



ITALY with a difference, MALTA & GREEK ISLANDS

23 May to 22 June 2025

Personally escorted by Jacquie Turner

Starting in **Bologna**, we explore the less visited regions of **Italy**, along the Adriatic Sea to the heel of the boot, the Salento Peninsula. Taking in Bologna, Ascoli Piceno, Ostuni and Lecce before heading west to Matera, a Basilicata's jewel, a town built on carved caves. We reach the rugged Amalfi Coast with a visit to Naples.

Malta is a history-rich small archipelago in the Mediterranean Sea and one of the smallest countries in Europe. There is glorious variety in its small archipelago; prehistoric temples, fossil-studded cliffs, hidden coves, and a history of remarkable intensity.

Experience a **Greek Islands** cruise combining amazing destinations on a mega yacht with professional crew and exquisite cuisine. Each day, discover a new port of call, a hidden cove with crystal blue waters, a glimpse of ancient history and rich cultural diversity.



Friday 23 May **DEPART AUSTRALIA**

We depart Gippsland for our evening flight from Melbourne to Bologna via Dubai. Departures are available from other Australian cities.

Saturday 24 & Sunday 25 May **BOLOGNA, ITALY** **(B B L D)**

We arrive in Bologna on Saturday 24 May and will be met and transferred to our hotel, the ART HOTEL COMMERCianti, *or similar*, where we shall stay for the next two nights.

During the next couple of days our sightseeing will include a walking tour of the historic centre, winding through the beaten paths frequented mostly by locals. From the Church of San Petronio in Piazza Maggiore to the Ghetto and the hidden “Venetian canals” of Bologna, we will discover traditions, habits, and anecdotes of this amazing city.

We shall also visit the Sanctuary of Madonna di San Luca for views of the city. A highlight will be a visit to a local village.

Monday 26 May **ASCOLI PICENO** **(B D)**

After breakfast we drive to Ravenna, known for the colorful mosaics adorning many of its central buildings, like the octagonal Basilica di San Vitale, the 6th-century Basilica di Sant'Apollinare Nuovo and the cross-shaped Mausoleo di Galla Placidia

We then head south along the coast to Ascoli Piceno, that lies at the confluence of the Tronto and Castellano rivers in the Le Marche region. Called the "City of Travertine" for the milk and honey piazza and facades, Ascoli's historic centre is an architectural gem.

Once home to over 200 spindly towers, almost 50 remain. The public squares clatter with activity, especially in the evenings, as folks settle in for a glass of wine, always with little offerings of food, or an Anisetta from the famous Anisetta Meletti, a place that's been pouring since 1870.

On arrival we shall check in to the PALAZZO DEI MERCANTI, *or similar*. Dinner tonight is included.





Tuesday 27, Wednesday 28, Thursday 29 May OSTUNI (B B B L D D)

We depart Ascoli Piceno and head further south, right down into the “heel” of Italy and the Puglia region. Our hotel in Ostuni will be the HOTEL RELAIS SANT'ELIGIO, *or similar*, for the next three nights.

During our time here, we will visit Alborobello, famous for its trulli, whitewashed stone huts with conical roofs. These limestone dwelling are found in the southern region of Puglia and are remarkable examples of drywall (mortarless) construction, a prehistoric building technique still in use in this region.

Along with a cooking class at a local olive farm, we shall visit the picturesque fishing village of Polignano a Mare and spend time visiting other local villages.

Friday 30, Saturday 31 May LECCE (B B D)

Today we drive to Lecce with a detour to visit the charming harbour town of Otranto. Our accommodation for the next two nights will be at the PATRIA PALACE, *or similar*.

Bequeathed with a generous stash of baroque buildings by its 17th-century architects, the city has a completeness and homogeneity that other southern Italian metropolises lack. Indeed, so distinctive is Lecce’s architecture that it has acquired its own moniker, barocco leccese (Lecce baroque), an expressive and hugely decorative incarnation of the genre replete with gargoyles, asparagus columns and cavorting gremlins.



