

Day 1 Home - Istanbul

Your premium small group tour through Turkey awaits! Your holiday will begin with your flight to Istanbul. Prepare to receive a warm welcome to this continent-straddling metropolis that the Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, and Ottomans have all called home. Upon arrival into Istanbul you will be greeted by our representative and transferred to your 5 star hotel to relax after your journey.

PLEASE NOTE: Some flights depart the night before Day 1.

Hotel: Fer Hotel or similar

Day 2 Istanbul (B,L,D)

This morning your guide will meet you in the lobby for a welcome meeting to discuss the trip and give you a chance to meet your fellow travellers. After our meeting, we start our journey in the footsteps of the city's most famous ruler and head to Sultanahmet (the Old City, formerly Constantinople). Explore where ancient empires were situated and tour intertwining backstreets filled with hidden gems. Here you'll also visit the jaw-dropping Hagia Sofia, whose stunning construction is said to have changed the history of architecture. When not erecting splendid buildings, the Byzantine Emperors loved a bit of entertainment, and the hippodrome was their stadium. Inspect some of the decorative statues and obelisks that remain from a time when this now tree-lined land would hold thousands of chariot racing fans. From here you will continue to Topkapi Palace, the house of the Sultans of Ottoman's time. Finish the day off with some leisure time at the Grand Bazaar, packed with over 3,000 stalls of handcrafted jewellery, textiles and books, including the famous Spice Market. Tonight your guide will take you to his favourite restaurant to have a real meyhane experience at the heart of Istanbul!

Hotel: Fer Hotel or similar

Day 3 Istanbul - Gallipoli - Canakkale (B)

After breakfast we will be travelling to the Gallipoli peninsula, where we will visit the beach and cemeteries of Anzac Cove. From here we will head up the hill toward the poignant memorials of Lone Pine and Chunuk Bair. You'll look down and revere upon the rough hills and gullies that became the graveyard for so many thousands of young men from both sides. We'll tour the former battlefields and find remnants of trenches used by the Turkish soldiers. Afterwards, your guide will take you to Suvla Winery for an *Inspiring Taste* of the amazing wines from the region before continuing to Canakkale.

Hotel: Parion Hotel or similar

Day 4 Canakkale - Troy - Kusadasi (B,L,D)

The highlight for today is a visit to the legendary city of Troy. You'll see the remnants of the ancient city walls and the famed wooden horse as you learn about the ground breaking archaeological digs and how the site has baffled historians. We will then pay a visit to a weavers' association and see first-hand how famous Turkish carpets are made before continuing on to Kusadasi.

Hotel: Lavista Boutique Hotel & Spa or Similar

Day 5 Kusadasi - Ephesus - Sirince - Kusadasi (B,L,D)

Our day today will start with an orientation walk around the village of Selcuk, a sprawling town lying at the base of the ancient Aysoluk Hill fortress. You'll visit the last remaining column of the Temple of Artemis, the ancient aqueducts and the 14th-century Isabey Mosque. This afternoon, visit Ephesus,

one of the best-preserved classical cities in the Eastern Mediterranean and arguably the greatest Greco-Roman site in the world. Tour around the Amphitheatre, stroll the marble streets once walked by Cleopatra and Mark Antony, and marvel at the gymnasium, baths and beautifully restored Library of Celsus. After Ephesus, we drive to Şirince village to join a very special **Inspiring Taste** cooking class led by an amazing cook, Mujde!

Hotel: Lavista Boutique Hotel & Spa or Similar

Day 6 Kusadasi - Pamukkale (B,L)

Today we will be visiting Hierapolis and travertines. Travertine phenomenon was created by deposits from thermal waters that cascaded down the mountainside over hundreds of years, forming a myriad of pools and terraces. As the water overflows from the pools, dazzling cream-coloured stalactites are formed that, from afar, resemble cotton or snow. The pools are filled with hot spring waters that supposedly have healing properties for one's circulation and digestive systems. Close to Pamukkale are the ruins of Hierapolis, which was founded by the King of Pergamon in 190 BC and by the 2nd Century AD had become an important Roman bath centre. The extensive ruins of Hierapolis are well worth exploring and include a theatre, temple, holy area, monumental fountain, bath, basilica and necropolis.

Hotel: Doğa Thermal Hotel or Similar

Day 7 Pamukkale - Embark Gulet cruise (B,D)

This morning will be at your leisure. After lunchtime, we will board a traditional boat called a Gulet, your home for the next three days. A gulet is a classic wooden yacht usually built in Bodrum or Marmaris in Turkey. The average size of gulet is 20 to 30 meters in length. Hand-crafted from mahogany, pine and teak, the gulets follow a design developed for these waters in Byzantine times, with a sharp bow, broad beam and rounded aft. They are stylish, graceful, fitted for comfort and full of character. We cruise in style along the spectacular coastline of Turkey for the next three days on a journey that has to be experienced to be believed.

Please note: The traditional style gulet boats are not meant to be luxurious, but they are very comfortable and an exceptional way to spend 3 nights. All cabins are nicely appointed and have private ensembles. Most of your time will be spent on deck enjoying the view

Ship: Gulet Sailing boat

Day 8 Gulet Sailing (B,L,D)

After breakfast on board, we'll sail to Göcek, a magnet for high-end yachts and another beautiful town on the Aegean Coast. We will then continue along the coast where we'll be sailing, swimming and enjoying the crystal clear water of the Mediterranean for the rest of the day.

