



The Cradle of Civilization

October 16 - 25, 2006

Part II: Tolo, Santorini, and Crete

Here, on the second part of our *Cradle of Civilization* tour to ancient Greece, we explore the Argolid, visit Thera (possibly the site of the original Atlantis), and stay on Crete, the birthplace of Zeus and home to the Palace of Knossos and its legendary Minotaur.

The “wine-dark sea” written about by the poets of many ages is still vividly alive in the landscape of Greece, and so are many remains of the legendary past that have given birth to so much in our language and literature. Greece has had a long and turbulent history, but thankfully today a great deal of care is being put into preserving the remains of “The Glory That Was Greece.”

This second tour arrives in the city of Athens and heads straight for the fishing village of Tolo to meet up with the group from the first tour. Together we then head for the islands, where our first stop is Thera, or Santorini as it is more widely known. This horseshoe-shaped island is all that remains after a gigantic volcanic eruption that may have given rise to the legends of a lost continent. We then head across the Aegean Sea to the beautiful island of Crete, home of the Minoan civilization, where we will spend the final three nights of our trip.



Fira, Santorini

In Greece the sun shines, the sea is warm, the food is delicious, the people are friendly, and the land holds thousands of years of fascinating history, but don’t take our word for it – come and experience it for yourself.

The cost of this itinerary, per person, double occupancy is:

Land only (no airfare included): **\$2690**
The single supplement is **\$450**

Airfares are available from many U.S. cities. Please call for details.

Taken as an extension to **The Cradle of Civilization, Part I**, the cost per person, double occupancy is **\$1850**, (single supplement: **\$320**).

The following services are included:

- Airfare:** Roundtrip air from Athens to Santorini returning from Crete to Athens.
- Hotels:** All accommodation in superior tourist- and first-class hotels. All hotel taxes and service charges included.
- Coaching:** All ground transportation as detailed in the itinerary.
- Ferries:** Hydrofoil from Santorini to Crete.
- Guide:** Fully qualified local guide throughout.
- Meals:** As detailed in the itinerary.
- Expenses:** Portage of one large suitcase per person.
- Entrances:** Entrance fees to all sites included in the itinerary.
- Insurance:** Complete travel insurance including cancellation coverage.

Please note: This trip can be taken independently or as an extension of **The Cradle of Civilization, Part I: Athens, Delphi, & the Peloponnese**. A separate itinerary is available for **Part I**. Details of the combined cost of the two trips appear in the pricing box to the left.



Ancient Mycenae





Monday, October 16. Evening departure from your international gateway airport.

Tuesday, October 17. We will be met on arrival in Athens this morning. It is a short, two-hour drive to the village of Tolo, passing over the Corinth Canal. The afternoon is free to unpack, relax, and begin exploring the village. Dinner is included tonight at our hotel. **(D) Overnight: Tolo**

Wednesday, October 18. Today's excursion is to Mycenae, first excavated in 1876 by Schliemann, who found the fabulously rich royal graves. This was the home of Agamemnon, of Trojan War fame, and his Lion Gate is still here, just as Homer described it. We return to Tolo where the afternoon is free to enjoy the beach; in the evening sample one of the village tavernas. **(B) Overnight: Tolo**

Thursday, October 19. A visit to the beautiful site of the first theater, Epidavros. Excavated about 100 years ago, the ancient theater has amazing acoustics and is still in regular use for classical drama. The remainder of the site contains the first hospital, the Aesclepium; the

museum has a collection of early medical instruments and prescriptions carved in marble. After free time in Tolo, we will head to a nearby local taverna. **(B, D)**

Overnight: Tolo

Friday, October 20. We return to Athens Airport to catch the short flight to Santorini. Upon arrival, our bus and driver take us to our hotel. After time to check in and have lunch we will gather for an afternoon visit to Akrotiri, one of the most important prehistoric sites in the world, showing evidence of settlement from as early as the 4th millennium BC. Like Pompeii, much of the site was preserved as a result of a volcanic eruption covering it in a layer of ash – however, the eruption at Akrotiri occurred 1,650 years earlier! Dinner is included this evening. **(B, D) Overnight: Santorini**



Minoan Palace, Knossos

civilization, dating from between 1,700 and 1,400 B.C., although the site has produced evidence of habitation from thousands of years earlier. After an extensive visit we will adjourn for lunch and enjoy a free afternoon and evening. **(B) Overnight: Crete**

Saturday, October 21. This morning we take a panoramic tour of the island villages with their distinctive architecture, and have lunch on one of the famous black-sand beaches. In the afternoon, the more energetic among us may choose to climb to the top of the active volcano for stunning views of the island. The evening is free. **(B, L) Overnight: Santorini**

Sunday, October 22. The majority of the day is free to explore the island, but in the afternoon we will gather to board the "Flying Dolphin," a hydrofoil catamaran service to Crete. In less than two hours we will arrive in Heraklion, the capital of Crete, and be transferred to our hotel. Dinner is included this evening. **(B, D) Overnight: Crete**

Monday, October 23. After a leisurely breakfast we will depart for a visit to the Palace of Knossos. Forever associated with King Minos and the fabled Minotaur, Knossos is the largest and best-preserved palace of the Minoan



Rethymnon harbor

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Tuesday, October 24. Our first stop is the town of Rethymnon, where we'll visit the 16th-century Venetian fortress and have time to wander the old town around the harbour. We then head inland, to the 3,000-foot-high Lasithi Plateau – green, fertile, and irrigated by white-sailed windmills. We will stop at Psychro to visit the Dictean cave, the mythical birthplace of Zeus, before continuing on to Seli for spectacular views of the plateau. From here, we visit the Kera Monastery, with frescoes dating from the late Byzantine period. On our way back, we'll stop at the village of Mohos for a magnificent view of the villages of Chersonissos, Stalis, and Malia. We'll end our stay with traditional Cretan food and dancing. **(B, D) Overnight: Crete**



Tolo - the colors of Greece



Lasithi Plateau

Wednesday, October 25. This morning we transfer to Heraklion Airport for the short flight to Athens and our return flights to the United States. **(B)**