

**Pacific Horticulture Present's  
A Mediterranean Garden Montage through Greece  
Garden Tour  
22 April – 4 May 2026**



**Depart from the USA: TUESDAY - 21 April 2026.**

**WEDNESDAY - 22 April: Arrival in Corfu**

Today, you will arrive in Corfu and be met for a private group transfer to your hotel. The group transfer included will be scheduled to align with the majority number of the group's arrivals, likely within a timed window of 13:00-15:00. Your driver will greet you upon arrival and transfer you to your hotel, **Divani Corfu Palace** (or similar) for check-in and time to freshen up before the welcome dinner.

**Accommodation:** Divani Corfu Palace (3 nights, including breakfast and welcome dinner).

<https://divanicorfuhotel.com/>

This evening, enjoy a **welcome dinner** with garden expert Leftris and your tour escort from Pacific Horticulture, where you will be introduced to the highlights of your journey ahead.

**(D)**



## THURSDAY - 23 April: Exploring Corfu's Gardens & Historic Sites



This morning, we will take a **guided walking tour of Corfu's Old Town**, exploring its charming streets and historical landmarks. We will visit the **fortress** before taking a stroll through the **Garden of the People**.

Later, we will visit the private gardens of **Teresa and Barry Taylor** near Danilia Village. Teresa, who has conducted garden tours with the Mediterranean Garden Society, will guide us through their beautifully curated space. A light lunch will be provided today.

In the afternoon, we will visit **Achilleion Palace**, the grand summer retreat of Empress Elisabeth of Austria. If available, a local expert, Magda, will lead us through the estate's magnificent gardens.

The evening is free for us to enjoy dinner on our own in Corfu Town, with recommendations provided by our morning tour guide. **(B, L)**



## FRIDAY - 24 April: Private Garden Tour of Corfu

Today, we will take a deep dive into Corfu's most exquisite private gardens. If available, renowned horticulturist **Jennifer Gay** will guide us through some of her landscape designs, including the breathtaking **Kassiopi Estate**. This estate, perched above the Ionian Sea, showcasing stunning dry garden techniques and a spectacular variety of Mediterranean flora.



For lunch, we will have the unique opportunity to dine with **Rachel Weaving (subject to availability)**, author of *Gardens of Corfu*. Her insights into the region's distinctive gardening styles and challenges will provide a fascinating perspective.

In the evening, for those interested, we will include a **sunset cocktail tour**, offering a relaxing way to end our day before guests enjoy dinner on their own.

**(B, L)**



## **SATURDAY - 25 April: Transfer to Meteora via Zagori**

This morning, we will check out of the hotel and take a ferry to Igoumenitsa Port, crossing to mainland Greece. From Kerkyra, we will drive through the spectacular **Monodendri Village** near Ioannina to take in the beautiful Vicos Gorge from here. A special lunch is planned here today during our exploration.



We will then continue our journey to Meteora, home to the iconic monasteries perched at the top of towering rock formations.

**Accommodation:** Divani Meteora Hotel (1 night, inclusive of breakfast).

<https://divanimeteorahotel.com/>

The evening is free for us to relax and enjoy dinner at your leisure, with access to the hotel's **spa and indoor pool**. Many nearby dinner options of us to dine on our own this evening. **(B, L)**

## **SUNDAY - 26 April: Meteora & Transfer to Pelion Peninsula**



After breakfast, we will visit one of the **monasteries of Meteora**. Depending on the group's fitness level, we will select either **St. Stephen's Monastery**, which is the most accessible, or **Holy Trinity Monastery**, which requires a climb but offers breathtaking views.

Following our visit, we will depart for the **Pelion Peninsula**, stopping en route for lunch on our own in **Lafkos**, a picturesque mountain village known for its charming stone houses, elegant plateia (square) and scenic vistas looking west.

Upon arrival, guests will have time to unwind before gathering for a **hosted dinner at the Lagou Raxi Country Hotel**.

**Accommodation:** Lagou Raxi Country Hotel (2 nights, inclusive of breakfast and one hosted dinner). <https://lagouraxi.com/>

**(B, D)**

### **MONDAY - 27 April: Private Gardens & Leisure in Pelion**

Today, we will explore some of Pelion's most stunning private gardens. Our hosts will guide us through their properties, sharing insights into the unique challenges and rewards of gardening in this lush Mediterranean landscape. One of our garden owners will host a light lunch outside.



