



VCU Alumni



CLASSIC EUROPE

2025 GRADUATION TOUR

US DEPARTURE DATE: **MAY 20, 2025**

LAND TOUR START DATE: **MAY 21, 2025**

ROME RETURN DATE: **MAY 31, 2025**

ATHENS RETURN DATE: **JUNE 5, 2025**

LAND PACKAGE FROM: **\$4,285**

Visit our website www.aesu.com/vcu-gradtrip for more details and to book.

START YOUR ADVENTURE

Dear Graduating Student,

Congratulations on your approaching graduation!

As you prepare to become a part of our esteemed alumni family, I invite you to participate in a special travel opportunity designed for new graduates of VCU and select peer institutions.

VCU Alumni is pleased to offer a celebratory tour: Classic Europe. This trip offers the chance to visit Europe's 'must-see' destinations before settling into a new job or graduate school. Experience amazing theater, see great works of art, walk through millennia-old landmarks, swim in the Aegean Sea and bask in the Grecian sun.

In addition to being a great travel value, the Classic Europe trip offers:

- Opportunity for fun, hassle-free travel with fellow grads.
- Insights into other people, places, and cultures that will be a source of personal enrichment.
- Experiences that will broaden your world view and provide an advantage in today's global job market
- Memories for a lifetime and a reward for hard work!

It is our hope that your education does not stop at graduation; rather it will be a lifelong process. VCU Alumni Travel Program is excited to help you transition from student to graduate, offering this opportunity to augment your education. We look forward to welcoming you to our family of alumni, and we hope you'll join us as we experience the world, VCU style.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Bass
Associate Vice President for Alumni Relations
Virginia Commonwealth University

Travel insurance is compulsory. Some schools or alumni associations may offer travel insurance to you at a reduced rate. If not, AESU also offers group travel insurance. Ask our reservations agent for details or visit this link:

<https://www.generalitravelinsurance.com/get-a-quote.html?partner=AESU3922>

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“I LOVED THE FOOD. TRYING TRADITIONAL DISHES REALLY ENHANCED THE EXPERIENCE. OUR TOUR DIRECTOR WAS THE BEST!”

”

BRIDGET CROWLEY



CLASSIC EUROPE

12 DAYS PLUS AN OPTIONAL 5-DAY EXTENSION TO SOUTHERN ITALY & GREECE

COUNTRIES VISITED



PROGRAM ACCOMMODATIONS

This trip has been carefully designed to feature these fantastic inclusions and highlights:



For a glossary of these experiences, visit:
www.aesu.com/aspects-awt



ACTIVITY LEVEL: RELAXED

For more details, please visit:
<https://www.aesu.com/activity-levels-awt/>

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

12-Day Land Package Transportation and Lodging

- 10 nights in superior tourist class hotels or better, 2-share rooms with private bath/shower
- Intra-Europe transportation by air-conditioned motor coach as per itinerary
- Eurostar train from London to Paris
- High speed TGV train from Paris to Southern France

Meals

- 14 meals: 10 continental breakfasts, 4 three-course specialty dinners

Activities & Admissions

- London welcome orientation and pub crawl
- 1-day group tube pass in London
- Guided tours in London, Paris, and Rome, all led by local experts
- Seine River cruise in Paris
- Paris travel card with unlimited access to public transportation system
- The beaches of the French Riviera
- Tuscan experience
- Chianti wine tasting
- Roma Pass (Book early to secure your spot. Spaces may not be available on short notice.)
- See St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City

5-Day Optional Extension Transportation and Lodging

- 5 nights in superior tourist class hotels or better, 2-share rooms with private bath/shower — including overnight on ship from Italy to Greece (4-share cabins)
- All intra-Europe transportation by air-conditioned motor coach and overnight ship as per itinerary

Meals

- 8 meals: 5 continental breakfasts, 3 three-course specialty dinners

Activities & Admissions

- Guided tours in Pompeii and Athens, led by local experts
- Admission to Pompeii archeological site
- Bike rental on the Isle of Poros
- Greek Island stay
- Toga party
- Admission to Acropolis

Optional Excursions

(not included in land package price):

- Paris, France: Fragonard French Perfume Museum visit, French cabaret show
- French Riviera: Excursion to Monte Carlo & Cannes (not during Grand Prix)
- Poros, Greece - Watersports (17-day tour only)



CLASSIC EUROPE ITINERARY

About the Trip!

