



## EXPERIENCE TURKEY

### 13 Nights/ 14 Days

#### DAY 1 - Arrive in Istanbul

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

#### DAY 2 - Full Day Istanbul Tour

Begin your day at the newly renovated Blue Mosque, showcasing an impressive combination of blue Iznik tiles and intricate stonework. Then, on to the Hippodrome, the place where chariot races and competitive athletic events took place during the Roman period. Continue with a visit to St. Sophia, the great Byzantine Basilica built in the 6th century, which was later converted to a mosque. Afterward, arrive at Topkapi Palace, residence of Ottoman Sultans housing the richness of 700 years. End the day at the Grand Bazaar, where bargaining is an art.

#### DAY 3 - Travel to Ankara

This morning, depart Istanbul and drive to Ankara, the capital city of Turkey. Upon arrival, visit the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations with exhibits featuring Anatolian archaeological artifacts dating back to the Paleolithic Age. Continue to the Mausoleum of Kemal Ataturk, founder and first president of the Turkish Republic. Leading up to the Mausoleum, view the monumental avenue lined with Neo-Hittite stone statues and cenotaphs. The most noted cenotaphs are those of General Ismet Inonu, and that of Ataturk himself, beneath which lies his tomb.

#### DAY 4 - Visit Hattusa en route to Cappadocia

Today, depart Ankara and head south towards Cappadocia. Along the way, stop at the ancient city of Hattusa, which was the capital of the Hittite Empire in the late Bronze Age and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. View Lion's Gate, with its rich ornamentation and King's Gate, with its large-scale relief. Visit the citadel that was also the royal residence and explore the Great Temple, dedicated to the supreme deities of the Hittites. Afterward, continue the drive to Cappadocia. Arrive at the hotel.

#### DAY 5 - Full Day in Cappadocia

Embark on a tour of the area, famed for its temples and houses that are cut directly into the region's rock formations. Visit the Open-Air Museum, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Goreme Valley to see early Christian churches. During the panoramic drive to Pigeon Valley, Avcilar Valley and Pasabag Valley, view the surreal landscape of mushroom shaped rock formations. Afterward, visit a carpet atelier and watch a demonstration of traditional Turkish carpet weaving. Return to the hotel with free time

*\*An optional Cappadocia Balloon Ride (AM)*

#### DAY 6 - Full Day Cappadocia Tour





Today, the exploration of Cappadocia begins at the village of Avanos. Visit a local pottery shop before heading to the Ozkonak Underground City, built on the northern slopes of Mt. Idis that features a maze of narrow tunnels and rooms carved from soft volcanic rock. Continue to Güllüdere (Rose Valley) boasting the best views of fairy-chimneys, before returning to the hotel. Spend time at leisure before dinner. Tonight, be sure to attend the *optional* performance of the world-famous Whirling Dervishes

**Optional:** Whirling Dervishes Performance (PM)

### **DAY 7 - Cappadocia Caravanserai Sightseeing, Konya, Antalya**

Today, visit the 13th century Caravanserai of Sultanhan. The caravanserai provided these Silk Road traders with heated rooms, food, medical attention, equipment repair and many other common conveniences. Afterward, head to Konya, a city renowned for its Seljuk architecture. Visit the Mausoleum of Mevlana, housing the tomb 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. Continue the drive towards Antalya, passing through lush forests, orchards and olive groves. Arrive in Antalya for overnight

### **DAY 8 - Full Day in Antalya**

Spend the day at leisure in Antalya. Founded by King Attalos of Pergamum as "Heaven on Earth," Antalya is an international resort city that has become a prime destination in Turkey. Join the *optional* Cruise by Wooden Boat & Antalya Archaeological Museum. Board a charming wooden boat and cruise along the beautiful coast. Take in the magnificent views of the rugged cliffs, hidden coves and golden sandy beaches. After disembarkation, visit the Antalya Archaeological Museum with its artifacts dating back over 2500 years. Take a city tour of Antalya that includes Hadrian's Gate, the Clock Tower, city walls dating back to the 2nd century

**Optional:** Cruise by Wooden Boat & Antalya Archaeological Museum

### **DAY 9 - Necropolis & Hierapolis, Pamukkale**

This morning, depart for Pamukkale. Along the way, stop to visit the Necropolis, a burial ground covered in limestone with ornately decorated marble tombs and the ancient city of Hierapolis "Holy City", situated atop the Pamukkale hot springs, which together constitute a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Explore the Roman ruins of the ancient city and health resort since the 2nd century BC. Afterward, continue to Pamukkale for overnight

### **DAY 10 - Aphrodisias, Bodrum**

Depart Pamukkale this morning and drive to Bodrum. En route, stop to visit Aphrodisias, an archaeological site of ancient Roman ruins that were once was a major center of Aphrodite worship. View the many monuments dating back to the first century. Later, arrive in the seaside city of Bodrum and check into your hotel

### **DAY 11 - Bodrum City Tour**





Begin your morning city tour of Bodrum at Crusader Castle, housing Turkey's Museum of Underwater Archaeology. Later, view the historical windmills standing near the Bodrum harbour before heading to the imposing Myndos Gate. It was constructed in the 4th century BC by King Mausolos and is the only surviving gate of the two original entrances to ancient Halicarnassus. Continue to the Bodrum Amphitheater, one of the city's great historic monuments. Finish the tour at the market before heading back. Balance of the day is at leisure

### **DAY 12 - Ancient Ephesus, Izmir**

Depart Bodrum this morning and travel to the ancient city of Ephesus, an open-air archaeological museum. Walk along the 2000-year-old marble and cobblestone streets. The Odeon, the Fountain of Trajan, the steam baths of Scholastica, Temple of Hadrian, and the two-storied Library of Celsus are some of the ancient sites you'll behold on the walking tour. Visit the Great Theatre, and the peaceful House of the Virgin Mary, believed to be her last residence. Afterward, continue to Izmir for overnight

### **DAY 13 - Izmir City Tour**

Embark on a morning tour of the port city of Izmir, known historically as Smyrna with over 3500 years of history. View the ancient Roman Agora and one of the city's famous landmarks the Clock Tower. Afterward, visit the bazaar and browse the colourful stalls for souvenirs. The afternoon is free.

### **DAY 14 - Depart Turkey**

Transfer to the airport for your departure flight

***Return Home with the beautiful memories of your tour!!***

