



SHORE EXCURSIONS

8
nights

STAR FLYER
Sicily & Greece



Sat	Piraeus (Port of Athens), Greece
Sun	Nafplio, Greece
Mon	Monemvasia, Greece
Tue	Pilos, Greece
Wed	At sea
Thu	Taormina, Sicily
Fri	Syracuse, Sicily
Sat	Gozo, Malta
Sun	Valletta, Malta

What you need to know before booking your shore excursion:

- All our tours are offered with English speaking guides.
- The length of the tours and time spent on the sites is given as an indication as it may vary depending on weather, sea and traffic conditions and on the group's pace.
- The level of physical fitness required for our activities is given as a very general indication. Passengers should be fit and active to join tours which include hiking, biking, snorkelling, boating, or similar activities.

How you can book your shore excursions:

- You can book shore excursions onboard, using our "sign-up lists" available at the library.
- In order to provide the best service and to avoid disappointments, please book your shore excursions as early as possible: places are limited and there is a booking deadline for each port.
- A minimum number of participants is required for tours; if the required number is not attained, the tour may be cancelled.

Important notes:

- Departure times of the tour are mentioned on the daily program of each port.
- The Captain reserves the right to alter the itinerary in order to suit wind, weather and local conditions.
- Cancellation and changes are possible until the booking deadline. After the booking deadline, 100 % cancellation fees will be charged.
- All information concerning excursions is correct at the time of printing. However, Star Clippers reserves the right to make changes, which will be relayed to passengers during the Cruise Director's onboard information sessions. Last updated tour descriptions are available in a file at the library.

Date of last update: 15th of February 2023

NAFPLIO, GREECE

Nafplio is an enchantingly pretty coastal town which has often been called the most romantic destination in Greece, or the Greek Venice. It is the perfect place for strolling around, taking in the sights and generally soaking up the atmosphere. You will see stunning Venetian architecture, neo-classical mansions, a maze of little streets festooned with Bougainvillea, hidden squares and picturesque cafés, perfect for relaxing and watching the world go by.

This one-time Capital of Greece (between 1833 and 1834) has been a major port since the bronze age and its strategic position is highlighted by the fact that it is protected by no less than three fortresses. Palamidi and Bourti built by the Venetians and Akroafplia behind the old town.

Mycenae

Duration: 03:30

Price: 69 €

Min 18 / Max 70 participants

Transportation: air-conditioned motorcoach

Activity level: moderate

Enjoy a short scenic drive from Nafplio harbor to Mycenae through the beautiful orange and lemon groves of Argolis.

The first stop will be the breathtaking Beehive Tomb situated on Panagitsa hill at Mycenae. Schliemann, the famous amateur archaeologist who discovered both Troy and Mycenae, named the place the Tomb of Agamemnon or Treasury of Atreus because he thought it must have been the final resting place of Agamemnon, leader of the Greeks during the Trojan war. The tomb was constructed during the Bronze Age around 1250 BC, and it is the most impressive of the Mycenaean tholos tombs left standing.

The tour continues to the citadel of Ancient Mycenae on the spur of Mount Zara.

Follow the guide up the ramp of Ancient Mycenae, under the Lion's Gate and enter Mycenae's magic castle! Everything here recalls Homer's Iliad: the Grave Circle, where Schliemann discovered the famous golden mask of Agamemnon, the Cyclopean Walls, the foundations of the Palace, where once Agamemnon lived, the Postern Gate and the entrance to the Underground Cistern. After the visit you will drive back to picturesque Nafplio harbor.

Please note: This tour is not recommended to guests with limited mobility since it involves extensive walking / standing over cobblestone, uneven surfaces, inclines, steps, with lot of uphill walking.

Guests are advised to wear weather-appropriate clothes and comfortable walking shoes and to bring a hat and a bottle of water. Non-professional cameras and video-cameras can be used free of charge, while flash is forbidden in the museum.

Epidaurus Theater & Museum

Duration: 03:00

Price: 69 €

Min 18 / Max 70 participants

Transportation: air-conditioned motorcoach

Activity level: moderate

Epidaurus was the site of a shrine devoted to Aesculapius, the Greek God of Medicine. Patients would flock to the sanctuary seeking a cure for their ailments and Aesculapius would either effect a cure during their sleep or appear in a dream to the priests who would then treat the patient according to his instructions.

