

## Best of Turkey Tour - 13 days

TR-05



This 13 day tour offers a comprehensive itinerary for those keen to see Turkey in depth. Combining the cosmopolitan city of Istanbul with many of Turkey's historic treasures, it provides the opportunity learn more about its rich cultural heritage and key players such as Helen of Troy, King Midas, Kemal Atatürk and the Whirling Dervishes. Among the many sightseeing visits are those to Gallipoli, Ephesus and Troy. The country's incredible scenery hasn't been overlooked, with the chance to be wowed by the breathtaking valleys and rock formations of Cappadocia, the pretty coves near the resort of Antalya on the stunning Turquoise Coast and of course the exquisite terraces and hot springs of Pamukkale.

**DEPARTURE DATES:**

16.11.2024; 23.11.2024; 30.11.2024; 07.12.2024; 14.12.2024; 04.01.2025; 11.01.2025; 18.01.2025; 25.01.2025; 01.02.2025; 08.02.2025; 15.02.2025; 22.02.2025; 01.03.2025; 08.03.2025; 15.03.2025; 22.03.2025; 29.03.2025; 05.04.2025; 12.04.2025; 19.04.2025; 26.04.2025; 03.05.2025; 10.05.2025; 17.05.2025; 24.05.2025; 31.05.2025; 07.06.2025; 14.06.2025; 21.06.2025; 28.06.2025; 05.07.2025; 12.07.2025; 19.07.2025; 26.07.2025; 02.08.2025; 09.08.2025; 16.08.2025; 23.08.2025; 30.08.2025; 06.09.2025; 13.09.2025; 20.09.2025; 27.09.2025; 04.10.2025; 11.10.2025; 18.10.2025; 25.10.2025; 01.11.2025; 08.11.2025; 15.11.2025; 22.11.2025; 29.11.2025; 06.12.2025; 13.12.2025; 20.12.2025.

## ITINERARY

**Day 1 - Istanbul**

Your Turkey holiday begins as you arrive in Istanbul. We'll meet you at the airport and transfer you to a city centre hotel. Overnight in Istanbul

**Day 2 - Istanbul**

Many of Istanbul's most fascinating sights are concentrated in the area of Sultanahmet in the European part of the city. We'll begin at Topkapi Palace, built for the Ottoman Sultans and as splendid today as it was in its heyday. Its lavish interiors rival its position overlooking the Bosphorus when it comes to the wow factor. Nearby, you'll discover the magnificent Hagia Sophia. Constructed at the time of Constantine the Great, this extraordinary building has been a mosque, church and museum in its lifetime. Architecturally superb, the interior also reveals dazzling mosaics and calligraphic panels. After a break for lunch, the next stop is the wonderful Blue Mosque. Inside, admire the latticework and also the Iznik tiles which lend the place its nickname. Outside is the Byzantine Hippodrome, once the stage for chariot races; a short stroll away is the atmospheric Basilica Cistern with its columns and echoing subterranean chambers. Last but by no means least is a visit to the Grand Bazaar where you can shop till you drop at its 4000 stalls. Overnight in Istanbul. (Breakfast, lunch)

**Day 3 - Istanbul - Gallipoli - Canakkale**

The 1915-1916 Gallipoli campaign was a defining moment of World War One. The Allies attempted, and failed, to defeat the Ottomans. Although, with enormous casualties on both sides, you could argue there was no winner. In the UK, Gallipoli cost Winston Churchill his job and Asquith his government, but it led to a strengthening of national identity for Australia and New Zealand who commemorate the anniversary of the landings as ANZAC Day each April 25th. We'll pay our respects at ANZAC cove and the Lone Pine Cemetery. A visit to Chunuk Bair, site of a crucial battle in August 1915, and to Gabatepe War Museum will give us the opportunity to reflect on the campaign and its consequences. Overnight in Canakkale. (Breakfast, lunch)

