Antalya / Cappadocia / Dalyan / Fethiye / Istanbul / Oludeniz / Pamukkale

Turkey Discovery: Istanbul, Cappadocia and the Turquoise Coast



Tour code: IB-TR-010

Duration: 10 days

From US$1,299.00 / person

USD 1,299 per person sharing a double room, based on a travelling party of at least 6 adults.

Starting point: Istanbul airport arrival transfer; departure from Istanbul on Day 10.

Languages: English

Overview

Discover Turkey on a 10-day, 9-night journey from Istanbul to Cappadocia, Antalya, Oludeniz, Dalyan and Pamukkale, returning to Istanbul. The programme combines cultural sightseeing, a Bosphorus dinner cruise, outdoor activities and coastal landscapes.

Your itinerary

Day 1 Welcome to Turkey!

Welcome to Istanbul! You will be transferred to your hotel located in the heart of the old city, Sultanahmet and the remainder of the day is yours free to explore at your own pace.

Most short-stay visitors spend all their time in Sultanahmet, home to Istanbul's main sightseeing attractions. The monumental architecture, attractive parks and gardens, street-side cafés, and the benefits of a relatively traffic-free main road combine to make this area pleasant for both sightseeing and staying.

Oriental and Occidential – Bosphorus Dinner Cruise

Last call! All aboard, set sail and dine on fabulous hand-picked local delicacies with a 3-hours Bosphorus dinner cruise on our two-floor yacht. Indulge in a 4-course gourmet dinner with unlimited drinks. Unique way to sight-see stunning Istanbul, enjoy vibrant entertainment and eat well at a private table. From the resurrected buildings of great empires, to eye opening wonders of nature, this adventure encompasses the best of Istanbul.

Including traditional Turkish folklore show, belly-dancing show, performance of a whirling dervish, transfers to and from the venue, fine-dining and unlimited drinks. Finish off a legendary night with DJ Entertainment, Turkish dessert and a cup of Turkish coffee with its intense aroma and strong taste. Turkey is widely known for its colorful, rhythmic, elegant, stylish and traditional folk dances, which vary according to the region. Be enticed by Turkish folklore dances from different regions of Anatolia.

Just to name a few: Halay, the most popular folk dance particularly in the eastern and southeastern Anatolia regions. Origins stretch right back to old Turkish mythology and its shamanistic roots in Central Asia. Performed along with an upbeat rhythm consisting of drums and a shepher's pipe. Extremely similar to the Greek Sirtaki or the Arabic Dabke.. Zeybek is western and southern Anatolian folk dance represents symbol of courage and heroism of irregular militia and guerrilla fighters living in the Aegean region of the Ottoman Empire.. Horon folk dance in the northern Pontus and Black Sea regions, the melodies are rendered very fast and dancers dressed in black with silver trims.Today you get to choose! Variety of dishes to choose from include; fresh fish off the sea, whole mediterranean sea bream or bass served with soy sauce, olive oil, oven baked potateos, garnish and lemon.. Chef's vegeterian meal choice of the day; vegetable pizza, pasta or stewed vegetable casserole.. Protein-rich Turkish meatballs or kofte - minced beef or lamb, seasoned with a variety of spices and herbs, and then grilled to perfection.. Chicken breast or cutlets seasoned with red pepper powder, olive oil, salt, rosemary, thyme and soy sauce.. Both meatballs and chicken

breast is served with mashed potateos, rice and and garnish. Your culinary journey also includes hot and cold appetizers, seasonal salad and dessert or fruits. It’s the kind of cruise event that lasting memories are made of! Overnight Istanbul. (D)

