

DOWN
ANCIENT
PATHS™

GREECE & MALTA

**Early Christian Adventures with the Apostle Paul in
Greece and Malta (including an Aegean Greek Islands Cruise)**

MAY 5-23, 2024



Tour Host
Dr. Charles Nienkirchen
*Professor Emeritus,
Ambrose University*



Athens • Thessaloniki • Amphipolis • Philippi
Kavala (Neapolis) • Berea • Vergina • Meteora
Delphi • Patmos • Rhodes • Crete • Santorini
Valletta • Rabat • Mdina



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Tour Itinerary:

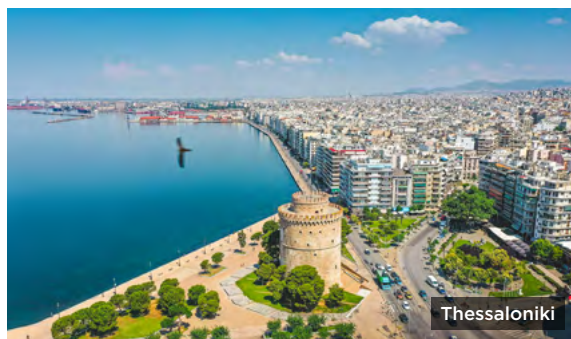
May 5 Sun Depart Calgary

May 6 Mon Arrive in Athens
Transfer to hotel for dinner/overnite (D)

May 7 Tue Athens
After breakfast, we start at the **Areopagus (Mars Hill)**, a limestone outcropping of rock, where it is believed that the Athenian Supreme Court met and tried those who committed homicide. A bronze plaque at the base of the stone steps commemorates Paul's sermon with an inscribed text. From here we have a panoramic view of both the Agora where Paul debated with Stoic and Epicurean philosophers and the **Acropolis**, with its elegant collection of monuments (the most significant of which date to the 5th century BCE). It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site which has been described as a 'grand composition of perfectly balanced massive structures' symbolizing the spirit of classical civilization. Its apex, the architecturally spectacular **Parthenon**, the **Propylaea**, the **Temple of Nike**, the **Erechtheion**, the **Theatre of Herod Atticus** and the newly opened **Parthenon Museum** are all a 'must' see. We'll stroll through the **Agora** and labyrinthine streets of the historic **Plaka district**. Dinner and overnight in Athens. (B,D)

May 8 Wed Athens/Thessaloniki
This morning we fly to beautiful **Thessaloniki**. After Macedonia was conquered by the Romans in 146 BCE, Thessaloniki was connected to the **Via Egnatia** and evolved into an important transit centre in the extensive road network built by the Romans. Visit the bygone world of Paul, somewhat preserved in the slightly later ruins of the **Roman Forum** of the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE which were discovered in the early 1960's in **Dhikastirion Square**. Among the city's many churches of interest, we'll concentrate our attention on the 5th century CE, five-aisled **Basilica of St. Demetrius** (B,D)

May 9 Thu Amphipolis/Philippi/Kavala (Neapolis)/Thessaloniki
Our first destination this morning is **Amphipolis**. It was located on the **Via Egnatia** (about 55 km from Philippi) on the east bank of the **Strymon River**. It is a dynamic archaeological site where in very recent years the largest burial mound in Greece has been unearthed. We'll also take time to visit the **Archaeological Museum**. We continue to **Philippi**. We'll read about the conversion of the Philippian jailor and the baptism of the entrepreneur Lydia, at a small river near the archaeological site.



