**ROMANCING THE LIGHT**

*A Guided Photographic Tour with Dale Neill*

*and Nick Melidonis*

**19 Days/18 Nights, 7-25 September 2016**



After conducting six Light Fantastic Photo Expos with UWA and Notre Dame over the past decade, **Nick Melidonis** and **Dale Neill** have joined forces to guide a small group tour to the countries close to their hearts.

This remarkable journey is about experiencing culture, food, art, connecting with the local people, shopping and the opportunity to take stunning images with two of Australia’s most creative photographers and educators It’s also about making friends and creating memories.

This personal, small group tour features a stunning Itinerary incorporating the iconic sites of Turkey, Athens and the best of the myth laden Cyclades Islands.

Our journey commences in Istanbul, Turkey; where East mingles with West, and the exotic with the modern. We visit the Blue Mosque and Topkapi Palace and sample genuine Turkish Delight! In the evening admire the sun setting over St Sophia from our rooftop restaurant. We fly to Cappadoccia to wonder at the unique geological landforms. For the adventurous there’s the opportunity for a hot air balloon ride and watch the sun rise over a fairy chimney wonderland. From Cappadoccia we fly to the romantic Mediterranean port of Antalya on the Turquoise Coast. With its cobbled lanes, friendly traders and seafood restaurants its no wonder Antalya is Turkey’s fastest growing city. We transfer to Izmir by bus for our last night in Turkey.

We then fly to Athens where we admire the majestic Parthenon, the Ancient Agora and also the blending of neoclassical architecture with the city’s modern lifestyle. From here we travel to the jewels of the Aegean, the best of the Cyclades Islands. We travel to Naxos where Theseus lost Ariadne to Dionysus, the God of wine. We visit cosmopolitan Mykonos and the sacred island of Delos, birthplace of Apollo. We then continue to the unique and spectacular Santorini, a photographer’s paradise.

**Tour Highlights**

* View the sun set over Saint Sophia mosque from our rooftop restaurant
* Cruise the Bosphorous and enjoy lunch in a fish restaurant under the Galata Bridge
* View and photograph the sun rise over the spectacular ‘fairy’ chimneys from a hot air balloon in Cappadoccia
* Shop and discover bargains along the winding lanes of Antalya on the Turquoise Coast
* Marvel at the perfection of the Parthenon set on the imposing heights of the Acropolis.
* Share a musical and cultural feast in an ancient castle with a descendant of the 13th century ruler of Naxos.
* Stroll through the vibrant streets of Mykonos and explore the sacred island of Delos, steeped in mythology.
* Wander along the awesome caldera’s edge in Santorini, one of the world’s most amazing landscapes.

**About Your Tour Leaders**

**Nick Melidonis**, Master Photographer and three times winner of the Australian Landscape Photographer of the Year, will take you on a personal, visual journey sharing his passion of his homeland Greece and in creatively experiencing the landscapes and people. **Dale Neill** Master Photographer AIPP; experienced cultural tour leader and popular UWA Extension photography presenter, provides a platform for every individual to pursue their artistic goals.

**Dates and Cost**

* A19 day/18 night photographic and cultural tour.
* Commences Istanbul on Sept 7th and finishes in Santorini on Sep 25th 2016
* Land content only twin share AU$9750. Single supplement AU$1050.
* A non-refundable deposit of AU$1500 is required to secure your spot (fully refundable if tour doesn’t

proceed

* Payment of the balance is required approx. 12 weeks days prior to the commencement of the tour.

**What’s Included**

* All accommodation, breakfasts, farewell dinner and meals as per itinerary
* Ferries, coach transport, day tours and flights as per itinerary.
* Pre-tour travel advice and a comprehensive tour pack on Greece and Turkey.
* Greek and Turkish speaking tour guides.
* Entry fees to monuments, museums and activities as per itinerary.
* Photography and other workshops on tour.

**What’s Not Included?**

* Travel to and from Greece and Turkey. Our Travel Agent can assist you with booking suitable flights.
* Any tours/activities/admissions not specifically included in the itinerary
* Travel Insurance, which is a requirement for this tour. Our Travel Agent can arrange a suitable policy for you.
* Dinners and lunches other than those mentioned in the itinerary.
* Personal expenses such as tips, drinks, laundry etc.
* In Turkey we will collect a tipping fee of 200TL from each passenger to cover all tipping in Turkey.

**Cancellation Policy**

* Our Cancellation Policy is detailed on the tour booking form available from our Travel Agent, contact details below.

**Need to Know**

* This tour starts in Istanbul and concludes in Santorini.
* Itinerary may be subject to change due to weather, ferry timetable changes and other factors. A significant

Change in exchange rates or other cost factors may necessitate a variation in price.

* A current Travel Insurance Policy is a requirement for this tour
* We require a minimum of eight (8) participants to run this tour.