Day 2 Old City Classics

Perfect introduction tour in the footsteps of Byzantine and Roman Emperors and Ottoman Sultans. The tour begins with a guided walking tour of Mehmet Akif Ersoy Park. A great Turkish poet, he has also written the lyrics of Turkish national anthem. Excavations carried out intermittenly between 1642 and 1964, led to the discovery of two impressive palace complexes situated next to each other; Lausos and Antiochos Palace. Lausos is a spectacular palace that was large enough to house a famous collection of antique sculpture. Aphrodite of Knidos, Athena of Lindos, Eros of Myndos, Hera of Samos and numerous sculpted beasts. Enjoy one of most well-known and popular attractions, Hippodrome of Constantinople, sporting and social centre Byzantine Empire for 1000 years and of Ottoman life for another 400. A masterpiece of ancient architecture. It is the location of the Obelisk of Theodosius, the Serpent Column, and the Masonry Obelisk and German Fountain of Wilhelm II.A nice lunch will be served in a quaint local restaurant before we visit the Million Stone, originally marks the start of all roads throughout the empire. Visiting labyrinthine and chaotic, Grand Bazaar. At its prime, the market was locked down and guarded by more than a hundred soldiers every night, like a fortified castle.

Sultanahmet‘s two great timeless monuments, side by side. Blue Mosque famed for it’s blue tiles, boasting magnificent curves and six towering minarets sees countless worshipers pass through its main doors every day. Contains a visual tip-of-the-hat from its architect, Sedefkar Mehmet Aga, to the architects of Hagia Sophia, Anthemius of Tralles and Isidorus of Miletus, who worked their miracle a thousand years earlier.On the 26th of December, A.D. 537, Emperor Justinian the Great stood in the Imperial Door, gazed at the cathedral which he had built, and exclaimed, "Glory to God that I have been judged worthy of such a work. Oh Solomon! I have outdone thee!" At this same spot on May 29, 1453, almost a thousand years later, Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror, fresh from the final battle for Constantinople, stood in this doorway and ordered the great church to be cleansed, repaired, beautified, and converted to a mosque. Another five centuries, and it was proclaimed a museum by Kemal Ataturk and opened to all. Overnight Istanbul. (B, L)

Day 3 Northern Cappadocia

This morning you will be transferred to the airport for your flight to Kayseri. On arrival you will be met and transferred to Cappadocia. Cappadocia is an extraordinary national treasure and is perhaps even the jewel in Turkey’s illustrious crown. Turkey’s most visually striking region, where erosion has formed caves, clefts, pinnacles, fairy chimneys and sensuous folds in the soft volcanic rock.

Meet the Flintstones! The fairytale rock chimneys of Cappadocia rising majestically from an otherworldly landscape, formed by the eruptions of three volcanoes, Mount of Erciyes, Melendiz and Hasan, which created one of the most distinctive landscapes in the world. Cappadocia is Turkey's very own fairy-tale kingdom. Imagine, if George Lucas had succeeded in his original plan to shoot Star Wars Episode 1: The Phantom Menace in Cappadocia. Not even Walt Disney could have dreamt of such lofty, multi-tiered housing for Tinkerbell—miles and miles of pyramid- and mushroom-shaped rocks that have sheltered or hidden people for thousands of years.

Discover fascinating stories, insights and facts on the roots of Cappadocia’s history. Kick off your exhilarating day out with Devrent Valley - nicknamed Imagination Valley is well known for its unusual rock formations. Find rocks that resemble those seen in the Hobbit and Smurfs as well as a dolphin, camel, kissing birds, Napoleon’s hat, the Virgin Mary holding Jesus Christ. Next, explore one of the region’s most magnificent town of Pasabag where Monks once inhabited and epic fairy chimneys and cave dwelling are widely regarded as the best in the region. If Fred Flintstone lived in Cappadocia, Pasabagi is the place he’d call home. Drive to the pottery town of Avanos, on the banks of the Kizilirmak, where the longest river in Turkey passes through. Have the chance to view the pottery making demonstration and even try your hand at making your own unique pot. The ancestral techniques and know-how of the craftsmen workshop will show you all the secrets. Break for a buffet lunch at a local restaurant before visiting the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Goreme National Park home to surreal wonderland of rock churches, chapels and decorative frescoes around 1000-1200 AD. This is most certainly a gorgeous sight to behold! Before tour’s end, enjoy a visit to Uchisar, natural castle of volcanic tufa giving it a Swiss-cheese look. It is a giant rock formation at the highest point of Cappadocia used as a fortress by the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman armies. Overnight Cappadocia. (B, L)

Istanbul-Kayseri: 483 miles / 773 km / 1.5 hours non-stop flight.

