

Day 1: Depart for Greece

Make your way to your local airport where you will board your overnight flight(s). Your meals will be served on board.

Day 2: Arrive Thessaloniki

Upon landing at Makedonia Thessaloniki Airport, make your way to the baggage claim area and collect your luggage. Proceed to the Arrival's Hall, where you will be greeted by your tour guide and/or driver. You will be escorted to the bus to be transferred to your hotel. Enjoy some time to relax after check in and this evening enjoy a delicious meal. Overnight in Thessaloniki.

Day 3: Philippi - Kavala - Thessaloniki

After breakfast, start your journey in Greece with the first stop of the day in Philippi. Philippi was the city where Saint Paul the Apostle delivered his first sermon and where he established the first church in Europe. "And from there (He went) to Philippi, which is the leading city of the district of Macedonia and a Roman Colony. We remained in this city some days..." (Acts 16:12-18). Also, it is the site where Saint Paul baptized a woman named Lydia, the first convert to Christianity in Europe. Visit the Roman Forum, where Saint Paul cast a spirit out of a fortune-telling woman. While here, you will have the opportunity to view the prison (now in ruins) in which Saint Paul and Silas were thrown into by the owners of the fortune-tellers. Continue to the modern port city of Kavala, which was once the ancient Neapolis. This port is where Saint Paul, Silas, Luke and Timothy landed when they sailed into Europe. After enjoying this city by the sea, return to Thessaloniki for a delicious meal and restful overnight.

Day 4: Thessaloniki City Tour - Kalambaka

Start your day with breakfast at the hotel. In the winter of 49-50 A.D., Saint Paul wrote two epistles to the Thessalonians. These letters urged Christians to "live blamelessly" and to refrain from living idly while they wait for the second coming of Christ. While in Thessaloniki, you will witness a number of ancient artifacts, such as the triumphal Arch of Galerius that is found at the start of Via Egnatia. Due to the convenient location, this arch was once a strategic artery of the Roman Empire. It was originally constructed in order to honor the Roman Emperor Galerius following the Roman victory over the Persians. Following your city-tour, transfer to Kalambaka. This evening, you will have a wonderful meal and a relaxing overnight in Kalambaka.

Day 5: Meteora - Delphi

After breakfast, you will go for a short drive to the Meteora Monasteries. In the eleventh century, there were monks who settled within caves. However, as the occupation of the Turkish increased, the monks were forced to move their settlements higher upon the rocks until they were unreachable by any opposing enemy. These settlements became Monasteries by bringing building, and living, materials by ladders and baskets. The Meteora Monasteries are notorious for preserving not only the Hellenic religion, but also, their academics and arts. During your visit, you will be able to view stunning Byzantine art, as well as the breathtaking scenery that surrounds the Monastery. Continue to Delphi for dinner and an overnight.

Day 6: Delphi - Athens

Visit Delphi, the center of the ancient world (navel) of the earth, whose prestige extended far beyond the boundaries of the Hellenic world. On the slopes of Mount Parnassus, in a landscape of unparalleled beauty

and majesty, lie the ruins of the Sanctuary of Apollo Phthios. Visit the site and the museum and continue to Athens, “Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are religious. For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription “to an unknown God”. What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you...” Athens is one of the most glorious cities in the world and the cradle of western civilization as we know it today. Dinner and an overnight at your hotel in Athens.

Day 7: Athens - Excursion to Corinth

After a nice breakfast at the hotel, you will start with a tour of the oldest city in the world, Athens! Visit the rock that has dominated the panorama of Athens for twenty-five centuries, the Acropolis. At the Acropolis, you will see the ruins of the Parthenon, Erectheum, and Propylae. After, you will ascend Mars Hill of where Saint Paul spoke to the Athenians. At this site, Paul spoke to the Athenians about the one and only God (Acts 17:22). While in this city, you will be able to view the ancient Agora, the former public center of Athenian life. It held the focus of a political, commercial, social, religious, and cultural center. As you are in the former political center, proceed for a drive through the city to view the House of Parliament on Syntagma Square. Also, you will have the opportunity to view the University of Athens, the oldest higher education institute in Greece, as well as, the National Library of Greece that holds 4,500 Greek manuscripts. Then, visit Panathenaic Stadium, the beautifully marbled multi-purpose stadium. It is home to the Olympian Zeus, and is the site of the first modern era Olympics (1896). Following your visit in Athens, you will proceed to the ancient Corinth. Under the shadow of the towering Acropolis, Saint Paul lived in Corinth for two years. While here, Saint Paul felt great grief over the way that the Gentile Church in Corinth has become. As a result, he was prompted to write four letters, all with the overarching theme of love. In Corinth, you will have the opportunity to view the remains of the first century shops, the site of Saint Paul’s trial by Gallio, the Fountain of Peirene, and the Temple of Apollo. Following your visit to Corinth, return to Athens for a delicious meal and an overnight.