Sunday 1, Monday 2 June

MATERA

(B B L D)

We depart the “heel” of Italy and head to Matera.

Matera is a fabulous troglodyte town of prehistoric grottoes, cave tabernacles, abandoned hovels and Renaissance houses, all excavated into the luminous limestone tufa. The rock-cut cave dwellings known as the SASSI, date back to Byzantine times. With the help of a locally grown expert, we will learn the stories of old and new Matera. We discover an ancient cave dwelling which tells a tale of poverty, hardship and struggle, whose history is best immortalized in writer Carlo Levi’s superb book “Christ stopped at Eboli“, comparing the Sassi to Dante’s Inferno. Today Matera contains some 3000 habitable caves. We visit a cave church-featuring medieval frescoes with their own legends.

There will be time at leisure to enjoy beautiful Matera. Our accommodation in Matera for two nights will be at the PALAZZO VICECONTE, *or similar*.



Tuesday, 3 Wednesday 4 Thursday 5 June NAPLES

(B B L L D D)

This morning, we drive to Naples with a visit to the amazing site of Pompeii on the way. Pompeii is a preserved ancient Roman city in Campania at the southeastern base of Mount Vesuvius. It was built on a spur formed by a prehistoric lava flow to the north of the mouth of the Sarnus (modern Sarno) River.

Pompeii was destroyed, together with Herculaneum, Stabiae, Torre Annunziata, and other communities, by the violent eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE.

The circumstances of their destruction preserved their remains as a unique document of Greco-Roman life. Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Torre Annunziata were collectively designated a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1997.

On arrival in Naples, we will check in to the GRAND HOTEL SANTA LUCIA, *or similar*.

During our time in Naples, we will have a city tour of Naples and weather permitting, a day trip to Ischia, a volcanic island in the Gulf of Naples. It is known for its mineral-rich thermal waters. Hot springs bubble up at Maronti Beach, in the south. Roman remains lie beneath the sea floor at Cartaromana Beach. The beach has views of medieval Aragonese Castle, linked to Ischia by a stone bridge. Nearby the 18th-century Palazzo dell’Orologio houses the Sea Museum, devoted to Ischia’s fishing tradition.



Friday 6, Saturday 7, Sunday 8, Monday 9 June MALTA (B B B L L L D D)

We say “arrivederci” to Italy as we fly to Malta. On arrival we shall be met and transferred to the GRAND HOTEL EXCELSIOR, *or similar*, where we shall stay for the next four nights. Welcome to the Maltese Islands.

We will start with a guided tour through the vibrant streets of Valletta. In the alleys of Valletta, we will discover the beauty and charm of the fortified city built by the Knights in 1566. We will enjoy fabulous views of the Grand Harbour.

We will discover the Island of Gozo, on a full day tour with highlights being a traditional ‘luzzu’ cruise of the inland sea; we see the Xwejni Salt Pans, protruding out of the sea; a farm visit including wine and local food products tastings; and lunch at a transformed little cottage with panoramic views of Mgarr Harbor, Fort Chambrey and the three sister islands.

Our full day ‘Malta Sightseeing’ will include the Megalithic Temples and Blue Grotto. We spend time in Mdina, the old capital city. We shall also visit the Dingli Cliffs, part of the highest land mass in Malta, some 200 metres above sea level, with the Parish Dome dominating the skyline and quaint village with a perpendicular plunge in the Mediterranean Sea.

This Mediterranean paradise continues to fascinate food lovers thanks to its wide variety of traditional and local cuisines, which are influenced by other international kitchens.

Tuesday 10, Wednesday 11, Thursday 12 June ATHENS (B B B D)

Today we will have some time to explore Malta further enroute to the airport for our flight to Athens. On arrival at the Athens Airport (El Venezelou) we shall check into the DIVANI PALACE ACROPOLIS, *or similar*, for a 3-night stay.

During our time in Athens, we will visit The New Acropolis Museum where we will see the artifacts of the first Acropolis Museum from 1874 from Greek Bronze Age to Roman and Byzantine Greece.

