



From Athens to Istanbul



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Greece • Turkey



Program Fee includes:

- Round-trip airfare
- 7 overnight stays in hotels with private bathrooms; plus 2 nights cabin accommodations
- Complete European breakfast and dinner daily; 3 meals daily during cruise
- Full-time bilingual EF Tour Director
- 5 sightseeing tours led by licensed local guides: Athens • Ephesus • Troy • Bursa • Istanbul
- 1 EF walking tour: Athens
- 6 visits to special attractions: Acropolis • Ephesus • Archaeological Museum House of the Virgin Mary • Topkapi Palace Blue Mosque

OPTIONAL:

- Greek Evening
- Bosphorus Cruise
- Excursions offered by Louis Cruise Lines: Mykonos Walking Tour, Rhodes and Lindos, Old City and Philerimos, Lindos, St. John's Monastery and Grotto of the Apocalypse, Scenic Island Tour



PBS

Learn before you go
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The Blue Mosque in Istanbul is so named because of the blue tiles found throughout its interior.

Day 1 Flight

Overnight flight to Greece • Spend the night flying across the Atlantic.

Day 2 Athens

Arrival in Athens • Touch down in Athens, Cradle of Democracy and birthplace of Western civilization! After clearing customs, you are greeted by your bilingual EF Tour Director, who will remain with you throughout your stay.

EF walking tour of Athens • Get acquainted with the endearing Plaka district. Stroll past Hadrian's Arch and the Temple of Olympian Zeus, built to honor the most powerful of all Greek gods—construction began in 515 B.C.

Day 3 Athens

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.

During free time you may have later, use your ticket from this morning's sightseeing to explore other sights in Athens. Visit the Agora, ancient Athens' political, economic and commercial center, which holds the remains of the Temple of Hephaistos, begun in 449 B.C. You might also visit the Athenian Cemetery, a who's who of Ancient Athens. It contains impressive family tombs, where statesmen, warriors and authors were laid to rest.

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 in or near the famous old Plaka district of Athens. Watch an enthralling belly-dance performance, and witness the fancy footwork



Number of overnight stays in parentheses.

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!

Day 4 Athens • Cruise

Cruise (Friday departure) • This morning, you'll check in for your Louis Cruise Lines voyage, which sails out of Athens. A captivating three-day odyssey lies ahead, with stops at some of the Mediterranean's most historically and culturally rich islands and seaports: Mykonos, Rhodes, Patmos and Kusadasi. On most of the islands, optional excursions will be made available for a more in-depth exploration. (Please note: These optional excursions are offered by the cruise company and not by EF.) In between ports of call, you'll have plenty of time to enjoy the activities on-board ship. Free-time options while you're at sea include shopping, games, fitness activities, swimming and sunning.

Mykonos • The first island you'll visit is Mykonos, one of Greece's Cyclades Islands. It was ruled by Venetians in the 13th and 14th centuries, and more recently was under Turkish occupation. In the center of Mykonos' Old Town is Mando Mavrogenous Square, named after the woman credited with saving the island from the Muslims during Greece's War of Independence. Nearby is the Church of Agia Kiriaki, which contains some of Mykonos' most fascinating and beautiful religious icons. The quaint winding streets of the Old Town are perfect for browsing trendy boutiques and crafts shops. And be on the lookout for Three Well Square (Tria Pigadia), where a local legend states that an unmarried woman who drinks from each of the wells will soon find a husband. The cruise line will also offer an optional Mykonos walking tour at this port of call.

Day 5 Cruise

Rhodes • The largest of the Dodecanese Islands, Rhodes 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. Rhodes once stood as a bastion of Christianity against the Turks. Its three major archaeological sites, Ialysos, Lindos and Kamiron, date back to the 7th century B.C. Rhodes was a center of Hellenistic culture in its early days, then became the territory of the medieval Knights of

St. John. The cruise line offers an optional visit to the Old City and Mount Philerimos, which provides spectacular views of Rhodes below, and an optional visit to Lindos, called Rhodes' most beautiful village, at this port of call. (Please note: Due to scheduling, you may have time to participate in only one optional.)

Day 6 Cruise

Patmos • Patmos, which united with Greece in 1948, is one of the 12 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. The cruise company will offer an optional visit to St. John's Monastery, a fortress-like retreat named after St. John the Evangelist, who came to Patmos in the 1st century after his exile from Ephesus. From the monastery, you'll have a panoramic view of the whole island and the surrounding sea. In a nearby grotto, which you will also visit, St. John wrote the Book of Revelation. At this port of call, the cruise line will also offer a scenic island tour. (Please note: Due to scheduling, you will have time to participate in only one optional.)

Kusadasi • Your cruise will come to an end at the picturesque Turkish village of Kusadasi, which lies on the Aegean coast.

Guided excursion to Ephesus • This afternoon, enjoy a half-day 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 you may also have the chance to see the nearby house where the Virgin Mary is said to have spent her last days.

Day 7 Cruise • Canakkale

Transfer via guided sightseeing in Pergamon • En route to Canakkale, travel north 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.

Ascend the sun-bleached heights of Athens' ancient Acropolis.



Arrival in Canakkale • Continue to Çanakkale, 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 Galliboli in WWI, when Turkish soldiers defended the Dardanelles Strait and prevented the Allied army from entering the country. Today the Galliboli 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."

Day 8 Canakkale

Guided excursion to Troy • Journey today to Troy, the city from which the beautiful Helen incited the Trojan War in the 12th century B.C. Author of *The Illiad* and *The Odyssey*, Homer alleges that Paris, the Prince of Troy, eloped with Helen, the wife of Menelaus of Sparta. The best remembered part of the 10-year war was its conclusion, when the Greeks hid in a wooden horse that the Trojans mistakenly thought was a peace offering. Needless to say, the Greeks emerged from the horse and ransacked the town. Tour the ancient site, where the remains of nine civilizations dating back 5,000 years were excavated only 120 years ago. After returning from Troy, spend some free time on the beach.

Day 9 Canakkale • Istanbul

Transfer via guided sightseeing in Bursa • En route to Istanbul, stop in Bursa, the very first capital of the Ottoman empire. A local guide shows you the highlights of this city, known for its Ottoman art and architecture, the Turkish automobile industry and bubbling Turkish baths.

Arrival in Istanbul • Welcome to Istanbul, crossroads of the East and West, as well as the world's only city that spans two continents.

Day 10 Istanbul

Guided sightseeing of Istanbul • A local guide introduces you to Istanbul's major sites on this morning's sightseeing tour. Discover the ancient Hippodrome, which once served as the public center of Byzantium for more than a thousand years. Then behold the breathtaking Blue Mosque, built by Sultan Ahmet and decorated with exquisite blue Iznik tiles. Continue to the magnificent Topkapi Palace, once the residence of the Ottoman sultans. Your tour concludes with a stop at Istanbul's legendary Grand Bazaar, where you can browse and barter for treasures of all kinds, from brassware to spices.

Optional Bosphorus cruise • Join an optional half-day cruise through the Bosphorus Straits, the waterway that separates Europe and Asia.

Day 11 Home

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

For complete financial and registration details, please refer to the Booking Conditions.

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