

EPIC MEDITERRANEAN AND GREEK ISLES VOYAGE

Explore the Mediterranean on a far-reaching journey that reveals the tastes and traditions linking the sea's storied shores. Offered in collaboration with the experts at Food & Wine, this voyage invites you to explore culturally rich islands and coastal towns, and experience the enduring rhythms of life along these age-old waterways. As you sail, the region's layers come into view--mythology embedded in dramatic landscapes, architecture shaped by successive empires, and daily life unfolding in harbors and hillside villages. Regional flavors further enrich the journey, from fresh local ingredients to distinctive wines that reflect the terrain. Aboard the nimble National Geographic Orion, you'll navigate narrow passages like the Corinth Canal and enjoy curated wine tastings as you sail these storied maritime crossroads.



ITINERARY

Day 1 Athens, Greece / Lavrio / Embark Ship

Arrive in Athens, the capital city of Greece, and transfer to Lavrio, where you'll embark the ship in the afternoon. Settle into your cabin and take in your first Aegean sunset at sea as you pass the Temple of Poseidon. Or explore more on a pre-voyage extension in Athens.

Day 2 Milos

Spend the morning exploring the sea caves at Kleftiko, and if conditions allow, get in the water. This afternoon, on the charming volcanic island of Milos, view the Ancient Theater and enjoy an island tour, including a visit to the stunning Sarakiniko, a majestic other-worldly beach cove surrounded by large white volcanic stones. In the small town of Trypiti, visit the 1820 excavation site of 'Venus de Milo,' one of the most famous works of ancient Greek sculpture, now exhibited in the Louvre. This evening, enjoy dinner on board or explore Adamantas on your own. Be sure to stop by the famous ice cream shops.



Day 3 Sifnos

Sifnos--a local favorite--is a peaceful, rugged island known for its sandy beaches, plethora of churches and trendy food scene. With a scenic upper _chora_ (village) that invites exploration, visit quaint little churches that sit precariously on the edge of the sea. This morning, go on a scenic hike and then join a walking tour of the Kastro, with an optional cooking class at a local farm. Our Sifnos visit also offers an optional hands-on pottery experience. Spend the afternoon on board or enjoying the water at a local beach. Whatever your pace, this is the ideal place to explore on foot, whether it's a brisk walk or a lazy stroll along the beach.

Day 4 Serifos

On Serifos, one of the smaller Cycladic islands, visit the Chora for views across the Aegean Sea. Enjoy a stop at the Mineralogy and Petrology Museum, the Monastery of Taxiarches or spend time in the water enjoying a local beach or kayaking.

Day 5 Paros

In Paros, explore the charming Kastro, visit a winery or join an optional excursion with a local farmer to hear how they make dry-land farming work. Afterward, taste the fruits of their bounty. Visit charming villages along the harbor like Parikia and Naoussa that offer a maze of streets and alleyways to explore.

Day 6 Naxos

This morning, choose to go on an early hike on Naxos. Visit an olive press museum and meet the fifth-generation owners while sampling cake, oil and marmalades, or enjoy a self-guided tour of the Kastro. This afternoon, choose to explore on your own, or join an optional cooking class or optional cheese making activity.

Day 7 Delos / Tinos

The island of Delos is one of the most important mythical and historical sites in Greece and a designated UNESCO World Heritage site. In myth, it's the birthplace of the twin immortals Artemis, goddess of animals and the hunt, and Apollo, god of healing, music and light. Spend the morning surveying the Terrace of the Lions and exquisite Temple of Apollo, two of the many incredible ruins preserved here.

This afternoon, go ashore in Tinos, a smaller and less-visited Cycladic island, for a hike. Visit the artistic heart of Tinos, Pyrgos Village, the Tinos Marble Museum or take part in a basket-weaving activity. Explore the small towns and artisan crafts that make this island so unique.

Day 8 Lavrio / Athens / Lavrio

Arrive in Lavrio and, after breakfast on board, transfer to Athens. Explore the city on a guided tour, then sit down to lunch at a local restaurant. This afternoon, return to the ship in Lavrio and settle back into your cabin. Enjoy the Aegean sunset as you sail toward the Adriatic.

