

JEWELS OF THE CYCLADES 2024

ATHENS TO ATHENS • PRIVATE SHORE EXCURSIONS





DAY 3

SANTORINI

SANTORINI: BEST ISLAND HIGHLIGHTS, VILLAGES, LEGENDS OF ATLANTIS

- Duration approx. 4,5 hours
- Incl. Bus/Guide/Entry fee
- Per Person: Euro 104

Disembark by tender and board the cable car to reach the **island's capital Fira** for a guided walk through the narrow pedestrian streets. Board the bus for a pleasant drive through the countryside passing the village of **Pyrgos** to the famous **archaeological site of Akrotiri**. If Santorini is known as the Greek Pompeii it is because of ancient Akrotiri. Excavations uncovered an ancient town frozen in time by ash from an eruption some 3.600 years ago. Remains of sophisticated buildings with great frescoes and other constructions are evidence of an elaborate lifestyle.

Continue by bus to the northern coast admiring views of land, sea and skies to reach **Oia**, the **most picturesque village of Santorini** with its **magical views over the Caldera**. Our local guide will take you to the most photographed blue domes, to insight spots and will give you hints for your time at leisure. A short drive will bring you back to Fira.



DAY 4

PAROS

PAROS: GENUINE VILLAGES, STORIES AND TRADITIONS

- Duration approx. 4,5 hours
- Incl. Bus/Guide/Entry fee/a specialty dessert tasting
- Per Person: Euro 78

Next to the colourful **port of Parikia**, stands gracefully the **church of Ekatontapiliani** (the church with the hundred gates), one of the most important Byzantine monuments in the whole Greece. The Church, built in the **4th century AD**, is dedicated to Virgin Mary. The visitors entering the cathedral can admire its dome and the **old byzantine icons**. Hiding up in the mountains untouched, authentic villages like **Lefkes** and **Marpissa** are full of little traditional whitewashed houses, mixed with Venetian architecture, **wonderful chapels**, **whitewashed windmills** and beautiful **dovecotes**. In **Marpissa**, we visit the folklore museum, which is a representation of a typical house of Paros, with traditional old furniture, a loom, utensils and various other objects. The **cosmopolitan Naoussa** on the other side, has preserved the feeling of the pristine fishing village it truly is, beautifully mingling with the elegant atmosphere of the modern venue that it has become. Full of shops, taverns and bars, is one of the most famous nightlife destinations in the Aegean. After our stroll we will have some free time and will then return to the ship..



DAY 5

DELOS

DELOS: TRIUMPH & TURMOIL, BIRTHPLACE OF GODS

- Duration approx. 3,5-4 hours
- Incl. Round trip boat/Guide/Entry fee
- Per Person: Euro 80

In antiquity, **Delos** was considered to be **the spiritual and commercial centre of the Aegean**. After a short ferry/tender ride disembark on the island and gather for an introduction before proceeding with your lecturer guide on a unique walk through the original streets of the site's best-preserved quarters. There you will see **Hellenistic houses** with beautiful mosaics in amazingly good condition, further along you will come to the **Sanctuary**, where you can see the **ruins of a temple dedicated to Apollo** – Delos being Apollo's mythological birthplace - while over the **Sacred Way** you will see the famous five **7th century B.C. marble lions, guardians of the Sacred Lake**. On to the **Theatre and the Roman quarter**, where you will find ancient statues dedicated to Dionysus and optionally visit the museum with its interesting exhibits. Delos is one of the most important Unesco World Heritage Sites.



DAY 6

SYROS

SYROS: ARISTOCRACY, ELEGANCE AND CONCORDE

- Duration approx. 4 hours
- Incl. Bus/Guide/Entry fee/Local Meze treat
- Per Person: Euro 75

Syros has been continuously **inhabited for 7000 years**, and together we will explore why its path through history has been completely different than the rest of Greece. Admire the **European influence** which created a distinctive blend of **Neoclassic, Byzantine, Venetian and Greek culture**, present everywhere.

Our tour begins at **Ano Syros**, the **center of Greek Catholicism in the Aegean region**. This traditional neighborhood is built high up on a hill above the port - we will enjoy **stunning views of the Cyclades** as we stroll through its **picturesque narrow alleyways**, passing by the **Catholic Cathedral of San Giorgio**, the Jesuit and Capuchin monasteries, the churches of San Sebastian and Virgin Mary di Karmilo.

We then head down to the glorious, aristocratic merchant town of **Ermoupolis**, a neoclassical wonder of rich houses, iconic public edifices, and marble-paved streets. Admire the impressive **Town Hall**, the **Apollo Theater** (a miniature version of Scala di Milano) and the elegant **Captain's Quarter** overlooking the sea. Last, but not least, we visit the local grocery, fish, fruit and pastry market, a chance for a culinary experience. Taste authentic tapas of the Cycladic cuisine at our small family taverna.

An ever-changing tour where the locals are always ready to surprise us with something new, every time!



REMARKS:

The tours are exclusively run for our Variety small groups and require a minimum of 14 guests.

Our tailor-made tours do perfectly match with our cruise itinerary timings and are led by local certified English-speaking guides or professional escorts. Let us take you to the “must see” sites and show you some hidden spots at the same time.

The tours are subject to changes due to site restorations, weather, heavy traffic or other conditions. Should sites or museums be closed on our visiting days, alternative visits will be offered instead.

All tours are quite active and require good physical condition. Due to slippery sites, we recommend comfortable shoes, sun tan lotion, a hat and water. Dress code for Church and Monastery visits.

Gratuities for drivers and guides are not included.

updec23

WWW.VARIETYCRUISES.COM

