



MYSTAKIDIS TOURS
ORTHODOX PILGRIMAGES SINCE 1959

Greece, in the Steps of Saint Paul

Nine days along the second missionary journey, with the scriptures read aloud in every place they describe.

DURATION

9 Days · 8 Nights

ROUTE

Athens · Corinth · Philippi

SEASON

Year-round departures

MYSTAKIDISTOURS.COM

WHY THIS PILGRIMAGE

The Epistles, read where they were lived

From the Areopagus, where Saint Paul preached to the city of the Unknown God, to Corinth, where he stood before Gallio and founded a young Church, to Philippi, where the Gospel first set foot in Europe: this is the pilgrimage that walks the second missionary journey on its own ground, with the monasteries of Meteora and the city of Saint Demetrios along the way.

The method is simple and it changes people: at every site, the passage is read aloud where it happened. Acts 17 on the Areopagus rock. The Corinthian letters beside the bema at Corinth. The midnight hymn of Paul and Silas at the prison in Philippi, and the baptism of Lydia at the river where the font now stands. At Veroia you stand at the Bema of the Apostle, at Delphi the museum holds the Gallio inscription that dates the whole journey, and in Thessaloniki the two earliest letters of the New Testament find their address.

Around the Pauline spine the route gathers what no pilgrim should pass: the mosaics of Daphni, the hanging monasteries of Meteora, the tomb of Philip II at Vergina, and the relics of Saint Demetrios in his crypt. Bible study groups and clergy tell us this is the journey that makes the Epistles permanent.

WHO THIS PILGRIMAGE IS FOR

Clergy-led parish groups, adult catechism and Bible study circles, and pilgrims who want scripture on location rather than sightseeing with verses attached. The pace is steady, with two longer coach days broken by major sites; walking is moderate throughout.

THE JOURNEY

- ATHENS
2 nights: the Areopagus, Acts 17
- CORINTH
The bema of Acts 18, en route west
- DELPHI
1 night: the Gallio inscription
- KALAMBAKA
2 nights beneath Meteora
- VEROIA
The Bema of the Apostle, Acts 17:10
- THESSALONIKI
3 nights, with the day at Philippi

Athens, Corinth, Berea, Thessaloniki, Philippi, Neapolis: the cities of Acts 16 to 18, joined in one road.

THE PILGRIMAGE, DAY BY DAY

Steps of Saint Paul: the days

DAY 1 Arrival in Athens

Arrival at Athens International Airport, where our pilgrimage director meets the group in the arrivals hall. The coach runs the Attiki Odos into the city with a first panorama of Hymettus and the Saronic Gulf, and, as we reach the center, the Acropolis standing above the rooftops. After check-in and time to rest, an evening orientation walk through the Plaka, the old quarter beneath the Acropolis, passes the little eleventh-century church of the Metamorphosis and ends at a viewpoint below the sacred rock, lit gold against the night sky. Your director walks the group through the shape of the days ahead over dinner: which monasteries ask for skirts and sleeves, where the long drives fall, and when the church of Saint Demetrios will be quietest for veneration. Dinner at the hotel and an early night after the flight.

OVERNIGHT Athens

MEALS D · 4-star hotel

DAY 2 The Apostle's Athens: Areopagus and Acropolis

The Apostle's Athens. We begin on the Areopagus rock itself, where Paul stood before the council in the year 51; your guide reads the whole of Acts 17 aloud, the altar to the Unknown God, the men of Athens too superstitious in all things, and Dionysius the Areopagite, who believed and became this city's first bishop and patron. The agora through which Paul disputed daily lies directly below, and we walk it, past the temple of Hephaistos and the rebuilt Stoa. We climb the Acropolis for the Parthenon, for a thousand years the church of the Panagia Atheniotissa, then come down to the Byzantine survivors of the old city: Kapnikarea on Ermou street and the Metropolitan Cathedral, with the relics of Saint Philothei and Patriarch Gregory V. Evening free in Plaka under the lit rock.