In the afternoon, guests may choose to participate in an **optional workshop**, sunbathe by the pool, or stroll down to the beach, providing an opportunity for relaxation and personal enrichment. Dinner is at our leisure in the village, with recommendations provided.

**(B, L)**



## TUESDAY - 28 April: Flight to Crete from Thessaloniki



This morning, we will collect our packed snacks from our wonderful host, check out of our hotel and join our driver to make our way to the airport in Thessaloniki. Here we will board a flight to Chania, Crete. On arrival in Crete, we will join our new coach and driver and make our way to Chania's Old Town. Here we will check into the **Casa Delfino Hotel and Spa** (or similar). Once we have stored our luggage,

we will meet in the lobby with a local guide to take a walking tour of the Old Town. Visiting this area is one of the most enchanting experiences one can have in Greece. With its Venetian, Ottoman, and Neoclassical influences, this coastal town is a blend of cultures and centuries of history. Our guide can make some restaurant suggestions for us too. Some free time after our tour, to get some lunch on our own. Meals to be settled directly.



This afternoon we will regroup and join our driver and Leftris, to make our way to a traditional olive oil farm. Exploring an olive oil farm in Chania, Crete, offers a delightful journey into the heart of Cretan culture and gastronomy. Following our Olive Press Presentation, we will participate in a cooking class and culminate a delightful dinner for ourselves. Prepare traditional dishes using fresh ingredients from the garden and enjoy our creations in a serene setting.

**Accommodation:** Casa Delfino Hotel and Spa (4 nights, inclusive of breakfast).

<https://www.casadelfino.com/> (B, D)

### **WEDNESDAY – 29 April: Exploring Crete with Leftris**



Omalos plateau for the displays of Tulipa bakeri, other rare plants and the view of Samaria Gorge and White Mountains.

Lunch at Xyloskalo taverna (Or similar).

The Botanical Park and Garden of Crete before returning to our hotel.

Dinner on our own in the Old Town this evening.

**(B, L)**

### **THURSDAY- 30 April: Crete's Gardens & Landscapes**

Details of the Crete itinerary will be arranged in collaboration with local expert Leftris. The Crete portion of the trip will include visits to private gardens, botanical sites, and cultural landmarks, offering a comprehensive exploration of Crete's unique plant life and history.



For our lunch today, we include a unique food experience at the taverna of Ntounias, in the village of Drakona south of Chania. Cretan old style cooked food, without any electricity used. All done in wood ovens and open fire.

**(B, L)**

### **FRIDAY – 1 May: Elafonisi with included plant stops along the way.**

Today we will explore Elafonisi, located on the southwestern coast of Crete, is a stunning natural wonder known for its pink sand beaches, shallow turquoise waters, and protected status as a Natura 2000 site. Technically an island, Elafonisi is often reachable by foot through a shallow lagoon, especially during low tide.



Its unique beauty comes from crushed pink shells that tint the sand, making it one of Crete's most photographed beaches. **We may want to pack water shoes in our backpacks today.**



Elafonisi is not only visually captivating but also ecologically vital. The area includes sand dunes, salt marshes, and rocky outcrops, creating microhabitats that support rare and endemic plant species. Due to its fragile ecosystem, walking outside the designated paths is discouraged.

This diversity makes Elafonisi a paradise not just for beachgoers, but also for nature lovers, botanists, and photographers. Conservation efforts are crucial here, as the delicate flora is easily disturbed by foot traffic and climate stress.

Some time at a beach taverna today for lunch on our own. Final night on Crete **(B)**



## SATURDAY- 2 May: Travel to Athens & Vorres Museum

This morning, we will check out of our hotel and make our way to the Chania airport. Here we will fly to Athens and join our coach and driver for a visit to the **Vorres Museum**. Enjoy a tour of its exceptional garden, and grounds with Nektarios Vorres (if not available Leftris will guide). Lunch will be provided on-site, making for a leisurely and enriching experience before heading into the city. From here we will transfer to the **Electra Metropolis Hotel** (or similar).



After checking into the hotel, and storing our luggage, we will meet in the hotel lobby for a guided **Acropolis tour**, exploring the Parthenon and surrounding historic sites. Guests will then have free time in the **Plaka District** for dinner on our own and souvenir shopping.

