

Athens - Dikkili - Myrina - Shiathos - Skopelos - Poros - Athens

All tours are offered with English speaking guides. The length of the tours and time spent on the sites is given as an indication as it may vary depending on the road, weather, sea and traffic conditions and on the group's pace. Minimum number of participants indicated per coach or group.

The level of physical fitness required for our activities is given as a very general indication without any knowledge of our passenger's individual abilities. Broadly speaking to enjoy activities such as hiking, biking, snorkelling, boating or other activities involving physical exertion, passengers should be fit and active. Passengers must judge for themselves whether they will be capable of participating in and above all enjoying such activities.

All information concerning excursions is correct at the time of printing. However Star Clippers reserves the right to make changes, which will be relayed to passengers during the Cruise Director's onboard information sessions.



DIKKILI, TURKEY

Dikkili is a sleepy little beach town, authentically Turkish. The harbour is lined with open air restaurants and shops selling local delicacies. Nearby Berama is well worth a visit especially for its two main monuments: the Acropolis perched at a height of 280m and the Asklépeion.

Pergamon

By motor coach and on foot

Minimum 15 participants, no maximum

Duration: 4 hours

€60

Located in Bergama county in the province of Ismir, Pergamon is one of the major classical sites in Turkey and is considered to be one of the most beautiful cities of the ancient world.

During the Hellenistic period, Pergamon was an outstanding cultural hub for more than a century. During Byzantine times, Pergamon was the centre of a diocese. The stones from Hellenistic and Roman buildings, as well as ancient statuary were used as building material. In 716 the city was occupied by Arab invaders for a while and was captured by Turks in 1330. The German archaeologists Carl Humann, Alexander Conze and R. Bohn first undertook the excavation of this site between 1878 and 1886. During this period the magnificent relief sculptures of the Altar of Zeus were discovered and shipped off to Berlin. You will leave the motor coaches behind and board a cable car to reach the Pergamon Acropolis perched at an altitude of 350 m. The Upper Acropolis was the official city and home to the royal family and aristocracy as well as housing a garrison. Practically all the monuments date from the Hellenistic period except the temple of Trajan which is from the Roman period. You will see the foundations of the Royal Palace, the arsenal where weapons and stores were stocked, the Temple of Trajan, the Temple of Athena, the majestic theatre with its tiered seating built into the south slope of the acropolis, the Temple of Dionysus and the remains of the great library, the biggest in Asia minor, second only to the famous library in Alexandria. Ancient authors tell us that at one time Pergamon library contained 200.000 volumes. Mark Anthony had them taken over to Egypt as a gift for Cleopatra to replace the books that had been lost when the Alexandrian Library was burned down during Caesar's campaign.

After this visit you will board the coach for a short trip to Asklépeion, a site of thermal baths & pilgrimage which attracted visitors from all over the Empire.

You will follow the same route as that taken by the pilgrims and discover ruins that date back from the Roman period and the Emperor Hadrian. The name Asklépeion derives from Asklépios, the Greek god of medicine. This place of pilgrimage included a school of medicine, a philosophical centre a temple and even a theatre.

You will then be driven back to Dikkili.

The price includes a return transfer by cable car from the parking lot to the Acropolis

The drive to Pergamon takes 30 minutes



MYRINA, Greece

According to the poet Hesiod, Zeus, the King of the Gods, threw Hephaestus (the Greek equivalent of the Roman God of Fire, Vulcan) off Mount Olympus, because he had come to the aid of his Mother Hera, who had incurred Zeus's wrath. Hephaestus fell for some time before landing on the island of Limnos, and the fall left him with a permanent limp. The story does not say whether he was restored to health by drinking the excellent red and white wines that are produced on the island, but they may well have helped to reconcile him to his fate!

The town of Myrina is dominated by the white ramparts of the Kastro, built in 1186, and even earlier ruins (some of the most ancient in Greece) are located in nearby Poliohni.

