

FULL DAY TOUR ARGOLIS (MYCENAE, NAFPLION, EPIDAVROS)

1) ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE OF MYCENAE

- In the second millennium B.C., Mycenae was one of the major centres of Greek civilization, a military stronghold which dominated much of southern Greece, Crete, the Cyclades and parts of southwest Anatolia. The period of Greek history from about 1600 B.C. to about 1100 B.C. is called Mycenaean in reference to Mycenae. At its peak in 1350 B.C., the citadel and lower town had a population of 30,000 and an area of 32 hectares.
- The first correct identification of Mycenae in modern literature was during a survey conducted by Francesco Grimani, commissioned by the Provveditore Generale of the Kingdom of the Morea in 1700.

2) ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE OF EPIDAVROS

- Epidavros was a small city in ancient Greece, on the Argolid Peninsula at the Saronic Gulf. Two modern towns bear the name Epidavros: *Palaia Epidavros* and *Nea Epidavros*.
- Epidavros was independent of Argos and not included in Argolis until the time of the Romans. With its supporting territory, it formed the small territory called Epidauria. It was reputed to be founded by or named for the Argolid Epidaurus, and to be the birthplace of Apollo's son Asclepius the healer.

3) ANCIENT THEATER

- Is located on the southeast end of the sanctuary dedicated to the ancient Greek God of medicine, Asclepius. It is built on the west side of Cynortion Mountain, near modern Lygourio, and belongs to the Epidaurus Municipality.
- It is considered to be the most perfect ancient Greek theatre with regard to acoustics and aesthetics.
- According to Pausanias, the ancient theatre was constructed at the end of the 4th century B.C. by the architect Polykleitos the Younger. Pausanias praises the theatre for its symmetry and beauty.
- At a maximum capacity of 13,000 to 14,000 spectators, the theatre hosted music, singing and dramatic games that were included in the worship of Asclepius. It was also used as a means to heal patients, since there was a belief that the observation of dramatic shows had positive effects on mental and physical health.

4) THE FIRST CAPITAL OF GREECE (NAFPLION)

- It is in the Argolida's prefecture, in the east of Peloponnese peninsula. Nafplion was the first capital of Greece. Is a coastal city and it has three castles. The most famous are the Palamidi castle, and Bourtzi castle which is on the islet in front of the port. The population of Nafplion is 13,124 inhabitants.
- Nafplion was the second capital of Greece. In 1834 the king Otto carried the capital to Athens. Nafplion was one of the first cities which were liberated during Greek War of Independence.

5) PALAMIDI CASTLE

- It is nestled on the crest of a 216-metre high hill, the fortress was built by the Venetians during their second occupation of the area (1686–1715).
- The fortress was a very large and ambitious project, but was finished within a relatively short period from 1711 until 1714. It is a typical baroque fortress based on the plans of Venetian engineer Antonio Giancix and built by French military engineer Pierre de la Salle. In 1715 it was captured by the Ottomans and remained under their control until 1822, when it was captured by the Greeks.

6) BOURTZI CASTLE

- The water castle of Bourtzi from Ottoman Turkish "*burc*" meaning "tower" and formerly *Kasteli* is a Venetian castle located in the middle of the harbour of Nafplio.
- Antonio Gambello, an architect from Bergamo, built the castle in 1471 on this tiny islet in front of the port of Nafplion, although the construction was completed by the engineer Brancalone.

