



Real Break is a pan-orthodox program of National Orthodox Christian Fellowship, SCOBA.

2010 Greece Trip Preparation Info Every trip participant please read!

Brief info about Greece

The project will take place in Central Greece, near the city of Karditsa. This is an area rarely visited by the average tourist from abroad. However, the mountainous terrain attracts the few, who seek hard enough, to find areas unspoiled by a deluge of tourists.

The team will be based in the sixteenth century monastery of the Twelve Apostles, known by the locals as "Red Church," just outside of Karditsa. Twelve Apostles works closely with St. George Monastery near Mavromati. St. George Monastery is famous for housing one of the four icons of the Virgin Mary associated with St. Luke the Evangelist. This monastery is one of two historic monasteries in the local Diocese which have been recently reopened. The other, near the village of Katafigi, is the sixteenth century monastery, Moni Petras. Moni Petras is famous for its wonder-working icon of the Virgin Mary. Both sisterhoods of St. George and Twelve Apostles, as well as the brotherhood of Moni Petras are international in character consisting not only of Greeks but people from various other countries such as the United States, Russia, Germany, Georgia, England, South Africa and Israel, to name a few. Most members of both monasteries speak English at least as a second language. The team will be working with all three of the monasteries on any tasks that they need our assistance.

Even though this mission will be taking place during the Great Lent, the hosts will do all in their means to offer genuine Greek hospitality, as well as the opportunity to participate in their daily lives of prayer and work. The monastics at these three monasteries are wonderful people. They are looking forward to the team's arrival. They have plenty of plans to keep you busy, but will also make sure you learn and experience Orthodoxy in a truly unique manner, one that cannot be experienced anywhere else.

Activities

It will be the goal of the Real Break team to help the monasteries face the material challenges involved in the rebuilding and the rehabilitation of long neglected facilities and properties. There will be reconstruction and renovation projects.

There will also be excursions to nearby places of interest such as Lake Plastira and the world famous monastic center known as Meteora, where the monasteries are built on the tops of precipitous columns of rock, which are the only such geological formations of their kind in the world. The last night will be spent in Athens, enabling us to get to the airport in a timely manner and to enjoy some of the splendor of this great city.

Sample day in Greece

7:00 AM	Service (Some English will be used. Attendance not mandatory.)
8:30 AM	Light Lenten Breakfast
9:00 AM	Work (Painting, logging, gardening projects, spring cleaning tasks requiring many hands, grounds clean-up, re-organization of spaces in light of renovation and construction in process, recreational project with handicapped children, are examples of work that the team might encounter at the monastery and two convents which will be hosting the team. Some people will also probably help with clean-up, cooking, and/or setting up for the meals.)
1:30 PM	Lunch
2:30 PM	Work
5:30 PM	Supper
6:00 PM	Great Compline
7:00 PM	Tying up work projects or other group activities. At least one evening you will have the chance to speak with sisters and/or fathers, Q&A, etc.
9:00 PM	Bell for silence. End of the active day. Personal time, showers, rest, etc.

Trip Cost:

\$1750 USD. This cost includes the international flight, transportation, lodging, meals, materials and sightseeing; however, it does not include the domestic flight to and from New York (JFK). If you fundraise over the \$1750 trip cost, OCF will reimburse your domestic flight up to the overage amount fundraised.

Travel to Greece

Each participant will be responsible for making their own domestic travel arrangements and e-mailing this information to realbreak@ocf.net. For information on flight reimbursements, please see Real Break policies. The international flight to Greece will leave JFK at 5:00 PM on February 26, 2010 and will come back to JFK at 1:55 PM on March 8, 2010. Please **book your flight to New York (JFK) on Friday, February 26th, 2010 before 2:00 PM and out of JFK on March 8th, 2010 after 5:00 PM.** Proceed to the gate of our departing flight, where the team will assemble. The trip leader will let you know about the international flight. If your domestic flight does not arrive in time to catch the international flight, OCF is not responsible for your flight arrangements.

The OCF Office will book your international flight to and from Greece. In addition, if you need a hotel room near the JFK airport on March 8th, please e-mail us at realbreak@ocf.net and contact your trip leader. We will fly to Greece as a group and be met at the airport by their staff.

Living Conditions

We will be staying at the monastery. We must remember that we will be guests, and not just ordinary guests, but servants who have come to give of our time and resources to help out their community. Bedding will be provided for us. No sleeping bag is needed. We will have availability to hot showers daily. However, please remember that we must be flexible.

Immunizations:

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommend that you receive/be up to date on the following immunizations: measles/mumps/rubella (MMR vaccine), diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DTP vaccine), polio, chicken pox (or varicella), and influenza. In addition, hepatitis B is recommended for travel to Greece. These shots are available through a family physician or a public health clinic (generally, clinics are much less expensive). These shots are a one-time immunization and if you plan to do future traveling it is worth getting them now; many other travel destinations require the same immunizations. Begin getting your shots several months before your departure. If you have any further questions consult the website for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov).

Entry and Exit Requirements

A valid US passport is required to enter and depart Greece. Many people, including some U.S.-based airline employees, mistakenly believe that this requirement is not enforced, but US citizens returning to the United States from Greece are not allowed to board their flights without valid US passports. Certificates of naturalization, birth certificates, driver's licenses, and photocopies are not considered acceptable alternative travel documents. Non US citizens must check Visa requirements for entry and exiting Greece.

Emergencies

In case of emergency during your trip, OCF will monitor their phones:

1-800-919-1623

Also, your trip leader will be contacting you with his phone number in case you have problems with your arrival.

Clothing:

Mission work through the Orthodox Church has always been an effort to bring the Gospel of Christ to all people through meekness, and humility. Therefore everything that we do or wear presents an image of who we are and what we are doing. T-shirts with suggestive, crude, or derogatory language will draw negative attention to your group. Please do not bring them.

When traveling in Greece, and particularly into monasteries and churches, women must wear long skirts and respectable shirts that cover their shoulders, while men must wear long pants and respectable long-sleeve shirts. As you will travel to various religious and historical sites in one

day, it is suggested that women bring a wrap-around skirt or sarong to wear over your clothes and carry on all trips. This will allow you to travel comfortably in pants, but also make a quick change and enter into any monastery or church while you are traveling. Furthermore, women should bring skirts/sarongs and men should bring pants that they are willing to get dirty to wear while working at the monasteries. "Work clothes" means clothes that they're willing to get dirty or abused!

Although our destination is Greece, the weather in March is not like summer weather on the Greek Islands. Last year's group encountered weather in the 40-60 degree range. Please pack warm clothes since the rooms might not be heated. However, it can get warmer, so be prepared for a variety of weather.

Another reminder, be sure to pack at least 1 extra set of clothes in your carry-on just in case your suitcase gets lost for the first day or two.

TO BRING:

- Work clothes (we suggest jeans and t-shirts)
- Work shoes or sneakers (no sandals or open-toed shoes are to be worn while working)
- US Passport
- Sunscreen
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- Warm clothes for evening and night
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Camera (bring at your own risk)
- Sufficient clothing
- Sunday church clothes (Nothing too dressy is required, but jeans and t-shirts are not acceptable. Women must wear skirts/dresses in church.)
- Towels and washcloths
- Flip-flop sandals for showers
- Personal toiletries
- Holy Bible
- Notebooks, pens, etc.

DO NOT BRING:

- Alcoholic Beverages
- Drugs (prescription and over-the-counter drugs are allowed but must be kept in their original containers)
- Mp3 players, etc.
- Curling irons, blow dryers, etc.