



Lifelong  
Learning

With **Stephen P. McCormick**,  
Associate Professor of French  
and Italian

# FROM THE CANALS OF VENICE TO THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS OF ATHENS

August 31 - September 9, 2025



Aboard the New Expedition Cruise Ship *DIANA*



Dear W&L Alumni, Parents, and Friends,

The Dalmatian Coast, the eastern shore of the Adriatic Sea, is one of the most intriguing destinations in the Mediterranean. The region offers spectacular scenery, ancient, medieval, and renaissance history and art, and charming towns and villages. I invite you to join us on this voyage as we sail from Venice, Italy to Athens, Greece and discover the rich culture and history of this majestic corner of the world.

Begin our itinerary by strolling across Venice's Piazza San Marco, viewing St Mark's Basilica, Doge's Palace, and the Grand Canal. Marvel at the intricate canals, bridges, and gondolas as well as the city's acclaimed art and sculptures. We'll then depart the center of the former Venetian Empire to explore the historic coastal towns of Croatia and Montenegro, including the ancient Palace of Emperor Diocletian in Split, Dubrovnik (one of Europe's best-preserved medieval cities), and the fortified town of Kotor, like Dubrovnik, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Further south, we venture into Albania and discover Butrint, another UNESCO World Heritage Site and the Trojan settlement with ruins spanning 2,500 years. Then experience the mythical Greek past where the echoes of the Oracle of Apollo resonate amidst olive groves overlooking Itea. As we transit through the legendary Corinth Canal—an engineering marvel initiated by Nero but completed only in 1893—you'll feel the weight of history surrounding you.

Associate Professor of French and Italian **Stephen McCormick** will accompany the voyage to share insights into the complex history of this part of the Mediterranean world.

Our vessel for this cruise will be the state-of-the-art 192-guest *Diana*, a ship that has received high praise from W&L travelers on previous voyages for its elegant accommodations, fine cuisine, superb service, and perfect size.

Please look over the enclosed brochure and begin making plans to join fellow W&L travelers and me for a special trip of discovery and comradery.

Warm regards,

Ruth Candler  
Associate Director, W&L Lifelong Learning

Cover photo: Grand Canal, Venice, Italy

## FACULTY

### STEPHEN P. MCCORMICK

Associate Professor of French and Italian



After receiving his PhD from the University of Oregon, **Stephen McCormick** came to Washington & Lee University in 2014 to teach French and Italian literature and language. His previous work focused on Old French epic literature in northern Italy,

especially the hybrid-language Franco-Italian literature that flourished in the Veneto region in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Stephen's more recent research projects examine knowledge of geography and cartography among the merchants of fifteenth-century Florence. This work investigates the intersection of mapmaking and literature in Renaissance Italy, especially the representations of the Mediterranean in both cartography and epic literature. At Washinton & Lee University, Stephen teaches all levels of French and Italian, with advanced seminars on medieval French literature, Italian mapmaking, and contemporary issues of France and Italy.



Remains of the ancient Baptistery, Butrint, Albania



Galaxidi, Greece

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL THE W&L OFFICE OF LIFELONG LEARNING AT 540.458.8723



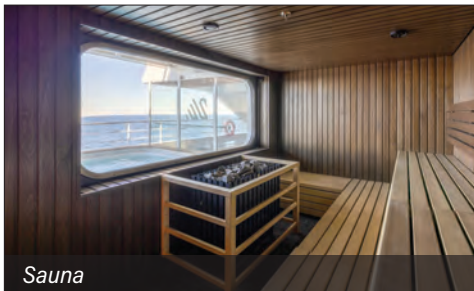
# THE NEW 192-GUEST EXPEDITION CRUISE SHIP *DIANA*



Oceanview Stateroom



Balcony Suite



Sauna



Observation Lounge



Outdoor Café/Bar with swimming pool

Built in Finland, and launched in April 2023, Swan Hellenic's *Diana* is a new generation expedition cruise ship. Although at 12,100 tons the ship is large enough to accommodate more than 350 passengers, *Diana* will accommodate a maximum of 192 guests in 96 spacious staterooms and balcony suites. The low guest density results in one of the most generous indoor and outdoor space-to-guest ratios among cruise ships.

