



# Vassar Travel Program

Educational Excursions for  
Alums, Families, & Friends

## Impressions of Life in the Greek Islands

June 13–24, 2026

**Dear Vassar Traveler,**

It is my joy to invite you on a truly special travel excursion: a rejuvenating journey through the breathtaking Greek Islands. Whether you're seeking inspiration, community, or a moment of peace, this journey offers a beautiful pause from the ordinary—a chance to restore your energy and reconnect with what matters most.

As a fellow Vassar alum, I know how deeply we all value connection, curiosity, and personal growth. This trip will be a retreat, designed with exactly that in mind. Picture waking up to the sparkle of the Aegean Sea, spending your days exploring sun-drenched villages, and engaging in activities that help you tap into greater joy, awe, and wonder.

This isn't just a vacation, it's a meaningful pause. A reset. An opportunity to reconnect with yourself, a like-minded group of Vassar alums, and with the things that truly nourish us: nature, movement, mindfulness, joy, and community. Our journey will combine the beauty of exploration with the wisdom of science-backed wellness practices. Together, we'll enjoy thought-provoking conversations and restorative experiences that leave you not only refreshed but truly changed. Let's reconnect with what lights us up and experience the beauty of both place and purpose.

Traveling to a place like Greece offers profound mental health and well-being benefits. The calming rhythm of the sea, the warmth of the Mediterranean sun, and the slower pace of life. All have been shown to reduce stress, improve mood, and restore a sense of inner balance. I would love for you to be part of this unforgettable experience—a blend of Vassar connection, adventure, and the timeless beauty of Greece, one of the most beautiful places on Earth.

If you have any questions or just want to chat about the trip, feel free to reach out. I would be happy to connect.

With excitement,

Michele M. Tugade, PhD  
Professor of Psychological Science  
on the William R. Kennan, Jr. Chair  
VC '95



# Daily Itinerary

*Saturday, June 13*

## DEPART THE U.S.

Depart the United States for Athens, Greece.

*Sunday, June 14*

## ATHENS/ANDROS

Arrive in Athens and transfer to the nearby port of Rafina, where we will board the Seajet to Andros (2 hours). Upon arrival, transfer to the lovely boutique Hotel Micra Anglia (or similar), situated in the island's main town, Chora. Enjoy a welcome dinner in the evening. **(D)**

**NOTE: In order to make the departure of the Seajet to Andros, travelers should arrive in Athens no later than 1:30 p.m., local time.**

*Monday, June 15*

## ANDROS

Although Andros is one of the most stunning islands in the Cyclades, it has evaded mass tourism. Perhaps this is due to the wealth generated by its long tradition in shipping, making it possible for the islanders to be prosperous without the need to derive income from tourism. Whatever the reason may be, the fact is that Andros has retained its considerable natural beauty and traditional way of life. A mountainous and verdant island, with fertile and well-watered valleys, Andros's hillsides are dotted with picturesque old villages. In the morning, explore Chora, dramatically situated on a narrow, rocky promontory jutting into the sea, its headland crowned by a 13th-century Venetian fort. The town's striking neoclassical architecture reflects its shipping prosperity. There are two outstanding museums we will visit: the Archaeological Museum, displaying artifacts from the island's ancient sites, and the superb Goulandris Museum of Contemporary Art, home to paintings by prominent international artists and works by notable Greek sculptors. Lunch will be served at a seaside taverna. Spend the afternoon at your leisure. Andros is a walker's paradise, and there are well-marked paths you may wish to choose from for a stroll through beautiful landscapes. **(B, L)**

*Tuesday, June 16*

## ANDROS

Explore Andros' scenic interior featuring old monasteries and villages. Begin in Stenies, a beautiful village known for its stately architecture and car-free lanes. Further up the hill is the extensive Monastery of Aghios Nikolaos, whose buildings date from the 16th century. The village of Apikia is home to the Sariza spring, famous throughout Greece for its therapeutic qualities, while in the shaded square of nearby Menites water gushes from the marble mouths of lions. Continue to the whitewashed fortress-like Monastery of Panachrantou, founded in the 10th century. Its position high on the slope of the Messaria Valley affords spectacular views. Descend to the village of Korthi, known for its 17th and 18th century stone towers and mansions. A short distance away is the inviting Korthi Bay with a seafront esplanade. **(B, L)**

*Wednesday, June 17*

## ANDROS/NAXOS

Sail from Andros to Naxos (2 hours, 10 minutes). Situated in the middle of the Cyclades, Naxos is notable for its ancient history and monuments, charming old villages, early Christian churches with painted interiors, and an active contemporary life that includes vibrant agriculture. The island was the birthplace of Dionysus, the god of wine, and the place where the Athenian prince Theseus abandoned Ariadne. Upon arrival, enjoy dinner and then check in at the Hotel Naxos Resort (or similar). **(B, D)**

