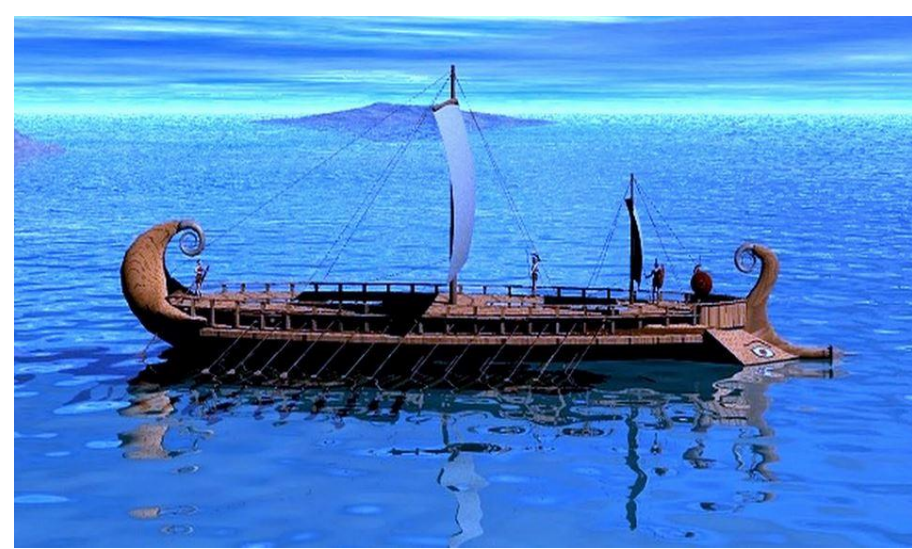


THE ARGONAUTICA

AFTER APOLLONIUS OF RHODES



Argo ship of the Argonauts

Join us on a spectacular full day tour exploring both sides of the Pelion peninsula (east and west), having the chance to admire both the Aegean sea and the Pagasitikos gulf, a place where the legendary Jason and the Argonauts started their sail to the edge of the known world in search of the Golden Fleece. A mythical mountain, home of the mighty centaurs, birthplace of Achilles, mythical hero of the Trojan War, greatest warrior in Homer's epic poem "Iliada".



Centaur Chiron educating young Achilles



We depart at around 09:00 from **Volos** by bus to famous **Milies** village. We shall have the chance to walk the rails of the legendary **Little Train of Pelion** (est.1903) designed and constructed by the Italian engineer Evaristo de Chirico, father of the world famous surrealist painter and sculptor Giorgio De Chirico (born 1888 in Volos). We shall also visit the historic **church of the Archangels** (est.17th century) characterized by its impressive frescoes and the magnificent hand carved wooden temple covered with gold leaves. The church is also well known for its superb acoustics. As a highlight, we shall also visit the **historic public library**, one of the oldest in modern Greece (est.1814) founded by the 3 major advocates-scholars of greek Enlightenment Mr Gazis, Mr Konstantas, Mr Filippidis, all born in Milies. In the beginning it was an academy and it played a significant role during the 1821 revolution, preserving a most valuable archive of books, scientific instruments and maps. In the two-floor building, there are more than 3,500 rare books and historic relics, the oldest one dating back in 1497. Among others there are 17th-18th century manuscripts, ledgers, stamps, personal items belonging to the 3 founders of the original school. The library also houses the historic flag that Mr Gazis raised to declare the revolution against the Turkish occupation in 1821.

Then the bus will take us to the eastern side of Pelion mountain (the Aegean side) where we shall visit the famous **Tsagarada** village to admire its marvelous square with the over **1000 years old plane tree** (one of the oldest trees in the world, a living nature's monument) with a circumference of 14 meters!!! As a bonus, we shall finally visit the magnificent stone building of **Nanopoulos school of economics** (est.1909) which served as the primary-high school-lyceum of the area till 1988. It is one of the most iconic buildings in Pelion mountain. This is why UNESCO declared it as a work of art in 1985. We will have lunch and at, approximately, 18:00 we depart by bus to Volos city (some 60 km distance – 1 hour drive). The exact time and place of departure from Volos to be announced during the conference.



IDEA

In case we get lucky and there is a scheduled steam train ride either on Saturday the 8th or Sunday the 9th of April, it could be a fantastic opportunity for us to change the tour program and board the historic Little Train of Pelion for an unforgettable 90 minute ride, of the most scenic ones in Europe! (Greek railways will let us know by March on this possibility)

Construction of this legendary railway line began in December **1894** and one year later, on October 12th, the first section, Volos - Lehonía, covering a distance of 13 Km, was officially operated.

In **1900** the railway line was extended up to Milies village and by **1903** this section had been completed. The line from Lehonía to Milies is **16 Km** long, having the narrowest gauge in Europe (only 60 cm !). Technically, the work was extremely difficult because of the many bridges (6 stone bridges with two, three, four and five arches and one iron bridge), protective walls, tunnels, aerial pedestrian bridges, all masterpieces of engineering, representing the aesthetic power of the period, when engineering was sensitive to and in perfect harmony with the environment.

Today, after 25 years of silence, the little train puffs up Pelion mountain once more at 25 Km per hour, thanks to the strenuous efforts of its friends. The passengers are able to enjoy the fantastic views of the Pagasitikos gulf from the mountain, and also enjoy taking photos of the magnificent bridges; the five-arched bridge, or the sturdy iron bridge, of the unique ones in Europe.





Tsagarada village



Famous 1000 years old plane tree in Tsagarada

Tsagarada is one of the oldest and most appealing villages of east Pelion (altitude 500 m). It was founded in 1500 ad in a wild chestnut forest. Set in a panoramic position in a lovely hillside area, it offers amazing views over the deep blue Aegean sea. It is harmoniously integrated in lush vegetation with magnificent mansions, traditional cobbled paths, stone-built fountains and beautiful squares.

Initially Tsagarada used to be a seaside village, located at the region of Palaiokastro, next to the beach of Fakistra (7 km away). For security reasons, however, given that it was the era of massive attacks from pirates, the village "moved" higher up in the mountain, where it is located until today.

Tsagarada perfectly combines both the mountain landscape and the splendid beaches of the **Aegean** Sea, making it a very attractive year round holiday destination, offering the visitor a unique, unforgettable sense of relaxation and joy.



Traditional Pelion mansion – Milies village



Unspoiled Fakistra beach listed by "The Guardian" in the top 10 european beaches reached on foot (Aegean sea – Tsagarada)

FULL DAY “PELION WEST TO EAST” OPTIONAL TOUR INFO

WHEN : Saturday 8th or Sunday 9th of April 2017 at, approx, 09:00 (exact time to be finalized later on)

PRICE PER PERSON: 45 euros (only cash paid at the conference reception desk)

WHAT IS INCLUDED :

-Bus Transportation Volos-Milies-Tsagarada and return to Volos (some 140 km in total)

-Sightseeing with a local guide.

-3 course lunch menu at a traditional restaurant in Tsangarada village (Choice of beer or house wine or soft drinks included. Vegetarian meals can be arranged, please let us know in advance)

NOT INCLUDED : one way steam train ticket Ano Lehonia-Milies (90 min ride at 10 euros per person)

MINIMUM PARTICIPANCY : 30 persons

REGISTRATION - QUERIES : Via e-mail to Mr Stamatis Vassalos : stamvassalos@gmail.com by

Monday the 6th of February 2017.

So bring on your cameras, your friendly spirit and we shall all enjoy an unforgettable time!