As we tour Athens we will see the ancient marble Stadium, The Zappion Hall, the former Royal Gardens, the Parliament House at the Constitution Square as well as Schliemans House and the Academy of Sciences and Arts. We will also see the old University building and the National Library and a few of the most beautiful new classical style buildings of modern Athens.



We will travel towards the Sacred Rock of the Acropolis. There we will have the chance to admire all the masterpieces of architecture built during the time of Pericles/Golden Age of Athens in the 5th century BC. We will see the Propylea, the temple of Athenian Nike, Erechtheon and the world-renowned Parthenon temples. From above, we will see the Odeon of Herod Atticus, the ruins of the ancient Athenian Agora as well as Mars Hill where St Paul addressed the members of supreme court of Ancient Athens.

Friday 13 June

ATHENS - BOARD HARMONY V YACHT

(B D)

This morning, we will drive westwards, along the beautiful scenic coastal road to reach the Corinth Canal, which connects the Gulf of Corinth with the Saronic Gulf in the Aegean Sea.

We continue to Loutraki, the seaside charming village for free time to enjoy lunch by the sea before we drive to the marina in the mid-afternoon to board our floating home on the sleek, contemporary state of the art **Harmony V** for our 7-night/8-day Greek Islands cruise.

Once on board we shall enjoy a welcome drink and meet the crew and fellow passengers. We depart via Cape Sounion to Kea. There will be leisure time to explore Kea's tiny port, Korrisia, after dinner. Our ship departs Kea in the early hours for Delos. We overnight at sea.



Saturday 14 June **DELOS - MYKONOS** **(B L)**

Today you can enjoy an optional morning tour to the unique archaeological site of Delos, antiquity's most sacred island before we travel onto the port of Mykonos, with a swim stop on the way. Your afternoon and evening are free to enjoy the island's cosmopolitan lifestyle. We overnight in Mykonos.



Sunday 15 June **SANTORINI** **(B D)**

Today we will admire one of the unique volcanic islands worldwide where we will visit the authentic Megalochori village. We will stop at the Red Beach surrounded by the volcanic rocks and continue to Profit Elias where we will see the whole island from all sides, an amazing point for photos.

We continue to Firostefani and Imerovigli villages and end at Oia village on the northern part of the island overlooking the caldera and the Aegean Sea. We return to Fira, the capital and the most cosmopolitan settlement of Santorini. It is located in the western edge of the island, opposite the volcano and the two volcanic islands, Palaia Kammeni and Nea Kammeni that lie in the sea. Enjoy walking on the narrow paths with amazing views to take photos. There will be time to explore Fira before heading back to the **Harmony V**.

Monday 16 June **CRETE** **(B L D)**

After arriving in Rethymno port, we will meet our coach and guide for a tour in this area of Crete. We will head to Chania, a Venetian harbor city of the 14th century and known also for its waterfront taverns and shops as well as the 16th-century lighthouse with Venetian, Egyptian and Ottoman influences.

We will then drive to the nearby Aptera, a Minoan city from the 4th century BC, and see the Theatre, the fortification and the arched roman cisterns. We continue to Giorgioupoli, a fishing village located where three rivers meet the sea. Here we will taste the Cretan cuisine and enjoy Cretan music. We return to Rethymno for a relaxing evening on board.

Tuesday 17 June **KYTHIRA** **(B L)**

Time to relax before a late morning swim stop and afternoon arrival to Kythira, a less known island gem now fast becoming a favourite among visitors to Greece. The evening is at leisure to visit the picturesque main town of Chora and experience the subdued charms of this peaceful island. We overnight in Kythira.

Wednesday 18 June **MONEMVASSIA - NAFPLION** **(B L)**

We have an early morning sailing to Monemvassia. Here we can discover a remarkable medieval fortified town, with time at leisure to explore the uniquely preserved Byzantine and Venetian architecture and experience the beauty of the natural setting. We depart for Nafplion in the early afternoon, with a swim stop on the way.

