

Classical Greece & Its Mythology

October 1-12, 2022



MYTHS : GODS, HEROES, HEROINES & TRAGIC DYNASTIES

Ancient Greek myths and legends form the richest, most fertile collection of stories in Western culture, after the Bible. Yet despite their diversity they tend to share a common outlook on life. The Ancient Greeks cherished life and believed in living it to the fullest degree, since death was an inevitable fact. They felt the only answer to death was to carve an imperishable legend by magnificent deeds. The Greeks pursued fame with astonishing energy in the five centuries from Homer to Alexander the Great. They were a tough, restless, ambitious, hard-living, imaginative race. But their lust for reputation made them touchy about their honor, for they were also feisty and vengeful. Their stories show all these traits in abundance.



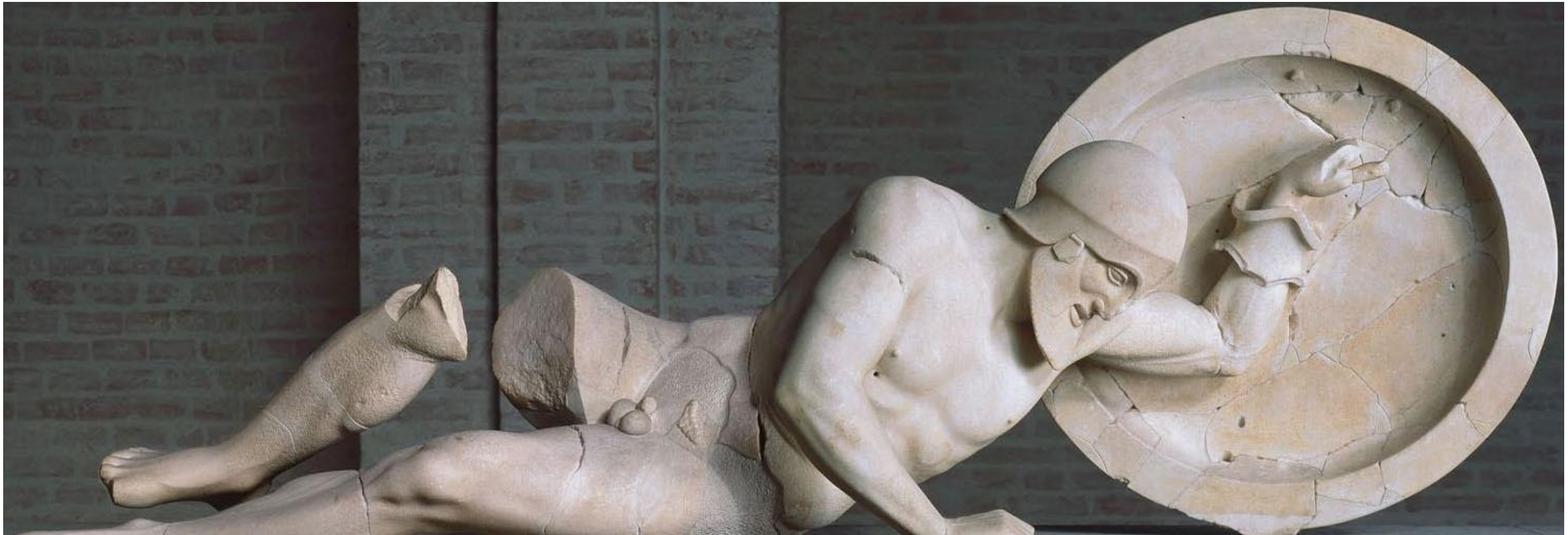
MYTHS: GODS AND GODDESSES

The Olympian gods and goddesses mirrored these Greek qualities faithfully, being quarrelsome, unforgiving deities who enjoyed warring, banqueting, and fornicating. They were always depicted in human form with beautiful, powerful bodies. Thus, they were not only humanly intelligible but extremely pleasing to the eye as well. The Greeks greatly admired strength, beauty, and intelligence. And to them man was the measure of all things.



MYTHS: HEROES AND HEROINES

Few mythologies have produced such a wealth of heroes and heroines. This was the natural result of the Greek urge for fame. The heroes and heroines tend to be adventurers and fighters — bold, experienced, fierce, strong, and often clever. Their feats were far above those of ordinary humanity. However, they also had serious failings that sometimes ruined them: flaws such as overweening pride, rashness, cruelty, which arose from the very source of their successes — ambition. With Greek heroes and heroines, ambition was intense, occasionally aspiring to godlike powers. As models of human excellence, they provided standards for Greek youths to emulate.



