

Experiencing the Olympian Gods 2024 Sacred Sites Tour of Greece With Jason Holley and Gray Crawford September 4-16, 2024

Hermes-Hestia Tours invites you to a journey led by **Jason Holley and Gray Crawford** to the place where the wellsprings of the Western astrological tradition and so much more converged long ago. To reconnect, rediscover, and also to redream the ancient stories still reflected in our worldviews, our symbols, and the celestial skies of our births.

Our intention in this trip is to re-embed our bodies and our imaginations into the deep mythic soils that gave rise to the myriad esoteric and exoteric practices of the western tradition: astrology, divination, philosophy, and so much more. Our 12-day trip will include visits to the temples and sanctuaries where the goddesses and gods were honoured, healing and oracular sites where they were petitioned, and forests, rivers, and mountains where they were born.



Temple of Athena, Akropolis, Athens; Photo J. Holley

The patron god and goddess of our journey are **Hermes and Hestia**. Hermes, messenger from the gods and friend to travelers who found home on the road; and Hestia, she of the deep and centering hearth at the center, where all gods found a place. Rarely the center of veneration themselves, in their different ways Hermes and Hestia made possible safe encounter with the other gods.

Inspired by this pair, Jason and Gray will each offer storytelling and seminar related to the places we visit, as well as support to experience the weave of the stories and the temples, the forests and the seas, in your own life and the skies of your birth. The rhythm of our time together will also include morning dream and reflection circles facilitated by Jason, to support a deeper contemplation of the places and the mythic figures as they appear in our dreams and imagination.

Days 1-3 Athens

On our first evening we will assemble for a reception in our hotel in Athens, followed by a short walk through the ancient and lively **Plaka** to begin in the way of *xenia*, guest-hospitality, by receiving food and drink in our taverna beneath the Parthenon.

The next morning after our first dream group, we will take the Panathenaic Way to the Parthenon, along the way visiting the **Temple of Hephaestus** and the **Stoa**. We will meet our guide at the **Akropolis**, visiting the many temples made in honor of **Athena**, including the Parthenon, the Erechtheion, and the Temple of Athena Nike. We will also visit the **Akropolis**



Temple of Poseidon at Sounion, Photo M. Perdiou

Museum, where we will view many windows into our coming travels, with a collection including statues and references of many of the places we will visit.

We will then make the brief drive to **Sounion**, to witness the sunset from the **Temple of Poseidon**, as well as (skies permitting) the setting conjunction of the Moon and Venus.



Sanctuary of Artemis at Brauron, Photo Brian Clark

The next day, we will drive through Attica to **Brauron**, which lies in the Erasinos valley. At this sanctuary **Artemis** was honored in her role as guardian during early transitions of the life cycle. Whether animal or human, she safeguarded the vulnerable during life's early phases; as a goddess of childbirth she also watched over pregnant women.

during the perilous, peri-natal transition. At Brauron young Athenian girls honoured the transitional period between *parthenoi* and *nymphē*, from girlhood to marriageable woman, through the ritual of 'dancing the She-Bear'. After our visit we will enjoy lunch together at a nearby taverna before returning to Athens, where we will visit the **Benaki Museum**.

Day 4 Athens to Nauplion

In the morning we will depart from Athens, following in the steps of many initiates who walked the 'Sacred Way' to **Eleusis**, site of the Eleusinian Mysteries where for a thousand years the story of **Demeter, Persephone, and Hades** was shared in a manner so profound that it escorted those who participated across the threshold into full initiation.



Cave of Hades at Eleusis, Photo J. Holley

Making our way to the beautiful seaside town of Nauplion, we will make a brief stop at **Nemea**, where **Hercules** faced his first labor, the infamous Nemean Lion immortalized in the constellation of **Leo**, during this time after the heliacal rise of the great star **Regulus**, the Heart of the Lion, when the star is said to walk upon the land. And then continue on for a free evening in Nauplion.

Day 5-6 Nauplion

From our base in Nauplion, we will journey to the great healing **Sanctuary of Asclepius at Epidauros**, the most celebrated healing center of the Classical world. Those seeking cure slept overnight in the *enkoimeteria*, or dream incubation temple, sharing their dreams in the morning with the priests who would be guided by the dream to the way of healing.



Sanctuary of Epidauros, Photo J. Holley

In the afternoon we will take a picnic at the nearby **Heraion of Argos**, sacred to **Hera** and where her cults first arose. It is said that time itself in the Argolid was measured by the names of the line of priestesses of the temple.

The next day, after our dream group in the morning, we will visit the **Heraion of Perachora**, a beautiful sanctuary on the Gulf of Corinth, connected to older and rural cults of the goddess. Along the way we will also visit the town of **Loutraki** and on our way back to our final evening in Nauplion, we will stop by the **Kanathos Spring**, where Hera is said to have bathed each year, and to become a maiden once more.



Heraion at Perachora, Photo J. Holley

Day 7 Nauplion to Olympia

Following our morning dream group, we will depart from the seaside and begin making our way to Arcadia. In the mountains along the way is the sanctuary of Bassae, where we will visit the magnificent **Temple of Apollo** at Bassae, one of the most well-preserved temples due to its relative remoteness in the Arcadian hills. Apparently forgotten for



Temple of Apollo at Bassae, Photo E. Dodwell

many centuries, this lack of frequent footsteps seems to have preserved this homage to the Sun and the god of healing and prophecy. From there, we will proceed on to Olympia, site of the Olympic games, and spend time in the evening orienting ourselves to the centaurs and other wild beings of **Arcadia**.

