



University of Illinois
Alumni Association



Island Life Greek Isles and Ephesus

September 14, 2027 - September 22, 2027

Program Overview

Embark on a journey aboard the exclusively chartered Le Lapérouse, an intimate yacht designed for discovery. Cruise the sapphire Aegean Sea, tracing the paths of ancient civilizations and exploring the enduring legacy of Greece and coastal Turkey. Begin in Athens, setting sail for Chania, Crete's Venetian-influenced port city. Here, choose your experience — delve into the labyrinthine Old Town, uncover archaeological treasures or relax on a beach. Next, glide to iconic Santorini to explore the excavations of Akrotiri, a Bronze Age settlement preserved in volcanic ash, and enjoy time at leisure in Fira, known for its panoramic caldera views. After crossing into Turkey, select to explore the fascinating Ephesus Museum or visit the House of the Virgin Mary. Plus, enjoy a visit to a traditional carpet weaving workshop! Continue to Rhodes, where the UNESCO-listed Medieval City reveals layers of history from the Knights Hospitaller to Ottoman times. Then journey to Delos, the mythological birthplace of Apollo and Artemis, and one of Greece's most sacred archaeological sites. Conclude with free time in cosmopolitan Mykonos, known for its whitewashed architecture and vibrant waterfront, before your return to Athens. Enhance your journey with our Pre-Extension in Athens.



Greece, Mykonos, Windmills



Facade of the Library of Celsus



Old Venetian Harbor, Chania, Crete, Greece

Program Highlights

- Cruise for 7 nights through the Aegean Sea to historic Greek islands and Turkey's Turquoise Coast aboard Le Laperouse.
- Visit the preserved prehistoric ruins of Akrotiri and soak in the atmosphere of cliffside Fira, perched on the Aegean Sea.
- Gain a deeper connection to the destinations through expert talks as well as traditional Greek and Turkish cultural performances.
- Visit 3 UNESCO World Heritage sites: Greek ruins in Delos; awe-inspiring ancient Ephesus, Turkey; and the medieval city of Rhodes.
- Included meals | 2 receptions, 7 breakfasts, 7 lunches and 7 dinners.
- Athens Pre-Tour Extension. (Available at additional cost.)



Day-by-Day Program Itinerary

- The Activity Level ratings indicate each excursion's physical expectations. To make the best personal choice, please evaluate each excursion's rating and your ability to meet the tour's physical demands.

Mild excursions involve:

- Walking for 1.5 hours or more over uneven terrain
- Walking on challenging surfaces: cobblestones, uneven paths and/or pavements
- Climbing stairs and hills and crossing rail tracks
- Ascending and descending narrow (and sometimes steep) gangplanks
- Stepping on and off motorcoaches with 3-6 steep steps

Moderate excursions could involve the above, plus:

- Walking for 3 hours for distances of a mile or more
- Walking on uneven terrain: narrow cobblestone streets, stone floors, and/or slippery surfaces. There may be several flights of stairs, some without railings

Active excursions could involve the above, plus:

- Walking on uneven terrain: sandy or rocky beaches and/or steep inclines
- Standing for 2 hours or more at a time, possibly without areas to sit
- Climbing 100 stairs or more
- Additional challenges, such as long jeep rides, bumpy boat rides or hikes

- Depending on the excursion, more leisurely alternatives to active excursions may be available.

Day 1 | Depart Home City

Depart your home city for Athens, Greece.

Day 2 | Athens, Greece | Embark

Arrive at Athens and embark Le Laperouse.

This evening, attend a Gohagan & Company Welcome Briefing and lifeboat drill, followed by a dinner on board the ship as we depart Athens.

Day 3 | Chania, Crete

Arrive at Chania, a picturesque city that beautifully blends history, culture, and natural charm. Its Venetian harbor is lined with colorful buildings, lively cafés, and seafood tavernas, while narrow cobblestone streets in the Old Town reveal layers of Venetian, Ottoman, and Greek heritage. Iconic landmarks like the lighthouse and historic fortifications offer stunning views of the sea, and nearby beaches provide a perfect escape for relaxation. Chania's vibrant markets, charming alleys, and rich history make it one of Crete's most enchanting destinations.

