

Cruising the Greek Islands of the Southern Aegean – with Smithsonian Journeys

From **1/9/2022**
to **8/9/2022**

Ship: **LE BOUGAINVILLE**

From **Athens**
to **Athens**



Shore excursion or activity in each port of call + transfers included

In alliance with Smithsonian Journeys.

This cruise is part of a collection of PONANT voyages that are specially-tailored for English-speaking travelers who want to engage with the world. In addition to the usual elements of the PONANT experience, the listed price for these voyages includes transfers to and from the ship, talks and discussions aboard ship by world class experts, and a shore excursion or activity in each port of call that encourages guests to embrace the sights, sounds, tastes, and smells of the local environment and culture.

With **this exceptional itinerary**, PONANT invites you to enjoy a wonderful interlude discovering the cultural and natural treasures of **the Cyclades** and **the Dodecanese**. From Athens, set sail aboard **Le Bougainville** for an **8-day cruise** to the most beautiful **Greek islands of the Aegean Sea and delight not only in the rich cultural heritage but also in refreshing dips in the turquoise waters of the archipelago.**

You will discover **Patmos**, known as the “Jerusalem of the Aegean Sea”. This island, where Saint John is said to have written the Apocalypse, offers unique landscapes combining white sandy beaches and rocky coves.

After a stopover on the small island of **Symi**, which will not fail to dazzle you with its discreet beauty and Italian-style neoclassical houses, you will head for the **Cyclades. Amorgos**, or the island of the Big Blue as it is known, is a raw gem. You will admire its volcanic and mountainous landscapes that rush into the crystal clear waters that surround it.

Le Bougainville will then approach the **Santorini archipelago** in an incredible cruise along the foot of its **caldera** formed during an eruption in around 1600 BC. **Sublime white villages** such as Thera and Oia are built on top of the cliffs falling vertically into the sea.

You will then make a stopover on the authentic and picturesque Folégandros before reaching Delos, a minuscule island in the Cyclades archipelago. According to mythology, Apollo was born here. Like an **open-air museum**, Delos offers unique testimony of the civilisations that followed one another in the Aegean world.

Next comes **Mykonos**, its beaches and windmills, with **Alefkandra**, a district that is typical of the island, with houses built right on the water's edge. *Le Bougainville* will make a final stopover on **the island of Hydra**, famous for its incomparable light, before heading towards the Greek capital.

Your cruise will end in Athens, the mythical city dominated by the Acropolis and its monuments that form **the most extraordinary architectural and artistic collection** bequeathed by Ancient Greece to the rest of the world.



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YOUR STOPOVERS :

ATHENS

Embarkation 1/9/2022 from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm
Departure 1/9/2022 at 7:00 pm

The Greek capital city is located on the edge of the Saronic gulf, in the east of the country. It bears a plural name in reference to the first villages that surround the **Acropolis**. You will be enchanted by the rocky plateau presided by its monuments listed as UNESCO World Heritage. In the city below, you can visit some of the liveliest districts in Athens: **Plaka**, with its maze of colourful streets, and where, in the evenings the drifting aroma of moussaka and garlic prawns will tickle your taste buds. The **National Archaeological museum** and the Cycladic Art Museum are also some of the city's key attractions and allow visitors to discover Athens' cultural past.

PATMOS

Arrival 2/9/2022 midday
Departure 2/9/2022 early evening

Patmos is one of the legendary must-see islands in the Dodecanese. This is where Saint John resided, presumed author of the last book in the Bible. The **cave of the Apocalypse** and the **Saint John Monastery** are dedicated to him. These sites, which are listed by UNESCO as World Heritage, are located at the top of a hillside planted with vines and orchards. On the shore, the crystalline coves of Kambos and Lampi offer absolutely gorgeous swimming areas.

