

Splendors of Greece with Susan Duval

Oct. 2 – 13, 2018

Join Susan Duval – Susan Duval Seminars, and other like-minded souls as you nourish mind, body and spirit on a magical journey to explore the Splendors of ancient Greece! The timeless legends of the Aegean Islands evoke the adventures of Homers heroes, while lively harbors and charming towns showcase today's vibrant Greek culture. Here, dazzling white-washed villages and lively ports serve as a backdrop to classical archaeological sites that have continued to lure travelers and scholars since ancient times. The Acropolis, perched on a high hill in the center of Athens is stunning. The mystical mountains of Greece hold the mysteries of the Oracle at Delphi and many other extraordinary sites. The food is fabulous, the local folks friendly, Ancient Sacred Sites energetically powerful and the sunsets on Santorini are incredibly spectacular!

Day 1: Tues Oct. 2

Evening departure USA for Athens, Greece.

Day 2: Wed Oct. 3 Group transfer from airport to hotel scheduled at 11 AM. Group Welcome Dinner

Athens, morning arrival and transfer to the hotel. Settle in, rest and enjoy lunch on your own.

In the afternoon we'll enjoy a visit to Lycabettus Hill which offers an incredible panoramic view of Athens. From the hill you can see some monuments of ancient Athens, such as the Temple of Zeus and the Panathenaic Stadium. With the help of the telescope (which is on the hill) one can see up to Aegina island, if the sky is clear. We will end up in the famous Plaka area and enjoy a Group Welcome Dinner at a local restaurant.

Overnight: [Royal Olympic Hotel](#)

Day 3: Thurs Oct 4 Meals: B,L,D

After a good night's sleep and breakfast, we'll take a morning tour of Athens, named after Athena - protector of female wisdom. Our tour will include the Royal Palace and the Panathenian Stadium, Temple of Zeus, and Hadrians Arch. The Acropolis reveals architectural masterpieces of the Golden Age of Athens, the Propylae, Temple of Athena Nike, Erechtheion and finally the "harmony between material and spirit, the Parthenon.

After lunch we'll enjoy a scenic drive as we wind our way along the coastal cliffs and beaches to Cape Sounion and The Temple of Poseidon on the Aegean Sea. The Temple of Poseidon, surrounded in myth and mystery, is perched on the craggy rocks above Cape Sounion and is one of the most famous archaeological sites in all of Greece.

Day 4: Fri Oct 5 Meals: B,L,D

This morning we begin our scenic drive into the mountains to Delphi, passing through the cities of Thebes and Livadia. Delphi is breathtaking and was believed to be the "navel" (omphalos) of the world and where Apollo's most important and famous oracle, Pythia, was located. Follow the Sacred Way up to Apollo's Temple, where his oracle priestess delivered her oblique prophecies. Marvel at the beauty of the landscape and consider the never-ending search of mortal people for truth and the true meaning of life. Discuss the ideas of the last philosophers of the pagan world and their effect on the early "fathers of the Christian Church". We will visit the exquisite Museum which is full of masterpieces, all of them "ex votos" (images produced as a sign of thanks for an answered prayer or favor granted) of the pilgrims who came to consult Apollo. The pride of this museum is the bronze "Charioteer", one of the finest examples of classical sculpture of the "severe style". Enjoy a delicious lunch at a local Greek restaurant.

Overnight: [Amalia Delphi Hotel](#)

Day 5: Sat Oct 6 Meals: B,L,D

Today you can explore more of Delphi, one of the most spectacular mystical sites in the world where a seeress was suspended from a metal tripod over psychoactive vapours arising through an opening underneath her. Attendants deciphered the future from her inspired prophecy. Academe itself, the Western institution of higher learning, arose from a prophecy issued here.

Follow in the footsteps of the pilgrims traversing their way through the holy sites of this place of power, inspiration, purification and rejuvenation. Here you experience the nourishing and healing energies still present at the Temple to Athena Pronea, the temple dedicated to protecting women, especially during childbirth. The powerful primal essence of the purifying springs of Castellan will also take your breath away. There will be time for meditation to experience the very special qualities of this ancient place. Then you might want to do some shopping for local treasures in this quaint town. Allow some time to sit by the pool at the hotel and simply enjoy the spectacular mountain views that surround you. Overnight Delphi Amalia Hotel.

Day 6: Sun Oct. 7 Meals: B,L,D

Check out of the hotel and enjoy the scenic drive back to Athens for lunch. Then transfer to the airport for our afternoon flight to Greece's largest Aegean island – Crete, home of the ancient Minoan culture. Crete enchants and seduces the senses of everyone who visits with its wild natural beauty, majestic landscape, vivacious spirit, rich cultural history, world-famous cuisine and its warm, friendly people.

“The mystery of Crete runs deep. Whoever sets foot on this island senses a mysterious force coursing warmly and beneficently through their veins, sensing their soul beginning to grow” wrote *Nikos Kazantzakis*, Crete's most celebrated author, in Report to Greco. We enjoy the next 3 nights at our lovely beach resort hotel.

