



Grand Tour of Italy & Greece

14 days | 18 days with Santorini & Athens extension

Italy or Greece? We wouldn't want to choose either. And with this tour, you don't have to. These two distinct sides of the Mediterranean each offer their own spin on sun-ripened foods, melt-into-the-sea views, and unique way of life. Find inspiration in Italy as you visit the Renaissance monuments of Venice, Florence, and Rome. Then, head to Greece to uncover mythical antiquity in Delphi, Olympia, and Athens. Extend your trip to Santorini and revel in the sun-splashed island's iconic whitewashed buildings and pristine beaches.



Your tour package includes

- 12 nights in handpicked hotels
- 12 breakfasts
- 5 dinners with beer or wine
- 7 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach
- 1 on-tour flight

Included highlights

- St. Mark's Basilica
- Florence Duomo
- Ponte Vecchio
- Spanish Steps
- Pantheon
- Temple of Apollo
- Ruins of Olympia
- Archaeological site of Mycenae
- Acropolis
- Parthenon

Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for at least 2.5 hours daily across moderately uneven terrain, including paved roads and unpaved trails, with some hills and stairs.

Group size

15-38

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Overnight Flight → 1 night

Day 1: Travel day

Board your overnight flight to Venice.

Venice → 2 nights

Day 2: Arrival in Venice

Included meals: welcome dinner

Welcome to Italy! Meet your Tour Director and fellow group members at tonight's welcome dinner, served with beer or wine.

Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Venice

Included meals: breakfast

Surrender to the beauty of Venice's labyrinthine canals, elegant bridges, and ornate Gothic and Renaissance architecture. Close your eyes and let the sound of lapping water and passing gondolas soothe you, but not for too long—there's so much to see! You'll meet up with your local guide and explore the heart of Venice on foot and (if you'd like) by gondola a little later.

- Feel the energy of St. Mark's Square, with its thriving cafes and sumptuous buildings, and marvel at the domes, mosaics, and arches of St. Mark's Basilica— one of the symbols of Venice.
- View the stately Doge's Palace. The center of political life in the Republic of Venice, it was built in the 1500s in the Venetian Gothic style and expanded in the centuries that followed.
- See the windowed Bridge of Sighs, named after the legend that prisoners would sigh at their final view of their beloved city before being taken down to their cells in the New Prison.
- Watch a Murano glassblowing demonstration, where artisans keep the Venetian glasswork tradition alive. Observe as they skillfully use the distinctive millefiori technique to create intricate patterns by fusing tiny glass rods.

Spend a free afternoon walking through Venice, or board a gondola and cruise down the city's famous canals on today's optional experience.

Please note: Due to ticket time availability, travelers on some departures, may enter St. Mark's Basilica after the sightseeing tour.

- + Gondola Ride: Venice Canal Cruise
- + Private Gondola Ride: Canal Cruise for Two

Florence → 2 nights

Day 4: Transfer to Florence & sightseeing tour

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Cross through the Apennine Mountains as you make your way to Florence, where Renaissance treasures and hidden piazzas shimmer in the golden glow of Tuscan sunlight. Set off on a walking tour of the city with a local guide once you arrive.

- Head to Florence's UNESCO-listed historic center and view its exquisite 15th-century cathedral—the Basilica di Santa Maria del Fiore. Also known as the Duomo, it's the world's third-largest church.
- Learn about the cathedral's distinctive, marble-clad exterior and its instantly recognizable dome, the latter of which was built by Filippo Brunelleschi and has become a symbol of the Renaissance and Florence itself.
- Pass Giotto's Campanile, or bell tower. A masterpiece of Gothic architecture, it rises nearly 280 feet above the city and features the same red, white, and green marble found on the Duomo's facade.
- Walk past the Piazza della Repubblica, one of Florence's main squares, to the medieval Ponte Vecchio, an iconic bridge that spans the Arno River and has been lined with shops since the 13th century.
- Stroll along the riverbank and through the Uffizi Gallery's courtyard to the Piazza della Signoria—a beautiful square that's situated just outside the Palazzo Vecchio. It's home to several notable statues, including a replica of Michelangelo's David and the 16th-century Fountain of Neptune.

This evening, enjoy dinner with your group, served with beer or wine.

Day 5: Free day in Florence

Included meals: breakfast

The day is yours! Enjoy free time in Florence or add an excursion to the Tuscan hill town of San

Gimignano, home to a dramatic skyline punctuated by 14 soaring medieval towers. Throw in wine, olive oil, and balsamic vinegar tastings, and you have the makings of a satisfying day.

