

# Best of Turkey



## 15 Day In-depth Adventure

*...the history, culture and food experience*

*Featuring Gallipoli, Istanbul, Cappadocia & Pamukkale*



Fully escorted  
Maximum group size is 16  
Excellent local tour guides  
Comfortable hotels  
Comfortable coach transport  
2 train journeys  
18 meals included  
Most tours, entry fees and experiences are included  
Some optional activities are available to compliment your interests

Comfortable tourist standard tour with basic level of fitness  
Many departures are still available for 2024

**Prices from \$3132<sub>pp</sub> (twin share)**

*(airfares are not included)*

**Single supplement \$1175**

**2025 departures are available from March to October**

**Prices from \$3461<sub>pp</sub> twin share**

*Call in for tour details...*

**Travelabout Tours & Cruises**

# Best of Turkey

## Detailed Itinerary

### Inclusions & optionals

#### Day 1: Istanbul

Hoş geldin! Welcome to Turkey. Your adventure kicks off in Istanbul – the continent-straddling metropolis that the Greeks, Romans, Byzantines and Ottomans have all called home. There's a welcome meeting at 1 pm, where you'll meet your group leader and fellow travellers. After, maybe get out and explore the frenetic streets of Turkey's crown-jewel metropolis. Your group leader will take you on a walking tour of the nearby neighbourhoods so you can get your bearings on what's around. Later, why not gather together your new pals and seek out some Turkish cuisine in a street-side cafe.

#### Special information

It's very important that you attend the welcome meeting as we will be collecting insurance details and next of kin information at this time. If you are going to be late please let your travel agent or hotel reception know. Ask reception or look for a note in the lobby for more information on where the meeting will take place.

#### Day 2: Canakkale

After breakfast this morning, hit the road to Canakkale – a port city on the southern shore of the Dardanelles. You'll stop along the way to explore Gallipoli on a guided tour that will teach you about the significant events and history embedded in this area. Your guide will take you to ANZAC Cove and major memorial sites like Brighton Beach and ANZAC commemorative Site. You'll also take in the views across the Dardanelles Strait and the Gallipoli Peninsula. This evening, we'll spend the night in Canakkale with free time to grab dinner and get ready for tomorrow's adventures.

#### Breakfast

Gallipoli - Fully guided Gallipoli tour & visit to the Commonwealth graveyards

#### Special information

Your travel time today will be approximately 6 hours.

#### Day 3: Selcuk

This morning, drive to Selcuk with a stop in Troy – where history and mythology sit side-by-side. You'll wander the ancient city walls with your leader and even get a chance to enjoy a photo op with a replica Trojan Horse. You'll learn more about how this place has confounded historians and archaeologists, before continuing on to Selcuk, which will be your base for exploring the nearby ruins of Ephesus tomorrow. After arrival in the town, on the slopes of Ayasoluk Hill lie several historical buildings – you'll follow your leader on an orientation walk, passing Isa Bey Mosque and the imposing Byzantine citadel of the Grand Fortress. Just below the fortress are the ruins of the Basilica of St John, built by Justinian I in the sixth century. A short distance out of Selcuk is one of the ancient world's Seven Wonders – the Temple of Artemis – although, sadly, only a single column (of 127 originally) remains. It was destroyed in AD401, after being successively damaged by floods, a Greek arsonist seeking notoriety, and the Goths. You'll arrive in Selcuk with enough time to check in to the Breakfast

#### Included activities

Selcuk - Leader-led orientation walk

Troy - Archaeological site visit

Add on activities - Selcuk - Basilica of St John - EUR6

#### Special information

Your travel time today will be approximately 7 hours. Please note that Isa Bey Mosque is under renovation now, so you won't be able to visit it.

#### **Day 4: Selcuk**

This morning, take a private minivan to visit the ruins of the ancient city of Ephesus – one of the best-preserved Greco-Roman classical cities in the world. Once the capital city of Roman Asia Minor, the city has a fascinating history, which really comes alive with a local guide to enhance your experience. Considering their age, the ruins are in incredible shape, and it's not difficult to imagine them in their full glory over 2000 years ago, equipped with running water, public toilets, a medical institute, and Roman baths. The theatre is well preserved and regularly hosts concerts, but it's perhaps the magnificent library that is the most striking. This afternoon, drive out to the nearby picturesque village of Sirince and taste some locally produced fruit wines. This authentic Greek Ottoman village seems to have been overlooked by modern development and the unique local architecture nestled in the hills make for a photographer's dream.

