



**THALASSA**  
JOURNEYS

Beyond the ordinary

Join **PROFESSOR BART D. EHRMAN**  
on a Journey



FROM THE ANCIENT  
MONUMENTS OF ATHENS TO  
THE CANALS OF VENICE

Aboard the New All-Suite Cruise Ship *Explora I*

June 5 - 14, 2025

Rovinj, one of Croatia's prettiest old towns.

Dear Friends,

This summer I will be giving lectures on a cruise to some of the most gorgeous places on the planet, starting and ending with two of the amazing cities in the world – Athens and Venice – and stopping along the way in spots I've long been eager to see, including coastal villages and towns of Montenegro and Croatia. Are you interested in joining me?

This part of Europe – Greece and the Balkan Peninsula -- is incredibly rich in ancient and medieval art, scenery, and charming towns and villages. For the voyage we will be tracing the storied coastline through the Aegean, Ionian, and Adriatic Seas, sailing from the heart of the Classical World (Athens) to the heart of the medieval Italian world (Venice).

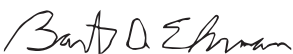
Leaving Athens, our first port of call is Monemvasia, on the southeastern coast of the Peloponnese, which serves as our gateway to the Byzantine town of Mystra, the first of four UNESCO World Heritage Sites along our way. Following a day of relaxation at sea, we enjoy a full day on the island of Corfu to immerse ourselves in the charms of this famous resort. Then, entering the Adriatic Sea, we devote three days to exploring the rich history of the towns and villages of the Dalmatian Coast, including the Montenegrin port of Kotor and the Croatian towns of Zadar, Rovinj, and Poreč, before ending our journey in *La Serenissima*, the Most Serene Republic of Venice.

Our vessel for this cruise, *Explora I*, launched in 2023, is equipped with the most advanced safety and environmentally responsible technology available and is designed to maximize luxury in a relaxed, informal, and friendly environment. The emphasis throughout is on comfort, wellness, and extraordinary culinary experiences. The *smallest* of the all-suite staterooms is 377 square feet, including a private balcony. The extensive wellness facilities include multiple indoor and outdoor exercise spaces, four heated pools, and a large spa. Dining options, available in six different restaurants, range across cuisines from Europe to East Asia.

My lectures on the tour will be called "The Difference Christianity Made." They will be closely connected to my forthcoming book (which will not be published yet!), which deals with how Christianity changed Greek and Roman society, sometimes in surprising and unexpected ways. When not lecturing I'll be spending my time with all of you who come, having interesting discussions, thinking deep thoughts, answering questions, luxuriating in the splendor, and enjoying fantastic food and drink.

Please look over the enclosed brochure and make your plans to join me and fellow adventurers this summer on an extraordinary voyage *From the Stones of Athens to the Canals of Venice*.

Sincerely,



Prof. Bart D. Ehrman  
James A. Gray Distinguished Professor of Religious Studies,  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

## HOST AND LECTURER

### PROFESSOR BART D. EHRMAN



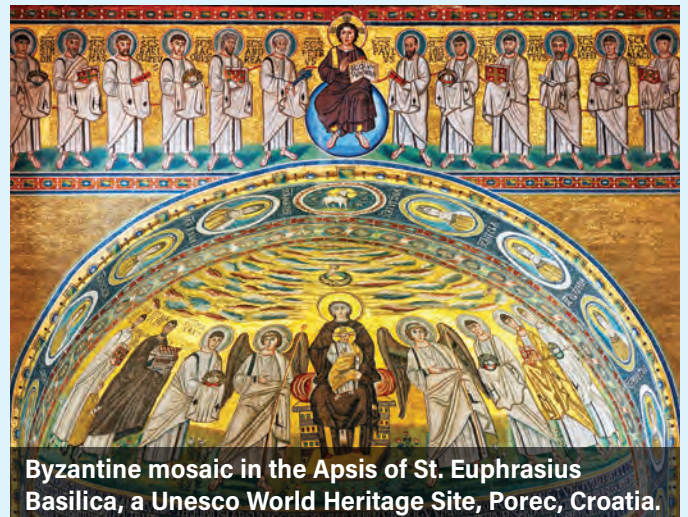
**Bart D. Ehrman** is the James A. Gray Distinguished Professor of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he has taught since 1988. Professor Ehrman has published extensively in the fields of New Testament and Early Christianity, having written or edited thirty-three books, including six New York Times Bestsellers:

*Misquoting Jesus; God's Problem; Jesus Interrupted; How Jesus Became God; and The Triumph of Christianity.*

His Introduction to the New Testament has been the most widely used textbook in colleges and universities for over twenty years and he has recorded ten lecture courses for The Great Courses (The Teaching Company). More than two million copies of his books and courses have been sold, and his books have been translated into twenty-seven languages.