OVERNIGHT Athens

MEALS B, D · 4-star hotel

DAY 3 Corinth, the Bema of Acts 18, and West to Delphi

Along the Saronic coast to the Corinth Canal, then into ancient Corinth, the city where Paul lived eighteen months with Aquila and Priscilla, working leather and founding a Church. We stand at the bema where he was brought before the proconsul Gallio, walk the Lechaion road, and see the Erastus inscription, the city treasurer Paul greets by name in Romans, his title cut in stone. The Corinthian letters are read where they were first opened. At nearby Cenchreae, the port where Paul had his hair shorn under a vow, the harbour stones still lie in the shallows. In the afternoon the coach follows the Gulf of Corinth west and climbs to Delphi for the night, the one mountain evening of the pilgrimage, with the olive sea of the Pleistos gorge below.

OVERNIGHT Delphi

MEALS B, D · 4-star hotel

DAY BY DAY, CONTINUED

DAY 4 Delphi, the Gallio Stone, and North to Meteora

Morning among the ruins of Delphi, the navel of the ancient world. We walk the Sacred Way past the treasures to the temple of Apollo, and in the museum stand before the bronze Charioteer and, of particular weight for Christians, the Gallio inscription, the stone naming the proconsul before whom Paul stood at Corinth, the anchor by which the whole chronology of the Apostle's journeys is dated. Your guide sets the oracle in its Christian ending: silenced, as the Fathers noted, in the generation the Gospel entered Greece. After lunch in Arachova or Delphi the coach descends to the Thessalian plain, and by late afternoon the grey towers of Meteora rise ahead, monasteries visible on their summits. Overnight in Kalambaka beneath the rocks.

OVERNIGHT Kalambaka, below Meteora**MEALS** B, D · 4-star hotel**DAY 5 The Monasteries of Meteora**

The full day at Meteora, the monasteries in the air. In the morning we ascend to the Great Meteoron, the highest and oldest of the monasteries, founded by Saint Athanasios the Meteorite in the fourteenth century, by the modern staircase built into the rock; time in the katholikon of the Transfiguration and the old refectory, and at the ossuary of the departed fathers. We continue to Varlaam across its stone bridge, venerating in the katholikon of All Saints beneath frescoes by Frangos Katelanos, and pausing at the windlass tower where monks and provisions were once hauled up in nets. After a lunch stop we visit the Roussanou convent, gentler steps and the nuns' garden, with the whole valley below. In Kalambaka an icon workshop shows how the egg-tempera tradition is kept today. Dress modestly: skirts for women, covered shoulders for all; wraps are lent at the doors.

OVERNIGHT Kalambaka, below Meteora**MEALS** B, D · 4-star hotel**DAY 6 Vergina and Veroia, the Bema of the Apostle**

Two Macedonian towns in one day. At Vergina, the ancient Aigai, we descend into the Great Tumulus to the unlooted tomb of Philip II, father of Alexander: the golden larnax with its sixteen-rayed star, the oak-leaf wreaths, the king's armour, shown in the half-dark of the burial mound itself. Then to Veroia, the Berea of Acts 17, where Paul and Silas were sent by night after the uproar in Thessaloniki, and where the Jews received the word with all readiness of mind and searched the scriptures daily. We stand at the Bema of the Apostle Paul, the stepped monument with its mosaics marking where he preached, and walk the old Jewish quarter of Barbouta along the river. Arrival in Thessaloniki toward evening; dinner at the hotel.

OVERNIGHT Thessaloniki**MEALS** B, D · 4-star hotel

DAY BY DAY, CONTINUED

DAY 7 Thessaloniki, City of Two Epistles

The day of Saint Demetrios's city. We begin at his great basilica, rebuilt after the fire of 1917 around its surviving mosaics, and descend into the crypt, the Roman bath where the saint was imprisoned and speared in 306, where his tomb ran with myrrh for centuries; we venerate his relics in their silver reliquary before the morning crowds. We then walk the city's Byzantine spine: the Rotunda with its early mosaics of the martyrs, the Panagia Chalkeon of the coppersmiths' quarter, and the Cathedral, with the relics of Saint Gregory Palamas, archbishop of this city. In the upper town, inside the Byzantine walls, we visit Vlatadon Monastery, founded by disciples of Palamas, with its view over the whole gulf to Mount Olympus. Late afternoon free on the paralia, the seafront promenade, before dinner.