MYTHS : TRAGIC DYNASTIES

The legends of tragic dynasties show this same ambivalence. Despite their worldly power the royal families of Mycenae, Thebes, Crete and Athens were afflicted with their own particular faults that rendered them vulnerable to disaster: pride of power, ruthlessness in getting revenge, stubbornness in pursuing some goal, and sexual conflict. No race has understood quite as clearly as the Greeks how character is destiny, or how our very achievements can stem from the same source as crime. In the tale of the Trojan War, the heroic and tragic elements are blended. This is perhaps the finest legend of Greek culture. The chief heroes of this story, Achilles and Hector, were doomed to a premature and violent death, but there was a measure of grandeur in their code of honor and in their defiance of fate. Most of the survivors, too, were doomed or suffered a long ordeal. It was a war which no one would win.



TRIP OVERVIEW

- 11 nights/12 days
- The theme of the trip concentrates on the mainland of Greece which is full of ancient Greek city states where the most famous of ancient Greek myths took place.
- An English-speaking licensed guide will be with you for the entirety of the trip presenting you the mix of mythology and history which represents Greece.
- 3 nights in Athens, 3 nights in Nafplion, 3 nights in Monemvasia, 1 night in Ancient Olympia and 1 night in Delphi
- 6 UNESCO World Heritage Sites including the Acropolis, Mycenae, Epidaurus, Mystras, Ancient Olympia and Delphi
- 3 Organized Cultural Activities with a focus on gastronomy. Including a food tour in Athens, a wine tasting in Nemea, and an olive oil tasting in the southern Peloponnese.
- Leisure time in both Nafplion and Monemvasia for a more authentic experience
- One beach day at the island of Elafonissos, one of the most beautiful beaches in all of Greece.
- Driving time the first 7 days is at a maximum two hours per day not including the stops. However, from Nafplion to Monemvasia the distance is 3 hours, and 4 hours between Monemvasia and Ancient Olympia, Ancient Olympia to Delphi, and Delphi to Athens.

Archetypes create myths, religions, and philosophical ideas that influence and set their stamp on whole nations and epochs.

ITINERARY

Saturday October 1st – ATHENS arrival

Sunday October 2nd – ATHENS touring

Monday October 3rd – ATHENS touring

Tuesday October 4th – ATHENS to ELEFSINA to CORINTH to NAFPLION

Wednesday October 5th – NAFPLION to EPIDAUROS to SPETSES

Thursday October 6th – NAFPLION to MYCEANE & WINE TOUR AT SKOURAS

Friday October 7th – NAFPLION to MYSTRAS to MONEMVASIA

Saturday October 8th – MONEMVASIA at leisure

Sunday October 9th – MONEMVASIA to ELAFONISSOS beach day

Monday October 10th – MONEMVASIA to ANCIENT OLYMPIA

Tuesday October 11th – ANCIENT OLYMPIA to DELPHI

Wednesday October 12th – DELPHI to ATHENS

"Myths express characters and stories that are encoded into the human species in prehistory, and therefore express universal concerns."

DAY by DAY ITINERARY - October 1 to 6

Saturday October 1st

AM arrivals

3PM – Meet the group

4PM – Acropolis Museum

6PM – Acropolis

8PM – Welcome Dinner

Sunday October 2nd

9AM – Ancient Agora & Temple of Hephaestus

11AM – Temple of Zeus & Kallimarmaron

1PM – Benaki Museum Lunch

2:30PM – Benaki Museum

4:30PM – Cycladic Museum

Dinner at Leisure

Monday October 3rd

10AM – Food Tour

2PM – National Archeological Museum

Dinner at Leisure

Tuesday October 4th

9AM – Departure from Athens Hotel

10AM – Ancient Elefsina

12PM – Ancient Corinth

1:30PM – Lunch

4PM – check into hotel

Dinner at leisure

Wednesday October 5th

10AM – Mycenae

12PM – Wine Tasting followed by lunch

4PM – return to hotel

Dinner at leisure

Thursday October 6th

9AM – Epidaurus

12PM – Spetses Island tour

2PM – lunch

4PM – return to hotel

Dinner at leisure

DAY by DAY ITINERARY – October 7 to 12

Friday October 7th

9AM – Departure from Nafplion Hotel
11AM – Mystras
1PM – Lunch at Gytheio
4PM – check into hotel
Dinner at leisure

