

EXPLORE!

Book with confidence



Highlights of Turkey

TURKEY - TRIP CODE TRH

DISCOVERY

Why book this trip?

Discover the contrasts of Turkey and experience its delicious cuisine and captivating culture on this one-week highlights trip that travels down the west coast. Explore the historic city of Istanbul, ancient Greco-Roman ruins and the Turquoise Coast.

- **Ephesus** - Walk the marble streets where Saint Paul preached and see the famed Celsus Library
- **Pamukkale** - Admire the unique white travertine terraced hillside and ancient Hierapolis
- **Gallipoli** - Experience the poignant World War I memorials including the Lone Pine Cemetery



INCLUDED MEALS
Breakfast: 7
Dinner: 1



TRIP STAFF
Explore Tour
Leader(s)
Driver(s)



TRANSPORT
Bus
Boat
Ferry



ACCOMMODATION
7 nights
comfortable hotel



TRIP PACE:
Full on



GROUP SIZE:
12 - 18

Itinerary

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

DAY 1 - Join trip in Istanbul

Arrive in Istanbul. As Constantinople, the city was the capital of both the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, so today it is steeped in history and fascinating architecture. Modern day Istanbul has much to offer - not least its mouth-watering cuisine and budding cafe culture. The city straddles between Europe and Asia and because of this, it was an important stop on the old Silk Road. It is a melting pot of different cultures and this is demonstrated in its gastronomy. Turkish food is a hearty mix of Middle Eastern, Asian and Balkan style dishes that range from barbecued meat kebabs to vine leaf wrapped vegetable and rice parcels.

For those arriving on time our Leader plans to meet you in the hotel reception at 7pm for the welcome meeting and for those that wish, there is the chance to go out for dinner. There are no other activities planned today, so you are free to arrive in Istanbul at any time. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you'll need to depart from Istanbul Airport (IST), which is about one hour and 30 minutes' drive or Sabiha Gokcen International Airport (SAW), which is around two hours' drive from the city centre, depending on traffic, which can be heavy at times. Should you miss the welcome meeting, your Leader will inform you of any essential information as soon as you catch up.

Our conveniently located hotel is within walking distance or a short tram ride of many of the cultural and historical sites in the Sultanahmet district. If your flight arrives earlier in the day, perhaps you might choose to explore this area. If your flight is arriving earlier today or if you're extending your stay by a night then we'd recommend visiting Istanbul's Grand Bazaar, as it is closed on a Sunday, so there won't be the opportunity to go tomorrow. Located within the walls of Istanbul, there are around 60 streets and over 3,000 shops selling everything from jewellery to carpets and textiles and furniture to local arts and crafts. It's one of the oldest and largest covered markets in the world. The labyrinth of streets also house two mosques, two hamams (Turkish baths) and an array of restaurants and cafes, so there is plenty to experience in this historic landmark of Istanbul.





ACCOMMODATION:
Monaco Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: NONE

DAY 2 - Explore Istanbul including the Blue Mosque and Hagia Sophia

Spend a full day discovering historic Istanbul on foot. Visit the famous Blue Mosque, which gets its name from the vivid blue ornate tile designs and stained glass found in its interior, and the Byzantine Hagia Sophia, which reigned as the greatest Greek Orthodox church for 900 years before later becoming an imperial mosque, and it's now a fascinating and unique museum. Also see the Hippodrome, where chariot races took place in the centre of the city, before heading to the opulent Topkapi Palace, which was once home to the sultans. In the Yeldegirmeni neighbourhood of Kadikoy admire the colourful and expressive street art that has appeared in recent years. Along the way our local Leader will show the range of street food on offer in the city and you'll have the chance to buy lunch.

There's the opportunity to go underground into the Basilica Cistern, to see the ancient columns partially submerged in water that catch the light and reflect in the pools, giving the illusion of being endless rows.

This evening, is free to experience the city's huge selection of restaurants, bars and entertainment. Our local Leader will be able to offer advice based on your preferences.



ACCOMMODATION:
Monaco Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 3 - See the emotive memorials at the World War I site of Gallipoli

Leaving Istanbul after breakfast to drive to the Gallipoli Peninsula. The drive will take us around five hours, but a stop to buy lunch will be made along the way. It was at Gallipoli in 1916 that, after eight months of bloody hand-to-hand fighting and loss of life, the ill-fated Allied campaign was forced to concede victory to the Turks and withdraw. Whilst here visit Anzac Cove - the infamous site of the Anzac landing, as well as the Lone Pine Australian Memorial and Cemetery and the war belongings exhibit in the sobering Kabatepe War Museum.