Need inspiration for a free day in town? Escape the crowds and wander through the Boboli Gardens, located behind the grand Palazzo Pitti. Explore the extensive greenery, hidden pathways, and stunning sculptures of this peaceful oasis, then dive into the vibrant Mercato di Sant'Ambrogio, which has served locals for more than 100 years. Smaller than its more famous counterpart, the Mercato Centrale, it'll give you an intimate and authentic appreciation for how Florentines live. Browse through stalls bursting with fresh produce, regional delicacies, and traditional wares. After, join the locals for a coffee or a bite to eat at the market's lively cafes.

+ San Gimignano: Medieval Sights & Tuscan Flavors

Rome → 3 nights

Day 6: Transfer to Rome & sightseeing tour

Included meals: breakfast

Depart Florence for Rome. Upon arriving in the Eternal City, take a guided walk to discover its centuries-old squares and fountains.

- Stroll past the Spanish Steps, where Pietro Bernini's Baroque-style Fontana della Barcaccia has stood since the 1600s, and head to the intricately carved Trevi Fountain. The latter, a Baroque beauty carved of Travertine marble, has served as the dreamy backdrop to *La Dolce Vita* and *Roman Holiday*. Legend says that if you throw one coin into the fountain, you're bound to return to Rome.
- Step inside the Pantheon, home to the world's largest unenforced concrete dome. There, you'll learn about the engineering skills of the ancient Romans and how they created this well-preserved temple.
- End at Piazza Navona and see Gian Lorenzo

Bernini's Fontana dei Quattro Fiumi, commissioned by Pope Innocent X in the 17th century. It symbolizes the four major rivers of the four continents where papal authority had spread at the time.

Day 7: Free day in Rome

Included meals: breakfast

On your free day in Rome, you can discover the hidden gem of Trastevere, a bohemian (and mostly car-free) neighborhood filled with narrow streets and delectable trattorias.

Need a moment of respite? Visit the picturesque Aventine Hill, home to the peaceful Giardino degli Aranci (Orange Garden) and the famous keyhole view of St. Peter's Basilica—which you can visit by adding the guided tour of Vatican City to your day. Here, you'll also experience the grandeur and serene beauty of the Vatican Museum, as well as the Sistine Chapel's venerated ceiling fresco.

How could this day get any better? By adding a pasta-making class and ending the evening dining on your own fresh, sauce-laden creation!

The day is yours to seize.

+ Iconic Sights: Vatican City

+ Pasta-Making Class & Dinner

Day 8: Free day in Rome

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

You won't want to skip the guided tour of St. Paul's Basilica—one of Rome's four major papal churches. Add it to your itinerary to view the final resting place of St. Paul and to take a subterranean journey through Rome's ancient catacombs.

Prefer to spend the afternoon on your own?

Whether you want to take it easy over an Aperol spritz or take in the beauty of the Galleria Borghese's art collection, the day belongs to you.

This evening, enjoy an elegant, four-course dinner—served with beer or wine—at a local restaurant with live musical entertainment.

+ Ancient Rome: St. Paul's Basilica & the

Catacombs

Delphi Region → 1 night

Day 9: Flight to Athens & transfer to Delphi

Included meals: breakfast

Fly to Athens, Greece this morning. Then, continue to Delphi. Tomorrow, you'll journey into the epicenter of ancient Greek culture on the slopes of Mount Parnassus, hugged by the Gulf of Corinth and the verdant valley of Phocis.

Olympia Region → 2 nights

Day 10: Sightseeing tour of Delphi & transfer to the Olympia Region

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Journey to the slopes of Mount Parnassus and visit the Archaeological Site of Delphi. Now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Delphi was believed by ancient Greeks to be the "navel of the Earth," a spiritual focal point and the center of the universe.

- Embark on a guided tour of the Temple of Apollo where, according to legend, the god Apollo once spoke in prophecy to mortals through the voice of the Oracle of Delphi and Pythia, or high priestess.
- Take time to explore the ancient treasures of the Delphi Museum, including the life-size bronze statue named the Charioteer of Delphi.

Cross onto the Peloponnese peninsula as you make your way to the Olympia region this afternoon.

Day 11: Sightseeing tour of Olympia

Included meals: breakfast

This morning, meet your local guide and tour the legendary Archaeological Site of Olympia, where the Olympic Games were born.

