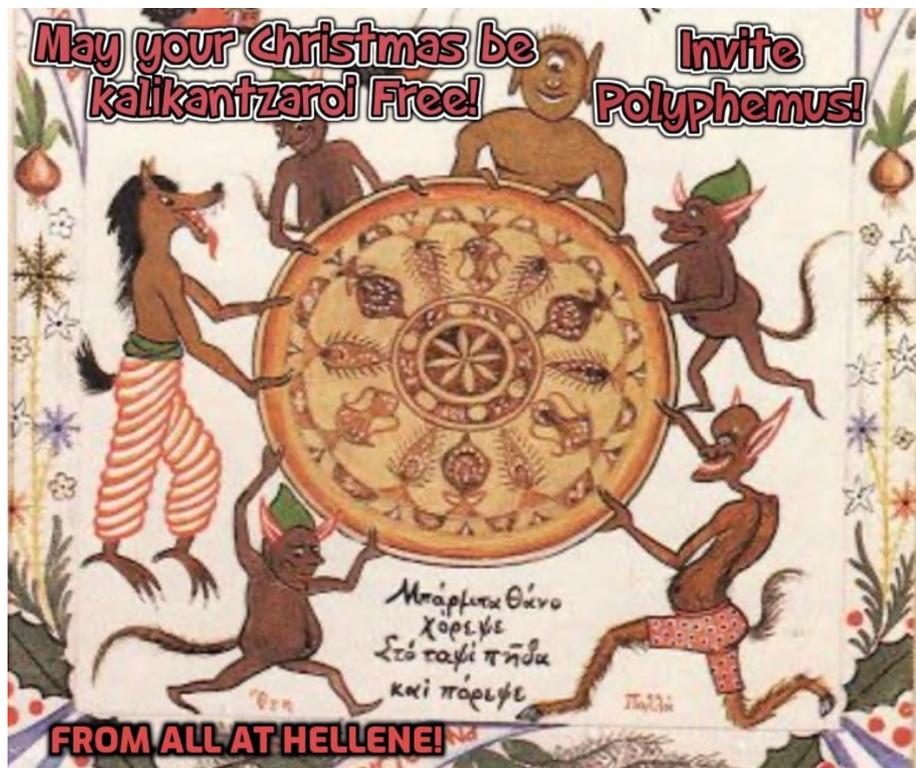


DECEMBER END of AUTUMN 2025 NEWSLETTER – *Travel Updates, Resources, Out and About, TRAVEL BLOGS, NEW ITINERARIES – JORDAN, Religious Tours, Ancient Battlefields, Theatre, Classical Cuisine, Quizzes, Gaming ..... and as ever, so much more!*



Χαίρετε! Salvete! Greetings! Happy Christmas and a Happy “almost end of term!”.

Always the most gruelling, I found, with so many curricular deadlines, extracurricular distractions, and Flu.....

We send you all our best vibes, sacrificial cocks to Asklepios and hope the following helps with future travel plans and a few items of interest and humour.

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## TRAVEL UPDATES

**ETAS.** Non EU/UK pupils & Staff must **MUST** have a physical print out of their UK status not just a sharing code from HMRC

### Greece

- i - Kerameikos site and museum in Athens closed for restoration until the end of 2025..... but no guarantees they'll stick to the deadlines!
- ii – Athens Agora still to be accessed via Thisseo entrance
- iii - Patras–Pyrgos Motorway Fully Opens, Changing Travel Across Western Greece, should make that Western route a darn sight faster!

iv - Delphi guards pickier than ever – be prepared

v - February & late October out of season / end of season: expect some businesses closed in Tolo & stops like Livadheia

### Italy

i - No whispering headsets needed for Colosseo. YAY!

ii - Vesuvius – Groups over 40 pax, *may* be split over 2 coaches. We have had varying reports..... but fear not, we'll cover the extra expense of coaches and drivers!

iii – Vatican. St. Peter's Basilica Entry has implemented entrance fees! See Web Site  
You will need at least 3 hours as with the new entry system. Groups will be split as 15 pax. Entry is on the hour so if one group enters at 9am the next will be 10am for example ... Details are still not clear. €7 pp affected one group last October, but we don't know if they are trialling it for when they know there will be a big influx of people due to an event etc. Our Agents are investigating!