Day 9 Corinth Canal / Delphi

Navigate the historic Corinth Canal, slipping between the 300-foot limestone walls that tower above both sides of the vessel. Built in the late 19th century, the canal is too small for most modern-day ships, but _National Geographic Orion_ is perfectly sized for the transit to the Gulf of Corinth and Ionian Sea.

Later, visit the UNESCO World Heritage site of Delphi, the center of the ancient Greek world. The ruins here are home to the Temple of Apollo--Greece's most important shrine--where the



Oracle of Delphi delivered divine prophecies. Learn about the city's storied past and explore the temple and other important sites.

Day 10 Kefalonia

Your Expedition Leader and local guides will choose one of the many picturesque beaches on the island of Kefalonia, bordered by the idyllic Ionian Sea. Soak in the vivid blue waters--a true photographer's delight. Stroll along the shoreline, or swim, kayak or paddleboard in the beautiful sea.

Day 11 Corfu

Known for its strong cultural heritage, Corfu is home to many of the country's firsts: the first university, theatre and opera. Learn about the island's history, including its triumphant defense against the Ottoman empire, and spend time around Spianada, the old city's main square--and the largest one in Greece--built in the 16th and 17th centuries by the Venetians. Discover the island's most iconic landmarks and signs of foreign influences. Or meander through the old town's charming city streets tasting local delicacies such as kumquats and olive oil. Alternatively, spend the day taking in the stunning landscapes of Greece's greenest island exploring the countryside and mountain trails.

Day 12-13 At Sea / Siracusa, Italy

Spend the following day at sea, relaxing aboard _National Geographic Orion_ as she makes her way toward Italy.

Head ashore at Siracusa, one of the most powerful cities in the classical world. Explore the archaeological park where a well-preserved Greek amphitheater with carved limestone seats is still used today. Paradise Quarry, now an attractive garden and orange grove, was the primary source of that limestone, and is the site of the curious Ear of Dionysius--a huge cave with incredible acoustics. Make the most of your time in port: explore the city's excellent market or the adjacent island of Ortigia, where a stunning cathedral was built on the columns of the 6th-century Temple of Athena. Alternatively, take an evening stroll through the city's piazzas.

Day 14 Taormina, Sicily

This morning, drive up to the beautiful town of Taormina, perched 250 meters above the sea. With Mount Etna dominating to the south, this medieval town boasts the pedestrian-friendly Corso Umberto, lined with exquisite buildings and one of the world's most interesting cultural sites: the Greco-Roman Theater. This remarkable theater was built right into the cliffside, overlooking the vast sea below, in the third century B.C. Enjoy a special lunch at a privately owned castle, the Castello degli Schiavi. This impressive 18th-century home was the setting for many scenes in _The Godfather_ films, and you'll meet members of the family that owns it and explore the extensive buildings and grounds.

Day 15 At Sea / Aeolian Islands

Enjoy the day at sea as you sail toward the Aeolian Islands--not only famous for the winds of the god Aeolus, but also for some of the most well-known classical volcanoes. With a bit of luck, you will witness the pyrotechnics of the active volcanic island of Stromboli. Pass through the narrow Strait of Messina overnight, the purported location of Homer's monsters Scylla and Charybdis: the rock and the hard place through which Odysseus had to sail.

Day 16 Golfo Aranci, Sardinia



Step ashore on Sardinia's east coast, known for its stunning and remote landscapes, including grottos and mountain peaks. Populated since pre-historic times, the landscape is dotted with Roman village ruins and monasteries from the Middle Ages. Spend the morning in San Pantaleo, visiting local artisan shops that showcase the handicrafts of painters, goldsmiths, sculptors and potters. Or venture into the mountains to visit the archeological discoveries, including tombs and village remains.

Day 17 Bonifacio, Corsica, France

Wake up to the sunrise over the layered cliffs of Bonifacio. Enter the narrow harbor to dock and enjoy the day in one of the Mediterranean's most beautiful towns. Begin with a walking orientation to the citadel, established by the powerful margraves of Tuscany in the ninth century. The rest of the morning is devoted to enjoying this lovely destination.

