



Specially prepared program for the Escarpment Probus Club

ISLANDS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

Sicily, Malta, Cyprus, Athens

Sep 9 – 22, 2021



Gozo Island



tourdesign.ca

Itinerary

DAY 1 / Sep 9, 2021

Depart Canada

Gather at Pearson International Airport for our flight to Catania, Sicily, Italy.

Transportation: Air Canada / Lufthansa

DAY 2 / Sep 10, 2021

Arrive in Catania (D)

Catania, the second largest city in Sicily located on the east coast facing the Ionian Sea. We arrive at Catania Airport this morning and are met by our coach and guide.

Our guide will help direct you as to where to relax and have lunch. You might like to try cannoli where it was invented or have a tasty Sicilian-style pizza. We rejoin our coach and transfer to our hotel. Welcome dinner this evening with a glass of wine included.

Accommodation: Plaza Hotel Catania or similar (3 nights)

DAY 3 / Sep 11, 2021

Catania – Taormina – Catania (B, L)

For a good sampling of Sicily, you need to visit a mix of big cities (Palermo and Catania), smaller towns (Taormina) and striking sights in the countryside (Mount Etna, ancient temples and theatres). Today our 5-hour experience includes a seafront drive alongside Nexus Bay through the history-steeped seaside town of Giardini Naxos. We arrive in Taormina where we enjoy lunch in a local restaurant. From the old world charm of the ancient Greek theater (admission included), to the breathtaking views of the Bay of Nexus, and the striking architecture of Palazza Corvaja, this town steals the heart of every visitor.

We return to our hotel in the afternoon, and the remainder of the day is free. Dinner on your own.

DAY 4 / Sep 12, 2021

Catania – Mount Etna – Catania (B, L)

Mount Etna which literally gave rise to Sicily, is one of Europe's most accessible active volcanoes. A cable car whisks us half way up the mountain. Enjoy the view of the lunar landscape of black sand, volcanic rocks and oozing lava flows that are as stark as they are beautiful. Declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2013, Etna is an important part of Sicily's topography. Mount Etna's last eruption was on Dec 24, 2018, spewing plumes of ash and smoke above Sicily. But Mount Etna is also home to one of Italy's most pleasant wine-growing regions. We will visit one of several wineries offering a tour, wine tasting and lunch. We return to our hotel for dinner on your own.



Taormina



Mount Etna



Winery at Mount Etna

DAY 5 / Sep 13, 2021

Catania – Pozzallo – Malta (B, L)

Syracuse was once one of ancient Greece's most important cities. Now it is a lively town of about 125,000 on Sicily's southeast coast. The city overflows with amazing remnants from its long history. In Syracuse's harbor, Ortygia Island is the site of many of the main attractions, including the seventh-century cathedral and the Fountain of Arethusa. This is also the birthplace of the pre-eminent mathematician and engineer Archimedes. Marvel at age-old quarries and a Roman amphitheater where gladiators fought each other to the death. We have lunch at a local restaurant in Syracuse.

Next stop is Pozzallo, which is situated on the southern tip of Sicily on the Mediterranean side of the island. The town is heralded for its clean beaches and sparkling water, awarded the Bandiera Blu for their cleanliness. It is here we board our high speed ferry to Malta. Upon arrival at Malta port, local assistant will welcome you and take you to your hotel.

Transportation: High Speed Catamaran

Accommodation: Dolmen Hotel in Qawra, St. Paul's Bay or similar (4 nights)



Syracuse

DAY 6 / Sep 14, 2021

Malta (B, L)

Breakfast at our hotel. This morning we transfer to Marsamxett Harbour in Sliema for a day cruise on a Turkish Gullet to visit two of Malta's neighbouring islands, Gozo Island and Comino Island. This cruise passes both sides of Sliema, St. Julians, the Casino, St. Andrews, Salina Bay, St. Pauls Bay and the Island where St. Paul was shipwrecked in 60 A.D. Of course, you have the opportunity to swim and snorkel in the crystal clear waters of the Blue Lagoon. Our cruise day includes a morning snack, and a buffet lunch consisting of grilled steak, fish, a selection of hot vegetables and potatoes, a selection of cold cuts and different salads, fresh fruit (also served in the afternoon) and wine and beer. Returning to Marsamxett Harbour in Sliema by 4:30pm, and then transfer back to the hotel. Dinner on own tonight.



