



MEJDI TOURS

MEJDI Tours Group Departure

- Tour:** Exploring Greece: From Athens to the Greek Isles
- Dates:** September 24 - October 3, 2021 & May 20-29, 2022
- Included:** 9 nights' accommodation at the following hotels or similar (double occupancy): Elia Ermou (Athens), Pearl Beach Hotel, Rethymno (Crete), Del Sol Spa Hotel Santorini
1 local guide in Athens; 1 local guide in Crete; 1 local guide in Santorini
8 days of private bus transportation
Internal flight (Athens - Crete)
Meals listed in the itinerary: 9 breakfasts, 7 lunches, 8 dinners
Entrances, sites, and honorariums for speakers¹
Water on the bus throughout the tour
Headsets for daily use throughout the tour
US-based customer service representatives
- Not included:** International airfare
Arrival & departure airport transfers
Travel insurance-**HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**
Single Supplement-\$995
Meals not mentioned in the itinerary
Gratuities
Anything not explicitly mentioned in the included section
- Pricing:** **September, 2021:** 15+ Paying Participants - \$4,500 Per Person
May, 2022: 15+ Paying Participants - \$4,775 Per Person

Overview:

¹ Subject to confirmation based on availability

Experience the beauty, cuisine, and culture of Greece from a local's perspective. Picturesque views of the Aegean Sea, dramatic geological landscapes, rich and diverse local cuisine, and – of course – the Greek isles. It can be easy to visit Greece and have a nice vacation, but remain distant from the people and culture. This is what makes traveling to Greece with MEJDI Tours, profoundly distinct. Broaden your perspectives of this incredible country as you stroll through the Acropolis in Athens and wonder at the majesty of the Parthenon. Sit down with some of the brightest minds in Athens for a no-holds-barred discussion on Greece's current socio-economic position. Explore the Cave of Zeus and learn traditional Greek dancing with locals on the island of Crete. Learn to sail in Santorini, and sit down with the island's only local fisherwoman to learn about three generations of fishing in the islands.

Itinerary:

Day 1: Arrival - Athens, Greece

Arrive in Athens. Transfer to your hotel (on own). Afternoon at leisure. Enjoy a group **welcome dinner** this evening.

Hotel: Elia Ermou, Athens (D)

Day 2: Athens

This morning, meet with your guide at the hotel. Depart for a **full day guided visit to the famous Acropolis and the Mars Hill** followed by a visit to the **Acropolis Museum**. Enjoy lunch on your own and time to explore the cobblestone streets of the **Plaka neighborhood** at your leisure. Later, **visit a private home for dinner and an evening of conversation with a local expert in Greek Philosophy and a local journalist who specializes in the geopolitics of Greece.**

Hotel: Elia Ermou, Athens (B, D)

Day 3: Athens

Enjoy a sightseeing tour of Athens this morning. **Visit the Ancient Agora and museum**, then continue onto a **tasting tour in the modern market**, sampling local delicacies and authentic Greek specialties from traditional neighbourhoods. This afternoon, **meet with a refugee** currently living in Athens for a **discussion on immigration and refugee assistance in Greece**. Then, transfer to a local theater for a **private performance of an Ancient Greek Tragedy** presented in English, followed by a **Q&A with the actors and the director**.

Hotel: Elia Ermou, Athens (B, L)

Day 4: Chania, Crete

Transfer to Athens airport for a morning flight to Chania, Crete. Wander through the maze-like alleys and cobblestone streets on a **walking tour of Chania's Old Town**, surrounded by beautiful Venetian mansions, fountains, and the elaborate churches, and take in vestiges of Arab, Byzantine, Venetian, and Turkish occupations. Over lunch in a local restaurant, **meet with a local fashion designer and clothing manufacturer**, Elli Lyraraki, at her workshop, and learn how Minoan art inspires her work. **Visit the Chania Archaeological Museum** in the city's historic center, and explore collections containing

Neolithic and Minoan finds. Transfer to Rethymno (~1 hour drive), check into your hotel, and enjoy an evening at leisure.

Hotel: Pearl Beach Hotel, Rethymno, Crete (B, L)

Day 5: AgrecoFarms & Rethymno

Be a farmer for the day and try your hand at centuries-old farming methods at AgrecoFarms, an organic farm that offers a fascinating insight into the organic production of the island's simple and healthy food. Milk goats, shear sheep, bake bread in a wood-burning oven, and **gather and pick fresh vegetables for a farm to table lunch**. Enjoy the fruits of your labor against a backdrop of olive groves stretching down to the sea. This afternoon, return to Rethymno for a **guided walking tour of one of Greece's best preserved Medieval towns**. Over dinner tonight, **meet with the Cretan Mayor or Deputy Mayor of Culture and Tourism**.

Hotel: Pearl Beach Hotel, Rethymno, Crete (B, L, D)

Day 6: Heraklion

Today, transfer to Heraklion, the bustling portside capital of Crete. Set out on a **panoramic city tour**, including a **visit to the tomb of Greek writer, Nikos Kazantzakis**. Visit the world famous **Knossos Palace** and hear alternate narratives of its history. Over lunch at a local restaurant, **meet with Mihalis Papagiannakis, Conservator of Archaeological Artifacts at the Archaeological Museum** in Heraklion for a discussion on the discovery and preservation of ancient Greek artifacts. This afternoon, **tour the Archaeological Museum's magnificent collection of art and artifacts from the Minoan civilization**. Return to Rethymno for dinner on your own this evening.

Hotel: Pearl Beach Hotel, Rethymno, Crete (B, L)

Day 7: Oia, Santorini

Depart early in the morning on a high-speed ferry to Santorini. Enjoy a **panoramic tour of the island** and lunch at a local restaurant. Then, transfer to your hotel and get settled in. This afternoon, **transfer to Oia and enjoy a guided walking tour** of this picturesque, white-washed, blue-domed cliff-side town, followed by some time to explore on your own. Take in one of the most breathtaking sunsets in the world before meeting up with the group for dinner overlooking the caldera.

Hotel: Del Sol Spa Hotel, Santorini (B, L, D)

Day 8: Santorini

After breakfast at your hotel this morning, **meet with a local fisherwoman and hear real life stories of life in Santorini**, the history and art of fishing in Greece, and what its like to be the only fisherwoman on the island, descended from generations of fishermen. Grab a quick lunch on your own, then transfer to the port for a **catamaran sailing cruise around the caldera** (weather permitting). Take in breathtaking views of white-washed cliffs from below, swim in the geothermal hot springs, and enjoy a barbecue meal on board. Enjoy another stunning sunset from the caldera before returning to your hotel.

Hotel: Del Sol Spa Hotel, Santorini (B, D)

Day 9: Santorini - Athens

This morning, **visit the Prehistoric Museum, Akrotiri Bronze Age site known as the “Pompeii of Greece,” and the village of Pyrgos.** Visit a local winery for **wine tasting** and lunch before flying back to Athens. Transfer to your hotel and join the group for a **farewell dinner** to toast your last night in Greece.

Hotel: Elia Ermou, Athens (B, L, D)

Day 10 - Departure

Transfer to the airport (on own) and depart for home today. *(B)*