Saturday October 8th

Day at Leisure

Sunday October 9th

10AM – Olive Oil Tasting
12:30PM – Lunch
Elafonissos Beach Day

Monday October 10th

9AM – Movemvasia Departure
11AM – coffee, snack stop
1PM – Ancient Olympia
3:30PM – Lunch
5PM – check into hotel

Tuesday October 11th

9AM – Departure
11AM – coffee, snack stop
1PM – Delphi
3:30PM – Lunch
5PM – check into hotel
8PM – farewell dinner

Wednesday October 12th

8AM – Departure
11AM – Arrival at Athens Airport for
international & domestic departures

"In the end the ancient Greeks achieved the permanent fame they sought so avidly. And their mythology has been a mainstay of Western art and literature for well over two thousand years."



• DELPHI

• ELEFSIS

• ATHENS

• ANCIENT CORINTH

• MYCENAE

• ANCIENT OLYMPIA

• NAFPLION

• EPIDAUROS

• MYSTRAS

• MONEMVASIA

• ELAFONISSOS

ATHENS – October 1 to 4

- The itinerary starts with Athens, the capital of modern Greece and also the leading city-state of Ancient Greece. You will spend 3 nights here in order to have enough time to visit all the highlights of the city including the Acropolis, the Acropolis Museum, the National Archeological Museum, and the Cycladic Museum.
- We have also included a half day gastronomic tour which will serve as an introduction to Greek cuisine as well as contemporary culture as the tour includes the main locations where Athenians do their food shopping for their homes and families. You will learn about the various influences of Greek cuisine from the antiquity through Byzantium to contemporary life.
- On your departure from Athens you will visit the site of Eleusis, where the Eleusinian mysteries took place in worship of Demeter.
- After Eleusis you will also make a stop at Ancient Corinth, and very important city state of Ancient Greece with references throughout both Ancient Greek Mythology but also Christianity as the Apostle Paul came through the area during his travels throughout Greece.