The ruins of **Philippi** are extensive – the **Forum** where the apostle presumably preached, the 5th and 6th century CE Christian basilicas which prove the public solidification of the faith, the '**prison of Paul**' and the restyled **Roman Theatre**. We will walk a part of the ancient Via Egnatia. Our last stop of the day, 17 km from Philippi, is **Kavala (Neapolis)**, the port of Philippi, set beautifully in a natural theatre dominated by a Byzantine fortress. Our tour of the city will include the **Kavala Old Town (Panagia)**, the 16th century CE **Turkish aqueduct**, the **Byzantine fortress/castle** and the **mosaic of Paul** replicating his arrival on the European continent. Overnite in Thessaloniki, enjoy an evening walk by the sea to see the Alexander the Great Monument. (B,D)

May 10 Fri Thessaloniki/Berea/Vergina/Kalambaka
Before departing Thessaloniki we'll ascend to its 4th century CE, basically Byzantine walls for a spectacular overview of the city. We'll continue to **Beroea (Veria)** which in the first century CE was characterized by racial and religious diversity and possessed a flourishing Jewish population (Acts 17: 10-14). We will proceed to **Vergina**, the preeminent archaeological site in Macedonia, where some of Greece's most momentous, archaeological finds have been made. The royal tombs of **Philip II**, the discoveries in the **Great Tumulus** were breathtaking. We'll view the priceless artifacts of the tombs in the **Archaeological Museum**. Overnite in Kalambaka. (B,D)

May 11 Sat Meteora Monasteries/Delphi
This morning we'll have an option for hot air ballooning. Then we begin exploring **Meteora** which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the second most important complex of monasteries in Greece after Mt. Athos. It is definitely a highlight of this itinerary. They are perched precariously on the tops of fingerlike rocks which soar skyward as if connecting earth with heaven. We drive on to **Delphi** with a brief stop at **Thermopylae** ("hot gates") to contemplate the modern, roadside monument to **King Leonidas I** of Sparta. This evening we will have a lecture by Professor Nienkirchen on **How Does Delphi Relate to the New Testament?** (B,D)

May 12 Sun Delphi/Hosios Loukas/Athens
Delphi is today's main agenda. It is a UNESCO World Heritage Site which stands enchantingly among hills and olive groves, arguably the most beautiful classical site to be seen anywhere. The **Oracle of Delphi**, venerated throughout the ancient world for almost a millenium before its influence expired, was situated in an imposing ravine on the side of **Mt. Parnassus** sacred to the god Dionysus. We'll follow the once magnificent '**Sacred Way**' (which originally had 3000 statues and treasures) up to **Apollo's Temple** as well as visiting the remains of the **Roman Marketplace**, the **Treasures of Greek city states**, the magnificent **Theater**, and the **Stadium of Delphi**. We'll also take time for the **archaeological museum**. Also to be seen on site are the **Gymnasium** where athletes trained for the games and the **Sanctuary of the Athena Pronaea**. Before continuing on to Athens, we'll visit **Hosios Loukas (Blessed Luke) Monastery**, one of the most important and impressive of the medieval Greek Orthodox monasteries. Return to Athens for dinner and overnight. (B,D)

May 13 Mon Greek Island Aegean Cruise begins – departs Lavrion @ 13:00
This morning we transition from land to sea and proceed to **Lavrion port**, to board our cruise ship, the **Celestyal Olympia**. Our first stop is **Mykonos at 18:00**. Departing Mykonos at 23:00, we set sail for **Kusadasi, Turkey**. (B,L,D)

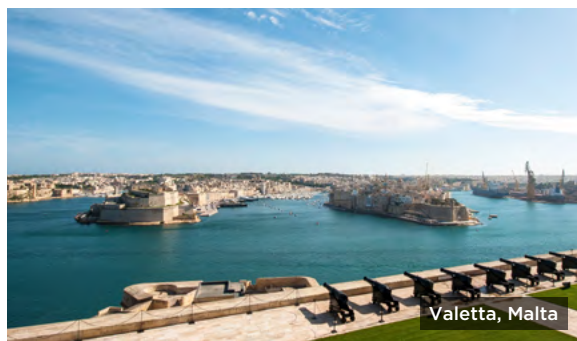
May 14 Tue Arrives 07:00 Kusadasi - Patmos
We will have the opportunity to visit the ancient city of Ephesus in the morning. Depart at 13:00. Our next destination in the early evening is **The Holy Island of Patmos**, arriving 16:30. Patmos is the most northerly part of the Dodecanese Islands. With its ragged coastline it puts the apocalyptically charged **Book of Revelation** on our radar screen. We'll visit the venerated **Cave of the Apocalypse** which according to tradition is where John the Divine heard the voice of Jesus Christ and composed the final book in the New Testament which he dictated to his disciple Prochorus to record. Departure at 21:30 (B,L,D)