Celebrate your recent graduation with the ultimate European getaway. The Classic Europe grad trip spans 17 unforgettable days, filled with adventure, culture, and exploration in some of Europe's most sought-after destinations.

From mingling with locals during a London pub crawl to embarking on thrilling adventures in the Greek isles, capturing the grandeur of the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, and delving into history at the Roman Forum and the 2000-year-old Parthenon in Athens, this journey is the perfect blend of excitement, leisure, and cultural immersion.

Rediscover your inner adventurer, create memories, and forge lifelong friendships on this epic European journey.

- DAY 1 FLIGHT TO ENGLAND**
 Embark on your overnight flight to London.
Meals: In-flight
- DAY 2 LAND TOUR START DAY: LONDON**
 Enjoy a free afternoon to relax and unwind. In the evening, meet fellow travelers and your tour director at our welcome orientation followed by a fun London pub crawl.
Meals: In-flight
Inclusions: Transfer from airport to hotel included with purchased AESU group airfare | Welcome orientation | Welcome cocktail | Pub crawl
- DAY 3 LONDON**
 Big Ben, Buckingham Palace, and Westminster Abbey: These familiar names become familiar places on our morning tour of London. During an afternoon at leisure, browse the many food, craft and clothing stalls at popular Camden Market, walk in the footsteps of Harry Potter at Leadenhall Market aka Diagon Alley or take a ride on the London Eye for a birds-eye view of the city and the opportunity to take great photographs. After dusk, consider taking in some Shakespeare at the Globe Theater by the Thames River or attending a West End show.
Meals: Breakfast
Inclusions: 1-day group tube pass, Tour of London guided by a local historian, Personal audio headset, See Big Ben, Buckingham Palace, Westminster Abbey, Tower Bridge and more
- DAY 4 LONDON - PARIS**
 Travel through the "Chunnel" below the English Channel to Paris. Our local expert shows us the Arc de Triomphe, Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame Cathedral and Place de la Concorde, where the guillotine once stood. Tonight, dine on French specialties at our bistro dinner. Afterward, we take a romantic cruise down the river Seine.
Meals: Breakfast | Dinner
Inclusions: English Channel Eurostar train, Tour of Paris guided by a local historian, See the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame Cathedral, Place de la Concorde, Arc de Triomphe and more, See Paris-by-night illuminations, French bistro dinner, Seine River cruise

- **DAY 5 PARIS**
 Enjoy a free day in Paris today. Join your tour director this morning on an optional visit to a French perfumery and museum. Afterwards, consider visiting the Palace of Versailles, Louis XIV's residence with the stunning Hall of Mirrors, the world-famous Louvre, housing the Mona Lisa, Musée d'Orsay, or the Musée National Picasso. Your Paris travel card will provide unlimited public transportation throughout the city (zones 1-3.) This evening you may opt to see a can-can cabaret show at the world-famous Moulin Rouge.
Meals: Breakfast
Inclusions: 24-hour Paris travel card with unlimited access to public transportation system
Optional activity: Optional visit to French perfumery and museum | French cabaret show

- **DAY 6 PARIS – FRENCH RIVIERA**
 This morning, the TGV high-speed train takes us from Paris to Nice, queen resort of the Côte d'Azur. Enjoy your free afternoon on picturesque beaches along the Mediterranean coastline, stroll along promenades lined with chic boutiques, or unwind at a sidewalk café. The thriving local art scene and buzzing nightlife is yours to discover after tonight's brasserie dinner.
Meals: Breakfast | Dinner
Inclusions: High-speed train to Nice | See Promenade d'Anglais, Place Macena and more | French brasserie dinner

- **DAY 7 FRENCH RIVIERA**
 Enjoy a free day on the dazzling French Riviera. Relax on the beach, paddle in the azure sea, or sip on a smooth cocktail beneath swaying palms. Consider exploring Nice to visit the magnificent Palais Lascaris, the Cathédrale de Sainte Réparate and harbors filled with opulent yachts. Or you may opt to join our excursion to Monaco, where Prince Rainier married Hollywood actress Grace Kelly, and glitzy Cannes, known for its famous International Film Festival.
Meals: Breakfast
Inclusions: See the French Riviera beaches & promenades
Optional activity: Excursion to Monte Carlo & Cannes (not offered during Grand Prix)