Apart from praying to be restored to health, Patients could indulge in thermal baths and hydrotherapy as well as "taking in a show"! Indeed, as soon as you arrive at the site you will walk through a beautiful grove to discover the famous theatre, one of the best-preserved monuments of the ancient world. The theatre can seat 14.000 spectators and is famous for its acoustics. It is still in use today and modern visitors enjoy musical productions and performances of Greek drama there. You will have some time to wander around, so you can test the wonderful acoustics for yourself.

The nearby museum houses fragments from the Asklepion sanctuary. Return to Nafplio port.

Please note: This involves extensive walking / standing (approx. 1.5 hours) over uneven surfaces. There is no uphill walking involved in this tour. Guests are advised to wear weather-appropriate clothes and comfortable walking shoes and to bring a hat and a bottle of water. The drive to Epidaurus takes approx. 30 minutes each way.



MONEMVASIA, GREECE

The island of Monemvasia was separated from the mainland by an earthquake in 375 AD and is sometimes called “the Gibraltar of the East”. The city was fortified during the 13th century under Byzantine rule and was established as a successful trading port. The Pope ruled the city for a brief period from 1460-1464 before the Venetians took over, building a 535 ft long fortified bridge to protect them from their enemies. During Venetian rule the city flourished, the population reached 30.000 and many houses and churches were built. Later the city fell to the Turks who ruled for nearly 300 years from the mid sixteenth to the early nineteenth centuries, with the exception of a short-lived takeover by the Venetians.

The Walled lower town extends along the slopes of a 985ft crag that projects into the sea on the east side of the Peloponnese. The population of this impressive stronghold was gradually depleted as more and more of the inhabitants moved to the mainland. However, a restoration program aimed at preserving Monemvasia’s heritage has given the Lower Town a new lease of life, and people from the mainland have started to return to this attractive tourist center.

The Upper Town is located on top of the Rock of Monemvasia. It is reached via a zigzagging path. Once an impregnable bastion, it is now completely uninhabited. Visitors can explore the remains of the ancient citadel-castle and have a look inside the church of Hagia Sofia. There are also fantastic views to be had of the surrounding area.

Time at leisure (no tours in program)**PILOS, GREECE****Nestor’s Palace and Methoni Fortress**

Duration: 04:00 approx.

Price: 72 €

Min 18 / Max 70 participants

Transportation: air-conditioned motorcoach

Activity level: moderate

A coach will be waiting at the Port of Pylos to take you on the 30-minute drive to Nestor’s palace, which was built in the 13th century BC. King Nestor is mentioned in Homeric epics as a wise old ruler who participated in the Trojan wars.

The palace is strategically located on top of Ano Eglianos Hill, giving a clear view of the coastline, and is surrounded by a fortified wall. It is the central building of a Middle Helladic era settlement. Excavations have revealed some early remains dating from before 1300 B.C., an Old Palace (1280 B.C.) and a New Palace (1250 B.C.).

Nestor’s Palace is considered to be the most well-preserved Mycenaean palace in Greece. It was originally a two-storey building, ornamented with frescoes, including amenities such as storerooms, workshops, baths, light wells, reception rooms and a sewage system. The buildings were almost completely destroyed by fire in the 12th century BC, however hundreds of clay tablets bearing inscriptions remained intact and were unearthed during the excavations. The tablets were written in a text known as Linear B, and this important discovery enabled Michael Ventris to decipher the script used by the Mycenaean’s and prove that it was in fact an archaic form of Greek.

The tour continues with a visit to the fortress of Methone situated at the southernmost tip of the west Peloponnesian coast, 11 km away from Pylos.

The site has had a tumultuous past, changing hands many times in the course of its history. It was fortified as early as the 7th century B.C., and in the period between 395 A.D. and 1204 A.D. was used as a Byzantine fortress. The area was briefly under Frankish rule before being captured in 1206 by the Venetians who strengthened the fortifications. In 1500 Methoni was captured by the Turk Bayazit Pasha, before being recaptured by the Venetians from 1685 until 1715, when it was once again captured by the Turks who held the fortress until 1829 when it was liberated by the French General Nicolas Maison, along with other towns in the Peloponnese, during the struggle for Greek independence.

Please note: This tour is not recommended to guests with limited mobility since it involves extensive walking / standing over cobblestone and uneven surfaces. Guests are advised to wear weather-appropriate clothes and comfortable walking shoes and to bring a hat and a bottle of water.