**Accommodation:** Electra Metropolis Hotel (2 nights, inclusive of breakfast and farewell dinner). <https://www.electrahotels.gr/hotels/electra-metropolis-athens/>

(B, L)



**SUNDAY - 3 May: Athens Gardens & Farewell Dinner:** This morning, we will visit several of Athens' most impressive gardens, with a special highlight being **Sparoza Garden**, a Mediterranean paradise maintained by the Mediterranean Garden Society. A light lunch will be provided during the day.



From the Sparoza Garden, we will join our driver and head down for a visit to the archaeological site of Sounion with time to explore the Poseidon Temple. From here we can return along the coast route, what they call the 'Athens Riviera' and end at the Niarchos site. Return to the hotel.



This evening, we will gather for a **Farewell dinner** with wine. We will celebrate the wonderful experiences we have shared and say our goodbyes. **(B, L, D)**

#### **MONDAY - 4 May: Departure**

Guests will be provided with a one group transfer to Athens Airport for their departing flights. Those leaving at different times may arrange their own transportation as needed. This ends our services. **(B)**



## **LAND-ONLY TOUR PRICE AND DEPOSIT INFORMATION**

(Based on double occupancy and a minimum of 15 guests/ Max 20 guests)

Tour Price per guest: \$10,090.00 for NON-MEMBERS

\$9,990.00 per guest, for Pacific Horticulture Members

Single supplement \$ 1,000.00 pp

To become a Pacific Horticulture Member visit:

<https://pacifichorticulture.org/membership-registration/>

## **TOUR INCLUDES:**

### **Hotels and portorage:**

Divani Corfu Palace (3 nights, including breakfast and welcome dinner)

Divani Meteora Hotel (1 night, inclusive of breakfast)

Lagou Raxi Country Hotel (2 nights, inclusive of breakfast and one hosted dinner)

Casa Delfino Hotel and Spa (4 nights, inclusive of breakfast).

Electra Metropolis Hotel (2 nights, inclusive of breakfast and farewell dinner).

Coach services based on present itinerary within a 12h day (ex: 9am-9pm)

Group Arrival/Departure Transfer by Coach for majority guest arrivals/ departure times (any guests arriving and departing Greece from their international flight will be provided the costed in group transfer that will be decided upon the majority guest's arrival/departure times.) Any other guest may make their own way by taxi to the hotel or request a private transfer to be arranged at an added cost for them.

Breakfast daily, 8 lunches, 4 dinners.

All garden entrance fees and all guiding services.

Local guides and archaeological guides where needed

A Patronage for Pacific Horticulture of \$350

Domestic flights in Economy– Thessaloniki to Chania and Chania to Athens.

**Tour Horticultural Expert,** Eleftherios Dariotis, or Leftris, also known by his online pseudonym "Liberto Dario," is a renowned Greek horticulturist and botanist celebrated for his expertise in Mediterranean flora, particularly salvias and other members of the mint family (Lamiaceae). Raised in Paiania, near Athens, he has significantly contributed to the appreciation and cultivation of Greece's rich botanical diversity. Leftris' passion for plants was ignited during a childhood trip to Chicago, where he was struck by the stark contrast between the local flora and that of his native Athens. This experience propelled him into a lifelong journey of botanical exploration.

He has since become a key figure in identifying and promoting Greece's native plant species, many of which are endemic and adapted to the country's unique climatic conditions. In addition to his fieldwork, Dariotis has shared his knowledge through lectures and tours, including a notable 10-city speaking tour in the United States, where he discussed the alpine flora of Greece and its parallels with North American plant communities. His academic background includes master's degrees in plant biology from the University of California, Davis, and in horticulture from the University of Reading in England. His association with the Sparoza Garden, the flagship garden of the Mediterranean Garden Society (MGS) located near Athens, is particularly noteworthy. Dariotis has been a long-standing friend and contributor to the Sparoza Garden. His involvement includes redesigning plantings to incorporate a diverse range of drought-tolerant Mediterranean species, thereby enhancing the garden's resilience and ecological value.

