

# ASIA MINOR *and* GREECE JOURNEY

13 – 29 April, 2020

IN THE FOOTSTEPS of APOSTLE PAUL

*and*

THE SEVEN CHURCHES of THE BOOK of REVELATION

*Hosted by Rev. Dr. Jeff Crittenden*

*“Not all those who wander are lost”*

J.R.R. Tolkien



*Istanbul (Constantinople)*



*Ephesus*



*Aegean Cruise (viewed from Patmos)*



*Athens*



Travel Industry Council of Ontario  
T.I.C.O. Registration # 2976741

#### **DAY 1: MON. 13 APRIL: Canada to Istanbul**

Today, we depart from Toronto on our overnight flight(s) to Istanbul. Group seating will be pre-assigned by the airline for our flight. Dinner and complimentary in-flight service will be provided this evening. **(D)**

#### **DAY 2: TUE. 14 APRIL: Arrive Istanbul**

Upon arrival at Istanbul, we will be met by our guide and driver. Once in Istanbul, we shall drive through the Marmara Region where we arrive at the gateway between Europe and Asia, Istanbul (Constantinople). Here, we check-in to **The President Hotel** for the next two nights. **(B, D)**

#### **DAY 3: WED. 15 APRIL: Istanbul**

After breakfast, we enjoy our full day historical Istanbul tour. Visiting the **Hagia Sophia Museum** (built in the 6th century) the **Blue Mosque**, famous for its blue Iznik tiles and the **Hippodrome Square** where ancient chariot races were held. **Topkapi Palace** – This former Sultan's Palace and museum offers wonderful views of the Bosphorus River. We shall also visit the **Grand Bazaar**, home to over 4000 shops and merchants.

Dinner will be at our hotel this evening. **(B, D)**

#### **DAY 4: THU. 16 APRIL: Istanbul**

This morning, we stay in Istanbul and visit:

**Egyptian Spice Market** – Experience the atmosphere of the authentic marketplace, with sights, sounds and smells stimulated by this unique covered bazaar.

**Bosphorus River Cruise** – Viewing the picturesque beauty of the European and Asian shorelines on either side.

Later this afternoon, we head to the airport for our domestic flight to Denizli.

Our time spent in Pamukkale is quite memorable! Here, we shall check-in to the **Lycus River Hotel**. Dinner and overnight will be at our hotel. **(B, D)**

#### **DAY 5: FRI. 17 APRIL: LAODICEA, HERAPOLIS, PAMUKKALE**

Today, we take the short coach ride to the hot springs of Pamukkale, ancient Hierapolis and Laodicea. (Colossians 4:13)

**Hierapolis** – Located in ancient Phrygia, this was a very prosperous city. People came from all over the ancient world to visit and be healed by the unique properties of the hot spring water. The size of the archeological site speaks to the wealth of the people at that time, yet any who came to be healed are buried in the large necropolis.

**Laodicea** – The “luke warm” Church that is neither hot nor cold. (Revelation 3:14-22)

This afternoon allows you free time to enjoy the natural hot spring pools of the hotel and maybe take advantage of the Turkish baths and spa facilities!

Dinner will be at our hotel. **(B, D)**

#### **DAY 6: SAT. 18 APRIL: PHILADELPHIA, SARDIS, SMYRNA**

Today, we begin our journey to the Aegean Coast and overnight in the picturesque port City of Kusadasi. En-route, we shall visit three of the Seven Churches of the Book of Revelation.

**Philadelphia** – The Church that had endured patiently. (Revelation 3:7-13)

**Sardis** – The Church that had fallen asleep. (Revelation 3:1-6)

**Smyrna** – The persecuted Church that suffered poverty and martyrdom. (Revelation 2:8-11)

Dinner will be at our hotel, **The Ramada**, in the port city of Kusadasi located by the Aegean Sea. **(B, D)**

#### **DAY 7: SUN. 19 APRIL: EPHESUS**

Today, we have a full day visit to the unforgettable ruins of **Ephesus** – The ‘desirable Church’ that left its first love! (Revelation 2:1-7)

In the ancient world, Ephesus was a center of travel and





commerce. Situated on the Aegean Sea at the mouth of the Cayster River, the city was one of the greatest seaports of the ancient world. It was here that Paul visited, whilst on his return to Israel but was forced to leave the city vowing to return.

He never returned to Ephesus but instead held council from Melitus during his Third journey. Our day also includes a visit to the Church of Apostle John.

Dinner is back at our hotel in Kusadasi. **(B, D)**

#### **DAY 8: MON. 20 APRIL: PATMOS**

This morning, we embark on our ferry to the beautiful Island of Patmos.

This is picturesque, peaceful and almost mysterious rocky island of the Dodecanese where the Apostle John was exiled and wrote the Book of Revelation. Here, we tour the Monastery of St. John the Evangelist where we also have a wonderful view of the island. We will visit the Grotto of the Revelation. After some free time in Skala for browsing, we return to the mainland on our ferry.

Dinner will be at our Kusadasi hotel tonight. **(B, D)**

#### **DAY 9: TUE. 21 APRIL: SMYRNA, PERGAMON, TROY**

After breakfast, we depart for a day visiting some more sites of the Seven Churches of Revelation.

