

Gems of Greece: Athens, Naxos & Crete

Highlights...

Acropolis Site & Museum • Naxos & Lesser Cyclades Day Cruise • Kitron Distillery & Tasting • Knossos Palace • Cooking Class • Pottery Demonstration • Olive Oil & Wine Tasting • Cretan Folk Dancing & Dinner



14 Days • 21 Meals: 12 Breakfasts • 4 Lunches • 5 Dinners

Collette experiences

- Connect with the mission of Shedia Home, a café and artists' workshop in Athens that supports its community.
- Explore the culture and traditions of Naxos, the largest of the Cyclades islands, where families go back generations and one of the few Greek islands full of year-round residents.
- In Archanes, get a local cooking lesson at co-op café preserving traditional Cretan recipes.

Must-see inclusions

- Visit the famous Acropolis in Athens and the Acropolis Museum dedicated to its artifacts.
- Take a scenic day cruise from Naxos and sail among the Small Cyclades islands.
- Explore the ruins of Knossos Palace, a center of Minoan civilization and legend.

Culinary inclusions

- Sample the local Kitron, a liqueur only produced on the Greek island of Naxos.
- Enjoy tastings of Cretan olive oils and wines at a family-run olive mill and winery.
- Immerse yourself in Greek folk traditions during a Cretan taverna dinner with dancing.

Day 1: Overnight Flight

You're on your way to Greece! Get ready to soak in the Mediterranean lifestyle as you explore Greece's beauty, ancient wonders, and lively culture from the capital to the isles.

Day 2: Athens, Greece

Arrive in Athens, the capital of Greece and "the cradle of democracy." Settle in as you prepare to be a part of this immortalized city, home to the famous Parthenon and ancient monuments as well as to inviting neighborhoods where you can explore the heart of Greek culture.

Day 3: Athens

Begin your day in Athens on a panoramic tour through the city, taking in the history of Athens' many landmarks. Next, get to know Plaka, the lively neighborhood at the foot of the Acropolis, brimming with welcoming restaurants and shops. Here, take time to explore and find a spot for lunch on your own, soaking in your surroundings while indulging in delicious Greek cuisine. Later, explore artifacts recovered from the Acropolis archeological site with a guided visit to the Acropolis Museum. Just steps from where ancient relics were recovered, the "new museum" (as the locals still call it) offers incredible views of the Acropolis. Later this evening, join your fellow travelers for a welcome dinner. *Today breakfast and dinner will be included.*

Day 4: Athens

Today, get an up-close look at the iconic Acropolis and its monuments – universal symbols of classical antiquity. Marvel at the ancient history all around as you stroll beside the Parthenon on a guided tour of the incredible archeological complex. Next, experience an **Impact Moment** during a stop at a community-minded café and workshop. This café with a mission shines a light on stories of people from the community who have overcome homelessness through work and support of the unique art made onsite. After a light lunch at the café, the rest of the afternoon and evening are yours to explore more of Athens independently. *Today breakfast and lunch will be included.*

Day 5: Athens - Naxos

Get an early start today to set out for the island of Naxos! The journey begins by boarding the ferry with your luggage in hand. Once you've set your luggage down, settle in for views of the sea as the ferry stops at islands along the way. Arrive in Naxos, the prosperous, self-sustaining island and the largest of the Cyclades in the Aegean Sea. After getting off the ferry, your first stop is to see the island's emblem, the giant marble gate at the unfinished Temple of Apollo – Portara. Take free time for lunch on your own before settling in at your hotel. Tonight, gather for dinner at a nearby restaurant in the Chora (Naxos Town). *Today breakfast and dinner will be included.*

Day 6: Naxos - Lesser Cyclades - Naxos

This morning, board a sailboat for a full-day cruise* to take in the beauty of Naxos and the nearby Lesser Cyclades islands of Koufonisia. After sailing along the eastern shore of Naxos, step off the boat onto the island of Kato Koufonisi with some time to explore. Enjoy a Greek barbeque lunch with local wines as well as the chance to take a dip in the Aegean Sea's turquoise waters. Next, sail to Ano Koufonisi and take time to stroll along the island's beautiful beaches and visit the small village. Sail on, back towards Naxos to Rina Cave, where you may wish to dive in and explore. Arrive back at your Naxos hotel this evening. *Today breakfast and lunch will be included.*

