

**10 Days/ 9 Nights**

Departs Daily from the US



## **Avanti Journeys - Ancient Wonders of Europe:** Istanbul, Athens & Rome

Each of these three cities can claim to be a cradle of civilization. Although miles apart, they are linked by history, art and architecture. Put these links together yourself as you explore the wonders of each.

### ACCOMMODATIONS

• 3 Nights Istanbul

• 3 Nights Athens

• 3 Nights Rome

### INCLUSIONS

- Air JFK to Istanbul, Istanbul to Athens, Athens to Rome & Rome to JFK
- Private Bosphorus Bonanza Tour

- Private Istanbul History Tour
- Private Athens Tour with Acropolis Museum
- One Dinner in a Typical Taverna

- Private Rome Tour With Colosseum Visit
- Private Vatican Tour
- Daily Breakfast



## ARRIVE ISTANBUL:

After landing and clearing customs, claim your bags and meet your driver and assistant who will transfer you to your hotel. You have the rest of the day to see Istanbul on your own. Istanbul is an eminently walkable city, so drop your bags and go for a walk!

*(Accommodations, Istanbul)*



## ISTANBUL:

Today your guided exploration of Istanbul begins with your **Private Bosphorus Bonanza Tour**. Your driver and English-speaking guide will pick you up at your hotel for this four-hour tour that will show you aspects of Istanbul's uniqueness, including:

### Visit to Egyptian Spice Market:

One of the oldest covered bazaars in Istanbul, the Spice Bazaar in Eminonu located behind the Yeni Mosque and next to the flower market, was established by Sultan Turhan, and designed by architect Kazim Aga. It was given a new lease of life by the Municipality of Istanbul after its restoration between 1940 and 1943. Open every day except Sundays, it sells herbs, spices, a variety of natural medicines, and plant and flower seeds. Beside these traditional commodities, one can now find a large range of dried fruits and nuts, cheeses, meats and other foods.

### Bosphorus Cruise:

An unforgettable excursion starts between two continents; Europe and Asia. The cruise takes you along the Bosphorus, past the European style palaces of The Ottomans, Dolmabahce and Beylerbeyi, as well as beautiful wooden mansions from the 19th century. Disembark in Sarıyer, a small village on the European shore. At the end of the tour, you'll be returned to your hotel and have the rest of the day at leisure.

*(Breakfast & Accommodations, Istanbul)*



## ISTANBUL:

Over its history, this city has had three different names: Byzantium, Constantinople, and now Istanbul. Today you'll delve into the history of this multi-layered city with your guide by taking a full-day **Private Istanbul History Tour**. Some of the tour highlights include a visit to **Hippodrome Square**, with several Egyptian obelisks and columns; the **Blue Mosque**, the only one in the world with six minarets; and **St. Sophia**, one of architectural wonders of the world.

After visiting these sites, take a coffee break for a cup of Turkish coffee. Then visit the 1500-yr-old **Underground Cistern**; follow this with a visit to the **Grand Bazaar**, one of the largest markets anywhere, where you will see exquisite jewelry and rare carpets. Then it's time for a Baklava break at one of the best-known purveyors of this sweet treat. Finally, enjoy a delicious optional lunch at Green House Restaurant, featuring Turkish and Continental cuisine.

*(Breakfast & Accommodations, Istanbul)*



## ISTANBUL TO ATHENS:

This morning after breakfast, take your private transfer to Istanbul Airport for your flight to Athens. On arrival in Athens, a driver will meet you for your private transfer to your hotel. You have the rest of the day to relax or to begin exploring Athens on your own.

*(Breakfast, Istanbul; Accommodations, Athens)*



## ATHENS:

This morning, your driver and English-speaking guide will meet you at 9 a.m. at your hotel, to begin your **Private Athens Tour with Acropolis Museum**. The striking contrast between breathtaking monuments of a glorious past and modern elegant structures is what you will enjoy during your tour of Athens. Visit the **Acropolis**, the crowning beauty and glory of Ancient Athens, with its many monuments atop its rocky base, including the awesome **Parthenon**, the Propylea, the temple of Athena Nike and the **Erechtheion**, with its Porch of Maidens. Drive to the Roman Temple of Olympic Zeus, the **Panathinaikon Stadium** (site of the first modern Olympic Games in 1896), and the **Tomb of the Unknown Soldier** in front of the Parliament House on Constitution Square. See views of government buildings and elegant structures of the 19th century. Drive along Panepistimiou Avenue and view the Catholic Cathedral, the Academy, University, National Library.

In contrast, conclude your tour with a visit to the new **Acropolis Museum**, a marvel of architecture with a full exhibition of the glory of Ancient Athens. At the conclusion of the tour you'll be returned to your hotel.

*(Breakfast & Accommodations, Athens)*



## ATHENS:

Today is free for you to explore Athens on your own. In the evening, enjoy a traditional three-course dinner in a typical Greek taverna, offering a cozy ambience and breathtaking evening views of the Acropolis from its rooftop terrace—a fitting conclusion to your Athens journey.

*(Breakfast, Dinner, & Accommodations, Athens)*



## ATHENS TO ROME:

This morning after breakfast, take your private transfer to Athens Airport for your flight to Rome. On arrival in Rome, a driver will meet you for your private transfer to your hotel. You have the rest of the day to relax or to begin exploring Rome on your own..

*(Breakfast, Athens; Accommodations, Rome)*



## ROME:

Today you have a private four-hour tour of Rome, including a visit to the Colosseum. Your driver and English-speaking guide will meet you at your hotel to show you some of the highlights of the Eternal City, such as the **Roman Forum**, the center of civic life in ancient Rome; **Palatine Hill**, location of the emperors' palaces; and the **Colosseum**—the largest amphitheater ever built—famed for its entertainments including mock naval battles, gladiatorial combats, and wild animal fights (entrance fees included). After the tour, you have the rest of the day on your own to continue your exploration of Rome.

*(Breakfast & Accommodations, Rome)*



## ROME:

Today you have the morning free for exploring Rome. In the afternoon, you'll have a **Private Vatican Museums Tour**. You'll be picked up at 2 p.m. for this three-hour tour of one of the world's greatest museums. In addition to many masterpieces from the Renaissance, you'll also see the **Sistine Chapel**, one of Michelangelo's greatest works. At the end of the tour, you are free to explore the area around Vatican City, and Trastevere—the district of Rome that adjoins the Vatican.

*(Breakfast & Accommodations, Rome)*

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## DEPART ROME:

Today you say farewell to Europe as you have a private transfer to the Rome Airport, for your flight back to New York (or other selected city).

*(Breakfast, Rome)*

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