

Cyclades Highlights

Country(ies): Greece

Tour type: Private

Transport: A/C car/minibus & ferry

Group size: Min: 2 | Max: 26

Days: 8 Days

Start location: Athens, Greece

End location: Athens, Greece

Departs On: Any day

Meals: Breakfasts - 7, Lunches - 0, Dinners - 0

Highlights:

Athens City Tour including the Acropolis & Parthenon,
Free time to explore the beautiful islands of Milos and
Santorini.

Places Visited: Athens, Milos, Santorini



Itinerary

Day 1: Your Greek adventure begins. Airport to hotel transfers included

Upon arrival in the city of Athens, you will be picked up by our transfer and dropped off at your 4-star hotel. The hotel is set in the heart of the city centre and ensures a comfortable stay to the start of your Greece tour.

The rest of the day is then free for you to relax after your flight, explore the area or take in the impressive vista of the Parthenon from the hotel's restaurant.

OVERNIGHT: Athens hotel

MEALS: None

EXTRAS: Extra day in Athens - pre-tour || Single room supplement (GRTMHC)

Day 2: Exploring Athens

The Athens city tour will kick off from the Panathenaic Stadium - an iconic structure that held the first Olympic Games of modern times in 1896. The tour will then continue to tick off the Temple of Olympian Zeus, the memorial to the Unknown Soldier, the Parliament, Hadrian's Arch, the University, the Academy, the Constitution Square (Syntagma) and the National Library.

Stopping off at the Acropolis - an ancient citadel set on a rocky hill above the city - your guide will inform you of the ancient building's history and the significance of the Parthenon.

Please note that the sightseeing included today is a shared city tour - if you would like a private tour, this can be arranged at an additional cost.

From here, you can enjoy beautiful views over the historical metropolis. After spending the day exploring Athens, you will return to hotel and relax for the rest of the evening.

OVERNIGHT: Athens hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 3: From Athens to Milos

Early this morning, we depart for the island of Milos situated in the Aegean Sea, located north of the Sea of Crete. Part of the Cyclades group of islands, this unique horse-shoe-shaped destination is often referred to as 'the island of colours' given its surrounding emerald waters and pastel-painted buildings.

You will be taken to your 4-star hotel and get the chance to find an idyllic spot to watch the sun sink behind the shimmering sea.

OVERNIGHT: Milos hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 4: Free time to explore the island of Milos

Today you are free to venture around the island by yourself or join the optional photography safari tour. Milos has

many picture-perfect wonders to be found - and we recommend seeking out the ancient theatre, the windmills in the Tripti village and the vast collection of sandy and pebbled beaches.

Your guide will also take you to marvel at the volcanic cave of Papafragas and the lunar landscape of Sarakiniko - the point where volcanic white stone meets the sunlight. In the evening, we'll take you to the cobbled streets of a nearby village, tucking into a seafood feast under the stars.

OVERNIGHT: Milos hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 5: From Milos to Santorini

We say goodbye to Milos as hop in a ferry to the equally enchanting island of Santorini. This very distinguishable bucket list location is sure to impress with its soaring precipice of white houses jutting out over the sea.

You will be dropped off at your hotel, which is within walking distance of some of the best volcanic-sand beaches and the capital of Fira. We'll visit the Greek Orthodox Cathedral, the old port and the Archeological Museum. Bustling bars and restaurants spill out onto leveled patios and boast dreamy vistas of the water below.

Those looking for the best place to view the sunset should visit Oia - a small coastal town where crowds gather to cheer as the sky changes from vivid shades of orange and pink to dark velvet.

OVERNIGHT: Santorini hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 6: Exploring Santorini

If you want to get closer to the world's biggest volcanic crater above sea level, then take the optional tour to witness this impressive sight. This volcano is still active and you are able to swim in the steamy thermal waters as well as take a therapeutic mud bath.

After this excursion, you can continue wandering around the island or pick a lounge and relax by the hotel's pool. If you are after further activities, be sure to visit the microbreweries, wine caverns, cooking schools and the open-air cinema.

