We invite you to join us as we explore the cultural heritage of ancient Greece. Like the Athenians in the 5th century BC, we will pay homage to the great Parthenon Temple on the Acropolis, and visit the Oracle at Delphi against the backdrop of Mt. Parnassus.

We will cross the “wine-dark sea” (like Homer’s heroes a few centuries earlier) to the islands of the Aegean.

On Santorini, we will explore the ancient Akrotiri archaeological site (which has reopened) and learn about the cataclysmic explosion in 1450 BC of Santorini.

On Crete, we will attempt to unravel the mysteries surrounding the Minoans: Where did they come from, what language did they speak, what brought about their downfall 2,000 years ago?

Sparkling new museums in Athens, with dazzling collections from ancient Greece, and fascinating archaeological sites will enchant us, as will the every-day splendors of sunset at Santorini and evening light on the harbors at Mykonos and Chania.

All this with superb leadership by expert Dr. Ken Sheedy!
LEADERSHIP

Leading this expedition will be Dr. Ken Sheedy, Director of the Australian Centre for Ancient Numismatics at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia. Formerly with the British Museum and the Australian Archaeological Institute in Athens, Greece, Ken is an archaeologist whose special focus is the Greek world, including Greek sites in Turkey.

Ken is an authority on Greek coins and has a particular interest in the archaeology of the Cyclades Islands in the central Aegean. He has found many of his studies on the antiquities of the important Cycladic island of Paros. He has published papers on many Greek archaeology topics including archaic vase painting of Paros and the Cycladic City-states, sculpture of archaic Paros, and the development of pottery styles of the Segesta islands. Ken has participated in excavations on Paros and the Greek mainland.

Ken is an experienced lecturer and expedition leader and has led trips to Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, and the Black Sea. He is a popular leader of many past Aegae Odyssey Expeditions for Sigma Xi and AAAS. He looks forward to sharing his love of Greek history and archaeology, and his enthusiasm for the culture and people of Greece with you.

ITINERARY

Days 1/2  New York to Athens, Greece

• Depart New York (JFK Intl. Airport) for Athens, Greece. Transfer to the Herodion Hotel (4 nights) near the foot of the Acropolis. It leisure to begin to discover ancient Greece in the historic Plaka District. Welcome dinner. D

Day 3  Acropolis & Parthenon

Today we will visit the Acropolis and the Parthenon. The height of the Golden Age of Athens is displayed in the Acropolis. The Parthenon will give you a look at the artistic beauty, richness, and importance of ancient Athens, the empire that ruled the Eastern Mediterranean. Here Pericles, ruler of 461 BC Athens, amassed great fortunes through trade and then spent this wealth on Athens, the goddess of Athens.

Another highlight today will be a visit to the New Acropolis Museum, at the foot of the Acropolis. It was constructed over a site of ancient Athens, which can be seen through the floor. We will see exhibits from the age of the Acropolis and the Parthenon Gallery.

The Parthenon Gallery is exactly the same dimensions as the Parthenon and includes copies of the works that are in the British Museum and Louvre. B

Day 4  National Archaeological Museum & Ancient Agora

This morning, we visit the National Archaeological Museum, which includes works of the great civilizations that developed in the Aegean from the 6th millennium BC to 1500 BC. (Neolithic, Cycladic, Mycenaean) and finds from the prehistoric settlement of Thera. The museum is amusing, including collections of ancient Greek sculpture, pottery, and bronzes. We will also enjoy a walking tour of the Agora at the foot of the Acropolis. The Agora is the original city center, where Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle spoke to devoted students. We will walk the narrow cobblestone streets and imagine the exciting period in the birth of Western Civilization. B

Days 5/6  Paros & Mykonos

We will cross the “wine-dark sea” of Santorini. In Paros, we will attempt to see the ancient Akrotiri archaeological site (which has reopened) and learn about the cataclysmic explosion in 1450 BC, we will pay homage to the great city of Mykonos.

Days 7/8  Santorini

The height of the Golden Age of Athens is displayed in the Acropolis. The Parthenon will give you a look at the artistic beauty, richness, and importance of ancient Athens, the empire that ruled the Eastern Mediterranean.

