



FIELD. MUSEUM

Southern Greece, By Land & Sea

An Exclusive Behind-the-Scenes Journey
with Field Museum Archaeologists

with **Dr. William Parkinson**, Curator and Associate Director of Anthropological Research,
and **Dr. Chelsea Gardner**, Research Associate, Field Museum, and Associate Professor,
History & Classics, Acadia University

April 25 – May 5, 2026

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

TRAVEL on an exclusive Field Museum land-and-sea adventure through the **Peloponnese** and **Athens** in Southern Greece

JOIN archaeologists **Dr. William Parkinson** and **Dr. Chelsea Gardner** for rare, behind-the-scenes access to active projects they've led across Greece's archaeologically richest regions

EXPERIENCE where archaeologists uncovered the earliest Greek writing on mainland Europe at the **Iklaina Archaeological Project**, revealing how Mycenaean administration worked 3,000 years ago (*pending confirmation*)

DESCEND into the **Caves of Diros** with Dr. Parkinson and his colleagues, whose research here shows how Neolithic humans created elaborate ritual spaces in this vast underground network 7,000 years ago

NAVIGATE ancient shipwrecks in **Navarino Bay**, studying vessels from Bronze Age traders to 19th-century warships in one of Greece's most historically significant harbors

FOLLOW Dr. Gardner through her research at **Cape Tainaron**, investigating the Temple of Poseidon and the cave where Greeks believed Hercules entered the underworld to capture Cerberus

ENTER the **Acropolis** for an expert-guided exploration of the world's most influential ancient sanctuary and the innovative **Acropolis Museum**, home to archaeological finds from the site

MEET experts to view some of the world's greatest antiquities at the **National Archaeological Museum**, including the gold *Mask of Agamemnon*

TOUR the **Palace of Nestor** with Dr. Parkinson, discovering where Mycenaean kings ruled "sandy Pylos" during the era of the Trojan War, as described in Homer's epics

TRAVELING WITH YOU



Dr. William Parkinson is Curator and Associate Director of Anthropological Research at the Field Museum and Professor of Anthropology at the University of Illinois at Chicago. A specialist in European and Eastern Mediterranean Prehistory, he investigates the social dynamics of early village societies and the emergence of early states. Dr. Parkinson co-directs the **Diros Project** in southern Greece, which explores Neolithic cultural changes and the significance of Alepotrypa Cave in early Mediterranean networks. His research has reshaped our understanding of early agricultural societies and Mycenaean statehood. Dr. Parkinson holds a Ph.D. and M.A. in Anthropology from the University of Michigan and a B.A. in Anthropology from the University of Illinois at Chicago.



Dr. Chelsea Gardner is Research Associate at the Field Museum and Associate Professor of History and Classics at Acadia University. A Classical Archaeologist specializing in the history and material culture of ancient Greece, Rome, and the Mediterranean, she is deeply engaged in archaeological exploration in southern Greece. Her work at **Cape Tainaron**, the site of an ancient sanctuary to Poseidon and the mythic gateway to Hades, uncovers the intersection of mythology, religion, and sacred space in ancient Greek life. Dr. Gardner is also the creator and host of *Peopling the Past*, a podcast and resource hub chronicling the real people who lived in the ancient Mediterranean world. She holds a Ph.D. and M.A. in Classical Archaeology from the University of British Columbia and a B.A. in Classics and Religious Studies from McMaster University.



Dear Field Museum Friend,

As classical archaeologists, **Dr. Chelsea Gardner** and I have spent our careers uncovering the stories of early Greek civilization through decades of research and excavation. From **April 25 to May 5, 2026**, please join us and the **Field Museum** to explore Southern Greece by land and sea, with behind-the-scenes access to sites where we've made significant discoveries.

This spring program immerses you in Greek myths and legends along the **Peloponnese's** coast, featuring sea excursions on private boats to observe underwater treasures. From **Pylos**, immortalized by Homer as a Trojan War battleground, and the rugged **Mani Peninsula** to the ancient splendor of **Nafplion**, we'll trace the evolution of Greek civilization—from its Neolithic roots and Mycenaean statehood to the cultural achievements of Classical **Athens**, our final destination.

On the Mani Peninsula, we'll descend into the Neolithic **Caves of Diros**, where my team's excavations revealed rituals and daily life in prehistoric Mediterranean communities. At **Cape Tainaron**, mainland Greece's southernmost point, we'll explore the sanctuary of Poseidon and the legendary gateway to Hades—sites central to Dr. Gardner's research into the intersections of myth, geography, and ancient religion.

