

With Distinguished Guest Lecturer  
**Emily Wilson**, Professor of Classical Studies,  
University of Pennsylvania, and award-winning  
translator of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*

# THE SEA OF HOMER

Exploring Greece, the Greek Islands & Turkey

**Aboard the New All-Suite EXPLORA II**

**July 1 - 13, 2026**



Dear Friends,

This leisurely voyage through the heart of the Aegean, which Homer called the "wine-dark sea," is the perfect introduction to all that this fabled waterway has to offer. Ancient sites and monuments - the Acropolis of Athens, storied Mycenae, the sanctuary at Epidaurus, the sacred island of Delos, awe-inspiring Ephesus and storied Istanbul, all of them UNESCO World Heritage Sites - share the landscape with whitewashed homes of present-day fishermen and farmers. Great Byzantine churches - including the UNESCO sites in Patmos and Istanbul's Aghia Sofia - exist in the same space as the painted townhouses of quaint island ports. This is truly an experience not to be missed.

We are pleased to have on this journey as our special guest lecturer **Emily Wilson**, a distinguished professor of classical studies at the University of Pennsylvania, and an award-winning translator of Homer's the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*. A Fellow of the American Academy in Rome, a Guggenheim Fellow and a MacArthur Fellow, Professor Wilson has also published translations of *Sophocles*, *Euripides*, and *Seneca*. Her lectures and discussions will add meaning and content to our journey.

Our vessel for this ocean journey, EXPLORA II, launched in 2023, is equipped with the most advanced safety and environmentally responsible technology available and is designed to maximize luxury in a relaxed, informal, and friendly environment. The emphasis throughout is on comfort, wellness, and extraordinary culinary experiences. The smallest of the all-suite accommodations is 377 square feet, including a private terrace. The extensive wellness facilities include multiple indoor and outdoor exercise spaces, four heated pools, and a large spa. Dining options, available in six different restaurants, range across cuisines from Europe to East Asia.

I hope you will be able to join us on this travel and learning adventure through *The Sea of Homer* and the many thinkers who followed him.

Warm regards,

**Thalassa Journeys**

#### Activity Level

This program includes walking at a leisurely pace for 2-3 hours; however, there will be some inclines and uneven surfaces, such as cobbled or stone pathways. Historic sites, such as ancient ruins and fortresses, may have stairs without railings and are often without seating or shade. Do be aware that summertime conditions can be quite hot and sometimes humid.

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Cover photo: Delos, Greece

## DISTINGUISHED GUEST LECTURER

### EMILY WILSON



**Emily Wilson** is a Professor in the Department of Classical Studies and holds the College for Women Class of 1963 Chair in the Humanities at the University of Pennsylvania. Her books include *The Death of Socrates: Hero, Villain, Chatterbox, Saint* (2007) and *The Greatest Empire: A life of Seneca* (2014). Her verse translations include *Six Tragedies of Seneca*, four translations of plays by Euripides in the Modern Library *The Greek Plays*, and *Oedipus Tyrannos*. She is the Classics editor of the revised Norton Anthology of World Literature. Her 2017 translation of the *Odyssey*, in iambic pentameter, met with wide acclaim, as did her new translation of the *Iliad*, published in fall 2023. She is now working on translations of select dialogues of Plato, and a fictionalized retelling of the ancient myths associated with the Trojan War. She was named a MacArthur Fellow in 2019, and won a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2020.

## ABOUT THALASSA JOURNEYS

**Thalassa Journeys** is a tour company founded by the men and women who, working as Travel Dynamics International, pioneered educational and cultural travel in the 1970s in partnership with the leading educational, research, cultural and performing arts institutions in the United States. For more than 45 years our mission was to provide robust, intellectually stimulating experiences to lifelong learners who see travel as an opportunity to expand their understanding of the world and their place in it. This same mission guides us today. We believe that the most rewarding travel experiences happen when small groups of like-minded individuals share an enthusiasm for engaging with the richly varied environments of the world, and with the history, culture, ideas and ideals of the people who inhabit them.