THE TIME MACHINE TOUR : Poliochni Kotsinas & Archeological museum

By air-conditioned motor coach

Minimum 20 participants, maximum 60

Duration 4 hours

€48

The tour begins with a drive to Poliochni on the East coast of Lemnos, the site of the island's most significant archaeological discoveries. In 1930 a group of Italian archaeologists discovered no less than seven different layers of civilisation here, one on top of the other. Poliochni is considered to be one of the largest urban centres of the Early Bronze Age and the very first city in Europe with a basic social and civic structure. The Neolithic town predates the Egyptian dynasties, the Minoan Kingdoms of Crete and even the earliest level of Troy.

The next stop is Kotsinas, a small village situated on the north coast of Lemnos which, in the Middle Ages, was an important commercial port belonging to Hephaisstia (the capital of the island from the 8th to 6th centuries BC). The seafront is lined with tavernas and on a hilltop overlooking the village the church of Zoodochos Pigi (The Life-Giving Spring) watches over the inhabitants and the Statue of Maroula, the legendary heroine of Lemnos who forced Turkish invaders to flee the island in 1478, bears witness to their proud spirit.

Next stop is Myrina where you will visit the Lemnos Archaeological Museum founded in 1961. The museum showcases the discoveries made by the Italian archaeologists at the ancient sites of Poliochni, Kavirio and Ifestia among others. You will also learn something of the fascinating history of Lemnos, from prehistoric times to the Copper age and the Classical period. After the visit you will return to the ship

Please wear comfortable walking shoes as the ground is uneven at Poliochni.

Visits may take place in a different order

In certain areas of the museum cameras (non-professional) and video-cameras are allowed, flash photography is forbidden.

In Poliochni cameras (non-professional) and video-cameras can be used.

There are 50 steps to climb if you wish to visit the church.



Mountain Bike safari

Duration 4 hours (may vary – subject to participants' fitness)

Experienced bikers

Minimum 10 participants, maximum 18

€49

This tour is a great choice for mountain bike enthusiasts.

You will be cycling up and down hills through some of the most spectacular places on the island of Skiathos, (moderate difficulty).

We start from the port of Skiathos and head south-west along the coastal road. After about 6km cycling on asphalt, we reach the Agia Paraskevi district with its eponymous local church. From that point we are officially "on safari" as we go off-road taking the Platanias route, dusty roads and narrow paths leading to the forest area of Skiathos at the centre of the island. We carry on all the way to Kechria beach on the northern coast, where there will be a short stop. After a little rest (or a refreshing swim), our next destination will be the Katsarou view-point where you can take fabulous panoramic photos of Skiathos town, Tsougria Island and the ship.

The last part of the trip on the way back to port is through the fascinating narrow alley ways of Skiathos town.

Participants need to be at least 16 years old, physically fit and should wear bright coloured clothing for visibility.

There is an English speaking tour leader

Mountain bikes are Hardrock or Mongoose

Each participant will be equipped with helmet, gloves, small bottle of water and juice

Duration of the tour may vary – subject to participants' fitness

Boat & beach tour

By boat

Duration 4h30

Minimum 20 participants, maximum 30

€58

Leaving the port of Skiathos behind us, we will sail along the Eastern coast to reach our first stop – Lalaria beach situated on the northern part of the island and accessible only by boat. It is covered with grey pebbles and is famous for its crystal clear water and a huge arched rock forming a natural bridge between the beach and the sea.

After some leisure time on Lalaria we will get back on board and visit another beach, not too far away, called Castro. Above the beach you can see the remains of the old medieval city of Skiathos (1100-1600) which was once the island's capital.

You can either spend your time relaxing on the beach and swimming or take a walk uphill and explore the old town (15 minutes' walk) admiring the frescoes in the small Byzantine churches and soaking up the unique medieval atmosphere. If you climb to the summit you will be rewarded by breath-taking scenic views from the castle and get to take some wonderful photos.

From Castro beach we return to the port.

Lalaria beach has no facilities (deckchairs sun umbrellas, restaurant), and pebbles instead of sand.

