

Mediterranean Visions: Ancient & Contemporary

(Dates below are subject to change. Required date flexibility of 4 days on either side of requested departure date)

Day 1	Tuesday, May 26, 2009
--------------	------------------------------

Board your overnight flight to Istanbul!

Day 2	Wednesday, May 27, 2009
--------------	--------------------------------

Arrival in Istanbul

Welcome to Istanbul, crossroads of the East and West as well as the world's only city that spans two continents. Upon your arrival, you will be greeted by your bi-lingual EF Tour Director, who will remain with you throughout your stay. This afternoon your Tour Director will introduce you to the sights of Istanbul, including the Galata Bridge and Tower on your EF Walking Tour.

Overnight in Istanbul

Day 3	Thursday, May 28, 2009
--------------	-------------------------------

Guided Sightseeing of Istanbul

Today your Tour Director, who is also a licensed guide, introduces you to Istanbul's major sites. Discover the ancient Hippodrome, which once served as the public center of Byzantium for over a thousand years. Then behold the breathtaking Blue Mosque, built by Sultan Ahmet and decorated with exquisite blue Iznik tiles. You'll also visit the Church of Divine Wisdom, better known as Aya Sophia. A thousand years older than St. Peter's in Rome, this awe-inspiring building was the pride of Christendom until the city fell to the Turks in 1453. Other sites that you will visit today include the Tomb of Sultan Mehmet II, Constantine's Column and the Byzantine Cistern in Istanbul.

Overnight in Istanbul

Day 4	Friday, May 29, 2009
--------------	-----------------------------

Visit Topkapi Palace

Built by Mehmet the Conqueror over the ruins of Constantine's Imperial Palace, Topkapi Palace occupies one of the seven hills of the city at the tip of the historic peninsula overlooking the sea. Mehmet II began construction of the palace 9 years after his conquest of the city, where the sultans reigned continually until 1855. You will also tour the Treasury and Harem during your visit.

Visit the Istanbul Archaeology Museum

This afternoon you will visit the three buildings that house the Istanbul Archaeology Museum. You will note that you will only find exhibits of items from the first century AD or earlier at this museum, making every item significant.

Turkish Cultural Dinner

Tonight enjoy a culturally rich dinner in Istanbul. This evening's repast includes authentic Turkish dishes as well as belly dancers.

Overnight in Istanbul

Day 5

Saturday, May 30, 2009

Visit the Spice Bazaar

This morning's first stop will be Istanbul's famous Spice Bazaar, one of the oldest bazaars in the city and second largest only to the Grand Bazaar. Enjoy time to browse the numerous stalls, who knows what you will find!

Visit the Grand Bazaar

Your next stop is Istanbul's legendary Grand Bazaar, where you can browse and barter for treasures of all kinds, from brassware to spices.

Bosphorus Straits Cruise

Journey through the Bosphorus Straits on this half-day cruise excursion. View decadent Ottoman palaces and imposing medieval castles as you journey through this narrow waterway, which separates Europe and Asia. Then stop on shore to explore the Rumeli Fortress, where Mehmet the Conqueror planned his siege of Istanbul.

Overnight in Istanbul

Day 6

Sunday, May 31, 2009

Excursion to Chora

Today you will travel just outside of Istanbul to the city of Chora. Well known for its famous St. Saviour church, you will have time today to explore some of the best sites of the city including St. Saviour and the Eyub Mosque.

Overnight in Istanbul

Day 7

Monday, June 1, 2009

Transfer to Cannakale via Troy & Gallipoli

A local guide shows you the sights of Troy. Tour the ancient ruins, where archaeologists have identified the relics of nine civilizations dating back 5,000 years. Continue to Canakkale, whose shores touch both Europe and Asia, a highly strategic area to control. The city is known for its crucial role during the eight-month Battle of Gallipoli in WWI, when Turkish soldiers defended the Dardanelles Strait and prevented the Allied army from entering the country. Today, the Gallipoli peninsula is a national park dedicated to those who lost their lives here. Keep your eyes out for the tribute carved on one of Canakkale's cliff

walls: "O Passer-by: The quiet earth on which you tread unaware is the place where a generation was lost. Bow and listen, for this ground is where the heart of a nation throbs."