Ship: Gulet Sailing boat

Day 9 Gulet Sailing (B,L,D)

After another breakfast on board, we'll sail to Tersane Bay where you can get off the Gulet and enjoy a hidden, untouched beach. In the afternoon, we will sail to Bedri Rahmi Bay for a swimming stop.

Ship: Gulet Sailing boat

Day 10 Disembark Gulet - Fethiye (B)

This morning we leave our beautiful Gulet in the port town of Fethiye, a culturally fertile town located on a bay surrounded by pine forests and dotted with islands. Enjoy the rest of the day at

leisure to explore this Mediterranean city.

Hotel: Blueberry Boutique Hotel or Similar

Day 11 Fethiye - Kayakoy - Antalya (B,L)

This morning you'll be travelling on to the Greek ghost-town of Kayakoy. Stroll around and take in the eerie atmosphere. After, we continue to see Hadrian's Gate, the old Roman Harbours of Antalya and the turquoise waters of the Mediterranean before enjoying lunch. Remnants remain from Antalya's time as a major Roman port.

Hotel: Akra Hotel or Similar

Day 12 Antalya - Konya - Cappadocia (B,L)

We leave Antalya today and head inland to the iconic landscape of Cappadocia. The drive today is long, but incredibly scenic. We will have a quick stop in Konya to try the local food before continuing to Cappadocia.

2019 Departures - Göreme – the pearl of Cappadocia – is where you'll find your Inspiring Stay at the Artemis Cave Hotel. The 21st Century will fade away as you find yourself in rooms carved right into the rock, taking you back through the ages. You may not want to leave!

2020 Departures - Tonight's Inspiring Stay is at the Best Western Premier cave hotel. The 21st Century will fade away as you find yourself in rooms carved right into the rock, taking you back through the ages. You may not want to leave!

Hotel: Artemis Cave hotel (2019) / Best Western Premier Cave Hotel (2020) or Similar

Day 13 Cappadocia (B,L)

Today includes a visit to the incredible underground city of Derinkuyu. You be enthralled by the ancient dwellings that span seven levels beneath the ground. From here you'll make your way to the archaeological site of Asikli Höyük, which was first settled in 8,000 BC. Later in the afternoon you'll be visiting the red river of Cappadocia, famous for its clay, which is still used today to make magnificent pieces of art. You'll learn about this ancient craft when we visit a local potter. Afterwards spend the rest of the day at your leisure or enjoy one of our bonus *Inspiring Sights* options to enhance your experience.

You may choose to include two (2) optional *Inspiring Sights* throughout your tour, free as part of your package.

Optional Inspiring Sight (1 of 4) - Wine and Sunset - On this tour you'll learn about wine-making, hike through valleys, visit vineyards and sip some local wines as the sun slides away for another day.

Optional Inspiring Sight (2 of 4) - Kelebek Turkish Bath - Enjoy some pampering and experience a Turkish bath (60mins). The Turkish bath, also known as hamam, is one of the ancient world's most widely exported customs and a not to be missed experience when in Turkey.

(Both optionals can be chosen as they take places at different times)

Hotel: Artemis Cave hotel (2019) / Best Western Premier Cave Hotel (2020) or Similar

Day 14 Cappadocia (B,L)

Enjoy a relaxing breakfast before going for a walk to the most beautiful valley in Cappadocia, Kizilcukur. You'll see fascinating rock formations such as cones, peaks and fairy chimneys, as well as

man made cave chapels from early Christian times. Around noon, your guide will take you to a beautiful lodge to watch the spiritual Whirling Dervish Ceremony. Soon after this you will be enjoying your first Inspiring Taste with a local speciality called 'Pottery Kebap'.

Optional Tour: Hot Air Ballooning - Early birds have the option of taking a hot air balloon over the otherworldly Cappadocian landscape. The scene at sunrise is sure to take your breath away. Please note this activity can only be booked locally. Please speak to your trip leader on Day 1 to organise this (approx. EUR 200pp).

Hotel: Artemis Cave hotel (2019) / Best Western Premier Cave Hotel (2020) or Similar

Day 15 Cappadocia - Istanbul (B)

This morning you will be transferred to the airport to fly back to Istanbul! On arrival you may want to enjoy one of our bonus *Inspiring Sights* options to enhance your experience.

You may choose to include two (2) optional *Inspiring Sights* throughout your tour, free as part of your package.

Optional Inspiring Sight (3 of 4) - Bosphorus Dinner Cruise - Enjoy an evening cruising along the Bosphorus river as you are dined and entertained by a wide range of performances.

Optional Inspiring Sight (4 of 4) - Homecooked dinner Istanbul - Nothing beats home cooking, especially Turkish home cooking. Join this Istanbul tour to be treated to a feast at a local family's home, as well as other oh so Turkish pursuits: drinking tea and playing backgammon.

(Please note only one of these tours can be done as they operate at the same time).

Hotel: Fer Hotel or similar

Day 16 Istanbul - Australia (B)

As they say, all good things must come to an end. Today marks the end of your incredible tour through Turkey. At the appropriate time, you will be transferred to the airport to board your flight home.

Day 17 Australia

Arrive home today