GIARDINI NAXOS – TAORMINA (SICILY), ITALY

Giardini Naxos is Taormina's small port. Taormina is the most important resort in Sicily and Southern Italy. It is located on Mount Tauro, between the jagged mountains and the calm Ionian Sea. The town's origins date back to 398 AD.

The Romans considered Taormina an ally, but as the city sided with Pompeus against Octavianus, it was reduced to the rank of mere colony. Thanks to its strategic position, it remained important to the various powers that held sway over the island. In 902, after a long siege, it fell to the Muslims. They destroyed it, but the caliph Al Muezz later rebuilt Taormina on a grander and much more beautiful scale. In 1079 it was conquered by the Normans and was chosen as the seat of the Sicilian Parliament for the King's election in 1410.

Taormina's most important monument is the theater, built in the 3rd century BCE by the Greeks and restructured by the Romans. The site is spectacular. The theater is situated between looming Mount Etna and the sparkling blue sea. It is one of the most beautiful landscapes in the world, a beautiful jewel set among the blue sky, aquamarine sea, green valley, and white snow-capped peaks of Mount Etna.

Taormina and wine tasting and Sicilian lunch on the slopes of the Etna

Duration: 07:00 approx.

Transportation: air-conditioned motorcoach

Price: 129 €

Activity level: moderate

Min 15 / Max 35 participants

This picturesque town, perched on a natural terrace 200m above sea level, has many delightful medieval features, as well as a host of interesting shops.

You will leave the coach at the parking lot and continue on foot. This guided walking tour showcases many of the town's highlights including the Greek Theater (inside visit), the Cathedral, Palazzo Covaia and the Odeon (all these last three sites are exterior views). You will also get to stroll down Corso Umberto, the main shopping area in Taormina.

After the guided tour you will have some free time on your own to taste some local pastries, sit in a café and people watch, browse the shops, or just walk around admiring the palaces, squares, staircases, and narrow streets which lend such charm to this delightful medieval town.

You will then return to the parking lot and board the coach for a drive heading south, leaving the freeway in Giarre and on to Mount Etna. This scenic route around the mountain takes you past the town of Giarre and the village of Santa Venerina and crosses orchards, vineyards, and forest.

Your next destination is the Gambino Estate, where you will take a tour of the cellar and the winery and will learn about the characteristics of Mount Etna wine, shaped by unique geological and climatic conditions. You will also enjoy fantastic views over the fertile valley and vine covered fields which produce certified Etna wine.

After the visit you will be treated to a Sicilian brunch of local specialities and get to taste four different wines produced on the estate. Before driving back to the pier, you will have the chance to buy some wine at the estate shop.

Our destination is the Estate Gambino. Here you will be welcomed by a member of the staff who will take you on a tour of the cellar and the winery and talk about the characteristics of Mount Etna wine, shaped by unique geological and climatic conditions. You will also enjoy fantastic views over the fertile valley and vine covered fields which produce certified Etna wine.

After the visit you will be treated to a Sicilian brunch of local specialities and get to taste four different wines produced on the estate. Before driving back to the pier, you will have the chance to buy some wine at the estate shop.

Please note: the order of the visits may vary. This tour is not recommended to guests with limited mobility since it involves considerable amount of walking over cobblestone, uneven surfaces and inclines.

We advise guests to wear weather-appropriate clothes and comfortable walking shoes and to bring a hat and a bottle of water.



Discovery hike on the north side of Mount Etna

Duration: 04:30 approx.

Transportation: air-conditioned motorcoach

Price: 69 €

Activity level: strenuous

Min 15 / Max 30 participants

Departure from Giardini Naxos with guide by bus. after about 1h 15m arrival Piano Provenzana 1900 meters ASL – meet with volcanologists – short time for toilets – and departure for the trekking - you shall start your trekking to the west towards the area of the eruptions of 2002 in the direction of Monte Nero. The way is quite strenuous and unwinds partially on offroad trail and partially on the fields of the past eruptions. After about 1h you will reach about 2100 meters asl where you will be able to see the so called “Bottoniera” a sequence of craters located in the area of the lava flows. You will stop to admire the fracture of the earth caused by the eruption and the breathtaking view (weather permitting). Then start tour return journey. Return to Piano Provenzana, reboard your vehicle and return to pier.