In Athens, we'll ascend the **Acropolis** for an in-depth, expert-led tour of its iconic monuments and state-of-the-art museum. At the National Archaeological Museum, a curator will guide us through some of the world's greatest displays of antiquities, such as the gold mask attributed to Agamemnon.

Between these extraordinary experiences, we'll sample local wines from ancient vineyards and other culinary delights. **To join this archaeological adventure**, please contact our tour operator, Arrangements Abroad, at 800-221-1944 or email trips@arrangementsabroad.com. Dr. Gardner and I look forward to sharing the discoveries that have shaped our careers, the stories these sites tell, and the mysteries waiting to be solved.

With anticipation,
William Parkinson, Ph.D.
Curator & Associate Director
of Anthropological Research, Field Museum



Activity Level:



Pace Level:



Visit Arrangements Abroad's website for more information about Activity and Pace Levels at www.arrangementsabroad.com/faqs.

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Palace of Nestor, Pylos

TUESDAY, APRIL 28: COSTA NAVARINO / PYLOS

Cruise across **Navarino Bay** this morning, following the routes of Bronze Age traders and 19th-century warships that shaped Greek maritime history. Peer through the bay's clear depths at historic shipwrecks dating from as far back as 425 B.C. and as recent as the late 20th century. Enjoy an optional snorkel to view a shipwreck up close.

After lunch at leisure, attend a **lecture on the history of Costa Navarino**, a modern-day resort paradise with millennia-old roots. Learn about how this seaside town has shaped naval strategy since ancient times while producing some of the world's finest olive oil.

Then visit one of the Mediterranean's largest fortresses, **Methoni Castle**, built by the Venetians in the early 13th century on a rocky promontory. Inside this medieval stronghold, see centuries of Peloponnese history up close through the castle's relics. Highlights include two Ottoman bathhouses and the Bourtzi, a prison and place of executions during the Turkish Occupation. Gather for dinner this evening. B,D

SATURDAY, APRIL 25: DEPARTURE

Depart on an international flight bound for Kalamata, Greece.

SUNDAY, APRIL 26: KALAMATA, GREECE / COSTA NAVARINO

Arrive at Kalamata International Airport and transfer to the **Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Costa Navarino**, situated on the Messinian coast overlooking Navarino Bay. Enjoy a welcome reception at the hotel. R

MONDAY, APRIL 27: COSTA NAVARINO / PYLOS

This morning, go behind the scenes at the **Iklaina Archaeological Project Site** (*pending confirmation*), the Bronze Age excavation site where archaeologists unearthed the earliest known Greek writing on the mainland—discoveries that reshaped our understanding of Mycenaean civilization.

Against the backdrop of the Ionian Sea, enjoy a picnic lunch at **Voudokilia Beach**, an Omega-shaped cove referenced as "Voufrada" in Homer's *Odyssey*. Then join your expert guide inside the ancient **Palace of Nestor**, Greece's most intact Mycenaean palace, where rulers from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* once held court.

This evening, dine at leisure in Pylos, choosing from harborside cafés serving classic Greek dishes. Wander over to **Three Admirals' Square** with its monument to those leaders who took part in the 1827 Battle of Navarino that helped lead to Greek independence. B,L



Methoni Castle, Costa Navarino



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29: COSTA NAVARINO / PYLOS / MESSINI / KALAMATA / GEROLIMENAS

Depart Pylos for the ancient city of **Messini**, founded in 371 B.C. after Theban general Epaminondas defeated Sparta at the Battle of Leuctra. Walk among remarkably preserved ruins that reveal its grandeur, including a vast stadium, the grand Sanctuary of Asclepius, the tiered Fountain of Arsinoe, and the formidable Arcadian Gate.

Depart from **Kalamata** by boat, cruising along the western Mani coast. Enjoy lunch on board and optional stops for swimming along the way. Arrive in **Gerolimenas** for free time and dinner at leisure. Check into the **Kyrimai Hotel**, housed in a fully restored 19th-century complex near the southernmost tip of the Mani Peninsula.