OVERNIGHT: Santorini hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 7: Back to Athens

Leaving Santorini behind, this tour will return back to mainland and drive you to the port for your ferry to Athens. Once in Athens, you will be dropped at your hotel and have another day to get better acquainted with the city.

To escape the heat, there are plenty of museums to visit as well as shopping options to pick up gifts and souvenirs. Your guide will be on hand for any questions or arrangements.

OVERNIGHT: Athens hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 8: Your Greek adventure ends. Hotel to airport transfers included

If you have some free time before your flight, feel free to do some last minute shopping. You will be transferred from your hotel to the airport to board your flight back home.

OVERNIGHT: N/A

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: Extra day in Athens - post-tour

Included

- All accommodation as stated in the itinerary in approx. 4-star level hotels & boutique guesthouses
- All transport and transfers
- Greek island ferry crossings as per itinerary
- Port-hotel-port transfers on Greek islands
- 24-hour airport arrival & departure transfer service
- Services of a professional local tour guide for mainland tours
- Services of a local tour leader on the islands
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Tipping kitty

Excluded

- International flights (available on request)
- Visa fees (see tour notes)
- Travel insurance (compulsory, available on request)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Entrance fees to sites visited (allow approx. EUR 23)
- Hotel residence tax (see tour notes)
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tips for guide & driver
- Optional tours
- Any other items not mentioned above

Notes

The itinerary above is subject to change based on the Greek island ferry schedules. While it does not happen often, sometimes ferry schedules are changed without notice and ferries may also be cancelled completely due to poor weather conditions. In this event the program may need to be adjusted and you may end up spending more or less time in one location than originally planned. This is the nature of travel between the islands and we thank you for your patience and understanding in the rare event of this occurring.

Unlike many of the Greek islands, Santorini is an all year round destination, and remains a very attractive and interesting place to visit whatever time of year it may be. However, some hotels, shops, restaurants and attractions do close during the winter months (November to March). During this time we may use boutique style guesthouses located closer to the centre of Fira so that you are as close as possible to what is still open.

Options

Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you're visiting.

However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplements, extra nights, cruise upgrades) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements.

Other options may either be booked and paid for in advance or while you are on the tour, though we recommend booking in advance to ensure there are no issues with availability.

Many options are priced the same throughout the year, but some may incur single or high season supplements - full details are given on the tour reservation form or on request.

Extra day in Athens - post-tour

Min numbers: 1

This option adds an extra day to the end of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Your airport departure transfer is not included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing. Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Price: Starting from - \$90

Extra day in Athens - pre-tour

Min numbers: 1

This option adds an extra day to the start of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). Your airport arrival transfer is still included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing. Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Price: Starting from - \$90

1. Accommodation

Our tours in Greece use a range of hotels mainly at the local 4-star level with some more boutique style properties or deluxe guesthouses also used where possible, especially on the Greek Islands. Please check the Accommodation section for more information on the normal accommodation used on this tour. This list is given as a guide though and hotels may change from time to time to others of a similar standard. If you have specific requests for individual hotels, please contact us about a private/tailor-made tour.

We regularly inspect all the hotels we use to ensure that the service you receive is as close as possible to your expectations. Please check your hotel room when you first arrive (hot water, cleanliness etc.), as our rep will be available for a short time to help in case of any problems.

We will contact you with your arrival hotel details normally a couple of weeks before departure.

Check-in Times: Official hotel check-in times in Greece are between 14.00 and 15.00 and from 17.00 on our Greek Gulets. However, we do always try to ensure that if you arrive early, you can check into your room as soon as possible. We can nearly always get you into your hotel rooms by midday, but please understand that it is out of our control if the hotel is full and it takes a little longer. You will have full use of the hotel facilities while you wait if there is a short delay.