SYMI

Arrival 3/9/2022 early morning
Departure 3/9/2022 mid afternoon

A simply ravishing gem in the Dodecanese, Symi is located north-west of Rhodes. This island of cypress forests, vineyards and olive orchards, possesses a capital city of the same name that is as colourful as the surrounding countryside. The charm of the port district of **Gialos** is not to be missed: its quaysides are lined with picturesque houses with multi-coloured facades. You can get to the upper town by car or climb the 500 steps up the **Kali Strata** ramp. The second option offers superb viewing points of the coast and gorgeous turquoise waters.

AMORGOS

Arrival 4/9/2022 early morning
Departure 4/9/2022 late afternoon

It's no accident that the island of Amorgos was chosen as a shooting location for Luc Besson's film, The Big Blue. You

too will fall under the charm of this island as your ship edges closer. Amorgos is the most easterly island in the **Cyclades** and stands out for its **rocky inlets** with crystal-clear water and its small, **picturesque villages**. This port of call will be your chance to visit one of the prettiest villages in the Cyclades, Chora, and discover its cobbled streets and whitewashed houses overlooked by a castle. **Byzantine churches**, windmills and courtyards brimming with flowers complete this typical tableau of timeless Greece.

SAILING IN THE SANTORINI CALDERA

Arrival 5/9/2022

Departure 5/9/2022

Sailing in the waters of **Santorini caldera** is breathtaking. The gigantic scale of the unique setting, the majesty of the high cliffs surrounds this **ancient crater** that was flooded in 2000 years before Christ, is one of the highlights of the cruise. The colourful whites, greys, reds of the volcanic rocks, the blue of the Aegean Sea and the immaculate perched villages form a unique and marvellous spectacle.

FOLEGANDROS

Arrival 5/9/2022 midday

Departure 5/9/2022 evening

Folegandros is a treasure concealed in the Cyclades archipelago. You approach this mountainous island from the south-east side of continental Greece. The blue and white houses built on a steep plateau in its main town, **Chora**, is a feast for the eyes. Why not climb up to the belvederes and admire the view of the Aegean and the port of **Karavostasi**. The jetty in Karavostasi port leads to a lovely beach where you can have fun in the turquoise water. Higher up, **Ano Meria**, a village surrounded by terrace farms, offers a magnificent panorama over the sea.

DELOS

Arrival 6/9/2022 early morning

Departure 6/9/2022 midday

This legendary Cyclades island of Delos stands just a few miles southwest of Mykonos. The ceremonial solemnity of this **ancient holy sanctuary** will not leave you indifferent. The sheer size and importance of this UNESCO World Heritage site which covers over half of the island is thrilling in itself. From the Stoa of Antigonos, the **Terrace of the Lions**, to the carved marble animal statues, you will make discovery after discovery, against a backdrop of the Aegean stretching to the horizon. The theatre steps on the hillside are a particularly good place from which to enjoy the expansive view.

MYKONOS

Arrival 6/9/2022 early afternoon

Departure 6/9/2022 late evening

Nicknamed "little Venice", Mykonos is famous for its **Alefkandra** district where houses are built right on the water's edge. Their multi-coloured loggias are emblematic of this Cyclades island, as are the **pelicans** and **windmills**. You can get close up to the birds on the quaysides of the old port. Up on the hillside, you can see the windmill sails turning. In

the cobbled streets of the pedestrian centre, bougainvillea bedeck immaculate facades. As you weave in and out of the little streets, snatches of coastline will undoubtedly call you to the island's beaches, the quietest of which can be found on the northern coast.

HYDRA

Arrival 7/9/2022 midday

Departure 7/9/2022 evening

This unusual gem belonging to the Saronic islands is located to the east of the Peloponnese. There are no cars here. Named after the island, the harbour town is layered up the slopes of a mountainous bay. You may be surprised to see beautiful **stone mansions**. These are traditional here, as are the multi-coloured *caïques* along the quays. Further along the shore, you will discover the Historical Archives Museum. Collections from Athens National History Museum are exhibited in the elegant **villa Koundouriotis**.

ATHENS

Arrival 8/9/2022 early morning

Disembarkation 8/9/2022 at 7:00 am

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