

Gustavus Adolphus College Symphony Orchestra American Celebration of Music in Greece & Macedonia

Custom Tour #6 (13 nights/15 days)

Day 1 Wednesday, January 20, 2016

Depart via scheduled air service to Athens

Day 2 Thursday, January 21 Athens (D)

Arrive in Athens

Meet your MCI Tour Manager, who will assist the group to awaiting chartered motorcoach for a transfer to the hotel via orientation tour of Athens' highlights en route, including Constitution Square and Kendriki Agora (Central Market)

Late afternoon hotel check-in

Evening Welcome Dinner and overnight

The stunning sight, the brilliant light, the beauty of the ancient monuments and the quality of the museums all contribute to the pleasure of visiting Athens, the city of Athena, the cradle of European civilization. During the 5th and 6th Centuries BC and especially during the Golden Age of Pericles, Athens became the center of art, learning, discourse, philosophy, teaching, architecture for the whole civilized world

Day 3 Friday, January 22 Athens (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel

Participate in a tour of Athens, including a visit to the Acropolis (Parthenon). In spite of the destruction wrought by many centuries, most notably the devastating explosion in 1687, when a Venetian grenade blew up a Turkish powder magazine which had been housed in the Parthenon and made the 2,000-year-old temple a ruin, the surviving remains still convey something of the splendor of the age of Pericles

Lunch on own

*Concert as part of the American Celebration of Music in Greece**

Evening dinner and overnight

Day 4 Saturday, January 23 Athens (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel

Today visit the Acropolis Museum. A walk through the New Museum's galleries is a walk through history – between the masterpieces of the Archaic and Classical periods, but also in the ancient neighborhoods of Athens. The museum has over 14,000 square meters of exhibition spaces

Lunch on own

Afternoon at leisure for sightseeing, shopping or other activities

Evening dinner and overnight



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Day 5 Sunday, January 24 Athens / Corinth / Epidaurus / Patras (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel

Transfer to Corinth where you can see the famous Corinth Canal

Lunch on own

Continue to Epidaurus. At the heart of the gentle Argolis hills set about with pine trees and oleanders, lay the ruins of the famous sanctuary of the hero Asklepios, the god of medicine, where people from all over ancient Greece would come to consult the oracle. The most famous site here is the theatre, the most outstanding in the ancient world, known for its beauty, its magnificent lines, harmonious proportions and incredible acoustics
Then it is off to Patras for dinner and overnight

Patras is the largest town and principal port of the Peloponnese, chief town of the nomos of Achaea, the see of an archbishop and a university town. The town was founded about 1100 B.C., but became of importance as a port only in Roman times. In 1408 it came under the control of Venice and in 1430 of Mistra. In 1460 it fell into the hands of the Turks, by whom it was destroyed in 1821, at the beginning of the war of liberation. Thereafter it was rebuilt in neo-classical style on a rectangular street layout

Day 6 Monday, January 25 Patras / Olympia (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel

Excursion to Olympia for a tour. Situated at the foot of the wooded Mt Kronos in an area of gentle hills, the site of ancient Olympia - one of the great achievements of archeological excavation - makes an impact on the present-day visitor which is fully commensurate with its importance in ancient times. See the site of the ancient Olympic Games

Lunch on own

Return to Patras

*Concert as part of the American Celebration of Music in Greece**

Evening dinner and overnight

Day 7 Tuesday, January 26 Patras / Delphi / Meteora (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel

Transfer to Delphi. Today, Delphi is one of the most attractive archaeological sites of Greece. Its rich grounds and museum represent classical antiquity with such clarity even the uninitiated visitor can grasp. Its importance as an archaeological site, coupled with its location at an idyllic landscape makes it one of the most visited sites of Greece. Visit the Oracle, Stadium, and the Museum of Delphi

Lunch on own

Continue to Meteora for dinner and overnight

Day 8 Wednesday, January 27 Meteora / Volos (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel

