



Grand Tour of Turkey

15 days | 17 days with Istanbul extension

In Turkey, Ottoman domes float against modern skylines. Classic scenes from Greek epics come to life, and bustling bazaars and vibrant street vendors prove variety is the spice of life. From Istanbul to Cappadocia and the ruins of Ephesus, take in the living traditions where East meets West on this small group Adventure Tour.



Your tour package includes

- 13 nights in handpicked hotels
- 13 breakfasts
- 2 lunches
- 6 dinners
- 1 wine tasting
- 2 tastings
- 15 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach
- 3 ferry transfers
- 1 on-tour flight

Included highlights

- Hagia Sophia
- Blue Mosque
- Archaeological Site of Troy
- Sirince wine tasting
- Pamukkale's travertines
- Göreme Open-Air Museum
- Cappadocia valley hike
- Kadiköy Market

Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for about 2.5 hours daily across moderately uneven terrain, including cobblestone streets, dirt paths, and wooden platforms, with some hills and steps.

Group size

12-22

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Overnight Flight → 1 night

Day 1: Overnight flight

Board your overnight flight to Istanbul today.

Istanbul → 2 nights

Day 2: Arrival in Istanbul

Welcome to Turkey! Arrive in Istanbul—one of the world's only cities that spans two continents—and enjoy a welcome drink as you meet your Tour Director and fellow travelers.

Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Istanbul

Included meals: breakfast, welcome lunch

Set off on a tour of Istanbul's vibrant streets and historic UNESCO World Heritage sites led by your Tour Director.

- Step inside the Hagia Sophia, which held the title of the world's largest cathedral for nearly 1,000 years
- Walk to the Basilica Cistern and explore the 6th-century underground water collection area
- Visit the Hippodrome, once considered the social center of ancient Constantinople
- Enjoy an included welcome lunch at a local restaurant
- Explore the Blue Mosque, named for the blue tiles adorning its interior, and sit down to learn about Ottoman Islamic traditions
- Discover the former residence of Ottoman sultans at Topkapi Palace during a tour of the museum and palace grounds

Please note: Travelers are required to remove or cover shoes when entering the Blue Mosque. On some departures the visit to Basilica Cistern may take place on day 14.

Canakkale → 1 night

Day 4: Canakkale via Troy

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Take a short ferry ride across the Dardanelles Strait and join your Tour Director on a guided tour of Troy, the city at the heart of Homer's "Iliad."

- Explore the Archaeological Site of Troy

- See the ruins of the city walls, temples, and buildings
 - View a replica of the famous Trojan Horse
- After, continue on to Canakkale and sit down for an included dinner.
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Ephesus Region → 2 nights

Day 5: Ephesus Region via Adatepe & Bergama

Included meals: breakfast, tasting, dinner

Head south along the Aegean coast, making several stops along the way.

- Visit Adatepe, a small village in the hills above the Aegean Sea
- Walk along the cobblestone streets and have a chance to visit the elegant stone mosque
- Sample olives, olive oil, and Turkish tea at a local eatery
- Continue on to Bergama where a couple has worked to revive the ancient Hellenistic paper making techniques which date back 1800 years
- See how sheepskin is turned into paper with an opportunity to volunteer and join in on process

Then, travel to the Ephesus region, a historic area on Turkey's west coast, and sit down for an included dinner.

Day 6: Sightseeing tour of Ephesus

Included meals: breakfast

Join your Tour Director on a guided tour of Ephesus, one of the best-preserved ancient Greek cities in the Mediterranean region.

- Discover many UNESCO-listed sites, including the elaborate Library of Celsus and the ruins of the Basilica of St. John
- View the Great Theatre, which is still in use today
- Step inside the house where the Virgin Mary is said to have spent her final days

Spend a free evening in the Ephesus region or add an excursion.

+ Traditional Turkish Meyhane Dinner

Pamukkale → 1 night

Day 7: Pamukkale via Sirince

Included meals: breakfast, wine tasting, dinner

Head inland and stop in the quaint town of Sirince, known for its wine and olive oil, to get a firsthand look at rural village life.

- Learn about the town's history of Greek and Turkish residents from your Tour Director
- Hear how the local Turks reconstructed the Ottoman-era houses
- Enjoy free time to explore the streets and markets
- Visit a wine store for a tasting of local wines

Later, arrive in Pamukkale and sit down for an included dinner.

Antalya → 3 nights

Day 8: Sightseeing tour of Hierapolis, Pamukkale & transfer to Antalya

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Discover some of the area's natural wonders and ancient ruins on today's guided tour.

