



Back-Roads  
TOURING CO.



*Experience the road less travelled*

WITH THE EXPERTS IN SMALL GROUP TOURING

## GREECE: LEGENDS AND LANDSCAPES

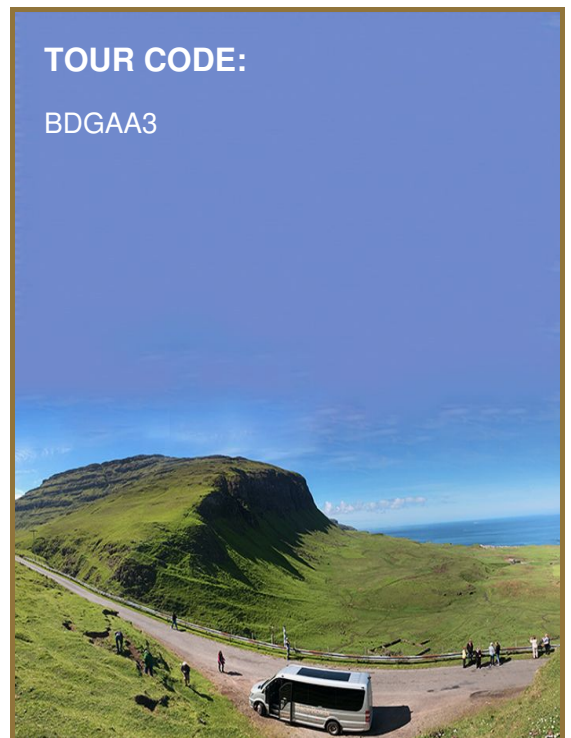
# Back-Roads | Europe (BRT)

Step into a world of myth and magic. Where ancient art and culture flourished. Philosophy was founded. And gods were made. From awe-inspiring archaeological sites to sleepy towns and coastal treasures, Greece rewards with every twist in the journey. Shrouded in secrets and stories, the legend lives on in this 12-day adventure.



TOUR CODE:

BDGAA3



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# Thank you for choosing **Back-Roads**

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Your extraordinary adventure awaits!

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## About your tour notes

These tour notes contain everything you need to know before your tour departs – from where to meet your fellow guests and local guide to what essentials to pack for your journey.

We recommend you print this document out and bring it with you on your tour. Give a copy to loved ones at home so they can follow your adventure, too.

IMPORTANT: please refresh this document as close to your departure as possible to ensure you're equipped with the latest information available.

### THE BACK-ROADS DIFFERENCE

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- ✓ Learn from the masters in a traditional Greek cooking class
- ✓ Discover the charms of Naxos, an authentic gem within the Cyclades islands
- ✓ Uncover the secrets of sacred Delphi – a UNESCO World Heritage Site

### TOUR CURRENCIES

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- Greece - EUR

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# Your itinerary

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## DAY 1 | ATHENS (GREECE)

Athens: where myths are born and legends live on. Welcome to the start of our Grecian adventure! This evening, we'll learn more about our like-minded travel companions over our first included dinner.

Accommodation: Elia Ermou Athens Hotel (or similar)

### MEALS:

✓ Dinner

## DAY 2 | ATHENS

Time travel back over 3,000 years: the iconic Acropolis awaits! This astounding temple complex stands guard over the city – an enduring symbol of Greece's classical spirit and the blueprint for Western civilisations to come. We'll uncover its secrets with a local guide, including the extraordinary Parthenon – dedicated to Athena, the goddess of war and reason. Wisdom topped up, the rest of the day will be ours for exploring! Discover more remarkable feats of the ancient world at the National Archaeological Museum, or settle into a traditional taverna for a hearty serving of moussaka. Accommodation: Elia Ermou Athens Hotel (or similar)

