



TURKISH TREASURES 11 Nights/ 12 Days

DAY 1 - Arrive in Istanbul

Arrive in Istanbul, at the crossroads of Europe and Asia and transfer to your hotel.

DAY 2 - Istanbul City Tour

Embark on a half day morning tour* of Istanbul, the only city that straddles two continents. Your tour includes the newly renovated Blue Mosque, showcasing an impressive combination of blue Iznik tiles and intricate stonework. Then, visit St. Sophia, the great Byzantine Basilica built in the 6th century, which was later converted to a mosque. Afterward head to Hippodrome, the place where chariot races and competitive athletic events took place during the Roman period. Spend the remainder of the day at leisure. Perhaps, embark on the *optional* cruise along the Bosphorus, the winding straits separating Europe and Asia. View humble fishing villages and suspension bridges set against the dramatic outline of the Strait. Then to the Grand Bazaar, where bargaining is an art.

**Due to traffic congestion the order of sightseeing may change*

Optional: Half Day Istanbul Bosphorus Cruise & Grand Bazaar (PM)

DAY 3 - Spice Market, Troy, Drive to Canakkale

This morning, head to the lively Spice Market with its unforgettable aromas. Afterward, depart Istanbul and drive towards the city of Canakkale. Proceed to the classical city of Troy. Tour this 4000-year-old city and legendary center of the Trojan War, made immortal by Homer's epic poem *The Iliad*. Arrive and check into the hotel with free time

DAY 4 - Pergamum, Drive to Kusadasi

This morning, drive to Pergamum, a powerful kingdom during the ancient Hellenistic period, and visit the Asclepion, the ancient Roman spa center. Continue to Kusadasi, a city believed to be the birthplace of Homer, where you will arrive in the late afternoon

DAY 5 - Full Day in Kusadasi

Spend a full day at leisure in Kusadasi. Or, join the *optional* tour to Ancient Ephesus where the Temple of Artemis, one of the "Seven Wonders of the Ancient World," once stood. Walk along the 2000-year-old marble streets; see the Great Theater, the Odeon, the Fountain of Trajan, Temple of Hadrian, and the Library of Celsus. Visit the peaceful House of the Virgin Mary, believed to be her last residence. Following the tour, visit a leather factory to shop, or return to the hotel

Optional: Full Day Ephesus & House of Virgin Mary with Lunch





DAY 6 - Pamukkale Hot Springs, Necropolis, and Hierapolis

Begin the day with a visit a carpet atelier and watch a demonstration of carpet weaving. Then, proceed to Pamukkale, famous for its mineral-rich hot springs and white terraces. Visit the Necropolis and the ancient city of Hierapolis "Holy City," a UNESCO a World Heritage Site situated atop the Pamukkale hot springs. The Pamukkale hot springs have served as a therapeutic thermal spa since the 2nd century B.C.

DAY 7 - Travel to Konya

Today, travel from Pamukkale, the "Cotton Castle," to Konya, a city renowned for its Seljuk architecture and also as the home of the "Whirling Dervishes." Arrive in the afternoon and visit the Mausoleum of Mevlana with its distinctive fluted dome of turquoise tiles. View works of the 13th century leader Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi, one of the greatest mystical poets of Islam. The Mevlevi Sufi order was founded to follow his teachings.

DAY 8 - Visit Caravanserai of Sultanhan en route to Cappadocia

Depart for Cappadocia, visiting the magnificent Caravanserai of Sultanhan en route. Afterward, visit Guzelyurt, a fine example of cave dwellings and Greek influences in the Cappadocia region. Following a special home hosted lunch, continue to Nevsehir in Cappadocia. Time permitting, meet children at a local school en route. Upon arrival in Cappadocia, check into your hotel with free time before dinner. Tonight, attend the *optional* Whirling Dervish performance; their captivating mystical ritual connects one in infinite spinning to perfect harmony

Optional: Whirling Dervishes Performance (PM)

DAY 9 - Full Day in Cappadocia

Awake very early to participate in the *optional* hot air Balloon Ride* that takes you soaring over the Cappadocian landscape with its fairy chimney rock formations. Cappadocia is home to rock-cut temples, ancient underground cities, and unparalleled landscapes. Spend the day at leisure or, join the *optional* full day Cappadocia tour*. Visit the Open-Air Museum in the Goreme Valley to see the early Christian churches and the Ozkonak Underground City. The tour ends at the village of Avanos, famous for its pottery-making tradition. Return to the hotel with free time.

**Passengers can book both tours since the Cappadocia tour starts after the Balloon Ride*

Optional: Cappadocia Balloon Ride (AM)

Optional: Full Day Cappadocia

DAY 10 - Ankara, Mausoleum of Kemal Ataturk

This morning, depart for Ankara, the capital and the second largest city of Turkey. Upon arrival, visit the Mausoleum of Kemal Ataturk, founder and first president of the Turkish Republic. Leading up to the Mausoleum, also known as the Anitkabir, lies a vast brick courtyard and monumental avenue lined with NeoHittite stone statues and cenotaphs beneath its colonnades. The most noted cenotaphs within the complex are those of General Ismet Inonu, a close comrade of Ataturk's and his successor, and that of Ataturk himself, a large and highly decorative marble cenotaph, beneath which lies his tomb. Continue





to the Anatolian Civilizations Museum, built in two Ottoman buildings located near Ankara Castle. The Museum, being among exceptional museums with its unique collection, exhibits Anatolian archaeological artifacts, as well as artifacts from the Paleolithic Age to the present

DAY 11 - Return to Istanbul

Depart for Istanbul, arriving in the early afternoon. Visit Topkapi Palace, residence of Ottoman Sultans housing the richness of 700 years. The jeweled turban crests, silken caftans, and priceless Chinese porcelains of the palace bear witness to the grandeur of a bygone era. Spend the remainder of the day at leisure.

DAY 12 - Depart Turkey

Transfer to the airport for your departure flight

Return Home with the beautiful memories of your tour!!

