

Splendours of the Western Mediterranean

From **26/9/2023**
to **3/10/2023**

Ship: **LE JACQUES-CARTIER**

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



Starting in **Athens**, step aboard **Le Jacques-Cartier** for an **8-day cruise** between Greece and the majestic Maltese coast.

Le Jacques-Cartier will take you to **Patmos** where you will discover its monastery and the cave where Saint John is said to have received his visions.

This cruise will also enable you to discover **Hydra**, a small island of old-worldly charm where motorised traffic is banned.

You will then follow a memorable crossing of the Corinth Canal and make a port of call at **Itea**, not far from the marvellous **Delphi** archaeological site.

After calling at **Katakolon**, you will leave Greece for Italy. Then, you will set sail for **Syracuse**, one of the most prestigious Sicilian cities, whose monuments are listed as a **UNESCO World Heritage**.

You will make a final call on **Gozo**, an unspoiled island that is home to a megalithic site listed with UNESCO.

Your cruise will come to an end in **Valletta**, capital of the island of Malta and former stronghold of the Knights of the Order of Malta.



The information in this document is valid as of 20/5/2022

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YOUR STOPOVERS :

ATHENS

Embarkation 26/9/2023 from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm
Departure 26/9/2023 at 6:00 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 27/9/2023 midday
Departure 27/9/2023 late afternoon

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.

HYDRA

Arrival 28/9/2023 early morning
Departure 28/9/2023 early afternoon

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 *caiques* 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**.

CROSSING THE CORINTH CANAL

Arrival 28/9/2023
Departure 28/9/2023

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!

ITEA

Arrival 29/9/2023 early morning

Departure 29/9/2023 early 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 whose ancient ruins are surrounded by steep mountains.

KATAKOLON

Arrival 30/9/2023 early morning

Departure 30/9/2023 midday

This picturesque village stretches along the Ionian sea in the west of the Peloponnese. Its main harbour offers a vast panorama of the coastline's wooded hillsides. Dazzling white, the **church of Saint-Nicolas** houses a selection of sumptuous icons. You can also pay a visit to the **archaeological site of Olympus** on the slopes of Mount Kronos.

SYRACUSE, SICILY

Arrival 1/10/2023 midday

Departure 1/10/2023 early evening

Its undulating rocky coastline, the endless sandy beaches, the menacing form of **Mount Etna** which surveys its island like a patriarch, the flowery gardens on the hillside... **Sicily** lays out its varied landscapes like a shopkeeper displays his wares. Described by Cicero as "the most beautiful city in the world", **Syracuse** was one of the most prestigious cities in Sicily and at her height was even a rival for Athens. **A central city of Ancient Greece**, it was home to a succession of civilisations, each of which has left their mark. The blend of Arabic, Roman, Norman, Byzantine and Spanish cultures makes Syracuse a town that is extraordinarily rich in fragrances, colours and flavours.

MGARR, GOZO ISLAND

Arrival 2/10/2023 early morning

Departure 2/10/2023 midday

Located to the north of Malta, a lot less urbanised than its larger sibling and protected from mass tourism, the **small island of Gozo** has managed to remain natural and authentic. Lush hills and valleys alternate with a mosaic of cultivated fields. The buildings, some of which are medieval, are built from honey-coloured limestone and blend in perfectly with the surrounding scenery. Gozo also boasts a unique historic site that is now listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site: **the megalithic temples of Ggantija** near the town of Xaghra. An **archaeological museum** adjoining the site presents a number of objects that were found there. Red-sand beaches and a crystal-clear sea add to the calm and

serenity of Gozo.

VALLETTA

Arrival 2/10/2023 mid afternoon

Disembarkation 3/10/2023 at 7:00 am

The whole of the Maltese capital Valletta is **UNESCO World Heritage** listed and occupies a peninsula in the north-east of the island. From the fountain of Tritons to Saint-Elme fort, there are as many majestic streets as there are narrow staircase vennels to explore. The painted loggia and carved corbels on the tall houses will accompany you in your explorations, and you'll rarely be bothered by traffic. You can visit the Grandmasters palace decorated with coats of arms and frescoes. **Saint-John's cathedral** and the ramparts which have guarded the city since the 16th century are also among the most emblematic sites of the city. Arranged in terraces, the **Barrakka Gardens** will punctuate your promenade with a green and floral experience.