



Treasures of Travel

Treasures of Turkey, 2023

~ 13 days/11 nights ~

Please note: This tour is not offered as a pre-planned group tour.

We would be delighted to meet the expectation of the interested individuals and/or groups with the below example outline of the trip, based on the highlights of the country, or custom design one working around the offered itinerary according to your special interest and desire to make it unforgettable experience.

Imagine one tour that offers the combination of unusual and intriguing natural wonders; inspiring archaeological and historical sites, beautiful beaches, fascinating museums and exotic bazaars. This is it! One morning you might be watching the sun rise from the heights of a hot air balloon over Cappadocia – the next day watching the same in Istanbul. Where else can you eat breakfast in Europe and lunch in Asia? An unforgettable 13 days journey!

Day 1

Depart the USA on overnight flight to Istanbul.

Day 2 ~ Ankara

Upon arrival in Istanbul, you will proceed to board your **domestic flight to Ankara**. We will meet you at the airport and **transfer** you to your hotel for overnight.

Day 3 ~ Ankara

Ankara, the ancient Ankuwash or the Angora, has been the capital of the Turkish Republic since 1923. In the morning, we will tour the **Museum of Ancient Anatolian Civilizations**, the best museum in Turkey for pre-classic exhibits. Next we will travel to **Gordion**, the city of legendary King Midas and the capital of the Phrygian Empire, where Alexander the Great cut the “Gordion Knot”.

Day 4 ~ Cappadocia

Today we will head south to the fascinating region of Cappadocia, stopping en route at the Hittite capital of **Hattusas, the UNESCO World Heritage Site**, which dates from 3,000 BC. Highlights include: the Great Temple, Lion’s Gate, and the Citadel. At the famous **Shrine of Yazilikaya** you will see reliefs of 63 gods and goddesses carved on the rock walls. Upon arrival

in **Cappadocia, the UNESCO World Heritage Site**, you will be fascinated by unique landscape, created eons ago by volcanic eruptions.

Day 5 ~ Cappadocia

The special composition of the rock in this fascinating area allowed the carving of underground and aboveground cities where thousands of people lived. We will visit one of these **underground cities** and the **Byzantine cave churches** today, as well as **Pasabagi** with its unique “fairy chimneys”. According to the legend, these odd-shaped rocks housed fairies, capable of casting spells. We will climb the **Uchisar Fortress** for a panoramic view of the beautiful **Goreme Valley**; visit **Urgup**, known for its Selcuk and Ottoman historical works, its kilims, handicrafts and local wines; as well as tour **Avanos**, which is famous for its pottery.

Day 6 ~ Pamukkale

En route to Konya we will stop at **Selcuk's Caravansary** (camel palace) where caravans stopped to rest along the trade route. Konya is the city, where Mevlana founded the Mevlevi Order of Whirling Dervishes. Once we arrive there, we'll visit the **Museum of Mevlana**. Our final destination today is **Pamukkale (ancient Hierapolis) -the UNESCO World Heritage Site**.

Day 7 ~ Kusadasi

This morning we will explore Pamukkale before heading to Kusadasi via Aphrodisias. The cliffs of **Pamukkale** are covered with brilliant white mineral deposits, the pools of clear warm water are fed by thermal springs, creating a unique and beautiful natural wonder. This site was a famous health spa in Roman times and is still in use today. You can soak in the pools and view the beautiful marble columns, toppled by earthquakes that lie at the bottom; then explore the ruins of **ancient Hierapolis** with its **theater, Temple of Apollo, colonnaded street, bath and its extensive necropolis**.

It is time to visit **Aphrodisias**, the city of Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty. This is one of the most interesting sites in the country which has very impressive ruins and beautiful museum with splendid collection of marble statuary.

We will continue onto Kusadasi, which has a beautiful location and houses a splendid boat harbor and fortress.

Day 8 ~ Kusadasi

Today we will explore the fascinating Hellenistic and Roman city of **Ephesus** including its beautiful **theater, Celsus Library, Temple of Artemis**- one of the wonders of the ancient world, and intriguing ruins. In the nearby charming town of Selcuk, we will tour the **Museum of Ephesus** where, among many artifacts, we will see the famous statue of Artemis.

Day 9 ~ Canakkale

In the morning we will head to **Pergamum**, which has an interesting ancient medical center and acropolis. It is especially famous for its library, once one of the most extensive in the world. Pergamum is also famous for the origination of parchment, from which our modern writing paper was derived.

Just before arriving in Canakkale, we will visit **Troy, the UNESCO World Heritage Site** -

the site of Homer's classic epic "the Iliad", where nine different layers of civilization have been uncovered and partially excavated.

Day 10~ Istanbul

We will cross the famous Dardanelles **by ferry to Gallipoli**, where we will visit some of the memorials to those who died in World War I during the famous **Battle of Gallipoli**. Then we will travel through Thrace (the European section of Turkey) along the Sea of Marmara to the fascinating cross-road city of Istanbul to spend the night.

Day 11 ~ Istanbul

The whole day will be dedicated to the exploration of **Istanbul, the UNESCO World Heritage Site**, in order to feel its pulse and learn about the past of this ever fascinating, one of the most beautiful cities in the world, so rich in old sites, arts and crafts, as well as hospitable people; no wonder it always attracts its guests back like magnet, once they've listened to Istanbul's heartbeat. We'll start sightseeing by walking to the **Hippodrome**, arena for political, cultural, and sports activities during Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman times, the **Blue Mosque**, famous for its Iznik blue tiles; and **St. Sophia**, the largest Christian church in the world for more than 1,000 years. Nearby is the Underground Palace, or **Basilica Cistern**, with its mystical atmosphere and marble columns surrounded with water. Finally, we will visit the most famous museum in Turkey, **Istanbul Archaeological Museum**, which is the part of the complex including Ancient Orient Museum and Tile museum (kiosk) as well.

Day 12 ~ Istanbul

We will start our morning with **Bosphorus cruise** between the continents to see some of the interesting historical buildings, as well as the fabulous palaces and villas that hug the shoreline. We will end our day with **touring the old and new city**, including the Galata and Pera regions.

Day 13

Today we will **transfer** you to the airport for your flight home.

Best time to travel:

Spring-fall