Days 9/10  Athens

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Day 5  Mount Parnassos & Delphi

This morning we will drive to Delphi, situated on the slopes of Mt. Parnassos. Mt. Parnassos is covered by Greek trees at the higher elevations. Lower slopes are covered with typical Mediterranean maquis vegetation including aromatic, spiny plants, with an understory of grasses, orchids, and spring wildflowers. Just to the west is Delphi, the center of the world according to Zeus, the ruler of all ancient gods. Delphi overlooks the Gulf of Corinth and has a well-preserved 6th century theater, stadium, gymnasium and reconstructed Orphian sanctuary. In ancient times, the main walkway was lined with statues from around the Mediterranean and marble statues at the ancient Greek city-state. The common people would make pilgrimage with their votive gifts to ask for guidance from the Delphic oracle. B, L

Day 6  Benaki Museum & Mykonos

This morning we will visit the Benaki Museum which includes artifacts from excavations on Santorini, plus beautiful red and black vases from the Minoan Civilization centered at Knossos, Crete. Ancient Akrotiri was a major trading outpost for the Minoan Islands, central Greece, Crete, Santorini or elsewhere.

In the afternoon, we will fly to Mykonos, a picturesque village with winding streets, overcast doorways, and a charming pace. This ancient fishing village has been transformed into a tranquil village with winding streets, recessed arches, picturesque houses, and the colorful waterfront area. Dinner in a Greek taverna. B, D

Day 7  Delos

We ferry to Delos and explore the archaeological site and museum today. The sanctuary of Delos was sacred during Hellenistic times. It was a religious and commercial center, trading with Egypt and Syria. Allotros placed a tax on all that entered and stored the wealth at Delos. The wealthy merchants and bankers financed Delos with the most expensive gifts in the form of sacred temples, a Terrance of the Lions, House of Cleopatra, the House of the Dolphins, and the Theater of Delos. All during this time, they worshiped Apollo, the god of the sun and poetry. We should see Jerusalem, Ephesus, and Mykonos amidst the ruins. Afternoon return to Mykonos and an exterior waterfront area. Dinner in a Greek taverna. B, L

Day 8  Mykonos to Santorini

Today we will ferry to the volcano island of Santorini, which some say is the site of the fabled Atlantis. Around 1650 BC, Santorini experienced one of the greatest volcanic explosions in the Mediterranean, creating the spectacular caldera landscape and giving Santorini its legendary status as one of the most spectacular sites of the Aegean. We will view the caldera, Ther i and Oia. Transfer to Artemis Hotel (2 nights) in Thira. B, L,D

Day 9  Akrotiri & Village of Oia

Ancient Akrotiri was a major trading output for the Minoan Civilization centered at Knossos, Crete. Today we will visit the archaeological site of Ancient Akrotiri and end this morning's tour of Santorini. We will have lunch near the site. Afternoon visit to Oia, one of the most picturesque villages in the Aegean. This tour ends at Santorini airport. Transfer to the hotel in Thira. B

Day 10  Santorini Archaeology Museum

This morning we will visit the Santorini Archaeology Museum in Thera, which has some of the finest frescoes and sculptures from ancient Greece, and the mosaic house of the Dolphins, the most important artistic find of the Cyclades during the 2nd century B.C. and the Theater of Santorini, plus beautiful red and black vases from the Minoan Civilization centered at Knossos, Crete. Ancient Akrotiri was a major trading output for the Minoan Civilization centered at Knossos, Crete. Today we will visit the archaeological site of Ancient Akrotiri and end this morning’s tour of Santorini. We will have lunch near the site. Afternoon visit to Oia, one of the most picturesque villages in the Aegean. This tour ends at Santorini airport. Transfer to the hotel in Thira. B

Day 11  Santorini to Chania

This morning we will enjoy a farewell breakfast. Transfer to the airport for flights to Athens and home.
Santorini is one of the best preserved archaeological sites in the Aegean because of the violent eruption of Santorini. In the mid-19th Century BC, the massive eruption covered Santorini and the surrounding agricultural lands with many feet of ash. We are in luck because the site was occupied in 2012 after on-years under repairs for a collapsed protective roof. In late afternoon, we will depart for Oia, one of the most picturesque of Santorini’s villages perched on the northern tip of the island overlooking the massive caldera. One can wander through the narrow streets and at every step another picture of beauty assails you. The architecture is both secular and ecclesiastical, infused with touches and charm from the imagination of local artisans. 8.L.