You can take along your snorkelling equipment from the ship

Castro beach has a stand where you can buy snacks and drinks

There are a limited number of deck chairs and sun umbrellas (these cost extra) but they are subject to availability.

In high season the beaches may be overcrowded

On the boat guests are entitled to one soft drink free of charge.

In case of adverse weather conditions and strong winds the beaches may not be accessible in which case with no prior notice these stops will be replaced by visits to Tsougria and Vromolimnos



SKOPELOS, GREECE

Skopelos is the largest of the Sporades islands and the capital of the archipelago. Its wealth is derived principally from the fine locally produced wine. The "chora" or main town of Skopelos is considered by many to be one of the prettiest harbourside towns in the Greek islands: the houses are built in tiers ascending the hillside and the port is lined with mulberry and plane trees.

Most of the town's tavernas and cafés are located on the waterfront; relax and enjoy traditional Greek refreshment as you watch the world go by. It is fun to wander down narrow cobblestone streets, discovering hidden courtyards filled with flowers and Byzantine churches, or just browse around the small craft shops and boutiques.

"Mamma Mia" highlights tour

by air- conditioned minibus only

Minimum 15 participants, maximum 50

Duration 4hours

€44

The minibus will be waiting for you at the port, ready to set off for Kastri on the northern part of the island. Here you will see the little church of John the Baptist located at the top of 130 steps carved into the rock face. Climb to the top and you will be rewarded with stunning views of the archipelago.

This modest but picture-perfect chapel shot to fame in 2007 thanks to the box office hit Mamma Mia which was filmed in Skopelos. It was the location chosen for Sophie's wedding in the film. On the same spot, at the bottom of the rock, Donna (Meryl Streep) and Sam (Pierce Brosnan) sang "The Winner Takes it All".

The tour continues to Kastani Beach, one of the best on Skopelos. The beach was the location of the beach bar and jetty featured in the film. It was here that Tanya sings "Does your Mother know" and Sophie and Sky sing "Lay All your Love on Me". The hit song "I have a dream" was also performed here.

You will not see Donna's bar nor the jetty, as these were constructed for the film and taken down afterwards. However, there is a nice beach bar and you can have a drink or go for a short swim.

On the way back to the port, there will be a short stop at Agnondas beach, and from there you will just glimpse the fantastic peninsula of Amarandos with the three trees.

Once you are back in Skopelos, you can enjoy time at leisure strolling around or shopping before returning on board.

The drive to Agios Ioannis church takes approx. one hour

There are 130 steps up to the church

You will spend one hour on site

There is a 30 minutes' drive to Kastani beach where you will spend one hour (changing facilities available)

30 minutes' drive back to the ship

"Does Your Mother Know" was performed and shot at Kastani bay and beach

The wedding scenes of the movie were shot in Agios Ioannis church

The official Mamma Mia Movie website reports that the movie cast and crew stayed at the Skopelos Village Hotel, the Prince Stafylos Hotel, the Adrina Hotel, and the Aeolia Hotel. Some of the stars rented villas nearby instead.

Due to very narrow roads, only a small bus can be used for this tour.



POROS, GREECE

It is barely a hop, skip and a jump from the Argolid Peninsula to the island of Poros. The island is home to the Greek Naval Academy and in the morning visitors can enjoy the cadet's marching band. The views from the temple of Poseidon are hauntingly beautiful which may explain why the doomed orator Demosthenes chose to end his life here.

Epidaurus

By air-conditioned motor coach and on foot

Minimum 20 participants, no maximum

Duration 3h30

€60

Transfer by ship's tender to the port of Galatas on the Argolid Peninsula. Here you will meet your guide and board the coach for the short drive to Epidaurus. Epidaurus was the site of a shrine devoted to Aesculapius, the Greek God of Medicine. Patients would flock to the sanctuary seeking a cure for their ailments and Aesculapius would either effect a cure during their sleep or appear in a dream to the priests who would then treat the patient according to his instructions.