**Day 4 - Canakkale - Troy - Kusadasi**

On today's itinerary is the legendary city of Troy. This ancient city was the setting for Homer's Iliad; many historians now believe that the archaeological ruins we see today were those that Homer wrote about. During your visit to this UNESCO World Heritage site, you'll find out about the Trojan Wars, a 10 year siege of the city by Greek forces. Lay eyes on a model of the famous Trojan horse that enabled the Greeks to trick the Trojans and put an end to the fighting. Your guide will also explain the complex relationship between the Trojan prince Paris and Helen, the woman he abducted or seduced depending on which account you believe. It's a fascinating piece of history, all the more compelling if you are standing amid the ruins as you learn about it. On leaving Troy, we'll visit the ancient kingdom of Pergamon with its Acropolis, Temple of Athena and library, where we'll learn about the contribution of Asclepion to the understanding of medicine. Overnight in Kusadasi. (Breakfast, lunch)

## **Day 5 - Ephesus**

Today we're treated to a walking tour of Ephesus. It was originally a port city, located at what was once the estuary of the River Kaystros. Highlights include the Great Theatre; built between 41 and 17AD, it's still used for performances today. We'll learn about some of its most famous sights, including the Library of Celsus and the Temple of Hadrian, guarded by what's thought to be a head of Medusa on account of its wavy hair. Sadly, little remains of the famous Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. A few miles away is the House of the Virgin Mary, an important place of pilgrimage for those who believe that it was her home. Other stops today include the Archaeological Museum of Ephesus in Selcuk, and Sardis, where the Greco-Persian wars took place. Overnight in Kusadasi. (Breakfast, lunch)

## **Day 6 - Pamukkale**

The focus today is the breathtaking complex of calcite-encrusted terraces at Pamukkale. Known as the "Cotton Castle", mineral-rich hot springs have sculpted an incredible landscape of terraced pools which cascade down a steep hillside. It's one of Turkey's most photogenic spots, particularly seen from above in the clear waters of Cleopatra's Pool (also referred to as the Roman Antique Pool). Our opportunity to swim here is enriched by the knowledge that it's been a spa for over 2000 years, as evidenced by the proximity of the ancient ruined city of Hierapolis. In fact, step into the 36°C waters and you'll be sharing a bath with submerged columns which date back many centuries. Just beyond the city walls we'll discover a sprawling necropolis whose 1200 tombs span a period from the Ancient Greeks to the early Jewish and Christian era. Overnight in Pamukkale. (Breakfast, lunch)

## **Day 7 - Pamukkale - Perge - Aspendos - Antalya**

On the itinerary this morning is a visit to the ancient city of Perge. It's about a three hour drive to what was the capital of Pamphilia and dates back to 1000BC. It has a colonnaded street similar to the one we saw in Ephesus, as well as well-preserved baths, unusual gate towers and several temples. From Perge we continue on to Aspendos, which boasts one of the most intact Roman theatres anywhere in the Mediterranean. It seats a crowd of 20000 and is still used for music and drama productions - the International Opera and Ballet festival is an annual event. The other important landmark at Aspendos is its aqueduct. Built by the Greeks in 155AD, it carried water from the hills to the town, a distance of 19km. It's an easy drive to Antalya, our next base. Overnight in Antalya. (Breakfast, lunch)

## **Day 8 - Antalya**

Your guide will offer a programme of optional excursions today. Perhaps you'll fancy a cruise around the Gulf of Antalya; the views of its pretty little coves and bays are delightful. For those who haven't yet had their full of ruins, we'd suggest Phaselis, which was a Greek and Roman city on the coast of ancient Lycia. If you prefer, you can relax and spend a leisurely day in Antalya or go out exploring on your own. Overnight in Antalya. (Breakfast, lunch)

## **Day 9 - Konya - Cappadocia**

Departing Antalya, we drive first to Konya. Our sightseeing this morning is at the Mevlâna Museum, where the mystic Celaleddin Rumi founded the Sufi order which we know as the Whirling Dervishes. The museum, opened almost a century ago, is a mausoleum containing his tomb, but it's also fascinating to study the musical instruments, textiles, carpets and calligraphy on display. We leave Konya to move on to the Sultan Han caravanserai, built in 1229. Caravanserais such as this were constructed as fortified inns and played an important role on ancient trade routes such as the Silk Road. This one is particularly special with a huge gate, elaborately embellished in Seljuk style. With a photo stop to catch the sunset, we arrive in Cappadocia in the early evening. Overnight in Cappadocia. (Breakfast, lunch)