Day 18 Bonifacio / At Sea

Enjoy a morning of activities in Bonifacio before settling in for an afternoon at sea. Listen to talks by your onboard experts, get photo tips from a National Geographic-Lindblad Expeditions certified photo instructor or spend some time on the bridge with officers who are happy to answer questions. A massage from the wellness specialist is an inviting option or relax with a book in the observation lounge.

Day 19 Ciutadella de Menorca, Spain

The Vandals, the Moors and the British Empire have ruled over this stunning little island where prehistoric civilizations left intriguing rock mounds and megalithic monuments dating back some 4,000 years. This afternoon, explore this history while traveling overland to the southeast of Menorca. Walk through the Bronze Age village of Torralba d'en Salord and see the characteristic T-shaped stone monuments left by the Talayotic peoples. This evening, set a course west toward Barcelona.

Day 20 Barcelona / Disembark Ship

Disembark in Barcelona and transfer to the airport for flights home.

Departure Time: Depart after 12:00 p.m. local time.
Departure City: Barcelona, Spain

Please note:

Itineraries are subject to change.



YOUR SHIP: NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ORION

YOUR SHIP:	**National Geographic Orion**
VESSEL TYPE:	**Luxury Expedition**
LENGTH:	**103 metres**
PASSENGER CAPACITY:	**102 (in 53 cabins)**
BUILT/REFURBISHED:	**2003 / Refurbished 2014**

Engineered for maximum comfort and safety, _Orion_ is equipped with the latest technology including large retractable stabilizers, sonar, radar, and an ice-strengthened hull. A shallow draft plus bow and stern thrusters provide the convenience of being able to maneuver close to shore. 14 Zodiacs ensure quick disembarkation and offer the ideal transport for up-close exploration. _National Geographic Orion_ meets strict specifications for environmental protection and the on board waste management systems meet the stringent Antarctic operational standards enabling us to travel to the most pristine environments. A host of advanced design features and technology ensures sustainable marine environmental practices. _National Geographic Orion_ accommodates 102 guests in 53 cabins, including several with balconies. She is spacious and modern, with a variety of public rooms that offer panoramic views of the passing landscape. Friendly and informal, _Orion_ fosters a welcoming atmosphere where like-minded guests share in exceptional experiences and enrichment. Her public rooms include a dramatic window-lined main lounge, as well as an observation lounge and library perched at the very top of the ship, with plentiful observation decks. The spacious lounge is the heart of our expedition community, and is suited for spirited cocktail hours, informative presentations and our nightly tradition of Recap. In addition, a dedicated theater provides a unique setting for specialist presentations or films and slideshows. Both the main dining room and outside buffet easily accommodate all guests at once for open seating dining. On selected nights, weather permitting, our dining room menu is also available on the outside deck. While _Orion_ interiors are elegant, life aboard is always casual, with no need for formal clothing. And you'll find shipboard services like laundry, in-room cabled internet, and public-area wifi make packing and traveling more





convenient.

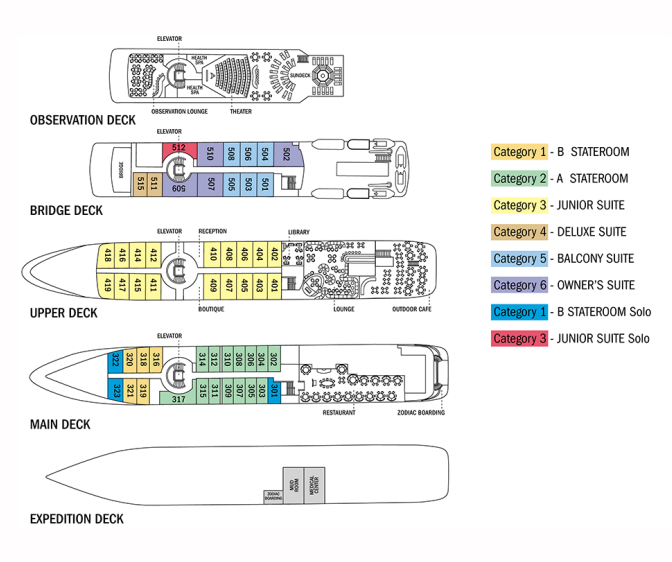
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