Featuring the latest advances in technology and engineering, *Diana* is among the world's first environmentally responsible ships. Equipped with hybrid engines and a unique water filtration system, *Diana* leaves a minimal footprint. For cruising in Polar regions, the ship meets the stringent requirements of the new Polar Code with its high PC5 Category A ice strengthened hull and other advanced features. A computer-controlled Dynamic Positioning System allows the ship to maintain position without anchoring. Operated by a complement of 135 experienced European officers and international crew members, *Diana* will

carry a fleet of Zodiacs, versatile landing boats, and kayaks. Powerful stabilizers provide a smooth ride.

*Diana's* interior spaces exude sophisticated elegance, with most rooms opening to panoramic views of the sea. All staterooms and suites face outside and are equipped with private facilities, climate control, TV, Wi-Fi and USB connections and other amenities. Of the ship's 96 staterooms, 76 have balconies. Public areas include a spacious observation lounge equipped with state-of-the-art facilities for lectures and presentations; a club lounge; a restaurant that accommodates all guests at one seating; an outdoor café/bar that surrounds the heated swimming pool; a wellness area with gym, spa, and sauna with an adjoining outdoor jacuzzi; library; beauty salon; and an infirmary that is attended by a full-time doctor and nurse. The ship also features expansive open-deck areas. Two elevators connect all decks. Attentive service is provided on a 24-hour basis. The outstanding cuisine is complemented by fine wines at lunch and dinner.

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# ITINERARY



Sunday, August 31, 2025  
**DEPART THE UNITED STATES**

Monday, September 1  
**VENICE, Italy**

Arrive in Venice and transfer to the port to embark *Diana*. The ship is docked overnight in Venice. (D)

Tuesday, September 2  
**VENICE**

After breakfast, your morning excursion explores St. Mark's Basilica and the Doge's Palace. The interior of the Basilica is covered with 14,000 square feet of gold mosaics, mostly from the 12th and 13th centuries, and the altarpiece known as Pala d'Oro is universally considered the most refined expression of Byzantine sensibility in the world. The Doge's Palace, combining Gothic, Renaissance, and



Along the shore of Montenegro's Bay of Kotor, the only fjord-like waterway in Southern Europe.

Mannerist elements, was the working center of Venetian government when Venice dominated the entire eastern Mediterranean. Following lunch, enjoy time for independent exploration, or join a walking tour of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, whose walls and ceilings are covered with murals by Tintoretto, and the Basilica Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, with its treasure trove of paintings and sculptures by artists including Titian, Canova, Sansovino, Donatello, and Bellini. (B,L,D)

Wednesday, September 3  
**RAB, Croatia**

Perched on a sloping peninsula overlooking a spacious bay, Rab, the only town on the small island of the same name, is one of the most beautiful along Croatia's coast. Four graceful belfries dominate the unspoiled medieval city, with its narrow streets lined with stately mansions. The Cathedral of Sveta Marija Velika (Saint Mary the Great), consecrated in 1177, is an excellent example of a Romanesque Basilica, while its magnificent Bell Tower is a masterpiece of 12th-century architecture. (B,L,D)

Thursday, September 4  
**TROGIR/SPLIT**

Trogir serves as our gateway to the World Heritage Site of Split. Originally a Greco-Illyrian settlement, Split is an ancient city built around the formidable Palace of Diocletian, constructed between 295 and 305. An extensive structure, much of it well-preserved, the palace contains within its walls Split's medieval town, making it the only palace that has been continuously inhabited since Roman times. Your tour includes the underground cellars, the Mausoleum, Jupiter's Temple, the Peristyle, and the Northern Gate. In the afternoon, enjoy a walking tour of Trogir, ancient Tragurion, one of Dalmatia's most beautiful and best-preserved towns. (B,L,D)