Overnight: [Aldemar Knossos Royal Beach Resort](#)

Day 7: Mon Oct. 8 Meals: B,L,D

This morning we make a pilgrimage to the small convent at Paliani to ask for a blessing from the 1000 year old Sacred Myrtle Tree. Many spontaneous healings and miracles have been witnessed standing at this tree. Paliani Monastery is one of the oldest monasteries in Crete and this specific myrtle tree is considered sacred (Holy Myrtle) and is honored every year on September 24. Inside the trunk of the Holy Myrtle, is believed to be the icon of Panagia Mirtidiotissa (Virgin Mary of Myrtle).

According to the tradition, once the area was covered by forest and the villagers set fire to create farmlands. Suddenly, the voice of Virgin Mary was heard and the surprised villagers found the icon of the Virgin with branches of myrtle painted around her. Later when some children went to the same place, they saw that the painted branches had sprouted and the trunk gradually covered the icon! The icon of Virgin Mary is visible only by children. At Paliani, you will see a lit candle next to the myrtle and many offerings hung on its branches, as the tree is considered miraculous. The “Cult of Holy Myrtle” is actually a survival of ancient religious habits; more specifically the worship of sacred trees in the Minoan religion. Overnight Aldemar Knossos Royal Beach Resort

Day 8: Tues Oct. 9 Meals: B,L,D

This morning we visit Knossos, the most famous of the Minoan Palaces and a sacred ceremonial center. Knossos was undeniably the capital of Minoan Crete. It is grander, more complex, and more flamboyant than any of the other palaces known to us. Marvel at the advanced architecture and sacred art, the first flushing toilet and the world famous "dolphin fresco". Here the Minoan Snake Goddess was discovered, bare breasted and proud, possessing the ancient wisdom of the serpent. Walking through the complex multi-storied buildings one can comprehend why the Palace of Knossos was associated with the mythological labyrinth which was the dwelling place of the Minotaur in Greek mythology.

This afternoon we will visit the Dikteon Cave, one of the most important and famous of the 3,000 caves in Crete. According to legend, it is in the impressive Dikteon Cave, rich in stalagmites and stalactites that Rhea, daughter of the Earth Goddess Gaia, retreated to give birth to Zeus, the Supreme Ruler of the Gods. Here he was protected from being eaten by his father Cronus. It is said, Zeus was nursed in the cave by Amaltheia, a divine goat.

Overnight Aldemar Knossos Royal Beach Resort

Day 9: Wed Oct. 10 Meals: B,L

After breakfast we take the morning ferry to the most spectacular and beautiful of all the Greek islands, Santorini. Upon arrival we check into the Daedalus Hotel, surrounded by fragrant gardens and palm trees and only a stone's throw away from the central square of Fira. This relaxing hotel enjoys a peaceful location next to the renowned Caldera of Santorini, away from the hustle and bustle of the city center. Then enjoy a panoramic tour of the island of Santorini with a stop in Oia, which is where you can see the most stunning sunsets in all of Greece.

Overnight: [Daedalus Hotel](#)

Day 10: Thursday Oct. 11 Meals B

Free Day: Sleep in, rest and enjoy your last day on Santorini doing exactly as you please. The shopping is fantastic; the bus system to the southern tip of the island beaches is very user friendly so go exploring. Take a tour to Akrotiri, thought to be part of the Lost City of Atlantis, a boat ride to the Caldera or other tour options (additional cost) or just do nothing but rest. Late afternoon enjoy a Greek coffee as you watch a breath taking sunset from the cliffs of Santorini and enjoy dinner on your own at a local restaurant. Overnight Daedalus Hotel.

Day 11: Fri Oct. 12 Meals B, Group Farewell Dinner

After breakfast we transfer to the airport for our flight to Athens and check into the Royal Olympic Hotel. The afternoon is yours to enjoy some shopping in the Plaka area, only a 5 minute walks from the hotel. The Plaka is full of wonderful shops and restaurants where you can enjoy lunch and do some people watching.

Day 12: Sat. Oct. 13 B Transfer to the airport to connect with your flight back to your home city.
Welcome Home from a Magical Journey to Greece.

Tour Cost: \$3,362.00 minimum of 10 guests / double occupancy
Single supplement private room: \$499.00

Includes:

Private tour bus, personal driver and Greek, English speaking local guide
All meals as listed in the itinerary
10 nights lodging in 4+ star hotels or similar
Flight Athens to Crete / flight Santorini to Athens
Ferry Crete to Santorini
All archeological site entrance fees as noted in the itinerary
VAT taxes and all local taxes

Not included:

International airfare to Athens, Greece
Tips to guides, drivers and hotel staff
1 lunch and 2 dinners in Santorini
Beverages with meals / any alcoholic beverages
Personal items, room service, phone calls, laundry etc.
Anything not specifically noted in the tour itinerary
Travel insurance

To Register or for more information:

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