### MEALS:

✓ Breakfast

## DAY 3 | ATHENS – NAXOS (CYCLADES)

The piercing blue waters of the Aegean are calling! Following breakfast, our path will lead us towards Naxos – a lesser-explored and unspoilt gem of the Cyclades islands. We'll slow the pace with a scenic ferry journey, soaking up seafaring views as we go, before docking at the namesake island capital. This green, verdant island, hugged by mist-topped mountains, oozes authentic Greek charm. Take a stroll around the maze of lantern-lit cobbled streets before we dine together this evening. Accommodation: Hotel Xenia (or similar)

### MEALS:

✓ Breakfast

✓ Dinner

## DAY 4 | NAXOS

There's an exclusive local experience in store today as we make tracks towards a working family farm. Here we'll sample a selection of flavourful local cheeses and homemade marmalades. Then: roll up your sleeves and dive in! We'll prepare our own traditional Greek lunches under the guidance of the experts, before touring the farm and digging into our creations. Appetites satisfied, when we return to the city the evening is ours to spend as we please. Why not round off a day of local discoveries with a tangy glass of kitron – Naxos' trademark spirit, made from the fruit and leaves of the citron tree. Yiamas! Accommodation: Hotel Xenia (or similar)

### MEALS:

- ☒ Breakfast
- ☒ Lunch

## DAY 5 | NAXOS

Winding lanes blushing with crimson flowers. Neat sugar cube houses snuggling grand Venetian mansions. Twisted vines smothering cosy cafes. The treasures of Naxos are yours for the taking today! Meander up to the Kastro – a medieval citadel housing an archaeology museum. Or amble along the coast and indulge in a spot of people watching. As the sky transforms to pink, stroll along the causeway to Portara – or the 'Temple of Apollo' – a vast sixth-century marble doorway that stands proudly on a neighbouring islet. Behold as the sun sinks into the sea! And when darkness descends? Legend has it that Dionysus, the Greek god of wine, blessed Naxos with fertile land; so dine like gods and feast on the island's bounty of rich cheeses and local meats! Accommodation: Hotel Xenia (or similar)

### MEALS:

- ☒ Breakfast

## DAY 6 | NAXOS – CORINTH CANAL (GREECE) – NAFPLIO

Westwards! Today we've got the handsome coastal city of Nafplio in our sights. Once back on the mainland, we'll wind our way through mountainous, vineyard-speckled landscapes – stopping at the striking Corinth Canal as we go. Wedged between sharp cliff faces, this distinctive canal is the narrowest in the world; a streak of blue connecting the two bordering gulfs. Though most modern ships would find it tricky to navigate its 25-metre width! Upon our arrival in Nafplio, take a moment to admire Bourtzi Castle – an atmospheric Venetian fortress floating in the middle of the harbour – before sampling the local fare in a homely tavern. Accommodation: Hotel Grande Bretagne Nafplio (or similar)



### MEALS:

- ☒ Breakfast

## DAY 7 | NAFPLIO – MYSTRAS – GYTHEIO

857. That's how many steps it takes to reach the top of Palamidi Castle (or a short taxi ride!). Snaking up a hillside, this formidable fortress looms over the city and offers spectacular 360-degree vistas of the sea and valley. The perfect way to spend your free morning, if you so choose! After enjoying a spot of lunch at our leisure, we'll regroup and make our way to mysterious Mystras. This fortified medieval city – once the Byzantine capital – perches along a steep mountainside, and harbours plenty of nooks and crannies to explore! Later the road will lead us to the peaceful port town of Gytheio, where we'll share stories of the adventure so far over our included dinner. Accommodation: Stavros Tou Notou Hotel (or similar)


### MEALS:

-  Breakfast
-  Dinner

## DAY 8 | GYTHEIO – DIROS CAVE – AREOPOLI – GYTHEIO

It seems magical Diros Cave has leapt from the pages of a fairytale. After breakfast, we'll delve into this subterranean wonderland with a local guide. A spellbinding maze of turquoise waterways and astonishing, lava-like rock formations, this otherworldly experience is truly unforgettable. Next: it's back above ground as we pay a visit to the captivating town of Areopoli. Prepare to be charmed as our expert Tour Leader reveals the hidden corners of the rustic stone-built streets. When we return to picture-perfect Gytheio there's an abundance of seafood restaurants to choose from for dinner. And it would be rude not to visit a traditional ouzeri for a taste of the country's renowned liquor, wouldn't it? Accommodation: Stavros Tou Notou Hotel (or similar)