We arrive at Nafplion in the evening. The old quarter is charming, with narrow streets and characteristic period architecture. Impressive medieval fortifications can be seen in the port and crowning the hills above. We overnight in Nafplion.

Thursday 19 June **HYDRA** **(B D)**

This morning there is an optional tour to Mycenae, the powerful walled palace of Agamemnon, the Homeric Achaean king. We depart in the early afternoon for the island of Hydra. On arrival there will be time at leisure to explore this picturesque port town. We overnight in port.

Friday 20 June **DISEMBARK YACHT - ATHENS** **(B L)**

Our time in the Mediterranean has come to an end and this morning we will disembark our ship and drive to Athens to the SOFITEL ATHENS AIRPORT HOTEL. Here we will have day use and a lovely lunch at the hotel before we transfer to the airport for our flight home to Melbourne via Dubai.

Saturday 21 June **DUBAI - MELBOURNE** **(inflight meal)**

We will have a morning departure for the flight to Melbourne.

Sunday 22 June **MELBOURNE** **(inflight meals)**

We shall arrive back in Melbourne in the early hours and will be met and transferred by coach back to Warragul.

YOUR TOUR LEADER:

JACQUEY TURNER has more than 40 years' experience as a highly successful travel agent and tour guide. Jacquy's attention to detail and personal care ensures that everyone travelling in her group will have a most enjoyable holiday experience.

"I thoroughly enjoy escorting tour members to so many wonderful places in the world. The sights, sounds and history all contribute to a fabulous experience but most importantly it is the people that you meet and have the privilege of travelling with that has the most lasting impression. We always have lots of fun and continue to enjoy the memories for many years."



YOUR LOCAL TOUR DIRECTOR

Our tour director, the lovely Lucy, will join us in Bologna and will remain with us until Naples.

Lucy has over 35 years' experience as a Tour Director and I have worked with her on many occasions. Her incredible knowledge, sense of humour and a hint of cynicism will enhance the enjoyment of the places we see and visit.

ITALY with a difference, MALTA & GREEK IS

Friday 23 May to Saturday 22 June, 2025

TOUR COST: \$27,999 per person on a twin share basis **
 \$ 8,019 single supplement (including cruise)

**Cost based on a category A cabin (upper deck) on the cruise.

Category B cabin (main deck) (two available for double or twin): \$850 pp reduction

Category B cabin (main deck) (two available for single) \$1,361 pp reduction

Note: Cabins will be allocated in order of receipt of confirmed registrations and full deposit.

★Upgrade to Premium Economy (MEL/DBX/MEL) or Business Class - cost on application

★Should you wish to extend your travel arrangements after the tour, please contact me to discuss further options.

★Should you select to travel on flights other than the included group flights, or upgrade to business/premium economy, payment for the air fares will be required at the time of booking the flights.

★Please note that a surcharge due to currency fluctuations may arise. If applicable, this will be confirmed prior to the balance of deposit being due.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Full deposit	Due by 31 May 2024 to secure place on tour	\$3000 per person
Further payment	Due by 31 August 2024	\$3000 per person
Balance of payment	Due by 31 January, 2025	
Information Night	Thursday, late January 2025	

Costs based on exchange rates prevailing on 22 May, 2024.

The tour cost is based on a minimum and maximum of 20 participants. In the unlikely event that this number of participants is not reached, Gippsland Travel reserve the right to cancel the tour. In this instance only, a full refund of all deposits paid will be refunded.

CANCELLATION FEES

Cancellation date	Cancellation fee
Cancellation received after full deposit has been paid	\$3000pp
Cancellation received after 31 Aug 24 and prior to 30 Jan 25	\$6000pp
Cancellation received on or after 1 February 2025	100% of tour cost