**Bookings and Information**

**Travel Agent**

**For bookings and enquiries please contact the sole booking agent:**

**Our World Travel East Perth** (License Number 9TA00049)

**Nick Missikos** (Owner/Manager) Shop 1/113 Royal Street

EAST PERTH

Ph: 08 9221 9977 Fax: 08 9221 5577 Store email: [travel@owtravel.com.au](mailto:travel@owtravel.com.au)

**Enquiries and Information**

**For further tour information please contact:**

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**Romancing the Light 2016 Itinerary**

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**Day 1: Istanbul, (B)**

After you arrive at Istanbul’s Ataturk airport you will be transferred\* to your Istanbul hotel and relax after your long flight. In the late afternoon meet your tour leaders Nick and Dale and our Turkish guide Onur for a welcome drink and briefing in the hotel lobby. Then we will explore a little of Istanbul by night and select a local restaurant to celebrate the start of our odyssey.

*\*one coach transfer available for when main group arrives*

**Day 2: Istanbul, (B,D)**

After breakfast we set off on a walking tour of the Old City visiting Topkapi Palace, major residence of The Ottoman Sultans for 400 years. We walk on to Hagia Sophia, considered to be the epitome of Byzantine architecture. If time permits we may also visit the fabled Blue Mosque and the Roman Hippodrome. The remainder of the afternoon is free. Those that hanker after bargains or a Turkish coffee a meander through the Grand Bazaar is possible. In the evening we dine at a rooftop restaurant and watch the sun set over Hagia Sophia.

**Day 3: Istanbul, (B,L,D)**

There is no more relaxing way to see Istanbul that a cruise on the Bosphorous, where Europe meets Asia. Enjoy the countless opportunities for photography of historic architecture We enjoy a typical Turkish fish lunch at restaurant near the Galata Bridge. The remainder of the day is free to rest and relax or you have a hankering to lose yourself shopping or enjoy a Turkish coffee in the maze at the Grand Bazaar. Save some energy for the evening when we enjoy dinner and a folkloric show with belly dancing at the Kervansaray Cabaret.

**Day 4: Istanbul to Cappadoccia, (B)**

After breakfast we transfer to the airport for our flight to captivating Cappadoccia in central Turkey. From hotel to hotel this should take about 4-5 hours. After you settle into your Goreme hotel we enjoy an evening/sunset tour of some spectacular landforms created by Cappadoccia’s unique geology. We’ll witness the sun set in Love Valley creating spectacular silhouettes.

**Day 5: Cappadoccia, (B)**

Weather permitting you have the opportunity for a pre-dawn departure and a hot air balloon ride to witness the sun rise over other-worldy Cappadoccia. (cost not included in tour). The one hour balloon ride will provide amazing photographic opportunities. Dale will provide special instructions for aerial balloon/pre-dawn photography. The ‘non-balloners’ will enjoy a leisurely breakfast and coffee, bedazzled by a balloon-speckled spectacular horizon! Later the whole group sets off on a half day tour of the fairy chimneys and the underground city. It’s a little like exploring the surface of another planet; Bronze Age homes carved into valley walls by troglodytes (cave dwellers) and later used as refuges by early Christians.

**Day 6: Cappadoccia to Antalya, (B, L, D)**

Weather permitting you have a second opportunity for a hot air balloon ride (cost not included in tour). We then transfer to Kayseri airport for our flight to Antalya, gateway to the Turquoise Coast. With its winding cobbled lanes, quaint bookshops, fortune tellers and restaurants where time stands still Antalya. The old city wraps around a splendid Roman-era harbour with cliff-top views of hazy-blue mountain silhouettes that are worth raising a toast to. In the evening we have a group dinner in a restaurant overlooking the harbour.

**Day 7: Antalya, (B)**

Optional: Earlybird sunsrise shoot over the harbour with coffee and bagels.

For the others a leisurely breakfast in our hotel followed by a guided morning walk of the city.

The afternoon is free – to download images, update diaries, go shopping or do more sightseeing.

**Day 8: Antalya, (B,L)**

After breakfast we stroll to the picture-perfect Antalya Harbour and board a small traditional boat for a meandering cruise that includes the Karpuzkaldiran Waterfall. The remainder of the day is free. In the early evening we have a ‘Slide Show with drinks with image critiques by Nick and Dale.

**Day 9: Antalya to Izmir, (B,D)**

After breakfast we check out of our hotel, bid farewell to Amtalya and board our bus for the 5-6 hour journey to Izmir, Turkey’s third most populous cities. Time to relax, read, catch up ion some much needed sleep.

We check into our hotel in Izmir mid-afternoon and in the evening have our fareell to Turkey dinner in a local restaurant. The ‘Turkish Delight 2016’ award is presented to the Artist/Photographer with the most unusual image of the tour.

**Day 10: Izmir to Athens, (B)**

The morning is free. Nick and Dale will make themselves available in the hotel for a review of images, processes, technical queries. Personal feedback on your own tour project is available.

We check out of our hotel for a late afternoon flight to Athens.

Arrive in Athens and meet your fellow passengers at the Titania Hotel. Later this afternoon (about 5.00 pm), we will meet in the lobby and walk to Syntagma Square to see the changing of the guard after passing some of the classical, historic buildings of Athens. Following this, we stroll to Monasteraki area and dine in a traditional restaurant next to the ancient Agora or market place near the foot of the Acropolis. We will dine in a traditional restaurant next the ancient Agora.

