

# Footsteps of Paul, Greek Isles Cruise 2026

## 13 days, April 27-May 9, \$5495 from CVG

### Led by Dr. David Smith, Pastor Paul Clark

We had a blessed first “Footsteps of Paul” experience last year! From that experience, we have made some refinements to benefit both returning and new travelers . . .

1. Later spring dates for great weather
2. Price based on exterior room with window
3. Centrally-located hotel in Thessaloniki
4. Fly Thessaloniki-Athens saving hours of bus travel
5. One-stop flights connecting in USA

**Day 1, Monday, April 27:** fly USA to Athens--group economy seats included from Cincinnati. However, travelers can arrange their own tickets from any airport, any airline, any schedule, any seat class—deducting \$1400 from final payment. Travelers who wish to depart earlier than the group will be assisted with necessary airport-hotel transportation and additional nights in a deluxe Athens hotel, to be rested and ready when the main group arrives (special activities will be offered for those who wish).

**Day 2, Tuesday, April 28:** morning arrival, then panoramic tour of Athens including highlights Changing of the Guard at House of Parliament and photo stop at the marble stadium that hosted the first modern Olympic Games. Lunch included in a local restaurant, then on to the deluxe hotel for check in. Time for Bible study, devotion, and group orientation before or after dinner.

Breakfast and dinner included each day on land, one lunch. All meals on the cruise.  
Tipping included for land itinerary and the cruise ship staff.

**Day 3, Wednesday, April 29:** drive to ancient **Delphi**, known as the *omphalos* or center of the pagan world, where for centuries the oracles of Delphi were consulted for guidance at the Temple of Apollo. Teaching on the historical importance of Delphi and how Paul treated the spirit of divination, plus historical context about 4<sup>th</sup> century Roman Emperor Theodosius I closing pagan temples, including Delphi, to establish Christianity as the dominant religion. Four-star overnight in the Delphi area.

**Day 4, Thursday, April 30:** travel through dramatic countryside to **Meteora** and the amazing Byzantine monasteries perched atop gigantic rock pinnacles in one of the world’s most bizarre and fascinating geological formations. Visually stunning and spiritually significant, the monasteries, established in the 11th–14th centuries, served as centers of Christian devotion and preservation during the Ottoman Muslim occupation. Introduction to Greek Orthodox Christianity including the centrality of icons. Overnight and dinner at a lovely four-star hotel in the village of Kalambaka.

**Day 5, Friday, May 1:** beautiful drive to **Thessaloniki**, stopping for worship in **Berea**, where after being chased out of Thessaloniki, Paul met men and women of noble character, both Jews and Greeks, who believed the Word (Acts 17:10-14). At Berea study and worship at the reconstructed *bema* or raised stone from which St. Paul preached. While there are no biblical archaeological remains in Thessaloniki, a panoramic tour of the city will illuminate the biblical history of the city to which Paul wrote The Letters to the Thessalonians. End the day checking into a centrally-located hotel in Thessaloniki for two nights.

**Day 6, Saturday, May 2:** after Paul received the vision of preaching to the Europeans beginning in Macedonia (northern Greece, Acts 16), he landed in the **Neapolis** harbor, which is modern day Kavala that we will visit. From Neapolis, Paul went to **Philippi** (16:12ff), where we will see the traditional site of the baptism of Lydia, first European convert, and the ruins on the city of ancient Philippi, including the site that remembers the cell where Paul and Silas were imprisoned before the Lord miraculously freed them and the family of the Philippian jailer was baptized. Return to Thessaloniki for dinner and overnight.

**Day 7, Sunday, May 3:** morning flight to Athens, then Sunday worship in **Corinth**, the once glorious city where Paul met Aquilla and Priscilla and spent a year and a half working and preaching the Gospel (Acts 18). Visit the Archaeological Museum, the Forum, the Temples and the famous Bema, where Paul stood before Gallio accused by the Jews of Corinth. Back to Athens for overnight and dinner.

**Day 8, Monday, May 4:** this morning board a Celestyal cruise line ship and sail to the world-famous island of **Mykonos**. The town is a small architectural miracle, with its gleaming whitewashed buildings and windmills. Guided walking tour of the city included, led by the tour escort with the group throughout the cruise.

Celestyal cruise line is proudly Greek. While not floating palaces like an American cruise ship, Celestyal ships are clean, comfortable, with good food and amenities—great reviews from recent groups. Three meals a day are included, as is basic wi-fi service. For special value, shore excursions are included in Ephesus and Patmos—along with free guided walking tours of Mykonos and Santorini.

**Day 9, Tuesday, May 5:** after the overnight cruise to the Turkish coast, the included shore excursion drives through the colorful town of Kusadasi to reach biblical **Ephesus**, where Paul spent a major part of his missionary journey (Acts 19) and, of course, wrote the Letter to the Ephesians (one of the Seven Churches of the Revelation). Your included guided walking tour includes the Library of Celsus and The Great Theatre, largest in antiquity with a capacity of 24,000 where Paul caused a riot (Acts 19:22ff).

Later, sail for the craggily beautiful isle of **Patmos**, where St John received The Revelation. The included shore excursion visits the cave where tradition says St John had his vision as well as the imposing Monastery of St John built over it. The picturesque port village of Scala is a pleasant place to enjoy some free time shopping and wandering.

**Day 10, Wednesday, May 6:** spend the day on the sunny island of **Rhodes**, where once seafarers were greeted by one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the Colossus of Rhodes. The old Walled City of Rhodes is most famous as the medieval fortress-kingdom of the Knights of St John. One can easily spend the full day wandering around in the Old City, filled with shopping and cafes and a magnificent palace of the knights—or sign up for an optional drive across the countryside to the **Bay of Lindos**, where Paul is remembered stopping on his way back to Jerusalem at the end of the Third Missionary Journey (Acts 21:1).

**Day 11, Thursday, May 7:** morning arrival at **Crete**, largest of the Greek Islands—optional shore excursions include the archaeological excavations at the Minoan Palace of Knossos OR other options exploring Cretan life and culture.

Afternoon call at **Santorini**, the most breathtaking of all the Greek islands—and which may have been ancient Atlantis since half of the island sheared off from a volcano. The exquisite white-washed villages cling to volcanic cliffs, including the main town of Fira (or Thira). From the cliff peak, walking tour of the city led by our tour escort or sign up for optional excursions.

**Day 12, Friday, May 8:** Arrive back in the port of Athens early in the morning and, after breakfast, disembark and head to the Athens Central Market where restaurants and regular Athenian residents do their shopping for fish, meat, vegetables, flowers, and spices—all in a riot of color, scent, and sound. End the trip with tour highlights the **Acropolis** and **Parthenon**, the very symbols of the Grandeur that was Greece. The area of Athens most associated with the Apostle Paul is **Mars Hill** (or Areopagus); when Paul's claims about the resurrection intrigued the city's leaders, he was taken to the top of the **Areopagus** to argue his belief in the famous sermon about "the unknown God" (Acts 17:19-31). Then a guided visit to the Museum of the Acropolis housing the cream of all the Acropolis area archaeological discoveries.

**Day 13, Saturday, May 9:** transfer to the airport for the flight back to the USA, arriving same day . . . with great stories of blessings from the trip to share Sunday, May 10, Mothers' Day.