- **DAY 8 FRENCH RIVIERA – PISA – TUSCANY**
 Our journey takes us along the scenic Côte d'Azur's sun-splashed beaches. We cross the border into Italy and arrive in Pisa with its stunning Piazza dei Miracoli. Take time to admire the Baptistry, the Cathedral, and take selfies in front of the famous Leaning Tower. Now, immerse yourself in the magic of Tuscany. Travel along rolling hills of olive groves and vineyards crowned by castles and ancient abbeys. Renaissance culture is around every corner with hilltop towns unchanged from the Middle Ages. During free time this evening, relax at the hotel or explore the town with your travel companions.
Meals: Breakfast
Inclusions: Private motor coach from the French Riviera to Tuscany | See the scenic Côte D'Azur | Visit to Pisa with its Leaning Tower

- **DAY 9 TUSCANY**
 Savor a day at leisure in the heart of Tuscany, where rolling vineyard-covered hills and picturesque countryside await your exploration. Spend your time meandering through the charming village and basking in the tranquil beauty of this iconic Italian region. Later, join us for a Chianti wine tasting and then savor regional dishes featuring produce and wines direct from the local farms. This region is also known for its fabulous farm-to-table agritourism.
Meals: Breakfast | Dinner
Inclusions: Chianti wine tasting | Tuscan experience | Tuscan dinner

DAY 10 TUSCANY – ROME – VATICAN CITY

This morning we continue our travels south to the capital of Italy. Get ready to soak up Rome's dolce vita lifestyle as we explore the city's picturesque streets and piazzas with our local expert. Ancient icons such as the Colosseum or Caesar's Roman Forum remind us of the city's golden age as the capital of the world. Vatican City with St. Peter's Basilica towering over the square, and colossal cathedrals throughout the city, tell stories of its history as seat of the Catholic Church.

Meals: Breakfast

Inclusions: Tour of Rome and Vatican City guided by a local expert | Personal audio headset | See the Colosseum, Circus Maximus, Pantheon, Vatican City with St. Peter's Basilica and more | Roma Pass with access to Caesar's Roman Forum and Palatine Hill | Unlimited access to local transportation

Important information: Most museums and sights, such as the Colosseum require advance reservations when using the pass. Book early to secure your spot. Spaces may not be available on short notice. The best day for museum visits is day 11 of your itinerary, the free day in Rome and Vatican City.

DAY 11 ROME - VATICAN CITY

A free day in Rome may find you exploring Piazza Navona, climbing the famous Spanish Steps, and tossing a coin into the Trevi Fountain to ensure your return to Rome. Try numerous flavors of the fabulous gelato ice cream or find yourself window-dreaming on Via dei Condotti, one of Rome's fashionable shopping streets. This evening, we cross the Tiber River to Trastevere, one of Rome's oldest neighborhoods, for our fun Italian Pizza Party. Toppings range from a simple drizzle of olive oil, rosemary, and salt, to mushrooms, prosciutto ham and artichokes. Buon appetito!

Meals: Breakfast | Dinner

Inclusions: See Piazza Navona, the Spanish Steps, Trevi Fountain and more | Unlimited access to local transportation | Pizza Party in Trastevere

DAY 12 TRAVEL HOME – OR CONTINUE TO POMPEII & OVERNIGHT SHIP TO GREECE

For some of us the celebratory tour of Europe ends in Rome this morning. Bid farewell to friends and "arrivederci" to Italy before jetting back home with memories to last a lifetime. For the rest of us - sunny olive groves line the way south to Pompeii. Under the shadow of Vesuvius, the volcano that buried this ancient city in 79 A.D., explore the excavated wonders including homes, markets and temples that remain intact, and streets that still bear the marks of chariot wheels from 2,000 years ago. Afterwards, we cross the Italian "boot" and board our overnight ship to Greece.

