



AMERICAN
HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY

UNESCO TREASURES OF ANCIENT GREECE

SEPTEMBER 17-26, 2026



CIRCUMNAVIGATING THE PELOPONNESE

by Private Luxury Mega-Yacht aboard the 50-Cabin

Emerald Azzurra

with AHS Host

PANAYOTI KELAIDIS



Mosaic detail in Athens.
COVER: Delphi

Dear Friends,

I AM DELIGHTED TO INVITE YOU on an extraordinary journey through the timeless landscapes of Greece, a country where myth, history, and horticulture intertwine in remarkable ways. This voyage offers a rare opportunity to explore ancient wonders while discovering the living traditions of cultivation, gardens, and landscapes that have flourished here for millennia.

Sailing aboard the intimate 50-cabin *Emerald Azzurra*, you will experience the Peloponnese as few travelers do, with exclusive access to hidden harbors, coastal villages, and a complete circumnavigation of this storied peninsula. Discover UNESCO World Heritage sites of extraordinary significance, from the healing sanctuary at Epidauros to the evocative ruins of Olympia and Delphi, where sacred groves and olive orchards still echo the rhythms of the ancient world.

This journey also celebrates Greece's horticultural legacy. Stroll through the Athens National Garden, explore historic estates where olives, grapes, and herbs have been cultivated for centuries, and visit the remarkable Olympic Botanical Garden, where living plants tell the stories of myth and ritual. Each excursion reveals the profound connections between people, plants, and place.

Guiding you through this journey is esteemed expert Panayoti Kelaidis, an AHS Board Member and a distinguished plant explorer. Panayoti has lectured internationally and received numerous honors, including AHS' prestigious Liberty Hyde Bailey Award. With his deep knowledge, enthusiasm, and personal ties to Greece, Panayoti will enrich this voyage with unique insights and unforgettable stories.

We hope you'll join us for this remarkable exploration, uniting Greece's rich history, timeless gardens, and breathtaking landscapes. Space is limited, so I encourage you to reserve your spot early.