ACROPOLIS – UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE



ACROPOLIS MUSEUM

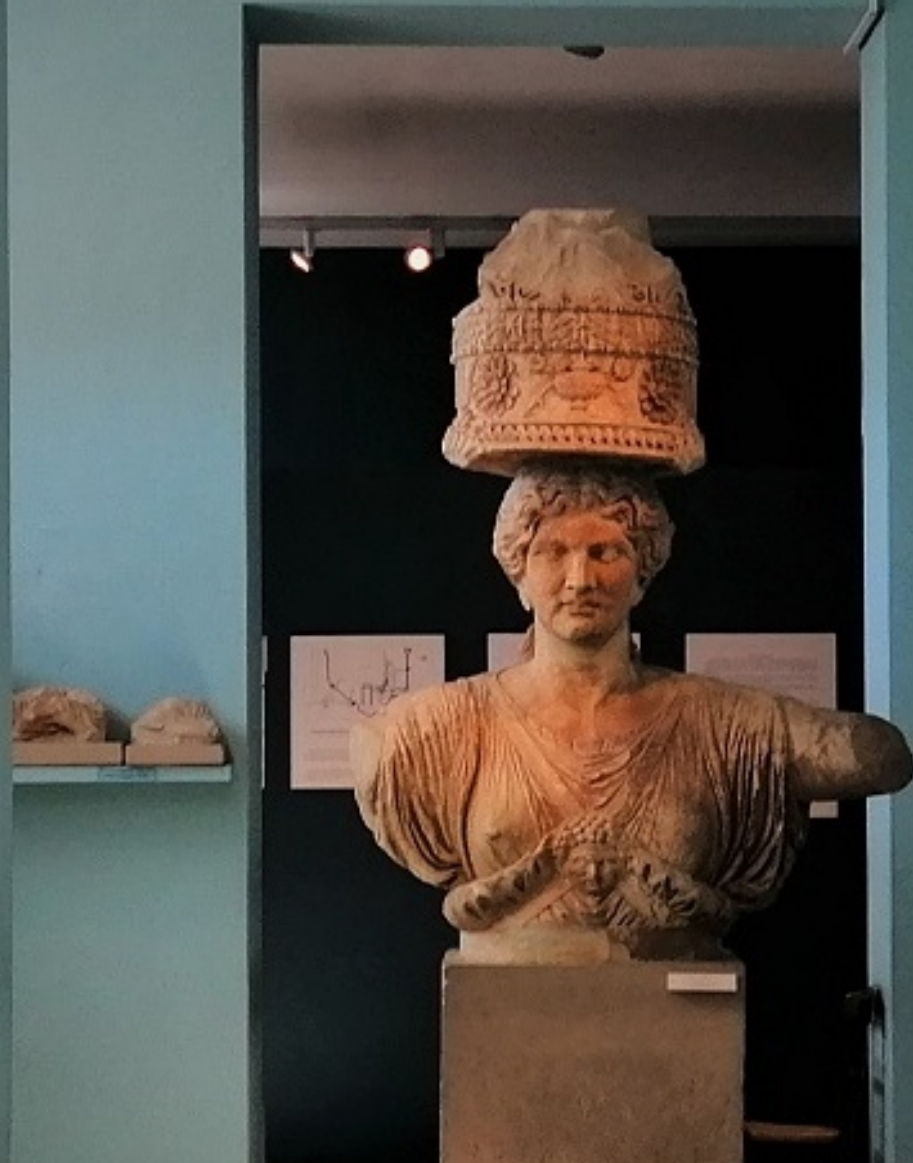


NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM



ATHENS GASTRONOMIC TOUR





ANCIENT CORINTH



NAFPLION - October 4 to 7

- You will be spending 3 nights in the picturesque town of Nafplion.
- While only located 2 hours from Athens, Nafplion serves as the perfect base to visit Mycenae as well as Epidaurus, both UNESCO World Heritage Sites and significant in Greek history and culture.
- The Mycenaean culture is an important bridge between Neolithic Greece and the Cycladic and Minoan cultures and Classical Greece.
- Epidaurus was another city state from antiquity which left behind a spectacular ancient theater which is even used these days, as one of the main venues to the Hellenic Festival which takes place every summer in Athens and Epidaurus. Its acoustics have made it famous around the world.
- After Epidaurus you will also have the opportunity to visit the island of Spetses an important island in modern Greek history as many of the wealthiest shipping families in the 19th and 20th century came from.
- The area between Mycenae and Nafplion is Nemea, which was another ancient city state. In modern day Greece the area of Nemea has become Greece's top wine country and for this reason we have included a wine tasting and lunch to Skouras Winery, considered to be the top winery in Greece.
- On your departure from Nafplion to Monemvasia you will make a stop at the UNESCO World Heritage site of Mystras. Mystras was a very powerful city state during the medieval times.

NAFPLION



NAFPLION



MYCENAE – UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE



SKOURAS ESTATE NEMEA – WINE TASTING



EPIDAUROS – UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE



SPETSES ISLAND



MYSTRAS - UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE



MONEMVASIA - October 7 to 10

- You will be spending 3 nights in Monemvasia, a very unique citadel in the area. Here you will take a small break from the site seeing of archaeological sites and will slow down to the pace of Monemvasia.
- We have also included a full day at leisure. Stay at your hotel, explore the village or go on a hike around the island.
- The Peloponnese as you will see is naturally covered by olive trees. With millions of olive trees this is Greece's top producing olive oil region. As such we have included an olive oil tasting where you will learn all about the process of producing olive oil but will also get a tutorial on evaluating quality.
- Less than an hour driving distance from Monemvasia is the tropical island of Elafonissos. A well-kept secret among Greeks, this island has two of the most beautiful beaches in Greece and one cannot visit Greece without a day at the beach.

“Symbolic keys to truths about the human condition and to the path of personal enlightenment “



MONEMVASIA





ELAFONISSOS – BEACH DAY



OLIVE OIL TASTING



ANCIENT OLYMPIA & DELPHI – October 10 to 12

- While these sites are hard to reach and off the beaten track, they are two of the most important sites for Greeks that lived in the antiquity, and they are not to be missed by those that wish to really understand their importance to the everyday lives of Ancient Greeks.
- From Monemvasia, it is about a 4-hour drive to reach Ancient Olympia. We will break up the drive with lunch at a very traditional village along the way. Once at Ancient Olympia, you will dive into the history of this site and of the Ancient Olympic Games. You will never watch the Olympics in the same way.
- You will spend the night outside of Ancient Olympia and the next morning start your drive to Delphi, the Oracle of the Ancient World. On your way there you will cross the Rio-Antirio Bridge, the world's longest multi-span cable stayed bridge.
- You will arrive at Delphi where you will do the full tour of the site and the museum and will then spend the night a few miles from there in the modern village of Delphi. As this will be your last night with the group, we have prepared something special for this evening as your farewell.

ANCIENT OLYMPIA – UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE



DELPHI – UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE

