

Aegean Explorer - 7 Days

go guide

don't leave home without it



A World Of Discovery



Kicking off in the powerhouse of the Ottoman empire, discover exciting Istanbul, embrace Gallipoli, impressive Roman ruins, the Aegean Coast and Pamukkale's beautiful cascading mineral pools.



- Guided sightseeing - Istanbul, Gallipoli, Troy, Ruins of Ephesus and Pergamum, Pamukkale terraces and Hierapolis
- Escorted by an English speaking, degree qualified Turkish tour guide
- All relevant transfers and transportation (excl overnight bus) in private modern air-conditioned vehicles

Istanbul. After a good night's rest and breakfast, we meet all our tour group members. At this point in time all entrance fees and your tip kitty will be collected. Shortly after we depart on a classic guided tour of the only city to span two continents.

Our sightseeing tour includes a visit to the stunning Blue Mosque (which faces the Hagia Sofia) and is famed for its blue Iznik tiles and unique 6 minarets, the ruinous Hippodrome – now a small park of sorts and once scene of chariot races and political activities in Byzantine times, Hagia Sofia Museum - constructed as a Basilica in the 6th century by Emperor Justinian, Topkapi Palace and the Underground Cistern – an ancient underground water tank - replete with carved and fluted Corinthian columns and a puzzling head of Medusa. Visitors walk on walkways suspended above the shallow water. It's very cool and peaceful. **Overnight - Istanbul (B)**

What's Not Included

- Tipping Kitty: \$25 USD
- Entrance Fees: \$110 USD
- Tip for your tour guide and driver. We recommend you allow \$3 - 5 USD per day, per traveller as a tip for your guide and \$2 USD per day for your driver. Tipping your guide and driver is an entirely personal gesture.
- International flights and visa

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Istanbul - old city, Istanbul, Hippodrome, Blue Mosque, Hagia Sofia, Basilica Underground Cistern and Topkapi Palace
- Gallipoli Peninsular - ANZAC Cove, Lone Pine and Chunuk Bair memorials, trenches and battlefields
- Troy - Trojan horse and ancient ruins
- Aegean Coast
- Roman ruins of Pergamum and Ephesus
- Pamukkale thermal pools and Roman Hierapolis
- Turkish carpet weaving and leather manufacturing houses.

What's Included

- 5 breakfasts and 4 dinners
- 5 nights 4 star hotels
- 1 overnight public bus journey - Pamukkale - Istanbul
- Airport arrival transfer on day 1 and departure transfer (to Ataturk International Airport) at 11am and 1:30pm on day 7

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 : Istanbul

Saturday. Welcome to Turkey! Arrive Istanbul and included transfer to our hotel. Spend the afternoon at leisure or head out to explore the city. This evening our tip filled welcome meeting takes place. Take the opportunity to meet your tour guide and travel companions then maybe head out for some dinner or a chat in the bar afterward. **Overnight - Istanbul**

Day 2 : Istanbul



Day 3 : Gallipoli



Istanbul – Gallipoli. Today, we travel to the WW1 battlefields of Gallipoli. Here, we'll embark upon a guided tour of the region, once the site of fierce fighting and today almost hauntingly beautiful, with its wooded landscape dotted with understated memorials to the war dead. Our guided tour of the region will take in sights such as Lone Pine Australian War Memorial and cemetery, Chunuk Bair New Zealand War Memorial and cemetery, the Nek, Johnston's Jolly and the many fortified trenches still clearly visible amongst the scrub after all these years. Roughly 3 feet deep, the system of trenches provided much needed safe cover for troops as they desperately fought the enemy.

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updated on 16-05-2012



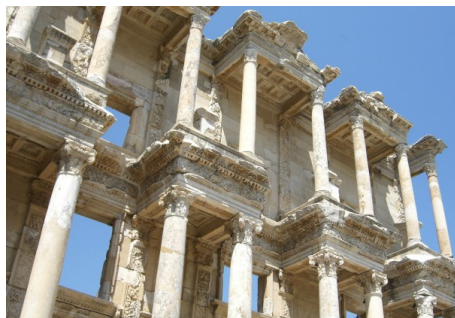
We'll also visit the small Kabatepe Information Centre and Museum - a museum of modest proportions which exhibits period uniforms, weapons, copies of letters from servicemen and other poignant personal possessions. Outside the small museum are some memorial gardens and top views of the peninsular memorials dotted across the landscape. Crossing the Dardanelles by ferry (offering panoramic views of the entire Gallipoli Peninsular) we proceed to our hotel for a little rest and relaxation. **Overnight - Gallipoli region** (B, D)

