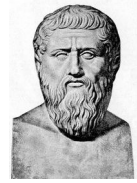


SACRED LANDSCAPES

In all qualities those places excel, in which there is a divine inspiration, and in which the gods have their appointed lots and are propitious to the dwellers in them (Plato, Laws)



Landscape archaeology is a new way of looking at ancient sites. Following both principles that entertainment should always reinvent itself and knowledge should not be the private pleasure of scholars, here is a series of four exclusive tours (12 participants maximum per tour) around some of the most sacred landscapes in Europe. From Attica and the Delphic Region in Central Greece, to Rome (as well as Tarquinia and Tivoli), exploring Northern Greece, from the slopes of Mount Olympus to Thassos, and finally rediscovering ancient Naples, its archaeological landscape (Naples, Pompeii, Herculaneum), Capri and Ischia.



Since the 17th century, archaeologists' focus has shifted from objects to sites and finally to whole landscapes. In the 17th and 18th centuries, antiquarians collect beautiful objects; in the 19th century, archaeologists start to record entire sites: objects are found and interpreted in their original context. Today, archaeologists study the entire landscape of ancient sites, their topography, the former sites as well as the visual and other links with related sites within the same geographical area. "Landscape" implies an area shaped by man: otherwise we would say nature. But a sacred landscape, means that men shaped nature because of certain pre-existing sacred natural elements. These could be a waterfall, a spring, a cave, a mountain which often give rise to early places of worship. These in turn are re-used as sacred locations by each generation.