



WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL
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Global Perspectives, Local Conversations

GREECE ODYSSEY

Crete & the Mainland

May 21-30, 2027

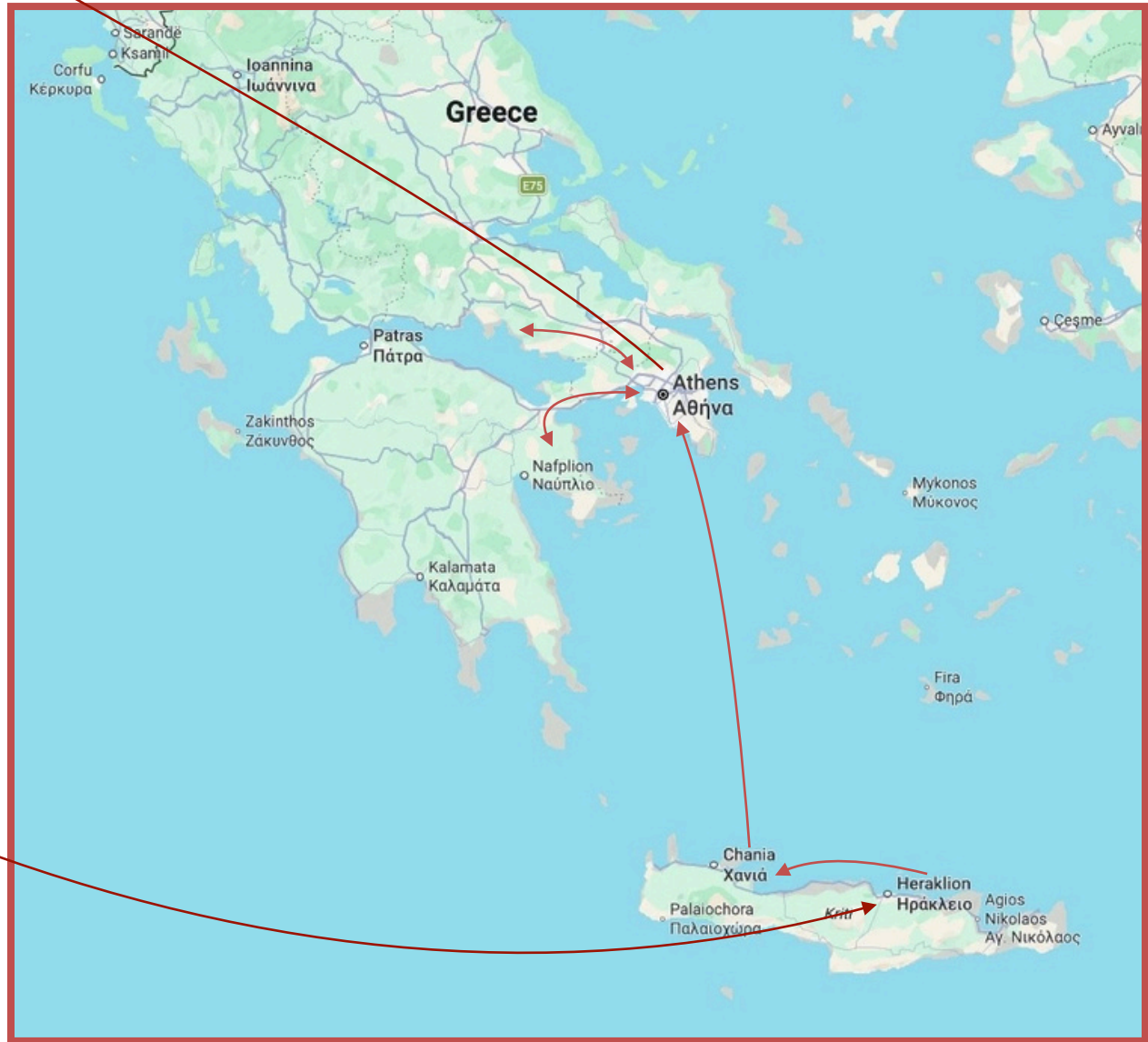
ITINERARY

DAY 1	Fri, May 21	Leave USA for Heraklion, Greece	
DAY 2	Sat, May 22	Arrival in Heraklion - transfer	Heraklion
DAY 3	Sun, May 23	Heraklion - Knossos sightseeing	Heraklion
DAY 4	Mon, May 24	Drive to Chania via Rethymnon	Chania
DAY 5	Tue, May 25	Chania sightseeing - evening flight	Athens
DAY 6	Wed, May 26	Athens sightseeing	Athens
DAY 7	Thu, May 27	Drive to Mycenae - sightseeing	Nafplion
DAY 8	Fri, May 28	Nafplion - Cape Sounion - Athens	Athens
DAY 9	Sat, May 29	Delphi excursion	Athens
DAY 10	Sun, May 30	Departure	

This journey through Crete and mainland Greece brings together some of the most influential civilizations, legendary landscapes, and enduring traditions of the Mediterranean. Beginning on Crete, you explore the world of the Minoans at Knossos and in the remarkable collections of the Heraklion Archaeological Museum, while visits to Rethymno, Chania, and the Akrotiri Peninsula reveal the island's Venetian, Ottoman, and monastic heritage. Along the way, local wines, olive oil, regional cuisine, and Crete's distinctive natural beauty offer a vivid introduction to the character of the island.

The journey continues on the mainland, where the monuments and stories of ancient Greece unfold across Athens, the Peloponnese, Cape Sounion, and Delphi. You stand beneath the Parthenon, discover the healing sanctuary and celebrated theater of Epidaurus, enter the fortified world of Mycenae, and visit the Temple of Poseidon overlooking the Aegean Sea. The program concludes at Delphi, once regarded as the center of the ancient world, completing an exploration of Greece shaped by archaeology, mythology, faith, and more than three thousand years of cultural achievement.

MAP TRAJECTORY





HIGHLIGHTS

- *Explore the exceptional Minoan collection of the Heraklion Archaeological Museum*
- *Discover the Palace of Knossos and the legends of King Minos and the Minotaur*