Day 4 : Troy & Kusadasi

Gallipoli – Kusadasi. This morning we enjoy a short guided tour of Troy! If you've seen the movie – 'Troy' or read the poet Homer's – 'The Iliad' you'll be familiar with Paris – Prince of Troy, his prized Helen and Hector – Prince of Troy on the Trojan side and Agamemnon and Achilles (he of the heel) on the Achaean (Greek) side. The legend of the lost city of Troy and Homer's poetry was bought alive by it's rediscovery in 1863. Subsequent excavations revealed 9 ancient cities, one on top of the other, dating back to 3000 BC! We enjoy a tour of the ruins and bear witness to a replica of the stoic Trojan wooden horse that, as the story goes, was filled to the gunnels with Achaean soldiers who helped sack Troy.

Driving further south to the ancient ruins of Pergamum, once one of the Middle East's richest and most powerful little kingdoms, we'll enjoy a guided tour. Home to one of the steepest, vertigo - inducing amphitheatres in the classical world, Pergamum was also famous for its Asclepion (medical centre). See the Temple of Trajan and of course the Library, which in its time was said to rival the library in ancient Alexandria. After exploring the ancient ruins, we continue to Kusadasi on the Aegean Coast via a leather manufacturing house. **Overnight - Kusadasi** (B, D)

Day 5 : Kusadasi



Kusadasi. Today, we enjoy a guided tour at the legendary Roman ruins of Ephesus. Positively the best-preserved classical city in the eastern Mediterranean, and among the best places in the world to get a feel for what Roman life must have been like. Ephesus, under the Romans was a vast city with a population nearing 250,000. It became the Roman capital of Asia Minor. We'll have plenty of time to tour the marble ruins of Ephesus. Be sure to see the famous Library of Celcus, the gymnasium of Vadius and Stadium, the great theatre and stroll the streets in the ruins of this large Roman ruined

city. It's completely fascinating. We'll see public toilets, a brothel, fountains and various temples. Carpet weaving has long traditions in Turkey and afterward we stop to watch a demonstration of how they are made. **Overnight - Kusadasi** (B, D)

Day 6 : Pamukkale



Kusadasi - Pamukkale - Istanbul. Today, after breakfast, we drive to Pamukkale visiting the region's famed calcium rich terraced pools. Known locally as the Cotton Castles, they are a natural phenomena and gift of Mother Nature. Pamukkale was formed when warm, calcium rich mineral water cascaded over the cliff edge, cooling and depositing in the process. The calcium built natural shelves and pools on the cliffs, known as travertines. Today, some of the pools are closed. However, areas of the travertines can be walked upon, albeit in bare feet.

We can however opt to enjoy a unique and very pleasant dip in the warm waters at the Pamukkale Thermal, with its submerged fragments of fluted marble columns in the centre of the ruined spa town of Hierapolis, which was a was a cure centre founded around 190 BC by the Romans. At approx 10:30pm this evening we bid farewell to our guide and travel by overnight bus to Istanbul. **Overnight - Public bus/coach** (B, D)

Day 7 : Istanbul



Friday. Arrive Istanbul early this morning (approx 8 - 8:30am) where our representative (holding an on the go tours logo signboard) will be waiting to meet you. We transfer to a nearby hotel where our luggage can be stored until the complimentary airport shuttle transfers to Ataturk International Airport which depart at 11am and 1:30pm. Consider heading out to one of the local cafes for a hearty breakfast followed by a visit to the Egyptian Spice market or the legendary, if cavernous Grand Bazaar - boasting some 4000 shops under one immense roof. The Grand Bazaar is just the

ticket for souvenir, clothing, scarves, brass, silver and handbag purchases. Alternatively, you could choose to extend your stay by purchasing an additional nights hotel accommodation. We hope you have had a wonderful holiday in Turkey and look forward to seeing you soon.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Climate

Turkey is a destination that can be visited year round. Temperatures in Turkey during the Northern Hemisphere summer are generally high, particularly during the summer months from June through September. April can spring up surprising results. Days can be amazingly warm, though temperatures do drop at night, so pack some warmer clothes. Summer in Turkey for the most part is hot and dry. For the beach worshipper, June through September is best, when you'll enjoy glorious Mediterranean sun. Turkey is a lovely winter destination, the weather is usually temperate, although from December through to February you may enjoy a little snow in Istanbul, Anatolia or Cappadocia. Whatever month you consider, you'll be rewarded with seasonal variations that range from leaf-strewn autumns to sun-kissed summers.