Days 8-9 Olympia



Grove believed to be sacred to Demeter, Photo J. Holley

Today we will cross into the natural world of Arcadia and hike in **the Foloï Forest**, one of the largest old-growth forests remaining in Europe. The forest was the home of dryads and centaurs, named after **Pholus**, whose prematurely uncorked wine led to the drunken accident when **Hercules** wounded his mentor **Chiron**. We will also walk through the **Gorge of the Centaurs** surrounded by high green walls.

Arcadia was also the place where **Demeter** was said to have wandered and grieved after the abduction of Persephone, and we will visit the **River Ladon**, where it is said she pacified her rage after her encounter with Poseidon.

The next day, after our morning dream group we will visit the complex of the **Archaia Olympia**, the sacred precinct dedicated to **Zeus**, including the stadium and other sites of the Olympic Games. We will visit the **Temple of Zeus, Temple of Hera**, and the **Herakleion Sanctuary**, said to be founded by Hercules in honor of Zeus, under the nearby Hill of **Chronos** his father.



Ladon River, Photo J. Holley

Days 10-11 Delphi



Temple of Athena Pronoia, Photo J. Holley

The next day, after our morning dream group we will take the road from the Peloponnese to **Delphi**, again following in the footsteps of many in the ancient world who sought guidance from the Pythia, stopping for lunch in the seaside town of **Patras**. Just before arrival to the town of Delphi we will follow in the footsteps of the pilgrims by first visiting the **Temple of Athena Pronoia** (**Athena Before the Temple**) where we

will also be able to collect waters from the **Castalian Springs**, where pilgrims cleansed themselves before meeting the oracle. In the evening after dinner we will spend some time in teachings on the Oracles we will be visiting on these final two days of our journey together.

The next morning, we will then proceed to the site of the Oracle, passing by the Omphalos, navel of the world, and then walking the path the ancients took to the Pythia. Following our time at the site we will visit the remarkable **Delphi Museum** and its many treasures, and have a free evening in Delphi.



Temple of Apollo at Delphi, Photo J. Holley

Day 12 Return to Athens

On our final day together, we will spend an extended morning in contemplation of the goddesses and gods, oracles and dreams, we have met across our travels. We will then set out for our Return to Athens. On the way, we will visit the fascinating **Oracle of Trophonios in Levadia**, a storied site where it is said one may access **Lethe**, the river of Forgetting, as well as **Mnemosyne**, the lake of Memory. At our final dinner together at our restaurant in the historical **Plaka**, we will say our farewells just as **Hestia** (Vesta) and **Hermes** (Mercury) meet in conjunction, completing this round of the cycle, and seeding our journeys onward.



Your Guides



Jason Holley - Over the years I've visited Greece cumulatively for several months, in contexts of pilgrimage, education, dance, and romance. Time in Greece connects me sensuously and imaginatively with the mythic mycelium that nourishes the arts of astrology, imagination, and soul. It has also been a place of pleasure, fun, and camaraderie.

The places we visit have memory, and as in dreams, we will find the stories often hiding where we least expect. It is no small thing to connect with land that remembers, with trees whose relatives were there when people first heard the stories on the winds, felt the gods in the forest, and made temples to remind themselves. As we approach and step into them, we too can remember and feel more of our own experience and mystery.

Alongside being a psychotherapist and consulting astrologer, I lead experiential astrology workshops and retreats including storytelling, dreamwork, psychodrama, art-making, and land-based practices in Australia, Europe, and the Americas. I also teach for conferences and programs including UAC, ISAR, NORWAC, FAA-Australia, Southwestern College, Astrology University, Mercury-Internet School for Psychological Astrology, and the Center for Astrology, Myth, and Symbol. <http://jasonholley.net/library>



Gray Crawford is an astrologer whose practice is rooted in relations with the Greek gods, goddesses and daimons whose home we will visit on our tour. For mysterious reasons when I experienced my darkest night of soul at the beginning of my twenties, Greek mythology and astrology emerged as a navigational compass for me to understand the mystery of my own psyche. Much later at the beginning of my forties, after having already established myself as a professional astrologer who had learned how to help others understand themselves through myth and astrology, it was an experience of the living presence of the Greek gods while exploring an exhibit of artifacts from the Antikythera shipwreck that convinced me to dedicate myself to learning the arts of Hellenistic astrology. One full Venus cycle after feeling the noumenal presence of Apollo in a statue, I was elated to be invited by Jason to help guide our tour to many of the sacred sites of Greece. <http://graycrawford.net>

Jason and Gray first met one Jupiter cycle (12 years) ago at an astrology conference. Friends since that time, we share a deep love of myth and a commitment to the symbolic life. Last year, we shared with one another that we had each been urged separately by our mentor-friends Brian Clark and Demetra George to continue their decades-long traditions of leading trips to Greece, and we realized it was time to lead our first trip together. We are excited to share with you this land of myth and dream that has inspired us so deeply for many decades.

Financial Details

USD 5995 total if deposit received before March 15 (**Early-Bird Rate**)

USD 6495 total if initial deposit received after March 15

Optional Single Room Supplement: USD 795

Schedule of Payments

Initial Deposit: USD 895 *before March 15*; USD 1395 *after March 15* [Register with Deposit Here](#)

April 20: USD 2550 (plus single room supplement if applicable)

June 20: USD 2550

Fee includes:

- 12 nights' double occupancy accommodation at 4-star hotels (3-star in Delphi)
- All entrance fees to sites visited
- All guide and driver fees and expenses
- All transportation and associated fees, tolls, portage between sites by deluxe a/c coach
- All tuition/fees for seminar and dream/reflection group sessions
- All breakfasts, 2 dinners including house wine, and 2 picnic lunches
- All current relevant EU, national, and local charges and taxes

Not included: transport to/from Athens airport (easy metro/car); meals except noted.

Questions? Email Jason jason@jasonholley.net