**Pacific Horticulture Escort:** Saxon Holt, a renowned garden photographer and photojournalist based in Northern California, celebrated for his compelling images that highlight sustainable landscapes and the intrinsic beauty of plants. With a career span of over 30 years, he has contributed to more than 20 gardening books and has licensed thousands of photographs to major garden publishers. Currently, at the heart of Holt's mission, is the Summer-Dry Project, on-going initiative to provide gardeners in summer-dry, mediterranean climates authoritative plant information and inspiring photos that encourage sustainable garden practices. Saxon's association with the Pacific Horticulture Society reflects his commitment to promoting environmentally responsible gardening and his dedication to educating others through both visual art and active participation in horticultural communities. Holt serves on the Board of Directors of Pacific Horticulture. He is actively involved in various initiatives, including serving on the Travel Committee, where he assists in shaping the organization's direction and outreach efforts. As a professional garden photographer, Holt has been a regular contributor to Pacific Horticulture magazine.



**Sterling Tours Escort:** Shannon Cummins is a seasoned travel professional with over two decades of experience in the industry. She currently serves as the Tour Development Facilitator and Tour Escort at Sterling Tours Ltd. In her role, Shannon specializes in curating and leading customized group tours, with a particular focus on garden and cultural travel experiences.

**DOES NOT INCLUDE:**

Hotel Tax: To be paid at checkout by each guest, an approx. €5 - 10 a night, pp

Your hotel incidentals

Any meals not included in the itinerary

Anything not stated as included per itinerary

Laundry services

International Air to Athens

Travel Insurance

Tips: For the step on guides, horticultural guide and drivers, your tour escort, will assist you with these amounts during the tour. For an estimate of cost, a daily tour with an archeological guide, 3 -5 euro per guest is efficient. For the Horticultural guide who is on the tour with the group every day for 8 hrs. a day about 5 – 8 euro per guest per day is efficient and for the drivers 3- 5 euros per guest per day is efficient. The tour escort will keep you advised on the tour and send a collection around. The Tour Escorts from Pacific Horticulture and Sterling Tours LTD do not except tips.

**Terms & Conditions – Please read, sign and return with deposit.**

This information is important. Please read it carefully. Submission of an online or printed Booking Form along with payment of required trip deposit indicates you have read and expressly agree to these Terms and Conditions. If there is something that you do not understand please ask us about it!

**Reservations and Payments** – A non-refundable deposit of \$1,300.00 per guest is required at the time of booking. Written confirmation will be provided upon receipt of the deposit. Balance of payment will be due 90 days before departure. The tour price is based on exchange rates in effect as of May 2025, and are subject to adjustment on the final invoice.

**Number of Guests** - A maximum of 20 guests (this includes the tour escort and guide) per tour can be accommodated. A minimum of 15 guests are required to operate the tour at the quoted price.

Purchase of non-refundable services outside of tour itinerary (such as airline tickets) before the minimum number of guests have registered is at the sole risk and expense of the guest.

**Cancellations** – All cancellations must be made in writing. As noted, final payment is due 90 days prior to departure and is non-refundable. Accordingly, we strongly recommend that you purchase appropriate cancellation insurance.

**Hotels** – Hotels are shown on your itinerary. Sterling Tours reserves the right to change any hotel through any circumstance---the substitute will be of equal or higher quality.

**Scheduled Activities** – Every effort will be made to provide such services as listed, but where unavoidable circumstances necessitate changes, the best substitute alternatives will be made at the discretion of Sterling Tours, the local escort, or the ground operator without financial compensation to tour members.

**Service Fees & Taxes** – Today there are frequently service charges and taxes imposed by hotels, suppliers, and governments. These fees and taxes are included to the extent possible, but where pre-payment is not allowed the amounts concerned must be paid locally by tour members.

**Travel Documents** - A passport valid for at least 6 months after the last date of this tour is required for this trip.



**Baggage** – Sterling is not responsible for loss, theft or damage to your baggage---travel insurance is strongly recommended to protect against loss. Guests are responsible for airline and government-imposed baggage regulations and fees.

**Exclusions** – Your arrangements exclude airfare, passports, visas, excess baggage charges, items of a personal nature such as laundry, communication expenses, room service, meals not specified in your itinerary, optional sightseeing and other excursions, and any items not listed in your documents.

**Travel and Trip Cancellation Insurance** – We strongly recommend that you purchase Travel Insurance. This decision to book insurance is at the guest's discretion and will be "as is" between the guest and their selected agency. Sterling Tours LTD shall not be held liable for any insurance claims resulting from usage of the product.