Warmest regards,

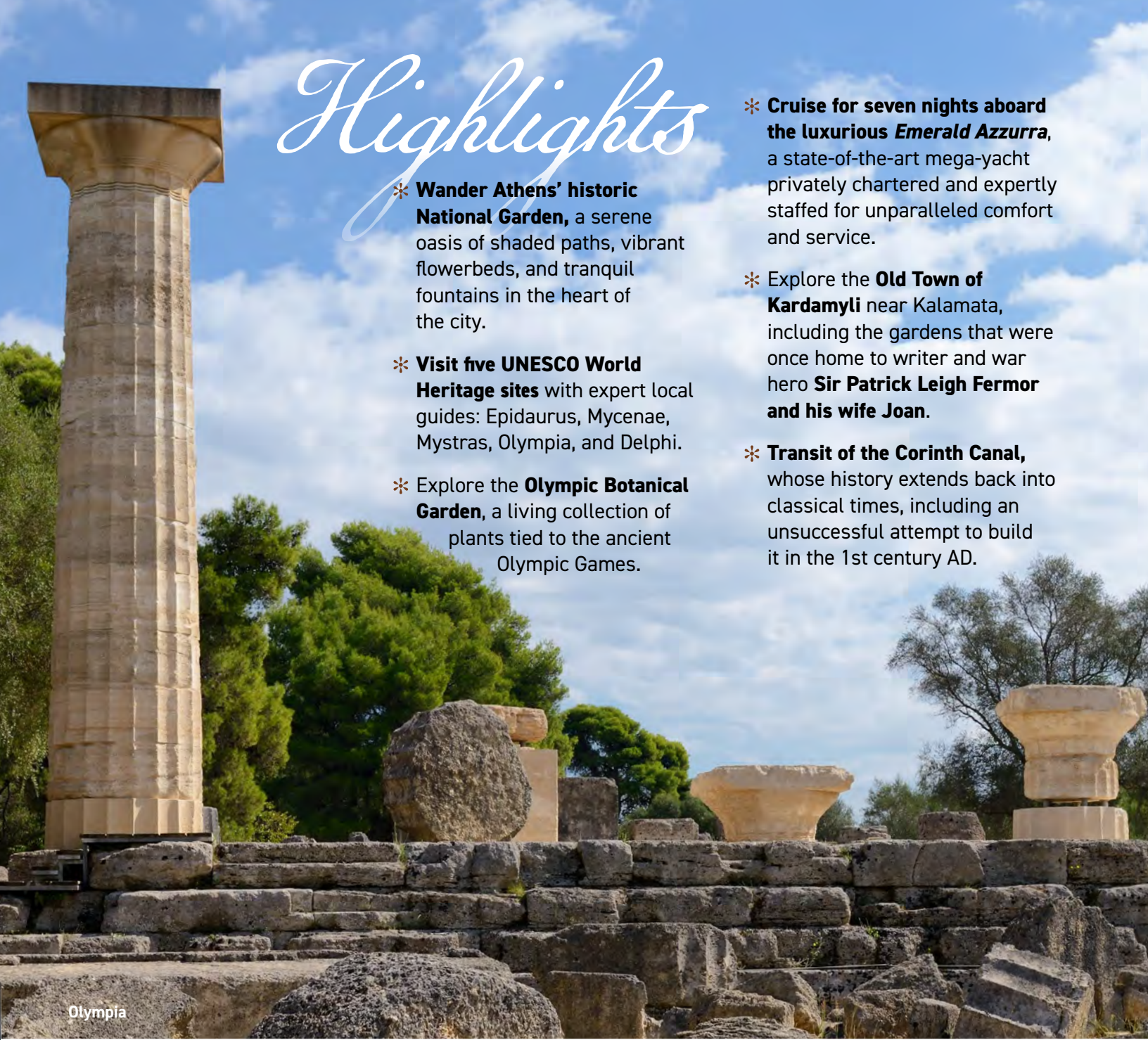
Suzanne B. Laporte
President & CEO

Olive grove
in Kalamata.



WHEN YOU TRAVEL WITH THE AHS, YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Designed for garden enthusiasts who love to explore horticultural wonders around the world, AHS Travel offers exceptional programs that include many exclusive experiences and unique insights. Your participation in an AHS Travel Study program supports the AHS's nonprofit work to increase knowledge among gardeners, inspire passion for plants and the natural world, and encourage responsible stewardship of the earth.



Highlights

- * **Wander Athens' historic National Garden**, a serene oasis of shaded paths, vibrant flowerbeds, and tranquil fountains in the heart of the city.
- * **Visit five UNESCO World Heritage sites** with expert local guides: Epidauros, Mycenae, Mystras, Olympia, and Delphi.
- * Explore the **Olympic Botanical Garden**, a living collection of plants tied to the ancient Olympic Games.
- * **Cruise for seven nights aboard the luxurious *Emerald Azzurra***, a state-of-the-art mega-yacht privately chartered and expertly staffed for unparalleled comfort and service.
- * Explore the **Old Town of Kardamyli** near Kalamata, including the gardens that were once home to writer and war hero **Sir Patrick Leigh Fermor and his wife Joan**.
- * **Transit of the Corinth Canal**, whose history extends back into classical times, including an unsuccessful attempt to build it in the 1st century AD.

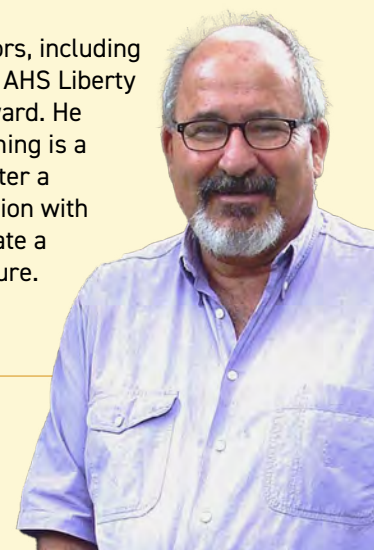
Olympia

AHS HOST PANAYOTI KELAIDIS

AHS Board Member **Panayoti Kelaidis** is a distinguished plant explorer, gardener, and Director of Outreach at Denver Botanic Gardens, where he has played a pivotal role since 1980. Known for designing and curating the Rock Alpine Garden, ranked by *Garden Design Magazine* as North America's best public rock garden, he has introduced countless native and exotic

