



GRAND EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN TOUR

Oct 06 - 21, 2013 (16 days)

Day 01 – Oct 06, Sun

CANADA – TEL AVIV

Depart for Israel, flying via Toronto

Day 02 – Oct 07, Mon

TEL AVIV – JERUSALEM

Upon arrival, you will be met by our airport representative, transfer to Jerusalem and check in. Tonight we'll have a brief informative meeting followed by dinner. (D)

Day 03 – Oct 08, Tue

JERUSALEM

We begin our day in the city at the Western Wall. Stand upon the Mount of Olives and view the city as Jesus did, or wander among the olive trees of the Garden of Gethsemane and visit the Church of All Nations. We'll walk along the Via Dolorosa to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, enter the Old City and visit the Pool of Bethesda. (B,D)

Day 04 – Oct 09, Wed

JERUSALEM – BETHLEHEM – DEAD SEA

Today we journey to Bethlehem to visit the cave revered as the birthplace of Jesus (Matt. 1: 18-25; Luke 2: 1-7). The church which was constructed on the site is the world's oldest functioning church. Nearby we'll view Shepherds' Field where the Good News was first heard. In the afternoon we travel to the Dead Sea before returning to Jerusalem (B,D)

Day 05 – Oct 10, Thu

JERUSALEM – TIBERIAS – THE GALILEE

We depart Jerusalem today for Jericho and Nazareth, where we visit the Annunciation Church, and then continue on to Cana before settling into Tiberias for our stay. (B,D)

Day 06 – Oct 11, Fri

TIBERIAS / THE GALILEE

Much of the Gospel is centered around the Sea. We'll stand on the Mount of the Beatitudes where Jesus gave his most famous sermon (Luke 6:12 - 49). At Tabgha, the traditional location for the calling of the

disciples and the feeding of the 5,000, we'll visit the Church of the Loaves and the Fishes (Luke 9:10-17) and the seaside Chapel of the Primacy where three times Peter professed his devotion to the risen Christ (John 21). We continue on to the shore town of Capernaum where Jesus called Peter, Andrew, James, John (Matt 4:13) and later Matthew. Later we'll stop by the River Jordan, where those who wish to be baptized may do so, and then enjoy a boat excursion on Lake Galilee. (B,D)

Day 07 – Oct 12, Sat

TIBERIAS / THE GALILEE – TEL AVIV

Stopping by and visiting Stella Maris and Caesarea en route to Tel Aviv – check in and dinner (B,D)

Day 08 – Oct 13, Sun

TEL AVIV – ATHENS

Early morning flight to Greece and there we set out today for a city tour, as the history and architectural splendours of the ancient city of Athens continue to inspire awe. Our guide will lead us to the fabled Acropolis where we will see the Propylaea, Parthenon and Erechtheum. We'll view Mars Hill where Paul preached the gospel to the intellectual Athenian community of his day (Acts 17: 15-34), and the ruins of the Agora marketplace, centre of Athenian public life, where Paul preached to the skeptical Athenians. After we've seen the Olympic Stadium, where the modern Olympics began (and returned in 2004), there will be time to explore the colourful and historic Plaka Market district. (B,D)

Day 09 – Oct 14, Mon

ATHENS – PIRAEUS – CRUISE: MYKONOS

Bright and early this morning we leave Athens to embark on our glorious Mediterranean cruise. Leaving the port of Piraeus at 11:00, we'll arrive in Mykonos at 18:00 and remain there until 23:00 to explore the town. (B,L,D)

Day 10 – Oct 15, Tue

CRUISE: KUSADASI – PATMOS

Our cruise ship docks in Kusadasi for our journey to Ephesus, the expansive marble city where Paul spent 3 years of his ministry. It was to this community that Paul is thought to have written his epistle to the Ephesians. The excavated ruins of Ephesus reveal much of the city from Paul's time. We will visit the ancient Agora where we can imagine Demetrius the silversmith selling his silver shrines of the Greek goddess Artemis, and marvel at the spectacular Library of Celsus and the Great Theatre mentioned in the Book of Acts. We will also visit Meryemana, the House of Mary, and the ruins of St. John's Church. Next we sail to Patmos the "Holy Island" of the Christian faith. We will have an afternoon tour of the cave and the monastery of St. John, as it's here the apocalyptic Revelation of John was written during his exile from the Roman Empire. (B,L,D)

Day 11 – Oct 16, Wed

CRUISE: RHODES

We have all day on Rhodes, the magnificent "Island of Roses", home to the sun god Apollo in Greco-Roman legend. The old town is the largest inhabited medieval town in Europe and its mighty fortifications (built by the crusaders of St. John) are the finest surviving example of defensive

architecture. We'll tour to Lindos, where the Acropolis commands a breathtaking view of the Aegean Sea and St. Paul's Bay, which harboured the Apostle during his historic voyage to Ephesus. (B,L,D)

Day 12 – Oct 17, Thu

CRUISE: CRETE – SANTORINI

Today we visit the island of Crete and tour Heraklion, famed centre of the Bronze Age Minoan civilization and the ruined palace of Knossos. As with so many sites in the region, its value to centuries of invaders has left a fascinating cultural and historical legacy. Then we journey to one of the Mediterranean's most prized and mysterious beauty spots, Santorini. Warm sun gleams off the iconic blue and white buildings which encrust the steep slopes of the largest in this southernmost group of islands in the Cyclades. The islands surround a giant water-filled caldera, remnants of the ancient Thera eruption, one of the largest volcanic events in recorded history. The tsunami and devastation likely gave rise to the legend of Atlantis and suggest Santorini as the locus of that elusive, ancient civilization. (B,L,D)

Day 13 – Oct 18, Fri

PIRAEUS – CORINTH – ATHENS – ROME

We disembark at Piraeus and travel to Ancient Corinth (Acts 18: 1-18), the city that inspired of St. Paul's most familiar letter. Here we'll visit the Archeological Museum, Marketplace and Temples. This region is so rich in imagery: imagine where Aquila and Priscilla lived and operated their tent-making business. We can walk among the ruins and stand on the Bema where Paul stood, read his letter to the Corinthians and visualize his address to the Gentiles as he began the task of building Corinth's church. We return to Athens for our flight to Rome, and there transfer to hotel for check-in and dinner. (B,L,D)

Day 14 – Oct 19, Sat

ROME

We begin with a visit to St. Peter's and continue to explore the major basilicas in the afternoon: Santa Maria Maggiore, St. John Lateran and St. Paul Outside the Walls. There will be a little time for shopping before dinner. (B,D)

Day 15 – Oct 20, Sun

ROME

Today we have time to visit the Vatican Museums and Sistine Chapel and join the pilgrims in St. Peter's Square. In the afternoon we continue with a leisurely review of the historic centre, encompassing the Colosseum, Forum Romanum, Trevi Fountain and Piazza Navona and enjoy some time at leisure for shopping or further exploration. (B,D)

Day 16 – Oct 21, Mon

ROME – CANADA