Day 7: Naxos

Today, trade the seaside bustle of the Chora for the mountain villages of Naxos. First, visit the peaceful village of Halki, the former capital of the island, and feel like you've stepped back in time as you stroll its alleys. In the picturesque hilltop village of Apiranthos, take time to explore and slow down among the locals. Later, return to your hotel for some downtime. This evening, sample the local spirits, including Kitron (a liqueur exclusively made on Naxos), served with delicious bites at a third-generation family-owned distillery. Learn about the machinery and distillation process and gain an appreciation for the unique liqueurs made here. *Today breakfast will be included.*

Day 8: Naxos - Heraklion, Crete

Enjoy the morning at leisure. Later this afternoon with your suitcase in tow, board the ferry to Heraklion, Crete. After a ferry trip of approximately three hours, arrive to Crete, the largest of the Greek islands. *Today breakfast and dinner will be included.*

Day 9: Heraklion

This morning, take a walk around Lion's Square – the heart of Heraklion. Next, head to Knossos Palace for a guided tour of the site, a major center of Minoan civilization. Among these remarkably preserved ruins, imagine the everyday lives of ancient Minoans and recall legend, as this is considered the mythic place where King Minos kept the Minotaur in his labyrinth. As you travel through the Cretan countryside, take in the sprawling olive groves that have shaped Crete ever since olive cultivation began in Minoan times. In Archanes, visit a women's cooperative café to learn about traditional Cretan dishes and enjoy a hands-on cooking class followed by lunch. Afterward, return to your hotel for an afternoon and evening at leisure. *Today breakfast and lunch will be included.*

Day 10: Heraklion - Rethymnon - Chania

Leaving Heraklion, head toward Chania today with a couple of stops along the way. Visit Margarites, a pottery village. Among the more than 20 pottery workshops in this village, visit the only one that uses both new and old (wood-fired) baking techniques. After watching a pottery demonstration, you can take the opportunity to shop for unique wares. Continue to Rethymnon with its beautiful old town and enjoy free time for lunch. Later, arrive in the city of Chania and gather for dinner at a local restaurant. *Today breakfast and dinner will be included.*

Day 11: Chania - Vouves - Anoskeli - Chania

Set out to explore Chania's old Venetian Harbor, the port city's vibrant hub, built in the 14th century. As you stroll along the narrow streets, you may enjoy sips of Greek coffee or try a local pastry. Then, set out for Vouves to see the world's oldest olive tree, estimated to be an astonishing 2,000–4,000 years old. Continue to a family-run olive mill and winery for a tasting of the oils and wines paired with a light charcuterie lunch. Back in Chania, enjoy the rest of the day at leisure. *Today breakfast and lunch will be included.*

Day 12: Chania

Today, **it's your choice!** Visit the Archaeological Museum of Chania and explore its treasures on your own **-OR-** join a guided tour of Aptera's archaeological site. Spend the afternoon in Chania any way you wish. Tonight, gather with your fellow travelers and celebrate the journey. Enjoy dinner and a performance of traditional Cretan folk dances – and join in during a dance lesson! *Today breakfast and dinner will be included.*

Day 13: Chania - Athens

This morning, a short flight takes you back to Athens. Take the afternoon to soak in the city's energy or do some last-minute souvenir shopping. Tonight, gather for a drink and light fare, toasting to the end of your journey through Greece. Look out over the city and soak in the incredible sight of the Acropolis once more, aglow at night. *Today breakfast will be included.*

Day 14: Athens - Tour Ends

Your tour of Greece's gems ends today. *Today breakfast will be included.*

Experience It! Crete's Olive Trees

On Crete, the largest island of Greece, uncover the deep roots of the olive tree, known as a symbol of peace and prosperity. Dating back to 3500 BC, the ancient Minoans of Crete were among the first cultures to practice olive cultivation. By 2000 BC, Cretan olive oil production defined the island's economy, with exports to the mainland of Greece as well as further afield to North Africa and Asia Minor. While olives are grown throughout Greece today, Crete's olive trees make up more than a third of the country's total olive crop. As you take in views of the island's groves, visit the world's oldest olive tree in Vouves, and taste the rich oil's flavors in the local cuisine, experience how this "liquid gold" is infused into the essence of Crete.