Greek Islands: The winter season on the Greek islands (November to March on Santorini, October to April on quieter islands) is very quiet, with many hotels closing completely. When necessary we therefore book alternatives that we feel provide a good experience suitable to the season. This generally means we aim more for smaller boutique style hotels and guesthouses that have a better location, being much closer to the shops and restaurants that are still open, rather than larger more properties further out that may have swimming pools and more space (which would not generally be used in winter anyway due to the cool weather, even were they to remain open).

Greek Gulets: Our Greek gulets generally carry up to 25 passengers, accommodated in 9 cabins (on our Mykonos Gulet, we use a larger vessel carrying up to 46 passengers. All cabins are ensuite, including comfortable mattresses, reading lights, a hair dryer, a wardrobe and an A/C device (on our Mykonos gulet, cabins have an electric fan rather than A/C).

Shoestring tours: On our shoestring tours hotel upgrade options may be available and due to the potential larger group sizes sometimes more than one hotel may be used in each location. This may mean that more than one hotel pick up and drop off is required at the start and end of each day. If necessary, these are timed so that the overall sightseeing time planned for the day is not affected.

Please check the Single Room Supplement option for details on room sharing options and charges for solo travellers on this tour.

2. Transport

Our Greece tours use a mix of air conditioned minivans, minibuses and coaches depending on the size of the group.

Ferry journeys to the Greek islands are booked in advance and approximate timings are given in our tour itineraries or on request. These are subject to change however, and any tour that visits the islands is subject to adjustments and amendments based on the available ferry schedules. While it does not happen often, sometimes ferry schedules are changed without notice and ferries may also be cancelled completely due to poor weather conditions. In this event the program may need to be adjusted and you may end up spending more or less time in one location than originally planned. This is the nature of travel between the islands and we thank you for your patience and understanding in the rare event of this occurring.

Where internal flights are used these will be detailed in the itinerary and fares will be included in your tour price unless otherwise specified.

3. Transfers

Our onland tours in Greece include your arrival and departure airport-hotel transfers and all other transfers. Airport transfers are not included on our Greek Gulet tours.

On tours where transfers are included, airport transfers are only included on the first and last day of the set tour itinerary, plus on any additional days if you book your hotel room with us. If you make your own arrangements for additional accommodation at either the beginning or the end of the tour then you will need to arrange your own airport transfers on these days.

4. International flights

We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people with varying travel plans, we don't include your international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to suggest flights to go with the tour. Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure airport and we'll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from.

Your airport arrival & departure transfers are included on the first and last days of the tour. Most of our Greece tours start and finish in Athens and are served by Athens international airport (ATH). Transfers from other airports, including on the Greek islands may also be included if your tour starts/finishes there - please check the tour inclusions/exclusions for details.

We do also sometimes advertise flight inclusive packages from selected airports. Where these are shown on our website, prices are correct at the time of quoting, but are subject to continued availability of the fare used. Prices will be reconfirmed at the time of booking, and we will also provide the flight times and airline details before tickets are issued.

Flight inclusive prices are based on the cheapest Economy ticket class available which is generally non-refundable and non-changeable unless the flight is cancelled for reasons such as Covid-19, in which case the airlines are more flexible. More flexible ticket options, as well as Premium Economy and Business Class tickets are available on request for an additional supplement. Any changes made to flight inclusive bookings will be subject to the airline rules on your ticket.

Flight CO2 Emissions:

Traveling by air is an amazing way to explore the world, but flights also contribute to carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions that impact the environment. By considering the airline's CO2 emissions when you choose your flight, you can help minimize your travel footprint.

When selecting your international flights and airline, we do therefore recommend that you try and also take into account the flight CO2 emissions. Some airlines and flight search websites (eg. Google Flights, Skyscanner) do publish this information, so you can compare between your flight options and make an informed decision. Thankfully, many airlines are working towards sustainability efforts, and choosing a greener option allows you to contribute to positive change while still enjoying your incredible adventure.

5. Group Size / Tour Leaders / Guides

This tour is offered as a private tour starting on any dates. The Athens sightseeing tours are arranged on a sharing basis, though they can be converted into private tours as well if you wish. Please contact us for details and prices.