Later this afternoon we board a ferry to travel across the Dardanelles to Canakkale, where we will spend the night. This port city is off of the main tourist trail and is a good place to sample locally caught seafood for dinner this evening and join the locals taking an evening stroll along the seafront where you can see the Trojan Horse replica, which stands as high as the surrounding buildings.



ACCOMMODATION:
Comfort Anzac Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 4 - Experience the ancient sites of Troy and Pergamon

Today we will make an early start and leave the hotel at around 7.30am as this is the longest travelling day of this trip. Driving the short distance to the ancient city of Troy where, according to legend, the artful Ulysses devised the wooden horse strategy, thereby ending the 10 year Trojan War. Here, nine ruined cities, one on top of the other, have been uncovered, going back some 5,000 years. Troy VI is the assumed walled city of King Priam (1800-1275 BC), celebrated by the blind Greek poet Homer in the Iliad and all but lost in legend until unearthed by amateur archaeologist Schliemann in 1871.

Boarding our bus again the drive to the Greco-Roman remains found at Pergamon takes around three hours. Pergamon gave its name to and was the source of 'parchment', for which it was famous throughout the Middle East. Visit the striking acropolis, impressively perched above the modern-day town of Bergama, which contains the remains of a library, a theatre, temples and altars.

The drive to Selcuk later this afternoon takes around three hours, but a stop will be made along the way to purchase lunch and stretch our legs. On arrival in Selcuk check-in to the hotel and have dinner this evening.



ACCOMMODATION:
Cenka Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST & DINNER

DAY 5 - Visit the famed Greco-Roman city of Ephesus; drive to Pamukkale

Spend the morning exploring Selcuk's historic neighbour, the great Greco-Roman city of Ephesus accompanied by a local guide. Visited by Mark Anthony and Cleopatra, and also having inspired Saint Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, this famous Asia Minor seaport reached its zenith in the 2nd century AD. Ephesus became one of the main cultural and economic centres of the ancient world until it went into decline after the 7th century. Saint John spent the last years of his life in Ephesus and wrote his Gospel here. It is believed that Mary, mother of Jesus, also came here with him. Today, its impressive ruins include a theatre, gymnasium, agora and baths, as well as the photogenic intricately carved stone facade of the Library of Celsus. The ruins here are extensive with lots of ornate columns and grand arches to discover.

Before leaving Selcuk there's the chance to visit a traditional carpet weaver and to explore the town. Later this afternoon, drive to Pamukkale (takes around two and a half hours) and check-in to the hotel for the night.



ACCOMMODATION:
Venus Hotel (or similar)

Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



SWIMMING POOL AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 6 - Explore the white terraces of Pamukkale and historic Hierapolis

This morning discover Pamukkale, which translates as the 'cotton castle', taking its name from the extensive white terraces that cover the hillside and were created by mineral springs. It's home to one of Turkey's most impressive natural wonders - the 'frozen waterfall'. A boardwalk offers spectacular views of the unusual white cliff face with its crystal blue pools and the huge valley below. Don't miss Cleopatra's Pool - an oasis of beauty with a mirror-like clarity that allows us to see deep down to the ruins below.

Above the white cliff is the ancient spa town of Hierapolis with its well-preserved Roman baths, tombs and an impressive theatre. People have been making the most of Hierapolis' thermal waters since the 2nd century BC to as recently as the mid 20th century when shockingly hotels were constructed on top of its priceless ruins. Luckily, UNESCO World Heritage status saved the site from further damage.

Later this afternoon, drive south to the Turquoise Coast, which takes around three and half hours, to spend the last two nights of the trip in Dalyan - famous for its loggerhead turtles, reed bed estuary and the ancient site of Caunos.



ACCOMMODATION:
Metin Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 7 - Riverboat trip to ancient Caunos; chance to take a mud bath

Formally a fishing village, the small resort of Dalyan is steeped in history. A gentle riverboat trip through the reeds to the ancient site of Caunos gives the opportunity to look out for loggerhead turtles and birdlife along the way. Still under excavation, the ruins date back to 400 BC and include a Roman bath, an impressive theatre and an acropolis. The boat trip continues to the mud baths and hot springs by Lake Koycegiz. Here there is the option to relax and to coat ourselves in the mud which is reputed to have great therapeutic properties, before returning to Dalyan.

Later in the day, there's the chance to take a water taxi down through the reed beds to Iztuzu Beach, to make the most of its glorious golden sand and inviting azure coloured waters.

Chance to visit the Turtle Conservation Centre (DEKAMER) before returning to Dalyan. 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:
Metin Hotel (or similar)



Grade: Comfortable Hotel



SINGLE ROOM AVAILABLE



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

DAY 8 - Trip ends in Dalyan

The trip ends after breakfast at our hotel in Dalyan.

