

Thessaloniki Highlights

Access to locations: easy to medium (not wheelchair accessible)

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

Approximate Duration: 4 hours

- White Tower
- Byzantine Museum
- Citadel
- Basilica of St. Demetrius and Crypt

Join us for a **fantastic half-day excursion to Thessaloniki's most popular landmarks!** We'll travel by air conditioned coach from the pier to the city, where **we'll stop for photos at the White Tower.** The city's most famous monument, the White Tower, along the paralia (seafront promenade), was **built in 1430** and today houses Byzantine icons and historical displays on its several floors. An excellent example of post-Byzantine architecture, it has become a majestic symbol of Thessaloniki. Our next stop is **the Byzantine Museum, where we'll have an hour to wander through an incredible collection of artifacts from the early Christian period through the Byzantine era, including sculpture, mosaics, painted tombs, embroidered fabrics and religious icons.**

We board the bus to drive past the International Trade Fair grounds and the Aristotelion University toward **the Citadel, where you'll enjoy a superb panoramic view of the city and Mt. Olympus and Thermaic Gulf beyond.** From here we drive to **the 5th century Basilica of St. Demetrius, the largest church in Greece, which houses an impressive display of mosaics and the crypt where Demetrius was confined.** On our return to the ship we drive past the Arch of Galerius and St. George's Rotonda. The Arch was built in 303 to commemorate the victory of Galerius over the Persians in 297 A.C., and it's chiseled with scenes of the battle. Just north of the arch stands the massive Rotonda, which historians believe was constructed as a mausoleum for Galerius. Now closed, it has been used as a mosque and was for a time the Church of Agios Georgios.

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Adult Price € 47,00

Child price only € 29,00

City Tour

Veroia

Access to locations: easy to medium

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

Approximate Duration: 4 hours

- Vlatadon Monastery
- Veria
- St. Paul's Tribune
- Church of Christ

Join us for a visit to a biblical city! We travel by air conditioned coach from the port of Thessaloniki to the Citadel and **Vlatadon Monastery, where St. Paul reached during his Second Missionary Journey.** We then leave Thessaloniki for a one-hour drive through the countryside to reach the city of **Veria (called "Berroia" in the Bible)**, St. Paul's next stop after Vlatadon – **it was here that he preached to the city's "noble Jews"** – we pay a visit to the traditional Tribune, where three in situ steps coexist with a recently finished mosaic of the Saint that commemorates this sermon. Today Veria is the capital of the regional unit of Imathia and the largest exporter of agricultural products in the region. **It may have been inhabited as early as 1000 BC.**

Paul is the patron saint of Veria, which was named for one of the daughters of the mythological King Veris. Established in the foothills of Mt. Vermion, **fortified Veria flourished behind its massive walls. One of the first cities to surrender to the Romans, in 168 BC, it became the area's second most important city after Thessaloniki. During the Byzantine era many small, delicate, frescoed churches were built in the city, which came to be known as "Small Jerusalem."** We will visit one of these immaculate churches, the Church of Christ, which was built in the early 14th century and is home to masterworks by the most famous painter of the era, Kalliergis. **Under the Ottomans, Veria was an important commercial and cultural center – it was during this period that many mosques, mansions and the old market were built.**

There will be time to wander and explore and shop in this marvelous ancient city before we return to the harbor at Thessaloniki.

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