In Greece we provide a fully trained, local English-speaking guide for the sightseeing tours in Athens. Our local

representatives on the Greek islands visited are also at your service and will be happy to give you information about their island and help you to arrange any optional tours or excursions during your stay.

At Encounters Travel we try to use local Greek guides and reps as much as possible. We feel this gives you the best experience of the country and the sites you are seeing.

6. Entrance fees, Hotel fees & permits

Escorted tours and tailor-made trips generally always include site entry fees in the price - please check the Inclusions/Exclusions section for details.

However, our Greece **Small group (including Greek Gulets)** and **Shoestring** tour prices do not include entrance fees to the tourist sites mentioned in the itinerary. You will need to cover the cost of these as you go along. Current prices are shown below, though these are subject to change by the local authorities at any time. A 50% discount is currently available on some fees during the winter months of November to March. Not all of the entrance fees below apply to all tours - please check your itinerary and the inclusions/exclusions section for a budget for your trip.

Athens - Acropolis - Summer EUR 20, Winter EUR 10
Athens - Acropolis Museum - Summer EUR 5, Winter EUR 5
Athens - Hadrian's Arch - Free
Athens - Panathenaic Stadium - Free
Athens - Parthenon - Free
Athens - Propylaea - Free
Athens - Temple of Athena Nike - Free
Athens - Temple of Olympian Zeus - Free
Corinth Canal - Free
Delphi Ancient Site & Museum - Summer EUR 12, Winter EUR 6
Delphi - Temple of Apollo - Free
Delphi - Treasury of Athens - Free
Epidauros Theatre - Summer EUR 12, Winter EUR 6
Mycenae - Tomb of Agamemnon - Summer EUR 12, Winter EUR 6
Nafplio - Palamidi Fortress - EUR 4
Olympia Ancient Site & Museum - Summer EUR 12, Winter EUR 6
Olympia - Temple of Zeus - Free
 Meteora - 2 monasteries - Summer EUR 6, Winter EUR 6

Camera Fees: Photography may be restricted in various ways at different sites. Often flash photography is often forbidden to protect the exhibits and ancient pigments, and sometimes cameras are not allowed in at all. Please respect these rules as they are there partly for your benefit. Tickets are not generally required for normal cameras, but if you have a video camera, if its use is permitted there will sometimes be a charge.

Hotel Residence Fees: The Hellenic National Tourism Organization has announced that a residence fee will be applied on all hotel accommodation, starting from 1st January 2018. The fees must be paid by guests directly to the hotel before the end of their stay and are therefore not included in the tour price. Fees are per room per night (not per person) and have been set at EUR 1.50 for 3* hotels, EUR 3.00 for 4* hotels and EUR 4.00 for 5* hotels.

7. Language - Greece

The Greek language is ancient and has a documented record which spans three and a half thousand years and has contributed much to all Western languages. As such it is a strong element of national continuity and pride.

You'll find you won't have much of a problem with the language barrier as English is well communicated by many Greeks, especially in the Islands.

Below you will find some important phrases that will have you sounding like a Greek in no time!

Good afternoon / evening = Kalispera (kah-lees-PEH-rah)
Good night = Kalinikta (kah-lee-NEEK-tah)
Goodbye = kherete (KHE-reh-tay)
Hello = Yassou (YAH-sue)
How are you? = Ti kanis? (tee-KAH-nis)
Well / good = Poli kala (po-LEE kah-LAH)
Thank you = Efkaristo (eff-kah-rees-TOH)
You're welcome / please = Parakalo (pah-rah-kah-LOH)
Sorry = Signomi (seegh-NO-mee)
Yes = Ne (neh)
No = Ohi (OH-hee)
What's your name? = Pos se lene? (POHS seh LEH-neh)
My name is... = Me lene... (meh LEH-neh...)
Can you help me? = Borite na me? (boh-REE-teh nah)
What time is it? = Ti ora ine? (tee OH-rah EE-neh)
Where is...? = Pou ine? (POO EE-neh)
I want... = Thelo (THEH-loh)
How much is it? = Poso kani (poh-soh KAH-nee)
Left = Aristera (ah-rees-teh-RAH)
Right = Dexia (thek-see-AH)
Open = Aniktos (ah-neek-TOHS)
Closed = Klistos (klees-TOHS)
Do you speak English? = Milas Anglika? (mee-LAHS Ang-lee-KAH?)
I don't understand = Den Katalaveno (then-kah-tah-lag-VEH-no)