- View the ruins of the Temple of Zeus, once home to a gargantuan statue of Zeus, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.
- See the ancient Gymnasium where track-and-field and pentathlon athletes trained in the early second century B.C.
- Step inside the Archaeological Museum of Olympia and enjoy free time to explore its world-renowned sculpture, bronze, and terracotta exhibits.

Greeks celebrate life with food—and dancing.

Join in on the fun during an optional cooking demonstration, followed by dinner and a dance performance where you can pick up a few new moves. Opa!

You can choose to explore the quaint village of Olympia on your own this evening (ask your Tour Director for a recommendation!) or rest up for tomorrow.

+ Greek Cooking Demonstration & Folk Show
Dinner

Athens → 2 nights

Day 12: Athens via Mycenae & Corinth Canal

Included meals: breakfast

As you make your way to Athens, stop to visit historic sites that trace Greece's progress from antiquity to modernity.

- Take a guided tour of the ancient city of Mycenae and learn about its connection to Homer's famous epics: the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. As you walk through the hillside citadel, you'll come across the remains of homes, storefronts, ancient tombs, and Agamemnon's Palace—associated with the mythical king who led the Greeks during the Trojan War.
- Snap a photo of the Corinth Canal, which separates the Peloponnese peninsula from mainland Greece. This diminutive waterway connects the Gulf of Corinth to the Saronic Gulf and was an important navigational route upon its opening in 1893. While it's too narrow for today's modern vessels, its steep limestone walls provide a scenic contrast to the aquamarine waters.

Day 13: Sightseeing tour of Athens

Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner

A local guide introduces you to the highlights of this bustling ancient capital, home to the world's first democracy.

- Pass by the Panathenaic Stadium, built entirely out of marble—the only such stadium in the world.
- Continue to Syntagma Square, home to the neoclassical Greek Parliament building, and admire the plaza's imposing marble steps, fountain, and lush shade trees.
- Reflect on the Arch of Hadrian, built to honor the Roman emperor, and imagine how its Pentelic marble stones were carted more than 11 miles from Mount Pentelikon in 131 A.D.
- View the remains of the sixth-century Temple of Zeus and gaze up at its 16 ornate Corinthian columns.
- Hop off your bus and walk through the Plaka. Situated at the foot of the Acropolis, this district is one of the oldest parts of Athens and is known as "the neighborhood of the gods" due to the dozens of monuments strewn throughout.
- Set off on a walking tour around the ancient Acropolis—site of the Parthenon, Temple of Athena Nike, and Erechtheion. You may have seen these enduring icons of antiquity in books and film, but now you're stepping through the work of craftsmen who quarried and honed these marble blocks thousands of years ago.

Opt into the excursion to Cape Sounion this afternoon, where the remains of the Temple of Poseidon—god of the sea—offer the perfect vantage point to take in panoramic views of the Aegean and its island chains.

Alternatively, spend a free afternoon in Athens to explore on your own. Head back to the Plaka district, or wander through Anafiotika on the northeast slope of the Acropolis. The neighborhood dates to the 19th century and is chock-full of charming, whitewashed cottages and vibrantly hued doors, the likes of which you might have seen—or will see soon—on Greece's Cycladic islands.

Tonight, celebrate your trip with your group over a farewell dinner, served with your choice of beer or wine.

+ Cape Sounion

Flight Home

Day 14: Departure

Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to the airport for your flight home or extend your stay to visit inimitable Santorini, where you'll walk through picturesque fishing villages, enjoy a cruise or local wine tasting (or both), and get your fill of just-caught seafood.

+ Santorini & Athens extension

Experience island time the Greek way. Extend your trip to Santorini—a volcanic outcrop that beckons with cobalt-domed churches, set against a canvas of Aegean blue and dramatic terrain. Its symphony of history, natural beauty, and the locals' zest for life is utterly intoxicating. (And that's before you've seen the island's fiery sunsets.) Then, end your trip with a flight back to Athens' myth-filled streets for one final night.

Santorini → 3 nights

Day 14: Ferry to Santorini

Included meals: breakfast

You've seen the photos—now get ready to star in them yourself. Board a ferry to Santorini today. Watch for the steep cliffs that plunge into the Aegean and the island's famed caldera (the large depression formed by a volcanic eruption). Enjoy free time this afternoon to wander the island's undulating, narrow streets before tucking into a taverna for dinner.

Day 15: Sightseeing tour of Santorini

Included meals: breakfast

Your guided tour of Santorini will take you from black sand beaches to jagged cliff-lined shores and back—a stark contrast to the island's beloved whitewashed buildings and sprays of fuchsia bougainvillea vines.