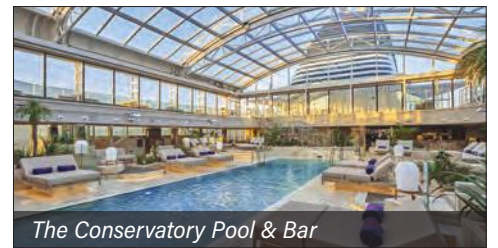
# THE EXTRAORDINARY ALL-SUITE EXPLORA II



*Ocean Terrace Suite*



*Journeys Lounge*



*The Conservatory Pool & Bar*



*Marble & Co. Grill*

**Launched in 2024, EXPLORA II** is dedicated to maximizing luxury in a relaxed, informal, and friendly environment. With a gross tonnage of 63,900 GT, the ship is comparable in size to vessels that carry over 2,500 passengers, but EXPLORA II has only 461 suites, accommodating fewer than 900 guests. This allows for spacious suites (the smallest suite is 377 square feet) and extensive public areas, including 67,000 square feet of outdoor deck space, twelve bars and lounges, multiple indoor and outdoor pools, and over 10,000 square feet of fitness and wellness facilities. All of this with a staff to guest ratio of 1 to 1.25.

Featuring the latest advances in technology and engineering, EXPLORA II is at the cutting edge of environmentally responsible operations. It is equipped with a selective catalytic reduction system to reduce harmful emissions; its water treatment and waste management systems are state-of-the-art; it is equipped throughout with LED lighting and high-efficiency, energy-saving appliances; its recycling protocols exceed the highest industry standards; and no single-use plastics are employed aboard. It is also RINA Dolphin-certified, ensuring reduced underwater noise and contributing to the

preservation of marine life.

Dining options aboard include six restaurants offering a variety of cuisines—Italian, Pan-Asian, French, Mediterranean, and European steakhouse—as well as in-suite dining. Unlimited beverages, fine wines and premium spirits, as well as specialty coffees, teas and soft drinks are available at all times. High-speed WIFI is complimentary throughout the ship, as are 24-hour concierge services and 24-hour in-suite dining. Twice-daily housekeeping services include an evening turndown service.

# ITINERARY



Wednesday, July 1, 2026  
**DEPART THE UNITED STATES**

Thursday, July 2  
**ATHENS, Greece**

Arrive in Athens and transfer to the *Athens Capital Hotel* (or similar). Join Emily Wilson, fellow travelers and the Trip Director this evening for a welcome dinner. (D)

Friday, July 3  
**ATHENS**

The ancient monuments of Athens are testimonials to a glorious past that gave birth to democracy and saw the beginnings of many of the arts and sciences at the core of the Western tradition. In the morning, tour the Agora, the civic and commercial center of ancient Athens and the living heart of its democracy. Here Socrates could be seen daily, questioning the assumptions of his fellow citizens. See the remains of the civic buildings and visit the Agora Museum, housed in an impressive reconstructed colonnaded building. In the afternoon, visit the National Archaeological Museum whose magnificent treasures trace the cultures and civilizations that developed in Greece from prehistoric times to the Roman period. (B,L)

Saturday, July 4  
**ATHENS**

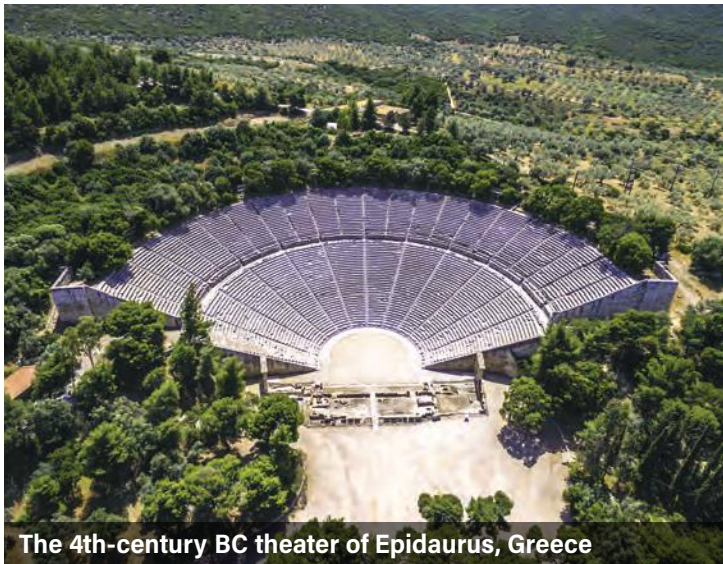
Today we will celebrate Independence Day at the beautiful grounds of the American School of Classical Studies or another appropriate venue. Our schedule of activities for the day will remain flexible, pending the confirmation and timetable of the event. Details will be provided later. (B,L)

