



ALUMNAE ASSOCIATION of SMITH COLLEGE

The Black Sea: Crossroads of Culture from the Ancient Past to the Present

August 3-13, 2008

DETAILED ITINERARY (subject to amendment)

Friday, August 3, 2008

USA

Fly from the U.S. to Istanbul, Turkey.

Saturday, August 4, 2008

ISTANBUL, Turkey/ Embark

Arrive in Istanbul and transfer to the port to embark on *Corinthian II*. Sail in the afternoon, navigating the Bosphorus, the narrow channel that separates Europe and Asia. Enter the Black Sea in the evening.

Sunday, August 5, 2008

BARTIN/ AMASRA/ BARTIN

Cruise alongside ancient Paphlagonia, a country that hosted Greek colonies until Romans conquered the area in 63 B.C. Arrive in Bartin and drive to Amasra (the ancient Sesamus), situated atop a headland sheltering two bays and known as one of the coast's most beautiful towns. Founded by Milesians in the 6th century B.C., it later became an important possession of both Byzantium and Genoa. Visit the Genoese citadel, which crowns one of the promontories with a constellation of towers, battlements, and gates.

Monday, August 6, 2008

SAMSUN/ AMASYA/ SAMSUN

From Samsun, drive to Amasya, founded, according to legend, by the Amazon queen Amasis, and admire its beautiful setting in a narrow gorge on

the Iris River, bounded by vertical cliffs. Ascend to the cliff-top fortress for a view of the city below and explore the rock tombs of the Pontic kings, which were carved into the cliff face. Also visit the architecturally precious 15th-century Sultan Beyazit mosque before enjoying lunch at a restaurant high on the hill, affording spectacular views. Then, continue to the Archaeological Museum.

Tuesday, August 7, 2008

TRABZON

Trabzon, the ancient Trapezus, was one of antiquity's greatest cities and commercial centers. Founded by Greek colonists during the early part of the 1st millennium B.C., it continued to prosper under the Romans and Byzantines, reaching its golden age in the 13th and 14th centuries. From here, travel to the Sumela Monastery, founded in the 4th century and situated high in the mountains in a spectacular setting. Back in Trabzon, visit the 13th-century Church of Hagia Sophia and spend time at leisure to explore the city on your own.

Wednesday, August 8, 2008

AT SEA/ YALTA, Crimea, Ukraine

Spend the day at sea cruising in the Black Sea. Late in the afternoon, *Corinthian II* will dock in Yalta and spend the night in port. Enjoy time exploring Yalta's bustling waterfront promenade on your own.

Thursday, August 9, 2008

YALTA

In the mid-19th century, the Russian Imperial family chose Yalta for its summer residence, and almost overnight the town grew into an elegant and popular resort. Tour the Alupka Palace, an amazing 19th-century edifice with both English Tudor and Byzantine embellishments. Then visit Livadia Palace, famous site of the 1945 Yalta Conference between Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin.

Friday, August 10, 2008

SEVASTOPOL/ CHERSONESOS/ BAKHCHYSARAY/ SEVASTOPOL

Arrive in Sevastopol, a beautiful port-city and the former base of the Russian Black Sea Fleet from the days of Catherine II until the fall of Soviet Union. Drive to nearby Chersonesos, an ancient city founded by Greeks in the 5th century B.C., which became a prosperous trading city. Return to Sevastopol to see the Panorama Museum's intricate depiction of the defense of the city during the Crimean War. In the afternoon, enjoy time at leisure in Sevastopol, or alternatively, drive to the Crimean interior to explore Bakhchysaray, the imperial Khan's Palace, built in 1519.

Saturday, August 11, 2008

ODESSA

Arrive in Odessa in the morning. This “Pearl of the Black Sea” flourished in the 19th century when the Duke de Richelieu transformed it into a center of free trade, attracting Russian, Jewish, Greek, and Italian settlers, among others. Explore Odessa’s tree-lined streets, with their many stately mansions. See its principal landmarks, including the Baroque-style Opera House, the historic Potemkin Steps, and the newly restored Archaeological Museum. In the afternoon, you will have the opportunity to meet with local families in their homes.

Sunday, August 12, 2008

VARNA, Bulgaria

Explore Varna, founded in 580 B.C. as the ancient Greek trading colony Odessos. Visit the domed Cathedral of the Assumption, with its splendid iconostasis and bishop’s throne, and the Archaeological Museum, with an astounding collection of the “Gold of Varna,” Chalcolithic grave-goods from Varna’s necropolis and the oldest gold treasure ever excavated. Continue to the remains of the Roman Thermae (Baths) and the adjacent Church of Sveti Atanas, and then to the Evksinograd Palace and its botanical gardens, built in 1882 by Prince Aleksandar Batenberg.

Monday, August 13, 2008

ISTANBUL/ DISEMBARK/ USA

Arrive in Istanbul in the morning. Disembark and transfer to the airport for return flights to the U.S.