Overnight in Canakkale

Day 8

Tuesday, June 2, 2009

Transfer Dikili via Guided Sightseeing in Pergamon

After leaving Canakkale, travel south along the Aegean coast to Pergamon, where your local guide shows you the sights. A stronghold of the Greek Attalid dynasty, this was, at one time, one of the world's most magnificent cities. Here, you'll visit the impressive Acropolis, Red Church, Pergamon Museum and the Asclepion.

Overnight in Dikili

Day 9

Wednesday, June 3, 2009

Transfer to Kusadasi via Izmir & Sirince

En route to Kusadasi you will stop in Izmir for a tour with your local guide. Izmir, historically known as Smyrna, is Turkey's second largest port city. To some it is considered an extremely urban city, given its 3,500 year history. Continue to the village of Sirince, which is nearly opposite in size when compared to Izmir. The peaceful village of Sirince lies in the hills outside of Ephesus. Known for its homemade wines, olive oils and needlecrafts, Sirince offers a taste of rural life far removed from the bustle of Turkey's cities. Stroll past some of the country's best-preserved 19th-century architecture, and enjoy panoramic views of peach orchards and olive groves.

Arrive in Kusadasi

Arrive in this picturesque Turkish village which lies on the Aegean coast. Shops and bazaars generate a bustle of colorful activity along its palm-lined streets.

Overnight in Kusadasi

Day 10

Thursday, June 4, 2009

Excursion to Selcuk

Today's excursion takes you north to Selcuk, originally named Ayios Theologos. Your local guide will show you the city stopping at such sights as the 6th century basilica of St. John the Apostle, the Byzantine Citadel and the Museum of Ephesus. Don't forget to visit the old quarter of Selcuk as it still retains a very traditional Turkish appearance and culture.

Overnight in Kusadasi

Day 11

Friday, June 5, 2009

Guided Excursion to Ephesus

This morning, enjoy an excursion to Ephesus, one of the Mediterranean region's best-preserved classical cities. During the reign of the Roman Empire, Ephesus was considered the greatest city in Asia Minor. You will see all the highlights, from the Forum, the Odeon and the elaborate Library of Celsus to the Thermal Baths of Scolastika, the Temple of Hadrian and the Great Theatre. Visit the Archaeological Museum and visit the nearby house where the Virgin Mary where she is said to have spent her last days.

Overnight in Kusadasi

Day 12

Saturday, June 6, 2009

Transfer to Pamukkale via Aphrodisias & Hierapolis

Begin the day with a visit to Aphrodisias. In the late first century B.C., the Roman Empire granted autonomy to the city that honored Aphrodite, goddess of love. Ancient sculptors created works of stunning beauty out of the glowing marble they found in the nearby mountains. Today Aphrodisias is one of Turkey's best-preserved archaeological sites. On your visit to Aphrodisias, marvel at the excavated ruins that bear testimony to this age-old artists' colony. Continue to Hierapolis, a UNESCO World Heritage Site made famous for its great baths used during the 2nd century B.C. Arrive later today in Pamukkale.

Overnight in Pamukkale

Day 13

Sunday, June 7, 2009

Transfer to Bodrum

Continue south to Bodrum, a beautiful port town located on the Aegean Sea facing the Greek island of Kos and originally known as Halicarnassus of Caria. Bodrum is now famous as the home to one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World - the Mausoleum of Mausolus. This afternoon, you will visit both the Castle of St. Peter and the Mausoleum of Halicarnassos.

Overnight in Bodrum

Day 14

Monday, June 8, 2009

Free day in Bodrum

Enjoy the day to experience Bodrum at your own pace. You may wish to visit the local archaeological museum or spend the day relaxing on the beach.

Overnight in Bodrum

Day 15

Tuesday, June 9, 2009

Ferry to Kos

This morning, board a ferry bound for Kos, a small Greek island just 4km off the coast of Turkey and the birthplace of Hippocrates. The whitewashed buildings of the island only add to its beautiful and peaceful nature.

Visit the Asklepion

As one of the most significant archaeological sites on the island, this will be an important stop during your time on Kos. Built after the death of Hippocrates, the people of Kos created this healing center in honor of the god Asclepius. The hospital applied the methods of therapy created by Hippocrates.