plants, including hardy ice plants, to horticulture worldwide. With extensive fieldwork across continents, from the Andes to the Caucasus, he has discovered new plant species and contributed to the preservation of Western native flora. A passionate educator and advocate for sustainability, Panayoti has lectured internationally and received

numerous honors, including the prestigious AHS Liberty Hyde Bailey Award. He believes gardening is a vital way to foster a deeper connection with nature and create a sustainable future.



EXPERTS FROM CO-SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS Participants from the Archaeological Institute of America, Colorado College, and Yale Alumni Academy will enrich the program with lectures and insights. National Trust Tours will also be part of this journey as a co-sponsoring organization.



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

NAFPLION

Spend the morning visiting two incredible UNESCO World Heritage sites, both once home to flourishing gardens, fruit orchards, and olive groves. Begin with Epidauros, home to the historic healing temple Asclepieion, then continue to Mycenae, the ancient city where Schliemann uncovered the legendary Mask of Agamemnon. Enjoy lunch at Skouras, a renowned local estate, with the option to stay a bit longer afterward for a vineyard tour. Later in the afternoon, choose between exploring the grounds and ramparts of Palamidi Fortress or taking a guided walking tour through the charming streets of Nafplion, a picturesque seaside town beneath the Venetian castle. *EMERALD AZZURRA (B,L,D)*

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

GYTHIO

Spend the morning exploring the UNESCO World Heritage site of Mystras, a beautifully preserved medieval walled town, and the legendary city of Sparta, both long celebrated for their surrounding gardens, orchards, and cultivated landscapes. Enjoy a leisurely inland lunch before visiting a local farm, where productive gardens and orchards showcase sustainable cultivation practices. As an afternoon alternative, return to Gythio for lunch on board the ship or on your own at one of the town's inviting seaside tavernas. Then set out on a small-boat cruise through the Diros Caves, where dramatic stalagmites and stalactites reveal a natural wonder that has inspired awe for millennia. *EMERALD AZZURRA (B,L,D)*

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

KALAMATA

Choose between two options this morning: visit the UNESCO World Heritage site of Ancient Messene, a classical city-state re-founded in 369 BC. Explore its well-preserved ruins, including ancient walls, a theater, temples, and a stadium nestled among olive groves and lush farmland. See ongoing excavations and visit the onsite museum with remarkable archaeological finds. Or visit the gardens of the Patrick Leigh Fermor House in Kardamyli, where olive groves, cypress, bougainvillea, jasmine, and aromatic herbs thrive on terraces overlooking the sea. Designed to harmonize with the coastal terrain, the gardens offer a vivid example of Mediterranean planting and dry-climate garden design. Conclude with lunch aboard the ship and time to cruise or swim in the crystal-clear waters nearby. *EMERALD AZZURRA (B,D)*

ITINERARY

THURSDAY-FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17 & 18

HOME ≈ ATHENS, GREECE

Depart home on an overnight flight to Athens, Greece. Arrive Friday, September 18, and transfer to the centrally located Athens Capital Hotel—MGallery Collection, situated at Syntagma Square. This elegant boutique hotel blends contemporary design with classic Greek touches. In the evening, gather for a welcome orientation and reception. *ATHENS CAPITAL HOTEL (R)*

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

ATHENS ≈ PIRAEUS

After breakfast, enjoy the first lecture of the day. In the morning, choose between a private visit to the Goulandris Museum of Cycladic Art or the Benaki Museum of Greek Culture. Savor a delicious Greek lunch. In the afternoon, embark the *Emerald Azzurra* in the port of Piraeus. The day concludes with the Captain's welcome reception and dinner aboard.