Turkish Gullet

DAY 7 / Sep 15, 2021

Malta (B, L)

Malta is a Southern European island country consisting of an archipelago in the Mediterranean Sea. Malta is the largest island and the cultural, commercial and administrative centre. Gozo is the second largest island and is more rural, characterised by fishing, tourism, crafts and agriculture. Comino, the smallest of the trio, has one hotel and is largely uninhabited. Malta's history is firmly in focus on this fascinating tour, which includes trips to Valletta, famed for its Grand Harbour, and the Three Cities – built by the Knights of Malta, prehistoric temples, relics of World War II and exploration of sister island Gozo. We depart this morning for a full day guided excursion to Valletta, including visiting the Upper Barrakka Gardens, Grand Master's Palace, St. John's Co-Cathedral & Museum including the Caravaggio masterpieces in the Oratory, and the Malta Experience audio-visual presentation. Lunch at a local restaurant including coffee and a glass of wine. Transfer back to the hotel after the tour. Dinner on own tonight.



Valletta

Day 8 / Sep 16, 2021

Malta (B, D)

Breakfast at our hotel. Depart this morning for a full day guided excursion visiting Mdina, also called the Silent City. It is surrounded by fortified walls and sits on top of one of the highest hills of Malta. Built in Medieval times, much of its original architecture has been preserved and its narrow alleys tell tales of centuries of history and the various rulers that governed Malta. We visit St. Paul's Cathedral & Museum, watch the audio-visual montage of "Tales of the Silent City", visit St. Paul's Grotto and Church in Rabat.

Wine is an integral part of Maltese culture and can be found on most Maltese tables during dinner time. You've been to Bordeaux, followed the wine trail in Tuscany, and you can tell a Rioja from a Rhône Valley. How is this tiny nation of just over 300 square kilometres going to produce anything of interest? You will be pleasantly surprised at the quality of the wine on our guided tour and tasting. Transfer back to the hotel after the tour. Dinner at hotel tonight.



Mdina

Day 9 / Sep 17, 2021

Malta – Cyprus (B, meal in flight)

Today we visit the magnificent Hagar Qim Temple and see the Marsaxlokk fishing village market. After the tour, we transfer to the airport for our flight to Cyprus.

Transportation: Emirates Air

Upon arrival at Cyprus airport, local airport assistant will welcome you and take you to your coach transfer to your hotel. Free time for rest of the day.

Accommodation: Atlantica Miramare Beach Hotel or similar (4 nights)



Marsaxlokk Fishing Village

Day 10 / Sep 18, 2021

Cyprus (B, L)

Breakfast at the hotel. Full day excursion to both sides of city of Nicosia with lunch at local restaurant. Today we visit Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus and the last divided city in Europe. We will visit both the Turkish and Greek sides of the city. This city is rich in history and is surrounded by walls built by the Venetians for protection.

Our first stop is to the Cyprus Museum to view its rich collection of cultural exhibits from Neolithic to Byzantine times. We will also visit the Greek Orthodox Cathedral of St. John and the Cultural Centre of the Makarios Foundation, which hosts the greatest icon collection of the island. There is free time to wander through the inviting, narrow streets of Laiki Yitonia, the restored, quarter of Greek Nicosia and admire the traditional shops, and souvenir and handicraft articles. Lunch is included at a local restaurant.

Later we cross the Green Line to walk through the picturesque narrow streets of the old Turkish part of Nicosia. We will visit Buyuk Han – a former Caravanserai (inn). This Han, with its 67 rooms and a small Mosque in the middle of the complex, is a typical example of Ottoman architecture. Today, the Han hosts handicraft workers, painters and souvenir shops. Our next stop is the Cathedral of Agia Sophia, built between 1209-1326, and considered to be one of the most beautiful churches. Dinner on own tonight.