B,L

THURSDAY, APRIL 30: GEROLIMENAS / SOUNION / VATHIA / PYRGOS DIROU

Join **Dr. Chelsea Gardner** at the **Tainaro Archaeological Site**, where she will share behind-the-scenes insights into her research here. Learn how myth, geography, and ancient religion intersect at this ancient settlement, viewing typical Hellenistic architectural styles.

While here, explore the ruins of the **Temple of Poseidon**, the god of the sea. See the legendary gateway to Hades tied to the myth of Hercules's Twelfth Labor. See firsthand where he descended into the underworld to capture the multi-headed Cerberus, guardian of these caves.

After lunch, explore **Vathia**, an ancient village where stone-built homes rise from the hills, remnants of centuries-old clan rivalries set among olive groves. See the imposing towers constructed to protect villagers from attacks by the Ottomans and pirates.

In Pyrgos Dirou, descend into the **Caves of Diros**, where shimmering stalactites, underground waterfalls, and crystalline formations create an otherworldly landscape stretching over eight miles. See how Dr. Parkinson's excavations here revealed rituals and daily life in prehistoric Mediterranean communities. Dinner is at leisure this evening.

B,L

FRIDAY, MAY 1: GEROLIMENAS / NAFPLION / KRANIDI

Depart Mani and drive to **Nafplion**, then sail along the **Argolic Gulf**, a vital commercial and military passage for over two millennia, lined with secluded beaches and sheer cliffs. Fortifications built by ancient Greeks, Byzantines, Venetians, and Ottomans reflect the Gulf's long history of military defense. Enjoy a barbecue lunch on deck.

Journey back to the Paleolithic Era inside **Franchthi Cave**, which overlooks Kiladha Bay in Kranidi. Here, artifacts dating back to at least 38,000 B.C. reveal one of Europe's longest records of continuous human habitation. Ancient stone tools, pottery, and evidence of early agricultural practices have all been uncovered in the cave.

Return to Nafplion to check into the **Liberty Hotel of Nafplio** (*our similar*) and gather for dinner this evening.

B,L,D

SATURDAY, MAY 2: NAFPLION / MYKINES / NEMEA / ATHENS

Stroll through **Nafplion's** cobbled lanes, where bougainvillea spills over whitewashed buildings, and Venetian, Neoclassical, and Ottoman influences shape the city's distinctive character. Ancient ruins and medieval castles dot one of Greece's most romantic cities, regarded by Venetians as the "Naples of the East."

Near the village of **Mykines**, stand in awe of a lost city that defined a civilization. Explore the **Mycenae Archaeological Site** on a behind-the-scenes tour of its UNESCO-listed ruins, including the Citadel, Lion Gate, and Palace. Learn how Mycenaean rulers shaped the Bronze Age Mediterranean from this strategic stronghold and uncover the mysteries of the city's so-called **Tomb of Agamemnon**.

En route to Athens, visit a renowned winery in **Nemea**, a region famed for its deep red Agiorgitiko wines, and enjoy a tasting paired with lunch. Arrive in **Athens** and check into the **AthensWas Hotel** (*or similar*). The evening is yours to explore the city's tavernas and cafés at your own pace.

B,L

Tomb of Agamemnon, Mykines





Zappeion Hall, Athens



Mask of Agamemnon, National Archaeological Museum, Athens

SUNDAY, MAY 3: **ATHENS**

Stand before the **Temple of Olympian Zeus**, the largest ancient temple on the Greek mainland and a striking example of Corinthian architecture. Walk among the ruins of this once-mighty temple, which, at its peak, surpassed even the Parthenon in scale.

Discover the origins of the Olympic Games at **Panathenaic Stadium**, constructed in the fourth century B.C. near the Ilisos River. Learn how its ancient competitions gave rise to the first modern event held here in 1896 and walk the stadium's white marble track, shaped like a classic hairpin.

Wander the **Zappeion Gardens**, landscaped in the early 19th century to bring a touch of classical beauty to modern Athens. Designed in the neoclassical tradition, the gardens feature shaded paths, sculpted fountains, and Zappeion Hall, which features grand colonnades and stately interiors.

After a lunch of regional Greek dishes, visit the **National Archaeological Museum**, home to one of the world's finest collections of ancient sculptures and frescoes. View such treasures as the gold *Mask of Agamemnon*, often called "the *Mona Lisa* of prehistory," and marvel at the Antikythera mechanism, an ancient analog computer. Dinner this evening is at leisure. B,L

MONDAY, MAY 4: **ATHENS**

Take a privately guided tour of the **Acropolis**, the heart of ancient Athens, where the Parthenon evokes the city's Golden Age. See the Temple of Athena Nike, honoring the goddess of victory, and the Erechtheion, an Ionic temple where Caryatids grace the southern porch.