Visit the Archaeological Museum of Kos

This afternoon you will visit Kos' archaeological museum, displaying both Hellenistic and Rome sculptures and mosaics found on the island. Don't forget to look for the 3rd century mosaic depicting how Hippocrates and Pan once welcomed the god Asclepius.

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight on the island of Kos (pending availability)

Day 16

Wednesday, June 10, 2009

Visit the Castle of the Knights of St. John

Situated at the entrance of the Kos harbor, this castle is a creation made from both local stone as well as re-used pieces of ancient buildings. The oldest remaining portion of the castle is the circular tower found to the left of the draw bridge. With a museum on site, you can learn more about the history of the castle.

Excursion to Zia Village

Enjoy the afternoon to explore Zia village at your own pace. Located on the Dikaion mountain, there is plenty to see during your visit. You might wish to see the oldest water mill on the island or browse the small shops selling local wares of thyme honey, olive oil or olive soap. Don't forget to try the thyme honey!

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight on the island of Kos (pending availability)

Day 17

Thursday, June 11, 2009

Excursion to Patmos (pending schedule)

Today you will enjoy a full day excursion to the island of Patmos located about 50 miles north of Kos. United with Greece in 1948, it is one of the twelve 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.

Visit the Monastery of St. John

Journey to St. John's Monastery, a fortress-like retreat named after St. John the Evangelist, who came to Patmos in the first century A.D. after his exile from Ephesus. From the monastery you'll have a panoramic view of the whole island and the surrounding area. In a nearby grotto, St. John wrote the *Book of Revelations*.

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight on the island of Kos (pending availability)

Day 18

Friday, June 12, 2009

Free day in Kos

Spend the day enjoying the island of Kos!

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight on the island of Kos (pending availability)

Day 19

Saturday, June 13, 2009

Ferry to Rhodes

The largest of the Dodecanese Islands, this is one of Greece's most popular resort areas. According to ancient myth, this island erupted from the sea to appease Helios, the sun god, after Zeus overlooked him while distributing the earth among the other gods. Once a bastion of Christianity against the Turks, Rhodes has three major archaeological sites—Ialyssos, Lindos, and Kamiron—which date back to the seventh century B.C.

Visit the Archaeological Museum of Rhodes

This afternoon you will visit the Archaeological Museum of Rhodes, housed in the medieval building of the Hospital of the Knights. The museum contains piece from ancient Lalysos, Kamiros and Karpathos to name a few.

Visit the Palace of the Grand Masters

After your visit to the archaeological museum, continue on to the Palace of the Grand Masters. Modeled after the Pope's palace in Avignon, the palace was completed in 1346 and has been used as a palace, prison and summer home. The exterior truly represents its medieval origins and you can visit the Medieval Exhibit on the ground floor to get a more in-depth look at the history of this palace.

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight on the island of Rhodes (pending availability)

Excursion to Lindos

Travel to the town of Lindos, where you can stroll among the ruins of the ancient acropolis, see the Crusader fortress, and climb to the Temple of the Lindian Athena. Here you'll see many architectural clues to this town's rich history: Rhodes was a center of Hellenistic culture in its early days, then became the territory of the medieval Knights of St. John.

Flight to Heraklion

This afternoon, board a plane bound for the Greek island of Crete. Said to be the birthplace of Zeus, Crete, one of Greece's largest islands, enjoys a culture and history all its own. Land in Heraklion, the largest city in Crete. Crete is home of the mythical Minotaur, a creature that had the body of a man and the head and tail of a bull. The Minotaur lived in a labyrinth feasting upon the citizens of Athens, until the Greek hero, Theseus, cleverly defeated the Minotaur and escaped from the labyrinth with the help of a ball of string.

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight in Heraklion

Visit to the Palace of Knossos & Archaeological Museum

Your guide introduces you to one of the most impressive archaeological sites in the world, Knossos Palace. Sir Arthur Evans's archaeological discoveries suggest that this was the site of the ancient Minoan Kingdom. See the Palace's Hall of the Royal Guard, the Hall of the Double Axes, the King's Chamber with the alabaster throne, the Queen's Apartment, as well as its beautiful courtyards and shrines.