Traveler's Choice | Choose ONE of the following included excursions:

Walking Tour of Old Town and Venetian Harbor. Visiting the Old Town and Venetian Harbor of Chania is like stepping back in time. Narrow alleyways lined with pastel-colored buildings, elegant balconies, and hidden courtyards reveal the city's rich blend of Venetian, Ottoman, and Greek influences. Stroll along the harbor promenade, where fishing boats bob beside restored warehouses now home to charming cafés, boutique shops, and seafood tavernas. The iconic lighthouse, standing proudly at the harbor's entrance, offers stunning sunset views over the Aegean Sea. Every corner of Chania's Old Town exudes history and romance, making it one of Crete's most enchanting destinations. (Mild)

Visit Nearby Beaches. Just a short drive from Chania, you'll find some of Crete's most stunning beaches. Whether you're seeking relaxation, swimming or adventure, the beaches around Chania promise unforgettable moments by the sea. (Moderate)

Archaeological Site of Aptera. The archaeological site of Aptera contains such sites as the remarkable Roman cisterns, the ruins of ancient bathhouses a recently excavated theater, and the Monastery of Agios Ioannis Theologos, which houses an excellent exhibition about the site's history. The enclosed area represents only a small portion of this vast ancient city, which once covered the entire hilltop. Massive fortification walls still surround the site, while ongoing excavations continue to reveal new discoveries. Notable highlights include the western gate, beautifully restored and visible as you approach Aptera, and a fascinating Hellenistic villa near the entrance. (Moderate)

Welcome Reception: Join your fellow travelers for a Welcome Reception and Dinner on board the ship.

Day 4 | Santorini, Greece

Arrive near Santorini, one of the most breathtaking and romantic islands in Greece, famed for its dramatic landscapes, whitewashed villages, and spectacular sunsets. Formed by a volcanic eruption thousands of years ago, the island's crescent-shaped caldera overlooks the deep blue Aegean Sea, creating some of the most iconic views in the world.

Santorini. After a short tender ride to the port of Athinios, board a comfortable motor coach for a scenic drive to the southern end of the island. Here, enjoy a guided tour of the newly reopened and enhanced excavations of Akrotiri, one of Santorini's most fascinating archaeological sites. The excursion concludes in the lively capital of Fira, the island's vibrant main town perched dramatically above the sea. Spend some free time exploring its charming streets, shops and cafés before returning to the pier to board the tender for your short ride back to the ship. (Please note: return is from a different port than arrival.) (Moderate)

Dig into lunch on board. Then set off for leisure time in Santorini.

Free Time: Santorini offers exceptional local cuisine and wines, especially the crisp Assyrtiko variety grown in its volcanic soil. You can try traditional dishes like tomatokeftedes (tomato fritters), fava (yellow split pea purée), and fresh seafood at a seaside taverna. Browse boutiques selling handmade jewelry, local art and ceramics – perfect souvenirs to bring home!

Wine Sampling. Sampling wine offers a delicious glimpse into the country's rich agricultural traditions. Tonight, join some of the crew for an insightful (and tasty) sampling of local vintages. (Mild)

Day 5 | Kusadasi, Turkey for Ephesus

Arrive in the Turkish Riviera town of Kusadasi and disembark for a short drive to the ancient city of Ephesus, one of the best-preserved classical cities in the Mediterranean. Pass by rural Turkish villages and countryside dotted with orchards of fig trees.

Ephesus. Discover this vast archaeological site of Greek, Roman and Byzantine ruins. Visit the beautifully restored and reconstructed Celsus Library, one of the most impressive structures in ancient Ephesus and a masterpiece of Roman architecture. Built in the 2nd century AD in honor of the Roman Senator Tiberius Julius Celsus Polemaeanus, it once housed around 12,000 scrolls, making it one of the largest libraries of the ancient world. Also visit the Grand Theater, an extraordinary ancient amphitheater carved into the hillside, capable of seating up to 25,000 spectators. Built in the Hellenistic period and later expanded by the Romans, it was used for dramatic performances, political gatherings, and gladiatorial contests. Its remarkable acoustics allow performers' voices to carry to every corner of the massive stone seating area, and today, the theater still hosts concerts and cultural events

Traveler's Choice | Choose ONE of the following included excursions:

Terrace Houses and Ephesus Museum. Explore the Terrace Houses complex, a fascinating glimpse into the lives of Ephesus's wealthiest citizens. These beautifully preserved residences feature intricate mosaics, frescoed walls and luxurious courtyards, offering a rare insight into daily life during the Roman period. Afterward, travel to nearby Selçuk to visit the Ephesus Archaeological Museum, where an impressive collection of artifacts from the ancient city is on display. Highlights include sculptures, inscriptions and household items unearthed during excavations in the

late 19th and early 20th centuries, most notably the renowned statue of Artemis, the goddess whose temple once drew pilgrims from across the ancient world. (Active)