## **Day 10 - Cappadocia**

We suggest waking up early in the morning and participate in the optional hot air balloon excursion. Our standard programme for the day will start as usual at about 10 am. Those who are not participating in the optional excursion will be able to discuss their options with the guide, you might simply want to drive to the place where the balloons are launched, and enjoy spectacular views from the ground. The Cappadocia region is one of the most breathtaking in Turkey. This volcanic landscape has been weathered over time to create a fantastical place crammed with quirky landforms. Volcanic eruptions three million years ago left a layer of tufa, a soft stone which is easily removed by wind and rain. Underneath, the rock is more resistant, and the result is an almost surreal landscape of rock pinnacles, steep ravines and spindly fairy chimneys with capped tops which look a little like mushrooms. Within the valleys you'll find tumbling streams and fruit trees laden with apricots. People have lived in this place for many centuries and have left their mark in the form of underground cities, such as that of Kaymakli. Littered throughout the region are frescoed chapels hewn from the soft rock. The best known are found at Göreme Open-Air Museum, which we will visit on a guided tour. There will also be an opportunity to see rugs being made, which make a great souvenir purchase. Overnight in Cappadocia. (Breakfast, lunch)

### Day 11 - Ankara

Our Best of Turkey itinerary wouldn't be complete without Ankara, the country's capital. Here, we'll learn about Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who founded modern Turkey as a secular state. Included in today's programme are his mausoleum and also the Atatürk Museum. We'll also visit the Museum of Anatolian Civilisations and its impressive collection of antiquities covering a period from prehistoric times onwards. One of the highlights is some incredibly well preserved furniture recovered from the tomb of King Midas, who famously turned everything he touched into gold, so legend has it. Overnight in Ankara. (Breakfast, lunch)

### Day 12 - Istanbul

We complete the loop as we return to Istanbul. Today's programme gives you the opportunity to discover the city by subway. Beginning on the Bosphorus, we travel to the Golden Horn Metro Bridge; opened in 2014, the station is located right in the middle of the bridge. From it there's a fabulous view of the river, Galata Tower, Süleymaniye Mosque and the Topkapi Palace which we visited earlier in the holiday. Next we'll take you to a station of a different kind: the historic departure point for the Orient Express, Sirkeci Terminal. Another metro ride, this time on the Cross-Continental Subway, gets us underneath the Bosphorus in a subterranean tunnel. We board in Europe and disembark in Asia. Tonight, we'll spend our final night in Turkey at lively Taksim Square, at the heart of Istanbul's entertainment district. (Breakfast, lunch)

### Day 13 - Istanbul

After breakfast, you'll bid farewell to Istanbul as we transfer to the airport for your flight home. (Breakfast)

## TOUR INCLUSIONS AND OPTIONAL EXTRAS

#### Included

[International flights](#)  
[Accommodation](#)  
[Guided tours & cultural programme](#)  
[English - speaking guides](#)  
[Half board meals](#)  
[Ground transportation](#)  
[Airport transfers](#)

#### Not included

[Personal travel insurance](#)  
[Optional excursions](#)

#### Practical information

[About Best of Caucasus company](#)  
[Book with confidence - covid FAQs](#)  
[Contact our travel consultants](#)

## AVAILABLE PACKAGES

### COMFORT - 3\* PACKAGE

Dates	Excl. flights	Incl. flights*	Single suppl.
16/11/2024 - 28/11/2024	£3495	£3795	£525
23/11/2024 - 05/12/2024	£3495	£3795	£525
30/11/2024 - 12/12/2024	£3495	£3795	£525
07/12/2024 - 19/12/2024	£3495	£3795	£525
14/12/2024 - 26/12/2024	£3495	£3795	£525
04/01/2025 - 16/01/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
11/01/2025 - 23/01/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
18/01/2025 - 30/01/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
25/01/2025 - 06/02/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
01/02/2025 - 13/02/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
08/02/2025 - 20/02/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
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22/03/2025 - 03/04/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
29/03/2025 - 10/04/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
05/04/2025 - 17/04/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
12/04/2025 - 24/04/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
19/04/2025 - 01/05/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
26/04/2025 - 08/05/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
03/05/2025 - 15/05/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
10/05/2025 - 22/05/2025	£3495	£3795	£525

