



RAINBOW TRAVEL GROUP

Suite 207, 3112 11th Street NE • Calgary AB, Canada T2E 7J1 • Tel: (403) 210 1997 • Fax: (403) 210 1346
Toll Free: 1-888-456-5482 • E-mail: info@rainboweducationaltours.com

Wednesday, November 17, 2010

Proposed Itinerary

12 Days/10 Nights – From April 20th to May 01st -2011

Day 1, Wednesday April 20

DEPARTURE

Leave Calgary's International Airport via wide-bodied jet to Greece. Enjoy in-flight meals and services.

Day 2, Thursday April 21

ATHENS

Arrive in **Athens**. The **Rainbow Educational Tour Representative** will meet you upon arrival and escort you to your waiting coach. Transfer to the downtown hotel and an orientation of the area. Continental breakfast and dinner daily are included in your tour.

Day 3, Friday April 22

ATHENS

This morning after breakfast you will have a guided sightseeing tour of Athens including a visit to the **Acropolis**. Four buildings remain on the site of the Acropolis, the **Parthenon, the Propylaea, the Temple of Athena Nike and the Erectheum**. The Erectheum housed the beautiful **Caryatids** and the columns in the shape of women. The Original Caryatids are now in the Acropolis Museum. The dominating structure is the **Parthenon**, a miracle of construction in its time. You will also see **the Plaka, the National Gardens and Syntagma Square**. This afternoon you will have some free time to enjoy shopping. This afternoon you'll check in for your Greek islands cruise voyage, which sails out of Athens. A captivating seven-day odyssey lies ahead, with stops at some of the Mediterranean's most historically and culturally rich islands and seaports. Dinner and overnight on the ship.

Day 4, Saturday April 23

Istanbul

Your first port of call is Istanbul, ancient Turkish capital and traditionally considered the crossroads of East and West. Nestled between the Black Sea and the Dardanelles, Istanbul is the world's only city spanning two continents (Europe and Asia). Formerly known as both Byzantium and Constantinople, Istanbul's history dates back to the 7th century B.C. Wind through Istanbul's ancient streets and past remnants of the glorious Byzantine and Ottoman empires. Dinner and overnight on the ship.

Day 5, Sunday April 24

Istanbul

Today you will enjoy a guided city tour of Istanbul with lunch on board the ship, but includes Hippodrome, Blue Mosque. Topkapi Palace, St, Sophia Museum and the Grand Bazaar

Day 6, Monday April 25

Mykonos

The first island you'll visit is Mykonos, one of Greece's Cyclades Islands. It was ruled by Venetians in the 13th and 14th centuries, and more recently was under Turkish occupation. In the center of Mykonos' Old Town is Mando Mavrogenous Square, named after the woman credited with saving the island from the Muslims during Greece's War of Independence. Nearby is the Church of Agia Kiriaki, which contains some of Mykonos' most fascinating and beautiful religious icons. The quaint winding streets of the Old Town are perfect for browsing trendy boutiques and crafts shops. And, be on the lookout for Three Well Square (Tria Pigadia), where a local legend states that an unmarried woman who drinks from each of the wells will soon find a husband. Dinner and overnight on the Cruise ship.

Day 7, Tuesday April 26

Patmos and Kusadasi

Patmos, which united with Greece in 1948, is one of the 12 Dodecanese Islands that extend off the western coast of Turkey. Despite many centuries of foreign rule, Patmos has long retained its Greek language and culture. You will continue your cruise to **Kusadasi** Harbour, Turkey. Disembark, and travel about 20 km north west of Kusadasi for a guided tour of Ancient **Ephesus**, the well-preserved and most extensive remains of a classical Roman city, *the site of a Christian shrine, and one of the seven wonders of the ancient world*. Among the most remarkable **Ephesian monuments** you will see are, the **Trajan Fountain**, the **Odeion**, the famous **Basilica of St. John**, the **Great Theatre**, the **Gate of Heracles**, the **House of the Virgin Mary** – and the **Celsus Library façade** with its central columns and capitals. Restored with the aid of the Austrian Archaeological Institute is the most famous and elegant monument at Ephesus. The Celsus Library was built in 135 A.D by Consul Gaius Julius Aquila, to honour his father, Celsus Polemaeanus of Sardis a Roman Senator and Proconsul of the province of Asia Minor, who was buried under the west side of the library, where he rests to this day.

At the Golden Age, heyday of the Roman Empire, Ephesus grew to be the second largest city of the Empire, which stretched its power from Britain to the Red Sea. Enjoy your visit to this magnificent city before you continue cruising to **Pátmos**, known as the Jerusalem of the Aegean.