**Physical Capabilities** - The tour includes a SIGNIFICANT amount of walking, FREQUENT use of stairs and steeply sloped pathways on uneven or unpaved surfaces. Some of the places we will be visiting can only be seen on foot with no other access possible. Guests with limited mobility MUST consult with Sterling prior to tour registration.

**Responsibility Clause** – Sterling Tours – the “Operator”, CEO, Michael Lee, Group Facilitator and Tour Escort, Shannon Cummins, and/or agents or representatives, act only as facilitators for the various companies involved in providing included visits and services. They assume no responsibility or liability in connection with the service of any means of conveyance which may be used either whole or in part in the performance of its duty to the passenger. Likewise they will not be responsible for any act, error or omission or for any personal injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, irregularity or inconvenience which may be occasioned by reason of any defect in any vehicles, or through any act, neglect or default, or any company or person engaged in carrying out the purpose for which tickets or coupons are issued, whether negligent or not, including, but not limited to, any act of God, terrorism or war. In the event it becomes necessary or advisable for the comfort or well-being of passengers, or for any reason whatsoever, to alter itinerary or arrangements, such alterations may be made without penalty to the Operator. The right is reserved to withdraw any or all tours should the condition's warrant, also to decline to accept or retain passengers as members of the tour. Legal proceedings against the Operator may be instituted only in a State or Federal Court within the County of San Diego, State of California, and any claim involved in such proceedings shall be decided in the County of San Diego, State of California. Any legal proceedings against the Operator must commence within one year following the date of tour completion.

Neither the Operator nor Shannon Cummins nor any organization involved in the tour shall in any case be liable for compensatory damages and you hereby waive any right to punitive damages.

Please sign you have read and agreed to these terms and conditions:

X\_\_\_\_\_

**Sterling Tours LTD - CST# 2023849-40**

**306 West El Norte Pkwy Suite N #316**

**Escondido, CA. 92026**

## **BOOKING FORM**

IMPORTANT: Submitting this form and paying the tour deposit confirms you have read, signed and accepted the Terms and Conditions for this tour. Please review and make sure you understand the terms and conditions before registering.

**RESERVATION FORM: PLEASE COMPLETE ONE FORM PER PERSON TRAVELING.**

**Full Name as on your passport:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name you prefer to be called: Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Dr:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Birth:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Passport #** \_\_\_\_\_

**Issue Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Expires:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Country:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email: Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_ **Country** \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contact Name and Phone #** \_\_\_\_\_



**Special Food or Physical Requirements:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Planning to arrive early or stay after the tour?** \_\_\_\_\_

**HOTEL ROOM** Please circle appropriate room type:

Double Room/ One Large Bed/ Double Room, Two Beds (where possible, some doubles in Europe are continental kings with sewn mattress but two duvets)

**Sharing room with:** \_\_\_\_\_

Single Room, I am willing to share: (Y/N)

(We will attempt to find a roommate, but if unsuccessful, the single supplement will apply)

Single Room, not sharing: (Y/N)

## LAND-ONLY TOUR PRICE AND DEPOSIT INFORMATION

(Based on double occupancy and a minimum of 15 guests/ Max 20)

Tour Price per guest: \$10,090.00 NON-MEMBERS

\$ 9,990.00 for Pacific Horticulture Members

Single supplements are \$ 1000.00 pp

A non-refundable deposit of \$1300.00 per guest is required to register for the main tour. This must be submitted with your booking form and signed and agreed Terms and Conditions document.

Travel Insurance is highly recommended. This decision to book insurance is at the guest's discretion and will be "as is" between the guest and their selected agency. Sterling Tours LTD shall not be held liable for any insurance claims resulting from usage of the product.

If paying deposit by credit card, please return this completed form by email or post.

Signature X\_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Type Accepted: Visa, Mastercard, American Express

Name as stated on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit card #: \_\_\_\_\_

EXP: \_\_\_\_\_ Security Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Billing address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Checks should be payable to Sterling Tours LTD and mailed with this form to the address below.**

Sterling Tours LTD - 306 West El Norte Pkwy Suite N #316 - Escondido, California 92026

C/O: Group Development; Shannon Cummins

**Feel free to contact the Group Developer/ Facilitator/ Tour Escort, Shannon Cummins with your questions or concerns.**

Telephone: 1 800 976 9497 ext. 13 OR Email: Shannon@sterlingtoursltd.com