- *Experience the historic streets and Venetian-Ottoman heritage of Rethymno*
- *Stroll through Chania's atmospheric Old Town and Venetian Harbor*
- *Visit the seventeenth-century Monastery of Agia Triada*
- *Tour the Acropolis, the Parthenon, and the acclaimed Acropolis Museum*
- *Explore the ancient healing sanctuary and celebrated theater of Epidaurus*
- *Enter the legendary Bronze Age citadel of Mycenae*
- *Enjoy the neoclassical architecture and waterfront setting of historic Nafplio*
- *See the dramatic Corinth Canal connecting two Greek gulfs*
- *Admire the Temple of Poseidon overlooking the Aegean Sea at Cape Sounion*
- *Visit the sanctuary of Apollo and the Archaeological Museum at Delphi*
- *Experience regional Greek cuisine, wine, music, and traditional dance*

INCLUDED

- **8 Nights hotel accommodation with daily breakfast, in listed hotels. Lunches and dinners as indicated in the itinerary.**
- **English speaking professional tour guides.**
- **Transportation with AC vehicles & drivers.**
- **One bottle of water per person on the bus on touring days.**
- **Arrival and departure transfers for suggested flights.**
- **All entry fees to places mentioned in the itinerary.**
- **Porterage at hotels.**
- **Local taxes.**

NOT INCLUDED

- **International and one local airfare.**
- **Visa fees if applicable.**
- **Drinks with included meals, except tea or coffee for breakfast. Gratuities for guides & drivers.**
- **Personal expenditures like phone calls, laundry, medical expenses. Travel insurance.**





SUGGESTED FLIGHTS

Suggested flights are on United and Lufthansa:

Fri, May 21 Houston to Frankfurt

LH 441 dep: 3:35 pm / arr: 8:15 am on May 22

Sat, May 22 Frankfurt to Heraklion

LH 6178 dep: 10:40 am / arr: 2:40 pm

Tue, May 25 Chania to Athens

GQ 255 dep: 7:05 pm / arr: 8:05 pm

Sun, May 30 Athens to Frankfurt

LH 1285 dep: 6:40 am / arr: 8:45 am

Sun, May 30 Frankfurt to Houston

UA 8866 dep: 10:00 am / arr: 1:35 p

Economy class: \$2075

Business class: Please call

Per person, including taxes, surcharges and fees as of September 23, 2026

Fares are non-refundable and may change based on availability.