Kayseri-Cappadocia: 41 miles / 67 km / 1 hour drive.

Day 4 Southern Cappadocia

This morning you have the option of taking a hot-air balloon ride in a region famed for being one of the best places in the world for ballooning.

Optional Sunrise Hot-air Balloon Ride - TBAOur crew will pick you up at your hotel before dawn and transfer you and fellow travelers to the takeoff site. Feels like stepping out of a bus or getting off a spacehip? Watch our team’s preparation for flight, inflating balloons against the backdrop of the dawn sky.Listen to your pilot who will share safety measures and the do’s and don’ts during your flight. With the sound of a fire-breathing dragon, you skim the grass and slowly lift off, graceful stability with majestic views. Hundreds of hot air balloons float across the sky. It lives up to the

hype, times 100. Floating silently above the oddest-looking landscape dotted with villages, vineyards, and fruit orchards for about an hour, coming down in a farmer's field. Break out the bubbly for a traditional champagne toast to a successful aeronautical adventure! Your Cappadocia hot-air balloon flight includes a complimentary pre-flight breakfast and transfers between your hotel, take-off and landing spots. Prices can vary greatly depending on the time of year you fly and how far in advance you book. ONCE IN A LIFETIME EXPERIENCE!

Enjoy time at leisure in Cappadocia to explore the area independently, where life still follows a village rhythm. Cappadocia derived from the Hittite word ‘Katpatuka’, it is commonly held to mean ‘Land of beautiful horses’. Still plays a big role in local life, and a popular way for visitors to explore the region. Maybe you would prefer to explore vineyards and abundant orchards of Cappadocia from the saddle of an Anatolian horse, visit a gorgeous 15th-century bath house or ancient caves, go rafting or take an off-road quad-bike, jeep safari, vintage car tour, photo or drone shoot either at sunrise or sunset – the list is almost endless. The choice is yours. Optional activities are a different way of seeing more of the region in a shorter time. Overnight Cappadocia. (B)

Day 5 Cappadocia to Antalya

If your flight is canceled a day before, you don’t lose your booking or money, we’ll reschedule your balloon ride for this morning based on the availability on the particular day.

09:30 Today you will be transferred to the bus station and board a daylight intercity coach travelling further south to the capital of Turkish Mediterranean coast, Antalya. It is a peaceful sprawling modern city with a small, charming historic center, perfect year-round climate, long sunny beaches to east and west, the Turquoise Coast’s busiest airport, captivating blend of ancient ruins, lush landscapes, modern amenities good hotels, lots to see and do and dramatic sea and mountain views.

In addition, home of the world’s biggest tunnel aquarium (see amazing creatures from the Nile and Amazon River), country’s best golf resorts and clubs, magnificent archaeology museum, unique aquatic Land of Legends Theme Park and legend of Saint Nicholas aka Santa Claus - a 4th century bishop gave anonymous gifts to dowryless village girls. He would drop bags of coins down the chimneys of their houses and this ‘gift from heaven’ would allow them to marry. Overnight Antalya. (B, D)

Day 6 Koprulu Canyon National Park: Rafting, Jeep Safari, Dirt Buggy and Zipline

Tick off Antalya's must-sees at Koprulu Canyon National Park before unwinding on the Turquoise Coast. Experience four exhilarating outdoors activities - river rafting, zipline, off-road jeep safari and dirt buggy on a full-day tour from Antalya.

