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JOURNEYS

# ANCIENT GREEKS IN CANBERRA

Archaeology, art and astronomy  
in the National Capital



## Overview

The National Museum of Canberra's 20<sup>th</sup> birthday exhibition, *Ancient Greece: Athletes, Warriors and Heroes*, is a must-see collection of over 170 works from the British Museum that have never before toured the Southern Hemisphere. The exhibition, with its celebration of athletes and the spirit of competition, is only one of several excellent events in Canberra this summer. Another is the National Gallery of Australia's Jeffrey Smart exhibition which commemorates one of Australia's most popular artists in the centenary of his birth.

Expanding on the theme of the Greeks in Canberra, we join renowned archaeologist Dr Estelle Lazer for a talk on Greek Myths and the stars, followed by a private stargazing session at Mount Stromlo Observatory.

On the last morning we enjoy an early drive around the Capital with resident archaeologist Ben Churcher to survey the foundations of the city.

The tour is rounded out by fine dining and excellent accommodation in the heart of Canberra.

## Tour leaders

For this tour, Academy Travel has brought together a team of expert archaeologists and established tour leaders to enhance your experience. Dr John Tidmarsh, Dr Estelle Lazer and Ben Churcher will all join the tour and deliver lectures, plus there is an online talk by Dr Nick Gordon on the art exhibition at the NGA. In addition, a tour manager will accompany the group.

## Essential information

**Tour dates:** January 18-21, 2022

**Price per person:** \$2,640

**Supplement for sole use of double room:** \$440

**Maximum number in group:** 16

**Start:** 4pm, January 18, Midnight Hotel

**Finish:** 12pm January 21, Midnight Hotel

## Fitness level

★★ Good overall fitness required

## Hotel

The **Midnight Hotel** provides comfort, luxury and style in the heart of Canberra, close to museums and restaurants (3 nights)

## Further information and bookings

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## Highlights

### **Ancient Greeks at the NMA**

Enjoy an array of over 170 pieces from the British Museum including sculpture, ceramics and jewellery

### **Jeffrey Smart and the NGA**

Explore the Jeffrey Smart exhibition, which brings together the artist's masterpieces and archival materials that provide great insight into his art.

### **Greek Myth and the stars**

Join Dr Estelle Lazer for a talk on the constellations, as described in Greek mythology: god-favoured heroes who received a place amongst the stars as a memorial of their deeds.

### **Mount Stromlo Observatory**

In a behind the scenes tour learn of the 100 years of history of the Observatory, marvel at its 200kg meteorite and enjoy a guided experience of the highlights of the Southern Hemisphere sky.

### **Foundations of Canberra**

A panoramic drive reveals the story of the establishment of the Capital, including early ruins and the grave of General Bridges who died at Gallipoli.

## Detailed itinerary

### **Tuesday 18 January – Welcome and Ancient Greeks**

Check into the Midnight Hotel and join Dr John Tidmarsh for a talk on the Ancient Greeks exhibition at the National Museum of Australia. This superb display is subtitled *Athletes, Warriors and Heroes*. Particularly relevant in the afterglow of the recent Olympics, it celebrates the role of competition and combat in the ancient Greek world. These iconic objects have never before been exhibited in the Southern Hemisphere. This evening we dine in one of Canberra's fine restaurants. (D)

### **Wednesday 19 January – the Greeks and Astronomy**

We start the day with a trip to the NMA to enjoy the exhibit in the company of John. After time for lunch there is the option of visiting the National Library to discover the Treasures Collection. In the late afternoon we join archaeologist Dr Estelle Lazer for a talk on the Greeks and the constellations as described in their mythology. We convene for an early dinner in the hotel before making the trip out to Mount Stromlo Observatory for a behind-the-scenes tour. We learn of its fascinating history as the Commonwealth Solar Observatory, achievements by its researchers, and its experience and rebirth following the 2003 bushfires. An astronomer will lead us in the use of the outreach telescopes, and a viewing of the best features of the Southern Hemisphere sky. (B, D)

### **Thursday 20 January – Jeffrey Smart at the NGA**

This morning, art historian Dr Nicholas Gordon joins us via Zoom for a talk on the Jeffrey Smart retrospective at the National Gallery of Australia. The exhibition brings together major works by this much-loved artist from public and private collections. It also includes significant archival material, such as Smart's captivating drawings, which provide insight into his approach to composition. An Academy Travel tour manager accompanies us to the NGA before we head to one of Canberra's fine wineries in the Lake George region for lunch. (B, L)

### **Friday 21 January – the Foundations of Canberra**

On our final morning, we take an early drive around the outskirts of Canberra to learn about the establishment of the city with archaeologist and local resident Ben Churcher. We enjoy a fine view from Mount Ainslie, discuss the Burley Griffins, visit spots like Duntroon Dairy which predate the city, stop at the early surveyors' huts and see the foundation stone of the city. (B)