Breakfast

Included activities

Ephesus - Archaeological site visit

Sirince - Village visit and fruit wine tasting

Add on activities

Selcuk - Ephesus Archaeological Museum - EUR10

Selcuk - Meryemana (Mary's House) - EUR15

Ephesus - Terrace Houses entry - EUR15

#### **Day 5: Pamukkale**

A train ride inland through mountainous landscapes brings you to one of Turkey's most photographed sites – Pamukkale – which literally translates to 'cotton castle'. Here, natural hot springs with a high calcium content cascade over the edge of the cliffs, leaving the earth bright white, hence the 'cotton'. Though you won't be able to bathe in these travertines, you can wade through them, and these pools are said to have many healing properties. Take some time to visit the nearby ancient city of Hierapolis and have a dip in what used to be Cleopatra's old pool. You can also check out the other ruins of the city – Hierapolis is known for its abundance of temples and religious structures, vast necropolis, amphitheatre and strange tombs.

Accommodation

Breakfast

Included activities

Pamukkale - Hierapolis and Travertines National Park

Add on activities

Pamukkale - Hierapolis Museum – Free

Pamukkale - Cleopatra Ancient Pool - TRY200

Special information

Your travel time today will be approximately 3.5 hours.

#### **Day 6: Kayakoy**

Take a bus ride south – off the tourist trail – to the village of Kayakoy. This small town acts as your base for exploring the Mediterranean coast, including the resort town of Fethiye and the renowned Blue Lagoon. Kayakoy was once a thriving place and now it's considered a ghost village, as its ancient stone houses were abandoned after their Greek inhabitants left Turkey during the great population exchange of the 1920s. Now protected by the Turkish government, it provides the opportunity to see an untouched, traditional Turkish town in quite an eerie location. One church in the lower area of the village, Kataponagia, is of particular interest due to an interesting room out the back – it was used to collect the bones of the dead. Pay to wander the ruins, enjoy the solitude, or simply  
Breakfast

Included activities

Kayakoy - Village visit

Special information

Your travel time today will be approximately 4.5 hours.

## **Day 7: Kayakoy**

Today, set out on a half-day trek along a section of rugged coastline, following part of the ancient walking trail of the Lycian Way to nearby Oludeniz, where you can swim in the Blue Lagoon. You'll walk up a steep rocky path up the hillside, make your way through forest, and then up a hill with fantastic views out across the Mediterranean. At the final descent into Oludeniz, you'll be greeted with a breathtaking view of an arching peninsula of white sand beach separating the crystal waters from its lush banks and the town's trademark panorama. The myriad hues of colour between the waters and pine-forested hills is a sight to behold, and you'll soon realise why this is one of the most photographed beaches in Turkey. This evening, join your hosts for a Turkish barbecue dinner, relaxing in their garden and enjoying some delicious local food and lively company.

### Meals

Breakfast & Dinner

Included activities

Lycian Way - Hike from Kayakoy to Oludeniz Beach

Kayakoy - Home-cooked Turkish BBQ dinner

Special information

Your trekking distance today will be approximately 6 km.

The trek to Oludeniz is rated moderate to difficult, and a good level of fitness is required. The terrain under foot is sometimes slippery and uneven and there are periods of ascent and descent. Good walking shoes are certainly required. If you do have a good level of fitness, this will be an enjoyable and rewarding walk. If you are unsure as to your capability to complete this walk, please discuss with your group leader before undertaking so that other transport arrangements can be made.

Fires over the last few years have caused several temporary closures of sections of the Lycian Way at very short notice. Should this occur a different activity will be arranged.

## **Day 8: Kas/Kekova**

Make your way the short distance from Kayakoy to Fethiye by dolmus – a Turkish shared taxi. From there, take a public bus to Kas or Kekova, with some spectacular coastal scenery along the way. The picturesque village of Kas – whitewashed buildings covered in bougainvillea and cobbled streets – is the southernmost of all the Turkish resorts. The best places in town to swim are from the waterfront restaurants that have their own private water access. For the price of an occasional drink, you get your own deck chair, umbrella and unbeatable views. When the sun goes down there is the chance to explore the handicraft markets, where you can find beautiful handmade wares with a distinctly

Meals Breakfast

Included activities

Kas - Leader led orientation walk

Kas - Handicraft market

Special information

Your travel time today will be approximately 3 hours.

Depending on the season, you'll stay either in Kas or Kekova for these two nights. Kekova is a smaller village, away from the tourist crowds for you to enjoy the sun and salt by the Mediterranean Sea. But in colder months, you'll stay in Kas, where there will be a bit more happening and more things to explore.

## **Day 9: Kas/Kekova**

Today, head to the shimmering turquoise waters on your gutlet and enjoy a day of fun, swimming, snorkelling, sun bathing and cruising over the ancient Sunken cities, with your lunch included on board. Disembark in the late afternoon and transfer back to your accommodation.

Accommodation Hotel/Guesthouse (1 night)

Meals Breakfast & Lunch

Included activities

### **Day 10: Konya**

This morning, take a private bus inland towards Konya. While it's a long day of travel, the scenery will keep you entertained as you cross the Toros Mountain range. The city is closely linked with the whirling dervish sect of Islam developed by Celaleddin Rumi – one of Islam's greatest Sufi mystics. Mevlana – 'our master' – as he came to be known, believed that music and dance could induce a state of love and divine union, and so devised the whirling sema ritual. In town, you can visit the original Tekke of Mevlana, which holds many relics and is also the final resting place for Rumi. Get your bearings on an orientation walk to Aladdin Hill in Konya's centre. On the side of the hill are the sheltered remains of the palace of the Seljuk Sultans of Rum, while beneath the Alaettin Mosque are artefacts dating back to the Stone Age. Tonight, perhaps enjoy a refreshing tea or try some central Anatolian cuisine.