Health Requirements

Recommendations - Tetanus and Polio, plus Typhoid and Hepatitis. Contact your local healthcare provider for the most up to date information.

Currency

We recommend you carry a mixture of cash and a debit/credit card. The Turkish Lira is fully convertible and can be obtained before departure or upon arrival. ATM facilities, banks and exchange booths are available in all major cities and towns. Avoid changing the bulk of your money at the airport, the exchange rates are usually more favourable in the city.

Credit cards are widely accepted in large restaurants, hotels and shops. Although merchants may place a surcharge of up to 10% on credit card purchases. Ensure you have sufficient funds in cash before travelling outside major cities and towns. Travellers cheques are hard to exchange, so best not to bring them.

Turkish Lira - abbreviated to TL or TRY.

USD 1 = TL 1.8
GBP 1 = TL 2.8
EURO 1 = TL 2.5
AUD 1 = TL 1.8

Time & Voltage

Turkey is 2 hours ahead of GMT. Turkish voltage is 230-240v AC. Turkish sockets are of the 3 round-pin variety, similar though not identical to European sockets. Greek sockets are of the 2 round-pin variety. If taking a hairdryer or chargeable device, be sure to pack an adaptor.



Essential Packing

- A small daypack for your day-to-day needs.
- A photocopy of your passport data pages.
- The voltage in Turkey is generally 220V and outlets fit a two-pin European plug. You should pack a Universal Adaptor and check that it is suitable for Turkey.
- Spare camera batteries/memory card so you can go snap happy.
- If you fancy a tippie, take advantage of Duty Free.
- Buy some Lira at the airport upon arrival.
- Buy a phrasebook and practice your holiday Turkish.
- Keep a supply of small notes for local transactions.

Holiday Money

Funds collected in Turkey for entrance fees and tip kitty (if applicable to your holiday) or optional excursion that you may wish to participate in are payable in local currency (TL).

Pre-Tour Accom & Arrival Transfers

If you would like to arrive into Turkey prior to your tour or stay on longer, we can arrange pre or post tour accommodation for you. Pre/post tour accommodation is located at the hotel your tour commences/ends and is inclusive of breakfast.

If arriving on day 1 of a holiday or booking pre-tour accommodation with us on a tour or short stay that includes an airport arrival transfer (as indicated in the 'What's Included' section of this Go Guide) we will be at the airport (Ataturk or Sabiha Gokcen), ready to transfer you to your hotel.

If arriving prior to 8am on day 1 (essentially on a flight that arrives very, very early in the morning) you will need to purchase a night of pre-tour accommodation to save you waiting until standard hotel check in time, which is generally 2pm.

ARRIVING VIA ATATURK AIRPORT

As you enter the arrival hall in Ataturk Airport turn LEFT and walk along the concourse. Look to the right, our representative will be waiting here behind the barricade, displaying an on the go sign. Remember, the representative won't know what you look like, so it will be important to look out for our company sign, in order to facilitate rendezvous.

SABIHA GOKCEN AIRPORT

If arriving into Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen International Airport, an additional 50km from the Istanbul city centre. Please be timely in exiting customs and in meeting our awaiting representative, who will be holding an on the go tours sign.

If your tour or sailing holiday does not include an arrival transfer you will need to make your own way to the tour start point. Details of the tour/sailing holiday start point can be found on your tour voucher.

Departure Transfers

We offer the following complimentary departure transfers: Aegean Explorer, Turkey Unplugged & Remembrance Day tours - departure transfers at 11am and 1.30pm on the final day of your tour (day 8 for Turkey & Tutankhamen tour) to Ataturk International Airport. Turkey & Tutankhamen tour: on day 8 at 11am & 9pm. Turkey Discovered: departure transfer on the final day of your tour at any time of day to Ataturk International Airport.