Preferred Travel Partner



May 21 -30, 2027
10 Days / 8 Nights

ACCOMMODATIONS

May 21 -30, 2027
10 Days / 8 Nights

Ibis Styles

Heraklion

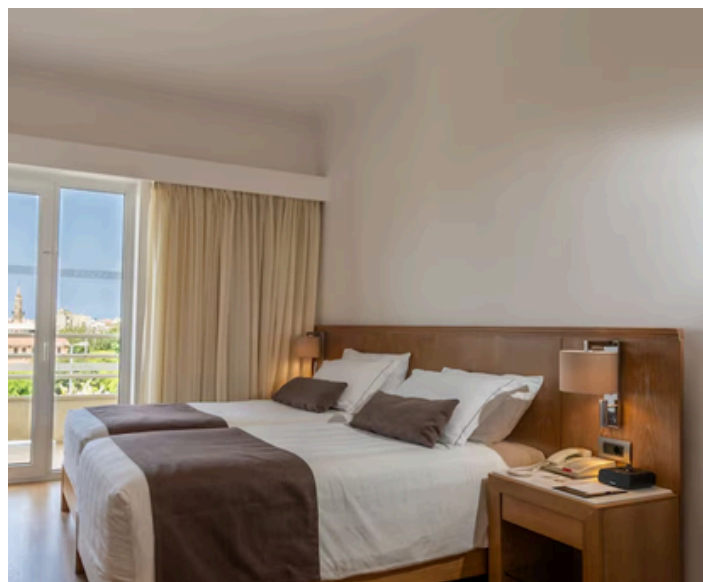
<https://all.accor.com/hotel/A9P7/index.en.shtml>



Kydon Hotel

Chania

<https://www.kydonhotel.com/>



ACCOMMODATIONS

May 21 -30, 2027
10 Days / 8 Nights

Divani Palace Acropolis

Athens

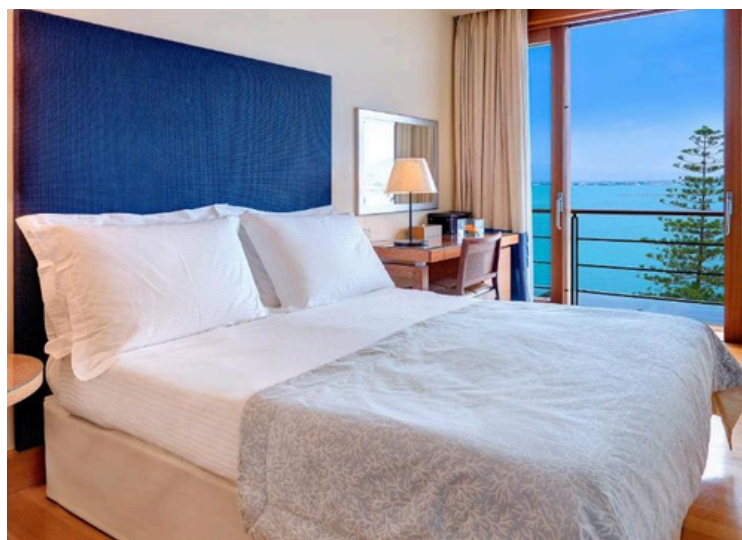
<https://divaniacropolishotel.com/>



Amphytrion Hotel

Nafplion

<https://amphitryon.gr/>





PROGRAM DETAILS

Day 1: Fri, May 21

Leave USA to Heraklion

Today, you depart the United States on your overnight flight to Heraklion, the capital of Crete. Your journey begins with a crossing of the Atlantic and continues toward Greece's largest island.