Sunday, July 5  
**ATHENS/MYCENAE/NAFLION/EPIDAUROS/ATHENS**

Leave Athens in the morning. Drive over the steep banks of the Corinth Canal to reach Argolis, in the northeast Peloponnese, one of the most significant historic and archaeological regions of the country. Stop in Mycenae, the powerful center of the Mycenaean civilization, which flourished in the late second millennium BC, and the home of Agamemnon, who led the Greeks against Troy. Walk through the monumental Lion Gate to explore the fabled citadel. Continue to Nafplion, the capital of Greece before Athens and one of its most striking towns, for lunch at a seaside taverna. Then, drive to Epidaurus, the sanctuary dedicated to Asclepius, the god of healing, which in antiquity, was a religious shrine, health center and a popular spa. Epidaurus is famous for its incredible 4th-century BC theater, renowned for its harmonious proportions and perfect acoustics. Return to the hotel late in the afternoon. (B,L)

Monday, July 6  
**ATHENS/EMBARK**

In the morning, tour the Acropolis, site of the incomparable Parthenon and other temples and structures built on the Acropolis in the 5th century BC. They represent the highest achievement in architecture and art of the Classical period. Also visit the Acropolis



The 4th-century BC theater of Epidaurus, Greece



Celcus Library, Ephesus, Turkey



Hagia Sophia, Istanbul, Turkey

Museum, which houses an outstanding collection of sculptures. Transfer to Piraeus in the afternoon to embark EXPLORA II. Set sail in the evening. (B,L,D)

**Tuesday, July 7**

**PATMOS**

The rugged island of Patmos is where St. John the Evangelist was exiled during the reign of the Roman Emperor Domitian and where he is said to have received visions of the Apocalypse, which later became the *Book of Revelation*. Visit the 11th-century Monastery of St. John with its enormous towers, domed roofs, belfries and battlements. Admire the artistry of the icons, manuscripts and fine embroideries. Enjoy time at leisure in Chora, the island's main town, one of the most beautiful in the Greek archipelago. (B,L,D)

**Wednesday, July 8**

**AT SEA**

Spend the day cruising in the fabled Aegean Sea, the "wine-dark sea" of Homer, attend informative lectures and briefings from Professor Emily Wilson, relax and enjoy journeying across the open sea, and treat yourself to some of the many amenities aboard EXPLORA II. (B,L,D)

**Thursday, July 9**

**ISTANBUL, Turkey**

Founded by Greeks in the 7th century BC and named Byzantium, in AD 324, Emperor Constantine made the city the capital of the Roman Empire, naming it after himself, Constantinople. For over 1,000 years, it was the capital of the Byzantine Empire. Renowned as the most resplendent city in Europe, in the 15th century it was taken over by the Ottoman Turks, making it the capital of the Ottoman Empire. Spend the day touring the principle historic monuments, including the incomparable Hagia Sophia, the Church of Divine Wisdom, built by Emperor Justinian in the 6th century; the Topkapi Palace, the sumptuous place of the sultans for three centuries; the Sultan Ahmed Mosque, also known as the Blue Mosque, built in the early 17th century, and decorated with hand-painted blue tiles; the Hippodrome; the underground Basilica Cistern; and the Grand Bazaar. (B,L,D)

**Friday, July 10**

**AT SEA**

Enjoy the ship's facilities as EXPLORA II sails toward Kusadasi. (B,L,D)



Patmos, Greece

Saturday, July 11

### KUSADASI/PRIENE/EPHESUS

From Kusadasi, on Turkey's Aegean coast, we drive to Priene, site of a well-preserved 4th-century BC city. Dominating the site is the imposing Temple of Athena, a superb example of Ionic architecture set against a backdrop of tree-covered hills. In the afternoon, explore Ephesus, one of the world's most celebrated archaeological sites. Renowned in antiquity as a center of worship of the mother goddess Cybele, Ephesus was also one of the communities where St. Paul preached the gospel of Christianity. See the stunning façade of the Library of Celsus, the Temple of Hadrian, the Theater, and other large public monuments, as well as more modest buildings that give a glimpse into the daily lives of the ancient Ephesians. (B,L,D)

Sunday, July 12

### MYKONOS/DELOS/MYKONOS

Previously an island that relied on fishing and other traditional occupations, Mykonos transformed itself to become the most glamorous and high profile island of Greece, perhaps because of its main town, the quintessential traditional Cycladic town, a maze of narrow lanes and gleaming whitewashed cubic architecture that stretches from a hill that is crowned with the island's famed windmills to the curving harbor. Take an excursion to Delos, the nearby small island that was sacred to the ancient Greeks as the birthplace of the divine twins, Apollo and Artemis. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, Delos is a vast archaeological site and a veritable open-air museum. Walk the Sacred Way to see the remains of sanctuaries, temples, the celebrated Terrace of the Lions, and houses, some of which contain exquisite mosaics. Spend the afternoon at leisure in Mykonos. (B,L,D)