Meals: Breakfast

Inclusions: Tour of the Pompeii excavations guided by a local expert | Personal audio headset | Scenic overnight ship from Italy to Greece | Transfer from hotel to airport included with purchased AESU group airfare

DAY 13 ISLE OF POROS

After cruising through the enchanting aquamarine waters, our ship arrives in Patras. From there, we'll embark on a breathtaking journey along the stunning Corinthian Sea, ultimately arriving at Galatas and the charming island of Poros. Get ready to embrace three days of pure Greek god or goddess living. Start the adventure with a welcoming drink, then dive into exploring this idyllic island paradise. Tonight, prepare for a Greek culinary extravaganza at a charming local restaurant. Afterward, you might just find yourself dancing the night away, Zorba-style, at a lively local tavern.

Meals: Breakfast | Welcome cocktail | Dinner

Inclusions: Relaxing pool and beach time | Enjoy iconic Greek sunsets | Traditional Greek dinner at a local taverna

- DAY 14 DAY 14 – ISLE OF POROS**

Today is all about having fun on your own terms. Dive into the sparkling waters for a refreshing swim, soak up the glorious sunshine, or get your adrenaline pumping with optional watersports like waterskiing, wakeboarding, parasailing, banana-boating, or tubing.

Meals: Breakfast

Inclusions: Explore the white-washed village center of Poros | Beach and pool

Optional activity: Watersports
- DAY 15 ISLE OF POROS**

During free time today, get ready for some fantastic shopping in the old town center or, more adventurous souls may embark on a thrilling journey to the 6th-century BC ruins of Poseidon's Temple perched atop the island's highest peak. We'll have bicycles at our disposal, opening up new avenues to discover the island's treasures. And as the sun sets, get ready to join the fun at our epic toga party.

Meals: Breakfast | Dinner

Inclusions: Bike rental on the Isle of Poros | Beach and pool | Toga party | Greek island farewell dinner
- DAY 16 ISLE OF POROS - ATHENS**

This morning, we hop on a ferry to Athens. Once we arrive, we'll be in for a treat with visits to the awe-inspiring 2,400-year-old Parthenon, the Temple of Olympian Zeus, and Constitution Square. During free time this afternoon, you might find yourself wandering in the footsteps of legends like Plato, Socrates, and Sophocles, or honing your bargaining skills at the vibrant markets of Monastiraki. And as the sun sets, follow the irresistible sounds of traditional bouzouki music and join us for a spectacular farewell taverna dinner in the Plaka District – Athens' oldest neighborhood, right at the foot of the iconic Acropolis. It's bound to be an unforgettable night of fun and feasting.

Meals: Breakfast | Dinner

Inclusions: Tour of Athens guided by a local expert | Acropolis admission | Greek tavern farewell dinner | Greek music and dancing
- DAY 17 TRAVEL HOME**

With a heavy heart, it's time to bid adieu to Europe and our amazing new friends. As we jet back home, we let the excitement of planning our next alumni adventure fill our thoughts! The world is our playground, and there are countless adventures waiting for us to explore.

Meals: Breakfast | In-flight

Inclusions: Transfer from hotel to airport included with purchased AESU group airfare

TOUR DIRECTORS

Your land package tour includes the services of a professional tour director, who knows this is a trip of a lifetime for you. They are young professionals; multi-lingual and carefully selected graduates from major universities. They are eager to show you the world through the eyes of an adventurer, sharing with you their vast knowledge, as well as interesting little-known facts.

Our qualified tour directors and staff of local experts mean a trouble-free journey with the added security of group travel. We are very proud of our tour directors, therefore it is customary to include gratuity.

Show the tour director and driver your appreciation with a tip. We suggest \$6-7 per person/per day for your tour director and \$4 per person/per day for your driver.

HOTELS

We stay in superior tourist-class hotels or better, all with private bathrooms in 2-share rooms. Our hotels have been specially selected for their European atmosphere, friendly hospitality, and cleanliness. They are centrally located or within a short walk of public transportation, taking you to the landmarks of your choice in the city you are visiting.

All land package rates are based on two people sharing a room. You can book a single-room by paying an additional single supplement of \$1,345 for the 12-day land package or \$1,840 for the 17-day land package. Please note that single cabins are not available on the overnight ship.

If you are a solo traveler and don't want to pay the single supplement, AESU will attempt to arrange a share with a same-gender traveler. If we are unable to arrange a share, the single supplement will be added to your invoice.