Skala, Patmos



Heraklion, Crete



Valletta, Malta

May 15 Wed Arrives Rhodes

Arrival to Rhodes at 07.00. The town of Rhodes has been inhabited for more than 24 centuries. The buildings which adorn Rhodes today are the legacy of the **Knights of the Order of St. John** who took control of the island in the 14th century CE delivering it from the looting. Depart 18:00. We're now bound through the night for a morning arrival on the island of **Crete. (BLD)**

May 16 Thu Arrives Heraklion (Crete) at 07:00 /departs Heraklion @ 12:00/arrives Santorini @ 16:30/departs Santorini @ 21:30 pm

After docking in **Heraklion**, we will have opportunity to visit the **Minoan Palace of Knossos**. Departing **Heraklion** at midday, our maritime journey heads to magical **Santorini (Thera)**. The main town of the island, **Fira** (also called Thira), dramatically clings to the lip of the crater. We'll also savour the breathtakingly picturesque vistas to be visually absorbed at a second settlement, **Oia** (pronounced i.a) a small, much photographed, village in the north of the island that extends for almost 2 km along the edge of the caldera that forms the island of Santorini. **(B,L,D)**

May 17 Fri Arrives Piraeus @ 06:00am

Transfer to Hotel in Plaka district and enjoy the rest of the day free **(B,D)**

May 18 Sat Athens/Corinth

This morning we drive to **ancient Corinth**, site of the famous Isthmian Games second in stature only to the Olympic Games, where Paul resided for 18 months c. 50-51 CE and established a church (Acts 18). Enroute to Corinth we'll stop at the **Corinth Canal** which was attempted in the first century by the Emperor Nero but was only actually dug in 1893.

Only a fraction of the ancient city remains. This includes the **Temple of Apollo**, the **Forum** (one of the largest in the ancient world), the **Peirene Fountain**, the **Bema** and the first century **Lechaion Road** on which Paul and his associates would have walked. The highly visible **Acrocorinth** towers above the city. We'll also visit the onsite **Archaeological Museum**

An ascent of **AcroCorinth** will bring us to some of the most impressive, ancient ruins in the world given both their extent, altitude and the immense, panoramic view they command from the rocky crag. The fortifications on the acropolis are both Byzantine and the remains of a Frankish castle that dates to the 13th century. The connection between antiquity and modernity is made in **New Corinth**, where we will stop at the **Greek Orthodox Cathedral of St. Paul** to see the succession list of Orthodox bishops which extends from the Apostle Paul in the first century to the present time. Return to Athens for dinner and overnight **(B,D)**

We will have a lecture delivered by Professor Emeritus Daniel Sahas on the subject of 'The Apostle Paul and the Development of early Christianity in Athens' (to be confirmed)

May 19 SunFLY Athens/Valletta, MALTA

Today we fly to Malta. You will soak your soul in more Mediterranean adventure on an island where the apostle Paul's life journey, according to the Acts narrative, took an unexpected twist as a result of a violent storm in which he and his shipmates were providentially spared from death at sea. Upon arrival in Valletta, we'll check in at our hotel and then go to see 'The Malta Experience', an audio visual presentation which will set the stage for what is to come over the next 3 days by introducing you to the many chapters in Malta's storied past. As a second feature in 'The Malta Experience' Professor Conrad Thake who is an art and architecture historian on the Faculty of the University of Malta as well as a published expert on Maltese cemeteries, will give us a walking tour of the Ta' Braxia Cemetery, a 19th century, multi-denominational burial ground designed by Maltese architect Emanuele Luizi Galizia. Dinner and overnight in Valletta. **(B,D)**