EMERALD AZZURRA (B,L,R,D)

Athens
Acropolis



WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

PYLOS

Spend the day discovering the history, culture, and flavors of Pylos. Explore the remarkable Bronze Age site of Nestor's Palace, where storerooms once held vast jars of olive oil, and learn about life in the Mycenaean world. Visit a working olive farm to see traditional cultivation practices and sample fresh, organic oils. Alternatively, explore historic landmarks such as Methoni Castle, one of the largest fortresses in the Mediterranean, or the Pylos Archaeological Museum. Enjoy free time to stroll through the charming streets of Pylos' historic center, browsing local shops or simply taking in the town's atmosphere. *EMERALD AZZURRA* (B,L,D)

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

KATAKOLON ≈ OLYMPIA

Begin the morning with a visit to the UNESCO World Heritage site of Ancient Olympia, the iconic birthplace of the Olympic Games. Explore its remarkable temples, stadium, sanctuary, and stoa, and experience history firsthand by partaking in a foot race on the original Olympic track. Choose to tour the Botanical Garden, where plant species are selected based on descriptions in Greek literature, or dive deeper into the past at the Archaeological Museum, home to statues, votive offerings, and treasures from the ancient sanctuary. In the afternoon, relax with a scenic cruise along the stunning Gulf of Corinth. *EMERALD AZZURRA* (B,L,D)

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

ITEA (DELPHI) ≈ CORINTH CANAL

Start the day with a morning lecture before docking at Itea for a climb to the UNESCO World Heritage site of Delphi, famed for the Oracle whose pronouncements were sought for centuries. Visit the Sanctuary of Apollo and the nearby Temple of Athena Pronaia that are set within the dramatic landscape of Delphi, surrounded by the slopes of Mount Parnassus and overlooking the vast Amfissa Olive Grove, one of the oldest and largest in Greece, whose trees extend toward the Gulf of Corinth. In the afternoon, cruise through the breathtakingly narrow Corinth Canal, where teal, crystal-clear waters meet dramatic cliffs. The day concludes with the Captain's farewell reception and dinner aboard. *EMERALD AZZURRA* (B,L,R,D)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

ATHENS, GREECE ≈ HOME

Disembark in Athens this morning and transfer to Athens International Airport for flights home. (B)



Corinth Canal

OPTIONAL PRE-TRIP EXTENSION

TUESDAY-FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15-18

HOME ≈ ATHENS, GREECE

Depart the U.S. on an overnight flight to Athens, Greece. Arrive Wednesday, September 16, and transfer to the centrally located Athens Capital Hotel—MGallery Collection. Experience the treasures of Athens on this two-night pre-tour extension. Explore ancient landmarks from the bustling Agora and lively Plaka to the iconic Acropolis and its acclaimed museum. Savor authentic Greek meals, visit the National Archaeological Museum, and enjoy time to wander this vibrant city at your own pace.



