SARONIC JEWELS

3 islands, legendary Peloponnese sites
guided with vehicle support

June 4-13, 2023 and Sept 23 – Oct 8, 2023

Tour destinations: Athens, Hydra island, Spetses island, Poros island, Epidavros, Nafplio, Kalamaki Beach

DESCRIPTION

The Argo Saronic region in the southeast corner of the Peloponnese Peninsula is where everything encourages you to pedal at a gradual pace, or siga-siga (slow, slow) as the Greeks say. We bicycle, swim, smell the lemons, shop for quality souvenirs and take enlightening archaeology tours of legendary antiquities.

The tour introduces you to three islands, two World Heritage Sites, the incredibly lovely city of Nafplio which you will rate your favorite. The region is known for its Nemean wines where wine-making from ancient days continues to inspire and delight visitors.

During the tour you will also get in the kitchen to learn how to make a traditional Greek meal, and then you will eat the fruits of your labor. There will also be a Greek spirits night of liqueur flavors you've probably never tried before and whose tastes are unique to Greece. Attend a seminar by an expert on the local Nemea wines.

We recommend you take the Athens Add-on which precedes the Saronic Jewels spring tour and follows the fall tour. You will immerse yourself in the culture of Athens and Attica region with exciting activities: Historic Central Athens bike tour (90% traffic free), Acropolis & Acropolis Museum with professional guide, Temple of Poseidon coastal cycling, walking food tour of Greek cuisine.

DETAILS

2023 Dates	June 4-13 and Sept 23 – Oct 8
Duration	10 days
Add-ons	Athens, see Add-on tab
Arrival City	Athens
Arrival transfer	See Extras tab

Tour Start Point	Athens
Tour End Point	Athens
Minimum Age	18
Minimum Pax	8
Maximum Pax	14
Total Mileage	327 km or 203 miles
Highest Elevation	767 feet 234 m
Rating	Moderate – see **Rating System**

ITINERARY

Day 1 Athens
Welcome to Historic Central Athens for the first day of the tour. The meeting point of the tour is Acropolis pedestrian walkway. Today is for relaxing, adjusting to jet lag, meeting fellow cyclists on the tour and getting fitted for your road bike and test riding it on the Acropolis walkway. Welcome dinner in the Plaka.

Day 2 Hydra island & Spetses island
Everyone is transferred to Piraeus port for the two-hour hydrofoil transfer to car-free Hydra, an elegant island attracting high-end artists whose paintings, jewelry and clothes fill the local shops. As Hydra is also bike-free, the day's activity is a hike up to a monastery offering tremendous views. Late afternoon sea transfer to adorable Spetses island hike 6 km, 3.7 miles, from sea level to 1561 feet, 476 meters

Day 3 Spetses island
Spetses is so small you can circumnavigate the island by bike in a couple of hours. At a half-way point enjoy swimming at a beach with a marvelous sea cave accessible where pirates hid out. In the evening, you're treated to a private tour of the Laskarina Bouboulinas Museum, the national heroine who commanded her own fleet during the Greek Revolution **24 km, 15 miles**

Day 4 Poros island
Return to the Peloponnese mainland by water taxi and hug the coast eastward on mostly flat terrain to reach Galatas, the port opposite Poros, from where you take a ten minute ferry to the island. Put on your aprons for dinner to prepare your meal in a traditional Greek cooking class. **57 km, 35 miles**

Day 5 Epidavros
Hop on the ferry again back to the Peloponnese mainland to bike to the serene coastal town of Epidavros. The route has spectacular views overlooking the Aegean Sea. **39.30 km, 24.40 miles**

Day 6 Nafplio
A gradual climb brings us to Ancient Epidavros, the 3rd century BC outdoor theatre seating 13,000 spectators with impeccable acoustics. Epidavros was the most famous healing center

in ancient Greece, focusing on mind, body and spirit. Continue biking to Nafplio, the first capital of modern Greece, and the prettiest city in the Peloponnese. **48.50 km, 29.80 miles**

Day 7 Nafplio
Bike Nafplio to Ancient Mycenae on mostly flat back road. Tour Mycenae with a professional guide. After lunch cycle back to Nafplio. Pre-dinner wine tasting of famous Nemean wines. **46.60 km, 30 miles**

