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Expedition Details

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From science and medicine to art and democracy, the achievements of the ancient Greeks have shaped the foundations of Western civilization. Encounter this living legacy firsthand on a journey from the magnificent monuments of Athens to the enchanting villages of the Cyclades. Discover the mythology of ancient temples and ruins once buried in volcanic ash, and experience the pageantry and excitement of participating in your own Olympic Games. Explore the islands of Mykonos, Delos, and Paros by boat and on foot, and sail

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Depart on an overnight flight to Athens. Upon arrival, transfer to our hotel in the heart of the city. After time to settle in, gather for a welcome dinner at a charming taverna.

Acropolis Hill Hotel (L,D)

Day 3 — Athens

Spend the day exploring Athens, considered to be the birthplace of Western civilization and a place where democracy, philosophy, science, and the arts flourished in ancient times. Take a tour of the hilltop Acropolis, crowned by the legendary Parthenon, and visit the new Acropolis Museum. Explore the historic Plaka neighborhood and the bustling market of Monastiráki and sample delicious Greek dishes during lunch. This afternoon, kids meet up with their pen pals and take part in their own Olympic Games staged at a nearby beach. Learn about the ancient origins of this athletic competition, designed to honor Zeus and other deities, and participate in events such as archery, the triple jump, and relay races.

(B,L,D)

Day 4 — Piraeus/Mykonos

At the main port of Athens, step aboard a ferry for our journey to the Cyclades, named for the circular formation of these stunning islands. Step ashore at Mykonos—where, according to mythology, heroic Hercules destroyed the last of the powerful giants. Venture to Elia beach to swim in crystal-clear waters and enjoy watersports such as boating and windsurfing. Or join a cooking lesson with a local chef. Later, check into our beachside hotel—an airy oasis of Cycladic architecture—and rest up before an evening stroll through the main town, lined with whimsical sugar-cube houses. Encounter the graceful cupolas of Panagia Paraportiani church and the cluster of waterfront homes known as Little Venice. Have dinner at a restaurant overlooking the island's famous windmills.

Hotel Petinos (B,L,D)

Day 5 — Mykonos/Delos

Travel by ferry to Delos, the mythological birthplace of the twin gods Artemis, goddess of animals and the hunt, and Apollo, god of healing, music, and light. Let your imagination run wild as we explore this UNESCO World Heritage site, including the foundations of the Temple of Apollo and the famous Terrace of the Lions. Return to Mykonos for lunch and get immersed in Greek culture this afternoon. Meet local artisans to watch and learn how to make colorful mosaics and join a dance group to learn a traditional Greek dance. Enjoy a family dinner on your own.

(B,L)

Days 6 & 7 — Paros

For centuries, Paros prospered from the export of its fine white marble, prized by sculptors and architects throughout the classical world. Board a morning ferry to the island—our home for the next two nights—and enjoy a walking tour of the capital and main port, Parikia, where blue-painted doors and shutters dazzle against whitewashed stone. Visit the 4th-century Panagia

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Ekatontapiliani, one of Greece's oldest churches, and the remains of a medieval castle. Later, roll up your sleeves at a pottery studio and decorate your own special souvenir. The next day, travel to the island's mountainous interior to visit the ancient marble quarries that were the source of masterpieces including the "Venus de Milo". Explore Levkai, a lovely village with Venetian architecture, and see fishermen hauling their catch in seaside Naoussa.

Paros Bay Hotel (B,L,D; B,L)

Days 8 & 9 — Santoríni

In the second millennium b.c., massive volcanic eruptions on Santoríni collapsed the island into a fractured caldera possibly contributing to the collapse of Minoan civilization on nearby Crete. See what remains of the island's violent origins as we arrive by ferry in Santoríni's caldera and disembark below soaring cliffs. After settling into our hotel in Firá, set out to explore the town's mazelike streets. The following morning, head to ancient Akrotiri, which was buried by volcanic ash sometime between 1625 b.c. and 1450 b.c. and excavated starting in 1967. Tour this Minoan Bronze Age settlement and learn about the ongoing archaeological work there. Later, ride a donkey or cable car down the cliff and embark on an afternoon sailing adventure. Cruise the waters of the caldera, go swimming, and have lunch at a private beach. Step ashore at the picturesque port of Ammouídi, and enjoy spectacular sunset views during a farewell dinner.

Aressana Spa Hotel & Suites (B,L,D Daily)

Day 10 — Santoríni/Athens/U.S.

After breakfast, fly back to Athens and connect with your return flight home.

(B)

Optional Extension

- [The Peloponnese](#) - Post-Trip Extension, 5 Days
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