Guided Sightseeing of Heraklion

A local guide introduces you to Heraklion, Greece's sixth largest city. See the massive city walls, built by forced laborers in the late 16th century. Inside the city walls, visit the grave of Nikos Kazantzakis, the author of *Zorba the Greek*. Stroll along Market Street, famous for its fresh fruits and vegetable stalls. At Fountain Square, try a bougatsa, a traditional Cretian pastry filled with cream or cheese. Then make your way to the Basilica of St. Mark, where you can see El Greco's *The Baptism of Christ*.

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight in Heraklion

Tour director-Led Sightseeing of Ayios Nikolaos

Your tour director introduces you to this charming beach town. Stroll along the quaint streets, grab a bite to eat at one of the many seaside cafés or pick up a few souvenirs to take home.

Excursion to Spinalonga

This afternoon take a ferry to the island of Spinalonga. Enjoy free time to explore the island made famous by Victoria Hislop's bestselling novel *The Island*. The island was home to a leper colony from 1903 to 1957 and was one of the last active leper colonies in Europe - you might even enter the island through the lepers' entrance known as "Dante's Gate." While on the island, you might wish to explore the small pebble beaches or visit the island's fortress.

Optional Greek Evening

Tonight, opt to experience Greece's unique and colorful culture during an evening of traditional entertainment and cuisine. Enjoy an authentic meal composed of typical dishes at a specially selected

taverna. Watch an enthralling belly-dance performance, and witness the fancy footwork and twirling bravado of traditional Greek dancing, while musicians perform on bouzoukis, stringed instruments unique to Greece. Musical instruments, which date from the Bronze Age in Greece, have long played a central role in Greek tradition, as have regional dances. Experience firsthand this thrilling element of Greek culture!

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight in Heraklion

Day 23

Wednesday, June 17, 2009

Guided Sightseeing of Phaistos, Gortyna and Matala

Your tour director introduces you to one of Greece's most impressive Minoan archaeological wonders. As you explore the ruins, think about what life may have been like for all of the people who lived here so many years ago. Perched atop a hill, surrounded by mountains and overlooking a valley of small villages is the Minoan palace of Phaistos. Built in 2000 B.C., the palace exhibits an extensive irrigation and sanitation system, typical of Minoan architecture. You'll also visit the Gortyna archaeological site and the Matala caves, once frequently visited by the Roman general, Brutus. The caves have served many purposes over the years. In the first and second centuries the caves were used as tombs, but by the 1960s, the caves became home to some hippies.

Night ferry to Athens

Board a night ferry from Chania to Athens.

Overnight on board ferry to Athens

Day 24

Thursday, June 18, 2009

Arrival in Athens

Nestled among mountains on the Attic plain, Athens is the Cradle of Democracy and birthplace of Western civilization. A modern city with a strong connection to its ancient history, Athens has been a center of culture, politics, and history for thousands of years. The great philosopher Socrates lived here, offering to fellow Athenians his views on virtue and knowledge.

Visit the Monastery at Daphni

According to Sir David Talbot-Rice, a famous Byzantine art historian, the Monastery at Daphni is, "The most perfect monument of the 11th century." Take time to reflect on Talbot-Rice's quote as you visit this World Heritage Site.

Transfer to Argolida via Guided Sightseeing of the Corinth Canal

Journey by way of the Corinth Canal (Oedipus spent his childhood in Corinth) en route to Argolida.

You will visit the most beautiful of the remaining buildings at Corinth, the Temple of Apollo. Here you can see the remains of the Roman Agora, the marketplace where Greek trade flourished. You will also climb the Acrocorinth. This former fortified mountain top reaches 1,885 feet and has breathtaking view of the surrounding area.

Overnight in Argolida

Day 25

Friday, June 19, 2009

Guided Sightseeing of Epidaurus & Mycenae

Visit the ancient site of Epidaurus, famous for its open-air theater, dating from the 4th century AD. The best-preserved theater in all of Greece, its acoustics are world-renowned—a person whispering in the round orchestra can be heard from the top row of seats. Test the practice during your visit here today. Continue on to Mycenae where excavations began in 1874 under the leadership of German archaeologist Heinrich Schliemann. The site is perched on a hilltop, overlooking valleys, mountains and the sea, and in ancient times "golden Mycenae" was one of Greece's greatest cities. According to Homer's epic, it was in Mycenae that Agamemnon began his legendary campaign against Troy.