**Flights** - every little helps, route and capacity wise!

i - New J2 in 2026 - Gatwick to Pula, Heraklion, Naples, Thessaloniki, Kalamata, Antalya – staggered introductions April to November.

ii - EJ new in 26 – Bristol to Thessaloniki, Glasgow to Pisa, Manchester to Preveza,

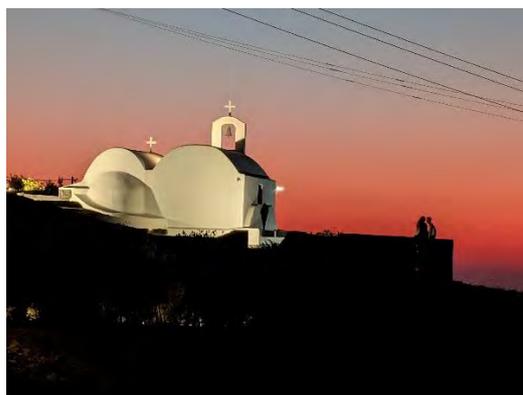
iii - Crete's New Airport Enters Final Phase, First Test Flights Planned for 2027

iv - Athens International Airport (AIA) is set to undergo a significant expansion aimed at increasing its passenger capacity from 26M to 40M by 2032.

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### OUT and ABOUT – Blogs and Suggestions and NEW HELLENE TOURS

Both Jamie and Claudia had trips to Crete recently, Kerry to Verona, John to Scotland on the Sleeper and John and Sarah to Toulouse.....





Claudia, John and Vishal to the World Travel Market



Vishal to Croatia



BUT our big news is now we can offer School Trips to **JORDAN!**

Admittedly expensive but it really is a once in a lifetime trip which encompasses Modern and Ancient History, Archaeology, Religion, Geography, Cuisine, Art and Culture! A fabulous opportunity for a cross curricular experience.

I took my Mum to Jordan 20 odd years ago as an 80<sup>th</sup> birthday present, as since a child she'd wanted to visit Petra. We managed to create the itinerary to visit on the day of her Birthday. She was thrilled!

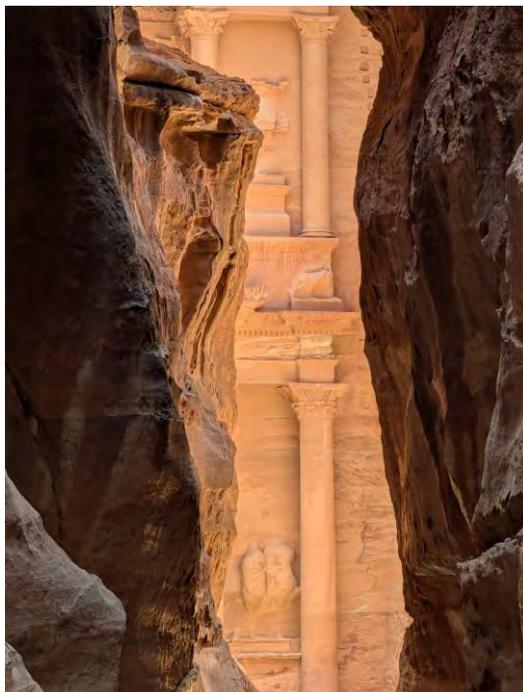
Horse drawn carriages may well have been replaced by golf buggies, but James was equally overwhelmed, laughing unashamedly and in disbelief when he visited.



Enjoy it vicariously by reading the reports below.....