House of the Virgin Mary and Basilica of Saint John. Visit the House of the Virgin Mary, a revered Catholic shrine nestled on the slopes of Mount Koressos. Discovered in the 19th century through the visions of Blessed Anne Catherine Emmerich, the site is believed by many to have been the final home of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Pilgrims from around the world come to experience its serene atmosphere, reflect in the chapel, and take in the peaceful gardens surrounding the stone structure. You can also leave a personal note or prayer at the Shrine's "Wishing Wall," a meaningful tradition that allows visitors to connect spiritually with the site. (Moderate)

Proceed to the Nakkas Weaving Center for a traditional barbecue lunch made with ingredients grown in the weavers' gardens. You will also be able to watch a cocoon silk processing demonstration by the same women who prepare your meal. The center produces Turkish carpets, kilims and antique rugs.

After lunch, watch a group of whirling dervishes as they perform the captivating Sema ceremony.

Return to the ship for dinner on board this evening.

Day 6 | Rhodes, Greece | Lindos

The island of Rhodes has had many faces over the millennia, from its fame in antiquity as the site of the Colossus of Rhodes statue — one of the Seven Ancient Wonders of the World — to the medieval old town of Rhodes built by the Knights of St. John. While the island attracts visitors today with its cosmopolitan energy and sandy beaches, it's also home to several well-preserved archaeological sites, including an ancient acropolis at Lindos that once served as its capital.

Rhodes. Our tour begins in the city of Rhodes, a UNESCO World Heritage site, with a stop at its ancient port where the mighty Colossus of Rhodes statue stood before it was destroyed by an earthquake in the third century B.C. Explore the medieval old town as it was built by the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, which occupied Rhodes from the early 14th century through the 16th century. Visit the Palace of the Grand Masters, a formidable Gothic castle that houses a treasure trove of art, furniture and icons from that era.

Return to the ship for lunch, followed by an afternoon at leisure. Those looking for an active afternoon may join a walking tour to the Acropolis of Lindos.

Those who choose to explore ancient Lindos will walk through its narrow, cobbled streets — past the colorful courtyards and mosaics for which it is so famous — and up more than 200 steps to the legendary acropolis. At a height of 535 feet, this iconic site offers breathtaking views and photo opportunities of the entire village, including its medieval castle, sandy beaches and charming whitewashed, sugar-cubed houses. After a guided tour of the Acropolis, walk back down to the village and return to the ship.

This evening, enjoy a traditional folklore show with local musicians and dancers, followed by dinner.

Day 7 | Delos | Mykonos

Delos is barely 1.3 square miles, but it brims with ancient history and also played a role in Greek mythology, including as the legendary birthplace of the twin gods, Apollo and Artemis. Pilgrims have flocked here over the millennia to visit the Sanctuary of Apollo and other ancient sites documented in Greek mythology. By the fifth century B.C., Delos also was famous as a prosperous commercial hub. A visit to this sacred island is like walking back through antiquity.

Delos Discovery. Embark on your own pilgrimage down the majestic Sacred Way, a monumental roadway to the Temple of Apollo that is flanked by arcades and statues. See ruins of three temples dedicated to Apollo as you continue past the narrow Stoa of Antigonos, which forms the northern boundary of the sanctuary, to behold the famous Terrace of the Lions. From there, we will head south on a route that will take you past the Sanctuary of Dionysus and through the Theatre Quarter to continue exploring Delos.

Return to the ship for lunch on board as we cruise a short distance to the island Mykonos, famous for its whitewashed houses, iconic windmills and cosmopolitan verve.

Free Time: Known as the “island of the winds,” Mykonos is also part of the stunning Cyclades archipelago. According to Greek mythology, it was here that Hercules lured giants into battle and the large rock formations that remain are evidence of their defeat. Today, Mykonos is a sun-drenched Aegean retreat with stone-paved streets and a picturesque skyline of windmills and whitewashed houses. It is also noted for its beach bars, luxury boutiques and chic art galleries, making it one of Greece’s most popular destinations. Enjoy free time to explore the island on your own. Options abound, from shopping and seeing archaeological sites to soaking in the views over a cocktail at one of the trendy cafes.

Return to the ship for dinner on board.