May 20 Mon Neolithic and Early Christian Malta

This morning, we visit two temples, both of which are UNESCO World Heritage Sites. **Mnajdra** is the most atmospherically evocative of all the Maltese temple complexes. Remarkably, the third temple, inserted between the other two, is still mostly intact. 500 metres away on a hill top, is the temple of **Hagar Qim** ('stone worship') which, given its close proximity, evidently belonged to the same cluster of temples as Mnajdra. This afternoon we'll move forward on the Maltese timeline and enter the world

of early Maltese Christianity. Weather permitting, we'll take a boat trip to St. Paul's island, the larger of two islands just off St. Paul's Bay which has a very prominent statue of St. Paul claiming to commemorate the spot where the apostle stepped ashore after surviving the shipwreck (he and 275 others!) (Acts 27). It is the work of Sigismondo and Salvatore Dimech and was inaugurated and blessed in 1845.

Returning to shore, we'll also visit **San Pawl Milqi** ('Welcoming St. Paul') (subject to confirmation) where the extensive remains of a typical Roman villa can be seen. As well, we will visit the **St Pauls Bonfire Church**. We'll conclude this afternoon's itinerary in Valletta with a visit to the **National Museum of Archaeology** which is set in one of the most beautiful, baroque-styled buildings in Malta – the Auberge de Provence which dates to the 16th century and once served as the house for the Knights of the Order of St. John. Dinner and overnight in Valletta. **(B,D)**

May 21 Tue Rabat/Mdina

Both **Rabat** and **Medina** are dramatically perched on a ridge that overlooks the entire island and the sea. We will visit both today, starting with Rabat that was once inside the Roman town of Melita. We enter the 17th century, **St. Paul's Collegiate Church** (subject to confirmation) which is constructed on but to the left of St. Paul's Grotto. Adjacent to St. Paul's parish church is the **Church of St. Publius**, once a small chapel. In the church we descend to **St. Paul's Grotto**, an underground cave which according to a tradition is the place where the Apostle sought refuge and lived for three months following the shipwreck. **St. Paul's Catacombs**, situated just outside the ditch of the Roman city of Melite, are Malta's most extensive underground cemetery which bear semblance to those in Rome itself. Only a few metres away from the Catacomb of St. Paul, under the **Church of St. Agatha**, is the underground cemeterial complex of St. Agatha, the second largest catacomb in Malta. Leaving Rabat, we go to walled **Mdina**, the 'silent city,' that was the capital of the island until 1568, prior to the building of Valletta by the Knights of St. John. Magnificent **St. Paul's Cathedral**, built between 1697 and 1702, will again connect us with the shipwreck narrative recorded in considerable detail in Acts 28-29. Standing in **Bastion Square** we'll be surrounded by the aesthetic delights of Mdina's exquisite limestone architecture with many of the buildings displaying finely crafted door knockers in the shape of angels, fish, lions and Maltese crosses, all symbols of the owners' prosperity and power. Our final stop of the morning takes us back to Roman times, the **Domus Romana** outside the walls of Mdina. It was a stately house belonging to either a wealthy Roman or a Romanized Maltese patron, the original construction of which may well date to the 1st century BCE. In the afternoon, we'll visit the **Church of St. Paul's Shipwreck** which is the only church in Malta dedicated to the shipwreck of the apostle. Our itinerary concludes at the **National Maritime Museum. Dinner and overnight in Valletta. (B,D)**

*Tonight a guest lecture will be given on *The Origins of Christianity in Malta and the Shipwreck Controversy* (to be confirmed)