Meals Breakfast

Included activities

Konya - Mevlana Museum

Add on activities

Konya - Karatay Museum - EUR3

Special information

Your travel time today will be approximately 7 hours.

### **Day 11: Cappadocia**

Leave Konya this morning by bus and head to The Cappadocian town of Urgup – with a vibrant, modern downtown area, plenty of boutique hotels built into the surrounding caves, it's perfectly positioned to springboard you into your Cappadocia explorations tomorrow. The surrounding areas are honeycombed with caves scooped out to make churches and dwellings that are known as fairy chimneys and castles. In times of peace, the people in this region lived on the land, but in times of war or persecution they took to living underground. This is a fascinating place, get prepared see some incredible stuff! Follow your leader on an orientation walk on arrival. This evening, you'll get to settle in and enjoy a special stay in a cave hotel – accommodation that is specific to this area. Don't forget to pack sturdy walking shoes or boots and a comfortable daypack for exploring the valleys of Cappadocia.

Breakfast

Included activities

Cappadocia - Leader-led orientation walk

Add on activities

Goreme - Whirling dervish performance - EUR30

Special information

Your travel time today will be approximately 4 hours.

### **Day 12: Cappadocia**

This morning is an ideal time to discover Cappadocia's unique landscapes from above – in a hot air balloon! Although this activity isn't included, it's a highly recommended experience that most travellers opt for to see the wondrous desert scenes at sunrise. This afternoon, take a walk through one of the nearby valleys with your group leader. It could be the Valley of Love where the fairy chimneys, deserted rock cut homes, and churches with frescoes will astound you, or any of the other fantastic scenic routes that your leader knows. There'll also be some time this afternoon to visit the Open Air in Goreme if you wish. It's a monastic complex composed of churches, rectories and dwellings, and one of the earliest centres for religious education. There are at least 10 churches and chapels in the museum area, dating between AD900 and 1200, each one named after a prominent attribute by the local villagers, who were exploring these caves long before there was an entrance fee. This evening you'll be warmly welcomed into a local cave home. The family will prepare a special home-cooked dinner for your group. Sit down to a feast made with passion, enjoy a friendly chat with your affable host and perhaps top off the night with some Turkish delight.

Meals Breakfast & Dinner

Included activities  
Cappadocia - Dinner at Local Family Home  
Goreme - Valley walk

Add on activities  
Cappadocia - Hot Air Balloon Deluxe Flight - EUR330  
Cappadocia - Hot Air Balloon Regular Flight - EUR260  
Goreme - Open Air Museum - EUR20  
Goreme - Underground city - EUR13

Special information

Hot air balloon in Cappadocia can be booked directly with your trip leader. Please speak to your group leader on Day 1 in your trip to secure a spot for this popular activity.

Due to local regulations, sunrise hot air balloon excursion times do vary which may result in your excursion beginning just after sunrise. This is subject to the tour provider's discretion and is not within our control.

### **Day 13: Eskisehir**

Say goodbye to the fairytale Cappadocia and head to Eskisehir this morning. A fascinating city, often known as the 'students' city by the locals, is a change of scene, and you can expect a refreshing and vibrant vibe. Arrive in the afternoon and visit Eskişehir Odunpazarı Village, where you'll dig into a ci borek lunch (a type of layered pancake) after a cooking demonstration at a local restaurant run by local women. This is the most popular snack in Eskisehir and you'll see what all the fuss is about when you taste some! After, wander the quaint and colourful houses nearby with your leader. Enjoy some free time later this afternoon, where you may like to take a gondola ride along the Porsuk River to get a glimpse into why they call this the Venice of Turkey.

Meals Breakfast & Lunch  
Included activities  
Eskisehir - Odunpazarı Village Visit  
Eskisehir - Ci Börek making & tasting

Special information

Your travel time today will be approximately 6 hours.

### **Day 14: Istanbul**

After breakfast this morning, depart on a fast train bound for Istanbul. The afternoon and evening is yours to enjoy at leisure. This glorious city is a gorgeous spot to toast to a great adventure and your leader will be able to recommend the best places to visit and eat, depending on your interests. Tonight, why not toast to newfound friends and an epic adventure with an optional dinner.

Meals Breakfast  
Special information

Your travel time today will be approximately 2 to 3 hours.

### **Day 15: Istanbul**

With no activities planned for today, your Turkish adventure comes to an end after breakfast. If you wish to spend a few more days checking out the sights of Istanbul, just speak to your booking agent.

Meals Breakfast