

# EXPLORE!



## Treasures of Turkey

8 days

Turkey - Trip code TA

## Treasures of Turkey

Enjoy a week exploring some of Turkey's best Greco-Roman sites, including Ephesus, Aphrodisias and the impressive Temple of Apollo at Didyma. We also visit the less well known sites of Sardes and Priene. In Pamukkale, like the ancients before us, we can enjoy a dip in the hot mineral waters of the spa or visit the ruins of ancient Hierapolis. We also tour the historic harbour city of Caunos, relax at a thermal spa hotel and beside the waters at Lake Bafa and there's the chance to visit the turtle conservation centre at beautiful Iztuzu Beach.

## Trip highlights

- ★ **Ephesus** - One of the ancient world's most iconic and important archaeological sites
- ★ **Pamukkale and Hierapolis** - Admire the hillside of white travertines and explore historic Hierapolis
- ★ **Aphrodisias** - Discover the lesser visited but amazingly well-preserved Greco-Roman stadium
- ★ **Sardes** - Visit to the extraordinary site rarely featured on other tours and stay in a thermal spa hotel
- ★ **Lake Bafa** - Stay in accommodation set amongst olive groves on the shore of the picturesque lake

### ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

#### Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

**TRIP PACE:****Moderate**

Moderate pace tours are ideal if you want a holiday which combines exciting activities and experiences with plenty of time to relax and unwind. Typically you'll be active and busy for part of the day but then also have time to rest and recharge your batteries.

**GROUP SIZE:****12 - 18**

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

# Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

## DAY 1 - Join trip in Dalyan

Our trip begins in Dalyan and after checking in to our hotel and meeting the group, this evening is free for you to relax. Once a fishing village on the edge of the Dalyan River it's now grown into a small town that is known for its meandering reed bed waterways that lead to the beautiful golden sand Iztuzu Beach, and for the Lycian rock tombs that can be viewed in the cliffs above the town. The ancient city of Caunos is also only a short walk or boat ride away.



**Accommodation: Dalyan Caria Royal Hotel** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

## DAY 2 - River boat to Caunos and Iztuzu Beach

This morning we'll get our first chance to try a traditional Turkish breakfast which usually consists of fresh cucumbers, tomatoes, olives and occasionally fruit. Along with a variety of yogurts, cheese and bread. We then take a small boat through the reed beds to the ancient ruins of Caunos, an important city circa 400 BC. Here, we can hike up to the higher points of the citadel from where there are fine panoramic views to the distant Aegean. We continue by boat to Iztuzu Beach, which is perhaps the best beach in all Turkey, for an afternoon of relaxation and the chance to visit the Turtle Conservation Centre (DEKAMER) before returning to Dalyan in the late afternoon. The conservation centre works to protect the turtle nesting areas on Iztuzu Beach, cares for and rehabilitates injured turtles and also attempts to educate the local fisherman on the importance of using propeller guards.



**Accommodation: Dalyan Caria Royal Hotel** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 3 - Drive to Lake Bafa via historic Stratonikeia and Milas

Today we make our way north to our lakeside accommodation on the shores of beautiful Lake Bafa. En route we'll stop at Stratonikeia where there's time to enjoy a picnic lunch and explore the UNESCO World Heritage Site. Stratonikeia has been continually inhabited from the Bronze Age and was an important city in ancient Caria. At the site today you can see the gymnasium, bouleuterion, theatre and Augustus-Imperial Temple amongst other ruins. We continue to Milas where we discover the old town area on foot as well as visiting the Jewish Cemetery and the Gumuskesen Monument, which is large Roman tomb dating from the 2nd century AD. Later this afternoon we continue to the neighboring town of Euromos where we visit the Temple of Zeus. It's one of the best preserved classical designed temples in the country and dates back to the 6th century BC. Following our visit we drive on to Lake Bafa, where we'll stay in lakeside chalet style accommodation set amongst olive groves. You may like to enjoy a peaceful lakeside walk or swim before we have dinner here this evening. Lake Bafa was once connected to the Aegean Sea and a number of important harbor towns were set along this gulf. Now it's separated from the ocean and is part of a nature reserve which is home to over 220 bird species including fish eagles, pelicans and pigmy cormorants. You can also find 20 different types of orchid and in the lake itself there are many fish including eels, sea bass and sea bream. The surrounding Latmos Mountains are the habitat of wild cats, boar and badgers.



