Journeys of Paul & John and Seven Churches of Revelation including a 3-night Aegean Cruise

April 21 - May 4, 2025

Hosted by Dr. Jim Cobban



DAY 1, MON, APR 21 **DEPART USA**
Depart USA on our overseas flight to Istanbul. (meals aloft)

DAY 2, TUE, APR 22 **ARRIVE ISTANBUL**
Arrive to Istanbul and transfer to **Hotel Mukarnas Pera** for dinner and overnight. (meals aloft)

DAY 3, WED, APR 23 **ISTANBUL**
Today we tour Istanbul, visiting the spectacular Blue Mosque, the 17th century Ottoman Mosque famous for its six minarets. After leaving your shoes at the door, step inside to see the brightly-colored interior decorated with at least 20,000 shimmering blue Iznik tiles and stained-glass windows. We view the historical Hippodrome, where chariot races and athletic events took place during the Roman period. Then we visit the great Hagia Sophia, the headquarters church of the Byzantine empire and the largest building at that time, later converted into a mosque. In 1935, under the secular republic of Turkey, it reopened as a museum famous for its mosaics, and then in 2020 it was again reclassified as a mosque. We also spend some time this afternoon at the Istanbul Archaeology Museums. Then on to the Grand Bazaar, a market of over 3,000 tiny shops before dinner and overnight in Istanbul. (B,D)

DAY 4, THU, APR 24 **NICEA/IZMIR**
Today we depart Istanbul and travel to Iznik, ancient Nicea, located in the northeast of Bursa on the side of Iznik Lake. Under Constantine I when Christianity became the state religion, Nicea became an important religious center where two ecumenical councils were held, in AD 325 and 787. The first one, under Constantine I, articulated the important confessional statements of Christian Orthodoxy regarding the Holy Trinity. The second Nicene Council focused on the use of saints, images, and icons. Following our time here we continue on to Izmir for dinner and overnight at **Izmir Garden Inn**. (B,D)

DAY 5, FRI, APR 25 **PERGAMON/THYATIRA/IZMIR**
Our touring begins in Pergamon, the early Roman capital of the Roman province of Asia and today known as Bergama. Recipient of the apostle John's third letter in revelation, it was celebrated worldwide for its magnificent library with the 200,000 scrolls which Anthony presented to Cleopatra, for its parchment made of goatskin known as "Pergamum paper" used as a substitute for Egyptian papyrus, and for its Aesclepion (with its symbolic entwined snakes), which was the most advanced medical center in the ancient world. The largest of all Hellenistic theatres stands here and the city's temples are remarkable for both their size and beauty. From here we continue to Thyatira, one of the Seven Churches of Revelation as well as a major commercial center of ancient Asia Minor, from which Lydia a seller of purple came (Acts 16:14). We travel on to Izmir, biblical Smyrna, where we visit the ancient Agora and the Church of St. Polycarp, who was Smyrna's first bishop. From there we return to our hotel for dinner and overnight. (B,D)

DAY 6, SAT, APR 26 **SARDIS/PHILADELPHIA/ HIERAPOLIS/PAMUKKALE**
Today we first visit Sardis, set upon a steep hill surrounded by an impregnable citadel and one of the most picturesque areas of the Seven Churches. We will visit its famous third-century Jewish synagogue, the largest synagogue ever excavated, with a seating capacity of a thousand persons. Other highlights include the Gymnasium, House of Bronzes, Temple of Artemis, and the ancient Church. We travel to Philadelphia, another of the seven churches of Revelation, and an important Christian center during Byzantine times. The modern town of Alasehir is built over ancient Philadelphia, although the ruins of a Byzantine basilica built of brick with a high arch and frescoes are still visible. The city was destroyed in AD 17 and 23 by earthquakes. We proceed to Hierapolis and see its well-preserved baths, the basilica (dating back to the 6th century AD), the Temple of Apollo, and the theater. Then we continue to Pamukkale, known as the "Cotton Castle" because of its fantastic calcium formations and pools of natural warm water for dinner and overnight at our hotel **Pam Thermal Hotel**. (B,D)

DAY 7, SUN, APR 27 **COLOSSAE/APHRODISIAS/ LAODICEA/KUSADASI**
This morning we travel to Colossae, recipient of one of Paul's letters, and home to Philemon. We tour Aphrodisias, constructed to pay homage to Aphrodite, the goddess of love and fertility. One of the best preserved stadiums in the world is here. We then journey to Laodicea, where Mark, Timothy and Epaphras brought the Gospel and established the first church. In Revelation the church members were condemned for their "lukewarm attitude" toward Christianity. Highlights will be the Nymphaeum, the Amphitheater, and the Council Chamber. After our visit we proceed to Kusadasi for dinner and overnight at **Charisma De Luxe Hotel**. (B,D)

