

Greece

It was a dark, damp, freezing morning when a small band of about 30 Woodford Girls set out on a journey to Greece, a nation whose history stretches on far back beyond the Common Era. As soon as we had arrived and checked in at the hotel, we went to discover the capital city of Athens, so full of antiquity that you could see the Temple Of Zeus directly from your tram seat. The next morning we headed out for Delphi, the ancient site of Apollo, Olympian God of music, light, medicine, healing and prophecy (as well as too many other things to list). It was here that Delphic Oracle, manifested most famously through the priestess Pythia, would foretell prophecies of war, misfortune but also occasionally prosperity. After descending from the heights of Delphi, we travelled to cape Sounion, the very spot where King Aegeus, father of the Athenian hero Theseus, tragically leapt of the cliff, giving his name to the waters below: The Aegean Sea. On our third day in Greece, we explored the Acropolis, on top of which lies the Parthenon built on the sacred Hill of Athena, Goddess of Wisdom and Arts and Patron of Athens (also personally my favourite classical goddess). As it so familiar to anyone with even a mild interest in Classical Mythology, it really is an exhilarating experience to stand at the very top of this site and gaze upon what are the monuments of a civilisation. Even as you look out to the amazing panoramic view of Athens, you see a modern-day city with ancient foundations. Leaving Athens, we transferred to Tolo, a picturesque sea-side town, close to Mycenae. This was the legendary city of Agamemnon, who was leader of the Greek Army in the Trojan War (the events of which are most notably written by the poet Homer in the Iliad). For me, the archaeological discoveries at Mycenae, bring more meaning to all these myths and heroes, it suggests that there might be some physical proof of their existence. It is one thing to study about places and people and see pictures of them and memorise facts about their lives, but completely another to visit them, experience them and to know that they were real. In all honesty that is something, going on this trip, has enlightened me to.