Please note: You will reach an altitude of approximately 2100m above sea level – if you suffer from high blood pressure or heart disease, please check with your doctor about the advisability of going on this excursion.

This is a very active tour and is recommended only to guests in excellent physical conditions.

This tour includes a considerable amount of hike (approx. 3 km) over rocky, uneven surfaces and inclines.

We advise guests to wear weather-appropriate clothes, comfortable walking shoes and to bring a hat and a bottle of water and a jacket or sweater (it can be cold and windy on Mount Etna, even in summertime).

The drive to Mount Etna lasts approximately 1:15 each way.

SYRACUSE (SICILY), ITALY**Classical Syracuse and Ortygia**

Duration: 04:15 approx.

Transportation: air-conditioned motorcoach

Price: 59 €

Activity level: moderate

Min 15 / Max 35 participants

Your air-conditioned motor coach will be waiting at the port to take you on a 15-minute drive to the Archaeological Park of Neapolis.

During a guided walking tour lasting 1.5 hrs, you will visit the sites’ major highlights including Paradise Quarry and the “Ear of Dionysius”.

The stone quarries of Syracuse were excavated using slave labor and afterwards they were used as prisons, as was the case with Paradise Quarry. “The ear of Dionysius” refers to an ear-shaped cavern with unusual acoustics. Legend has it that Dionysius, the Greek tyrant who ruled Syracuse, used to listen in on prisoners’ conversations to find out if they were plotting against him. You will also see the Greek Theatre and the Roman Amphitheatre.

The amphitheater is one of the largest and most complete theatres bequeathed to us by Antiquity. The ruins give an idea of the enormous arena.

After the visit you will drive back to the old town of Ortygia. Buses are not allowed inside the historical old city so you will leave the coach in the car park and continue on foot for a guided tour of the old town center.

Starting with the Arethusa Fountain, you will proceed with a brief visit to the cathedral, and view other attractions such as the ruins of Temple of Apollon, Archimedes' Square with the Fountain of Diana, and Corso Matteotti, the main shopping area of Ortygia with its elegant boutiques.

At the end of your visit you will have some free time before returning to the pier on foot.

Please note: The order of the visits may vary. This tour is not recommended to guests with limited mobility since it involves extensive walking / standing over cobblestone, uneven surfaces and inclines.

Guests are advised to wear weather-appropriate clothes and comfortable walking shoes and to bring a hat and a bottle of water. A proper attire is required when visiting religious sites (no bare shoulders or shorts are allowed).



Noto

Duration: 04:00 approx.

Price: 59 €

Min 15 / Max 35 participants

Transportation: air-conditioned motorcoach

Activity level: moderate

After a 45-minute drive by air-conditioned motor coach, you will arrive at Noto, considered to be one of the most beautiful towns in Sicily. Totally destroyed by an earthquake in 1693 and rebuilt in the 18th century, the town is a perfect treasure trove of Baroque architecture.

UNESCO has awarded it World Heritage status and is funding the restoration of monuments damaged in the most recent earthquake in 1990.

When you arrive at Noto you will leave the coach and start your tour of the town on foot. Admire the imposing gateway known as the Porta Nazionale which leads to the main street where the most important monuments can be seen.

At the heart of the city stands the 18th century cathedral which is currently being restored after being damaged by the 1990 earthquake.

Other impressive buildings include the city hall, the archbishop's palace, the Sant'Alfano Palace, the Church of Santissimo Salvatore and the Villadorata Palace – all are fine examples of typical Sicilian baroque architecture from the early 18th century.

At the end of the visit, you will have some free time on your own to do some shopping or maybe have an ice cream at the famous Caffé Sicilia before driving back to Siracusa.

Please note: This tour is not recommended to guests with limited mobility since it involves extensive walking / standing over cobblestone, uneven surfaces and inclines.

Guests are advised to wear weather-appropriate clothes and comfortable walking shoes and to bring a hat and a bottle of water. The driving time between Syracuse and Noto takes approx. 45 minutes (each way).

GOZO, MALTA

The charm of Malta's sister island Gozo is immediately apparent. Steeped in myth Gozo is thought to be the legendary Calypso's isle of Homer's Odyssey. It's green, rural and calm relying on fishing and agriculture as well as tourism. It is one of the Mediterranean's top diving destinations with an incredible range of shore and boat dives including reefs, caves and wrecks. There are also Knight's watchtowers, tiny chapels and beautiful peaceful beaches to explore.