Friday, September 5  
**DUBROVNIK**

Set on a rocky peninsula jutting into the Adriatic Sea, Dubrovnik is one of Europe's best-preserved medieval cities and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Its ancient walls enclose narrow cobblestoned streets and alleyways, palaces, and mansions. The city contains within its ramparts the Rector's Palace; the Franciscan Monastery, which houses a 13th-century pharmacy (the oldest in Europe); and the baroque Cathedral, with works by Renaissance painters Titian and Andrea del Sarto. *Diana* is in port until late in the evening, providing ample opportunity to continue exploration of this fascinating city on your own, and perhaps to have a meal ashore as well. (B,L,D)

Saturday, September 6  
**KOTOR, Montenegro**

Sail the fjord-like Bay of Kotor to reach the Montenegrin port town of the same name, located at the head of the bay beneath towering mountains. One of the most striking and best-preserved towns along the Adriatic coast, Kotor is also designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. A tour of this delightful town reveals its magnificent walls, palaces, and churches, including the Drago Palace, with its elegant Renaissance windows, the 12th-century St. Tryphon



**Rab Island, Croatia**

Cathedral, and the baroque Lipovac Palace. (B,L,D)

**Sunday, September 7**

**SARANDË, Albania/BUTRINT**

From Sarandë, drive to Butrint, yet another UNESCO World Heritage Site. Inhabited since prehistoric times, the settlement was founded by the Trojans, or so the poet Virgil claims in the Aeneid. This stunning excavation has uncovered ruins spanning 2,500 years, including the remains of a Greek acropolis, a Roman amphitheater, a 6th-century baptistery, and a 19th-century fortress. (B,L,D)

**Monday, September 8**

**ITEA/DELPHI/CORINTH CANAL**

Begin today's excursion with a drive through spectacular scenery on the way to Delphi. Famous in antiquity as the home of the oracle of Apollo, Delphi continues to cast a spell as you marvel at the impressiveness of the site even in ruins and imagine the awe ancient pilgrims must have felt when the temples and shrines were still standing. Explore the on-site museum, with superbly done exhibits explaining the history of this sacred place. Our special lunch is within an ancient olive grove where we will learn how olive oil is produced, and its health benefits. Proceed to the



**Temple of Apollo, Delphi, Greece**

delightful seaside town of Galaxidi with time at leisure before returning to Itea. Later the ship will transit the Corinth Canal, the narrow waterway that separates the mainland of Greece from the Peloponnese. (B,L,D)

**Tuesday, September 9**

**ATHENS/USA**

This morning, disembark in Piraeus and transfer to Athens airport for return flights. (B)