Ehrman's work has been featured in the *New Yorker*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and other print media. He has appeared on NBC's *Dateline*, CNN, The History Channel, National Geographic, the Discovery Channel, the BBC, *Fresh Air*, other major NPR shows, *The Daily Show* with Jon Stewart, the *Colbert Report*, and other top media outlets.

A widely sought after lecturer, and winner of numerous university awards and grants, Professor Ehrman also has a weekly podcast, *Misquoting Jesus*, runs a daily blog the New Testament and early Christianity (The Bart Ehrman Blog), and produces online courses connected with the historical study of the Bible and Christian antiquity ([www.bartehрман.com](http://www.bartehрман.com)).



Byzantine mosaic in the Apsis of St. Euphrasius Basilica, a Unesco World Heritage Site, Porec, Croatia.

The scenic fjord-like Bay of Kotor, Montenegro.



# ITINERARY



Thursday, June 5, 2025  
**DEPART THE UNITED STATES.**

Friday, June 6  
**ATHENS, Greece**

Arrive in Athens and transfer to the *Elia Hotel* (or similar). Enjoy a welcome dinner in the evening at a local restaurant. (D)

Saturday, June 7  
**ATHENS/EMBARK**

In the morning, tour the Acropolis and its fabled monuments. Occupied since prehistoric times, the rocky plateau of the Acropolis rises dramatically out of the plain and dominates the modern city as it did in ancient times. The incomparable Parthenon and its neighboring temples represent the highest achievement of the art and architecture of the Classical period, and the nearby Acropolis Museum displays a remarkable collection of artifacts and sculptures from the site. After lunch at a local taverna, transfer to the port in Piraeus to embark *Explora I*. The ship sails in the evening. (D)

Sunday, June 8  
**MONEMVASIA/MYSTRA**

From the port of Monemvasia, travel inland to Mystra, the best-preserved Byzantine town in Greece, built on a rocky spur in the central Peloponnese, overlooking the plain of Sparta. Explore this UNESCO World Heritage Site, once a great center of learning, art and culture and now a treasure trove of Byzantine architecture, an evocative medieval walled town with several churches that contain exquisite mosaics, and palaces and houses built mostly in the 14th century. After lunch at a local restaurant, visit the excellent Archaeological Museum in Sparta before returning to Monemvasia for time at leisure to discover this town of labyrinthine alleyways, stately old homes, and chapels on your own. (B,L,D)

Monday, June 9  
**AT SEA**

Attend lectures and enjoy the many amenities of the ship as you sail around the Peloponnese and into the Ionian Sea. (B,L,D)

Tuesday, June 10  
**CORFU**

From the earliest times, Corfu has been prized for its natural beauty and resources and for its strategic position at the entrance to the Adriatic Sea. It has come under the rule of a succession of empires—Greek, Roman, Venetian, Napoleonic, British—but has been throughout its long history a favorite retreat of European elites. Your experience of Corfu begins with a walking tour of its historic Old Town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site of narrow streets and charming little piazzas crammed with cafés and shops. In the center of the city, stroll along the iconic arcades of Liston, built by the French in the 19th century to replicate the Rue de Rivoli of Paris, and visit the Church of Saint Spyridon, dedicated to the patron saint of the island. You will also have time to browse in Corfu's shopping quarter, famous for its galleries, jewelry, and high fashion. (B,L,D)



The historic town of Greece's island of Corfu.



The Acropolis looms over Plaka, Athens' oldest residential quarter, Greece

Wednesday, June 11

### **KOTOR, Montenegro**

Sail the fjord-like Bay of Kotor to reach the Montenegrin port town of the same name, located at the head of the bay beneath towering mountains. One of the most striking and best-preserved towns along the Adriatic coast, Kotor is also designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. A tour of this delightful town reveals its magnificent walls, palaces, and churches, including the Drago Palace, with its elegant Renaissance windows, the 12th-century St. Tryphon Cathedral, and the baroque Lipovac Palace. You will also have time at leisure to explore some of the many galleries and shops that display goods ranging from souvenirs to fine art, or to visit the small but fascinating Maritime Museum, with exhibits chronicling the development of Kotor's naval and merchant marine traditions. (B,L,D)

Thursday, June 12

### **ZADAR, Croatia**

After a morning at sea, arrive in Zadar, a city whose early history was dominated by Romans and Byzantines, yielding to control from Venice from the 15th to the 18th century, when it was a

critical port for the Venetian navy. Explore the old core of the city, including the Roman Forum; the 9th-century church of St. Donatus; the Cathedral of Anastasia, one of the finest Romanesque churches in Dalmatia; and the Archaeological Museum, whose exhibits trace the history of the city. (B,L,D)