Day 8: Athens - Start 3-day Cruise (Celestyal Cruises Cruise Line) to Mykonos

Following breakfast, you will proceed to the Piraeus port where you will board your 3-day cruise. Your first stop will be the Island of Mykonos, the most cosmopolitan of the Greek islands that attracts visitors from all over the world. After docking, transfer to Hora, the island’s capital. Upon arrival in Hora, you will enjoy a walking tour that will take you on the narrow cobbled streets of the city. Pass by chic boutiques, elegant nightclubs, and white washed houses to arrive in Alefkandra. This section of Mykonos is known as the “Venice of Mykonos”, as the homes have wooden balconies and are built on the sea. Historically, these homes were of the wealthy merchants and captains. Return to the cruise ship for dinner and an overnight.

Day 9: Kusadasi - Ephesus (Mary's House) - Patmos

After breakfast on board, arrive at the lively Turkish port of Kusadasi. Transfer to the small village of Mt. Koressos. While in this village, you will visit the small stone chapel that is situated upon the site where the Virgin Mary spent her last days following Christ’s crucifixion. Following this visit, your group will walk through the Magnesian Gate to the ancient Ephesus. Begin your walking tour, which will take you through the most magnificent excavations in the world. Some of the sites include the Odeon (concert hall), the Fountain of Trajan, the steam-heated Baths of Scolastika, the Temple of Hadrian and the Latrines, and the Library of Celsus. The last stop on the walking tour is the Great Theatre, the largest ancient theatre that had a capacity of 25,000 people and is a site where Saint Paul preached. On the return of your walking tour, follow the exact route that Mark Anthony and Cleopatra once rode in procession via the Arcadian Way. This main street runs from the Great Theatre to the main city’s harbor. On your transfer back to Kusadasi, you will have the opportunity to view the Basilica of Saint John. In the sixth century, Emperor Justinian erected this structure over the grave of the evangelist, John. Upon arrival in Kusadasi, enjoy free time to explore on your own before returning to the ship. When you embark on the ship, your journey will continue to Patmos, where

you will transfer to the village of Chora. While in this island's capital, visit the monastery of Saint John the Theologian. This marvelous structure was built nine-hundred years ago, and continues to be supported by the walls of a strong fortification. In addition to the stunning main church that contains outstanding frescoes, you will have the opportunity to view the beautiful courtyard, dining room, and the bakery. Your tour continues to the small museum, where you will view priceless ecclesiastical treasures such as books, manuscripts, mosaics, icons, textiles, vestments, and jewelry. Board the bus, which will take you to the Monastery and Grotto of the Apocalypse. In this grotto, experience a once in a lifetime opportunity to view the site of where the Book of Revelations was written. The silver niches in the wall mark the pillow and ledge that were used as a desk by the author of the Book. Additionally, view the three-fold crack made by the voice of God who emphasized the importance of honoring the Holy Trinity. Your day will culminate with a transfer to the port of Scala. While in this quaint and picturesque harbor, you will enjoy free time before returning to the ship.

Day 10: Heraklion - Santorini

This morning you will awaken and transfer to the largest city on the island of Crete, Heraklion. While in this administrative capital, visit the ancient ruins of the Palace of Knossos. These ruins were discovered in 1899, and the palace is currently partially reconstructed. This ancient palace is believed to have been the mythical Labyrinth of King Minos and the seat of ancient Minoan culture. Additionally, it is the site where Saint Paul met the owner and captain of the ship who warned him of continuing his journey to spread Christianity in Rome. Following this historical visit, you will embark the ship that will take you to the idyllic island of Santorini. Santorini is definitively the most breathtaking island of all of the Greek Islands. Upon arrival in Santorini, visit Thira with its iconic white-washed houses, narrow streets, open-air cafes, and glittering boutiques that cling to steep cliffs. This evening you will return to the ship for your last dinner and overnight on your cruise.

Day 11: Piraeus - Athens – Tel Aviv

Today marks the end of your cruise. After disembarkation you will be transferred to Athens airport where you will board your flight to Tel Aviv. Upon arrival in Tel Aviv, you will be met by the 206 Tours representative and transfer to your hotel in the Tel Aviv area. Dinner will be served at the hotel.