**i - Jordan**

**a - [School trips: destination emerges after successful fam tour | School Travel Organiser – with a video too!](#)**



*Figure 1: First glimpse of the Treasury through the Siq*

**b – James' Jordan Blog, Part ONE (part two in January!) - Attachment A**

ii - **Verona (again!)**, Desenzano del Garda, Brescia, and Limone sul Garda by Dr. Kerry Phelan (@KerryLPhelan on X/Twitter) - Attachment B

My husband had to attend Marmomac's 2025 Exhibit in Verona in September and I, of course, jumped at the chance to head back to the region to do a little more exploring. There was no pretence this year – he knew very well that I would have a specifically Classically-themed itinerary in mind this time



iii - **Toulouse** John and I stopped off in Toulouse en route to staying with an ex-colleague (my French/Italian 'wing man' on many a school trip) and her daughter, whom I taught.

Sarah on X: "Arrived in #Toulouse Hotel in foul weather, to be welcomed by some rather wet and battered Romans!"

Frustratingly, not only were the archaeological museum, amphitheater and thermae closed.....our attempt to locate a section of the Galic Romano curtain wall was also a failure.

Hoping to find this



We encountered this.



Nevertheless, on tweeting (X-ing?) my disappointment, I was rewarded by a reply from **Frédéric Neupont. Toulouse et la brique** assuring us of plans for incorporation into an architectural showpiece!

As an extra bonus, his website is a stunner! **Since Roman antiquity.** Do check it out.

*This site is dedicated to the building genius of our ancestors.*

*A word of warning: this website might be a bit dense and difficult to digest for someone who isn't a passionate enthusiast. If you simply want to discover Toulouse's architectural*

heritage, head over to the abridged version which only covers the essentials: <https://toulouseetlabrique.wordpress.com/> . However, if you'd like to delve deeper into the subject, this is the place to be.

When all the restorations are complete, Toulouse will be a lovely, economical venue for a combined Classics/French/ Religious short getaway.

We stayed in the Plaza Hotel, Pl. du Capitole, overlooking the Opera House built atop the Temple to Jupiter. The churches are wonderful and there are many Roman Sites within a few hours travel. Also - the people are so kind!

**iv** - History comes alive at a new hotel-museum in the ancient Italian city of Matera A young in-house team of archaeologists, classicists, musicians, performers, costume designers and dancers that bring everything to life with a passion for history that they're keen to share

**v** - We'll soon be introducing Roman and Greek Religious and Battlefield Tours. Greece's Religious Tourism Draws Pilgrims, Scholars Worldwide

**vi** – However, this may be a step too far! Astrotourism in Greece: Battling Light Pollution for a Clearer Cosmos

**vii** – John's hopes of a relaxing sleeper to Inverness was a step too far also! This is supposedly a cabin for two. Forget using it for School trips.....or any other trip to be fair. Scotland was amazing – the sleeper was not! No room for cases, unsafe bunk beds, no internal toilet.....it's at the end of the carriage. Huge safeguarding issues!



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**VARYING FORTUNES OF CLASSICS AT HOME AND ABROAD** – never give up but do check up with Exam Boards!

**i** - Aberdeen Latin teacher on why everyone should learn the language

“It sounds old-fashioned, but it's about so much more than language — it's about developing a way of thinking.”

- ii - Earliest Latin translation of 'Tao Te Ching' published. The "Tao Te Ching" (or "Daodejing") is a fundamental text of Taoism, one of the most important philosophical and spiritual traditions to originate in China. It is believed to have been written by a sage known as Laozi.
- iii - New Initiative Aims to Bring Greek Language and Culture to American Schools
- iv - University of Ottawa Halts Greek and Roman Studies Honours Program  
BUT THEN reopens admissions to Greek and Roman program because of public outcry.
- v - Ultimate teaching fear..... All fail Caesar: students at eight schools taught wrong topic for final year 12 history exam Queensland

Ouch!