Friday, June 13

### **ROVINJ/POREČ**

From the 14th through the 18th century, Rovinj was the center of Venetian government on the Istrian peninsula of Croatia. On your walking tour of the old city, you will see the Venetian influence everywhere, including in the emblematic bell tower of the main church of the town. After lunch aboard, a short drive north of Rovinj brings you to the small port town of Poreč and to the 6th-century Euphrasian Basilica, a UNESCO World Heritage Site famous for its gem-studded mosaics. (B,L,D)

Saturday, June 14

### **FUSINA, Venice/USA**

Disembark in the morning in Fusina, a port town near Venice, and transfer to the Venice airport for the return flight home. (B)

## OPTIONAL POST-CRUISE VENICE EXTENSION | June 14 - 16, 2025



Grand Canal, Venice, Italy

At the end of the cruise, spend optionally two days in Venice to explore some of the most important landmark sites of the unique city, including the St. Mark's Basilica, Doge's Palace, and the San Rocco Scuola. Time will also be available to discover on your own Venice's fabled canals and alleyways. Included are two nights at the *Hotel Giorgione* (or similar), tours with English-speaking guides, one lunch, a dinner, and transfers from the ship to Venice and from the hotel to the airport.

Rate: \$1,780, per person, double occupancy.  
Single room supplement, \$490

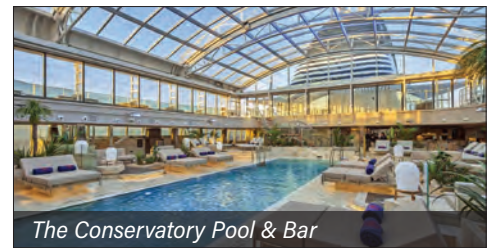
# THE EXTRAORDINARY ALL-SUITE *EXPLORA I*



*Ocean Terrace Suite*



*Journeys Lounge*



*The Conservatory Pool & Bar*



*Marble & Co. Grill*

Launched in 2023, *Explora I* is dedicated to maximizing luxury in a relaxed, informal, and friendly environment. With a gross tonnage of 63,900 GT, the ship is comparable in size to vessels that carry over 2,500 passengers, but *Explora I* has only 461 suites, accommodating fewer than 900 guests. This allows for large staterooms (the smallest suite is 377 square feet) and extensive public areas, including 67,000 square feet of outdoor deck space, twelve bars and lounges, multiple indoor and outdoor pools, and over 10,000 square feet of fitness and wellness facilities. All of this with a staff to guest ratio of 1 to 1.25.

Featuring the latest advances in technology and engineering, *Explora I* is at the cutting edge of environmentally responsible operations. It is equipped with a selective catalytic reduction system to reduce harmful emissions; its water treatment and waste management systems are state-of-the-art; it is equipped throughout with LED lighting and high-efficiency, energy-saving appliances; its recycling protocols exceed the highest industry standards; and no single-use plastics are employed aboard. It is also RINA Dolphin-certified, ensuring reduced underwater

noise and contributing to the preservation of marine life.

Dining options aboard include six restaurants offering a variety of cuisines—Italian, Pan-Asian, French, Mediterranean, and a steakhouse—as well as in-suite dining. Unlimited beverages, fine wines and premium spirits, as well as specialty coffees, teas and soft drinks are available at all times. High-speed WIFI is complimentary throughout the ship, as are 24-hour concierge services and 24-hour in-suite dining. Twice-daily housekeeping services include an evening turndown service.

## ALL ACCOMMODATIONS ABOARD THE *EXPLORA* / ARE SPACIOUS TERRACE SUITES THAT COMBINE ELEGANTLY SPACE and LIGHT. THEY FEATURE:

- The Ocean Terrace Suites measure between 377 - 420 sq ft.
- Oversize floor-to-ceiling windows with views of the sea.
- Bespoke king-sized bed sleep system. In some suites the bed can be converted to two twins.
- Lounge area with dining/ coffee table.
- Heated bathroom floor and Mandala Blue custom bath toiletries and amenities.
- Spacious private ocean-front terrace with dining area and daybed or sun loungers for relaxation.
- Spacious walk-in wardrobe with a seated vanity area.
- Mini-bar replenished according to each guest's preferences.
- Espresso machine, a kettle and teapot.
- Infotainment system with on-demand TV options.
- Individual climate and lighting control.
- Wireless bedside device charging station.
- Gentle motion-activated bedroom night lights.
- Pair of binoculars for guests' use during the journey.

RATES		
CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	PER PERSON / DOUBLE OCCUPANCY
C (OT2)	Ocean Terrace Suite	\$ 7,990
B (OT3)	Ocean Terrace Suite	\$ 8,190
A (OT4)	Ocean Terrace Suite	\$ 8,390
Single occupancy supplement: Category C \$ 2,290; Category B \$ 2,390; Category A \$ 2,470.		