- Visit the archaeological excavations at Akrotiri, a settlement buried in volcanic ash, where richly pigmented Bronze Age frescoes and other Minoan artifacts survived a devastating volcanic eruption in the 16th century B.C.
- Ride to the top of Mount Profitis Ilias for a panorama of Santorini, neighboring island chains, and blue waters kissing the horizon.
- Stop in small, picturesque Pyrgos, where you'll weave through the steep streets of this slightly off-the-beaten-path village.

Choose to hop on a catamaran for a steal-your-breath-away dinner cruise starring the cliffside village of Oia—Santorini's calling card. You can also spend your free afternoon poking around shops and sampling the local wine if you're craving time to explore on your own.

+ Santorini Caldera Cruise & Dinner

Day 16: Free day in Santorini

Included meals: breakfast

Santorini's nutrient-rich soil lends itself perfectly to growing wine grapes. Get to know the island's unique vineyards during an excursion to a local winery, complete with a tasting and accompanying lunch.

Prefer to spend the day on your own? You can sample some traditional dishes—like moussaka (a hearty eggplant dish) or tomato fritters—then explore the unique black-pebbled shores and clear waters of Kamari Beach. End the day with a sunset stop at the lighthouse found on the southern tip of the island.

Please note: For an additional cost, you can book a visit to the village of Oia through your Tour Director. The visit will either take place on the evening of day 14 or 16, depending on the ferry schedule.

+ Greek Wine Tasting & Lunch

Athens → 1 night

Day 17: Flight to Athens

Included meals: breakfast

Spend a final morning on Santorini before flying back to Athens.

This evening, enjoy a farewell drink as you celebrate your trip with your fellow group members.

Flight Home

Day 18: Departure

Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to the airport for your flight home.

Customize your experience

Customize your tour by adding excursion options. Excursions offered on the same day will occur at different times, so there's no need to choose. Save \$10 when you book your excursion up to three days before your tour departs.* Excursions requiring advance reservation only list this discounted price. Call or go online to customize your tour: goaheadtours.com/IGC | 1-800-597-0350

Day 3: Gondola Ride: Venice Canal Cruise

\$89/\$99* (25 minutes, departure time varies)

More than 100 canals crisscross Venice, and boarding a sleek, black gondola to explore them has become a time-honored tradition. On this memorable excursion, join your fellow travelers for a tour through the canals of Venice, with a gondolier deftly guiding your boat along. Please note: This excursion runs as weather permits, and travelers should feel comfortable getting into and out of the gondolas. A private, two-person gondola ride is available for an additional cost.

Day 3: Private Gondola Ride: Canal Cruise for Two

\$165/\$175* (25 minutes, departure time varies)

More than 100 canals crisscross Venice, and boarding a sleek, black gondola to explore them has become a time-honored tradition. On this memorable excursion, you'll enjoy a private gondola cruise for two through the canals of Venice, with a gondolier deftly guiding your boat along.

Please note: This excursion requires two passengers. Cost is per person, and each traveler must book the excursion. Travelers should also feel comfortable getting into and out of the gondolas. This excursion runs as weather permits.

Day 5: San Gimignano: Medieval Sights & Tuscan Flavors

\$115/\$125* (6 hours, departs in the morning, lunch included)

Travel through the beautiful Tuscan countryside to discover the medieval village of San Gimignano. During the Renaissance, the rival Guelph and Ghibelline political factions flexed their muscles by constructing tall towers throughout San Gimignano; fourteen of those towers survive today. Later, visit a local winery for a taste of the area's wines and a sampling of olive oil and balsamic vinegar that you won't find anywhere else. Then, enjoy lasagna during a light lunch.

Day 7: Iconic Sights: Vatican City

\$125 (3.5 hours, departure time varies)

This guided tour takes you inside Vatican City—a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most sacred places in Christendom. This independent city-state within Rome serves as the headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church and is home to the Pope. Upon arrival, turn on your pre-distributed headset and dive into the Vatican's rich history with your local guide. First, visit the Vatican Museums, which are more than 500 years old and house many of the world's most important Classical- and Renaissance-era sculptures. Next, step inside the Sistine Chapel, whose frescoed ceiling is arguably Michelangelo's greatest masterpiece. Finally, pay a visit to the enormous St. Peter's Basilica, the epicenter of the Roman Catholic faith. The artists who have contributed to its glory are some of the best Italy has ever known—Bramante, Peruzzi, Raphael, and Michelangelo. Masterpieces await at every turn, from Bernini's magnificent bronze canopy to Michelangelo's

Madonna della Pietà.