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### **New Theatrical takes**

- i - Medea — A Georgian take on one of Greek myth's most infamous female anti-heroines. From the very first lines, it is made clear Kuprava's Medea will focus on what it means to be exiled from one's homeland, and what it really means for a woman and mother to sacrifice everything for love.
  - ii - Tiresiā Reloaded: A Playful Exploration of Identity
  - iii - The Greeks: Radical Reinvention. National Theatre exhibition re 5 previous productions of Greek tragedy (9 September–February 2026): costume designs, props, rehearsal footage, audio recordings from Oresteia (1981), Iphigenia at Aulis (2004), Antigone (2012), Medea (2014) and Paradise (2021) A digital version via Bloomberg Connects app.
  - iv – Review: Ajax in Iraq, the emotional trauma from war and mythology
  - v – Modern staging of the immortal "Aeneid" at the ICCM - a modern staging of Ivan Kotlyarevsky's immortal masterpiece, created by directors Rostyslav Derzhypilsky and Oleksiy Hnatkovsky.  
This play is not only an interpretation of a classic, but also a powerful statement about Ukraine today. The action develops from lighthearted comedy to the searing coldness of contemporary events.
  - vi – The Getty's Theater Lab Presents Thieves of California, a Futuristic Retelling of Aeschylus's Seven Against Thebes
  - vii – 'Oedipus' Review: Brilliantly Reimagining Sophocles on Broadway  
Mark Strong and Lesley Manville star in Robert Icke's smart spin on the Greek tragedy, with its protagonist portrayed as a powerful politician on election night.
  - viii – Medea in Joburg: Ancient Greek tragedy meets modern SA realities
  - ix – The Ancient World Online: World's first film in ancient Sumerian released by Trinity filmmakers  
The film is available now on YouTube with subtitles in 27 languages
  - x - 9 Movies That Capture the Essence of Greek Tragedies
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### **RESOURCES**

- i - The Last Days of Pompeii: The Immersive Exhibition, Royal Docks Waterfront, London Transports visitors back to 79 AD, blending dramatic storytelling with cutting-edge technology to bring the doomed Roman city to life in London Until March 2026.
- ii - British Museum: Classroom resources
- a - Life in Roman Britain

- b** - [Roman Music](#)
- c** - [Emperors of Imperial Rome](#)
- d** - [Gods and Goddesses of Roman Britain](#)
- e** - [History Hotline Video – Ancient Roman Empire](#)
- iii** - [NEW VIDEO TOUR! – The Sanctuary of Asklepios: A Meditative Walk Through the Archaeological Site at Ancient Epidaurus](#)
- iv** - [Tansu Yegen on X: "Even the strong rain in Pompeii today couldn't beat the smart city design built by the Romans 2000 years ago 🌧️"](#)
- v** - [Mambo Italiano on X: "An interesting video showing the clever way Roman soldiers carried their "military backpack" with the sarcina \(personal pack\) slung over the furca \(carrying pole\) They were known as Marius' Mules for carrying this gear"](#)
- vi** - [Announcing a new release of the Perseus Art & Archaeology Artifact \(A&A\) Browser » Perseus Digital Library Updates](#)
- vii** - [The illusion of illusions: There are no optical corrections in the Parthenon](#)
- viii** - [Etruscan chamber tombs made accessible in digital portal](#)
- ix** – Ancient Roads
  - a** - [Digital map brings ancient Roman roads to life](#)  
For the first time ever, researchers have mapped the entirety of the vast Roman road network highlighting its immense influence on European relations and history.
  - b** – [Bronze Age Mycenaean Road Network Reconstructed Using Advanced Digital Mapping](#)
- x** – The Griffin Warrior, Pylos
  - a** - Home - [Griffin Warrior](#)
  - b** - [Archaeologists Present Rare Findings in 'Warrior Princes of Mycenaean Greece' Lecture](#)
  - c** - [Stephen Chappell: Here's an album filled with photos from the Kingdom of Pylos exhibition, recently at the GettyVilla.](#)
- xi** - More from Warwick on You Tube!
  - a** - [Comedy and tragedy in the dramatic festivals of Athens](#)
  - b** - [Not just political satire: Comedy's paradoxical obsession with tragedy](#)
  - c** - [Understanding Aristophanes' Frogs](#)
- xii** - [700 forgotten Thespian hoplites fell fighting alongside the Spartans at Thermopylae, a study explains why they chose to die](#)
- xiii** - [One Doorstep Mosaic Shows So Much | by Lawrence Payne / Roman Mosaic Workshops](#)
- xiv** – SENTENTIAE ANTIQUAE
  - a** - [Seeing \(and Wounding\) the Gods: Reading Iliad 5](#)
  - b** – [Backing Up the Future: Characterization and Rivalry in Iliad 4](#)
- xv** - [Ancient Greeks Engineered a Divine Light Show Inside the Parthenon, Oxford Study Reveals](#)
- xvi** - [A new multidisciplinary study explains how the Roman Temple of Venus has survived nearly 2,000 years despite sinking into the unstable volcanic ground of Baiae, Phlegraean Fields](#)