Upon arrival in Pátmos disembark for a short excursion of the island. The northernmost island of the Dodecanese complex lies at a distance of 158 nautical miles from the port of Piraeus. The harmonious succession of its rocky hills, peaceful valleys and green meadows, run down to a scene of beautiful aquamarine waters of the Aegean Sea. **The Monastery of St. John the Theologian** set like a crown on top of the settlement of **Chóra** is the island's landmark. Its construction started in 1088, when the Byzantine **Emperor Alexios Comnenus I** granted the whole island to St. Christodoulos to organise a settlement for monastic purposes. You will have an opportunity to visit the **Monastery and Grotto**; you will have time to explore this beautiful island before returning on board for dinner and overnight

Day 8, Wednesday April 27

Rhodes

You wake up this morning at the beautiful island of **Rhodes**. Ideally located at the south-eastern edge of the Aegean Sea, and its size, along with its proximity to Asia Minor and the Middle East have made it the de-facto hub of commerce, culture, and conflict throughout the ages. You will take an excursion of the **Old town of Rhodes**, with its **Ancient Fortress** and **Knight's Quarter**. Then visit the **Village of Lindos**

But for those of you that would like to shop the **town of Rhodes**, divided in two parts, the town of Rhodes, and the **medieval town of Rhodes**, through its relics from the past, constitutes a living testament to the multitude of invaders who took hold of the island and left their mark in the form of archaeological and architectural evidence. You will visit the medieval town whose impressive defensive wall --a marvel of medieval military architecture is credit to the **Knights of the Order of St. John**. During the 14th and 15th centuries the Order made the island their home to wage their holy wars against the Arabs and Turks; they extended the Byzantine city and reinforced its fortifications creating the medieval Rhodes, today recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

Continue with your day tour traveling to the town of **Lindos**, a picturesque Greek fishing village whose ruins of the **Acropolis** is perched high above the clear blue water of its harbour. Lindos is famous for its façades, doorways and windows with their elaborate carvings. From the Acropolis looking down you can see **St. Paul's Bay**, a natural bay where **St. Paul** is supposed to have landed and found refuge for his ship during a storm in 58 AD. His arrival led to the establishment of Christianity on Rhodes. For a small price, you can make the ascent on a donkey! Time to board your cruise ship again, dinner and overnight on board

Day 9, Thursday April 28

Crete – Santorini

You will cruise to Crete which is located in the center of the eastern Mediterranean at the crossroads of Africa, Asia, and Europe, Crete is framed by the Aegean coastline to the North, and the Libyan Sea to the south. The island measures about 200 Km from east to west. Between 12 to 58 Km from north to south at its narrowest and widest distances, making it one of the largest islands in the Mediterranean Sea and the largest of the Greek islands. In 1913, after centuries of occupation by the Ottoman Empire, Crete re-united with free Greece. You arrive at Heraklion, Crete's largest modern town, disembark and if you choose you may take a short sightseeing excursion of **Heraklion** including the **Palace of Knossos**. Cruise to the picture perfect, whitewashed island of **Santorini**. The landscape is dramatically beautiful with the white house's setting along red cliffs and hills. If you land at the old port of **Thira**, there is a 587 – step footpath leading up the cliff to the town. You may choose to

take a **mule ride** at your own expense up the steep path. It is possible to take the **cable car** down after enjoying the scenery of Santorini. You will have time to explore the town before go on board for dinner and overnight.

Day 10, Friday April 29 **Corinth Canal- Mycenae – Epidaurus – Tolon**

This morning you will arrive back in port and then board your coach and travel south west of Athens for a short visit and a Kodak picture of the spectacular **Corinth Canal**. The canal is 6346 meters long, 24.6 meters wide and about 8 meters deep. Cross the canal and continue southeast through the **Plain of Argolis** for a guided visit to ancient **Epidaurus** and **Mycenae**.

Your first stop is at ancient Epidaurus, completely hidden from view until you have climbed nearly to its level lies the enormous well preserve and acoustically perfect ancient **Amphitheatre** with a capacity to seat 14,000 spectators. Then continue with your tour to **Mycenae**. Shrouded in a mystery of how the civilization began and how it ended, Mycenae's well-preserved ruins are some of the most celebrated archaeological discoveries in modern history. Then you will return to Tolon for dinner and overnight.

Day 11, Saturday April 29 **Tolon - Athens**

You will have some time to enjoy Tolon before your return to Athens for some last minute shopping and your last night in Athens.

Day 12 Sunday May 01 **Departure**

You will have an early departure for your trip home to Canada.

Included in the cost of this tour:

- ❖ Airfare Calgary/ Athens /Calgary via scheduled airlines, Air Canada/Lufthansa
- ❖ All transportation as stated in the day-to-day itinerary
- ❖ Continental Breakfast and dinners daily
- ❖ Lunches on the cruise ship
- ❖ 3 nights Tourist Class Accommodation in multi bedded rooms with individual beds and bathrooms
- ❖ 7 night's accommodation in triple or quad occupancy on a cruise ship.
- ❖ Services of the RAINBOW representatives in Greece
- ❖ Entrances and guided sightseeing tours as outlined in the day-to-day itinerary
- ❖ Services of the RAINBOW educational consultant before departure
- ❖ Guided tour of Istanbul
- ❖ Guided tour of Kusadasi/Ancient Ephesus
- ❖ Guided tour of Rhodes and Lindos combined.
- ❖ Guided excursion of Mycenae and Epidaurus
- ❖ Visit to the Acropolis
- ❖ Port Taxes
- ❖ Airport Departure Taxes
- ❖ Comprehensive Insurance: Excess Medical, Trip Cancellation and Baggage

Not included in the cost of this tour:

- ❖ Expenses of a personal nature
- ❖ Lunches not on the cruise ship and extra beverages with meals
- ❖ Tipping for drivers, guides
- ❖ Passport and Visa Fees (if necessary)
- ❖ Optional tours, excursions and activities
- ❖ Single supplements for any single hotel room accommodation required
- ❖ **Fuel surcharges imposed by airlines or any new taxes**

RAINBOW TRAVEL GROUP

Phone: 403 210 1997

Toll Free: 1-888-456-5482

E-mail: info@rainboweducationaltours.com