On a guided tour of the acclaimed **Acropolis Museum**, behold artifacts excavated from the Acropolis, including sculptures, friezes, and everyday objects, a glimpse into classical Athenian life. Beneath the museum complex, walk through an excavated Athenian neighborhood of well-preserved houses and workshops.

Then join an expert-led tour of the **Agora** (market), the city's ancient social, political, and commercial hub. Visit the **Temple of Hephaestus**, one of Greece's best-preserved ancient temples, and the **Stoa of Attalos**, a colonnaded marketplace. This evening, gather for a festive farewell dinner. B,D

TUESDAY, MAY 5: **ATHENS / RETURN**

Depart the hotel early this morning and transfer to the airport for the flight home. B

PROGRAM RATE

\$13,999 per person, double rate

\$17,999 single rate

RATE INCLUDES

- Nine nights hotel accommodations as per itinerary
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, R=Reception, D=Dinner). Bottled water, soft drinks, juices, and coffee/tea with all meals; house wine and beer at all included lunches and dinners
- Enrichment program of lectures and talks
- Escorted sightseeing, transportation, and entrance fees for all included visits
- Airport/hotel/airport transfers for participants on arrival and departure days
- Taxes, service, and portage charges; gratuities to local guides and drivers

NOT INCLUDED IN RATE International airfare; passport/visa fees; meals not specified; alcoholic beverages other than what is noted in inclusions; personal items and expenses; airport transfers; excess baggage; trip insurance; any other items not specifically mentioned as included.



Kyrimai Hotel, Gerolimenas



Mandarin Oriental, Costa Navarino

ACCOMMODATIONS

MANDARIN ORIENTAL, COSTA NAVARINO

Along the Ionian Sea in the Peloponnese, enjoy refined accommodations in a tranquil seaside setting. This five-star resort features contemporary Mediterranean interiors infused with elements of the region's architectural heritage.

KYRIMAI HOTEL, GEROLIMENAS

Escape to this meticulously restored 19th-century mansion set in a picturesque coastal village on the Mani Peninsula. Blending historic charm with contemporary comforts, the hotel features sea-view rooms, a restaurant showcasing regional cuisine, and a quiet waterfront setting.

LIBERTY HOTEL OF NAFPLIO, NAFPLION (OR SIMILAR)

Enjoy this hotel's contemporary design and views of Nafplion's rooftops and the Argolic Gulf. Steps from Nafplion's historic sites and waterfront promenade, the hotel is well-situated for exploring the town's Venetian and Ottoman monuments.

ATHENSWAS HOTEL, ATHENS (OR SIMILAR)

In the heart of Athens, this luxury hotel combines boutique elegance with proximity to the Acropolis and Plaka's lively streets. Admire accents of Greek marble and warm wood tones in its rooms and suites.

DISCLAIMER: This itinerary is subject to change at the discretion of The Field Museum and Arrangements Abroad. For complete details please carefully read the terms and conditions at www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms.

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THE FIELD MUSEUM SOUTHERN GREECE APRIL 25 – MAY 5, 2026 RESERVATION FORM

To reserve a place, please call Arrangements Abroad at 212-514-8921 or 800-221-1944; email: trips@arrangementsabroad.com; fax: 212-344-7493; or complete and return this form with your deposit of \$2,000 per person (of which \$1,000 is non-refundable for administrative fees) payable to Arrangements Abroad. Mail to: Arrangements Abroad, 260 West 39th Street, 17th Floor, New York, NY 10018-4424.

Name(s) in full as on passport(s). Please print.

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ACCOMMODATIONS

Hotel Room Preference ☐ One bed ☐ Two beds ☐ Single

I wish to share a room with

FORM OF PAYMENT

☐ Enclosed is my check (payable to Arrangements Abroad)

☐ Debit card ☐ Credit card

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Debit/credit card number

3- or 4-digit security code

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Signature (required)

Date

Signature (required)

Date

Front cover: Old Town of Nafplion. Highlights page: Temple of Poseidon, Athens.
Traveling With You Page: Navarino Bay B_260425LNDKXLX_FMN CST 2059789-40