

Greece & the Greek Isles in the Footsteps of Paul

Blog Entry Day 1

Our journey begins with an early arrival at the airport - 4 am check in!

Most of the group is traveling today from Cleveland to JFK, a six-hour layover, then get on an overnight flight to Athens. The rest of the group gets to sleep in, go the wrong way to Chicago, then catch an overnight flight to Athens as well.

As we meet and greet our fellow travelers, we are getting excited about the days ahead. Here are a few of the places we will be going:

Athens - we will explore Mars Hill and the Parthenon and other sites in this amazing city. Mars Hill is the location of one of Paul's most important gospel presentations at the time of his visit to Athens during his second missionary journey (Acts 17:16-34). It was where he addressed the religious idolatry of the Greeks who even had an altar to the "Unknown God."

Meteora - 24 perpendicular rocks are where 600 years ago Byzantine monks chose to worship God and build their cave-like Monastic community in these rocks. The striking monasteries hang over the stunning abysses which make these primitive dwellings one of the most fascinating sites on earth.

Thessaloniki - the ancient city where Paul planted a church that would later receive two New Testament epistles.

Philippi - where St. Paul preached his first evangelical sermon and baptized the very first Christian convert on European soil. Among the ruins located on the rocky ledge above the town's main road is the prison into which Paul and Silas were thrown. It was in Philippi that Octavian and Anthony defeated Brutus and Cassius in 42 BC.

In addition to our bus tour, we will set sail on a cruise to several sites, including:

The Island of Mykonos, world-renowned for its lovely windmills, small cobblestone streets, and countryside.

Kusadasi and nearby Ephesus, Turkey, Asia Minor's greatest archeological site.

Patmos, built on a mass of volcanic rock. The island marks the site where the apostle John wrote the book of Revelation.

Heraklion, Crete, the largest of the Greek Islands and the cradle of the Ancient Minoan Civilization. This island is where the Apostle Paul spent time as he was being transported to Rome as a prisoner and where Titus remained to help the churches.

Santorini, formed by the half-submerged crescent of a volcanic caldera. Perched atop high cliffs, savor the island's breathtaking views from Oia.

I hope to share with you more details and pictures as we go.

BUT IN THE MEANTIME, we travel.

See you in Greece!

