

Treasures of the Peloponnese

From **17/7/2020**
to **24/7/2020**

Ship: **LE LYRIAL**

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

Succumb to the charms of **Eternal Greece** during a new **8-day** cruise offered by **PONANT**. With Athens as the departure point, set sail aboard **Le Lyrial** for an exceptional tour of Peloponnese that will give you access to historic and cultural sites that are among the most celebrated in Greece.

During your stop at **Sifnos** in the Cyclades, discover this harmonious island exploited since Antiquity for its gold and silver mines, offering gentle landscapes, mountains paths and a rich endemic flora. From the main port of Kamares, set off to the picturesque fortified village of Kastro, sitting atop a hill overlooking the Aegean Sea.

After calling at **Nafplion**, an opportunity to visit the superb Ancient Theatre of Epidaurus, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, **Le Lyrial** will then set sail for **Gythio**, the main port of ancient Sparta where you will discover the **Byzantine city of Mystras**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

When the ship calls at **Pylos**, you will explore the ruins of the **Palace of Nestor**, one of the heroes of the Trojan War, and of course the wonderful **archaeological site of Delphi** clinging to the slopes of Mount Parnassus, which you will reach from Itea.

Le Lyrial will finally cross the **Corinth Canal**, thus sailing through the Peloponnese isthmus to arrive in **Athens**, the City of the Gods, the end of your Mediterranean odyssey.





The information in this document is valid as of 1/6/2020

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YOUR STOPOVERS :

ATHENS

Embarkation 17/7/2020 from 16h00 to 17h00

Departure 17/7/2020 at 18h00

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.

KAMARES, SIFNOS

Arrival 18/7/2020 early morning

Departure 18/7/2020 evening

Nestling in the Cyclades, the harmonious and much less crowded **island of Sifnos** is home to many treasures. Exploited since antiquity for its gold and silver mines, this little-known pearl boasts gentle landscapes and is a botanical paradise. The rich endemic flora can be admired along the island's mountain paths that have been trodden for thousands of years. From the main port of Kamares, set off to discover the nearby sandy beach which runs along a lagoon and whose dunes are covered in sea daffodils. The picturesque **fortified village of Kastro** is another of the island's wonders. Sitting atop a hill overlooking the Aegean Sea, this spot, where people have lived since prehistoric times, is very much an open-air museum.

NAFPLION

Arrival 19/7/2020 early morning

Departure 19/7/2020 early evening

The engaging town of Nafplion is staggered up green hillsides of the Argolic Gulf, to the east of the Peloponnese. Don't be surprised by its extremely varied cultural heritage. Some of the must-see visits are the ancient agora on the plateau of Akronafplia, Italianate arcades in **Syntagma square** as well as the baroque fortress of **Palamidi** on a hillside of the same name. At the top of the hill, views of the gulf and the surrounding mountains are simply awesome. If you want to chill out by the water's edge, walk along the **Arvanitia promenade** to a beautiful creek in the shade of cedars

and cypresses.

GYTHIO

Arrival 20/7/2020 early morning

Departure 20/7/2020 early evening

Located in the south of the **Peloponnese**, on the Mani Peninsula, Gytheio was the main port and naval base of ancient Sparta, located around fifty kilometres inland. In Roman times, the port experienced significant expansion thanks to trading in imperial dye; in fact, the region had an abundance of murex, the rock snails from which this dye, loved by the Romans, was extracted. The town is nestled against Mount Koumaros and dominated by a citadel. Take a stroll and fall under the charm of the calm that reigns over the stairways bordered by small neoclassic houses with steps overrun with wild flowers.

PYLOS

Arrival 21/7/2020 early morning

Departure 21/7/2020 late afternoon

The picturesque port of Pylos is located in the south west of the Peloponnese. Backed against the lush green hills of Messenia, it looks out onto the **Navarino Bay**. You can admire the gorgeous view as you walk uptown amid pink oleanders that cascade over the jetty. A stone's throw away, the historical centre's winding streets will plunge you into a maze of houses with whitewashed facades and terracotta roof-tiles. On the attractive main beach, you will be able to relax in the shade of the **age-old plane trees** and taste the delicious local biscuits made of sesame and honey.

PAXI

Arrival 22/7/2020 early morning

Departure 22/7/2020 early evening

Paxi Island is one of the Ionian islands' best kept secrets, only reachable by boat. You will be lured in by the port of Gaios and the colourful houses surrounding the orthodox church of Analipsi. On the northern tip of the island, you'll want to dive straight into the translucent waters of the **Lakka bay**. After that, you can climb into a caique and head for the little island of Agios Nikolaus, where the Venetian fort awaits your visit.

ITEA

Arrival 23/7/2020 early morning

Departure 23/7/2020 late afternoon

Tucked away in the Gulf of Corinth, this **little port** is situated in continental Greece, north-west of Athens. Take an easy stroll along the old cobblestone quays, while gazing at the summits encircling the **Bay of Itea**. We wouldn't be surprised if you are tempted by a visit to the **Delphi Sanctuary**. The sanctuary is located on a plateau on the slope of Mount Parnassus, just ten kilometres from Itea. A listed UNESCO World Heritage site, this is a once-in-a-lifetime experience. The ancient ruins are surrounded by steep mountains, and their Archaeological Museum is chock-full of

cultural delights.

CROSSING THE CORINTH CANAL

Arrival 23/7/2020

Departure 23/7/2020

The Corinth Canal cuts through the Isthmus of Corinth, turning the Peloponnese into an island as it separates the region from the Greek mainland. Inaugurated in 1893, the canal is a little over six kilometres long and enables merchant vessels and passenger to avoid a long 400-km detour around the peninsula. The two sides of the canal reach a height of approximately fifty metres. From the exterior decks, don't miss this unique opportunity to watch the ship as it navigates along the narrow strip of water encased between tall, ochre cliffs. What an experience!

ATHENS

Arrival 24/7/2020 early morning

Disembarkation 24/7/2020 at 07h00

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