Monday, July 13

### PIRAEUS/DISEMBARK

Dock in the morning in Piraeus. Disembark and transfer to the airport for the return flight home. (B)



The colorful Grand Bazaar, Istanbul, Turkey

## ALL ACCOMMODATIONS ABOARD THE EXPLORA II ARE SPACIOUS TERRACE SUITES THAT COMBINE ELEGANT SPACE and LIGHT. THEY FEATURE:

- The Ocean Terrace Suites measure between 377 - 420 sq ft.
- Oversize floor-to-ceiling windows with views of the sea.
- Bespoke king-sized bed sleep system. In some suites the bed can be converted to two twins.
- Lounge area with dining/coffee table.
- Heated marble bathroom floor and Mandala Blue custom bath toiletries and amenities.
- Spacious private ocean-front terrace with dining area and daybed or sun loungers for relaxation.
- Spacious walk-in wardrobe with a seated vanity area.
- Mini-bar replenished according to each guest's preferences.
- Espresso machine, a kettle and teapot.
- Infotainment system with on-demand TV options.
- Individual climate and lighting control.
- Wireless bedside device charging station.
- Gentle motion-activated bedroom night lights.
- Pair of binoculars for guests' use during the journey.

## RATES

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	PER PERSON / DOUBLE OCCUPANCY
C (OT2)	Ocean Terrace Suite	\$ 9,290
B (OT3)	Ocean Terrace Suite	\$ 9,590
A (OT4)	Ocean Terrace Suite	\$ 9,890

Single occupancy supplement:

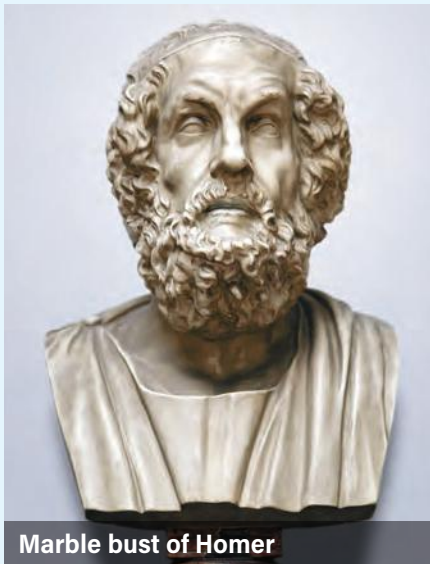
Category C \$ 1,780; Categories B and A \$ 1,980.

## PROGRAM INCLUSIONS

The rates are all-inclusive. There are no hidden costs and no additional charges such as shore excursions and embarkation and port charges. Other than the international airfare and expenses of a personal nature, all else is included. Specifically, the rates include the following:

- Ocean journey aboard EXPLORA II as described in the itinerary.
- Four nights at the *Athens Capital Hotel* (or similar) in Athens.
- Airport/hotel/pier transfers and handling of luggage.
- Program of lectures and discussions with Professor Emily Wilson.
- Complete program of shore excursions, led by professional local guides.
- All meals aboard the ship, with a selection of wines, beer and soft drinks during all meals.
- Open bar with select alcoholic beverages.
- Coffee, including espresso and cappuccino, tea and soft drinks throughout the day and night.
- 24-hour in-suite dining.
- Gratuities to the ship's crew, guides, porters and drivers.
- Wi-Fi aboard the ship.
- The services of an experienced Thalassa Journeys Trip Director.
- All local taxes and service charges, including port and embarkation taxes.
- Complete pre-departure material.

**NOT INCLUDED:** International airfare; travel insurance; expenses of a personal nature; experience fees in Chef's Kitchen and Anthology; any items not mentioned in the itinerary or the above inclusions.



Marble bust of Homer

## REGISTRATION

TJLL 26EII-0701

Enclosed is my check or credit card no. for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$ 1,500 per person) as a deposit to hold \_\_\_\_\_ place(s) on **THE SEA OF HOMER**, July 1 - 13, 2026 with Thalassa Journeys. I understand that final payment is due ninety (90) days prior to departure and is payable by check or credit card. We accept Visa, Mastercard, or Discover credit cards.