Day 12: Tel Aviv - Caesarea - Nazareth - Cana - Tiberias

Theme: The Annunciation

This morning we will depart Tel Aviv to Caesarea Maritima, located on the shores of the Mediterranean. Built by Herod the Great, Caesarea was where St. Peter baptized the first gentile convert, Cornelius (Acts 10). We will see the Roman theatre, Herod's Palace, view the Hippodrome, and the harbor from which St. Paul sailed on his journeys to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the ancient world. Continue to Nazareth to visit the museum and archaeological Garden, which contain remains of Nazareth at the time of Christ. Visit the museum and archaeological Garden where we can see the remains of Nazareth at the time of Christ, as well as St. Joseph's workshop – which is now known as St. Joseph's Church. Within the Church of the Annunciation, you will make your way down to the Grotto to see the remains of the house of the Blessed Mother and where the Angel of the Lord announced the good news to Mary. From here, we drive to Cana, where Jesus performed His first miracle, changing water into wine at His mother's request. We celebrate Mass here at the Wedding Church, and married couples will have the chance to renew their wedding vows. From there, we continue to our hotel by the Sea of Galilee for dinner and overnight.

Day 13: Tiberias: Sea of Galilee

Theme: The Ministry of Christ in the Galilee

This morning we take a boat ride on the beautiful Sea of Galilee (Luke 5:1). Then we visit Capernaum, the fishing town where Jesus lived and launched His ministry to change our lives and the world. In Capernaum, we see the Synagogue where Jesus taught (Mark 1:21-29) and gave the Sermon on the Bread of Life. We continue to the Mount of Beatitudes, where Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount (Luke 6:20-49). Then to Tabgha, where Jesus fed the crowd of 5,000 people with five loaves of bread and two fish (Luke 9:10-17). Nearby is St. Peter's Primacy, where Peter confirmed his Love of Jesus (John 21), and it was in this place that Jesus anointed Peter to lead His Church and became the first Pope. (John 21:9). Continue visiting Mary Magdalene's birthplace in Magdala. During the time of Jesus, this village was a prosperous fishing village that exported fish and garum, a fish sauce reduction popular in Roman cooking. Return to the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 14: Mt. Tabor - Jericho - Jerusalem

Theme: The Transfiguration

After breakfast, drive to the site of the Transfiguration, Mount Tabor (Matthew 17:1-50). You will have time to reflect on Christ's Divinity at this site. Celebrate Mass at the Basilica of the Transfiguration and then continue south towards the Jordan Valley, to the world's oldest inhabited city (Jericho (Joshua 6:12-25). In Jericho, you view the exact location, the Mount of Temptation, where the Devil tempted Jesus during his forty-day fast (Luke 4:1). Drive up to Jerusalem to check in to your hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 15: Jerusalem: Bethlehem & Ein Karem

Theme: The Visitation and Nativity

This morning we go to the village of Ein Karem to visit the Church of St John the Baptist, which marks his birthplace (Luke 1.5). Nearby is the Church of Visitation that commemorates the visit of our Blessed Mother to her cousin, Elizabeth, who stayed with her for three months (Luke 1.39). Many people pray the Mystery of the Rosary as they walk up the hill to the Church. Later drive to Bethlehem to visit the fields where the Angel appeared to the shepherds to proclaim the birth of Jesus Christ (Luke 2:8). We enter the caves where shepherds took shelter in ancient times and see the soot marks of the fires they lit to keep warm. Continue to Manger Square and the Church of the Nativity. We enter the Church through the door of humility and proceed down to the Grotto of the Nativity, which marks the place of Our Saviour's birth (Matthew 2:1-18). Beneath the altar is a silver star and a Latin inscription that states: HIC DE VIRGINE MARIA JESUS CHRISTUS NATUS (Here, Jesus Christ was born to the Virgin Mary). Following Mass in Bethlehem, return to the hotel in Jerusalem for dinner and overnight.

Day 16: Jordan River - Qumran - Dead Sea

Theme: Early Years in Jerusalem & the Wilderness

Drive through the Judean wilderness, the site where Jesus spent His 40 days of fasting. We head to the Jordan River for some time to reflect on the Baptism of Christ (Matthew 3:13-17). In the afternoon, we visit the Essene site where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found in Qumran. (Ezekiel 47:8-10). These writings have helped further the understanding of the Jewish background of Christianity. Before returning to Jerusalem, there is also time to swim or float on the Dead Sea, the lowest and saltiest place on Earth.