Overnight en route

Meals: -

Day 2: Sat, May 22

Arrival in Heraklion

Upon arrival in Heraklion late in the afternoon, your local guide and driver welcome you at the airport, assist with your luggage, and accompany you to your hotel. The transfer offers a first glimpse of Crete's northern coast and the city that has served as the island's administrative center for centuries.

After check-in, the remainder of the afternoon is at leisure. You may rest after the international journey or take a gentle independent stroll toward Heraklion's lively center and Venetian-era harbor.

This evening, you gather for dinner and an introduction to the journey through Crete, Athens, and the great archaeological landscapes of mainland Greece.

Overnight in Heraklion

Meals: D

After breakfast, you walk to the Heraklion Archaeological Museum, one of Europe's most important collections of ancient art and material culture. Its galleries bring together discoveries from across Crete and illuminate more than 5,500 years of island history, from the Neolithic period through Roman times. The celebrated Minoan collection includes frescoes, ritual objects, jewelry, pottery, and the enigmatic Phaistos Disc.

You then drive approximately 10 kilometers to Knossos, the largest Bronze Age archaeological site on Crete. The palace complex was a ceremonial, economic, and political center of Minoan civilization, with courts, storerooms, workshops, and richly decorated rooms revealing the sophistication of the society that flourished here during the second millennium BC.

Knossos is also inseparable from Greek myth. Tradition identifies it with King Minos, the Labyrinth and the Minotaur, and the stories of Daedalus and Icarus. As you explore the site, your guide distinguishes the archaeological record from the legends that have shaped its place in the European imagination.

Following the visit, you continue to traditional Archanes for lunch amid vineyards and olive groves, then return to Heraklion for leisure time before dinner.

Overnight in Heraklion

Meals: B - D





Day 4: Mon, May 24

Heraklion to Chania via Rethymno

After breakfast, you leave Heraklion and follow Crete's northern coastal road toward Chania. Mountain slopes, olive groves, and broad views of the Cretan Sea accompany the journey west.

Your first visit is Rethymno, where Venetian and Ottoman layers meet in a compact old town of narrow lanes, arched doorways, shaded courtyards, and minarets. After a guided stroll, you enjoy a wine tasting and light lunch featuring local flavors.

You continue with a short stop at Lake Kournas, Crete's only natural freshwater lake. Set beneath the White Mountains, its calm waters and surrounding hills provide a refreshing pause along the route.

You reach Chania in the afternoon and check in at your hotel. Rest of the day at leisure.

Overnight in Chania

Meals: B - L

Day 5: October 2025

Chania, Akrotiri & Flight to Athens

This morning, you explore Chania and its surroundings. In the old town, you visit the local market area and the Venetian Harbor, then stroll along the waterfront and through lanes lined with historic houses, small shops, restaurants, and cafes. At the restored Moro shipyards, exhibitions recall the maritime traditions and shipbuilding history of Crete.

You then enjoy a guided visit to the Botanical Park and Gardens of Crete. The landscape brings together endemic Cretan plants, Mediterranean orchards, citrus groves, vineyards, tropical species, and habitats for local fauna. A cup of Cretan mountain tea offers a quiet moment to appreciate the gardens before lunch.

In the afternoon, you drive to the Akrotiri Peninsula to visit the Monastery of Agia Triada of Tzagarolon. Founded in the seventeenth century by brothers of the Venetian Zangaroli family on the site of an earlier church, the monastery is among the finest examples of the Cretan Renaissance. Its monastic community continues the long tradition of producing wine and olive oil on the estate.

After a short tasting, you continue to Chania Airport for your flight to Athens. Upon arrival, you are transferred to your hotel.

Overnight in Athens

Meals: B

Day 6: Wed, May 26

Athens: Acropolis & Historic City

Today, you discover Athens, a city where the monuments of classical antiquity stand within a vibrant modern capital. Classical Athens became a center of art, learning, and philosophy, home to Plato's Academy and Aristotle's Lyceum, and its civic experiments gave lasting form to the ideal of democracy.

You ascend the Acropolis to visit the Parthenon and its surrounding sanctuaries. Dedicated to Athena, the city's patron goddess, the Parthenon is a masterwork of the Doric order; construction began in 447 BC, when Athens was at the height of its power. Your guide places the temple within the ambitious building program of Pericles and the religious life of the ancient city.