Apart from praying to be restored to health, Patients could indulge in thermal baths and hydrotherapy as well as "taking in a show"! Indeed, as soon as you arrive at the site you will walk through a beautiful grove to discover the famous theatre, one of the best preserved monuments of the ancient world. The theatre can seat 14.000 spectators and is famous for its acoustics. It is still in use today and modern visitors enjoy musical productions and performances of Greek drama there. You will have some time to wander around, so you can test the wonderful acoustics for yourself.

The nearby museum houses fragments from the Asclepeion sanctuary.

The drive to Epidaurus takes 45 minutes each way

You will spend 1h30 on site before returning to the ship

ATHENS, GREECE

The earliest Athenians were of Ionian stock and arrived on the peninsula in about 2000 BC. Little is known about these early rulers, apart from the fact that they were kings. By the 7th century BC, the monarchy had been superseded by the Eupatrids, noblemen hailing from the eleven aristocratic families of Attica. Next came Solon, the "Father of Democracy", who initiated the idea of government by the people, and created assemblies of ordinary citizens. After Solon came the age of the Tyrants, which started when Peisistratus seized power in about 546 BC. This benevolent tyrant helped farmers by giving them loans and land, taken away from the nobles, and provided work for the poor with new building projects. The idea was to weaken the power of the aristocracy in favour of merchants and farmers.

Athens, particularly the Acropolis, became one of the chief religious centres in Greece and by 600 BC there were many temples, fragments of which can be seen at the Acropolis Museum.

The year 450 BC saw the dawning of the "Golden Age" of Pericles.

The Modern Greek state was born in the 1830's after the Greek revolution of 1821. The Ottomans ceded the Acropolis to a Bavarian detachment and the Bavarian Prince Otto became the new King of Greece. The Greek architect Cleanthes and his German counterpart Schaubert were given the task of setting out the new city, which they planned around Otto's austere palace. The palace dominates Syntagma Square (Constitution Square) and is near the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

From Syntagma Square, Amalia Avenue leads past the National Garden and Zappion Park to Hadrian's Arch. Behind the park lies the stadium, venue of the first modern Olympic Games in 1896 and built on the site where games were held in ancient times.

The mountainous region of Attica and Athens, although barren and infertile, enjoy a superb climate.



Athens and the new Acropolis museum

By air-conditioned motor coach

Minimum 10 participants, no maximum.

Duration : 5 hours, ending at the airport , €75

Duration: 4 hours, with a drop off in Athens, €60

After leaving Piraeus you will drive past the charming yacht harbour of Zea, where the foundations of the 5th century BC dock are clearly visible. Next comes the Mikrolimanon waterfront, lined with tempting al fresco fish restaurants. From here it is but a short drive to cosmopolitan Athens, where modern buildings cohabit with ancient monuments. You will pass the Temple of Zeus, the Panathenaic Stadium, the Parliament at Syntagma Square (Constitution Square), the National Academy, the University, the Library and Hadrian's Arch, before arriving at the New Acropolis Museum located 300m south east of the Rock of the Acropolis. The museum was designed by Bernard Tschumi and was opened to the public in 2009. It has a surface area of 14.000 m2 and houses nearly 4000 exhibits displayed on three levels. You will see findings from the Acropolis archaeological site as well as artefacts from the Greek Bronze age right through to Roman and Byzantine Greece. For those passengers returning to the ship, the tour ends in the city centre, while the rest of the passengers will be transferred to the airport.

The tour will end at Syntagma Square in Athens . The guide will then leave the tour and the coach will drive on to the airport arriving around 13h00/13h30.

A minimum of 6 guests is required for the tour to continue to the airport

Passengers staying on board for the following cruise will be dropped off in Athens, and make their own way back to the pier

The duration of the tour depends on the traffic situation. If the traffic is fluid, arrival at the airport will be somewhat earlier

You will spend about 2 hours in the museum

The use of cameras and video cameras is free of charge, but flash photography is forbidden in the museum.