8. Tipping

Tipping is common practice in Greece, though not as extensive as in nearby Turkey. For basic restaurants, taxis and local markets, leave the loose change. For more up-market restaurants we suggest 5% to 10% of your bill. We include a 'tipping kitty' in your tour price which your tour guide/leader will use to tip a wide range of people along the way to help ensure the smooth running of the tour. This does not include your tour guide/leader, driver(s) or transfer staff though.

Drivers: You may have a range of private drivers on your trip. For those you see for at least several days and who are more involved with the group, a tip of around EUR 1-2 per person per day is generally appropriate.

Tour guide/tour leader: If you think your tour guide and/or tour leader has worked hard and provided a good service then s/he will appreciate a tip of a few Euros. How much you tip is subject to your satisfaction with their service and your personal budget. You should not feel pressured to tip any particular amount. As a guideline, we can suggest that for good service, a tip of EUR 3-5 per day for local tour guides or local tour leaders would be fine.

9. Health and Vaccinations

You should ensure you are fully insured for medical emergencies including emergency evacuation and repatriation. UK travellers visiting other European Union countries including Greece should also carry the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) as it entitles travellers to reduced cost, sometimes free, medical treatment in most European countries.

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures vary according to the country you are visiting and where you are travelling from. We recommend you contact your GP/medical practitioner or a travel clinic for current

information on vaccinations needed for your destination.

You should ensure that you are up to date with vaccines and boosters recommended for your normal life at home, including for example, vaccines required for occupational risk of exposure, lifestyle risks and underlying medical conditions. No additional courses or boosters are normally recommended for Greece though you could consider Tetanus and Tick-borne Encephalitis.

More information is available here: [Greece](#)

[Malaria map](#) - there is low to no risk of malaria in Greece, none in tourist areas.

Yellow fever certificates are not required.

10. Passports and Visas

Passports should be valid for at least six months after your departure from the country. Please do not bring an almost full or almost expired passport. Visa arrangements are the responsibility of the traveller, and requirements are subject to change by the local authorities.

Some foreign nationals require a visa to enter Greece, though many do not (including UK, EUR, US, CA, AU, NZ, SA). More information is available at [visas for foreigners](#).

11. Time

Greece Time is GMT plus 2 hours. Daylight saving adjustments of 1 hour are applied, starting at the end of March and finishing at the end of October. Exact dates vary from year to year.

12. Money

The currency in Greece is the Euro (EUR). 1 Euro = 100 Euro cents. Banknotes: 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200. Euros Coins: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, 50 Euro Cents and 1, 2.

Credit Cards and Travellers Cheques are widely accepted in major cities and tourist resorts. ATMs are also accessible at all our destinations and generally offer the best exchange rate. A mixture of debit, credit cards and cash are the best forms of currency. You should split this up and keep some separately as a backup in case you lose your main money/cards.

It is difficult for us to specify the amount of money that you will spend per day, however, as a general rule EUR 25 to 50 per day can provide you with additional meals, tipping, snacks & drinks. Should you wish to purchase many souvenirs or other luxuries, of which there is a diverse range, you will have to budget for these.

Greek Sailing Tours:

Please note that there are no card payment facilities available onboard our Greek gulets, payments should be made onboard in Euro cash. Whilst many of the locations visited on our sailing trips do have ATM facilities, these cannot be guaranteed in all locations, particularly on smaller islands, therefore we always recommend having a supply of cash.

