

A sea Odyssey



Μεσόγειος - Η Οδύσσεια μιας θάλασσας

Athens 22 September 2018

Dear Friends!

In less than a month we will be welcoming you in Athens for the 16<sup>th</sup> Mediterranean Gathering / 5<sup>th</sup> Southern Europe Gathering.

We are very happy to inform you of the participation of 197 members from 17 countries (Algeria, Belgium, Cyprus, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Libya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Morocco, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Uganda, United Kingdom) and of more than 80 members from Greece. We are especially honored to have with us the Chairman of ISGF, Mr. Mathius Lukwago, as well as Mr. Mario Bertagnolio, member of the ISGF World Committee.

With this letter we wish to give you some information, useful to remember while preparing your luggage for both the Gathering and the Post Tour.

1. As we have already informed you, we will be waiting for you at the airport for transfer to Hotel TITANIA. To avoid complications, if you have not yet sent details of your arrival and departure times, please do so by filling-in the attached form. By all means please do inform us of any changes that might occur in your flights.
2. Friday, October 19<sup>th</sup> is dedicated to registration and finalization of any pending issues. **At this point we would like you to note that as of 1.1.2018 the payment of a "Hotel Tax" is applied in Greece as is the case in all other European Union countries. This tax is payable directly to the hotel by the visitor at check-in and amounts to € 3 per room per day. Since this provision was issued after we sent you the cost of participation in 2017, we could obviously not have included it. So, please calculate the amount you have to pay when you arrive at the hotels in Athens and Kalamata for the Post Tour.**
3. On that day we will all be there with you to provide any information to those of you who wish to take a walk in Athens or go for lunch out of the hotel (the meals of this day are not included in your participation fee) or visit some place in the city. A tourist guide of Athens and Attica will be given to you upon your arrival and registration.
4. The Opening ceremony will take place on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> October, in the morning, and the whole day will be dedicated to the Gathering plenary session, in the hotel premises.
5. The weather in Greece at the end of October, particularly in Athens and the Peloponnesus, is usually still quite pleasant, with an average temperature of 20 ° -22 ° C. Keep this in mind for your clothes. Do not forget to bring along your hat, comfortable shoes, sun cream and why not a

swimsuit and a towel. Who knows, we might get to swim in the sea. An umbrella might also be useful for the sun or for a casual rain shower.

6. What to wear at the plenary and outings: as we have decided not to make a special scarf for the Gathering, we suggest you wear your uniform if available or the white polo shirt with the ISGF scarf and woggle.

7. Those of you who wish to participate in a mild sporting activity prepare yourselves for a surprise at Marathon, on Sunday October 21. Bring along your sporting suit; you will not regret it!

8. After Marathon, 12 workshops on various themes will be organized at the KONAKIA Camping and Training Center, for all tastes and desires. On the day before you will be asked to sign up in which one of these you would like to participate. We are sure you will enjoy this experience.

9. The evening of Monday October 22 will feature music from the Mediterranean. However, we would very much like to include music or dances from all participating countries. You could perhaps present something traditional from your country (no Scout or Guide songs or dances) if possible for not more than 5 minutes, and it would be nice if you would be wearing your traditional costume.

10. For the farewell night on Tuesday October 23, we are preparing a party with modern or slightly older live music. So, dress up and get ready to dance.

11. If you wish to claim the organization of the next, 17<sup>th</sup> Mediterranean Gathering / 6<sup>th</sup> Southern Europe Gathering, please let us know as soon as possible so as to adjust the program accordingly. Cyprus has already given notice. The presentation should not exceed ten minutes!

12. If you happen to have used stamps in good condition, we urge you to bring them with you in order to forward them, after consulting the World Bureau, to the Stamp Bank.

13. Our volunteers, Scouts and Guides, young and less young, are our greatest asset. They will be helping and guiding you with the greatest pleasure. You will recognize them from their orange scarf. They speak different languages and are ready to be with you at any time, to make your stay in Athens more enjoyable and as interesting as it may be.

### **Post-Gathering Tour in Peloponnesus**

Peloponnesus is full of unique destinations. We have included an interesting selection of places in this tour, yet without tiring you.

We will take off in Athens on Wednesday October 24, after breakfast, the final destination being the ELITE Hotel in Kalamata, where we will spend 3 nights, half-board (dinner). The choice for the rest of the meals all through the Post Tour will be yours, depending on where we are according to the program.

On the first day, on our way to Kalamata, we will visit the Ancient Olympia archaeological site, the place where the Flame begins its journey before the Olympic Games, as well as the local Museum. Arriving in Kalamata we will be welcomed by the local Fellowship.

On the second day, Thursday 25 October, we shall go to Pylos in the morning to visit the 16th century "Niokastro" castle; then to Gialova, a seaside town in the Western Peloponnesus. In the afternoon, in the city of Kalamata, we can visit the "VGKarelias Collection», a collection of greek traditional costumes. The city center also offers many other places of historical interest. A surprise awaits you at the beach later in the evening.

On Tuesday, Friday, October 26, we will be visiting the Medieval city of Mystras, Sparti and the Olive Museum. In Sparti we will be welcomed by the local Fellowship. In the evening, at the hotel, a traditional music and dancing program will take care of our entertainment.

On Thursday, Saturday, October 27, we shall visit the Ancient Messina archaeological site. Finally, in the heart of the Peloponnesus, the city of Tripoli will be our last stop; here too we will be welcomed by the local Fellowship. Back to Athens at about 19.30. Special provision has been made for those who have arranged their return on the same day (27-10-208) so that they will be at the airport on time.

Our deepest wish is that at the end of this Gathering a big bunch of Guides and Scouts will have joined hands, united by the precious moments of friendship, brotherhood and understanding experienced through the myth of the Odyssey and Odysseus' adventures in the Mediterranean.

The Organising Committee for Med Athens 2018