INCLUSIONS

- Personally escorted throughout entire 30 day tour by Jacquye Turner
In the unlikely event that Jacquye is not available to escort all or part of the tour, she will be replaced with a well-trained tour escort.
- Minimum and maximum of 20 guests
- Coach transfers between Gippsland and Melbourne
- Return economy airfares and taxes with Emirates
- Economy airfares Italy/Malta and Malta/Athens
- Overnight accommodation at Dubai Transit Airport Hotel
- All airport arrival and departure transfers
- Excellent hotel accommodation in twin-bedded rooms with private facilities throughout tour
- Private luxury 48-seater coach throughout Italy. Mini coaches in Malta.
- 7-night Greek Island Cruise onboard Harmony V yacht in category A cabin including:
Half-board: Buffet breakfast and one meal daily, including a Welcome Cocktail, a Greek night Evening, fun BBQ, weather permitting) and Captain's Dinner. Regular (filter) coffee, tea and drinking water free all day. Use of fishing and snorkelling equipment (subject to availability).
- Private Professional English-speaking guide in Italy / local guides in key locations.
- Experienced driver/guides throughout tour
- Comprehensive sightseeing as per itinerary and admission fees where applicable
- Meals as per itinerary: **55 meals** - 27 Breakfasts (B), 13 Lunches (L), 15 Dinners (D)
- Complimentary water throughout tour
- Gippsland Travel hat or cap; luggage strap; luggage tag. hand gel;
- Gippsland Travel journal and photos supplied on USB showcasing your time on the tour.
- Audio guiding system
- Porterage (one suitcase per person)
- **ALL tipping** of waiters/restaurant staff at included meals throughout the tour
- **ALL tipping** of guides and drivers and crew on board yacht.

EXCLUSIONS

- Comprehensive travel insurance. We highly recommend insurance be issued at time of paying full deposit. It is a condition of our tours that comprehensive travel insurance is in place at the time of final payment.
- Expenses of a personal nature like laundry, telephone charges, alcoholic beverages, medical expenses, and transfers/sightseeing or meals not included in itinerary.
- Any optional tours or activities other than those specified in the itinerary
- Excess baggage charges.
- Health requirements
- WiFi charges on Harmony V



GIPPSLAND TRAVEL ESCORTED TOURS - TERMS & CONDITIONS

INTRODUCTION:

This contract is governed by Gippsland Travel Centre Pty Ltd and all members of the travelling parties as listed on your itinerary.

Gippsland Travel Centre acts as the agent selling and coordinating products on behalf of a third-party travel supplier/s. A separate contract with the supplier/s will apply and will be governed by the supplier's Terms and Conditions. Gippsland Travel cannot guarantee the performance of any third-party supplier/s. Gippsland Travel may receive fees, commissions, gifts or financial incentives from third party supplier/s under this contract.

LATE BOOKINGS

Higher deposit payments are required for late bookings. A guarantee of full payment is required at the time of booking for all bookings received within 4 weeks of departure.

GOVERNING LAW

These booking conditions are governed by the law in force in Victoria, Australia.

PASSPORT and VISA

A valid passport is required for all international travel.

If you do not hold an Australian passport, you may require a resident return visa. Some countries require a visa to be issued before you depart Australia. Gippsland Travel will advise you of all passport and visa requirements for this tour.

The Australian Government through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade regularly updates travel advice on various destinations. We recommend that you refer to www.dfat.gov.au for the latest updates before choosing to travel and prior to departure.

HEALTH & FITNESS

A minimum level of fitness is required to be able to participate on a Gippsland Travel Tour, you are required to at least:

- Be able to walk at least 1 hour on uneven surfaces without the use of any walking aid (walking stick for stability is acceptable)
- Walk up flights of stairs and short, steep hills
- Stand for 20 minutes without needing to sit down, often in hot/humid climates
- Carry your own hand luggage / handle your own suitcase when portage is not supplied eg. at airports.
- Get on and off various modes of transport without assistance, including small boats. Assistance will be offered where necessary.

Passengers must inform us of any medical conditions which may affect your ability to participate in the tour.

At our discretion we can exclude you from a tour or any activity if we consider that you are unable to safely participate in that tour or activity or we consider your participation may place the safety of other guests at risk.

You will be requested to supply a letter from your doctor indicating your prescription medication and your reason for taking it, which shall be carried in the event of an emergency. This information will remain confidential and can be supplied in a sealed envelope.

