

# GREECE

## COURSE DETAILS

The land of Greece is located on the continent of EUROPE and is infused with ancient mythology. It is made up of a series of idyllic islands that are surrounded by jet blue seas and covered in dainty white buildings



The capital city of Athens, has a population of over 3 million people. Dominating the skyline is the Acropolis which means "high city", is one of the most famous ancient sites in the world and is made from glittering marble.



The Temple of Poseidon is made entirely of white marble and built to honour the God of the Sea, Poseidon. Built in 444 BC, it is a vision of gleaming white columns assisting sailors in ancient know they were nearly home when they saw the first glimpse of white.



Santorini is also known as the island of Thira. It's most recognised for its picture postcard good looks, covered in traditional Cycladic homes which gleam white under the hot Greek sun and contrast beautifully with the deep blue seas and churches.

### EXTRA FACTS

- Greece has about 9,000 miles of coastline
- The first Olympic Games took place in 776 B.C
- Greece enjoys more than 250 days of sunshine -or 3,000 sunny hours- a year
- There are more than 2000 islands in the Greek territory, but only 170 are populated
- The Acropolis of Athens was a runner-up for the New 7 Wonders of the World

# JAPAN

## COURSE DETAILS

Japan is a string of islands on the eastern edge of ASIA, with four main islands; Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu. It is almost completely covered with mountains and the highest peak (and most famous) mountain, is Mt Fuji. One hundred million people live in what is a pretty small space.



Tokyo, Japan's busy capital city and home to nearly 14 million people mixes ultra modern neon-lit skyscrapers with traditional historic temples.



The magical cherry blossom festival (hanami) celebration is centuries old and held throughout Japan with picnics being held under a cherry blossom (sakura) tree in bloom.



Sapporo is the capital of the northern island of Hokkaido and known for being one of the most exciting cities in this part of Japan. Home to around two million people, the city is famous for its annual Sapporo Snow Festival featuring enormous ice sculptures from all over the world. The 1972 Winter Olympics were held in the mountains.

### EXTRA FACTS

- Japan consists of nearly 7,000 islands
- It is good manners to slurp your noodles
- There is a Rabbit Island in Japan made up of a curious, big-eared population
- Japanese trains are some of the most punctual in the world – the average delay is 18 seconds

# NEW ZEALAND

## COURSE DETAILS

New Zealand is an island country in the southwestern Pacific Ocean, consisting of two main landmasses, the North and South Island, with more than 700 smaller islands. It covers a total area of 268,021 square kilometres, with a population of just over 5 million people.



We'll visit some small towns located in the Otago region of Te Waipounamu / South Island and steeped in history and charm. The reflective Lake Hayes has panoramic views of the surrounding mountains and is loved by runners, cyclists and photo buffs too.



Arrowtown is charming and quirky, an historic gold rush village nestled beside the sparkling Arrow River and below magnificent mountains. A walk down Arrowtown's heritage main street is a journey back in time, while the hills and rivers that teemed with gold mines a century ago are now a favourite of outdoor adventurers.



Queenstown was carved out of the land by glaciers, rivers and lakes, but it has been shaped by innovative adventurers and pioneers from all over the world who made this place home. Sitting next to Lake Wakatipu and surrounded by snow capped mountains, Queenstown is a great place to get outside and enjoy nature all year round.

### EXTRA FACTS

- The highest peak in Otago is Mount Aspiring / Tititea
- Lakes Wakatipu, Wanaka, and Hawea form the sources of the Clutha, the largest river (by discharge) in NZ
- The population of Otago is 219,200, which is approximately 4.7 percent of NZ's total population

# TURKEY

## COURSE DETAILS

**Turkey straddles two continents, ASIA and EUROPE. It is a large peninsula surrounded by three seas; the Black Sea, the Mediterranean and Aegean Sea and is home to over 81 million people.**



The magical city of Istanbul straddles two continents; Asia and Europe, is rich in history and culture. The Grand Bazaar is one of the largest and oldest covered “malls” in the world, with more than 4000 shops. The Hagia Sophia is a great architectural beauty and was designed by a physicist, mathematician and geometrician which is why it has so many amazing angles and shapes in it’s design!



Cappadocia is a beautiful region in central Turkey, best known for its unique moon-like landscape, underground cities, cave churches and houses carved in the rocks. With hundreds of hot air balloons soaring through the sky during sunrise every morning, it is like a fairytale scene.



Pamukkala, meaning “cotton castle” in Turkish, gets its name from the cascading white pools with bright turquoise water and is recognised as one of the most beautiful natural places in Turkey and a truly wondrous natural phenomena.

### EXTRA FACTS

- The capital is Ankara
- Soccer is the most popular sport
- The story of Santa Clause originated in Turkey
- Turkey is the largest producer of hazelnuts
- One of the Mediterranean's primary sea turtle nesting beaches is in Turkey

# ITALY

## COURSE DETAILS

**Italy is on the continent of EUROPE with a long Mediterranean coastline. It comprises some of the most varied and scenic landscapes on Earth (from rugged mountains to pristine beaches) and is often described as a country shaped like a boot. The population is close to 59 million people.**



Rome became the capital city of Italy in 1870. It was the first city in the world to record a population of 1 million people. There were over 200 ampitheatres in the Roman Empire, the largest was the Colosseum, in the centre of the city that held up to 85,000 spectators. Law in Rome allows cats to live without disruption in the place they were born, so wild cats can be seen climbing the walls of the Colosseum.



Modern Rome has 280 fountains, one of the most famous being the Trevi Fountain. Nearly 700,000 euros worth of coins (about \$1.2 million NZ dollars) are tossed into the fountain each year and the proceeds are donated to help those in need.

Rome also has a museum dedicated entirely to pasta!



The Pantheon in Rome is the most unique Roman building that survives, it is the only one of its kind in the world! It is famous for its enormous, unsupported concrete dome with a huge hole in the middle.

### EXTRA FACTS

- Italy is the fifth most visited country in the world
- All three of Europe's active volcanoes are in Italy
- Italians invented pizza in Naples
- Italy has the most UNESCO World Heritage sites in the world.

# CHINA

## COURSE DETAILS

**China is on the continent of ASIA. Asia is the largest of the five continents of the world shared by about 50 other countries like Russia, India, Pakistan with China being the largest with a population of more than 1.4 billion people**



The Great Wall of China spans across 15 regions in north China. Built 2,700 years ago to protect China from attacks by enemies with over 7,000 watchtowers it has a total length of 21,196.18 km, equal to half the length of the Equator. Beijing (meaning Northern Capital), China's capital city for over 700 years, is a mix of ancient temples like the Forbidden City and very modern architecture like the CCTV Tower.



The Terracotta Army, in Xi'an, was discovered in 1974 by a farmer digging a well. This pottery led to the discovery of the first warrior of the famous Terracotta Army. Upon excavation came the discovery more than 2,000 warriors and horses, with an estimated 6,000 still underground (and no two are the same).



The beautiful Yinziyan (Silver) caves, located in Yongshuo County, in the Guangxi Region, stretch over 2km and through 12 mountains. Its inside temperature is a constant 26 deg Celsius throughout the year and are filled with stalactites of different ages, crystal clear like diamonds, sparkling, known as the world's cave wonders.

### EXTRA FACTS

- Giant pandas are the Chinese national animal - bamboo accounts for 99% of their diet
- Ice cream was invented in China (not Italy) 4,000 years ago
- On average a new skyscraper is built every 5 days!
- It is the 4th largest country by area in the world and its extensive railway network could loop the earth, TWICE!