## QUIZZES

- i** - [TrovaTrivia: A new story-led quiz app to help kids discover Ancient Rome](#)
- ii** - [Roman emperor quiz: Test your knowledge on the rulers of the ancient empire](#)
- iii** – [Identify the artifacts](#)

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## **GAMING**

### **'A MIXTURE OF STRENGTH AND SEDUCTION': BRINGING THE ROMAN EMPIRE TO LIFE IN 'ANNO 117: PAX ROMANA'**

Ubisoft historians Thierry Noël and Eve Ben-Haïm reveal how Anno 117: Pax Romana brings the Roman Empire to life through strategy and authenticity. Anno 117: Pax Romana is the latest instalment in the acclaimed city-building strategy video games series. Players are invited to step into the Roman Empire and take on the role of a Roman governor tasked with building and managing provinces, shaping cultures and defining their legacy.

## **CLASSICAL RECEPTION – contentious issues for class discussion?**

i - Trump Order Requires Classical Architecture for Federal Building

ii - Federal style, American revival of Roman architecture, especially associated with Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Latrobe. It flourished from 1785 to 1820 and later in governmental building. The Federal style had definite philosophical ties to the concept of Rome as the republic that the new American country thought it reflected.

iii - Is Celebrating Ancient Greek Legacy White Supremacy? European Scholars Respond

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## **WHAT ELSE HAS BEEN HAPPENING IN THE CLASSICAL WORLD?**

*Lots of updates regarding current Exhibitions, new Site openings and some closures highlighted in red under their relevant countries*

**GREECE** - Attachment C

**ITALY** - Attachment D

**UK** - Attachment E

**BALKANS, SCANDANAVIA, CZECH REPUBLIC, N MACEDONIA POLAND, RUSSIA, UKRAINE, BLACK SEA and beyond** - Attachment F

**SWITZERLAND, GERMANY/AUSTRIA, FRANCE, SPAIN** – Attachment G

**TURKEY, EGYPT, ISRAEL, IRAN, IRAQ, LIBYA** – Attachment H

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**A miscellaneous collection of diverse and eclectic articles on Greece and Rome for your whimsy** - Attachment I

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**CLASSICAL CUISINE** – inspirational alternative ideas to that of the more traditional Xmas Fayre, or maybe not.....

i - How to Prepare the Ancient Greek Sauce Garum at Home

ii - From Clay Tablets to Cookie Dough Bake your own Mesopotamian-inspired cuneiform cookies with Penn Museum baker Katy Blanchard's beloved holiday recipe.



iii - [Ancient honey-barley bread revived in Türkiye](#) as scholars recreate 3,000-year-old recipe

iv - [Caraway Alexander's Pop-Up Kitchen Salona](#) Makes Feasts Inspired by Ancient Rome.