Your itinerary at a glance	
Day 1	Overnight Flight
Days 2 – 4	Holiday Suites Boutique Hotel, Athens
Days 5 – 7	Galaxy Hotel, Naxos or Naxos Resort, Naxos
Days 8, 9	Olive Green Hotel, Heraklion
Days 10 – 12	Samaria Hotel, Chania, Crete
Day 13	Holiday Suites, Athens
On some dates alternate hotels may be used.	

Explorations: These small group tours give travelers access to the world in a truly authentic way. On these active, immersive journeys, travelers connect with the cultures of the world on a deeper, more meaningful level in ways that are hard to replicate. The group size is kept small, allowing these journeys to be the most active, engaging, and rewarding experience possible.

Please Note:

- Economy air rate and schedule are applicable for groups of 10 or more traveling on the same flights and dates.
- The overall activity level of this tour is a level 3.** This means you're an on-the-go traveler. You don't want to miss a thing, so walking and standing for longer periods of time (2-3 hours) isn't a big deal. A moderately paced two-and-a-half-hour walking tour, covering several miles, hills, and uneven surfaces that may be slippery, is no problem for you. Walking four miles over the course of a day is very doable, as is climbing into and out of various modes of transportation. You can climb three flights of stairs easily. Expect leisurely mornings with some late nights balanced with free time to recharge or set out on your own adventure. This level is not a fit for travelers who require mobility assistance devices.
- If you choose to visit Aptera as your Choice on Tour, you can expect to be standing or walking for 1-1.5 hours with little shade.
- Luggage handling is not available when getting on and off the public ferries between Athens, Naxos, and Crete. You will need to carry your own luggage for approximately 200 feet each way. As the ferry is the main connection between the mainland and several islands, you can expect large crowds and personnel directing passengers to their destinations with a very quick turnaround.
- If you require any special assistance while on tour, please make us aware at time of reservation so the necessary request form can be sent to your attention.
- In order to access the Acropolis archeological site, you will be required to climb about 50-60 steep uneven steps and walk over rugged terrain with loose stones and without railings.
- Due to a limited number of tickets for the Acropolis, travelers booking within 60 days of departure may be waitlisted until tickets can be confirmed.

*On occasion, due to inclement weather, your boat trip in Naxos may be moved to the following day and your sightseeing activities will be swapped. While on the cruise, be sure to bring a bathing suit, towel, hat, and sunscreen.

Single accommodations are limited and are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Single rate subject to change based on availability.

To complete your tour, we include roundtrip airport-to-hotel transfers when purchasing our airfare with your tour. If you have arranged for your own air, we are pleased to provide you the option of *purchasing* these transfers. Please note that all transfers will leave at pre-scheduled times.

For air-inclusive reservations, the name provided at time of booking must match your government-issued ID that will be used during travel. Name changes are subject to penalties.

Please be advised many airlines do not provide advance seat assignments until check-in at the airport. Advance seating will be subject to the airline's terms and conditions.

Internal flights are required in order to participate on this tour and are included in the final price, quoted at time of booking.

IDENTIFICATION

Passports are required for this tour at your expense. Certain countries require that your passport be valid at least 6 months beyond the dates of your travel. You are strongly urged to contact the appropriate consulate for details. Visit www.travel.state.gov for the U.S. State Department for the latest details about passports and visa requirements.

IMPORTANT: We recommend that travelers take a photocopy of their passport and applicable visas. It should be packed separately from your actual passport and visa. We also

recommend leaving a copy at home with your emergency contact.

Effective for travel in May 2025, all visitors who do not need a visa to enter Europe will be expected to apply for an ETIAS visa waiver, for a fee, when visiting a Schengen Area Country. To identify Schengen Area Countries and to complete the ETIAS application, please visit <https://www.etiasvisa.com/>

Important reservation information:

***Airfare:** For your convenience, we offer airfare for purchase with all tour packages. If you purchase an air inclusive program, your airfare will be quoted inclusive of all fuel, taxes and fees. Your price is guaranteed once deposit is received by Collette. Your price is not subject to increase after the deposit is received, except for charges resulting from increases in government-imposed taxes or fees. Preassigned seats are limited and may not be available on every flight or departure date.