DAY 8, MON, APR 28 **EPHESUS/KUSADASI**
This morning we journey to Ephesus where Paul spent two years and which had become the capital city of the Roman Province of Asia by the time John wrote the Book of Revelation to the

churches there. We walk through history in a city founded as early as the 10th century B.C. In the magnificent excavations we see streets lined with wonderful public buildings such as the Baths of Scholastica, the Library of Celsus, the Temple of Hadrian, the Basilica of St. John and the great Theatre where the Ephesians screamed against Paul (Acts 19:28). Following our full day here, we return to our hotel in Kusadasi for dinner and overnight. (B,D)

DAY 9, TUE, APR 29 KUSADASI/PATMOS

This morning we board our cruise ship, the *Celestyal Discovery*, at the port of Kusadasi for our three-day journey through the Aegean Sea to Athens. We arrive in the afternoon at the former Roman prison island of Patmos where John received his "Revelation." Here we visit the Grotto named for his book and the Monastery of St. John which houses ancient manuscripts including an early one of the Gospel. (B,L,D)

DAY 10, WED, APR 30 RHODES

Enjoy the day at leisure in Rhodes. The Colossus of Rhodes, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, once dominated the strategic harbor entrance. Later it served as a crucial outpost for the Crusaders in many of their ill-fated journeys to Israel during their conflicts with the Muslim conquerors. Wandering through the old city you can see its fortifications, the Street of the Knights with medieval stone mansions, the Palace of the Grand Master and the Hospital of the Knights (now a museum). There are also art shops as well as many lovely beaches. (B,L,D)

DAY 11, THU, MAY 1 HERAKLION/SANTORINI

The largest of the Greek islands, Heraklion (Crete) is well-known for its archaeological sites. You may wish to take an optional excursion to the Palace of Knossos, the residence of the ruling house and also an administrative and religious center for the whole region. The buildings (a labyrinth complex) covered an area of 22 square miles. The high standard of Minoan civilization 4000 years ago, displayed here through architecture, frescoes and the perfect plumbing system, surprise modern visitors. This afternoon we sail on to the island of Santorini, widely considered to be the lost continent of Atlantis. Off the entrance of the bay of Santorini there is the only active volcano in the Eastern Mediterranean. After you have strolled through the narrow streets you can enjoy the fascinating and marvelous sunset. (B,L,D)

DAY 12, FRI, MAY 2 PIRAEUS/ATHENS

We arrive in port this morning in Piraeus and journey to Athens. We visit the Acropolis with the Parthenon shimmering in its ageless grace and unmatched design and see the unique Erechtheion (the only double temple). Nearby we climb the Areopagus (Mars Hill), where Paul addressed the philosophic court about Jesus and the resurrection (Acts 17:22-34). Our full day of touring also features a visit to the National Archaeological Museum, as well as a panoramic tour including Embassy Row, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the National Palace, the House of Parliament, and the University. After our tour, we check into our hotel, the **Athens Avenue**, for dinner and overnight. (B,D)

DAY 13, SAT, MAY 3 CORINTH/MYCENAE

In the morning we drive along the spectacular Greek coastline into the Peloponnesus. We stop at the Corinth Canal, a remarkable engineering feat connecting the waters of two seas before continuing to Corinth, Paul's beloved city and site of his most extensive ministry. Dominated by the Acro-corinth rising



1700 feet above the ruins, the marketplace is laid out exactly as it stood in the days of the great Apostle. To the side is the impressive Doric Temple of Apollo. The point of central interest for Christians is the bema (the judgment seat) where Paul stood before Gallio and preached (Acts 18). We see the synagogue where Paul preached, and the house of Justus next door. This afternoon we travel to Mycenae, Greece's most important archaeological site where the underground beehive royal tombs and the famous Lion Gate are located. Return to Athens for dinner and overnight. (B,D)

DAY 14, SUN, MAY 4 ATHENS/USA

We transfer to the airport this morning for our transatlantic flight back to the US. (B,meals aloft)

All sites listed in the itinerary will be covered but the sequence and days may be altered to adjust to religious holidays, special closings of sites, air schedules, etc. Hotels listed are subject to re-confirmation. This tour is not recommended for those who have mobility limitations since it includes significant amounts of rigorous walking on uneven terrain. If a passenger is unable to get on and off the bus and walk without the assistance of another individual, the passenger must bring someone with them to assist them. Please note that the Americans With Disabilities Act is not applicable outside the USA and facilities in other countries may be sharply limited.

Dehoney TRAVEL

Arrangements by:
Dehoney Travel
3008 Charlestown Crossing
New Albany, IN 47150
Phone: (812) 206-1080
Email: info@dehoneytravel.com

TC#901
3/24/25
Greece and Turkey/Coban J of P 25 final itin.indd