17/05/2025 - 29/05/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
24/05/2025 - 05/06/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
31/05/2025 - 12/06/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
07/06/2025 - 19/06/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
14/06/2025 - 26/06/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
21/06/2025 - 03/07/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
28/06/2025 - 10/07/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
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26/07/2025 - 07/08/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
02/08/2025 - 14/08/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
09/08/2025 - 21/08/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
16/08/2025 - 28/08/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
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20/09/2025 - 02/10/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
27/09/2025 - 09/10/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
04/10/2025 - 16/10/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
11/10/2025 - 23/10/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
18/10/2025 - 30/10/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
25/10/2025 - 06/11/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
01/11/2025 - 13/11/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
08/11/2025 - 20/11/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
15/11/2025 - 27/11/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
22/11/2025 - 04/12/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
29/11/2025 - 11/12/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
06/12/2025 - 18/12/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
13/12/2025 - 25/12/2025	£3495	£3795	£525
20/12/2025 - 01/01/2026	£3495	£3795	£525

## ALTERNATIVE TOURS AND TAILOR-MADE ARRANGEMENTS

In addition to organized group tours, we also offer individual trips. This could be an entirely separate holiday arrangement or an extension to a regular "Best of Caucasus" trip. Whether you would like to travel independently, or just with the group of your friends or colleagues, we can help to realise your holiday plans. Depending on your preference for either comfort or budget, we can help you to design the ideal itinerary and provide the optimal value-for-money quote. Please [contact us for a quote](#).

Based on your chosen tour we believe you might be interested in alternative trips listed below:

- > [Short Break in Istanbul - 3 days \(TR-01\)](#), Price from £445, 3 days
- > [Short Break in Istanbul with a Visit to Cappadocia - 6 days \(TR-02\)](#), Price from £1,095, 6 days
- > [Best of Istanbul - 5 days \(TR-04\)](#), Price from £745, 5 days
- > [Classical Turkey Tour: Istanbul, Cappadocia, Ephesus, Pamukkale, Izmir - 8 days \(TR-03\)](#), Price from £1,495, 8 days
- > [Highlights of Azerbaijan - 6 days \(AZ-01\)](#), Price from £1,095, 6 days
- > [Discover Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan - 16 days \(CT-02\)](#), Price from £2,895, 16 days
- > [Best of Armenia and Georgia - 12 days \(CT-05\)](#), Price from £2,095, 12 days

## HOW TO BOOK

### Step 1 - Choose Your Holiday & Departure Dates

It is important that you choose a trip that is well suited to your interests, capabilities and experience. All our staff has first hand experience of a range of Best of Caucasus holidays and will be happy to talk to you about your chosen trip, enabling you to assess its suitability. We also recommend that you read the descriptions of the relevant region, general information about our services, booking conditions, and trip dossiers carefully. Once you know what tour is right for you, as well as your departure dates, you can start your booking.

### Step 2 - Complete the Booking Form

**Online:** log on to [www.best-of-caucasus.co.uk](http://www.best-of-caucasus.co.uk) and open the tour you wish to book and click "Book now". To provide you with a more personalised and relevant experience in all your contact with Best of Caucasus, when you book online we ask you to register on our system. Once registered you can retrieve your bookings, update newsletter subscriptions, passenger and emergency contact details, submit special dietary requests, view invoices and receipts, download trip documents.

**Email:** alternatively, you can book your tour per email - [info@best-of-caucasus.co.uk](mailto:info@best-of-caucasus.co.uk), or

**Phone:** call us on **+44 (0)20 30 51 76 40**

When booking by email or over the phone please confirm your personal details (full name and address), chosen tour, departure date, package type (hotel category), and available upgrades.

### **Step 3 - Confirmation of your booking**

On receipt of your booking form, we will make any necessary reservations for you and send you confirmation invoice, including the flight details, and additional information about your destination: advice on visas, vaccinations and what to take. The invoice will also show you the exact due date of the payment.

### **Step 4 - Payment**

Please note, if your departure date is more than 56 days you will need to pay the deposit, which should cover the full cost of the flight (if applicable), plus 10% of the land-only arrangements (minimum £100) per person towards your tour. The outstanding payment must be made 56 days prior to departure. If you book less than 56 days before departure, full payment must be made at the time of your booking. You can make your payment by bank transfer, debit or credit card, cheque, bankers draft or postal order. You will find all relevant payment details in your invoice.