Methoni Castle





Dining Room



Sky Deck

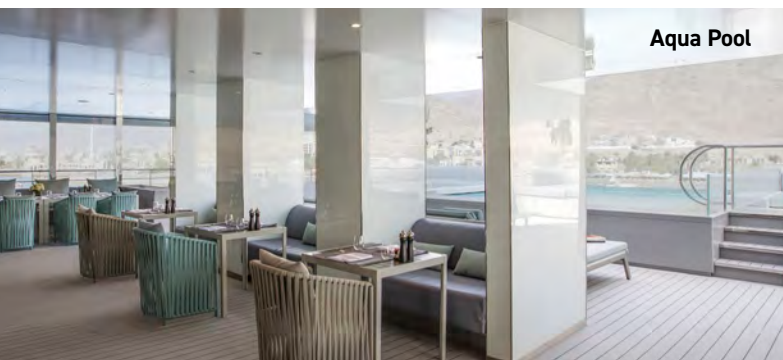


Balcony Suite A

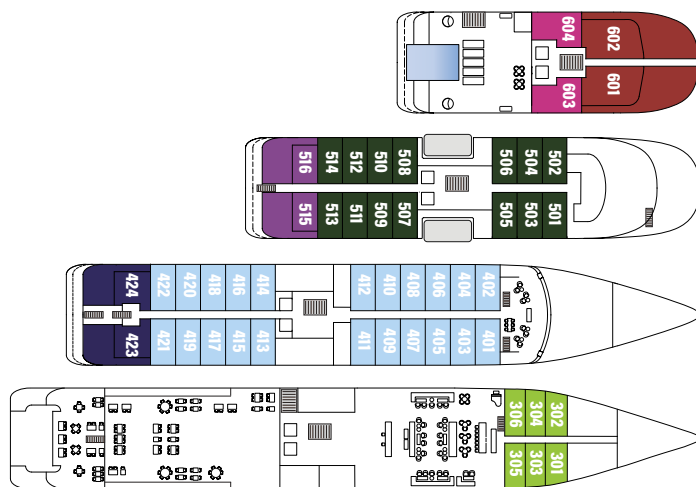
EMERALD AZZURRA

In March 2022, Emerald Cruises launched the *Emerald Azzurra*, a sleek mega-yacht designed to explore ports and harbors inaccessible to larger ships. Measuring 360 feet in length with just 50 spacious cabins, this stunning vessel offers a modern, Scandinavian-inspired ambiance. Forty-four cabins feature step-out balconies, and each cabin includes convertible beds, flat-screen TVs, stocked mini-bars, and bathrooms equipped with hair dryers, plush robes, and premium bath products.

The *Azzurra* offers inviting public spaces designed for relaxation and comfort, including multiple lounges and outdoor areas where you can soak in the views. Delight in fresh, locally sourced cuisine prepared by expert chefs, served either in the elegant Reflections Restaurant or al fresco on The Terrace. Indulge in a range of luxurious amenities: unwind with a dip in the infinity pool or soak in the outdoor hot tub. Savor handcrafted cocktails at the open-air Sky Bar or in the elegant Horizon Bar & Lounge (which also converts to a lecture room with full A/V capabilities). Rejuvenate your body and mind at the Wellness Center with soothing massages, revitalizing facials, and a cutting-edge infrared sauna. Stay connected with complimentary Wi-Fi throughout the yacht, and explore onshore with a selection of bikes available for guests.



Aqua Pool



CATEGORY

RATES (Per Person)

D OCEANVIEW STATEROOM

183–205 sq. ft., window

double occupancy	\$10,990
single occupancy	\$15,990

B BALCONY SUITE

260 sq. ft., sliding glass door to 45 sq. ft. private balcony

double occupancy	\$13,990
single occupancy	\$19,990

A BALCONY SUITE

260 sq. ft., sliding glass door to 45 sq. ft. private balcony

double occupancy	\$14,990
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S DELUXE BALCONY SUITE

305 sq. ft., sliding glass door to oversized 100 sq. ft. balcony

double occupancy	\$16,990
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T TERRACE SUITE

260 sq. ft., sliding glass door to 410 sq. ft. private terrace

double occupancy	\$19,990
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Y YACHT SUITE

345 sq. ft., sliding glass door to 375 sq. ft. private terrace

double occupancy	\$21,990
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SA OWNER'S SUITE

580 sq. ft., sliding glass door to 600 sq. ft. private terrace

double occupancy	\$26,990
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GENERAL INFORMATION

AHS SOJOURNS

AHS TRAVEL

This custom trip is offered in collaboration with Criterion Travel and is part of the AHS Sojourns travel program collection. For more information, visit ahsgardening.org/travel.

AHS Travel programs are designed to offer immersive experiences and often involve long days filled with exploration and extensive walking on uneven terrain. To participate in a program, it is recommended to be in good physical condition and prepared to walk up to three miles each day.

PROGRAM LENGTH, CAPACITY

10 days roundtrip from the U.S.

This program is limited to 84 participants, including travelers from the American Horticultural Society, Archaeological Institute of America, Colorado College, National Trust Tours, and Yale Alumni Academy.