### MEALS:

-  Breakfast

## DAY 9 | GYTHEIO – KARDAMYLI – KALAMATA – OLYMPIA

Beware of beasts! Today's journey takes us deeper into the remote Peloponnese peninsula: the heartland of Greek legend. It's here that the monsters and gods of mythology were born – and where the drum of traditional rural life beats slowly among neat rows of vineyards and snow-capped mountains. Kardamyli is our first port of call: a picturesque fishing town with a sleepy pace. After free time for lunch in nearby Kalamata, a traditional tasting awaits at a long-standing olive farm in Olympia – where we'll receive a masterclass in the art of olive oil production. When our day of exploring comes to an end, we'll reflect on the highlights so far over our group dinner. Accommodation: Amalia Hotel Olympia (or similar)

### MEALS:

-  Breakfast
-  Dinner

## DAY 10 | OLYMPIA – NAFPAKTOS – DELPHI

Limber up! Our day begins with a locally guided tour of legendary Olympia – the birthplace of sporting glory. This landmark archaeological site sparked off the Olympic Games in 776 BC – the world's greatest athletic event founded on values of peace and healthy competition. As you wander the shaded ruins imagine the roar of the crowd ringing as the athletes entered the arena. Leaving Olympia behind us, our next stop is the lovely seaside town of Nafpaktos. Brimming with history, Nafpaktos is one of the locals' best-kept secrets – sporting a dramatic Venetian castle and delightful, historic port. Finally, Delphi – considered the centre of the world by ancient Greeks – is a fitting end to an evocative day. Accommodation: Kastalia Boutique Hotel (or similar)

### MEALS:

 Breakfast

## DAY 11 | DELPHI – ITEA – DELPHI

Start the day with sacred stories as a knowledgeable local guide shares Delphi's secrets with us. This ancient mountainside site was the epicentre of religion and culture, as well as home to Pythia – the oracle or 'high priestess'. Pythia made prophecies and was consulted about all major decisions taken in the classical world. Be sure to embrace the view of the stunning surrounding valley before we depart for our next destination – where a sweet treat's in store! We'll live out Winnie-the-Pooh's fantasy with a delicious local honey-tasting experience in Itea. Later, upon our return to Delphi we'll dine as a group for the final time and cheers to one extraordinary adventure. Opa! Accommodation: Kastalia Boutique Hotel (or similar)

### MEALS:

 Breakfast

 Dinner

## DAY 12 | DELPHI – ARACHOVA – ATHENS

This morning we awaken to the final day of our Greek journey. But it's not over quite yet! As we take the scenic trail back to Athens, we'll call in at the elegant town of Arachova, which nestles along the foot of mighty Mount Parnassus. Back in the capital, it's time to say our goodbyes. Until next time!

### MEALS:

 Breakfast





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## Tour information

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### Meals

#### **INCLUDED MEALS**

Breakfast (B) is included daily.

Some of your lunches and dinners are also included, either in hotels or local restaurants. These are indicated by (L) and (D) in the itinerary.

Please note that drinks will not always be included.

We will do our best to accommodate any specific dietary requirements you may have. Please ensure to make these clear to us before your tour begins so we can communicate them to our hotels, restaurants and suppliers.

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# Other information

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## Finances

### CHANGING MONEY

CASH: Foreign money can be changed at banks, airports, some railway and tube stations, and at major hotels (though at a less favourable rate).

CREDIT CARDS: Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted. American Express is only accepted in some larger establishments.

CASH MACHINES: ATMS are widely available.

### TIPPING

Tipping is entirely at your discretion. If you feel you have received exceptional service, it is recommended that you tip £1-2/€ per day for Drivers and £4- 5/€ per day for Tour Leaders.