Note: Entry to the North is subject to formalities regulations. Please do not forget your passport.



Nicosia

Day 11 / Sep 19, 2021

Cyprus (B, L)

Breakfast at hotel. Full day excursion to Famagusta and Ayia Napa with lunch at local restaurant. We drive around the city of Famagusta to the Turkish side of the island and cross the Green Line at the Strovilia checkpoint. The Green Line is the UN buffer zone, which divides Cyprus. Venetian Walls, dating back to medieval times encircle the old city, and are 60 feet high and 30 feet thick. We will visit St. Nicholas Cathedral, which was built during the period 1298-1312 and has witnessed the crowning of the Lusignian Kings of Cyprus. After the subsequent conquest of the Ottoman Empire the cathedral was converted into a mosque, today's Lala Mustafa Pasha Mosque. Beside the cathedral is the Othello Tower, immortalized by Shakespeare. Drive to the former capital of Cyprus, the ancient city of Salamis.

Finally proceed to the Kokkinochoria area for your included lunch. After lunch we visit the Protaras and Cavo (Cape) Greco area for spectacular views on the way to Ayia Napa. Originally a fishing village, Ayia Napa has now become a major tourist resort. We will visit the monastery "Our Lady of the Forest", which stands in the middle of the village square. Return to your hotel. Dinner on own tonight.

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Famagusta

Day 12 / Sep 20, 2021

Cyprus (B, D)

Breakfast at the hotel. Full day excursion to Curium/Pafos, with free time for lunch on own.

Today we travel west along the coastal road to the Greek part of the island, passing the Phassouri citrus groves and vineyards on the way to the ancient city-kingdom of Curium. We see the house of Eustolios with its well-preserved mosaics, plus the theatre and basilica. Continue to the legendary birthplace of Aphrodite, where the goddess rose from the waves. In Paphos we see the beautiful mosaics in the house of Dionysos, plus St. Paul's Pillar, the catacomb of Ayia Solomoni and medieval fort. There is free time for you to wander around the old fishing harbor and enjoy lunch on your own.

On the way back there will be a stop at Yeroskipou where we visit the church of Ayia Paraskevi, a basilica surmounted by five domes forming a cross. The basilica has beautiful murals dated to the 15th century.

Dinner is at our hotel including coffee, wine or beer.

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House of Eustolios

Day 13 / Sep 21, 2021

Cyprus – Athens (B, D)

Breakfast at the hotel. Check out this morning, meet your coach driver and transfer to Larnaca airport for our flight to Athens, Greece.

Join our local guide for a tour of the city of Athens. Our tour includes an overview of the modern city with striking contrasts to the remains of its glorious past. Drive by the "Tomb of the Unknown Soldier" in front of the Parliament House on Constitution Square and the Pantheon Stadium (site of the first modern Olympic Games in 1896). See vistas of the Presidential Palace, government buildings, and elegant homes. Drive along Panepistimiou Avenue and view the Catholic Cathedral, the Academy, University, National Library, and Omonia Square. Then in contrast, we visit the Roman Temple of Olympian Zeus and the crowning beauty and glory that was Athens. We visit the Acropolis with its many monuments atop its rocky base, including the awesome Parthenon. After the visit of the Acropolis, you will arrive at the most suitable point for entering the Plaka. Proceed with your guide on a short walking tour of Athens's oldest and most picturesque

neighbourhood. The maze of cobblestone pedestrian streets is lined with shops, boutiques, souvenir stands and flea market stalls that beckon all that enter.

We then transfer to our hotel. Tonight, enjoy dinner at our hotel on a wonderful roof garden with an amazing view of the Parthenon and a panoramic view of Athens.

Transportation: Olympic Air
Accommodation: Divani Palace Acropolis Hotel or similar (1 night)

Day 14 / Sep 22, 2021
Depart Athens (B)

Breakfast at hotel before we transfer to the airport for our return flight home.