Please note: Should this excursion fall on a Sunday, it'll be moved to another day of the tour. Backpacks aren't allowed in the Vatican, and shorts and sleeveless shirts are strictly prohibited. Due to closures of certain entrances and pathways, wait times may extend to several hours during busy travel months. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 70 days prior to departure.

Day 7: Pasta-Making Class & Dinner

\$119/\$129* (4 hours, departs in the evening, dinner included)

In this hands-on cooking class led by an experienced Italian chef, you'll learn to make pasta—perhaps pillow ravioli or castellane, a ridged shell pasta that's rolled into a long, oval shape—using traditional techniques you can keep on practicing when you get back home. Then, sit down for dinner and enjoy the dishes you've prepared, along with wine.

Day 8: Ancient Rome: St. Paul's Basilica & the Catacombs

\$89/\$99* (4 hours, departure time varies)

Descend into Rome's ancient catacombs, where early Christians buried saints and popes alongside commoners. A local guide will lead you through the burial chambers before your visit to St. Paul's Basilica, one of the four most important basilicas of Rome. Originally founded by Constantine the Great, the Basilica also houses the tomb of St. Paul. Please note: Shorts and sleeveless shirts are not permitted within the Basilica. Also, this excursion involves extensive walking and may be challenging for claustrophobic travelers.

Day 11: Greek Cooking Demonstration & Folk Show Dinner

\$69/\$79* (4 hours, evening with dinner)

Head to a nearby estate in Olympia where you'll learn about Greek cuisine during a cooking demonstration. Then, enjoy a buffet dinner paired with Greek wine followed by a short, interactive dance performance. Please note: Customers will share stations during the cooking demonstration.

Day 13: Cape Sounion

\$75/\$85* (4.5 hours, departure time varies)

Journey to the southern tip of the Attica Peninsula to take in the sights of the Poseidon Coast, including sandy beaches, natural and manmade harbors, and, of course, the Aegean Sea itself. High above the sparkling shoreline, the Temple of Poseidon dominates the landscape. Of the original structure, 16 elegant Doric pillars remain. Afterward, decide how you'd like to spend your free time. Take a moment to look out from the lofty cliffside vantage point, where you can see five Aegean islands on a clear day. You may also choose to enjoy a coffee, stop in the souvenir shop, or stroll through the area. Please note: This excursion involves

some walking on uneven terrain.

Extension excursion options

Day 15: Santorini Caldera Cruise & Dinner

\$149 (5 hours, departs in the afternoon, dinner included)

Board a catamaran and sail in comfort through Santorini's awe-inspiring caldera on this scenic excursion. You'll cruise around the volcanic island of Nea Kameni for views of the picture-perfect cliffside village of Oia (pronounced "EE-ah"). Situated on the western end of the island, Oia was once a maritime center, and stately captains' houses still sit on its high ridges. Spend the afternoon on the open waters as you snorkel in the ocean, sunbathe on the deck of the catamaran, and swim in a natural hot spring that was once the crater of a volcano. You'll enjoy unlimited wine, water, and soft drinks, as well as a buffet-style dinner of home-cooked Greek specialties, on board the boat as you take in the beautiful scenery. Please note: We recommend packing a bathing suit. This excursion is seasonal and runs from April through mid-October only. It is also weather-dependent. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 20 days prior to departure.

Day 16: Greek Wine Tasting & Lunch

\$89/\$99* (4 hours, departs in the afternoon with lunch)

Santorini's volcanic landscape and nutrient-rich soil nurture a wealth of outstanding vineyards. You'll tour a local winery and learn about how the vines are trained to grow close to the ground, which helps protect the grapes from the strong ocean winds. Then, sit down for a lunch and tasting featuring some of their signature varietals including Assyrtiko and Vin Santo.

*Optional excursions may be purchased up to three days prior to departure or while on tour. Pre-purchased optional excursions cannot be canceled within three days prior to departure or while on tour. Select optional excursions require advance booking and cannot be purchased or canceled after the advanced reservation deadline. GAT accepts payment by cash, Visa or MasterCard for optional excursions purchased on tour. Additional fees may apply for optional excursions purchased on tour. Excursions require a minimum number of participants to operate. Details and prices are subject to change. Due to seasonal hours of operation and availability, some excursions may not operate. If this occurs, you will be refunded any payments made for that excursion post-tour. Learn more at goaheadtours.com/terms