## Insurance

Before travelling with Back-Roads Touring, it is compulsory for all guests to take out comprehensive travel insurance. Please ensure your insurance covers medical expenses (including repatriation), cancellation cover, loss or damage to baggage and personal effects, money and personal liability.

We recommend you carry your insurance details with you at all times. You may be asked to provide details of your medical insurance or a payment guarantee in some countries before medical assistance can be provided.

For more information, please see our FAQ page:  
[www.backroadstouring.com/faqs](http://www.backroadstouring.com/faqs)

If you have any further questions, please don't hesitate to contact our friendly Customer Service team: [www.backroadstouring.com/contact-us](http://www.backroadstouring.com/contact-us)

## Passports and visas

Please ensure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your tour. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your tour's departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling.

PLEASE NOTE: Some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure as requirements do change periodically.

We advise you to either carry a photocopy of your passport (and visa, if applicable) with you while abroad, or to ensure that you leave a copy with relatives back at home. This will enable the local embassy or high commission to arrange a replacement if the original should be lost or stolen. If you do take copies with you on your tour, please ensure that you keep these separate from your



## Medication and mobility

Whilst on your tour, we want you to have the smoothest journey possible which requires some mobility conditions:

- You must be fit enough to get on and off the vehicle on a regular basis, and to walk around towns and villages or to attractions.
- You must be able to walk up and down stairs and use a shower over the bath.

Please note that, unfortunately, we are unable to accommodate mobility scooter or wheelchair users as we frequently stay in traditional-style hotels and the majority do not have lifts or ground-floor rooms.

If you take medicine for certain conditions, such as diabetes or heart problems, please carry it with you at all times.

Please declare any medical conditions you may have in advance of your tour. If you are in any doubt as to whether our tours are suitable for you, please contact our friendly Customer Service team:

[www.backroadstouring.com/contact-us](http://www.backroadstouring.com/contact-us)

## Transport

We travel in premium mini-coaches equipped with comfortable seats, air conditioning and large windows for enjoying the view.

With far more flexibility than a standard-size coach, we're able to take the scenic route – winding through beautiful countryside to the heart of tiny villages and coastal towns.

## Mental health and wellbeing

Culture shock, homesickness and periods of feeling down happen regardless of age. Be rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Tour Leader and Driver will do their utmost to make you smile.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- Call loved ones. Hearing a familiar voice whilst in an unfamiliar destination can help ground you and remind you you're not alone.
- Eat well. Nobody feels their best when they're hungry. There are plenty of nutritious culinary delights to be savoured along the road!
- Integrate with your fellow guests. The more you socialise with the group, the less likely you'll feel homesick.

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# What to bring

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Based on our experience, the following items are essential.

Please note, this is a general packing list for Back-Roads tours. What you pack will depend on the countries you're visiting as well as the time of year you plan to travel.

## CLOTHING:

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|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ☑ Sun hat     | ☑ Long-sleeved tops         | ☑ Light jacket                    |
| ☑ Sunglasses  | ☑ Short-sleeved tops        | ☑ Waterproof jacket               |
| ☑ Sleepwear   | ☑ Shorts/skirts             | ☑ Trousers                        |
| ☑ Warm jacket | ☑ Socks                     | ☑ Swimwear                        |
| ☑ Underwear   | ☑ Smart casual evening wear | ☑ Walking shoes/comfortable shoes |

## OTHER THINGS TO PACK:

- |                           |  |                    |
|---------------------------|--|--------------------|
| ☑ Multi-use adapter plug  | ☑ Toiletries   | ☑ Camera           |
| ☑ Batteries               | ☑ Sunscreen  | ☑ Towel            |
| ☑ Umbrella                | ☑ Reusable water bottle  | ☑ Insect repellent |
| ☑ Any personal medication | ☑ Basic medical kit (including paracetamol, aspirin, plasters etc) |                    |

# That's it!

**We look forward to seeing you on tour.**