Day 17: Jerusalem: Mt. Of Olives - Gethsemane - Mt. Zion (Upper Room)

Theme: Palm Sunday and the Agony in the Garden

After breakfast, you will make your way to the Mount of Olives, where you will be able to take in the beautiful, panoramic view of Jerusalem. Historically, the Mount of Olives was a mandatory transit point for Jesus during many iconic moments. Visit the Pater Noster Shrine where Jesus taught His disciples the Lord's Prayer (Pater Noster) (Luke 11:1-4). You will have the opportunity to stop at Dominus Fleuit which is a

Church that commemorates where Jesus wept for Jerusalem (Luke 19:41). Continue on to Gethsemane, a garden at the foot of the Mount of Olives. Jesus brought His disciples here to pray the night before He was crucified (Luke 22:29-53). The Garden still contains trees with roots that date back to the time of Jesus. Your next stop, the Church of All Nations, is built over the “Rock of Agony”. This is where Jesus prayed alone on the night of His arrest. Throughout this time, you are invited to remain in prayer and to reflect on Christ’s agony that He experienced. You will have the opportunity to visit the Western Wall, which is the last remnant of the Jewish Temple after it was destroyed in 70 A.D. Continue with a visit to the house of the High Priest Caiaphas (Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu). This Church commemorates where Jesus was examined and eventually imprisoned before the Council in Jerusalem. It also commemorates Peter’s Denial of Christ (John 18:15-18), Peter’s repentance, and Jesus’ forgiveness of Peter. You will also visit the Upper Room on Mt. Zion. The Upper Room is where Jesus and His disciples celebrated the Last Supper (Matthew 26:17-30) and where Jesus appeared to His disciples after His Death and Resurrection (Mark 16:14). In addition, visit the nearby Benedictine Church of the Dormition. Tradition tells us that this Church is where Mary, the Mother of Jesus, “fell asleep.” At the end of this prayerful day, return to your hotel for dinner and an overnight.

Day 18: Jerusalem: Via Dolorosa - Holy Sepulchre- Western Wall

Theme: The Way of the Cross, The Crucifixion, The Resurrection

Very early this morning we walk together in prayerful procession along the Via Dolorosa (The Way of the Cross). We start at the Antonia Fortress, where Jesus was condemned to death by Pontius Pilate (John 18:28-19:16) and receives His cross. We end at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, which marks the place of the Crucifixion & the Resurrection, (Luke 23:26-33). After Mass at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher we return to the hotel for breakfast. Later we revisit the Old City to see the Church of St. Anne’s, the traditional birthplace of the Virgin Mary. Nearby is the Pool of Bethesda, where Jesus healed the crippled man (John 5:1-9). End the day with a visit the Western Wall, which is the last remnant of the Jewish Temple destroyed in 70 A.D.

Day 19: Jerusalem - Tel Aviv - Rome

After an early breakfast, you will transfer to Tel Aviv Airport for your flight(s) to Rome. Upon arrival in Rome, you will be greeted by your tour escort and/or driver. After a warm welcome to Italy, you will be escorted to your transportation to your hotel. This afternoon, your guide will introduce you to your fellow pilgrims and priest who will be with you for the rest of the journey. You will make your way to Mass, followed by a welcome dinner with wine. This evening, you may walk to St. Peter’s Square for Rosary (optional).

Day 20: Rome: Papal Audience - Trevi Fountain – Pantheon - Basilica of St. John the Lateran – Holy Stairs - Basilica of St. Mary Major

This morning we attend the Papal Audience in St. Peter’s Square or at the Audience Hall. The Audience is celebrated each Wednesday by His Holiness, Pope Francis (pending the papal schedule). Next Trevi Fountain area for some free time and lunch (on own). This afternoon, visit the oldest of the four major Basilicas in Rome, the Archbasilica of St. John the Lateran, the cathedral church and seat of the Bishop of Rome. Cross the street to the very steps that lead up to the praetorium of Pontius Pilate in Jerusalem which Jesus climbed on His way to trial during his Passion. Holy Mass will be celebrated by our priest at the Basilica of St. Mary Major, dedicated to Our Blessed Mother. Dinner and overnight.

Day 21: Rome: St. Peter's Basilica - Vatican Museum - Appian Way - Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls - Catacombs

Today we tour St. Peter's Basilica, built on the site where St. Peter the Apostle was martyred. Here, you'll have the opportunity to view Michelangelo's Pieta sculpture, pray at the tombs of Pope Benedict XVI and St. John Paul II. Next you will visit the Vatican Museum, where you can see the Tapestry Gallery, Raphael Rooms, and Sistine Chapel. After lunch, continue down the Appian Way, one of the earliest roads built in ancient Rome to the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls and the Catacombs. Dinner and overnight in Rome.

Day 22: Rome - USA

Bid farewell to Italy and your fellow pilgrims as you depart for Rome Airport. During the drive, take time to reflect on the memories that will remain in your heart for a lifetime.

***206 Tours Disclaimer:**

Occasionally local religious and national holidays, weather, traffic conditions and other events may necessitate changes in the sequence of events or the missing of certain events/places. Though every effort will be made to follow the itinerary, it should be considered as an indication, rather than a contract of events and places to be visited.