13. What to take

Luggage: Suitcases, rucksacks or fabric holdalls are all fine to bring with you to Greece. You should also bring a small daypack/bag to take out during the day. Your main luggage will normally be left in the hotel during your sightseeing trips - you will not need to carry it far, and there are nearly always hotel porters to assist.

Luggage limits: There is no luggage limit for this tour. However, most airlines restrict you to between 20kg and 25kg for your hold luggage and between 5kg and 10kg for hand luggage. Please check with your airline before travelling to the airport.

Clothing: Greece's climate changes drastically, with cold winters and hot summers. In Greece from late March to

May, spring brings with it average temperatures of around 15C, though the weather does gradually warm up with sunny days interspersed with rain showers. From May to the end of October, the climate is hot and sunny, getting cooler as the year progresses. By the end of October you can expect the first of the winter snows. So you must pack for cool and potentially wet conditions late in the year.

Other items: We also recommend you bring a sun hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, a basic first aid kit, toiletries, money belt, small torch, camera & charger.

14. Booking & Payment

If you would like to book a place on this tour, please complete the online reservation form on our website (via the Dates & Prices tab on the tour page). You may make a deposit or full payment online, or just hold a reservation if you prefer (full payments are due 8 weeks before departure). We will then contact you with more details about how to complete your booking. Payments may be made by debit or credit card (subject to a card processing fee), or by making a bank transfer, or posting us a cheque/bank draft. Full details will be provided in your booking confirmation email. Please [contact us](#) if you would like any more information or have any questions before making a booking.

15. Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory on all of our tours and needs to cover personal accident & liability, medical expenses and repatriation, travel delay & abandonment. We also strongly recommend that you take out cover against cancellation and lost/stolen baggage. Personal medical insurance does not normally provide sufficient cover and is generally not suitable for travel on our tours. You will not be able to join your tour if you have not provided us with details of your insurance or if you arrive without cover in place (no refunds will be due in this event). [More information...](#)

You may arrange your own insurance, or you can take advantage of a comprehensive policy that we can arrange for you through Endsleigh Insurance which has been designed to be suitable for our tours. The policy is available to travellers of all nationalities and you do not need to live in the UK to take out the policy. For full details of cover provided, prices and to apply for one of our policies, please complete [travel insurance application form](#).

Note: Any country that borders the Mediterranean is considered as 'Europe' for the purposes of travel insurance (including Turkey, Israel, Egypt and Morocco). If you are doing a tour that visits one country in 'Europe' and one that is 'Worldwide' (for example, an Egypt and Jordan tour), then you need a 'Worldwide' policy. When completing the form you should enter your travel dates including any extra days involved in overnight flights or connecting travel between your home and the tour. Our policies are not able to cover any extra time or activities other than your tour and options booked with us and your travel to & from home.

Note - to comply with insurance sales regulations, our travel insurance policies are only available to customers booking directly with us. If you have booked through a travel agent you will need to arrange your own insurance.

If your tour includes car hire, or if you plan to arrange a hot air balloon flight locally or do some scuba diving during your tour, you should check the small print in your policy to make sure these are covered (these are covered in our policy). Please also check the maximum altitude that you will be reaching and that full cover including emergency evacuation is provided up to this altitude.

If you are taking expensive camera gear or other electronic equipment with you then please check the coverage and the fine print of your policy to ensure that you have sufficient cover.

***IMPORTANT:** We must have your travel insurance details (policy number and type of insurance) before you depart or you may not be allowed to join the tour. If you haven't told us already, please let us know the details when you can. You should take a paper copy of your insurance policy with you as you may be asked to show this at the start of the tour.*

Covid-19

Before purchasing any travel insurance, please check the coverage provided for situations related to Covid-19, and for the rules about government travel advice. Your normal policy may not be suitable. Details about

our own policies cover levels are given [on our website](#).

16. Financial Security

We are a UK registered company and are committed to providing our customers with financial protection to provide peace of mind and to allow you to book with confidence.