## PROGRAM INCLUSIONS

The rates are all-inclusive. There are no hidden costs and no additional charges such as shore excursions or embarkation and port charges. Other than the international airfare and expenses of a personal nature, all else is included. Specifically, the rates include:

- Cruise aboard the *Explora I* as described in the itinerary.
- One night at the *Elia Hotel* (or similar) in Athens.
- Airport/hotel/pier transfers and handling of luggage.
- Program of lectures and discussions with Professor Bart Ehrman.
- Complete program of shore excursions, led by professional local guides.
- All meals aboard the ship, with a selection of wines, beer and soft drinks during lunch and dinner.
- Open bar with select alcoholic beverages.
- Coffee, including espresso and cappuccino, tea and soft drinks throughout the day and night.
- 24-hour room service.
- Gratuities to the ship's crew, guides, porters and drivers.
- Wi-Fi aboard the ship.
- The services of an experienced Thalassa Journeys Trip Director.
- All local taxes and service charges, including port and embarkation taxes.
- Complete pre-departure material.

**NOT INCLUDED:** International airfare; travel insurance; expenses of a personal nature; any items not mentioned in the itinerary or the above inclusions.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**PAYMENT SCHEDULE:** A deposit of \$1,500 per person is required to reserve your space on the tour. Final payment is due 90 days prior to departure. Payment can be made by personal check or charged to a credit card.

**CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS:** All cancellations are subject to a \$300 per person administrative fee. Cancellations received 71-90 days prior to departure will be assessed a penalty equal to 50% of the total program cost per person. Cancellations received within 70 days of departure are subject to 100% cancellation penalties. Requests for cancellations must be made in writing. No refunds will be made for any part of this program in which you choose not to participate.

**INSURANCE:** We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance, which is available for coverage of expenses in conjunction with cancellation due to illness or accident. Baggage insurance is also recommended. In the event that you must cancel your participation in a travel program, trip cancellation insurance may be the only source of reimbursement.

**ITINERARY:** The itinerary, accommodations and arrangements are subject to change at the discretion of Thalassa Journeys.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Please read carefully the following terms and conditions, which constitute the sole, legally enforceable agreements between the traveler and Thalassa Journeys. Thalassa Journeys acts solely as agents for the traveler with respect to all transportation, hotel and other tour arrangements. In that capacity, we exercise all reasonable care possible to ensure the traveler's safety and satisfaction, but, we neither assume nor bear any responsibility or liability for any injury, death, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity arising in connection with the services of any ship, airplane, train, automobile, motor coach, carriage or other conveyance, or the actions of any third-party, involved in carrying the traveler or in affecting these tours. We are not responsible for damages, additional expenses, or any other losses due to cancellation, delay or other changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, civil disturbances, acts or threats of terrorism, travel warnings or bans, termination or suspension of war risks or other carrier insurance, quarantine, acts of God or other causes beyond our control. All such losses must be borne by the traveler, and tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. In the event of cancellation, delay or rescheduling mandated by any of the aforesaid causes beyond our control, the traveler shall have the option of accepting in lieu of the original tour such rescheduled tour or other substituted tour(s) as may be offered by us, or else, receiving a refund of as much of such advance tour expenditures as we are able to recover on the traveler's behalf from carriers, third-party tour vendors, etc., but, we shall not have any obligation or liability to the traveler beyond the foregoing. We reserve the right to make alterations to the tour's itinerary and to substitute hotels, transportation methods, or lecturers if this is required. We reserve the right to cancel, delay, or reschedule any tour prior to departure, and, so long as this is not due to any of the aforesaid causes beyond our control, the traveler shall be entitled to a full refund of all monies paid to that point if he/she so desires. No refund shall be made for any unused portion of any tour. By forwarding their deposit(s), the traveler certifies that he/she and/or their dependents, minors or others covered thereby do not have any mental, physical or other condition of disability that could create a hazard for them or other travelers. We reserve the right to decline to accept or to decline to retain any person as a member of any tour should such person's health, condition or actions adversely affect or threaten the welfare or safety of other travelers or impede the tour. Baggage or valuables brought on the tour shall be transported, handled or stored at the traveler's risk entirely, and, we shall bear no liability or responsibility for any damage or other loss thereto. Resolution of any disputes arising hereunder shall be affected exclusively in the state or federal courts presiding in Florida, pursuant to applicable Florida law.

**RATES:** Tour costs are based upon current airfares, tariffs, and currency values. While we do everything possible to maintain the listed prices, they are subject to change.

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# FROM THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS OF ATHENS TO THE CANALS OF VENICE

With **Professor Bart Ehrman**

June 5 - 14, 2025



The well-preserved medieval walled town of Monemvasia, Greece

**FOR RESERVATIONS AND INFORMATION**

**PLEASE CALL**

**THALASSA JOURNEYS AT**

**866-633-3611**

or email

**[reservations@thalassajourneys.com](mailto:reservations@thalassajourneys.com)**