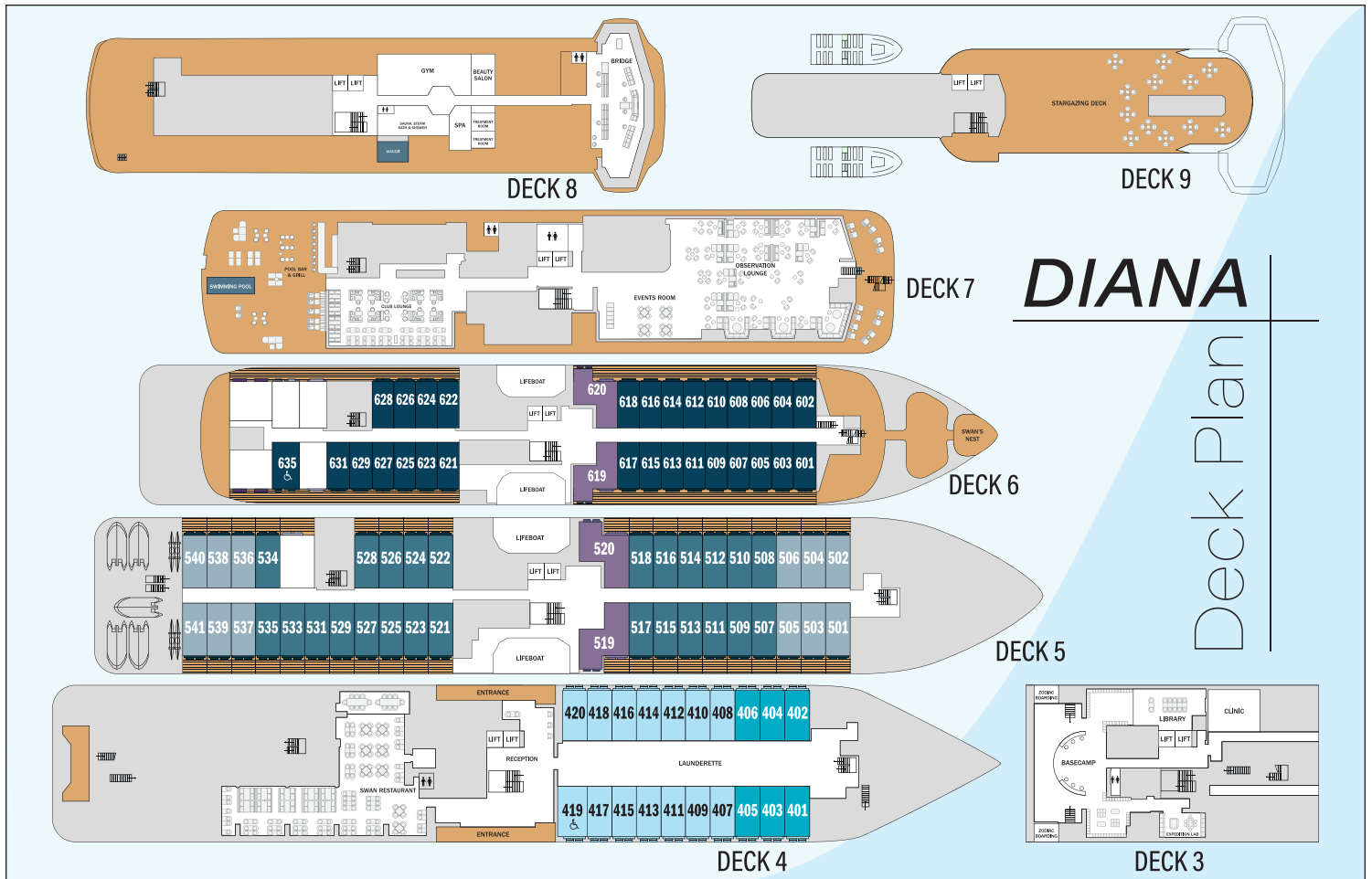
**OPTIONAL POST-TRIP EXTENSION IN ATHENS**

Our optional extension includes a two-night stay at the *Athens Capital Hotel* (or similar) which includes tours of the Acropolis, the Acropolis Museum and the ancient Agora, and time at leisure. Also included are transfers on September 9th and 11th, two breakfasts, one lunch and one dinner.

Rate: \$1,490 per person, double occupancy  
Single room supplement: \$390



**St. Mark's Basilica, Venice, Italy**



All accommodations aboard *Diana* are spacious staterooms and balcony suites. They are elegantly decorated, face outside, affording sea views, and include a queen-size bed that can be arranged as two twin beds, a spacious bathroom, mini-refrigerator, safe, ample closet space, climate control, telephone, TV, Wi-Fi, and USB connections, as well as other amenities.

