

House Beautiful

LIFESTYLE

These 10 Breathtaking Locations That Inspired Homer's *Odyssey* Are Worthy of Your Own Epic Journey

Retrace Odysseus's mythical route through these real-world landmarks.

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This summer's blockbuster *The Odyssey*, directed by Christopher Nolan, was filmed on location **in Greece**, Italy, Morocco, Iceland, and Scotland. But long before Matt Damon stepped into the role of Odysseus, there was the original *Odyssey*: an epic poem attributed to Homer and passed down through centuries of oral tradition.

Historians believe Odysseus was likely not a single historical figure but an amalgam of several Bronze Age kings. The places where the legendary hero and his companions fought, sailed, loved, and lived, however, were very real. Many of those locations still exist today—and are well worth crossing seas, braving adventures, and leaving home to experience yourself.

Below, you'll find the destinations many scholars believe inspired the settings of the original *Odyssey*, along with notable points of interest and suggestions for local accommodations that are worthy of a king. Which one will become the starting point for your own epic journey?



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Menelaus's Kingdom: Sparta, Greece



Telemachus's journey next takes him to Sparta, where he hopes King Menelaus can shed light on his father's fate. Today, Sparta is a modern city in Greece's Peloponnese region, but visitors can still experience echoes of the ancient city-state at the olive grove-dotted ruins of **Ancient Sparta** and the **Archaeological Museum of Sparta**, home to impressive Roman mosaics and statues of Greek gods.

The region also boasts one of Greece's most remarkable later-era landmarks: **Mystra**, a sprawling complex of Byzantine churches, monasteries, and palaces recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. After a day of exploring centuries of history, unwind at **Euphoria Retreat**, nestled in the foothills of Mount Taygetus just below Mystra, where wellness experiences nourish both body and mind.