**Pergamum** – The worldly Church that mixed doctrines and needed to repent. (Revelation 2:12-17)

Towards the end of the day, we shall arrive at the ancient site of Troy and visit the many layers of archeology associated with this famous city.

A truly memorable day, we arrive at the city of Canakkale for dinner and overnight stay at the **Iris hotel**. **(B, D)**

#### **DAY 10: WED. 22 APRIL: Canakkale to Kavala**

This morning, we cross the Dardanelle Straits (location of one of the bloodiest battles during WWI) and drive to the border crossing with Greece. Once at the border, we shall say “goodbye” to our Turkish guide and “hello” to our Greek guide.

Our resting point this evening is Kavala (ancient Neapolis) where we will have dinner and overnight stay at the **Egnatia Hotel**. **(B, D)**

#### **DAY 11: THU. 23 APRIL: Philippi, Thessalonika**

After breakfast, we depart for **Philippi** where Paul established a large church. This church was very near and dear to Paul’s heart. (Acts 16:9-33)

Here, we also visit the river where Lydia was baptized and the prison where Paul and Syllas were kept captive.

From Philippi, we head towards Thessaloniki where we learn about Paul’s teachings at the old synagogue. (Acts 17:1-4)

Dinner will be at our hotel, the **Grand Palace**, this evening. **(B, D)**

#### **DAY 12: FRI. 24 APRIL: Berea and Mt. Olympus to Kalambaka**

After breakfast, we leave Macedonia and head south to Berea where we see the beautiful mosaics and depictions of Paul’s teachings to the Jews. (Acts 17:10-11)

From Berea, we continue on our journey towards Kalambaka but not before reaching the base of Mt. Olympus.

Dinner will be at our hotel, **The Amalia Hotel**, in Kalambaka. **(B, D)**

#### **DAY 13: SAT. 25 APRIL: Meteora Monasteries to Delphi**

In the morning, we enjoy a spectacular drive up to the UNESCO Heritage site of the Meteora Monasteries. Perched on top of these gigantic geological monoliths are wonderful monasteries, dating back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Inside these Byzantine buildings are icons, old manuscripts, mosaics and frescoes.

From Meteora, we continue our drive southwards to Athens but not before our overnight in Delphi.

Dinner will be at our hotel, **The Amalia Hotel** in Delphi. **(B, D)**



#### DAY 14: SUN. 26 APRIL: Delphi to Athens

After breakfast, we check-out of the hotel and depart for the archeological site and museum in Delphi. During ancient times, Delphi was considered the navel (omphalos) of the Earth. Situated on the slopes of Mt. Parnassus, the site is nestled in a landscape of unparalleled natural beauty.

We shall visit the Sanctuary of Apollo, the Treasury of the Athenians and the museum.

After lunch, we shall depart for Athens and enjoy the scenic drive.

Dinner will be at our hotel, The Marriott, this evening. **(B, D)**

#### DAY 15: MON. 27 APRIL: Corinth

This morning, our excursion takes us by the Saronic Gulf. It was here in 480 BC that the small Grecian fleet managed to defeat the enormously powerful armada of the Persians. From here, via the historic Corinthian Canal, we arrive at ancient Corinth. (Acts 18:1-18)

It was to this megalopolis where the apostle Paul came and worked, established a thriving church, subsequently sending two of his epistles now part of the New Testament. Here, we see all of the sites associated with his ministry: the Agora, the Temple of Apollo, the Roman Odeon, the Bema and Gallio's Seat. In Romans 16:23, Paul mentions his friend Erastus and we will see an inscription to him at the site. From here, we see the ruins of early Christian 5th century basilica in **Cenchreae** before returning to the hotel in Athens.

It was the harbor of Corinth, on the Saronic Gulf east whence Paul sailed for Ephesus (Acts 18:18). There was a church here of which Phoebe was a member (Romans 16:1), and Lucius its first bishop, appointed by Paul. There was a temple at the end of each mole and a statue of Poseidon (Neptune) on a rock between as may be seen on an ancient coin of Corinth.

Dinner will be at our hotel this evening. **(B, D)**

#### DAY 16: TUE. 28 APRIL: Athens

Today, we will enjoy our full day tour in Athens. We shall visit the **Acropolis site**, the sacred rock of Athens, the citadel and the sanctuary of the city in antiquity. We visit the famous Parthenon and the Erechtheion with its porch of maidens.

We will then walk to nearby **Mars Hill** and stand on the very spot where Paul gave his famous speech to the Athenian philosophers (Acts 17:18-34) and spoke about the inscription: "to an unknown god".

Our tour continues with the highlights of modern Athens: we pass by the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Parliament House, the Academy, the University of Athens, the National Library, Panathenaic Stadium, Temple of Olympian Zeus and Hadrian's Arch.

This afternoon, we shall have some free time in **Plaka** before returning to our hotel.

Dinner will be at our hotel this evening. A wonderful time to reflect on our experience! **(B, D)**

#### DAY 17: WED. 29 APRIL: Homeward bound

After breakfast, we board our morning flight and depart for home. Our flights bring us back to Toronto in the late afternoon. Complimentary in flight service is provided on our flights, including breakfast and lunch. **(B, L)**

**B = Breakfast   L = Lunch   D = Dinner**



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