**Accommodation: Silva Oliva Hotel** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Dinner

## DAY 4 - Visit to ancient Didyma and Priene en route to Selcuk

We drive firstly to Didyma and visit the Temple of Apollo, which was an oracle held as important as the one at Delphi, in Greece. Today the massive scale of the fallen columns and the wealth of the intricate carvings bear testimony to the power of the ancient cult of Apollo. Slightly further down the coast we'll make a beach stop where there's the opportunity to swim, enjoy a picnic or relax in one of the beachside restaurants. This afternoon we'll visit Priene, which is one of the smallest but most picturesque sites in the area. It's perched on a hillside overlooking the Menderes Valley and was once a thriving Ionian city. It's one of only a few that wasn't built over by the Romans, so archaeologists have been left with a vivid picture of the scale and layout of a typical city from the 4th century BC. Following our visit we continue to Selcuk, which is home to a prominent Byzantine fortress, impressive mosque and remains of the huge Temple of Artemis, once considered to be one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, but sadly now totally destroyed. Every year from mid-March to mid-August white storks return to Selcuk to mate and their nests can be seen on the top of posts and pillars all around the town. On arrival this afternoon you may like to visit the Ephesus Archaeological Museum or the Basilica of Saint John. After a busy day exploring you might like to try a popular local yoghurt drink called, ayran, it has an unusual salty and soured milk flavour.



**Accommodation: Cenka Hotel** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 5 - Visit to Ephesus and Birgi; overnight at a thermal spa hotel

We depart early from our hotel this morning to try and beat the crowds for our visit to the great Greco-Roman city of Ephesus, once visited by Mark Anthony and Cleopatra, and also by the evangelist Saint Paul, which was the inspiration for the tenth book of the New Testament, Epistle to the Ephesians. This famous old Asia Minor seaport reached its peak in the 2nd century AD and declined after the 7th century. It was one of the main cultural and economic centres and boasted an excellent gymnasium and a stadium with seating for 70,000 spectators. Other highlights include the Baths of Constantine, the brothel, the Temple of Hadrian with its beautiful facade, the theatre (a giant with 24,000 seats) and the odeon (a 2000 seat music and poetry centre), the Arcadian Way (where Cleopatra entered from the harbour) and the Marble Avenue featuring the 2-storey Library of Celsus, which is one of the most photographed Greco-Roman buildings in the world. After free time back in Selcuk for lunch we drive to UNESCO listed historical town of Birgi. It was once an Ottoman regional capital and here we'll see the traditional stone houses, mosque and the very impressive painted mansion. The mansion is one of the few surviving examples of this richly coloured and ornate style. Built in 1761 you enter the mansion through two very large wooden doors and within each room you'll find beautifully painted walls and intricately wood carved ceilings. Later this afternoon we drive onto Salihli where we stay at a thermal spa hotel for the night. Here you may choose to take advantage of the hotel facilities which include an outdoor pool, thermal pool, Turkish bath, sauna and massage room. Situated on the edge of a hill you can take in the lovely views from the hotel terrace and restaurant.



**Accommodation: Lydia Sardes Hotel** (or similar)



Premium Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 6 - Drive via Sardes and Buldan to Pamukkale and Hierapolis

This morning we make the quick 10 minute journey to Sardes, a fascinating ancient site rarely featured on other tour operator's itineraries to the area. Here amongst the fascinating ruins you'll be able to see the restored gymnasium, synagogue and the old main road. Sardes was once the ancient capital of the kingdom of Lydia. The synagogue here is one of the most impressive ever excavated with over 80 Greek and seven Hebrew inscriptions found along with sections of a beautiful mosaic floor. The reconstructed gymnasium gives you a real feel for what these colossal ancient buildings would have looked like in their prime. We drive on to the weaving and textile town of Buldan where there's free time for lunch and to explore. Buldan is famed for a type of thin cheesecloth fabric which is edged with lace and commonly used as bed spreads; they also produce a lot of hanger chiefs and curtains, as well as the 'kaplama', the brightly coloured traditional head dresses of the region. This afternoon we reach one of Turkey's most amazing natural wonders, the 'frozen waterfall' of Pamukkale. Situated on a high escarpment, Pamukkale has been an attraction since Roman times. Stalactites of a bright white petrified waterfalls cascade from basin to basin. We visit the incredible travertine pools, where you can opt to swim and enjoy the views overlooking the Menderes Valley. Above the terraced pools you'll find the ancient spa town of Hierapolis where the ruins date back to 2nd century BC and the time of Eumenes II. Earthquakes have rocked the area throughout history and the site was finally abandoned in 1334 following a particularly strong quake. Here you can visit the theatre, Temple of Apollo, Frontinus Gate and see a number of sarcophagi as well as having the chance to go into the Archaeology Museum housed in the former Roman baths.



