

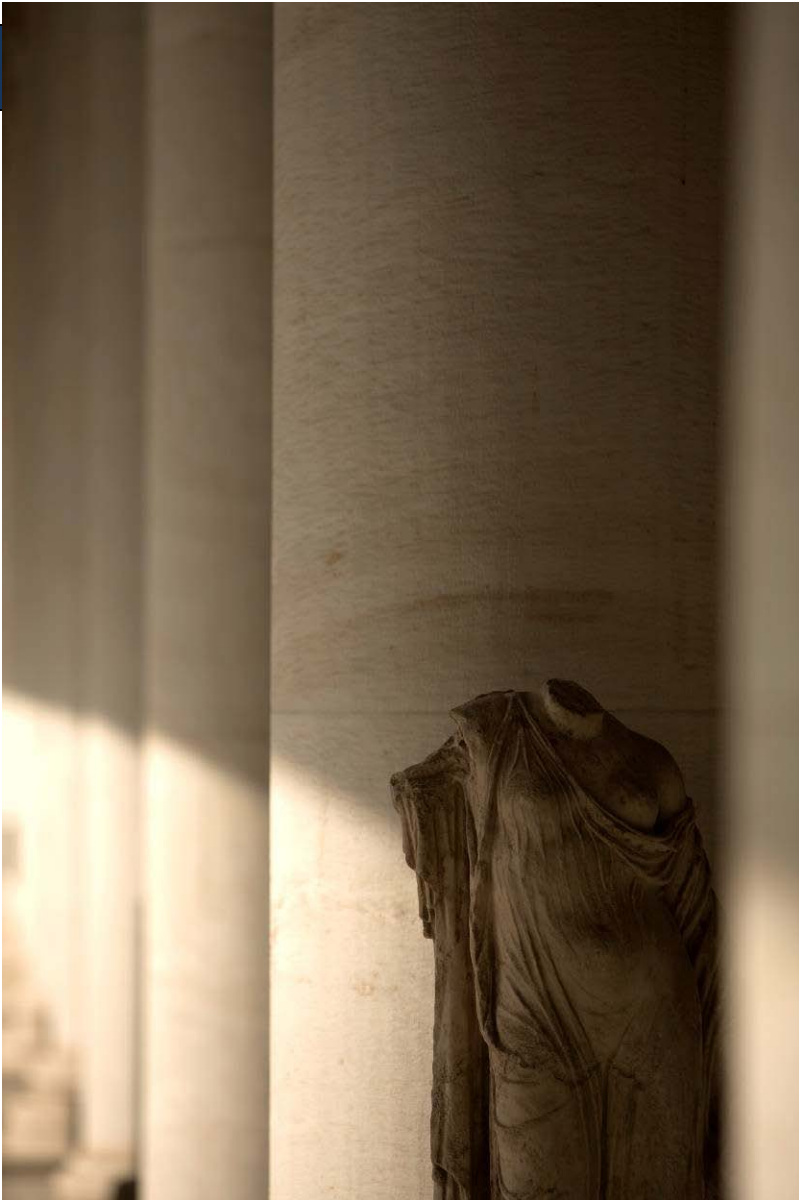
# Classical Greece

Sample tour  
7 days / 6 nights

*Classical Period - In this period Athens reached its greatest political and cultural heights in what is called the 'Golden Age of Pericles':  
the full development of the democratic system of government  
the building of the Parthenon on the Acropolis  
the creation of the tragedies of Sophocles, Aeschylus and Euripides  
the founding of the philosophical schools of Socrates and Plato*

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**DMC Services presented by Intermed Travel Services S.A.**





## Day 1

## Arrival Athens



- **Arrival** in Greece – Athens. Airport greetings from our hostess and transfer to the Hotel. Rest of the day at leisure to unpack and become acquainted with the new surroundings. **Dinner and overnight in Athens.**



## Day 2

## Full day in Athens



Enjoy a **Full Day in Athens**. Past and present Athens blend on morning sightseeing highlighted by a drive up the Acropolis Hill to visit the Ancient Parthenon. Our tour begins with a scenic drive around Athens, where we see some of the city's most important sites. The drive concludes at the footsteps of the Acropolis. Climb the smooth marble steps as visitors have for centuries, to admire the **Ancient Parthenon** and visit the **New Acropolis Museum**. Free time in **Plaka** for lunch.