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight in Argolida

Day 26

Saturday, June 20, 2009

Transfer to Delphi

On the slopes of Mount Parnassus lies Delphi, home of the mystical Oracle. For centuries, ancient Greeks would communicate with the

gods here, seeking advice and answers at this magical site where the heavens and the earth were said to meet. Delphi was considered not only the center of worship for the god Apollo, but also the center of the world.

Guided Sightseeing of Delphi

As you tour Delphi, ponder the mysteries of what lies in your future, as did Greece's ancient military leaders, who left gifts for the Oracle in hopes of good fortune in battle. Then visit the Temple of Apollo where, according to legend, the god communicated with mortals. Your visit concludes with a stop at the Delphi Museum, whose collection boasts many artifacts dating back to 550 B.C., reminiscent of the mythical past of ancient Greece.

Overnight in Delphi

Day 27

Sunday, June 21, 2009

Return to Athens Visit the Osios Lukas Monastery

This ornate Byzantine monastery has a history that dates back to the 10th century. Located on the western slopes of Mount Helikon, about 35 kilometers from Delphi, this impressive monastery rests as one of the most important monuments still accessible from the middle Byzantine period in Greece.

Walking Tour of Athens

Get acquainted with the endearing Plaka district. Stroll past the Temple of Olympian Zeus, built to honor the most powerful of all Greek gods-construction began in 515 B.C.

Overnight in Athens

Day 28

Monday, June 22, 2009

Guided Sightseeing of Athens

An expert local guide introduces you to the antiquities of Athens. Climb the Acropolis to view the majestic Parthenon, perhaps the world's greatest architectural feat. See the Temple of Athena Nike, which once housed a gold statue of the goddess (her wings were clipped to keep her from ever deserting the city). Athens is named after Athena, the goddess of war and wisdom. After seeing the Presidential Guard in their traditional costumes, pass the stadium, where the first modern Olympics were held in 1896, as well as lively Omonia and Syntagma Squares.

Visit the New Acropolis Museum

Located on the southern base of the Acropolis Hill and only 280 meters from the Parthenon, the New Acropolis Museum is the largest modern structure built so close to Greece's legendary ancient site. Designed by architect Bernard Tschumi in conjunction with Aristotle University Professor of Archaeology, Dimitrios Pandermalis, this brand new museum will house most of the archaeological findings related to the Acropolis Hill. It may be difficult deciding what's more impressive - the relics being displayed or the building itself.

Dora Stratou Theater

This evening enjoy an extraordinary experience in Greek Culture. The Dora Stratou theatre is a unique dance company featuring the authentic song, music and dance from various villages throughout Greece. With over 2,000 costumes, this lively evening will surely be a highlight of your tour.

Overnight in Athens

Day 29

Tuesday, June 23, 2009

Visit to the Archaeological Museum

Greece's rich and venerable history have long made it a paradise for archaeologists. You'll see the fruits of their labors in Athens' National Archaeological Museum, one of the finest collections of classical sculpture and bronzework in the world.

Group Leader-Arranged visit to the Presidential Palace

This afternoon your professor has arranged a visit to the Presidential Palace in Athens.

Dinner is not included this evening.

Overnight in Athens

Day 30

Wednesday, June 24, 2009

Visit a Grecian Winery

Today you will visit a local winery situated in Pikermi, the heart of the wine growing region of Attica. The vines in this area are known for their heritage with the local Savatiano grape variety. You will have a chance to see the winery and showroom where you can taste some of the wines.

Visit the Temple of Poseidon at Cape Sounion

At the southern tip of the Attic Peninsula, view one of the most imposing sights in the ancient world. High above the sparkling Aegean, the 5th century B.C. Temple of Poseidon, one of Greece's most evocative ruins, dominates the landscape. Sixteen elegant Doric pillars remain, and from this lofty cliffside location, you can see five Aegean islands on a clear day.

Overnight in Athens

Day 31

Thursday, June 25, 2009

Transfer to the airport for your return flight

Your tour director assists with your transfer to the airport, where you'll check in for your return flight home.