Day 10 Santorini Archaeology Museum

Today we will visit the Santorini Archaeology Museum, which includes artifacts from excavations on Santorini, plus beautiful red and black vases from the 13th Century BC and Minoan times. There are frescoes and sculptures from ancient reserves, and photographs and films and lectures about the history of archaeological discovery on Thira and the geography of the island. We will also learn about the plan and architecture of the historic city of Akrotiri, the development of this art of wall painting and vase painting, and the city’s and island’s contacts with Crete and elsewhere. In late afternoon, we will visit the Prehistoric Thira Museum, where artifacts from the Minoan civilization on Crete in it.

Day 11 Heraklion, Crete

Today will be at leisure for personal exploration until our flight or ferry to Heraklion, Crete. Arrive in Heraklion and transfer to the Galaxy Iraklio Hotel (2 nights). 8.L.

Day 12 Minoan Sites of Knossos

Today we will visit the renowned archaeological site of Knossos, which was the center of the Minoan culture and palace of King Minos, who ruled the eastern Mediterranean, and made Crete the hub of trade and center of ancient arts. The Palace has been partially restored, with reconstructed frescoes, mosaics, walls, floors, large storage vessels, fresh water system, ceremonial baths, stone walkways, and central plaza. Much of this was destroyed after the eruption of Santorini and rebuilt. We’ll also visit the ancient Minoan palace of Phaistos, south of Knossos. It is situated on a small hilltop overlooking the Minoan Plain which edges the Libyan Sea, with 4,000 foot Mt. Ida to the north. Phaistos was the home of Minos, the brother of the legendary King Minos. 8.L.

Day 13 Heraklion to Chania

This morning we will visit the excellent Archaeology Museum in Heraklion, which has some of the finest artifacts from the Minoan civilization on Crete in it. The collections include the Phaistos Disc, which is covered on both sides by stamped symbols and is one of the famous mosaics of ancient art. We will also tour the ancient walls of medieval Heraklion and learn about its Greek, Roman, Venetian, and Ottoman heritage. This afternoon we will travel to the charming north coast city of Chania. Portas Venetian Hotel (2 nights).

Day 14 Chania

Chania has aTech Min of narrow streets, wood-balustraded Turkish houses, Venetian monuments, and
and minarets. The Venetian Fortress has preserved its rich history with massive stone walls. We will explore Chania today and enjoy a festive farewell dinner along the waterfront. B,L,D

Day 13  Chania to Selena & Heron
Transfer to the airport for flights to Athens and home. B

Day 15  Chania to Athens & Home
Transfer to the airport for flights to Athens and home. B
AEGEAN ODYSSEY!

Discover the cultural heritage of Western Civilization on the AEGEAN ODYSSEY! April 21–May 5, 2014

This expedition is planned for the traveler with an appetite for adventure and discovery who would like to explore Athens, Delphi, and the Greek Isles led by a leading scholar and expert Dr. Ken Sheedy!

Airfare is an estimate from New York to Athens, round trip, plus in-tour flights on Aegean and Olympic Airways or ferry. All airfare bookings and ticketing will be handled by Betchart Expeditions Inc. For assistance, please contact Maria, (408) 252-4910. AIRFARES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Flights are based on current airfares and subject to change without notice. Airfare is an estimate from New York to Athens, round trip, plus in-tour flights on Aegean and Olympic Airways or ferry. All airfare bookings and ticketing will be handled by Betchart Expeditions Inc. For assistance, please contact Maria, (408) 252-4910. AIRFARES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. Flights are based on current airfares and subject to change without notice.

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Dr. Sheedy was excellent—far above our expectations. The trip was superb all around. Leading a tour with a scientist and archeologist like Homer's heroes a few centuries ago. Like the Athenians in the 5th century the Slopes of the Acropolis and the Art of the ancient world will enchant us, as will the every-day life and the artistic beauty, richness, and importance of ancient Greece. Like the Athenians, we will see the ancient world from the slopes of the Acropolis and through the floor. We will see exhibits from ancient Athens, Agora, and the Acropolis Museum, at the foot of the Acropolis. The Acropolis will give you a feel for what brought about their downfall and how language did they speak, and what was their place in history. We invite you join us as we explore the art of the ancient world and imagine this exciting period in the birth of the modern world.

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