Alexander challenges himself to use the same ingredients and techniques Ancient Roman chefs would have used.

v - [Ancient Roman recipes](#) discovered in archaeological site being recreated in Türkiye

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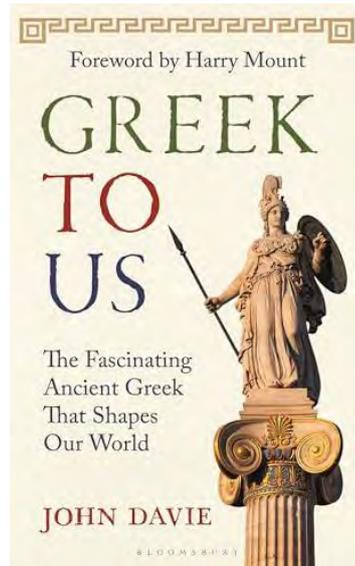
### **Christmas Presents**

i – The Ultimate Xmas present for those with very deep pockets – [An Ancient Greek City for Sale in Turkey: The History and Plight of Bargylia](#) “A first degree archaeological site, facing the Bird Heaven lake near the Bogazici village, with full sea and lake view,” for €8 million in 2015



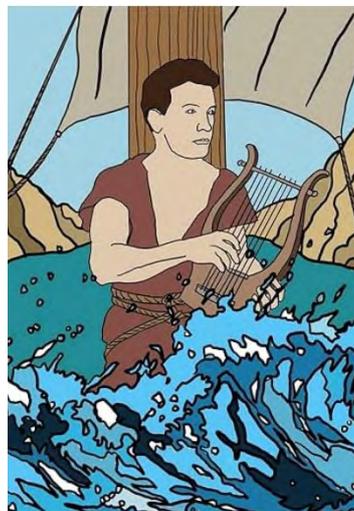
For those with shorter arms

ii - [Greek to Us: The Fascinating Ancient Greek That Shapes Our World](#)



iii – Late to the party on this one..... but how can one not ignore....***Happy anniversary of Cicero's fourth speech against the Catilinarians!*** **AND** An early present for Saturnalia! new Lucius Sestius short story is now available free from my website via this link: [Trial and Tribulation](#)

iv –



**Homer's Lyre, by Peter Bond (retired HoD Classics)** now available on Amazon.

Everything in the book is, I believe, possible, though guaranteed to annoy the purists.

This is a fictional autobiography of Homer. Nobody has any idea who Homer really was (or even how many people Homer was). This book imagines him as a boy/young man enduring all sorts of appalling and frequently comic misadventures which give him ideas which he then uses in his stories.

Many characters from the Iliad and the Odyssey make an appearance. What was his relationship with Nausicaa? And Circe? Why does Melanthios have such an appalling end in the Odyssey? Who was Dolon? Was Thersites annoying or just given a bad press? And why

was Odysseus so anxious to get away from Calypso? And what was Elpenor really doing before he fell off the roof?

Kindle edition: £1.99. Paperback: £7.65.

Perfect for Christmas!

v - Zeus and Hera T-Shirts – for those unaware of mythological context.



**Yet another shout out of the benefits of a Classical Education!**



Why Oh Why don't people research properly?

Jeff Bezos called his new AI startup Project Prometheus, and the classicists entered the chat - 16 legendary responses

*"The reason Greek myths are so enduring and have remained popular for so long is because everything in them always works out and goes exactly to plan, and they are in no way examples of cautionary tales..."*

Finally, should you be seeking the perfect beverage with which to celebrate Saturnalia.....look no further than [Papa Silenus IPA!](#)



Have a good one!

Very Best Wishes,  
The Hellene Team  
Sarah, John, Claudia, James, Kerry, Nidhi and Vishal