

Thessaloniki

Ancient Macedon and Halkidiki



THE ARTS
SOCIETY
TRAVEL AFFILIATE

Arranged with Travel Editions Group Travel exclusively for The Arts Society SW London

White Tower, Thessaloniki

19th – 24th September 2024 - 6 days from *£1,275pp

Often overlooked, Northern Greece is as diverse and as spectacular as the rest of the country and simply should not to be missed! This tour showcases just a little of what is on offer in this little known region combining history, scenery and cultural highlights. Our main focus will be on Greece's vibrant second city, Thessaloniki, but we will also spend two days delving into the region's other highlights – ancient Macedon and the spectacular golden treasures of Philip II, dating back to the 11th Century BC and the gloriously scenic and abundant Halkidiki region, renowned for its succulent olives.



The Arch of Galerius



Gold Crown, Royal Tomb

This holiday is operated by Travel Editions Group Travel

For further information please contact Travel Editions Group Limited, 3 Young's Buildings, London EC1V 9DB on Tel: 020 72510045

*Based on minimum 20 passengers and 2 people sharing a twin/double room. Initial deposit of £250.00 per person required by 26th January 2024.



Rotunda

Itinerary

19 September

Fly from London Gatwick to Thessaloniki

On arrival transfer by coach to the Golden Star Hotel (17kms from the city), check-in for five-night stay. This evening dinner will be arranged at a local taverna

20 September

Exploring Thessaloniki (mostly on foot)

Thessaloniki was, for many centuries, the second-most important city of the Byzantine Empire, and this legacy has left some wonderful monuments, many of which are listed UNESCO World Heritage sites. We start from the upper 'Old City' where the old castle walls are found along with wonderful views that stretch right across the city and over the ocean to Mount Olympus (which can be glimpsed on a clear day). Visits today will include the

Byzantine churches of Vlatadon (14th C.) and Osios David (5th C.), the historic Rotunda and the Arch of Galerius. Finish around lunch time, with time free for lunch and to explore the markets around Thessaloniki's central Aristotelous Square before returning to the hotel. Evening at leisure.

21 September

Pella and Vergina

Today's visits begin at Pella, the second capital of ancient Macedonia, an extensive archaeological site with an amazing museum. After a break for lunch at a local taverna we journey on to Ancient Aigai and visit one of the great highlights of the tour, 'The



Pella

Museum of the Royal Tombs' Vergina. The city of Aigai, the ancient first capital of the Kingdom of Macedonia, was discovered in the 19th century near Vergina and is the site of the spectacular tomb that is believed to belong to Philip II, who conquered all Greek cities and who was the father of Alexander the Great. Discovered in 1977, the tombs lie under a brilliant recreation of the tumulus which originally covered them, surrounded by an underground display of all the gold and silver objects found buried with the dead. Return to the hotel.

22 September

Thessaloniki

Taking a late morning/early afternoon boat (approximately a 50-minute journey), we return to Thessaloniki to discover more of its extensive and diverse history. Disembarking the boat we have the opportunity for photos of one of

the most iconic photo locations of Thessaloniki, The White Tower, situated right on the waterfront alongside Thessaloniki's famous seaside promenade. From here it is a short walk for visits to the Archaeological and Byzantine Museums. Later we will visit the church of Agios Dimitrios (the patron Saint of Thessaloniki) and

the Roman Forum. There will be some free time for shopping or enjoying a drink on the seafront before heading to the vibrant pedestrianised streets of 'Ladadika', an area of the city that was spared in the great fire of 1917, which housed the olive oil factories of Thessaloniki. Today, this area is a popular 'buzzy' place to enjoy



Royal Tomb



Church of Agios Dimitrio

dinner, which we shall do altogether. Early evening return to the hotel.

23 September

Introducing Halkidiki

An opportunity to discover just a little of what the attractive region of Halkidiki has to offer.

Agriculture is a very big part of both the traditional and current activities of this region, so we start our day with a visit to a somewhat unusual vineyard, one that makes many products but no wine! We will try some of the tasty products made here before heading into the Halkidiki hills to visit one of the most attractive historic villages of Halkidiki, Arnaia, a tiny hamlet situated in the shadow of Mount Holomontas, and known for its excellently preserved Macedonian architecture that dates to the 19th C. Also of interest here is the historic church of St Stephens, cleverly rebuilt in 2005 after a fire, that showcases three earlier churches of various eras, plus 15 tombs, which date to the 16th C; all discovered during the rebuilding of the church. Lunch in

the village and a chance to taste and perhaps buy honey from a local producer, as honey production in Halkidiki is an integral part of the region's identity. Return to the hotel. Dinner in a local taverna.

24 September

Return to the UK.

Transfer from the hotel to Thessaloniki Airport for the return flight to London Gatwick.

Where you stay

Golden Star Hotel, Perea

Situated just 17 kilometres from Thessaloniki, the four-star Golden Star Hotel provides a relaxed location as a base for this tour. Positioned on the sea front in the small seaside resort of Perea ensures ease of access to local tavernas, shops and other facilities. The comfortable rooms all have balconies with either mountain/town or sea view, air conditioning/heating, refrigerator, safe, TV. Hotel facilities include a restaurant, bar and Wi-Fi throughout.

<https://www.goldenstarhotel.com>



Arnaia, Halkidiki

Included in the price

- Return flights from London Gatwick to Thessaloniki.
- Five nights' bed and breakfast at the four-star Golden Star Hotel, Perea, based on shared occupancy of a twin/double room
- Three dinners
- One boat trip from Perea to Thessaloniki
- Local Guide on Days 2, 3 & 4
- Transfers, tours, and entrance fees as per the itinerary
- Tips for local staff
- Whisper headsets
- Tour manager throughout

Not included

- Single room supplement (guaranteed double rooms for sole use) £220 per person
- Room upgrades
- Holiday insurance
- Meals other than those detailed
- Items of a personal nature such as drinks, laundry, telephone calls
- Porterage



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