FEES INCLUDE

All accommodations, meals, and excursions as specified in the itinerary including one hotel night and seven nights aboard *Emerald Azzurra* ■ Comprehensive program of briefings, lectures and presentations ■ Transfers for all participants on group arrival and departure dates ■ Baggage handling ■ Gratuities to porters, waitstaff, guides and drivers ■ Gratuities to shipboard personnel ■ Port charges ■ Entrance fees ■ Welcome and farewell wine receptions ■ House wine, beer, and soft drinks with group lunches and dinners ■ Alcoholic/non-alcoholic beverages and Wi-Fi throughout the cruise ■ Filtered water on motorcoaches ■ Professional tour manager throughout the program

FEES DO NOT INCLUDE

U.S. domestic and international airfare ■ Passport/visa expenses ■ Medical expenses and immunizations ■ Private airport transfers or airport transfers outside of group arrival and departure dates ■ Travel and trip cancellation insurance ■ Excursions that deviate from the scheduled tour options ■ Airline baggage charges ■ Meals not specified in the itinerary; dishes and beverages not part of the included meals; premium alcoholic drinks ■ Laundry or dry cleaning ■ Telephone, fax, Internet, and email charges ■ Room service ■ Other items of a personal nature

FLIGHTS

U.S. domestic and international airfare is not included in the program rates. Participants are responsible for their own air arrangements. Please do not purchase airline tickets until the operation of the tour is confirmed by Criterion Travel. Further information about making flight arrangements will be sent to confirmed participants. When it is time to make flight arrangements, the AHS's flight and travel services provider, Cranky Concierge, provides optional flight and travel arrangement services for a seamless travel experience, including proactive flight monitoring and travel disruption assistance: www.crankyconcierge.com/ahsgardening. You are

also welcome to book your air transportation through your local travel agent, an online travel site, or the airline of your choice.

WHAT TO EXPECT

The pace of this tour is moderately active with considerable walking each day, often over very uneven and cobblestoned terrain, and extended periods of standing. The ship has two elevators. Participants must be in good health and able to keep up with the group without assistance from tour staff. All participants will be required to follow safety/sanitization protocols set forth by American Horticultural Society or Criterion Travel, our tour operator; local staff; and host country laws. If the tour manager decides that a participant cannot visit a site safely or in a timely manner, their judgment will be final. Where possible, an alternate activity may be suggested; additional costs may apply.

RESERVATIONS & PAYMENTS

To reserve space, please email Criterion Travel at res@critteriontravel.com or return the completed reservation form with your \$1,000 per person deposit to: Criterion Travel, 4250 SW Hall Blvd., Beaverton, OR 97005, or fax to (650) 560-6400. Balance of payment is due May 20, 2026. After May 20, 2026, full payment is due upon registration. Final payment may be made by check, wire transfer or credit card (credit card payments will incur a processing fee of 2%).

A NOTE ABOUT RATES

Program rates are based upon current fuel prices, taxes, tariffs, and a minimum number of participants. While we will do everything possible to maintain the listed prices, they are subject to change. If there are significant changes, details and costs will be advised prior to departure.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Upon receipt of registration, Criterion Travel will send registrant a Terms and Conditions, Release from Liability, Assumption of Risk and Binding Arbitration Clause detailing the full terms and conditions for this tour. This document must be signed and returned to Criterion Travel before participant's registration is considered complete and any arrangements can be confirmed.

PASSENGER CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS

Upon payment of a deposit, all reservations are subject to the cancellation provisions set forth below and by which the passenger agrees to be bound. Cancellations shall not be effective until they are received in writing and confirmed by Criterion Travel. Deposits are refundable (less a \$250 per person admin fee) if written notice of cancellation is received within 30 days of booking; after that, deposits are 100% nonrefundable. After May 20, 2026 final payment deadline: All payments are 100% nonrefundable, regardless of booking date. For this reason, we strongly urge participants to purchase trip cancellation insurance. No refunds will be made for any part of this program on which you choose not to participate. NOTE: Criterion Travel does not accept liability for any airline cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable ticket in conjunction with this tour.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is not included in the tour cost, but we strongly recommend that all participants purchase a travel protection plan. Be sure to review your options carefully and choose a policy that best suits your needs. Coverage should include trip cancellation or interruption, medical expenses (including COVID-19), emergency evacuation or repatriation, lost or delayed baggage, and other unexpected travel-related expenses. One provider to consider is USI Affinity Travel Insurance Services. For details on the plan available to AHS travelers, visit www.ahsgardening.org/travel. This link also includes information about optional flight and travel arrangement services.

