



# THESEUS

## THE HERO

Theseus is a legendary hero from Greek mythology who was considered an early king of Athens. Famously killing villains, Amazons, and centaurs, his most celebrated adventure was his slaying of the fearsome Minotaur of the Cretan king Minos. He was also a part of the brave crew of the Argo and went on many adventures with them.

Theseus, son of Aegeus and Aethra, was a mythical king and founder of Athens. He performed countless heroic deeds, the most famous of which was slaying the Minotaur (a man with a head of a bull). Some versions of the legend of Theseus say that the hero was one of the warriors on board the Argo.

Theseus grew up in the countryside, unaware that his father was a King. When he came of age, his mother told him to lift the rock where his father had hidden tokens of his royal identity. This led Theseus to set out for Athens to claim his birthright. On this voyage, Theseus encountered six villains, each guarding one of six entrances to the Underworld. These obstacles called for him to prove his bravery. One of the villains was Procrustes the Stretcher, who would offer a bed to passers-by and, if they did not fit, would make them fit either by cutting off their legs or stretching them. Theseus gave Procrustes a taste of his own medicine by cutting off the villain's legs and head!

Like Jason on his quest for the Golden Fleece, Theseus also embarked on a voyage that others believed deadly. This was his quest to slay the Minotaur. The Minotaur was a terrible monster, half-man and half-bull, who was the child of Pasiphae, wife of King Minos of Crete. As punishment for an insult committed by King Minos, Poseidon had sent upon Pasiphae a fit of lust for a bull, and the Minotaur was her fearsome offspring. King Minos ordered the blacksmith and engineer Daedalus to construct a labyrinth where the monster would be imprisoned, and demanded that every nine years the Athenians must send him seven girls and seven boys to feed the beast.

In order to put an end to this terrible tradition, Theseus set out to kill the Minotaur. Like Jason, who was aided in his mission by Medea, King Aeete's daughter, Theseus was secretly aided by Ariadne, daughter of King Minos. With her help, he found his way through the labyrinth and killed the Minotaur, putting an end to the Athenians' sacrifices. This bold deed proved Theseus' great courage and strength, making him an ideal member of the Argo's team.