There are no activities planned today, so you are free to depart from Dalyan at any time. If your flight is departing later in the day luggage storage facilities are available at our hotel. If you would like to receive a complimentary airport transfer today, you need to depart from Dalaman Airport (DLM), which is 30 minutes' drive.



MEALS PROVIDED: BREAKFAST

Trip information

Climate and country information

Turkey

Climate

Summers are hot and dry with refreshing sea breezes and clear waters, great for boat trips. It is often cooler on higher ground and in the mountains and can be cold at night, even in the summer. During the shoulder seasons (loosely speaking, before mid-May and after early October), temperatures and rainfall can be erratic, with some temperatures dropping to 8-12 degrees, and other days being bright and sunny up to 25 degrees. Mountain locations will be cooler than on the coast, of course. In the winter, temperatures usually hover between 0 and 10 degrees, but are usually wet, particularly around the coast. The best time for walking in Turkey is mid-May, June and September, with pleasant temperatures and clear blue skies.

Time difference to GMT	Plugs	Religion	Language
+3	2 Pin Round	Islam, Christian	Turkish

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Istanbul :

Entrance to the Basilica Cistern, operates on day two, 20 Turkish Lira (TRY) per person.

Dalyan:

Mud bath, operates on day seven, 6 TRY per person.

Public water taxi to Iztuzu Beach, operates on day seven, departs every 30 minutes and takes around one hour, approximately 24 TRY per person or a shared road taxi (dolmus), takes around 30 minutes, approximately 15-20 TRY.

Turtle Conservation Centre (DEKAMER) entrance £5.00 per person.

Please note that all optional excursions listed above are subject to change and availability and they may not all be possible to offer on every departure date.

Clothing

The long Turkish summer can be hot, though much of the Mediterranean coastline is freshened by sea breezes. In the spring and autumn, a warmer sweater or fleece is recommended for the evenings, as is lightweight rainwear and long trousers.

When visiting mosques, women should cover their head, shoulders and knees, so it's handy to pack a scarf or sarong. Men should also ensure their knees are covered.

Footwear

Bring comfortable walking shoes for exploring the ancient sites and sandals or trainers for city sightseeing and 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

Bring a water bottle, torch, strong sunscreen, sunhat, sunglasses, insect repellent, swimming costume and towel.

Tipping

Explore leader

Tipping isn't compulsory, and we work hard to ensure that our leaders all receive a fair wage. You may however, want to recognise a leader that has done a great job or really added to your trip by giving them a tip. We're often asked about the recommended amount. It is a tricky one, and down to personal preference, but we would recommend £15 to £20 per person per week as a guideline.

Local crew

Although 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 approximately £15 of local currency 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.

Turkey

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	Dinner price	Beer price	Water price
£7	£13	£2.7	£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 xchange some lira before arriving.

Credit Card Acceptance

In major restaurants.

Travellers Cheques

Not recommended.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals**Transport Information**

Bus, Boat, Ferry

Accommodation notes

Our hotel in Istanbul is in a central location where parking is restricted and therefore the bus is not permitted to stop directly outside the hotel. You will be dropped a short distance away from the hotel and walk with your luggage for about 10 minutes.

Essential Information**Government Travel Safety 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, Commonwealth & Development 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.

Price Guarantee

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 and Passport Information

Turkey: British nationals travelling to Turkey for tourism or business purposes do not require a visa for visits of up to 90 days. Other nationalities should check with your local embassy or online at <https://www.evisa.gov.tr> for up to date information.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may be able to apply through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See 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.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

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 receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The complimentary transfers will be arranged from the Explore designated airport or train station to your trips joining point, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. Generally the airport or station that Explore have selected will be the one that is closest to the town or city where the trip starts, or the one nearest to the joining point. It will be either an airport or train station but not both.

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, Polar, 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. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. 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.

Ability to swim

No

Turkey

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.

Ramadan



In 2020, Ramadan runs from 24 April - 23 May. Read more about [travelling during Ramadan](#).

The following 2020 departures of Highlights of Turkey will coincide with Ramadan:

16 May 2020

23 May 2020

Why book this trip

This trip is ideal for anyone looking to see all the best known sites of Istanbul along with the ancient ruins and coastal scenery found along Turkey's Turquoise Coast. This comprehensive one-week highlights trip is packed with must see places and is the perfect introduction to the sights and sounds of Turkey.

Reviews



**AWARD WINNING
EXPLORE LEADERS**



**PRICE GUARANTEE
PROMISE**



**AIRPORT
TRANSFERS**