- Visit the UNESCO-listed city of Hierapolis to see the well-preserved Greco-Roman ruins
- Walk to neighboring Pamukkale, a popular spa town during the Roman times
- See the town's famous travertines—petrified waterfalls of white stone

Then, travel to Antalya and sit down for an included dinner this evening.

Day 9: Sightseeing tour of Antalya

Included meals: breakfast

Join your Tour Director on a tour of Antalya, a stunning coastal city known for its pristine beaches and beautiful scenery.

- Explore the Antalya Museum, an enormous complex with nearly 30,000 antiquities from the Stone Age, Roman, Hellenistic, and Byzantine periods
- Walk through Karaalioglu Park to admire views of Hidirlik Tower, the coastline, and mountains
- Uncover the ruins of Hadrian's Gate, a remarkably well-preserved triumphal arch

Enjoy a free afternoon in Antalya or add an excursion.

+ Aspendos & Perge

Day 10: Free day in Antalya

Included meals: breakfast

Spend a free day in Antalya or add an excursion.
+ Mount Tahtali, Phaselis Ruins & Turquoise Coast

Cappadocia → 2 nights

Day 11: Cappadocia via Konya

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Cross the Taurus Mountains to visit the mystical center of Konya, the spiritual home of Sufism and the Whirling Dervishes.

- Step inside the Mevlana Museum with your Tour Director
- Learn more about the Dervishes as you tour the museum, which was once their monastery

Continue on to Cappadocia, which is known for its unearthly rock formations, and sit down for an included dinner.

Please note: For an additional cost, you can book a Whirling Dervishes cultural performance for this evening through your Tour Director.

Day 12: Sightseeing tour of Cappadocia

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Wander through the Göreme Open-Air Museum, which is comprised of frescoed rock churches dating back to the fourth century.

- See the area's signature geological rock formations, known as fairy chimneys
- Visit a cave village and a rock-carved church
- Stop in Avanos to discover the town's distinctive red-clay pottery

This afternoon, join your Tour Director on a hike down through one of Cappadocia's famous valleys.

- See the dramatic landscapes and rock formations carved by wind and water
- Learn about the people who carved their homes out of the rock

Sit down for an included dinner this evening.

Please note: For an additional cost, you can book a hot air balloon ride for this morning through your Tour Director.

Istanbul → 2 nights

Day 13: Flight to Istanbul

Included meals: breakfast

Spend a free morning in Cappadocia or add an excursion.

Then, fly back to Istanbul this afternoon.

+ Underground City

Day 14: Sightseeing tour of Kadiköy Market & Grand Bazaar

Included meals: breakfast, farewell lunch

Today, see Istanbul from a different perspective as you take a ferry across the Bosphorus Strait to Kadiköy and explore Kadiköy Market with a local guide.

- Walk through this open-air market, which sits on the Asian side of Istanbul
- See where locals go to shop for everything from fresh-caught fish to locally grown produce
- Stop by specialty shops to see what the vendors are selling and learn more about the foods used to create some of the country's culinary staples
- Shop for snacks and pick up some sweets to bring back home
- Head to a nearby restaurant for a farewell lunch featuring food, drinks, and desserts from the Anatolian, or Asia Minor, region of Turkey

This afternoon, take a ferry back up the Golden Horn and head to Istanbul's Grand Bazaar.

- Step inside the bazaar, which is one of the oldest covered markets in the world
- Follow along as you Tour Director points you in the direction of the best vendors and enjoy free time to shop

Toast to your trip with a farewell drink this evening.

Flight Home

Day 15: Departure

Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to the airport for your flight home or extend your stay in Istanbul.

+ Istanbul extension

Istanbul is magical, to say the least. It's here in Turkey's largest city that you can walk on two continents, see world wonders, and eat some of the best food ever. Extend your stay and look to your expert Tour Director as you fill each moment with wonder.

Istanbul → 2 nights

Day 15: Free day in Istanbul

Included meals: breakfast

Enjoy a full free day in Istanbul or add an excursion.

+ Hammam Spa Visit

+ Turkish Cooking Class & Dinner

Day 16: Free day in Istanbul

Included meals: breakfast

Spend a free day in Istanbul or add an excursion.

+ Bosphorus Straits Cruise

Flight Home

Day 17: Departure

Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to the airport for your flight home.