*Overnight - Athens*

**Day 11: Athens,**

In the morning we will visit the stunning Acropolis with the imposing Parthenon on top with our own guide. We then visit the ancient Agora, one of the most important sites for ancient Greek society. It was the centre of political, social, religious and commercial activities and was situated at the foot of the Acropolis. In Greek, the word **agora** means a gathering place, or market-place. Not only did the ancient Agora at Athens serve as a gathering place where people traded goods, it was also used as a site in which people exchanged news, gossip, discussed the latest political matters, and even criticized the government. This was also the place where prominent Greek philosophers such as Socrates, Aristotle and Plato exchanged thoughts and ideas.

We will then stroll to the breathtaking New Acropolis Museum. This evening’s dinner is at a traditional taverna.

*Overnight – Athens*

**Day 12: Piraeus to Naxos,**

This morning we transfer early to the port and board our large ferry and enjoy a leisurely ferry ride to the largest and greenest island of the Cyclades, Naxos, entering the port guarded by the ancient Apollo's Gate. We transfer to our resort hotel near St Georges Beach. The Naxos port area boasts one of the finest old Venetian Castro quarters next to the historic Bourg market area. This labyrinth of ancient buildings with classic tavernas and specialty shops will delight all who visit. In the afternoon we explore the exciting old port and castle. This evening we enjoy a relaxing program of traditional music and dancing with drinks at the castle in Naxos as a guest of its owner, a direct descendent of the Duke of Naxos (the day we do this may vary depending on the music itinerary of the castle).

*Overnight – Naxos*

**Day 13: Naxos,**

Subject to availability, this morning we board the ferry for our day tour of the trendy and magical island of **Mykonos** with its brightly painted balconies, geraniums and bougainvillea, Mykonos creates several photo opportunities. The ‘Little Venice’ area, the famous windmills and the historic church of Panagia Paraportiani, are featured on many postcards of Mykonos. This tour includes a visit to the sacred island of **Delos**, the mythical birthplace of Apollo to explore the ancient archeological sites.

Delos is one big open-air museum, with many of the ancient monuments and buildings remarkably intact. If you are interested in archaeology and/or Greek mythology, this will be an unforgettable day.

*Overnight – Naxos*

**Day 14: Naxos,**

Today we take our own bus tour of the impressive hilltop villages and ports of Naxos, including Chalki, with its Venetian towers, and we stop at the old family owned Kitron liqueur factory, alternatively, we will visit the hill town of Filoti. Our next stop, the impressive village of Apiranthos is made almost entirely of stone and marble from the nearby quarries. The road then winds through spectacular mountains to the attractive port of Apollonos for lunch. Photo tuition and guidance as well as cultural highlights of the island will be offered. Stops will be made on the way to capture images of the amazing mountain scenery. We return to Naxos town for a relaxing dinner in the old Quarter amidst the historic buildings of the Venetians and the colourful shops and markets.

*Overnight – Naxos*

**Day 15: Naxos,**

A day at leisure to explore this exciting island or to relax at the pool or the seaside near our hotel. Naxos has many beautiful villages and spectacular mountain scenery and as it is the biggest island in the Cyclades Group. An option today is to hire a small vehicle to explore and photograph on your own re-visiting some of the villages from our bus tour. The island also has a good bus service which visits the many villages and ports

*Overnight –Naxos*

**Day 16: Naxos to Santorini,**

We board the ferry for the most stunning island of the Cyclades, Santorini, and the legendary site of Atlantis. We are transferred to our resort hotel and explore the chic galleries, shops and charming Santorini architecture set on numerous levels on the caldera’s edge. After a stroll to experience the million dollar views on the caldera’s edge, we catch a Santorini sunset over dinner.

*Overnight – Santorini*

**Day 17: Santorini**

A highlight of our Santorini visit is a leisurely walk with stunning photo opportunities along the dramatic Caldera’s edge. View the unique architecture on the way to the capital, Thira, with its bustling shopping squares. Along the way your Nick and Dale will provide a history of the island and guidance in capturing the unique seascapes for that perfect shot. A visit to the pristine village of Oia; Santorin’s most photogenic icon; will be arranged this afternoon and evening to catch a sunset and enjoy dinner before being transported back to our hotel.

*Overnight – Santorini*

**Day 18: Santorini,**

A day at leisure to relax, explore and enjoy this stunning island. Optional activities can include a visit to the nearby volcano by boat, a return visit to Oia or a tour to the excavations of the ancient Minoan City of Akrotiri, devastated by the cataclysmic eruption over 2000 years ago. This evening we will enjoy our farewell dinner in the Islands.

*Overnight – Santorini*

**Day 19: Santorini – Tour End**

The tour concludes after breakfast. Some participants will connect with flights or ferries to Athens while others will continue with alternative travel plans.

*Tour itinerary, ferry schedules and activities may change due to weather and local conditions.*

