Winter, Early Spring, and Late Fall:* be sure to pack a warm jacket, a hat, scarf and gloves. Just in case.

*For Summer, Late Spring, and Late Summer:* Bring a sunhat and plenty loose-fitting clothing. Don't forget a lightweight sweater for the evenings as some places may be a little cooler than others. *A note about summer attire;* shorts (or mini skirts) and bare shoulders are considered inappropriate at some religious sites. For men, shorts that can be transformed by zippers into trousers may be convenient. Bring an all-weather coat, just in case. We strongly recommend that women bring a shall or sarong which can be placed conveniently in their day bag, so that they may drape their shoulders, or tie around their waists in the more religious sites.

Make sure you have a good pair of walking shoes. If new, make sure you walk in them for a couple of weeks to break them in. On the plane you will want to wear loose-fitting clothes and pack a pair of slippers to wear for the flight, as well as a lightweight jacket. Make sure your shoes are lace-up, as your feet may swell a little.

# Know Before You Go



## ...GREECE



### General Clothing for Men:

Jeans, casual slacks, short and/or long sleeve shirts, socks, undergarments, and light jacket or coat.

### General Clothing for Women:

Jeans, long skirts, casual dresses, casual slacks, short and/or long sleeve, socks, stockings, undergarments, and a light jacket or sweater is suggested.

### Other Suggested Items to Bring (check list):

- Inflatable head & neck rest, eye mask, foam earplugs (for flight)
- Portable alarm clock
- Flashlight with extra batteries: take batteries out while traveling
- Old towel or small plastic bag to sit on outside
- Handy wipes: freshening up during the day
- Travel pack size Kleenex.
- Extra batteries for flashlight, camera, recorders
- Tape recorder or journal for Mass, and talks
- Extra film for camera: expensive outside of US
- Travel size poncho, in camping section of Wal-Mart
- Optional grocery size plastic bags: 1-2 for dirty clothes or items you purchase
- Soap-small bar travel size
- Shampoo-travel size or put some in a small container; don't carry some big bottle
- Toothbrush & Toothpaste-travel size
- Deodorant-travel size
- Chap stick
- Comb/Brush
- Aspirin/Advil, Etc.
- Feminine protection
- Laxative/Imodium
- Band-aids
- Dramamine or Bonine - if subject to motion sickness
- Pepto Bismol- tablets
- Sominex
- Allergy/cold medicine; tablets (put medicines in a sandwich bag)

# Know Before You Go



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### Health Care:

Some people find that taking themselves off caffeine and taking compounds high in anti-oxidants to be helpful in combating jet lag. You can also take Jet-stress or Cell Guard which are herbal complexes designed to combat jet lag. Ginger can be helpful in motion sickness. Melatonin helps to allow you to sleep on the plane. These items can be found at most health food stores.

### What If...& Frequently Asked Questions:

#### What should I do if I lose my ticket?

If you should lose your ticket prior to your departure date please contact 206 Tours immediately. We will fax a copy of your original ticket to the airlines. You will need to arrive at the airport extra early and sign a Lost Ticket Indemnity Form, and pay the airlines a \$100 reissuing fee. If you should lose your ticket during your trip please immediately inform your tour escort who will advise us, so that we may follow the same procedure.

#### What should I do if my flight is cancelled or delayed?

If your flight is cancelled or delayed it is imperative that you work DIRECTLY with the airlines at the airport to arrange for alternate flights or protection. Please note that once your tickets have been issued or you have check-in for your flights, 206 Tours can no longer make any changes to your flight itinerary. This can Only \* be done by the airlines. In such case, remember, the squeaky wheel gets the grease, so be persistent. However, it is important to remember that it is not the airline agents fault, so try your best to remain courteous to them, as you may find that you receive more assistance this way. Please be advise that the airlines are not required to offer reimbursement for personal expense or overnights when delays/cancellations occur due to weather.

We strongly recommend the purchase of Traveler's Insurance for this reason ([www.206tours.com/insurance](http://www.206tours.com/insurance)). However, if you find that you have no luck with the airline personnel, please contact 206 Tours and we shall do all in our power to assist you.

#### What should I do if I miss my flight due to my late arrival at my departure airport?

If you should miss your flight, due to your own late arrival at your departure airport, it is imperative that you work DIRECTLY with the airlines at the airport to arrange for alternate flights.

You will incur additional costs (minimum of \$200 per person) for such changes.

Please note that you should contact 206 Tours once your alternate arrangements have been made so that we may arrange for a private transfer (at your expense) if necessary.

#### What happens if I miss my group transfer upon arrival?

**If your plane arrives late, or you are re-routed** you will probably miss the group transfer which is included in your package. In such circumstances you will need to pay for your separate private transfer, which you may submit a claim to the airlines for reimbursement upon your return to the USA.

For destinations such as Fatima, Lourdes, Medjugorje, La Salette, and Assisi, where public and taxi transportation is difficult to obtain from the airport, 206 Tours will do all possible to arrange for a private transfer to meet you upon your arrival (if we are aware of your misconnection/arrival flight), however, you will be responsible to remit payment to your driver upon drop off at your destination.

# Know Before You Go



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### **What happens if I miss my group transfer upon arrival? (cont.)**

If you arrive in one of the previously mentioned destinations, and we have not been able to arrange for a driver to meet you, please call your local emergency contact

(listed in your Final Instruction Booklet) so that they may dispatch a transfer for you.

In major cities such as Rome, Paris, Tel Aviv, Warsaw, Budapest, it is best for you to take a taxi directly to your hotel upon arrival should you miss the group transfer. Please remember to save your receipts. We strongly recommend the purchase of Traveler's Insurance for this reason

([www.206tours.com/insurance](http://www.206tours.com/insurance)).

### **What happens if I have a problem or complaint during my trip?**

If you have any problems, concerns, or complaints during your trip, please communicate them IMMEDIATELY to your tour escort. Your tour escort is at your disposal to assist you with all your needs including issues with your hotel room, meals, etc. Remember, there is very little that can be done to undo a problem once you have returned home, but, most of the time your tour escort can address any concerns you may have swiftly. However, if the issue is not resolved to your satisfaction by your tour escort, then please contact our office.

### **What should I do if I want to change my ticket?**

If you would like to change your ticket for any reason once it has been issued you MUST work DIRECTLY with the airlines. You will incur additional costs (minimum of \$200 per person) for such changes. For more on our general terms and conditions visit [www.206tours.com/terms](http://www.206tours.com/terms)

Please share with us your feedback upon your return!

Any questions? Call 800-206-TOUR (8687) or [Email Us](#)

Why travel with 206 Tours? [Click here](#) to read letters from our clients