We have therefore partnered with Trust My Travel Ltd., which provides financial protection services to over 2000 partners around the world. Funds paid to us by our customers are protected via an Insurance policy held by Trust My Travel. Each traveller and the description of services sold is declared against Trust My Travel's insurance policy directly against our financial failure. In the event of our insolvency, you will be refunded for any unfulfilled products and/or repatriation to the UK (where applicable). Please see [our website](#) or [booking conditions](#) for more information.

17. Responsible Tourism

It is impossible not to have an impact on the local environment, cultures and eco-systems when you travel. However, it is very possible to try and ensure that these impacts are as limited, or positive as possible. We are committed to ensuring that we try to leave our host countries in a better state than we found them and encourage and assist our travellers to help us with this.

The following are a few simple tips that require very little effort on your part but which will help ensure that any effect you have on the locations you visit is positive rather than negative.

- Don't prejudice: Things in different countries will almost certainly be different. That doesn't make them worse or inferior, just different.
- Communicate: Don't expect locals to speak your language. Take the trouble to learn a few words or phrases of the local language. Don't worry about sounding silly. Most locals are patient and accommodating and appreciate you making the effort to communicate in their language.
- Conserve energy: Be careful not to waste valuable resources. Use local resources sparingly. Switch off lights, air-conditioning and fans when you leave the hotel room and don't waste water. Remove superfluous packaging. Many countries have far less efficient waste disposal systems than ours. Remove packaging from newly acquired items before leaving home.
- Don't litter: No matter how untidy or dirty the country you're travelling in may look to you, avoid littering, as there is no need to add to the environment's stress. Many of the countries we visit have a tough challenge dealing with rubbish and waste. Please consider taking home as much plastic waste as you can (e.g. water bottles).
- Choose environmentally friendly products: By using environmentally friendly (bio degradable) sun creams, shampoos and detergents you can help reduce pollution.
- Respect local customs and traditions: As you are a guest in these countries, you should also comply with the local customs. If you are friendly and well mannered, the locals will reciprocate and it will only enhance your experience. It's important to follow dress and behaviour guidelines especially when visiting religious or sacred sites (your tour leader will advise you how best to do this).
- If a client commits an illegal act the client may be excluded from the tour and Encounters Travel shall cease to have responsibility to/for them. No refund will be given for any unused services.

All porters are employed and equipped following guidelines set by the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG).

18. Follow Us Online

You can stay in touch with us online by following us on Facebook and Twitter. We post updates on relevant travel news in our destination countries, special offers and discounts and other interesting travel related news and information.

www.facebook.com/encounterstravel

[www.twitter.com/encounterstravl](https://twitter.com/encounterstravl) (yes, without the 'e')

19. Before you travel

It is important when considering and preparing to travel anywhere in the world that you have a good understanding of the country you are visiting, its laws and customs, and the possible risks and situations that may occur. This includes specific risks related to your itinerary (eg. does it involve water & can you swim, are you fit enough for the activities included), as well as more general risks such as terrorism and natural disasters.

General details and links to more information about health risks, visa requirements, money, and travel insurance are given in these tour notes. We recommend that you re-read all these before your departure as well as the small print of your travel insurance policy so you know exactly what is covered and what is not.

You should take copies of your important travel documents with you and ideally also store them online securely as a backup. Make sure that you have given us your emergency contact details and told that person where and when you are travelling. Ensure you take enough money with you and that you have access to emergency funds.

Finally, you should read through and stay updated with the current [official government travel advice](#) for your destination. We are registered partners with the UK Foreign Office's '[Travel Aware](#)' campaign which provides further useful and invaluable information.

20. Voltage

Sockets are two round pronged and 220 volts (Type C). Universal adaptors are available in most airport shops if you don't have one already. Standard European adapters will work fine, though sometimes they may feel a little loose in the sockets. All hotel rooms have electrical sockets where you can re-charge cameras, phones etc. Hair dryers are normally available on request from the hotel reception if not in your room already.

If you have US appliances (110 volts) you will need a voltage converter as well as a plug adapter.

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Note: Please [download an up-to-date copy](#) of these tour notes shortly before you travel as itineraries and information does change from time to time.
