



PANHELLAS S.A.
International Travel & Tourism



Welcome to Mystras & Sparta (One day)

Activity information

- ⇒ Leave by the coastal road along the Saronic Gulf to the Corinth Canal -short stop
- ⇒ Continue driving at the Mystra. Visit the late Byzantine castle - city.
- ⇒ Lunch at the modern village Mystra
- ⇒ Also visit Sparta
- ⇒ Afternoon departure for Athens.

A window onto centuries of Greek history

“The late Byzantine city of **Mystra**, the modern city of Sparta and echoes of the ancient city-state – all in the foothills of mighty Mt **Taygetos**. Fought over for centuries by **Franks, Venetians, Byzantines** and **Ottomans**. Capital of the Despotate of the Morea, in the heart of the **Peloponnese** – a final outpost of the defeated **Byzantine** emperors. A bridge from antiquity to the Renaissance. Triumphant victories and humiliating defeats, but also the wisdom of philosophers and artists of **Ancient Greece**. The restored buildings within the castle of **Mystra** invite you to relive their history. Nearby, modern **Sparta** links yesterday with today. The ruins of the militarist state that gave birth to so many legends of fearless courage, laconic speech and true grit are just a stone’s throw away. Live history!

What to do in Mystra

Mystra: journey to Byzantium

The road twists and turns. As you travel to the **Peloponnese**, you can see the remains of the **Byzantine castle**-state from afar, clustered on the steep hillside. Stout walls, church domes, houses, monasteries, palaces stand out in relief against the sloping earth. Once you walk up the cobbled paths, enter the churches and admire their frescoes – you'll succumb to the charm of this abandoned city. It represents the apex of 14th-15th century Byzantine architecture. In 1989, Unesco added **Mystra** to its World Cultural Heritage catalogue.

In the Palace of the last **Byzantine** emperors

By the end of your visit, you'll be familiar with a great chunk of Greek involving the Cantacuzenos and Palaiologos families, who ruled over the Peloponnese from 1349 to 1460. Their palace lies on the only flat expanse near the top of the hill and is a rare example of civic Byzantine architecture, with additions from different periods. You can distinguish the two wings erected by the Cantacuzenos and Palaiologos despots. Their kingdom was called the Despotate of the Morea. Civilisation flowered here and when the Ottomans conquered it, its luminaries and artists fled to Italy and contributed to the rebirth of ancient Greek culture.

Saint Sophia, the palace chapel

Agia Sophia, in the Upper Town of **Mystra**, seems to have been the church of the monastery of Zoodotos Christos, which was founded by the first Despot, Manuel Cantacuzenos, in the mid-14th century. Step inside this church and the others on the hillside and look at the frescoes. The Pantanassa, considered the most beautiful, still functions as a nunnery.

Today's **Sparta** grew up south of the center of **Ancient Greece**. It was laid out from the start by Bavarian architects according to the model of neoclassical town planning that prevailed in mid-19th century Europe. This gives it a pleasant, spacious feeling. As you walk around, note the neoclassical Town Hall of 1907 and the old Palace of Justice in the main square, and the Leonidion monument on Agidos street. Many believe that the bones of the kings of Sparta and the heroes of Thermopylae still lie buried here. A bust of **Leonidas** stands at the entrance to the National Stadium, while behind it you'll visit the park that contains the ancient acropolis and the Roman theatre. Climb up to the acropolis and you'll see the modern city spread out below you like a chessboard."

Daily service:

Price (including lunch) is **115 euro per person**

Dep.:**08:00** – Ret.:**19:00**

Every Monday,Wednesday and Friday

Including

- Entrance fees
- Transport by luxury A/C bus
- Hotel Pick up and drop off service
- Services of a Professional – licensed guide
- Free wi-fi on coaches
- All taxes
- lunch

Not including

- Gratuities (optional)

√ Advice: Comfortable walking shoes, sunglasses, hat and loose fitted clothing, sun cream are strongly recommended