OVERNIGHT Thessaloniki**MEALS** B, D · 4-star hotel

DAY 8 Philippi and Kavala, Where the Gospel Entered Europe

The day the Gospel entered Europe. East along the Via Egnatia to Kavala, the ancient Neapolis, where Paul stepped ashore from Troas in the year 49; the harbour mosaic of the Apostle's landing is by the waterfront church of Saint Nicholas. Twenty minutes inland lie the ruins of Philippi: the theatre, the forum, the prison where Paul and Silas sang at midnight until the earthquake opened the doors, and the vast ruined basilicas that grew over the city the Apostle loved best. At the river Zygaktis outside the walls we stop at the baptistery of Saint Lydia, where the seller of purple became the first person baptised on European soil; groups who wish may hold a short thanksgiving prayer at the riverside font. Return to Thessaloniki along the coast in the late afternoon.

OVERNIGHT Thessaloniki**MEALS** B, D · 4-star hotel

DAY 9 Departure from Thessaloniki

A final morning in the city that received two epistles. Early risers return to Saint Demetrios to venerate the relics once more, or walk the ramparts of the upper town while the light is low. Your pilgrimage director accompanies the group to Makedonia Airport and remains through check-in. In nine days you will have followed the second missionary journey through the cities where it happened: Neapolis and Philippi, Berea and Thessaloniki, Athens and Corinth, with the scriptures read aloud in every place they describe. Parish groups often tell us the Epistles never sound the same again; that is the purpose of the journey. Ask about group air from your nearest gateway, and about adding a two-night Athens extension for those who wish to stay on.

OVERNIGHT None, departure day**MEALS** B

YOUR PILGRIMAGE, PLAINLY STATED

What is included, and what is not

INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

- ◆ Eight nights in 4-star hotels: two in Athens, one in Delphi, two in Kalambaka, three in Thessaloniki
- ◆ Half-board throughout: breakfast and dinner at the hotel daily
- ◆ All land transportation in a modern air-conditioned coach
- ◆ Licensed English-speaking guide, briefed in the Orthodox tradition, throughout
- ◆ Entry fees to every site, monastery, and museum named in the itinerary
- ◆ Divine Liturgy and veneration arrangements at the shrines named in the itinerary
- ◆ Airport transfers on the group arrival and departure days
- ◆ All road tolls, parking, and portorage of one case per pilgrim

NOT INCLUDED

- ◆ International airfare to and from Greece; group air quoted separately on request
- ◆ Single room supplement, quoted on request
- ◆ Travel insurance, strongly advised
- ◆ Tips to guides and drivers; we suggest \$8 to \$10 per day for the guide and \$4 to \$5 per day for the driver
- ◆ Lunches, taken at leisure on the road
- ◆ Alcoholic beverages with dinner
- ◆ Optional excursions offered locally
- ◆ Passport fees; US citizens do not require a visa for Greece for stays under 90 days
- ◆ Items of a personal nature: laundry, telephone, minibar

Hotels are named in your final documents; we contract 4-star houses in Athens and Thessaloniki and the best available pilgrim-class hotels in the mountain towns. Prices are per person, twin share, land only, in US dollars.

BOOKING YOUR PILGRIMAGE

Terms, plainly stated

RESERVING YOUR PLACE

A deposit of \$400 per pilgrim confirms your reservation. Places are assigned in the order deposits are received, and each departure is limited to forty pilgrims.

BALANCE OF PAYMENT

The balance of the pilgrimage price is due 90 days before departure. Prices are per person in US dollars, sharing a twin or double room. A single room is available for a supplement, quoted on request.

CANCELLATION

More than 90 days before departure	Deposit only
89 to 60 days before departure	50% of the price
59 to 30 days before departure	75% of the price
Inside 30 days of departure	No refund

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is not included and is strongly advised. We recommend a policy covering trip cancellation, medical care abroad, and baggage, purchased within days of paying your deposit.

GROUP SIZE

A minimum of 15 pilgrims is required for the pilgrimage to operate. Maximum 40 pilgrims per departure, so that veneration at the holy places is never rushed.

A FAMILY COMPANY

Mystakidis Tours has led pilgrims to the holy places since 1959, a family company in its third generation. Your group travels with one experienced pilgrimage director from arrival to departure.



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Every itinerary can be adjusted for your parish. Ask us about preferred dates, group air from your nearest gateway, and a visit from our team to present the pilgrimage to your community.