

**U of KY School of Environmental Sciences Alumni and Friends Study Tour:  
Ikaria Greece: “The Island Where People Forget to Die”**

**Travel Dates:** May 29 – June 9, 2019

**Program Description:**

Ikaria, the Greek island, known as “the island where people forget to die,” is the focus on this tour. Ikaria is one of 5 “Blue Zones”, an aging hot spot where people live to be a healthy 100+ years old. The health and longevity of Ikarians is largely due to their lifestyle, which centers around having a reason to live, a focus on family, meaningful social connections, healthy diets, hard work, physical activity and spirituality. Using these lifestyle dimensions as a guide, participants will acquire unique insights regarding the Ikarian lifestyle through various hands-on activities, tours, observation and dialogue with local residents, historians, and professionals who promote the island’s history, health and happy lifestyle. Participants will also enhance their multicultural experience through site visits of historical, cultural, and contemporary significance. The program will start in Athens with a guided tour of the Acropolis and it will conclude on the Greek “glamour island,” Mykonos.

**Learning Outcomes:**

1. Participants will examine how lifestyle components of a community can contribute to the health of people and the communities where they live, learn, work and play.
2. Participants will understand factors that contribute to individual differences in human development, including culture and time.
3. Participants will apply knowledge to create a health-promoting lifestyle that can reduce risk of disease, improve well-being and life quality and enhance longevity.
4. Participants will demonstrate an understanding of how individual health behavior affects others and how personal choices and habits across the lifespan can contribute to prevention, overall healthiness, well-being and longevity.
5. Participants will discover parts of themselves by testing personal ability to adapt to diverse situations and problem-solve while gaining an understanding of a different culture.

**Program Highlights:**

- Experience how lifestyle and location contribute to overall health, well-being and life quality (nature hikes, religious festivals, local honey and olive oil production, wine-making, family life)
- Learn from the island’s oldest and most self-sufficient people through observation and discussion
- Take part in a traditional family life and the island's dedication to community
- Participate in sight-seeing and historical tours
- Free time to relax, take in hikes, wildlife, nature, shop, learn and explore

**Professional Highlights:**

- Cross-disciplinary programming opportunities focused on lifestyle, culture and food
- Diverse tour opportunities to match professional interests and encourage exploration of new focus areas
- Personal and professional growth and development through increased understanding of personal cultural values and biases
- Networking and cross disciplinary opportunities

## TENTATIVE Itinerary: Athens/Ikaria/Mykonos

### **Day 1 (Wednesday, May 29)**

Overnight flight to Athens, Greece

### **Day 2 (Thursday, May 30)**

Arrive in Athens and meet your guide who will be with you in Athens. Athens is the capital and largest city in Greece. It is also one of the oldest cities in the world. A centre for the arts, learning and philosophy, home of Plato's Academy and Aristotle's Lyceum, it is widely referred to as the cradle of Western civilization and the birthplace of democracy. Take a brief orientation drive around the city and drop off luggage at your 4-star hotel. Walk to lunch at a typical Greek restaurant before an afternoon guided walking tour of the Acropolis and Ancient Agora. Check into hotel and enjoy some free time to relax before walking to a group dinner.

*Overnight Athens*

*L, D*



### **Day 3 (Friday, May 31)**

Free day in Athens to enjoy of the many museums, markets and amazing views of the city. Athens is home to several museums and cultural institutions, such as the National Archeological Museum, featuring the world's largest collection of ancient Greek antiquities, the Acropolis Museum, the Museum of Cycladic Art, the Benaki Museum and the Byzantine and Christian Museum. Athens was the host city of the first modern-day Olympic Games in 1896, and 108 years later it welcomed home the 2004 Summer Olympics. Today, you can walk in the modern stadium, run or walk around the track and see many examples of Olympic torches. Other city highlights include the lively Agora-Athens Central Market, getting sandals made near the Monastriaki flea market, exploring the Plaka neighborhood and climbing Mount Lycabettus for exceptional city views. Lunch is on your own.