At the Acropolis Museum, set near the base of the sacred hill with direct views toward the Parthenon, you encounter sculpture and architectural fragments from the Acropolis in a modern setting designed by architect Bernard Tschumi. The approximately 226,000- square-foot building replaced the small nineteenth-century museum that once stood on the Acropolis itself.

After time for lunch, your city tour continues with Syntagma Square, the Metropolitan Cathedral, the Temple of Olympian Zeus, the Areopagus, the Panathenaic Stadium, Monastiraki, and the lanes of Plaka.

Overnight in Athens

Meals: B





Day 7: Thu, May 27

Epidaurus, Mycenae & Nafplio

This morning, you leave Athens and travel into the Peloponnese to Epidaurus, an ancient city near the Saronic Gulf. The surrounding landscape of pine-covered hills formed an evocative setting for one of the Greek world's most celebrated sanctuaries.

Reputed to be the birthplace of Asclepius, son of Apollo and god of healing, Epidaurus drew visitors seeking treatment through ritual, rest, exercise, and medicine. The prosperity of the sanctuary supported baths, athletic buildings, and the magnificent theater, praised since antiquity for its symmetry and still renowned for its exceptional acoustics.

Later, you continue to Mycenae, one of the major centers of Late Bronze Age Greece and the stronghold of a culture that dominated much of the southern mainland during the second millennium BC. The fortified citadel, monumental Lion Gate, and royal tombs evoke both the archaeological world of the Mycenaeans and the heroic traditions later preserved in Greek epic. Mycenae and Tiryns are recognized together as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

After sightseeing and time for lunch, you drive to Nafplio for the night. With neoclassical houses, Venetian fortifications, and a graceful waterfront, the town has an unmistakably Mediterranean character. Nafplio also served as the first capital of the modern Greek state from 1829 to 1834.

Overnight in Nafplio

Meals: B

Day 8: Fri, May 28

Corinth Canal, Cape Sounion & Athens

Before noon, you leave Nafplio and drive north, visiting the Monastery of Agnountos, known for its late Byzantine fresco tradition and peaceful rural setting.

You continue to the Corinth Canal, the nineteenth-century waterway cut through the isthmus linking the Peloponnese with mainland Greece. A brief stop reveals its steep limestone walls and the passage between the Saronic and Corinthian gulfs. Lunch is served along the route.

Following the coast around the Saronic Gulf, you reach Cape Sounion. The marble columns of the Temple of Poseidon have crowned this Aegean headland since the fifth century BC. Built around 444-440 BC, the temple honored the god whose protection mattered profoundly to ancient mariners.

You return to Athens for dinner at a local taverna, accompanied by Greek music and a traditional dance performance.

Overnight in Athens

Meals: B – D

Day 9: Sat, May 29**Excursion to Delphi**

Today, you journey through central Greece to Delphi, set on Mount Parnassus above the valley of Phocis. Its terraces and distant views toward the Gulf of Corinth form one of Greece's most memorable archaeological landscapes.

Delphi was Apollo's principal sanctuary and home of the classical world's most influential oracle. Myth told that Apollo established it after defeating the serpent Python, while the sacred omphalos marked Delphi as the navel, or center, of the world.

You see the Temple of Apollo, treasuries erected by Greek city-states, the theater, and the stadium. The Archaeological Museum preserves architectural sculpture and offerings that reveal the sanctuary's reach across the ancient Mediterranean.

Following lunch, you return to Athens in the late afternoon. The evening is at leisure for the city's nightlife or an independent dinner.

Overnight in Athens**Meals: B - L**

Day 10: Sun, May 30**Departure**

Your journey through Crete and mainland Greece comes to a close today. Early in the morning, you are transferred to Athens International Airport for your return flight, with assistance for check-in and departure formalities as required.

You leave with memories of Minoan palaces and Cretan harbors, the Acropolis above Athens, the healing sanctuary of Epidauros, the citadel of Mycenae, Cape Sounion above the Aegean, and Delphi on the slopes of Mount Parnassus.

Meals: B



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