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	RATES PER PERSON / DOUBLE OCCUPANCY
<b>E</b>	Oceanview staterooms with two large oval windows. 206 sq. ft. Deck 4. Staterooms 401-406.	\$ 8,790
<b>D</b>	Oceanview staterooms with two large oval windows. 206 sq. ft. Deck 4. Staterooms 407-420.	\$ 9,290
<b>C</b>	Suites with balcony & living room area. 300 sq. ft. Deck 5. Suites 501-506, 536-541.	\$ 10,690
<b>B</b>	Suites with balcony & living room area. 300 sq. ft. Deck 5. Suites 507-518, 521-529, 531-535.	\$ 11,190
<b>A</b>	Suites with balcony and living room area. 300 sq. ft. Deck 6. Suites 601-618, 621-635.	\$ 11,790
<b>AA</b>	Suites with large balcony, separate bedroom & living room. 474 sq. ft. Decks 5 & 6. Suites 519, 520, 619 & 620.	\$ 15,390

**FOR SOLO TRAVELERS** | A limited number of cabins are available for single occupants in Category D at 120% of the per-person, double occupancy rate, and in Categories C, B, and A at 150% of the per-person, double occupancy rate.



Corinth Canal, Greece

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL THE W&L OFFICE OF LIFELONG LEARNING AT 540.458.8723**

## PROGRAM INCLUSIONS

The rates are all-inclusive. There are no hidden costs and no additional charges such as shore excursions or embarkation and port charges. Other than the international airfare and expenses of a personal nature, all else is included. Specifically, the rates include:

- Cruise aboard the Swan Hellenic *Diana*, as described in the itinerary.
- Group airport/hotel/pier transfers overseas at designated times on the indicated arrival and return dates, and handling of luggage.
- The services of an experienced Thalassa Journeys Trip Director.
- Program of lectures and discussions with Washington & Lee Professor Stephen McCormick.
- Complete program of shore activities as described, led by professional local guides.
- All meals aboard the ship, with a selection of wines, beer and soft drinks during lunch and dinner.
- Welcome and farewell cocktail receptions aboard the ship hosted by the captain.
- Open bar with select alcoholic beverages.
- Coffee, including espresso and cappuccino, tea and soft drinks throughout the day and night.
- 24-hour room service.
- Gratuities to the ship's crew, guides, porters and drivers.
- Basic Wi-Fi aboard the ship.
- All local taxes and service charges, including port and embarkation taxes.
- Complete pre departure material.

**NOT INCLUDED:** International airfare; travel insurance; expenses of a personal nature; any items not mentioned in the itinerary or the above inclusions.



Street scene in the Old Town in Dubrovnik, Croatia

## REGISTRATION

W&L 25D-0831

I (we) wish to reserve \_\_\_\_\_ place(s) on **FROM THE CANALS OF VENICE TO THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS OF ATHENS**, August 31 - September 9, 2025, with Washington & Lee University. I/We understand that a deposit of \$1,500.00 per person is required.

**For the ease of registering online, please visit: <https://go.wlu.edu/venicetoathens>**

I/We wish to pay the deposit by credit card and authorize Thalassa Journeys to contact us for credit card details. I understand that final payment is due ninety (90) days prior to departure and is payable by check or credit card.

Alternatively, you can make your deposit by check.

Enclosed is my check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ (\$1,500 per person) made payable to **Thalassa Journeys**.

Please email your reservation to [lifelong@wlu.edu](mailto:lifelong@wlu.edu) and mail check to:

**Thalassa Journeys:** 8815 Conroy-Windermere Rd., Suite 406, Orlando, FL 32835

### PLEASE SELECT STATEROOM CATEGORY IN ORDER OF PREFERENCE

1st choice  \_\_\_\_\_ 2nd choice  \_\_\_\_\_ 3rd choice  \_\_\_\_\_

Double Occupancy  Single Occupancy (Inquire for rates)

**PREFERRED BED CONFIGURATION:** Double  \_\_\_\_\_ Twin  \_\_\_\_\_

I/we wish to register for the optional extension in Athens.