Day 8 Kalamaki Beach
One hour vehicle transfer to Ancient Nemea, one of the four sites where athletic games were held (the most famous being Olympia), and the one with the finest stadium entrance. From Nemea cycle to Ancient Corinth, the Roman ruins where St. Paul preached. Photo op in front of the Corinth columns. Home stretch leg to the seaside hotel on Kalamaki Beach. Partake in our Greek Spirits Night! **48.60km, 28 miles**

Day 9 Athens
Cross the Corinth Canal, the waterway that turned the Peloponnese peninsula into an island in 1893. Cycle the old national highway, hugging the sea to reach the ferry crossing to Salamina island. Lunch at Salamina's fish market. Then cycle to the second ferry that takes us to Piraeus port. Farewell Dinner. **63.30 km 39 miles**

Day 10 Departures

COST & INCLUSIONS

Cost in euros based on double occupancy

9 Days Tour	3150 euros per person
Single Supplement	800 euros

TOUR INCLUSIONS

9 nights Accommodations: 3-4 star hotels, primarily family owned and operated, ranging from boutique hotels to seaside upscale hotels. Tasteful, clean, air-conditioned, private bath, abundant hospitality, comfort. All accommodations are standard doubles with option for upgrade. All accommodations serve breakfast, usually buffet style. Tour prices are based on double occupancy. Check single supplement price for a single room.

5 sea transfers: Piraeus to Hydra (hydrofoil), Hydra to Spetses (hydrofoil), Spetses to Kosta port on mainland (water taxi), Galatas port on mainland to Poros (ferry or water taxi), Poros to Galatas (ferry or water taxi).

Bikes: Specialized road bike. Triple chain ring, 27 gears, carbon fiber fork. Carbon Tarmac bikes are available as an upgrade for 70 euros a day. Electric bikes are available as an upgrade for 50 euros a day. Regular pedals or toe clips on request. You are welcome to bring your own clip-in pedals and shoes. See **Our Bikes** and **Our Gear**

Bike gear: helmet, water bottles, handlebar pouch, odometer

Support vehicle: ("sag wagon") with bilingual driver who is also a bike mechanic. Vehicle carries spare parts, spare fully pumped wheels, floor pump, ice cooler, water, nutritious snacks, bike tools, first aid kit, day packs, luggage and gives you a lift if you get tired.

Tour Leader / Bike Guide: the Tour Leader handles all the tour logistics and bikes with the group.

All Meals:

* Breakfasts are included at each hotel.

* 8 lunches — you choose from the menu.

* 9 dinners consisting of 2-3 appetizers and salad chosen by us and shared by the group. You are offered an entrée choice, usually a meat, fish or vegetarian dish. Dessert, house wine or beer, water or beverage.

Bike Routes: Options (1) RideWithGPS App tour routes to upload to your iphone or Android with voice narration –bike mount available on request (2) GPX tracks to download to your device – bring your own bike mount

Cue sheets and cue sheet holders on request

Map of the region

Trip packet: useful and interesting information about the regions, packing tips, general travel info for Greece

Archaeology tours: Private one hour archaeology tour with professional licensed guides at Epidavros and Mycenae.

Entrance fees: Entrance fees to Epidavros, Mycenae, Nemea.

Wine Tasting: Nemea wine tasting with local expert

Traditional Greek Cooking Class: takes place in Poros, led by local cook

CycleGreece jersey: short sleeved, rear pockets, locally made

CycleGreece lite backpack: 17" x 13", 43cm x 33cm

Gratuities & 13% VAT taxes

TOUR EXCLUSIONS

* Airfare to/from Greece

* Transfers between Athens Airport and Athens — see Extras tab

* Travel insurance — see Extras tab

- Participants are required to sign our **Waiver**
- Participants are required to agree to the **Booking Agreement**
- Travel Insurance is required as a condition for participation in a CycleGreece tour

See the website for more details about Accommodations, Extras, Add-Ons, Maps, Booking Agreement and Waivers

CYCLEGREECE

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