Customize your experience

Customize your tour by adding excursion options. Excursions offered on the same day will occur at different times, so there's no need to choose. Save \$10 when you book your excursion up to three days before your tour departs.* Excursions requiring advance reservation only list this discounted price. Call or go online to customize your tour: goaheadtours.com/TUD | 1-800-597-0350

Day 6: Traditional Turkish Meyhane Dinner

\$65/\$75* (3 hours, departs in the evening, dinner included)

Head to a meyhane in Izmir this evening for dinner. Meaning “wine house” in Turkish, these traditional restaurants serve various types of local food and drink in simple surroundings. You'll enjoy mezedes—shareable small plates—with your group as you sip raki, an anise-flavored brandy that's Turkey's national drink. Take in the vibe and chat with your group, listening to lively Turkish and Balkan music as you do. Then, return to your hotel a satisfied bunch.

Day 9: Aspendos & Perge

\$59/\$69* (4.5 hours, departure time varies)

After the Trojan Wars, some of the victorious Greek forces stayed in Asia Minor and established new towns for Greek colonists. This excursion will take you to Perge, one of the most successful of these new colonies, which prospered under the patronage of Alexander the Great. The ancient remains of this proud city are extensive, and you'll have a chance to explore the Great Theatre, the ruined Hellenistic Gates, Roman baths, and the impressive stadium. Later, visit the Roman theater at Aspendos, a center of classical drama in the first century A.D. Please note: During the summer months, this region can be quite hot. Please bring sunscreen and sturdy footwear.

Day 10: Mount Tahtali, Phaselis Ruins & Turquoise Coast

\$95/\$105* (7.5 hours, departs in the morning)

Make your way to the base of Mount Tahtali, which is located in Beydaglari Coastal National Park. This mountain is the highest in the national park and you'll take a cable car ride to the summit and admire the views—from 7,760 feet in the air, to be exact. Enjoy free time to walk around and explore the summit before riding the cable car back down to the base. Continue on to the ruins of Phaselis, an ancient Greco-Roman city on the Lycian coast. You'll explore the ruins and surrounding coastal nature preserve on a walking tour with a local guide. End the day by relaxing at a beach on the Turquoise Coast, also known as the Turkish Riviera. The beautiful coastline, mountainous scenery, and natural beauty have made this a beloved destination for locals and travelers alike. You can swim, eat lunch, and lounge on the sandy shores at your leisure before traveling back to the hotel. Please note: This excursion is weather-dependent. The order of the cable car ride and Phaselis ruins tour may be swapped according to the time slot booked for the cable car ride.

Day 13: Underground City

\$55/\$65* (3 hours, departs in the morning)

Discover the mysterious underground city of Kaymaklı. This guided tour will expose the secrets of this ancient city brimming below the surface. The underground city consists of eight floors, four of which are open to visitors. Built to house hundreds of people, the city's

tunnels and underground rooms boast innovations including a church, stable, wineries, kitchens, and a ventilation system, along with living areas.

Extension excursion options

Day 15: Hammam Spa Visit

\$115/\$125* (2 hours, departs in the morning)

Do as the Turks do and pay a visit to a hammam, or Turkish bath house. Going to a hammam has been a mainstay in Turkish culture since the times of the Ottoman empire and visiting one is seen as a time to socialize with friends and relax. Today, you'll visit a local, public bath house and admire the traditional architecture as you learn more about the roots of this cultural mainstay.

Day 15: Turkish Cooking Class & Dinner

\$119/\$129* (3 hours, departs in the afternoon, dinner included)

Dive into Turkey's culinary traditions during this evening's excursion. You'll take part in an interactive cooking class alongside a local chef to learn how to craft the types of Turkish foods that are lovingly made and served by local families. Discover the origins of the dishes you'll be cooking and try your hand at preparing them. At the end of the class, enjoy an included dinner paired with local wine.

Day 16: Bosphorus Straits Cruise

\$85/\$95* (5 hours, departure time varies, lunch included)

Cruise through the Bosphorus Straits, looking out on decadent Ottoman palaces and imposing medieval castles as you journey through the narrow waterway that separates Europe from Asia. On your way, you'll stop to visit the famous Egyptian bazaar, known as the Spice Market. After returning from your cruise, sit down to a lunch of Turkish specialties. Please note: This excursion is weather-dependent. In some cases, dinner will be offered instead of lunch.

*Optional excursions may be purchased up to three days prior to departure or while on tour. Pre-purchased optional excursions cannot be canceled within three days prior to departure or while on tour. Select optional excursions require advance booking and cannot be purchased or canceled after the advanced reservation deadline. GAT accepts payment by cash, Visa or MasterCard for optional excursions purchased on tour. Additional fees may apply for optional excursions purchased on tour. Excursions require a minimum number of participants to operate. Details and prices are subject to change. Due to seasonal hours of operation and availability, some excursions may not operate. If this occurs, you will be refunded any payments made for that excursion post-tour. Learn more at goaheadtours.com/terms