*Overnight Athens*

*B, D*



#### **Day 4: (Saturday, June 1)**

Depart hotel for airport by bus. Arrive in Ikaria where you will be welcomed by Thea Parikos, our host and inn-keeper. We will stop at the seaside village of Therma to enjoy and experience the thermal springs—be sure to have your swimsuits and a towel handy. Thea will explain the health benefits and history of the spa. There is also a beach where you can dip your toes into the Aegean Sea if you chose. We will stay for a local lunch by the sea. We hope to stop at the island's capital, Agios Kirkios to tour the hospital and talk to the director about healthcare on the island. We will continue to Nas which is about a 1 ½ hour drive. Nas is an idyllic place seemingly frozen in time. We will take time to get settled and have a rest. We will stay in various guest houses/apartments within the village. Dinner will be at Thea's inn where she will cook and talk about Ikaria and the Blue Zone project with you.

#### *Overnight Ikaria*

*B, L, D*



#### **Day 5: Ikaria (Sunday, June 2)**

Our mornings in Nas all begin at the inn overlooking the Aegean sea. We will have farm fresh eggs, yogurt, cheese, honey, homemade marmalade, wild herbal teas and coffee. Today we will visit a traditional Greek church and attend a service. We will also be visiting a bee keeper to talk about the history of honey in Ikaria. You will be able to sample different honeys and see which type you prefer. Then we continue up the mountain to Christos Rahes. This is the main village near Nas. You will have free time to visit the shops and perhaps try a homemade cheese pie (\*lunch on your own). When everyone is ready we will go up a bit higher to the winery of Nikos and Maria Afianes. Our hosts will give us a tour of the winery and explain the history of wine in Ikaria. After our tour we will relax with some wine sampling and appetizers along with interesting conversation with our hosts. Then it's back to Nas for a break before dinner.

#### *Overnight Ikaria*

*B, D*





**Day 6: Ikaria (Monday, June 3)**

After breakfast we will take a walk to the inn’s farm. Goats, chickens, rabbits, gardens... there will be a lot to see. While we are there we can collect whatever is in season to take back with us to Nas to use in our cooking. We will be cooking together today and then enjoying a relaxed lunch. Free time. Dinner. A dietician will talk with us about the Ikarian diet and food programs on the island.

*Overnight Ikaria*

*B, L, D*



**Day 7: Ikaria (Tuesday, June 4)**

We will be visiting an old village in the mountains, Akamatra. We will talk with Theodore of Akamatra, an old villager, who will share with us about his experiences living in Ikaria. There will be additional exploring and local history with our refreshments. Then we will learn about the various steps in the production of olive oil and have a chance to get to know a Greek island well apart from the usual tourist areas. Afterwards we will stop at the beautiful port village of Evdilos. Here, we will have free time to wander, shop and have a snack. Back to Nas for a rest before dinner. Optional drop off in Armenistis (those dropped off will need to walk to Nas-3 miles). Dance lesson after dinner to prepare for tomorrow’s panageria. A historian will discuss the Panageria holiday and traditions.

*Overnight Ikaria*

*B, L, D*



**Day 8: Ikaria (Wednesday, June 5)**

After breakfast it's time for a hike. We will stop at a nice place for a picnic. Have a good rest this afternoon because it will be a late night. Today is the Panageria and we will be going to the festival in the village, Kastanies, for a meal of goat meat, salad and plenty of homemade Ikarian wine. Have your dancing shoes on! Ikaria is famous throughout Greece for "Panagirias", traditional feast days that celebrate the Saints' name days and other religious holidays.

*Overnight Ikaria/B, L, D*



### Day 9: Ikaria to Mykonos (Thursday, June 6)

After breakfast we will pack our things to leave Nas. On the way to the ferry, we will visit a very old monastery. It has an interesting history that Thea will enjoy sharing with you. At the monastery, our hostesses will treat us with homemade loukoumades, something like a doughnut covered in honey and cinnamon. We will also stop in the village of Armenistis for free time and to meet with authorities who tell us about Greek families and social service programs that help strengthen family/traditions. We will drive to the seaside village of Evdilos to catch the ferry for Mykonos. You will be greeted in Mykonos with a coach bus and guide who tell us about the history and people of Mykonos. We will check into our 3-star hotel and walk to dinner.