Transportation: Air Canada Rouge

*** END OF TOUR *** B – breakfast, L – lunch, D – dinner



Acropolis of Athens

Tour Map



Day 14 / Sep 22, 2021

Athens (B)

Breakfast at hotel. Say farewell to those who are heading to the airport and enjoy a relaxing morning at the hotel or perhaps back at the Plaka to do some shopping. Following lunch we take an afternoon tour to Cape Sounion. Driving along the coastal road we pass the wonderful beaches of Glyfada, Vouliagmeni, Varkiza and countless coves, one has a splendid view of the Saronic Gulf. A crowning feature of the tour Cape Sounion is the spectacular Temple of Poseidon overlooking the Aegean Sea. The sanctuary at Sounion is one of the most important sanctuaries in Attica. Our guide can share several interesting stories, myths and legends attached to the Temple of Poseidon. There is definitely something special about the location the Greeks chose to build this Temple. Its views overlooking the Aegean are indeed worthy of Poseidon, the Greek God of the Sea. One of the biggest highlights of this tour is the sunset. Sure, I know what you're thinking, you can see a sunset anywhere. Well, that might be the case, but seeing the sun slowly set behind a temple over 2000 years old is the next level!

Accommodation: Divani Palace Acropolis Hotel or similar (2 nights)

Day 15 / Sep 23, 2021

Athens (B)

Breakfast at hotel. Free day.

Day 16 / Sep 24, 2021

Depart Athens (B)

Breakfast at our hotel before we transfer to the airport for our return flight home.

Transportation: Air Canada Rouge

***** END OF TOUR *****

B – breakfast, L – lunch, D – dinner



Athens, Greece

POST-TOUR PACKAGE RATE (CAD\$, PER PERSON)

CAD \$660 per person based on double occupancy
CAD \$330 for single supplement

INCLUSIONS

- 2 night's accommodation with daily breakfast as per itinerary
- Tour and transfer as per itinerary
- Porterage at hotel (1 piece of luggage per person)
- International flight back to Toronto on Sep 24 instead of Sep 22

EXCLUSIONS

- Tipping for local guide and driver
- Meals not included in the itinerary

Pricing & Terms

PACKAGE RATE (CAD\$, PER PERSON)

CAD \$5,990 per person based on double occupancy
CAD \$1,590 for single supplement

INCLUSIONS

- Roundtrip flights from Toronto to Catania and Athens to Toronto
- High speed ferry from Pozzallo to Malta
- All local flights mentioned in itinerary
- Hotel accommodation with daily breakfast
- Meals included as per itinerary with water and coffee/tea, and additional drinks for some meals as per itinerary
- Tours and transfers including entrance fees as per itinerary
- Portage at hotels (1 piece of luggage per person)
- All gratuities for local guides and drivers
- All local taxes

EXCLUSIONS

- Airport departure taxes. Currently \$690 per person
- Meals not included in the itinerary
- Optional travel insurance

AIR CREDIT

If you wish to arrange your own air from Toronto to Catania and Athens to Toronto, an air credit of CAD \$550 per person will be deducted from the tour cost.

Please contact us for air deviation, premium economy or business class upgrade surcharges.

SPECIAL NOTE

- Names provided at time of booking **MUST** match exactly your passport
- You must have a passport valid for at least 6 months after your return date
- If you wish to purchase optional travel insurance with us, it **MUST** be purchase prior to final payment date. Please contact us for a quotation.

DEPOSIT AND PAYMENT

At time of booking:
CAD \$1,000 per person

Final payment:
Remaining balance due May 14, 2021

CANCELLATION TERMS

Between time of booking & Dec 11, 2020:
CAD \$500 per person

Between Dec 12, 2020 & May 13, 2021:
CAD \$1,000 per person

Between May 14, 2021 & date of departure:
100% of total cost

Program designed in conjunction with Joanne Millichamp, email: jmillichamp@hotmail.com or call 289-878-2969.

To book this program, please complete the Booking Form and email, mail or fax to Tour Design.



TOUR DESIGN

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