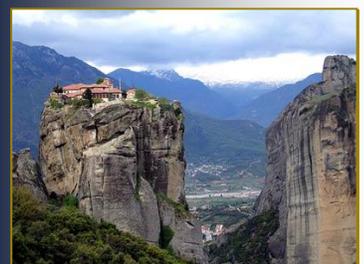
Visit the Meteora Monasteries. Some of the most amazing places in Greece are the impressive and beautiful monasteries perched on top of enormous rocks. The monasteries have a very rich history and give a unique perspective on the life of those who resided and reside there

Lunch on own

Continue to Volos

*Concert as part of the American Celebration of Music in Greece**

Evening dinner and overnight



Volos is one of the largest and most attractive cities in Greece as well as one of the country's most prominent ports. The modern-day city, built near the site of ancient Iolcos, dominates the region of Magnesia from its position at the foot of Mount Pelion overlooking the Pagasetic Gulf. This is one of the most beautiful areas in Thessaly, in the centre of Greece combining the allure of the sea with the mystical charm of the Centaurs' mountain

Day 9 Thursday, January 28 Volos / Skopje (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel
Lunch on own
Afternoon at leisure for sightseeing, shopping or other activities
Evening dinner and overnight

Skopje is among Europe's most entertaining and eclectic small capital cities. Skopje's new abundance of statuary, bridges, museums and other structures has made it an even more exciting place to visit

Day 10 Friday, January 29 Skopje (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel
Enjoy a tour of Skopje's Ottoman- and Byzantine-era wonders including the 15th-century Kameni Most (Stone Bridge), Čaršija (old Turkish bazaar), Sveti Spas Church, with its ornate, hand-carved iconostasis, and Tvrđina Kale Fortress, Skopje's guardian since the 5th century, etc.
Lunch on own
Concert as part of the American Celebration of Music in Macedonia*
Evening dinner and overnight

Day 11 Saturday, January 30 Skopje / Bitola (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel
Transfer to Bitola
Lunch on own
Enjoy some time along Širok Sokak, the city's most representative and stylish street, with its multicolored facades and European honorary consulates attesting to the city's Ottoman-era sophistication. Enjoying the cafe life here as the beautiful people promenade past is an essential Bitola experience
Concert as part of the American Celebration of Music in Macedonia*
Evening dinner and overnight

With elegant buildings, Bitola has a sophistication inherited from its Ottoman days as the 'City of Consuls'. Its 18th- and 19th-century colorful townhouses, Turkish mosques and cafe culture make it Macedonia's most intriguing and livable major town

Day 12 Sunday, January 31 Bitola / Ohrid / Thessaloniki (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel
Transfer to Ohrid to see Lake Ohrid, with its clear waters and beautiful scenery. Continue sightseeing to include Byzantine churches
Lunch on own
Continue to Thessaloniki for dinner and overnight

Thessaloniki was founded by King Kassandros in 315BC. The Romans made it capital of their province of Macedonia Prima in 146BC, and in AD 395 it became part of the Byzantine Empire. In 1430 it was captured by the Turks who held it until 1912. Today it is a cosmopolitan city with a flourishing cultural life and an array of splendid churches



Day 13 Monday, February 1 Thessaloniki (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel

Enjoy a guided tour of Thessaloniki's highlights possibly including the White Tower, Palace of Galerius, Church of Agia Sofia, Aristotelous Square, Town Hall, Dioikitirio, Old City, Byzantine Walls, Rotonda, Arch of Galerius, etc.

Lunch on own

*Concert as part of the American Celebration of Music in Greece**

Evening dinner and overnight

Day 14 Tuesday, February 2 Thessaloniki / Vergina / Athens (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel

Morning transfer to Vergina to visit the Tombs of Macedonian Kings. The 1977 discovery of the Royal Tombs, including gold funerary box and other gold items, are considered the most important findings in Greece since the discoveries at Mycenae

Lunch on own

Continue to Athens

Evening Farewell Dinner and overnight

Day 15 Wednesday, February 3 Depart for home (B)

Breakfast at the hotel

Transfer to Athens airport for return flight

**Subject to confirmation*

This is a very flexible itinerary. Except for confirmed appointments and performances, the places of interest and the sequence of sightseeing might be changed if necessary or desirable. In the event of an unavoidable conflict in the performance and the sightseeing schedule, the concert schedule will prevail, and it may be necessary to exclude some sightseeing activities.

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