Christmas Turkey and Turkish Delight: departure transfer on the final day of your tour at any time of day to Ataturk or Sabiha Gokcen Airports. Flying Carpet Crystal Coast: departure transfer on the final day of your tour at any time of day to Izmir Airport.

Should you require a departure transfer at any other time, this can be booked in advance or locally.

Visas

Australian, British, Canadian, Irish and USA passport holders can obtain a 3-month tourist visa upon arrival at Istanbul Ataturk International Airport. Cost is currently USD\$20/EURO 15 for USA, Irish and Australian passports, and USD\$60/EURO 45 for Canadian passports, GBP10/EURO 15 for British passports. South African passport holders can obtain a 30 day tourist visa upon arrival for USD\$20. South African citizens may be asked to show proof of funds upon arrival (50USD/day). New Zealand passport holders currently do not require a visa for a stay not exceeding 3 months.

Ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months from your date of arrival to Turkey. Please re-confirm all visa requirements with the Turkish embassy at least one month before travel. Visa procurement is subject to change and remains the responsibility of the traveller and not that of on the go.

Site Opening Times

Popular sightseeing spot in Istanbul are closed on specific days. Please plan your visit accordingly.
Hagia Sofia - Closed Mondays
Topkapi Palace - Closed Tuesdays
Grand Bazaar & Egyptian Spice Bazaar - Closed Sundays
Blue Mosque - Closed during all prayer times
During Ramadan (known as Ramazan in Turkey), some restaurants and shops (excluding those catering mainly for tourists) and attractions may close earlier, so scheduling may be slightly altered to ensure featured attractions are visited.

Shopping

Turkey is a virtual Aladdin's Cave. The Grand Bazaar in Istanbul is cavernous and full of unusual and everyday objects. Known locally as Kapali Carsi – the Grand Bazaar in Istanbul's Old City is a massive conglomeration of shops (some 4000) divided into areas specialising in gold, carpets, leather, souvenirs and clothing. Turkish handicrafts include a rich variety of textiles and embroideries, articles of copper, onyx and tile, mother-of-pearl, inlaid articles, leather and suede

products. Jewellery, carpets and kilims represent top buys at the bazaar.

Opening hours: Mon - Saturday 0900 – 1300hrs and 1400 – 1900hrs (closed Sunday).

The Egyptian Spice Bazaar at Eminonu near Istanbul is an easy continuance from the Grand Bazaar or good start point before heading onto the cavernous Grand Bazaar. Here, you can buy a dizzying array of spices at a fraction of the cost you'd expect to pay back home. Pine Kernels, peppercorns, real Iranian saffron and other precious commodities are hawked here at knockdown prices! Real Turkish delight is available by the tonne as well. Why not the milk-based Turkish delight studded with pistachios!

Opening hours: 0900 – 1900hrs Monday – Saturday (closed Sunday)

Markets and bazaars abound in other towns, too. During your stay in Turkey, you may visit a leather manufacturer and emporium. Although the quality of some of the jackets and clothing outstanding, the initially quoted prices can also be rather outstanding. If you do fancy a particular item, haggle, even if you are in the confines of what looks to be a smart showroom.

Carpet Buying

Turkey is justly famous for its carpets and kilims (a napless woven rug) and you'll be spoilt for choice. To ensure you get a good buy, spend time visiting several shops to compare price, pattern-type and quality. A good quality, long-lasting carpet should be 100% wool. Check the quality of the weave for possible holes. A wool carpet will have fine, frizzy fibres if you turn the carpet on its back. Cheaper carpets are made of cotton and most often the fringe will be, too. If you want a wool carpet and the fringe is of cotton, it's likely the carpet won't be a woollen one! The lies can be bigger than the fall of Ottoman Empire. Don't make the mistake of buying a cotton carpet at the price of a wool one! Many carpets are made to look like antiques at prices to match. Set your budget, don't be swayed (however good the complimentary mint tea or cool drink might taste), and bargain. And remember the caveat – 'Let the buyer beware'.

IMPORTANT: Any purchases made whilst travelling are at your own discretion. Make sure you are completely happy at the product you are purchasing. on the go will not become involved at any time, at a later date or once you return home should your purchase not live up to your expectations. Proceed with caution.