*Thursday, June 18*

## NAXOS

In the morning, tour Naxos's main town, its narrow alleyways fanning out from the Kastro, a fortress built by the Venetians who held the island from 1207 to 1537. Visit the Della Rocca-Barozzi Venetian Museum, a 13th-century tower house, and the archaeological area of Mitropolis. Facing the town is a small islet, connected by a causeway, where we will find the remains of an unfinished sixth-century BC temple. Surviving is the temple's monumental gateway. Spend the afternoon at leisure for independent activities. **(B)**



*Friday, June 19*

## NAXOS

Explore the island's scenic interior, starting at the Temple of Demeter, constructed in the sixth century BC. Continue to Chalki, a striking village that features distinctive architecture. Here, we will visit the Fish and Olive Gallery that displays exquisite ceramics made by its owners. Then we venture to Apeiranthos, a picturesque village perched on a high cliff, where we will enjoy lunch at a restaurant serving local specialties. After lunch, drive to Panaghia Drosiani, one of the oldest and most revered churches in Greece, consisting of a series of cave-like chapels. Nearby, we will visit an ancient marble quarry to view two unfinished monumental statues from around 570 BC. **(B, L)**

*Saturday, June 20*

## NAXOS/SANTORINI

In Naxos, famed for its cheeses, we will visit an artisanal dairy farm that produces them. We will have the opportunity to learn about the traditional and sustainable methods of their production and taste them. Later, we board the fast Seajet boat to Santorini, where we will spend the night at the Orama Hotel & Spa (or similar). Dinner will be at a restaurant notable for its home-cooked Greek dishes. **(B, L, D)**

*Sunday, June 21*

## SANTORINI/HERAKLION

Known in classical antiquity as Thera, during the Bronze Age, Santorini was a flourishing trading center inhabited by a prosperous society. In the late 17th century BC, a massive volcanic eruption collapsed half of the island and buried its main town in a thick layer of ash and pumice, preserving its houses, streets, and squares as they existed 3,700 years ago. In the morning, tour the excavated ancient town, now called Akrotiri, and then explore the village of Fira on your own, or join our guided tour of the Museum of Prehistory, housing an amazing collection of artifacts excavated at Akrotiri. After lunch at a local restaurant, board the Seajet for Heraklion, Crete. Upon arrival, check in to the Hotel Megaron (or similar), our home for the next three nights. **(B, L, D)**

*Monday, June 22*

## HERAKLION/ RETHYMNO/ KAPSALIANA

Drive to Rethymno, one of Crete's most charming and distinctive towns, renowned for its beautifully preserved 17th-century Venetian architecture. Continue to the formerly abandoned village of Kapsaliana, which has been meticulously restored into a luxury hotel where we will enjoy lunch, a tour of the Old Olive Mill Museum, and an olive oil tasting. The site is surrounded by an olive grove dating from 1763 that once belonged to the historic Arkadi Monastery. Return to Heraklion with the balance of the day at leisure. **(B, L)**

*Tuesday, June 23*

## KNOSSOS & THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

Tour the Palace of Knossos, the largest and most magnificent Minoan palace in Crete. Clustered around a spacious courtyard, the palace contains a maze of rooms, passages, and stairways that may have inspired the concept of the labyrinth. More than any other palace, Knossos reveals the brilliance and refinement of Minoan civilization. After our tour of Knossos, visit the Archaeological Museum of Heraklion, whose eye-opening exhibits reinforce the impression gained at Knossos of the remarkable achievements of Minoan culture. Enjoy the afternoon at leisure in Heraklion, during which you may wish to visit the market to browse among the stalls selling a variety of Cretan products, including their famed herbs. Enjoy a farewell dinner at Peskesi restaurant, one of Crete's finest, specializing in the island's centuries-old cuisine. **(B, D)**

*Wednesday, June 24*

## HERAKLION/U.S.

After breakfast at the hotel, transfer to the airport for flights homeward. **(B)**

## Optional Pre-Extension Trip in Athens

*Thursday, June 11*

### DEPART THE U.S.

Depart the United States for Athens, Greece.