After lunch we visit the **Ancient Agora**, a marketplace and meeting place, central point to every Greek city. From there following the still used ancient streets we reach **Keramikos**, the cemetery of the ancient Athenians. The tour ends with a visit to the **Roman Agora**, a natural continuation of the ancient Athenian Agora. **Dinner and overnight in Athens.**

### **The Acropolis of Athens**

On the natural fortress of the Acropolis, reinforced by the hand of man, stand the Propylaea, the temple of the Winged Victory, Erechtheion with the Porch of the Caryatids and, towering over all, and the majestic Parthenon. A winding path leads to the treasure of antiquity. From the top guests can see to the North Plaka quarters and the ancient Agora; to the East, Mount Lycabettus; to the South, the theatre of Dionysus. This is where the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides were performed.

### **The New Acropolis Museum - A Modern Museum Is Born**

A few metres away from the Acropolis entrance and the Ancient Theatre of Dionysos, the New Acropolis Museum, built on pedestrian walkway of Dionysiou Areopagitou Street, looks like hanging between the past and the present of Athens. Designed by Bernard Tschumi and Mihalis Fotiades, the new Acropolis Museum has a total area of 25,000 square meters, with exhibition space of over 14,000 square meters. Made of stainless steel, glass, marble and concrete, materials typical of the Athenian environment, the new museum has a direct view of the Acropolis. With bioclimatic planning, which gives ideal lighting and heating conditions, the New Museum offers all the amenities expected in an international museum of the 21st century.

### **The Exhibits and the Surprises of the Museum**

The Parthenon sculptures and the copies of those located in the British Museum, the 130 metres of the frieze, the pediments, the antiquities of the Holly Rock of the Acropolis, the emblem of goddess Athena, Karyatides are what visitors will have the chance to enjoy during the opening ceremony of the museum.

The reasoning behind the exhibition, is to give the visitors the feeling they are walking through the place to realize the place where the excavations and the artifacts lie.





## Day 3

## Epidaurus – Mycenae - Nauplia



This morning we join our guide for a motorcoach exploration of Classical Greece. A highway takes us on the coast of the Saronic Gulf, driving past mystical **Eleusis** on our way to the Corinthian Canal. We stop there to become introduced to a major engineering accomplishment of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. From there, we continue inland towards **Epidaurus**, situated on the cool slopes of a beautiful and wooded valley. Leaving Epidaurus we will enjoy a scenic drive through the Argive plains to arrive to the famous prehistoric citadel of **Mycenae**. Before reaching the site there will be a lunch stop at a local restaurant. Visiting Mycenae archaeological site - the Lion Gate, the Cyclopean Walls, the Palace and the tomb of Agamemnon. We continue to **Nauplia** town with it's Venetian fortress of Palamidi and the fortified islet of Bourtzi afloat in the middle of the bay. **Dinner and overnight in Nauplia.**

**Epidaurus Theater** : *The theater was constructed in the late 4th century BC. Originally it had 34 rows and was used for dramatic performances. The Romans added another 21 rows. Even in ancient times, the theater was considered to have great acoustics. The actors can be perfectly heard by all 15,000 spectators without the sound having to be amplified. The limestone rows filter the low-frequency sounds –such as the murmur of the crowd – but amplify the sounds from the stage. It still is one of the most beautiful open-air theaters. The view behind the scene was and still is an integrated part of the theater. The theatre was discovered in 1970 and the excavation began in 1972.*

**Mycenae** : *High above the modern town of Mycenae are the ruins of an ancient city. The ruins of Ancient Mycenae date back to the second millennium B.C. Though most of the original city state has been destroyed over time, parts of the Acropolis that overlooked a fertile plains still remain. The Acropolis sits atop an impressive mountain and is flanked on either side by taller mountains forming a very formidable fortification for the site, as well as a very scenic view . The Lions Gate is the main entrance into the city. The lions, with their front paws on an alter of some sort was suppose to represent the mycenaean's power. The entrance to the Treasury of Atreus at Mycenae is actually a circular tomb or tholos.*

