

0923 St John West Bend Pilgrimage - in the Footsteps of St Paul

Sep 25 - Oct 06, 2023



Monday, September 25

Depart ORD on our way to Athens, Greece

Tuesday, September 26

ATHENS

Welcome to Greece! Your afternoon is free to begin discovering Athens. Transfer to our hotel for dinner and overnight stay in Athens.

Wednesday, September 27

ATHENS

Today our tour in Athens will start by passing by the most famous sites in the center of the city. Short stop at the Panathenaic Stadium, where the first Olympic Games took place in 1896. After, the tour will bring you to the Acropolis - a UNESCO World Heritage - the Parthenon and Mars Hill where St. Paul spoke about the one and only God. From here we have an excellent view of the ancient Agora, the center of ancient Athenian public life where St. Paul spent time in the markets. Continue with a pleasant short walk passing by Herodian and Dionysus Theatre and visit the Acropolis Museum. Main attractions such as Votives, artifacts of everyday life, statues from the Archaic period, Caryatids, and the Parthenon Hall. Free afternoon.

Dinner. Overnight at our hotel in Athens

Thursday, September 28

ATHENS | CORINTH

This day we will drive to the city of Corinth. Our first stop will be at the Corinth Canal to enjoy the magnificent view. On to the archaeological site of Ancient Corinth, where under the shadow of the towering Acropolis St. Paul preached and lived for two years in 50 AD and where St. Paul wrote his most familiar letters. Visit the ancient city where St. Paul worked with Aquila and Priscilla, the Agora where St. Paul's trial by Gallio took place, the Bema, the Marketplace and the Temples. We will visit the Archaeological Museum. Return to Athens early afternoon. Dinner. Overnight at our hotel in Athens.

Friday, September 29

MN CELESTIAL OLYMPIA: MYKONOS

Morning transfer to the port of Piraeus for 11:00 am embarkation on the MN Celestyal Olympia for your 4 Days - 3 Nights Iconic Aegean Cruise. In the afternoon, your cruise will arrive to the island of Mykonos. Here the whitewashed houses, flowered balconies, and windmills of this Cycladic island will simply enchant you. We recommend that you take a nonchalant stroll in Mykonos town to take in the winding narrow streets full of boutiques and to visit the beautiful church of Panagia Paraportiani. Mykonos combines in a unique way the luxuriant and sophisticated lifestyle with the simple and yet charming life of a Cycladic Island. Overnight onboard Cruise Ship MN Celestyal Olympia.

Saturday, September 30

MN CELESTYAL OLYMPIA: EPHEBUS AND PATMOS

Morning arrival to Ephesus, Turkey. Our shore excursion to the ancient city of Ephesus, one of the most impressive ruins of the Biblical world. See the Great Theatre where St. Paul preached, which is the largest theatre in antiquity with a capacity of 24,000. Drive to the house where the Virgin Mary is believed to have spent her last days. In the afternoon we will arrive in Patmos, the tranquil island where John the Apostle wrote the Book of Revelations. Visit the village of Chora where the monastery of St. John is located and continue on to the nearby Grotto of the apocalypse where St. John wrote the Book of Revelations during his exile by the Roman State.

Overnight onboard Cruise Ship MN Celestyal Olympia.

Sunday, October 01

MN CELESTYAL OLYMPIA: CRETE AND SANTORINI

Morning arrival to the island of Crete and the city of Heraklion where we will join the shore excursion to the Palace of Knossos discovered in 1899. It is in Heraklion where St. Paul met the owner and captain of the ship who warned him of continuing his journey to Rome. In the afternoon, the ship will depart to Santorini, the most idyllic and breathtaking of all the Greek Islands. The island famous for its volcano, the eruption of which created the famous caldera. Optional excursions to Thira and Oia areas give you the opportunity to see one of the most famous islands of Greece. Overnight onboard Cruise Ship MN Celestyal Olympia.

Monday, October 02

METEORA

Morning arrival to Piraeus Port. Disembark the cruise ship and journey on to Kalambaka to visit the amazing monasteries of Meteora. Amid striking scenery, perched on top of huge rocks that seem to be suspended in mid-air, stand these ageless monasteries built in the 15th century. Dinner. Overnight at our hotel in Kalambaka.

Tuesday, October 03

METEORA | BEREIA | THESSALONIKI

Visit of one more Monastery (or two in case time does not permit to do so on May 23rd). Departure for Thessaloniki, the co-capital of Greece. On the way, we will visit Berea with the famous mosaics of St. Paul. We will continue to Thessaloniki and, before check-in, we will take a bus tour of the city of Thessaloniki, including St. Demetrius Basilica and St. Sofia church. Dinner. Overnight at our hotel in Thessaloniki.

Wednesday, October 04

KAVALA | PHILIPPI | LYDIA SPRINGS

Visit Kavala where St. Paul landed with his disciples Timothy and Sillas. See the small church that marks the

traditional site of his landing. Kavala once named Christoupolis because it was the first city in Europe to accept Christianity. We will continue to Philippi where St. Paul preached his first evangelical sermon and where early Christians were baptized on European soil. Visit the baptismal site where Lydia converted to Christianity. Our tour will continue with a visit to a crypt from the Roman period that is believed to have served as a prison for St. Paul, the Marketplace, the famous Acropolis, and the Theatre. Farewell dinner. Overnight at our hotel in Thessaloníki.

Thursday, October 05

THESSALONIKI

Enjoy a free day at your own leisure. You can visit the Rotonda, Byzantine Museum of Thessaloniki, Archaeological Museum (Jewish Museum), stroll around the Ladadika area, and the promenade, all of which are centrally located. Or, just relax at the hotel. Dinner on your own, Overnight at our hotel in Thessaloniki.

Friday, October 06

Transfer to the airport for our flight back home. Same day arrival to ORD Airport.