**Accommodation: White Haven** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 7 - Visit the Greco-Roman site of Aphrodisias en route to Fethiye

Today we depart for the very impressive Greco-Roman site of Aphrodisias, where the goddess of love once bestowed her sensual favours on her willing devotees. This site is in many ways as spectacular as Ephesus but far quieter by comparison and there's also an excellent museum on site that you may like to visit. The tetrapylon is a wonderfully ornate example of a huge gateway which would have once welcomed you into the main street leading to the Temple of Aphrodite. The well-preserved odeon and theatre are also well worth seeing as is the Sebasteion which is carved with reliefs depicted Aphrodite and her worshippers. The piece de resistance has to be the stadium which measures 270 metre long by 60 metres wide and would have held 30,000 spectators. On the seats you'll find carvings into the rock which have been graffitied during the athletic events that took place here. Following our visit we'll drive to Fethiye where your final evening is at leisure. Fethiye is a market town on the Aegean coast that can trace its history back to the ancient Lycian city of Telmessos built around the harbour in the 5th or 6th century BC. Reminders of the town's past include Lycian rock tombs on the hillside and a Hellenistic theatre.



**Accommodation: Yeniceri Hotel** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 8 - Trip ends in Fethiye

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Fethiye.



Meals Provided: Breakfast



## Why book this trip

In just one week you'll get to discover some of Turkey's best known historical sights along with lesser visited but equally impressive ancient monuments. You'll also stay on the shores of Lake Bafa and in a thermal spa hotel and have time to relax and swim on the beautiful Turquoise Coast.

# What's included?



## Included meals

Breakfast: 7  
Dinner: 1



## Transport

Bus  
Boat



## Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader  
Driver(s)



## Accommodation

6 nights standard hotel  
1 nights premium hotel

# Trip information

## Country information

### Turkey Holidays & Tours

#### Climate

Evenings and early mornings can be cool in the early and late season (before mid May and after early October). During the winter, temperatures usually hover between 0 and 10 degrees, but are usually wet, particularly around the coast. Summers are hot and dry with refreshing sea breezes. It is often cooler on higher ground and in the mountains and can be cold at night, even in the summer. Seasonal weather patterns can be unpredictable.

#### Time difference to GMT

+3

#### Plugs

2 Pin Round

#### Religion

Islam, Christian

#### Language

Turkish

## Budgeting and packing

### Optional activities

Pammukale - swim in sacred pool £10.00 Selcuk - Turkish Bath £8.00 Iztuzu Beach - Turtle Conservation Centre (DEKAMER) entrance £5.00

### Clothing

The long Turkish summer can be hot, though much of the Mediterranean coastline is freshened by a sea breeze. A warmer sweater or light fleece and long trousers are advisable for the evenings in early and late season. March and April and late September to November tend to be cooler so bring layers and some warmer clothes. A light rainjacket may also be useful. Make sure you bring your swimming costume and a towel with you. When visiting mosques, women should cover their head, shoulders and knees, so it's handy to pack a scarf. Men should also ensure their knees are covered.

## Footwear

Trainers or comfortable walking shoes are required for exploring the ancient sites and sandals for relaxing.

## Luggage

20kg

## Luggage: On tour

One main piece of baggage and daypack. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

## Equipment

We recommend you bring a water bottle, torch (for power cuts and emergencies), sun cream, sun hat, sunglasses and insect repellent. Most importantly don't forget your camera.

## Tipping

### Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Explore Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

### Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognised part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. Accordingly, you should allow £15.00 for tipping. In order to make things easier for you, the Explore Leader may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the trip.

## Country Information

### Turkey Holidays & Tours

#### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

##### Lunch price

£7

##### Dinner price

£13

##### Beer price

£2.7

##### Water price

£1

#### Foreign Exchange

##### Local currency

Turkish Lira.

##### Recommended Currency For Exchange

Major foreign currencies such as US Dollars, £Sterling and Euros can easily be changed. We advise against travelling with Travellers Cheques as commission rates are high. Other currencies can be exchanged in larger cities. We advise you to change money in Turkey as rates tend to be better.

##### Where To Exchange

Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

##### ATM Availability

ATMs are widely available throughout Turkey. To avoid large queues at the airport exchanges, you may wish to exchange some lira before arriving.

##### Credit Card Acceptance

In major restaurants.

##### Travellers Cheques

Not recommended.

## Transport, Accommodation & Meals

### Transport Information

Bus, Boat

## Essential information

### FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

#### Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

### Essential Information

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

### Visa Information

Turkey: Visas are required by UK citizens. We recommend that you obtain your visa online, prior to arrival at <https://www.evisa.gov.tr/en/> This will cost US\$20.00 and you will need a blank page in your passport for the stamp. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

### Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our [Essential Information](#) and [Booking Conditions](#).

### Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

#### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

#### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.



For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

## Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

## Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## Non refundable permits

## Turkey Holidays & Tours

### Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against tetanus, typhoid, infectious hepatitis and polio. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at <http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/> and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed before departure.

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