Challenge your limits and explore Antalya’s countryside over Taurus Mountains. Your tour includes hotel pick-up and drop-off, riverside lunch, outdoor adventures instruction and equipment. If you are a nature lover, then it is worth to mention that there are few stops during our excursion where you can enjoy nature at its maximum, full of beautiful smells, sounds and colours. Travel into the rugged landscape by open-top Jeep, riding through pine forests, splashing into rivers, and passing remote villages with stone architecture. Then go rafting in the Koprulu Canyon for another perspective on the mountain landscape, paddling an 8-mile (13-km.) stretch of the Koprulu River and a series of exciting rapids. You'll then be able to enjoy a quick swim break by the river to cool off and wash off some of that dust from the drive.

Dirt buggies are 110% fun. There's no real roof or body shell, so it might get a bit mud-splattered as you slide your way around the track. Try and keep your smiles under control, as it'll take all your concentration to keep your off road buggy going in the right direction. Depending on the route for the session this means somewhere between 55 and 95 corners are negotiated. Enjoy your day off the beaten track where you'll experience the real beauty of the mountains, its flora and fauna of the Taurus Mountains. You'll ride through pine forests, cross the creeks and even see some medieval ruins.

Walk to the far end of the park and climb our launch tower. Have all your kit checked again before taking two-way ride across the river. Each zip offers varying degrees of angle and speed for maximum thrill factor! Professional photo and video packages are available to purchase on the spot. Overnight Antalya. (B, L, D)

Day 7 Antalya to Oludeniz via Kas

Relaxing morning before we drive further West where Mediterranean meets Aegean coast, to Fethiye - rests on a broad Mediterranean bay boasting some of Turkey's best beaches and yachting, home to resort town of Oludeniz, famous for paragliding.

Fethiye is the fulcrum of the Turquoise Coast, and a hub of its property industry. It remains, however, a lively market town of 80,000-plus souls, sprawling north along the coastal plain, and the transport and marketing of oranges and tomatoes is still important to its economy. Fethiye occupies the site of ancient Telmessos, and some impressive rock tombs are an easy stroll from the centre. It also makes a convenient base for the nearby beaches of Oludeniz and Kıdrak, while a short drive or long walk out of Fethiye brings you to the atmospheric ghost village of Kayakoy. Much of the nearby coastline is accessible only by sea, and with the Gulf of Fethiye speckled with twelve islands, one- to four-day boat tours from Fethiye harbour are popular, aiming for secluded coves in which to swim, fish and anchor for the night. Overnight Oludeniz. (B, D)

Day 8 Dalyan River, Mud Baths, Caunos, Turtle Beach

Dalyan highlights include a lazy riverboat trip, mineral rich mud baths, ancient ruins and time for sun, sea and sand on Iztuzu Beach. You will be picked up from your hotel around 08:30 for a journey that lasts about an hour from Fethiye. Travel in an air conditioned bus through spectacular mountain and coastal scenery to arrive at the edge of scenic Lake Dalyan. You will board a small boat that has a protective sunshade roof for a float upon the meandering Dalyan River delta. The natural habitat along the riverbank is unspoiled and the way twists and turns through lush vegetation.

When you look to the cliffs high above you will notice ornamental tombs that were sculpted from the rock face during the 4th Century BC. These ruins and others in the area are from the ancient Greek and, later, Roman city of Kaunos, which was renowned in ancient times as a port and for its salted fish, figs and pine tar that was used in those days as waterproofing for boats. We'll stop for a chance to take advantage of the soothing and healing properties of the mineral rich mud baths. After a tasty lunch service at a riverside restaurant, you will continue in the boat along the river to spend the afternoon swimming in the Mediterranean Sea and playing on the golden sands of Iztuzu Beach, a protected habitat and breeding ground for loggerhead sea turtles. The riverboat will return to Dalyan in the late afternoon and you will be transferred to your hotel. Overnight Oludeniz. (B, L, D)

