



National Trust for Historic Preservation

National Trust Tours

GARDEN OF THE GODS

A SPRINGTIME VOYAGE TO THE GREEK ISLANDS & TURKEY

Aboard the 48-Guest Yacht *Elysium*

April 19 - 30, 2022



SCHEDULE OUTLINE

April 19	Depart the US.
April 20	Arrive in Athens. <i>Hotel King George</i> .
April 21	Tour Schinias National Park, Marathon and the Vorres Museum and gardens.
April 22	Tour Athens including the Agora and the wooded slopes of Mount Hymettus.
April 23	Tour the National Archaeological Museum, the Acropolis and its Museum. Board <i>Elysium</i> in Lavrio and sail.
April 24	Monemvasia, Peloponnese, for Sparta and Mistra.
April 25	Rethymno, Crete, for the Palace of Knossos and other sites.
April 26	Santorini, including ancient Akrotiri.
April 27	Rhodes, including Lindos.
April 28	Kusadasi, Turkey, for Ephesus.
April 29	Delos & Naxos.
April 30	Disembark in Lavrio and transfer to the airport.

PROGRAM NARRATIVE

Exploring the Greek islands of the Aegean Sea in spring is one of the most rewarding travel experiences, when the fabled islands become a vast natural garden. Greece is home to a stunning number of plant species, comprising the richest flora in Europe. Just the island of Crete is home to over 2,200 species, of which a large number are endemic. Greece is also the land that, in the 4th century BC, gave birth to the science of botany. The ancient Athenians planted the Agora, the city's civic and commercial center, with trees and plants and created leisure parks, considered to be the first public gardens in Europe.

On this springtime voyage we will witness the exquisite display of wildflowers that cover the land as we explore the ancient sites, quaint port towns, villages and islands where the presence of the gods and legendary heroes is still felt. We start in **Athens**, the city where democracy and so many other ideas and concepts of the Western tradition had their origins. Here, we will tour the ageless monuments, including the Acropolis, crowned by the magnificent Parthenon, and visit some its notable museums. Athens is not just about the ancient past. It is a dynamic and lively city that features a vibrant contemporary culture and art scene, superb restaurants and cafes, quaint markets and boutiques.

At the small port of Lavrio, located near Athens, we will board the *Elysium*, an elegant and spacious small private-yacht-like cruise ship that accommodates only 48 guests, that will take us on a voyage to the shores of the Aegean and magnificent islands. Included are the well-preserved medieval town of **Monemvasia**, built by the sea against an enormous rock and surrounded by walls; **Crete**, the birthplace of Zeus and home of the Minoans, who, during the Bronze Age created the first civilization of Europe; crescent-shaped **Santorini**, perhaps the Mediterranean's most spectacular island where a volcanic eruption in the 17th century BC collapsed half of the island and buried **Akrotiri**, the island's main town that was occupied by a sophisticated society; **Rhodes**, the island of Helios, the sun god, known for its ancient sites and beautiful landscapes; uninhabited **Delos**, the birthplace of Apollo and his twin sister Artemis, a vast archaeological site; and **Naxos**, one of the most verdant of the Greek Islands with its profusion of flora. Included also is **Ephesus**, one of the world's most important archaeological sites, known for its imposing monuments and ancient homes decorated with elegant mosaics, dating from the ancient Roman period.

To explore these beguiling lands when the ancient sites and landscapes are carpeted with a profusion of wildflowers and aromatic herbs is a rare privilege and travel-study experience.

THE ELYSIUM



Lounge



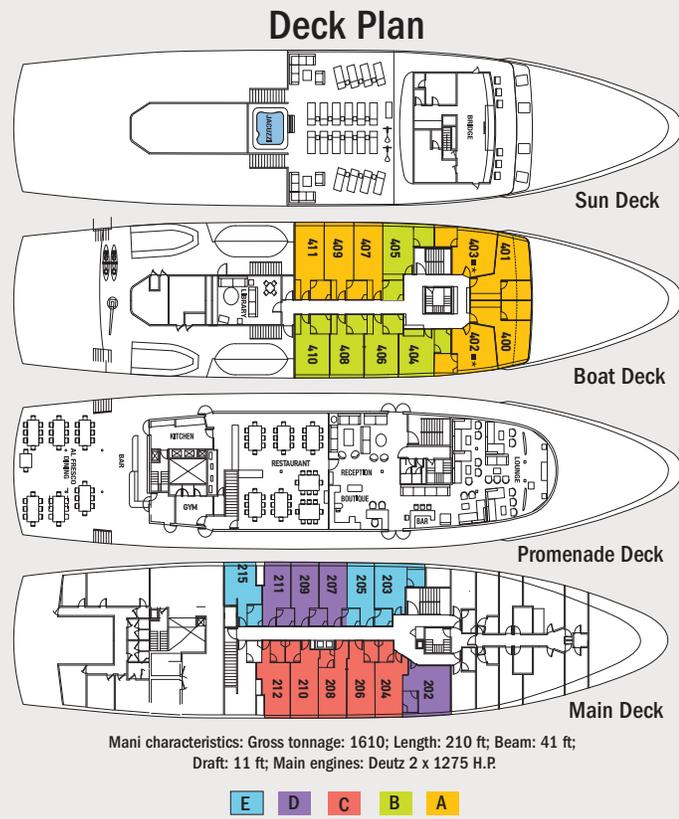
Boat Deck Stateroom



Library



Al Fresco Dining



In an era of mega cruise ships that carry thousands of passengers, *Elysium* is a delightful alternative. More like an elegant private yacht than a cruise ship, *Elysium* accommodates only 48 guests in 24 spacious cabins that face outside, about half the number usually found on a ship this size. Large enough to navigate in comfort and safety, small enough to access small ports with agility, *Elysium*

features expansive open deck areas that include a Jacuzzi, a promenade that wraps around the deck, an elegant restaurant that accommodates all guests in an open, unassigned seating, an outdoor dining area, a lounge that is surrounded with windows, a library and gym. A fleet of kayaks provide opportunities for kayaking in the protected blue waters of the Mediterranean. The ship is served by

24 seasoned officers and crew. *Elysium* provides a style of cruising that is rarely found today. More than a cruise, each voyage is custom-crafted to provide a comprehensive experience that reveals the singular aspects of the destinations.

Welcome aboard the yacht *Elysium*.

PROGRAM INCLUSIONS

- Three nights at the elegant *Hotel King George*, Athens.
- Welcome dinner in Athens at a local restaurant.
- Full breakfast each morning at the hotel.
- Cruise aboard the *Elysium*, as described in the itinerary.
- Complete program of tours and excursions and other activities ashore, with professional English-speaking guides.
- Program of lectures by accompanying professor or expert.
- Airport/hotel/pier transfers and handling of luggage abroad.
- All meals aboard ship, including wine, beer, and soft drinks with lunch and dinner.

- Open bar aboard ship throughout the voyage.
- Port, embarkation, and all other local taxes.
- Gratuities to guides, drivers and porters.
- Experienced *Thalassa Journeys* trip director.
- Comprehensive pre-departure material.

NOT INCLUDED: Airfare; travel insurance; expenses of a personal nature; gratuities to shipboard personnel; any items not mentioned in the Program Inclusions.



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