







### The Acropolis and Surrounding Area

**1 Acropolis**, one of the great wonders of the world, actually consists of four ancient buildings; the **Parthenon**, **Temple of Athena Nike** &, the **Erechtheion**, and the **Propylaea**. The acropolis was built during the apex of Greeks Golden Age in the 5th century BC. Throughout history, it has served as a military fortress and religious center. The entrance is on the southwest side at Dionyssiou Areopagitou street. It is a 5 minute climb to where tickets can be purchased. **The Acropolis Museum** is located on the Acropolis and contains sculptures found in the Acropolis. **Areopagus** is the ancient supreme court from which St Paul addressed the Athenians in 54 AD, and converted Senator Dionysius who became the first bishop of Athens.

**2 Ancient Agora** was the administrative center and marketplace of Athens from the 6th century BC to the 6th century AD. This archaeological site features three remarkable constructions: the Temple of Hephaestus, the best preserved classical temple in Greece; the Odeon of Agrippa the concert hall; and Stoa of Attalos, a multipurpose building now housing the Agora Museum. Pnyx, also located in the Ancient Agora, was the meeting place of the general assembly during the Golden Age. A quorum of 5,000 citizens was necessary to take a vote. It now serves as the location of the Sound and Light show as well

as an excellent photo opportunity of the Acropolis.

**3 Plaka** is the older area of the city located on the north slope of the Acropolis. You can walk the narrow cobblestone streets with winding staircases and old mansions, or take a rest in one of the numerous tavernas. There are also a number of tourist shops as well as a few ancient sites worth visiting. **The Tower of the Winds**, located in the Plaka area, is one of the most well preserved monuments in Athens. It was built in the 1st century BC and used as a water clock, sun dial, and weather vane. Each of the eight sides of the octagon has a relief depicting the wind that blows from that direction.

**4 Panathinion Stadium** was constructed in 1896 for the first modern Olympiad.

**5 The National Gardens** are open from Sunrise to Sunset and are located adjacent to Syntagma Square. This delightful garden is a retreat from the noise and heat of the city.

**6 Dionysos and Odeon Theaters**, are located just below Acropolis Hill. Dionysos once hosted plays of Euripides, Aristophanes, Sophocles, and Aesculus and could hold up to 17,000 spectators. The Odeon of Herold Atticus amphitheater was built in the second century AD. It has been reconstructed and is used during the summer to host Athens Festival performances.

**7 Hadrian's Arch** was built by the Roman ruler in the 2nd century. The architectural remains as seen from the outside are well preserved.

**8 The Parliament Building** near Syntagma Square has a changing of the guard every hour on the hour. The guards friendly demeanor is as delightful as their attire – Pom-pom-laden clogs, short pleated skirts (foustanela), and pony-tail-tasselled hats. This is the location of the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior.

**9** Along the impressive street of Akadimias you will find the **Athens University**, **National Library** and **Hellenic Academy**.

### Other sights in Athens

**Monastiraki Square** is the core of the market area and a great place to bargain for souvenirs. The flea market is located next to the Monastiraki metro station just off Monastiraki square. The best time to visit is Sunday morning.

**National Archaeological Museum** at 44 Patisision St., is one of the largest and best museums of Greek artifacts in the world. It contains archaeological finds from all of Greece, from prehistoric times through the Byzantine period. Descriptions are listed in Greek, English, French, and German.

**Little Metropolis**, dating back to the 12th century, is one of the most charming churches in Athens. Above the entrance you will find reliefs of figurines and interesting displays of zodiac signs. Beautiful frescos on the outer walls are covered with reliefs dating from the Classical to Byzantine periods.

**Mt. Lycabettus**, the highest hill in Athens, offers an excellent panoramic view of the city from all sides. The summit, at 912 feet, can be reached by foot, car or funicular which operates from the Kolonaki side of the hill. On the top you will find a tiny 19th century chapel of St George as well as a restaurant.

**Benaki Museum** contains ancient Greek and Byzantine art, icons, costumes and folk crafts from the islands, and relics from the War of Independence. Descriptions are in Greek and French.

**Byzantine Museum** is the only museum in Europe concentrating exclusively on Byzantine art. Each room is arranged to look like Greek churches of different eras and the outer wings contain mostly icons. The outer grounds are also worth a visit with beautiful rose gardens, a fountain, and fragments of statues. Descriptions are in Greek and French.

### Beyond Athens

**Mycenae** was settled as early as 2700 BC, but the period of its greatest power came at the close of the Late Bronze Age (1600 BC – 1100 BC). The Mycenae civilization spread throughout the Eastern Mediterranean and became the center of wealth and power. The archaeological discoveries in this area are some of the most celebrated finds in modern history. Some of the most

noted ruins include the Tomb of Agamemnon, and the Lion Gate.

**Cape Sounion** is located 70 kilometers (43 miles) from Athens at the tip of the Attic peninsula. This is the location of the 5th-century BC Temple of Poseidon. The view from the Temple is spectacular. The original temple was destroyed by Persians in 480 BC, but rebuilt by Pericles in 440 BC Among the remains are 16 doric columns. The lower hill is scattered with remains of the Temple of Athena Sounias, patron goddess of Athens.

**Delphi**, located 189 kilometers (118 miles) North of Athens, has served as a sanctuarie (shrine) throughout many periods of Greek history. It was the home of Apollo as well as the most famous oracle of antiquity. The most prominent figures in Greek history have visited this sacred site to hear the prophecy of the oracle. Among its ruins are the Temple of Apollo and Altar of Apollo.

**SHORE EXCURSIONS** To make the best of you visit to Piraeus and Athens we suggest you take one of our organized Shore Excursions. For Information concerning tour content and pricing cosult your Shore Excursion Brouchure or contact the Shore Excursion Desk.

**LOCAL CUSTOMS** Tipping: There are no absolute rules for tipping. A 10% tip is expected in most restaurants, and a taxi fare should be rounded up to the nearest Euro.

Local Cuisine: For a starter you will most likely find these three favorites on most menus; taramasalata (a dip or spread made from fish roe), melitsanosalata (made from smoked eggplant), and tzatziki (a yogurt cucumber and garlic dip usually used with bread). The traditional main entrees include moussaka (baked dish of minced lamb, potatoes and eggplant), gemista (stuffed tomatoes or peppers). Fast-food in Greece consists of the giro (slices of grilled meat with tomato and onions in a pita bread), souvlaki (shish kebab), and pastries filled with a variety of stuffings including spinach, cheese, or meat. A meal is not complete without a piece of baklava (a very sweet phyllo pastry filled with walnut and honey) for desert.

Drink Specialties: Ouzo, a clear licorice-flavor drink, and brandy (Botrys and Metaxa) are the national aperitifs of Greece. Wine is drunk at almost all meals and social gathering and is relatively inexpensive. Bottled water is recommended.