

## Athens Monuments and the Acropolis

**Access to locations:** easy to medium

You will need a hat, sunglasses, sunscreen and sensible shoes (no flip flops, please)

**Approximate Duration:** 3.5 hours

- Acropolis + Parthenon
- Propylaea
- Athens Niki Temple
- Erechtheion Panathenian Stadium
- National Library
- Athens Academy
- Omonoia Square
- Syntagma Square

**This Athens Acropolis excursion takes you deep into the history of Western Civilization and its magnificent monuments.** Athens Monuments and the Acropolis is like a tour of Athens during its “Golden Age” of arts, democracy, discourse, reason and science. **We’ll show you Athens as it was in the 5th Century BC, when it was the cultural and artistic capital of the ancient world, and the Athens of today, a vibrant, cosmopolitan, bustling 21st century European capital.** It’s a treasure trove for sightseers, with rewards at every turn.

Our first stop, after arriving by air conditioned coach in the center of Athens, is the Acropolis. This historic hill, which carries the Parthenon atop its broad shoulders, is dedicated to the goddess Athena, the city’s protector. **The Parthenon was inaugurated in 438 BC. It is one of the only Doric order temples built entirely of marble, and the only one with relief decoration on all of its decorative marble panels (metopes).** Your tour guide will discuss the colorful history of the Acropolis with you and your fellow passengers, and will explain to you the architectural significance of the Parthenon and of the famed entrance to the hill, the Propylaea. Beside the Propylaea stands the temple of Athena Nike (“Wingless Nike”), which housed the wooden statue (xoanon) of wingless Athena, which signified she would never leave Athens. Alongside the Parthenon you’ll find the Erechtheion, a marble edifice of the Ionic order: the eastern section of the temple was dedicated to Athena Polias, the western section to Poseidon-Erechtheus. **From the Acropolis you can look down toward the glorious Odeon of Herodes Atticus, an ancient theater with exceptional acoustics that is still in use, particularly during**

**the long Attic summer. This is one of the many places where ancient Athens and the 21st century city intersect.**

We leave the Acropolis to visit the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, in front of the Greek Parliament Building, followed by a stop at **Panathenian Stadium, where the first modern Olympic Games were held in 1896.** After the stadium we tour the stylish “Trilogy of Athens,” three beautiful 19th century buildings: the “old building” of the University of Athens, the National Library and the Academy of Athens. Our excursion concludes with visits to Omonoia Square and Syntagma Square, the busy heart of modern Athens.

- 
- 
- 

Adult Price € 63,00

Child price only € 40,00

City Tour

### **Athens tour and the New Acropolis Museum**

Access to locations: easy to medium

You will need a hat, sunglasses, sunscreen and sensible shoes (no flip flops, please)

Approximate Duration: 3.5 hours

- Olympieion
- Parliament
- Panathenian Stadium (Kallimarmaro)
- Omonoia Square
- Syntagma Square
- Plaka
- New Acropolis Museum

Leaving Piraeus behind us, we travel by coach along the sea road toward the center of Athens for this outstanding Athens tour. We stop At the Temple of Olympian Zeus, southeast of the Acropolis. The Temple was built with Pentelic marble and dedicated to Zeus, the father of the

gods. We then stop at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, in front of Parliament, which is guarded by silent “evzones” (historical elite light infantry and mountain units of the Greek Army), Presidential Guards who still wear their traditional uniforms, the colorful fustanellas. The guard changes every hour – this is a fantastic photo and video opportunity. We leave Syntagma for the Panathenian Stadium (“the Kallimarmaro”), one of the world’s best-preserved ancient stadiums and one of the few constructed entirely of white marble. It was built in 329 BC by Lycurgus and was used for the celebration of the Panathenaea; after its refurbishment, in the late 19th century, it hosted the first modern Olympic Games in 1896.

After the stadium we tour the stylish “Trilogy of Athens,” three beautiful 19th century buildings influenced by classical architecture: the “old building” of the University of Athens, the National Library and the Academy of Athens. We then stroll through Omonoia Square and busy Syntagma Square, the heart of Athens. Completed in 1842, Syntagma begins just below the Greek Parliament building, which was once the Bavarian-style Royal Palace and where King Otto, from his balcony, proclaimed the First Constitution of Greece. We leave Syntagma for the picturesque Plaka neighborhood, beneath the Acropolis, and our final destination, the New Acropolis Museum, a bright, modern archeological museum across from the Parthenon. The Museum, a landmark for lovers of both ancient art and modern architecture, was founded in 2009 and houses some of the most legendary works of classical antiquity. Designed by architect Bernard Tschumi and his Greek collaborator, Michael Photiadis, the New Acropolis Museum occupies 25,000 square feet and makes use of the incredible Attic sunlight to display its staggering collection of art and artifacts on three floors. A stroll through this picturesque neighborhood below the Acropolis is a visit to Athens as it was over a hundred years ago. Dense with beautifully restored heritage buildings, Plaka is perfect for your urban ramble. Visit the quarter’s museums and its wonderful shops, then sit down in the golden Athenian sun for a cup of delicious Greek coffee and some people watching, the perfect conclusion to the perfect Athens tour.

- 
- 
- 

Adult Price € 63,00

Child price only € 40,00