**Nauplion** : *Was once the capital of Greece. It is now the capital of Argolis area. There is a lovely view of the Venetian castle, 'The Bourtzi', which is surrounded by the sea. An old castle and fortress, "The Palamidi" stands on a mountain overlooking the town. At night-time, it is lit-up and displays a magnificent view. The ancient part of the town is exciting and has its own unusual, authentic, atmosphere. It has cobbled alleyways paved with stone and is lined with shops and many local taverns. With its old medieval neoclassic town, Nauplio is a dream to visit.*

## Day 4

## Ancient Olympia



Rolling smoothly across the arid, rock strewn Peloponnese, we arrive in legendary **Olympia**, sacred city of Zeus and birthplace of the Olympic Games. Visit the imposing archaeological site and the **Museum** with the splendid statues that were narrating the deeds of gods and heroes. Dinner and overnight in Olympia.

**Olympia** Greece was the site of the ancient Olympic Games, which were celebrated every four years by the Greeks. Olympia was situated in a valley in Elis, in western Peloponnisos (Peloponnesus), through which runs the Alpheus River. It was not a town, but only a sanctuary with buildings associated with games and the worship of the gods.

Olympia was a national shrine of the Greeks and contained many treasures of Greek art, such as temples, monuments, altars, theaters, statues, and votive offerings of brass and marble. The Altis, or sacred precinct, enclosed a level space about 200 m (about 660 ft) long by nearly 177 m (nearly 580 ft) broad. In this were the chief centers of religious worship, the votive buildings, and buildings associated with the administration of the games. The most celebrated temple was the Temple of Zeus, dedicated to the father of the gods. In this temple was a statue of Zeus made of ivory and gold, the masterpiece of the Athenian sculptor Phidias. Next to the Temple of Zeus ranked the Heraeum, dedicated to Hera, the wife of Zeus. In this temple, probably the oldest Doric building known, stood the table on which were placed the garlands prepared for the victors in the games. The votive buildings included a row of 12 treasure houses and the Philippeum, a circular Ionic building dedicated by Philip II, king of Macedonia, to himself. Outside the Altis, to the east, were the Stadium and the Hippodrome, where the contests took place; on the west were the Palaestra, or wrestling school, and the Gymnasium, where all competitors were obliged to train for at least one month.

*The Archaeological Museum of Olympia, one of the most important museums in Greece, presents the long history of the most celebrated sanctuary of antiquity, the sanctuary of Zeus, father of both gods and men, where the Olympic games were born. The museum's permanent exhibition contains finds from the excavations in the sacred precinct of the Altis dating from prehistoric times to the Early Christian period.*



A relaxing coastal jaunt this morning, passes through Patra's port as we make our way for Rion – Antirion bridge. By the afternoon we are in **Delphi** on the slopes of Mount Parnassus. Delphi is the most famous oracle of the world, the sanctuary of Apollo, where Pythia was seated giving out her predictions of the future. In a breathtaking hillside setting we walk on the Sacred Way and visit the **Temple of Apollo** and **Athens Pronia**. Dinner and overnight in Delphi.

*Delphi was considered by the ancients to be the physical and spiritual center of the earth. The shrine of Apollo, set nearly 2,000 feet up on the slopes of Mount Parnassus, exerts today a potent grip on the visitor. Here was the most respected oracle of antiquity. Even the most intelligent individuals who lived during the brilliant civilization of Athens believed implicitly in the responses of the god. These were given by the inspired priestess Pythia and were interpreted, usually with an ambiguous touch, by the priests. The site is breathtaking and the view from the top, down to the blue waters of the Gulf of Corinth, is spectacular. The drive will take guests by the sacred Castalian spring and close to the ancient site of Apollo's sanctuary. Guests will then walk the sacred way, visiting the treasuries, the place of offerings, the Grand Temple of Apollo and the theater, with its splendid acoustics.*

*The Museum is housing many treasures. Omphalos, which marked the center of the world and the Charioteer, one of the finest pieces surviving from the fifth century B.C. are among the many wonders housed in the museum.*



## Day 6

## Delphi - Athens



In the morning, we visit the **Delphi museum** with the famous bronze Charioteer and statue of Antinoos. Then we begin our **drive back to Athens**. On our way we will stop in the hills of ancient Boetia for a visit of the **Ossios Loukas monastery**. Reaching Athens we pass through glorious **Thebes**. Overnight at the hotel in Athens.

## Day 7

## Departure day



- Transfer to the airport for the return flight