#### *Overnight Mykonos*

*B, L, D*



### Day 10: Mykonos (Friday, June 7)

After breakfast we will take a guided island tour of Mykonos by coach and with our English speaking guide. We start with a unique experience of the countryside. Our first stop will be the idyllic beach, Ag.Ioannis, with the best view of Delos Island. We will see fishermen and their boats at the small pier, a private chapel and houses built in typical Cycladic architectural style. At the village of Ano Mera, the most traditional place, you can choose to visit the monk monastery, Panagia Tourliani, built in the 16th century, and/or stroll around the square, where you will have the opportunity to enjoy a drink or and ouzo (not included in price) and wish with the local people “stin igia mas” (cheers). The next stop is the Kalafatis beach where there will be time to relax a little and have a coffee or a refreshment (not included in the price), before going back to town. In town, we will explore Mykonos port town by walking into the narrow cobblestone streets, passing by the traditional labyrinth of the old town. We will see the famous wind-mills, walk around the stunning Little Venice neighborhood, visit the Paraportiani church, and Saint Nickolas of fishermen. Somewhere along the walk, we are bound to meet Petros the Pelican, mascot of Mykonos.. After the walking tour you are free continue your private exploration in town. We will walk to dinner and dine as a group with a lecture TBA.

#### *Overnight Mykonos*

*B, D*



**\*Day 11: Mykonos/Athens (Saturday, June 8)**

Breakfast at hotel. Transfer by coach bus with guide to Mykonos airport. Arrive Athens and depart for U.S.  
OR

Arrive Athens around 3:15pm. Check into hotel. Farewell dinner in Athens.

*Overnight TBA*

*B, D*

\*Note: We are looking into flights/possibility of flying straight from Mykonos back to the US to help keep cost down.

**\*Day 12 (Sunday, June 9)**

Flight from Athens to U.S

*B*

**This itinerary is subject to change without prior approval. Please note that if last minute cancellation occurs, a replacement technical visit of equal value to be arranged.**

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**Estimated pricing based on double occupancy, per person.**

UK Employees: \$3,261

Non UK Employees: \$3,282

\*Single supplement: \$950

**Included:**

- ✓ 3 nights Athens, at the Hotel Parthenon (4\*)
- ✓ 5 nights Ikaria, at guest houses in Nas, Ikaria
- ✓ 2 nights Mykonos, at a 3\* superior city hotel
- ✓ A/C dlx motor coach for in-country transportation and travel transfers
- ✓ English speaking assistance for travel transfers
- ✓ English speaking guides
- ✓ Meals as indicated on itinerary (drinks NOT included) B=breakfast; L=lunch; D=dinner
- ✓ Admission to Acropolis and Ancient Agora in Athens
- ✓ Hearing devises for Athens tour on May 30<sup>th</sup>
- ✓ Tips for guides and drivers
- ✓ In-country transportation (flight from Athens to Ikaria; ferry from Ikaria to Mykonos)
- ✓ U of Kentucky required international health insurance
- ✓ All local taxes

**Not included:**

- ✓ International Flights
- ✓ Drinks with meals
- ✓ Alcoholic beverages
- ✓ Airport & hotel portorage
- ✓ Cost of valid U.S. passport
- ✓ Souvenirs
- ✓ Leisure activities and meals on free days
- ✓ Excess baggage fees
- ✓ Hotel charges for incidentals

**RSVP, Registration and Payment Deadlines:**

October 15: RSVP your intent to participate to Sarah Gililand, FCS Staff Support Associate, [s.gililand@uky.edu](mailto:s.gililand@uky.edu)

December 1: \$500 deposit due

February 1: Pay in full

**Questions:**

Contact Amy Kostelic, Associate Extension Professor & Adult Development & Aging Specialist, 859-257-1763 or [amy.kostelic@uky.edu](mailto:amy.kostelic@uky.edu)