DR./MR./MRS./MS. FIRST LAST (As it appears on your passport)

DR./MR./MRS./MS. FIRST LAST (As it appears on your passport)

ADDRESS CITY STATE ZIP

GUEST ONE MOBILE GUEST ONE E-MAIL

GUEST TWO MOBILE GUEST TWO E-MAIL

GUEST ONE W&L AFFILIATION (CLASS YEAR, PARENT YEAR, FRIEND) **Each participant must sign below: I/We have read the "General Information" section and agree to its terms.**

GUEST TWO W&L AFFILIATION (CLASS YEAR, PARENT YEAR, FRIEND)

GUEST ONE NAME FOR NAME BADGE SIGNATURE DATE

GUEST TWO NAME FOR NAME BADGE SIGNATURE DATE

## GENERAL INFORMATION

**PAYMENT SCHEDULE:** A deposit of \$1,500 per person is required to reserve your space on the tour. Final payment is due 90 days prior to departure. Payment can be made by personal check or charged to a credit card.

**CANCELLATIONS & REFUNDS:** All cancellations are subject to a \$300 per person administrative fee. Cancellations received 71-90 days prior to departure will be assessed a penalty equal to 50% of the total program cost per person. Cancellations received within 70 days of departure are subject to 100% cancellation penalties. Requests for cancellations must be made in writing. No refunds will be made for any part of this program in which you choose not to participate.

**INSURANCE:** We strongly recommend the purchase of trip cancellation insurance, which is available for coverage of expenses in conjunction with cancellation due to illness or accident. Baggage insurance is also recommended. In the event that you must cancel your participation in a travel program, trip cancellation insurance may be the only source of reimbursement.

**ITINERARY:** The itinerary, accommodations and arrangements are subject to change at the discretion of Thalassa Journeys.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Please read carefully the following terms and conditions, which constitute the sole, legally enforceable agreements between the traveler and Thalassa Journeys. Thalassa Journeys acts solely as agents for the traveler with respect to all transportation, hotel and other tour arrangements. In that capacity, we exercise all reasonable care possible to ensure the traveler's safety and satisfaction, but, we neither assume nor bear any responsibility or liability for any injury, death, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity arising in connection with the services of any ship, airplane, train, automobile, motor coach, carriage or other conveyance, or the actions of any third-party, involved in carrying the traveler or in affecting these tours. We are not responsible for damages, additional expenses, or any other losses due to cancellation, delay or other changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, civil disturbances, acts or threats of terrorism, travel warnings or bans, termination or suspension of war risks or other carrier insurance, quarantine, acts of God or other causes beyond our control. All such losses must be borne by the traveler, and tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. In the event of cancellation, delay or rescheduling mandated by any of the aforesaid causes beyond our control, the traveler shall have the option of accepting in lieu of the original tour such rescheduled tour or other substituted tour(s) as may be offered by us, or else, receiving a refund of as much of such advance tour expenditures as we are able to recover on the traveler's behalf from carriers, third-party tour vendors, etc., but, we shall not have any obligation or liability to the traveler beyond the foregoing. We reserve the right to make alterations to the tour's itinerary and to substitute hotels, transportation methods, or lecturers if this is required. We reserve the right to cancel, delay, or reschedule any tour prior to departure, and, so long as this is not due to any of the aforesaid causes beyond our control, the traveler shall be entitled to a full refund of all monies paid to that point if he/she so desires. No refund shall be made for any unused portion of any tour. By forwarding their deposit(s), the traveler certifies that he/she and/or their dependents, minors or others covered thereby do not have any mental, physical or other condition of disability that could create a hazard for them or other travelers. We reserve the right to decline to accept or to decline to retain any person as a member of any tour should such person's health, condition or actions adversely affect or threaten the welfare or safety of other travelers or impede the tour. Baggage or valuables brought on the tour shall be transported, handled or stored at the traveler's risk entirely, and, we shall bear no liability or responsibility for any damage or other loss thereto. Resolution of any disputes arising hereunder shall be affected exclusively in the state or federal courts presiding in Florida, pursuant to applicable Florida law.

**RATES:** Tour costs are based upon current airfares, tariffs, and currency values. While we do everything possible to maintain the listed prices, they are subject to change.