HEALTH

At AHS Travel, ensuring the health and safety of our guests is our top priority. All participants will be required to follow safety/sanitization protocols set forth by Criterion Travel, local staff, and host country laws. All participants should be in good health and able to keep up with an active group of travelers without assistance from tour staff. By forwarding the deposit for passage, the passenger certifies that he/she does not have any physical or other condition or disability that would create a hazard for him/herself or other passengers.

ITINERARY CHANGES

The itinerary presented for this tour is subject to modification and change by Criterion Travel. Every reasonable effort will be made to operate the program as planned; however, should unforeseen world events and conditions require the itinerary to be altered, Criterion Travel reserves the right to do so for the safety and best interest of the group. Any extra expenses incurred in this situation are the responsibility of the participant.

AHS PROGRAM CONTENT

The AHS and its travel partners reserve the right to take photographs, videos, and audio ("Program Content") during the Travel Study program for editorial, promotional, and commercial use by the AHS or authorized third parties. By making a reservation on an AHS Travel program, the participant agrees to allow his/her likeness to be used by AHS or AHS-authorized third parties without compensation to the participant. AHS reserves the right to crop, alter, or combine the Program Content with other images, text, or media at its sole discretion and to use the Program Content in any medium or format, including but not limited to print, digital, or online media. This authorization grants AHS and/or authorized third parties the right to use the photographs, videos, and audio worldwide and in perpetuity, without further consent or compensation. Participants who prefer that their voice and/or image not be used must notify AHS in writing prior to the beginning of the program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please call: (888) 328-2089 or (650) 328-2089. California Seller of Travel Program CST #2088800-40

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RESERVATION FORM

NAME **Participant 1**

NAME **Participant 2**

PREFERRED NAME (FOR NAME TAG) **Participant 1**

PREFERRED NAME (FOR NAME TAG) **Participant 2**

ADDRESS

CITY / STATE / ZIP

HOME PHONE

CELL PHONE

E-MAIL ADDRESS **Participant 1**

E-MAIL ADDRESS **Participant 2**

ACCOMMODATIONS (not guaranteed):

Please indicate your cabin category preferences: ☐ 1st Choice _____ ☐ 2nd Choice _____

Bed Preference: ☐ One Bed ☐ Two Beds

☐ **Double Occupancy.** I will share a room with _____

☐ **Single Occupancy.** ☐ I would like a roommate but will pay the single supplement if one cannot be found

TOUR DOCUMENTS:

Criterion Travel will send all documents pertaining to the tour by email to the email address listed above.

☐ *If you wish to receive hardcopy versions of the tour documents by post as well, please check this box.*

Paper documents will not be sent to your home address unless box is checked.

DEPOSIT (\$1,000 per person): _____ #of persons _____ Amount Enclosed

☐ VISA ☐ MC ☐ AMEX ☐ CHECK (make payable to Criterion Travel)

CARD #

EXP. DATE

NAME AS IT APPEARS ON CARD

CVV SECURITY CODE

EACH PARTICIPANT MUST SIGN. *By registering and paying the deposit for this tour, registrant acknowledges he/she has carefully read and understands all information contained in the tour brochure, recognizes and accepts any risks therein, agrees to be bound by the terms and conditions above.*

SIGNATURE / DATE **Participant 1**

SIGNATURE / DATE **Participant 2**

COMPLETE AND RETURN THIS FORM TO:

Criterion Travel
4250 SW Hall Blvd.
Beaverton, OR 97005

TO REGISTER BY EMAIL:

res@criteriontravel.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT AHS TRAVEL PROGRAM

Please contact **(703) 768-8801**
Information is also available at

www.ahsgardening.org/travel



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Nafplion

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