**For reservations, please call Thalassa Journeys at: (866) 633-3611 or email: [reservations@thalassajourneys.com](mailto:reservations@thalassajourneys.com)**

or make a check payable and mail with this registration form to:

**Thalassa Journeys:** 8815 Conroy-Windermere Rd., Suite 406, Orlando, FL 32835

Visa

Mastercard

Discover

No. \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. \_\_\_\_\_ 3- or 4-Digit Security Code \_\_\_\_\_

### PLEASE SELECT STATEROOM CATEGORY IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

1st choice  \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd choice  \_\_\_\_\_ 3rd choice  \_\_\_\_\_

Double Occupancy

Single Occupancy (Inquire for rates)

### PREFERRED BED CONFIGURATION

Double  \_\_\_\_\_ Twin  \_\_\_\_\_

FIRST MIDDLE LAST (AS ON YOUR PASSPORT)

FIRST MIDDLE LAST (AS ON YOUR PASSPORT)

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE (HOME) \_\_\_\_\_

(CELL) \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**Each participant must sign below: I/We have read the "General Information" section and agree to its terms.**

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**PAYMENT SCHEDULE:** A deposit of \$1,500 per person is required to reserve your space on the tour. Final payment is due 90 days prior to departure. Payment can be made by personal check or charged to a credit card.

**CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS:** All cancellations are subject to a \$300 per person administrative fee. Cancellations received 71-90 days prior to departure will be assessed a penalty equal to 50% of the total program cost per person. Cancellations received within 70 days of departure are subject to 100% cancellation penalties. Requests for cancellations must be made in writing. No refunds will be made for any part of this program in which you choose not to participate.

**INSURANCE:** We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance, which is available for coverage of expenses in conjunction with cancellation due to illness or accident. Baggage insurance is also recommended. In the event that you must cancel your participation in a travel program, trip cancellation insurance may be the only source of reimbursement.

**ITINERARY:** The itinerary, accommodations and arrangements are subject to change at the discretion of Thalassa Journeys.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Please read carefully the following terms and conditions, which constitute the sole, legally enforceable agreements between the traveler and Thalassa Journeys. Thalassa Journeys acts solely as agents for the traveler with respect to all transportation, hotel and other tour arrangements. In that capacity, we exercise all reasonable care possible to ensure the traveler's safety and satisfaction, but, we neither assume nor bear any responsibility or liability for any injury, death, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity arising in connection with the services of any ship, airplane, train, automobile, motor coach, carriage or other conveyance, or the actions of any third-party, involved in carrying the traveler or in affecting these tours. We are not responsible for damages, additional expenses, or any other losses due to cancellation, delay or other changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, civil disturbances, acts or threats of terrorism, travel warnings or bans, termination or suspension of war risks or other carrier insurance, quarantine, acts of God or other causes beyond our control. All such losses must be borne by the traveler, and tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. In the event of cancellation, delay or rescheduling mandated by any of the aforesaid causes beyond our control, the traveler shall have the option of accepting in lieu of the original tour such rescheduled tour or other substituted tour(s) as may be offered by us, or else, receiving a refund of as much of such advance tour expenditures as we are able to recover on the traveler's behalf from carriers, third-party tour vendors, etc., but, we shall not have any obligation or liability to the traveler beyond the foregoing. We reserve the right to make alterations to the tour's itinerary and to substitute hotels, transportation methods, or lecturers if this is required. We reserve the right to cancel, delay, or reschedule any tour prior to departure, and, so long as this is not due to any of the aforesaid causes beyond our control, the traveler shall be entitled to a full refund of all monies paid to that point if he/she so desires. No refund shall be made for any unused portion of any tour. By forwarding their deposit(s), the traveler certifies that he/she and/or their dependents, minors or others covered thereby do not have any mental, physical or other condition of disability that could create a hazard for them or other travelers. We reserve the right to decline to accept or to decline to retain any person as a member of any tour should such person's health, condition or actions adversely affect or threaten the welfare or safety of other travelers or impede the tour. Baggage or valuables brought on the tour shall be transported, handled or stored at the traveler's risk entirely, and, we shall bear no liability or responsibility for any damage or other loss thereto. Resolution of any disputes arising hereunder shall be affected exclusively in the state or federal courts presiding in Florida, pursuant to applicable Florida law.

**RATES:** Tour costs are based upon current airfares, tariffs, and currency values. While we do everything possible to maintain the listed prices, they are subject to change.

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# Join Distinguished Guest Lecturer **Professor Emily Wilson**, on **THE SEA OF HOMER**

**For Reservations and Information, Please Call 866-633-3611  
or Email: [reservations@thalassajourneys.com](mailto:reservations@thalassajourneys.com)**



The famous Lion Gate that leads to the citadel of Mycenae. c. 1350 BC, Greece