May 22 Wed Valletta

Valletta, Malta's capital city, is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful and elegant cities in Europe. Today will be devoted to a walking tour of Valletta, the island's richest repository of art, architecture, history and culture. Passing the ruins of the **Royal Opera House** and the **New Parliament buildings** we come to the **Church of Our Lady of Victory**, the oldest building in Valletta. The beautiful **Upper Barakka Gardens** adorned with fountains and flowers frame magnificent views over the stunning Grand Harbour. and are an excellent vantage point from which to see Valletta's neighbours – the historic Three Cities of **Victoriosa, Senglea and Kalkara** which are heaped on a pair of promontories jutting into the bay. We'll see the **Auberges of Castille** (now the Prime Minister's Office) and **Italy** (now the General Post Office). We continue on to pass by the **Castelliana** (Law Courts of the Knights) built in the baroque style by the Order of St. John. It will definitely be a highlight of the day to visit **St. John's Co-Cathedral** that stands in the centre of Valletta and guards the city like a fortress. The **Monument of the Great Siege** with its three bronze figures, installed in Republic Street in 1927, recalls the Great Siege of 1565 when the expansionist Ottoman Empire desirous of controlling the Mediterranean, tried to invade Malta which was held by the Knights Hospitaller. Our day's itinerary concludes at the **Grand Masters' Palace**. Dinner and overnight in Valletta. **(B,D)**

May 23 Thu fly home from Valletta to Calgary

GREECE MAP



MALTA MAP



LAND & AIR

15-19 paying passengers **\$7,590 USD** per Person in Double Room
 20-24 paying passengers **\$7,440 USD** per person in Double Room
 25-29 paying passengers **\$7,350 USD** per person in Double Room
\$1,500 USD Single Room Supplement

INCLUDING

- Roundtrip international airfare from Calgary- Athens, departure from Valletta, Calgary
- Flight from Athens-Thessaloniki
- Flight from Athens to Valletta
- 2 nights at Athens Airotel Parthenon or similar
- 2 nights Capsis Thessaloniki or similar
- 1 night Antoniadis Kalambaka or similar
- 1 nights Amalia Delphi hotel or similar
- 1 night Athens Airotel Parthenon hotel or similar
- 4 nights Celestyal cruise- Iconic Aegean cruise
- 2 nights Athens Airotel Parthenon for similar
- 4 nights Hotel Cavalieri Valletta or similar
- Daily breakfast and dinners
- Entrance fees to all sightseeing as per itinerary
- English-speaking licensed tour guide throughout the itinerary, tour manager for 5 days in Malta
- Transfers & transportation by private A/C motor-coach
- Service charges and local taxes to hotels
- Headsets

CRUISE INCLUSIONS:

- Cabin accommodation in XB cabin.
- Port charges security and other services (gratuities)
- Full board (Breakfast-Lunch-Dinner)
- Select drinks included with meals (Specialty Restaurant excluded)
- ***Shore excursion discount US \$ 80 applicable per person**
- Entertainment and daily activities on board

EXCLUDING

- All lunches and drinks (other than bottled water at dinners)
- Tips to tour guides and drivers
- Optional balloon ride at Meteora
- All personal expenses, Travel and Health Insurances, any other item not mentioned above
- ****Citizens of ALL countries are responsible for checking their own countries' visa regulations for travel for both GREECE and MALTA**

CRUISE EXCLUSIONS: Shore excursion package supplement

HD Kusadasi House of Virgin Mary and Ancient Ephesus KUS-01: **98 USD pp**

HD Patmos St Johns Monastery PAT-01: **83 USD pp**

HD Knossos Palace tour HER-02: **87 USD pp**

Total: 268 USD per person ~ 80 USD discount from the cruise inclusive offer = **188 USD per person** final shore excursion package

PAYMENT PROCEDURE

1. **\$500 USD per person** Deposit due at time of booking: Due on or before **November 15, 2023**
2. **Full Payment** : Due **January 1, 2024**

Land Cancellation Penalty:

- 90-60 days prior to departure:	No Penalty
- 59-45 days prior to departure:	10%
- 44-30 days prior to departure:	25%
- 29-15 days prior to departure:	50%
- 14-7 days prior to departure:	75%
- 6 days & After	No refund

REGISTRATION

you can fill in the secure form at TUTKU website



OPTION 1

REGISTER NOW

<https://tutku.travel/tour/DAPGRMT24>

OPTION 2



- 1- Open the Camera app on your device.
- 2- Move the QR code into the frame.

OPTION 3

*Please email to info@tutkutours.com and ask for TUTKU' bank account details if you wish to pay with bank wire transfer.

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