BOOKINGS SOLD ON A SHARE BASIS

Bookings may be accepted on a share room basis on the proviso that the person requesting the share reservation agrees that while every effort will be made to match suitability of the passengers there is no guarantee that a share room can be provided. If a share room is not available at the time of final payment, either the single room supplement will apply, or the cancellation conditions detailed in your itinerary will apply.

UNUSED COMPONENTS OF THIS TOUR

We regret refunds will not be given for any unused component of this tour, such as meals, entry fees, accommodation or transfers.

ITINERARY CHANGES and ITINERARY VARIATIONS

Gippsland Travel reserves the right to amend the hotels, itinerary and excursions if deemed advisable or necessary due to adverse weather conditions, road conditions or other unforeseen circumstances. Any necessary alternative arrangements will be made to a similar standard.

Occasionally circumstances beyond the control of Gippsland Travel make it necessary to change airlines, hotels or amendments to daily activities. We will inform you of any changes as soon as they occur.

GENERAL CONDUCT

Gippsland Travel reserves the right to remove a traveller from a tour if they are acting in a way that interferes with the general operation of the tour or compromises the general enjoyment of the tour by other travellers in any way

FLIGHT SCHEDULES

Airlines schedules are subject to change without notice. Voluntary date changes will incur fees. Gippsland Travel is not liable for delays or disruption of air travel.

FORCE MAJEURE:

Force Majeure means the occurrence of an event that is beyond Gippsland Travel's reasonable control and which could not have been reasonably prevented by Gippsland Travel. Force majeure includes, but is not limited to: acts of God, accident, riots, war, terrorist act, epidemic, pandemic, quarantine, outbreaks of infectious disease or any other public health crisis, civil commotion, breakdown of communication facilities, natural catastrophes and natural disasters (including but not limited to flooding, fire, earthquake, landslide), adverse weather conditions, high or low water levels; government directed travel restrictions or omissions, changes in laws or regulations, national strikes, explosion, generalised lack of availability of raw materials or energy, nuclear or other industrial accident causing environmental pollution or contamination; change in law, meaning, enactment, amendment (including repeal) in the law or administration of any law in Australia or any jurisdiction or territory relevant to the booking contract, which includes changes in statute, regulation, determination, by-law, declaration, licence and the common law as applicable from time to time.

For the avoidance of doubt, Force Majeure shall not include (a) financial distress nor inability of either party to make a profit or avoid a financial loss, (b) changes in market prices or conditions, or (c) a party's financial inability to perform its obligations hereunder.

In the event that a Force Majeure is declared, the customer will be bound by the third-party supplier/s Terms and Conditions, if applicable.

TERMINATION OF BOOKING CONTRACT OR CHANGE OF TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS DUE TO FORCE MAJEURE

If Gippsland Travel, in its reasonable opinion, considers that any Force Majeure event prevents Gippsland Travel (whether directly or through its employees, contractors, subcontractors and agents) from lawfully or safely providing any products or services subject of the booking contract with you, Gippsland Travel may immediately by written notice; (a) terminate the booking contract (in whole or part of); or (b) change your travel arrangements as reasonably practicable to ensure your safety and invoice for any additional costs.

If you are eligible for a refund once a booking has been cancelled, the balance less any non-refundable amounts will be forwarded to you once received by Gippsland Travel from the third-party supplier/s.

Gippsland Travel is not responsible for any delays of refunds from the third-party supplier/s. Refunds from third party supplier/s can take in excess of 6 weeks. Refunds will be processed as per original form of payment.

Travel insurance policies may provide cover for cancellation fees subject to their terms and conditions.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY:

Subject to Australian Consumer Law, Gippsland Travel does not accept any liability in contract, tort or otherwise for any injury, damage, loss, delay, additional expense or inconvenience caused by a third-party supplier/s over who we have no direct control. Gippsland Travel is not liable for Force Majeure or any other event which is beyond our control or which is not preventable by us.