*Friday, June 12*

### ATHENS

Arrive in Athens. Your included transfer will take you to the Athens Capital Hotel, your home for the next two nights. That evening, meet your fellow travelers for a welcome dinner at a wonderful local restaurant. **(D)**

*Saturday, June 13*

### ATHENS

After breakfast at the hotel, visit the Acropolis, site of the incomparable Parthenon, representing the peak of the Classical Period's achievements in art and architecture. Also, explore the award-winning Acropolis Museum. After lunch, the balance of the day is at leisure, and dinner is independent. **(B, L)**

*Sunday, June 14*

### ATHENS | ANDROS

Breakfast and check out are followed by a tour of the Agora, the civic and commercial center of ancient Athens, and the fascinating Agora Museum. After lunch, drive to the Athens airport to meet the rest of your group. Transfer to the port of Rafina and embark on the Seajet. In Andros, check into the Micra Anglia Hotel and enjoy dinner. **(B, L, D)**

## Program Inclusions:

- Fine hotel accommodations throughout: Three nights at Hotel Micra Anglia (or similar), Chora, Andros; three nights at the Hotel Naxos Resort (or similar), Naxos; one night at the Orama Hotel & Spa (or similar), Santorini; and three nights at the Hotel Megaron (or similar), Heraklion, Crete.
- Lectures and discussions with Professor Michele Tugade.
- Full breakfast each morning at the hotels.
- Six lunches and five dinners at local restaurants with wine or beer and soft drinks.
- Boat ride to Naxos, Andros, Santorini, and Heraklion, Crete.
- Airport/hotel/pier transfers and handling of luggage on the program arrival and departure dates.
- All tours and excursions as described in the itinerary with a professional English-speaking guide.
- Entrance fees to museums, archaeological, and historic sites.
- The services of an experienced Thalassa Journeys Trip Director.
- Gratuities to guides, drivers, and porters.
- All local taxes and service charges.
- Complete pre-departure material.

**NOT INCLUDED:** International airfare; travel insurance; expenses of a personal nature; any items not mentioned in the Itinerary and the Program Inclusions.



# General Information

## **PAYMENT SCHEDULE:**

A deposit of \$1,000 per person is required to reserve your space on the tour. Final payment is due 90 days prior to departure. Payment can be made by personal check or charged to a credit card.

## **CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS:**

All cancellations are subject to a \$300 per person administrative fee. Cancellations received 71–90 days prior to departure will be assessed a penalty equal to 50% of the total program cost per person. Cancellations received within 70 days of departure are subject to 100% cancellation penalties. Requests for cancellations must be made in writing. No refunds will be made for any part of this program in which you choose not to participate.

## **INSURANCE:**

We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance, which is available for coverage of expenses in conjunction with cancellation due to illness or accident. Baggage insurance is also recommended. In the event that you must cancel your participation in a travel program, trip cancellation insurance may be the only source of reimbursement.

## **ITINERARY:**

The itinerary, accommodations, and arrangements are subject to change at the discretion of Thalassa Journeys.

## **RESPONSIBILITY:**

Please read carefully the following terms and conditions, which constitute the sole, legally enforceable agreements between the traveler and Thalassa Journeys. Thalassa Journeys acts solely as agents for the traveler with respect to all transportation, hotel, and other tour arrangements. In that capacity, we exercise all reasonable care possible to ensure the traveler's safety and satisfaction, but, we neither assume nor bear any responsibility or liability for any injury, death, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity arising in connection with the services of any ship, airplane, train, automobile, motor coach, carriage, or other conveyance, or the actions of any third-party, involved in carrying the traveler or in affecting these tours. We are not responsible for damages, additional expenses, or any other losses due to cancellation, delay, or other changes

in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, civil disturbances, acts or threats of terrorism, travel warnings or bans, termination or suspension of war risks or other carrier insurance, quarantine, acts of God, or other causes beyond our control. All such losses must be borne by the traveler, and tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. In the event of cancellation, delay or rescheduling mandated by any of the aforesaid causes beyond our control, the traveler shall have the option of accepting in lieu of the original tour such rescheduled tour or other substituted tour(s) as may be offered by us, or else, receiving a refund of as much of such advance tour expenditures as we are able to recover on the traveler's behalf from carriers, third-party tour vendors, etc., but, we shall not have any obligation or liability to the traveler beyond the foregoing. We reserve the right to make alterations to the tour's itinerary and to substitute hotels, transportation methods, or lecturers if this is required. We reserve the right to cancel, delay, or reschedule any tour prior to departure, and, so long as this is not due to any of the aforesaid causes beyond our control, the traveler shall be entitled to a full refund of all monies paid to that point if he/she so desires. No refund shall be made for any unused portion of any tour. By forwarding their deposit(s), the traveler certifies that he/she and/or their dependents, minors, or others covered thereby do not have any mental, physical, or other condition of disability that could create a hazard for them or other travelers. We reserve the right to decline to accept or to decline to retain any person as a member of any tour should such person's health, condition, or actions adversely affect or threaten the welfare or safety of other travelers or impede the tour. Baggage or valuables brought on the tour shall be transported, handled, or stored at the traveler's risk entirely, and we shall bear no liability or responsibility for any damage or other loss thereto. Resolution of any disputes arising hereunder shall be effected exclusively in the state or federal courts presiding in Florida, pursuant to applicable Florida law.

## **RATES:**

Tour costs are based upon current airfares, tariffs, and currency values. While we do everything possible to maintain the listed prices, they are subject to change.

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