Day 8 | Mykonos

Free Time: Explore on your own today! Wander the narrow, winding streets of the main town, filled with whitewashed houses, colorful doors and charming windmills. Discover boutique shops, art galleries and local cafés tucked away on cobblestone lanes. Savor fresh seafood, traditional Greek dishes and local specialties at seaside tavernas or upscale restaurants. Don’t miss trying kopanisti, a spicy cheese unique to the island.

Return to the ship for one last lunch on board as we set sail for Athens.

Farewell Reception: Join your fellow travelers for a Farewell Reception and Dinner on board the ship this evening.

Day 9 | Athens | Disembark | Return to Home City

Following breakfast, disembark and transfer to Athens International Airport for your return flight home. Arrive in your home city and go through immigration and customs.

Ponant - Le Lapérouse (Explorer Series I) - 2026

La Lapérouse

Aboard Le Lapérouse, Ponant's intimate yacht, you'll enjoy an exclusive, private atmosphere with just a limited number of guests. This beautifully designed ship sails to iconic ports and hidden harbors that only smaller vessels can reach, offering a unique blend of adventure and luxury. Eco-friendly and equipped with innovative technology, Le Lapérouse offers spacious lounges that open to the exterior, enhancing your connection to the sea. The 92 elegantly decorated cabins and suites feature light, calming tones, private balconies, and stunning views. A standout feature of this extraordinary yacht is The Blue Eye, an underwater lounge where you can immerse yourself in the marine world below. Sailing under the French flag, Le Lapérouse promises an intimate, sophisticated journey in an ethnic chic ambiance, offering both comfort and discovery at every turn.



Dates & Rates

Travel Dates: September 14, 2027 - September 22, 2027

All rates are in U.S. dollars per person, based on double occupancy, unless otherwise stated, and include taxes. The deposit is \$2000 per person. The Final Payment is due at least 150 days prior to departure. Single accommodations are subject to availability.

The Optional Extension(s) is available at an additional cost. Details will be provided with your reservation confirmation.

For Terms & Conditions, visit: il.gohagantravel.com/terms/

The Special Savings consist of \$500 Early Booking and \$500 Pay-in-Full savings. The Special Savings rate is valid if you book by January 11, 2027 and pay in full at the time of booking.

Double Occupancy Rates

Category	Description	Standard Rate	Discount Rate
J	Stateroom with private balcony; bathroom with shower. 205 sq ft Deck 3, mid.	\$8495.00	\$7495.00
I	Stateroom with private balcony; bathroom with shower. 205 sq ft Deck 4, mid.	\$8995.00	\$7995.00
H	Stateroom with private balcony; bathroom with shower. 205 sq ft Deck 5, mid.	\$9495.00	\$8495.00
F	Stateroom with private balcony; bathroom with shower. 205 sq ft Deck 5, mid & aft.	\$9995.00	\$8995.00
G	Stateroom with private balcony; bathroom with shower. 205 sq ft Deck 6, mid.	\$10495.00	\$9495.00
E	Stateroom with private balcony; bathroom with shower. 205 sq ft Deck 6, mid & aft.	\$10995.00	\$9995.00
D	Suite with large private balcony; bathroom with shower; walk-in closet; sitting area with sofa. 291sq ft Deck 3, mid.	\$11995.00	\$10995.00

