

GROUP TOUR PROGRAMME

Catholic Pilgrimage to Greece and Patmos

Thessaloniki · Philippi · Kavala · Veria · Meteora · Athens · Corinth · Patmos

DURATION	GROUP SIZE	REGION	BEST SEASON	TOUR THEME
10 Days · 9 Nights	**10+ Pax**	**Northern Greece, Athens**	**Apr–Oct**	**Daily Mass**

A pilgrimage in the order the New Testament tells it. Your group follows St Paul from Philippi, where the first Christian community in Europe was founded, through Thessaloniki and Berea to Athens and Corinth – then crosses the Aegean to Patmos, the island of St John and the Book of Revelation. Mass is celebrated every day: in the Catholic cathedrals of Thessaloniki and Athens, in St Paul's Church in Kavala, and in the open air at Philippi and Ancient Corinth. We book the churches, apply for the permits at the archaeological sites and set up a chapel room wherever there is no church, so your priest can concentrate on the liturgy. BenLeToni Tours has handled groups across Greece since 1992 – this programme is tailored for travel agencies and tour operators.

Made for your planning

Every day has a notes field, and the planning sheet on the last page collects what we need for a tailored proposal. Type into this PDF on screen or print it and write on it – then send it back to us.

Tour Route



Included in Our Offer

INCLUDED IN YOUR PROGRAMME

- ✓ 8 nights' accommodation – 2 in Thessaloniki, 1 in Kavala, 1 in Kalambaka, 3 in Athens, 1 on Patmos – in 3- and 4-star hotels (5-star on request)
- ✓ Breakfast and dinner daily
- ✓ Ferry Piraeus–Patmos and overnight ferry Patmos–Piraeus in cabins
- ✓ Private air-conditioned coach throughout the full itinerary, transfers on Patmos
- ✓ Licensed guide for the entire programme
- ✓ All entrance fees to the sites, monasteries and museums listed in the itinerary
- ✓ Daily Mass arranged: church bookings with the Catholic parishes, permits for the open-air Masses at Philippi and Ancient Corinth, a chapel room at the hotel where there is no church
- ✓ Airport transfers on arrival and departure days
- ✓ 24/7 local support contact during your group's stay in Greece

NOT INCLUDED

- International flights
- Travel insurance
- Personal expenses and gratuities
- Offerings to parishes and monasteries
- Single room and single cabin supplements (available on request)
- Optional excursions not listed in the itinerary (e.g. Delphi)
- Climate resilience fee, payable locally at the hotels

Full Programme

YOUR NOTES

1

Arrival in Thessaloniki

Arrival at Thessaloniki airport, where your BenLeToni guide meets the group. Transfer to the hotel. Evening Mass at the Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in the city centre. Welcome dinner. Overnight Thessaloniki.

2

Thessaloniki — Philippi — Kavala

Drive east along the route of the Via Egnatia to Philippi, where Paul founded the first church on European soil (Acts 16). Guided visit of the archaeological site – the forum, the early Christian basilicas and the place venerated as the prison of Paul and Silas – and of the baptistery of St Lydia by the river, where Lydia, the first Christian of Europe, was baptised. Open-air Mass at Philippi. Continue to Kavala, ancient Neapolis, the harbour where Paul first set foot in Europe. Overnight Kavala.

3

Kavala — Amphipolis — Thessaloniki

Morning Mass at St Paul's Catholic Church in Kavala. Return west on Paul's route through Amphipolis and Apollonia (Acts 17:1), with a stop at the Lion of Amphipolis. Afternoon in Thessaloniki: the Church of St Demetrios, the Rotunda, the Roman Agora and Vlatadon Monastery, built by tradition where Paul preached to the Thessalonians. Overnight Thessaloniki.

4

Thessaloniki — Veria — Kalambaka

Drive to Veria, biblical Berea, whose people searched the Scriptures daily to test Paul's words (Acts 17:11). Visit the Bema of St Paul, the mosaic monument marking the place where he preached. Continue to Kalambaka at the foot of the Meteora rocks. Mass in a hotel room set up as a chapel. Overnight Kalambaka.

5

Meteora — Athens

Morning Mass at the hotel. Visit two of the Meteora monasteries, built on top of sandstone pillars – a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the great centres of Orthodox monastic life. Afternoon drive to Athens, with a stop at Thermopylae. Overnight Athens.

6

Athens

Full-day guided tour: the Acropolis, the Areopagus, where Paul spoke to the Athenians about the unknown god (Acts 17), and the Ancient Agora. Evening Mass at the Catholic Cathedral Basilica of St Dionysius the Areopagite – named after the Athenian judge Paul converted on the Areopagus (Acts 17:34). Overnight Athens.