Checked Baggage Charges: Some airlines may impose additional charges if you choose to check any baggage. Please contact your airline or refer to its website for detailed information regarding your airline's checked baggage policies.

Cancellation Charges for this tour: After your seat reduction date has passed, a non-refundable deposit will be retained. For Cancellation between 90-16 days prior to departure: cancellation fee of 40% of total price. For cancellation between 15-1 days prior to departure: cancellation fee of 75% of total price. For cancellation on the day of departure and after: 100% of total price. For Ocean Cruises: For cancellation between 90-61 days prior to departure: cancellation fee of 40% of total price. For cancellation between 60-31 days prior to departure: 60% of total price. 30 or fewer days prior to departure: 100% of total price. For River Cruises: including Europe, Russia, Egypt and China, 90-61 days prior to departure: cancellation fee of 50% of total price. For cancellation between 60-31 days prior to departure: cancellation fee of 85% of total price. For cancellation 30 or fewer days prior to departure: cancellation fee of 100% of total price. For Galapagos and Antarctica: A cancellation fee of 60% will apply for cancellation between 120-90 days prior to departure; A cancellation charge of 100% will apply for cancellation less than 90 days prior to departure. Cancellation protection is highly recommended and must be purchased at time of deposit. Air rates are subject to change until tour is paid in full. If Travel Protection Plan has not been purchased and a reservation is cancelled for any reason prior to departure - Air is 100% non-refundable once paid in full. Cancellation charges also apply to reservations made for "pre" and "post" night accommodations. Payment of a Per Person Travel Protection Plan Fee guarantees a full refund of all payments (including deposit), except the Travel Protection Plan Fee itself, made to Collette for travel arrangements in case of cancellation of your travel plans for any reason prior to the day of departure. The Travel Protection Plan Fee with Air only covers airline tickets you have purchased from Collette. Exception: If you originally purchased nonrefundable airline tickets, Part B of the Travel Protection Plan may provide a refund for the airline tickets, taxes, or fees in the event of a cancellation for a covered reason (see Part B for more details). The Travel Protection Plan Fee does not cover any single supplement charges which arise from an individual's traveling companion electing to cancel for any reason prior to departure. However, the Part B travel insurance includes a single supplement benefit of \$1,500 for certain covered reasons as detailed in Part B. In this case, the single supplement will be deducted from the refund of the person who cancels. Division of this charge between the two passengers involved is solely their responsibility. If insufficient funds are deducted from the canceling client, the traveling client will be charged the remaining portion of the single supplement. Cancellation waiver protects you from penalties in the event you have a need to cancel your entire inclusive tour package up to the day prior to departure. Cancellation waiver does not indemnify you from penalties if you chose to cancel partial tour components or air. If you chose to partially cancel your vacation, you will be responsible for a revision fee as well as any penalties that are incurred at the time of the cancellation. Upon cancellation of transportation or travel services where you, the customer, are not at fault and have not canceled in violation of the terms and conditions above, you will be refunded 100%. Please see your sales agent for more information, or review our brochure for details.

Responsibilities: Collette monitors security situations around the world as well as government travel advisories. Conditions may require Collette to change or even cancel trips. You accept the risks involved in travel, both foreign and domestic, and accept responsibility for your own travel decisions. Guests may be required to review and sign a participation agreement prior to engaging in certain activities on the trip.

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Payment of the deposit to Collette constitutes acceptance of these terms and conditions. Collette reserves the right to modify these terms and conditions at any time, without notice.

Consumer Protection Plans: Collette Travel Service holds membership in the following highly reputable industry organizations: the United States Tour Operators Association and the American Society of Travel Agents. Each association operates a consumer protection plan to cover deposits made by travelers. Full details are available from the organizations or Collette Travel Service. Collette is pleased to give this additional protection to our clients. **Our California Sellers of Travel registration number is 2006766-20. Our State of Washington Unified Business Number is 601-220-855. Florida Seller of Travel registration number. ST35613**