Day 9 White calcium formations of Pamukkale

This morning, boarding public bus and passing through rural villages and fruit orchards as we journey inland to Pamukkale, which means 'cotton castle' in Turkish. It is a surreal natural wonder of rippling semi-circular, pure-white travertines that sit among green farming fields. This pure white hillside is one of Turkey's most photographed spots and famous natural tourist attraction with a stunning backdrop to the ancient Greco-Roman city of Hierapolis. Made up of 17 hot water springs, mineral-rich volcanic spring water outpouring over basins and natural terraces, crystallizing into travertines. The hot springs at Pamukkale are believed to cure rheumatism, musculoskeletal system, heart and blood vessels and other ailments, ancient Greeks and Romans considered the thermal springs sacred. Just above the travertines lies Hierapolis. Don't miss the Roman Theatre, largest surviving Necropolis, the Agora, Martyrium of St Philip the Apostle and Temple of Apollo where people came to consult the temple's oracle. We gain a sense of the daily life during those times.

Swimming in the Cleopatra's Pool offers a separate pleasure with mineral water bubbling from its bottom at 35°C or 95°F, so a dip in the middle of Dec-Jan is not out of the question. Changing rooms are available, as are drinks and snacks. There is an additional entrance fee to swim in this pool, but it is well worth it. When visiting Pamukkale, remember to pack your bathing suit, towel and slippers.

This evening you will be transferred to the airport for your return flight to the exotic Istanbul. Opportunity to finish up your sightseeing or get in some last minute shopping at your own pace. Overnight Istanbul. (B, L)

Day 10 Good-bye Turkey!

You are free to depart at any time today. After breakfast your tour draws to a close and we say goodbye to our new friends before being transferred to the airport. Please note that check-out time from the hotel is normally noon, but luggage storage facilities are available. We are able to organise extra post-trip accommodation and day tours/activities if you wish to extend your stay. Happy travels! (B) (B – Breakfast, L –Lunch, D –Dinner)

What's included

- Inbound and outbound airport transfers
- Transfers between domestic airports, bus stations and hotels
- Domestic flight tickets as per itinerary on economy class
- Checked baggage allowance is 15kg/33lbs +1 Free Carry-On Bag 8kg/18lbs
- and 1 Personal Item. Length + Width + Height must not exceed 62 inches (158 cm)
- Intercity coach between Cappadocia-Antalya and Oludeniz-Pamukkale
- Private transfer to Oludeniz from Antalya on Day 5
- Transportation in a fully air-conditioned, non-smoking minivan
- All relevant transfers and transportation in modern air-conditioned vehicles
- Professional English-speaking, degree qualified local tour guides
- Guided sightseeing at Istanbul, Cappadocia and Pamukkale
- Oriental and Occidential – Bosphorus Dinner Cruise
- Outdoor activities: Koprulu Canyon National Park: Rafting, Jeep Safari, Dirt Buggy and Zipline tour & Dalyan River, Mud Baths, Caunos, Turtle Beach tour
- Entrance fees on guided-sightseeing tours
- VIP entry to many sights
- Tips except driver and guide
- Compulsory TURSAB Travel Insurance (basic mandatory policy and not an adequate replacement for purchasing your own travel insurance.)
- Local taxes and service charges

- 24-hour emergency hotline
- Coordination and attentive customer service throughout the tour by our staff
- 19 meals: 9 breakfast, 5 lunch, 5 dinner(This tour provides a variety of dining experiences, including buffets, à-la-carte dining and set menus. Whenever possible, we will try to honor special dietary requests)
- 9 nights – cave and boutique hotel accommodation in total.– 2 nights in Cappadocia https://www.nostaljicavesuithotel.com
- – 3 nights in Istanbul https://www.ottomanhotelimperial.com– 2 nights in Antalya https://www.khanhotel.com
- – 2 nights in Oludeniz https://tonozbeach.com
- or similar alternatives

Not included

- International flights and visa
- Meals unless otherwise stated
- Personal expenses
- Suggested optional tours/activities

Good to know

9 nights accommodation. Optional hot-air balloon flight is not included; price to be advised. B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner. Hotels listed in the programme or similar alternatives.

Plan your journey

Contact our team for dates, availability and a personalised quote.

https://istanbluetravel.com/

This document is for information only. Prices and availability are subject to confirmation.