YOUR NOTES

7 Corinth Canal — Ancient Corinth — Cenchreae — Athens

Stop at the Corinth Canal. Guided visit of Ancient Corinth: the Temple of Apollo, the museum and the Bema, where Paul stood before the proconsul Gallio (Acts 18). Open-air Mass at Ancient Corinth. Continue to Cenchreae, the eastern port from which Paul sailed for Ephesus (Acts 18:18). Return to Athens. Overnight Athens.

8 Athens — Piraeus — Patmos

Morning Mass at the hotel. Transfer to Piraeus for the afternoon ferry to Patmos (about 7–8 hours), arriving late in the evening. Transfer to the hotel. Overnight Patmos.

9 Patmos

The island where St John wrote the Book of Revelation. Guided visit of the Cave of the Apocalypse, where by tradition John received his visions (Rev 1:9), and the Monastery of St John the Theologian above Chora – together a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Mass on Patmos. Afternoon free in Chora and Skala. Dinner, then the night ferry to Piraeus in cabins. Overnight on board.

10 Piraeus — Departure

Early-morning arrival in Piraeus. Transfer to Athens International Airport for departure.

Useful Information

Best time to travel
April to June and September to October. Patmos is served by ferry all year, but outside the summer there are only one or two sailings a week, so we fix your travel dates around the ferry timetable. Easter and the weeks around it are popular with parish groups – book early.

Hotel category
The programme uses a mix of 3- and 4-star hotels, chosen for location and group handling. 5-star hotels are available on request – please let us know when you enquire.

Customisation
Delphi can be added between Meteora and Athens, a second night on Patmos gives a quieter rhythm, and Ephesus in Turkey can follow via Samos. Contact us with your group's requirements and we will prepare a tailored proposal.

Walking difficulty
Moderate. Uneven ground at Philippi, Corinth and the Areopagus, and steps at Meteora and at the Cave of the Apocalypse. Comfortable closed-toe shoes are recommended.

Group size
The minimum group size for this programme is 10 passengers. Coaches and guides are planned around the size of your group.

Dress code
Modest dress is required in churches and monasteries – covered shoulders and knees. At Meteora women are asked to wear a skirt; wraps are available at the entrance. Clergy are welcome to travel in clerical dress.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where is Mass celebrated each day?

In the Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Thessaloniki, St Paul's Church in Kavala and the Cathedral Basilica of St Dionysius in Athens; in the open air at Philippi and Ancient Corinth; and in a hotel room set up as a chapel in Kalambaka, Athens and on Patmos. We agree times with each parish in advance and build the day around them.

Is an open-air Mass allowed at the archaeological sites?

Yes, with a permit from the local Ephorate of Antiquities, which we apply for on your behalf well before the trip. The Ephorate sets the place and time on the site, and the Mass is held without blocking other visitors. Your group's priest celebrates; we take care of the permit and the practical arrangements.

Does a priest travel with the group?

Daily Mass is celebrated by your group's own priest or chaplain. If your group travels without one, tell us early and we will ask the Catholic parishes in Greece whether a priest is available on the dates you need.

How does the ferry to Patmos work?

Patmos has no airport. The group travels from Piraeus on a large Blue Star ferry with reserved seats and returns on the night ferry in cabins, arriving in Piraeus early the next morning. Ferry days follow the timetable of the season; we set the dates of the programme around them.

Do we need licensed guides at the archaeological sites?

Yes. Licensed guides are required at all major archaeological sites in Greece, including the Acropolis, Philippi and Ancient Corinth. BenLeToni Tours arranges all guides as part of the programme – multilingual guides are available in German, English, French, Italian, Spanish, Dutch and Japanese.

YOUR NOTES

Planning sheet

Fill in what you already know and send this page to contact@benletoni-tours.gr. We reply with a tailored proposal within 48 hours.

AGENCY / TOUR OPERATOR

CONTACT PERSON

EMAIL

PHONE

GROUP NAME / CLIENT

TRAVEL DATES

NUMBER OF GUESTS

ROOMS: DOUBLE / TWIN / SINGLE

ARRIVAL FLIGHT

DEPARTURE FLIGHT

GUIDE LANGUAGE

HOTEL CATEGORY

☐ 3-star ☐ 4-star ☐ 5-star

CHANGES TO THE PROGRAMME

SPECIAL REQUESTS (DIET, MOBILITY, CELEBRATIONS)

We look forward to welcoming your group to Greece.

CONTACT
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