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**WASHINGTON AND LEE**  
UNIVERSITY

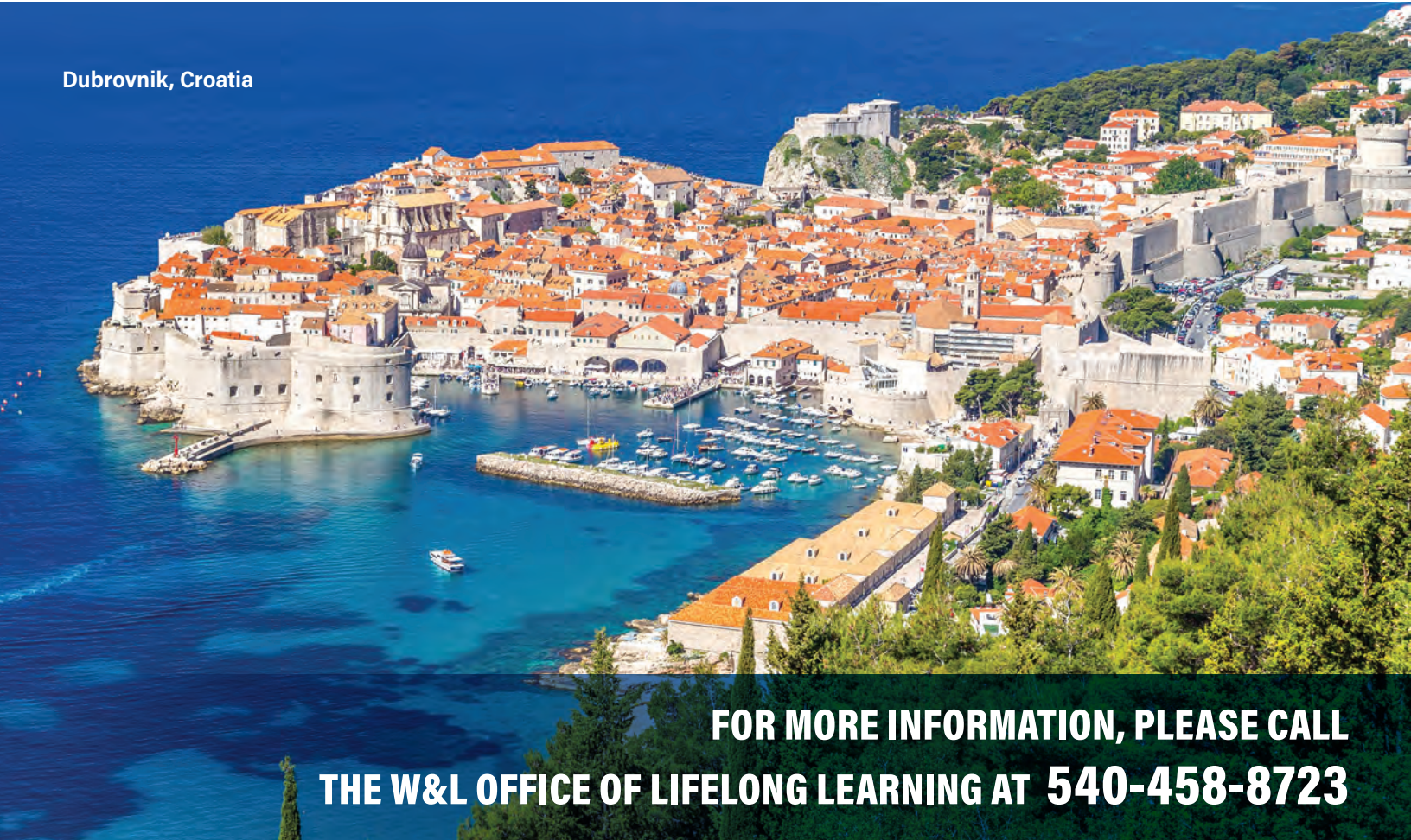
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Join **Stephen P. McCormick**, Associate Professor of French and Italian  
on **FROM THE CANALS OF VENICE TO THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS OF  
ATHENS | August 31 - September 9, 2025**

Dubrovnik, Croatia



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