Highlights of Gozo

Duration: 04:00 approx.

Price: 59 €

Min 15 / Max 70 participants

Transportation: air-conditioned motorcoach

Activity level: moderate

The Ggantija Temples are two prehistoric temples on Gozo, the second largest island in Malta. One of them is considered to be the oldest stone structure in the world, predating the Giant Pyramids and Stonehenge by several hundred years.

The temples are dedicated to the Great Earth Mother, and the round curved architecture symbolizes the body of a powerful full figured Mother goddess.

Local legend recounts that a female giant built the temple walls in one day and a night, while nursing a baby at the same time, and indeed the name Ggantija is Maltese for Giant's grotto.

The temples were a place of pilgrimage and sacrifice for the ancient peoples of Malta. Take a walk around this fascinating site before heading off to Victoria the capital of Gozo. Victoria (so named in honor of Queen Victoria's golden jubilee celebrations in 1887) nestles beneath a powerful old citadel. The walled castle dominates the town, and its fortifications afford superb panoramic views of the whole island. Inside the citadel you can admire the fine baroque cathedral, built on the site of a Roman temple dedicated to Juno.

After leaving Victoria, you will drive to the Basilica of Ta Pinu, which became a center of pilgrimage in 1883 after a local woman heard the voice of Our Lady while praying in the small chapel which once occupied the site. The monumental shrine which stands there now was built between 1920 and 1931. You can explore the church and enjoy the sweeping coastal views.



The next stop takes you to Fungus Rock known as the Dwejra Seascape. Admire this unique rock formation before continuing across the east coast to capture the coastal views of Ramla l-Hamara (The Red Beach). On the drive back to the pier there will be a photo stop to take pictures of the wonderful view across to Comino Island, also a location used for the movies "Troy" and the "Count of Montecristo".

Please note: The order of the visits may vary. This tour is not recommended to guests with limited mobility since it involves extensive walking over cobblestone and uneven surfaces.

Guests are advised to wear weather-appropriate clothes and comfortable walking shoes and to bring a hat and a bottle of water. Proper attire is required to visit the Cathedral.

Driving time to Ggantija Temples takes approx. 45 minutes. The guided hike to the temples of Ggantija takes about 45 minutes. In Victoria, you will visit the Citadel (approx. 45 minutes walk), you will visit the Basilica of Ta Pinu (approx. 30 minutes). You will have some free time in Dwejra.

VALLETTA (MALTA)

Malta's Capitals: Mdina & Valetta (ending at the airport)

Duration: 04:00 approx.

Transportation: air-conditioned motorcoach

Price: 59 €

Activity level: moderate

Min 10 / Max 30 participants

Take the scenic route to Malta's old capital, Mdina – one of the world's finest examples of a living medieval city.

Stroll through the city's streets and listen to your guide's presentation of the city and its history. Enjoy the sweeping views from the bastions, over the valley and the surrounding areas.

After the walking tour there will be free time to see the Cathedral, do some souvenir shopping, or just relax at one of the pavement cafés and watch the world go by.

Next the coach will take you to the present-day capital, Valletta. Here you will see St John's Cathedral, one of the finest examples of high Baroque architecture in Europe, richly decorated with ornate altar pieces, elaborate inlaid marble tombstones, and artistic masterpieces. You will view the Grand Master's Palace from the outside; originally the seat of the Grand Master of the Knights Hospitaliers of St John, it is now housing the Parliament and President's Office.

Your last stop will be at the Barracca Gardens located on the highest point of the 16th century bastion walls, built by the Knights of St John to protect the city. From this vantage point you can enjoy splendid views of the Three Cities and Fort Ricasoli.

Please note: The tour ends at the Malta International airport at around 13:15, and it is suitable for guests whose flight departure is after 15:30.

This tour is not recommended to guests with limited mobility since it involves extensive walking / standing over cobblestone and uneven surfaces.

Guests are advised to wear weather-appropriate clothes and comfortable walking shoes and to bring a hat and a bottle of water. A proper attire is required when visiting religious sites.

St John's Cathedral is closed on Saturday afternoon, Sundays and Public holidays. In case it is closed, there will be just an external visit.