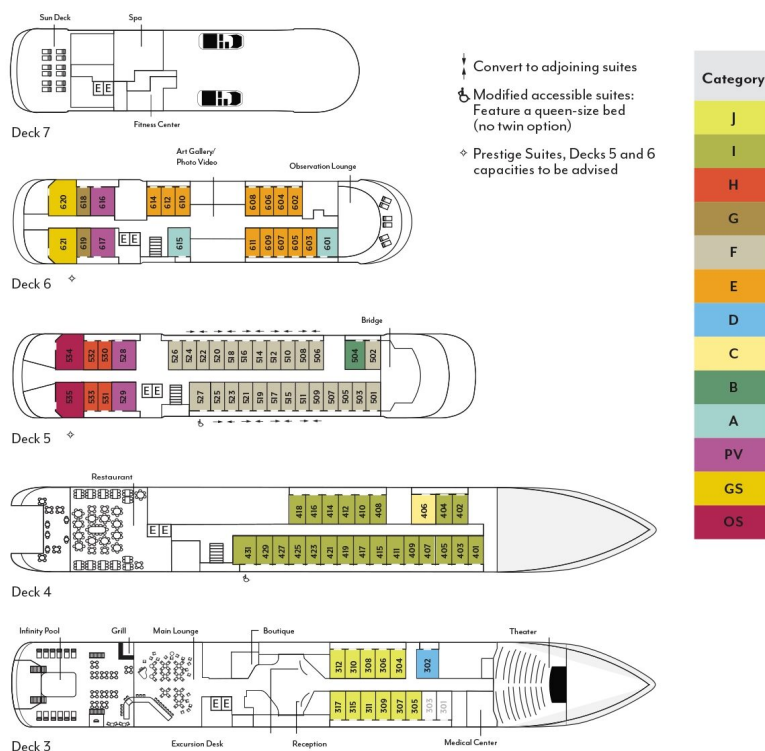
C	Suite with large private balcony; bathroom with shower; walk-in closet; sitting area with sofa. 291 sq ft Deck 4, mid.	\$12995.00	\$11995.00
B	Suite with large private balcony; bathroom with shower; walk-in closet; sitting area with sofa. 291 sq ft Deck 5, mid.	\$13995.00	\$12995.00
A	Suite with large private balcony; bathroom with shower; walk-in closet; sitting area with sofa. 291 sq ft Deck 6, mid.	\$14995.00	\$13995.00
PV	Suite with larger private balcony; bathroom with shower; walk-in closet; sitting area with sofa. 344 sq ft Decks 5 & 6, aft.	\$15495.00	\$14495.00
GS	Two-room suite with extra-large private terrace; bathroom with separate tub & shower; additional half bath; sitting area with sofa. 484 sq ft Deck 6, aft.	\$16995.00	\$15995.00
OS	Two-room suite with oversized private terrace with outdoor Jacuzzi; bathroom with separate tub & shower; additional half bath; sitting area with sofa. 484 sq ft Deck 5, aft.	\$17495.00	\$16495.00

Single Occupancy Rates

Category	Description	Standard Rate	Discount Rate
I	Stateroom with private balcony; bathroom with shower. 205 sq ft Deck 4, mid.	\$14390.00	\$13390.00
H	Stateroom with private balcony; bathroom with shower. 205 sq ft Deck 5, mid.	\$15190.00	\$14190.00
F	Stateroom with private balcony; bathroom with shower. 205 sq ft Deck 5, mid & aft.	\$15990.00	\$14990.00
G	Stateroom with private balcony; bathroom with shower. 205 sq ft Deck 6, mid.	\$16790.00	\$15790.00
J	Stateroom with private balcony; bathroom with shower. 205 sq ft Deck 3, mid.	\$16990.00	\$15990.00
E	Stateroom with private balcony; bathroom with shower. 205 sq ft Deck 6, mid & aft.	\$17590.00	\$16590.00

D	Suite with large private balcony; bathroom with shower; walk-in closet; sitting area with sofa. 291sq ft Deck 3, mid.	\$23990.00	\$22990.00
B	Suite with large private balcony; bathroom with shower; walk-in closet; sitting area with sofa. 291 sq ft Deck 5, mid.	\$27990.00	\$26990.00
A	Suite with large private balcony; bathroom with shower; walk-in closet; sitting area with sofa. 291 sq ft Deck 6, mid.	\$29990.00	\$28990.00
PV	Suite with larger private balcony; bathroom with shower; walk-in closet; sitting area with sofa. 344 sq ft Decks 5 & 6, aft.	\$30990.00	\$29990.00
GS	Two-room suite with extra-large private terrace; bathroom with separate tub & shower; additional half bath; sitting area with sofa. 484 sq ft Deck 6, aft.	\$33990.00	\$32990.00
OS	Two-room suite with oversized private terrace with outdoor Jacuzzi; bathroom with separate tub & shower; additional half bath; sitting area with sofa. 484 sq ft Deck 5, aft.	\$34990.00	\$33990.00

Ponant - Le Laperouse (Explorer Series I) - 2026



Athens Pre-Tour Extension

Start your voyage early with two nights in the ancient city of Athens. Explore the monumental Acropolis, followed by a guided visit to the Acropolis Museum. Discover the sparkling Aegean waters of Cape Sounion and follow the ancient route of Pericles to the Temple of Poseidon. Accommodations are in the deluxe Athens Capital Hotel.

The Optional Extensions are available at additional cost. Details will be provided with your reservation confirmation.



All information is accurate as of July 26, 2026. For up-to-date details, please visit:

il.gohagantravel.com/programs/island-life-greek-isles-and-ephesus-2027-2