Visit Istanbul - the only city that spans two continents. See the beautiful Blue Mosque and ancient Hagia Sofia, explore opulent Topkapi Palace and test your bartering skills in the Grand Bazaar. 4 days of pure Turkish delight!

**HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS**

**Trip Highlights**
- Istanbul - Sultanahmet (Old Istanbul) The Hippodrome, Blue Mosque, Hagia Sofia and Topkapi Palace
- Egyptian Spice Market and the Grand Bazaar
- Cruise along the Bosphorus Strait
- Beylerbeyi Palace and Buyuk Camilica - the city’s highest vantage point

**What’s Included**
- 3 breakfasts and 2 lunches
- 3 nights 3 star hotel (Upgrade to a 4 or 5 star available upon request)
- Airport arrival transfer on day 1 from Istanbul’s Ataturk International Airport
- Guided sightseeing of Istanbul sights* - day 2 and 3, plus a cruise along the Bosphorus.

*Please note: Your guided sightseeing may be conducted with other passengers (private touring available upon request at an additional cost).
- English speaking, degree qualified Turkish tour guide on day 2 and 3
- Relevant transfers and transportation
- Transportation in a modern air-conditioned vehicle
- Entrance fees to all included sites

**What’s Not Included**
- Tipping - an entirely personal gesture
- International flights and visa

**DETAILED ITINERARY**

**Day 1 : Istanbul**

Welcome to Turkey! Arrival at Istanbul airport where after you have attended to customs and immigration formalities, you’ll be met by one an On The Go representative, who will be easily recognised by the company sign he/she is carrying. From here, you’ll be transferred into Istanbul.

Day One is designed to be an arrival day, so there are no formal arrangements on this day. If arriving early enough into Istanbul, you’ll have time to get acquainted with this remarkable city. Istanbul is easy to get around on foot and there are plenty of restaurants and cafes dotted about the city. If arriving before the above you will need to make your own way into Istanbul and to our hotel at your own expense. 

**Overnight - Istanbul**

**Day 2 : Old City sights**

This morning embark upon a fully guided tour of the only city that spans two continents, Europe and Asia. Officially founded by Emperor Constantine in AD326, it remained capital of the Byzantine and Ottoman empires up until 1923. Its illustrious past leaves a rich legacy of churches, mosques, palaces and museums, complemented by the behemoth Grand Bazaar and colourful street life. Sultanahmet, the compact old city of Istanbul is full of parks, gardens and stunning sights. Before lunch, visit the Hippodrome area - famed
City of Sultans

as the centre of Byzantine life for 1000 years and of Ottoman life for another 400! Continuing, explore the stunning Blue Mosque. Famed for its prized blue Iznik tiles and unique six minarets, it faces the Hagia Sofia.

The Hagia Sofia, constructed as a grand basilica in the 6th century by Emperor Justinian reigned as the grandest and biggest church in Christendom until the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, when it became a mosque. It is now a national museum, rather than a place of worship. After lunch, enjoy explore Topkapi Palace. Residence of the sultans for almost four centuries, it overlooks the Sea of Marmara. There’s also time to wander around the Grand Bazaar (if open) before returning to your hotel. The Grand Bazaar has over 4000 stalls selling a wide range of goods including gold, carpets, leather, clothing and Turkish handicrafts.

**Day 3 : Bazaars & the Bosphorus**

Today, visit the Egyptian Spice market (stock up on bargain saffron, spices and Turkish Delight here!) before enjoying a cruise on the Bosphorus here! Before enjoying a cruise on the Bosphorus before enjoying a cruise on the Bosphorus before enjoying a cruise on the Bosphorus before enjoying a cruise on the Bosphorus. Return to your hotel and spend the remaining days at leisure. If you weren’t able to visit the Grand Bazaar on day 2, consider a spot of retail therapy there this afternoon and test your bartering skills!

**Overnight - Istanbul**

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**Day 4 : Istanbul**

Arrangements end after breakfast.

**Please Note The Following:**

Upgrade your stay! - Our City Of Sultans mini-break includes 3 star accommodation. Consider treating yourself and upgrading to a 4 star or 5 star hotel in Istanbul. Contact our reservations team for more information, cost and availability.

Planning when to travel - Topkapi Palace is closed on Tuesdays, Hagia Sofia is closed on Mondays and the Grand Bazaar is closed on Sundays. Please consider this when booking.

Guided touring - Your sightseeing on days 2 and 3 may be conducted with other passengers. Private touring is available upon request for a supplement.

Airport transfers - An airport arrival transfer is included for all flights arriving into Atatürk International Airport in Istanbul and also for Easyjet and Turkish Airways flights from London Luton Airport, that arrive in Sabiha Gökçen Airport.

**Entrance fees**

On group tours entrance fees to tourist sites are not included, (except on our City of Sultans tour) in our tour price. All entry fees must be budgeted by you. Entrance fee amounts do change, therefore upon arrival in Turkey your tour leader will outline the exact total of your entrance fees and collect this amount in Turkish Lira on day 2 of your tour.

**Tipping Kitty**

It is customary to tip in Turkey. At the start of your tour we collect a small tipping kitty from all tour participants to cover tips en route (to be paid in Turkish Lira) This saves you the hassle of when and how much to tip bellhops, luggage handlers, waiters, drivers, your airport representative and other support staff throughout your tour.

This tipping kitty does not include a tip for your tour guide where we recommend an amount approx USD5-5 per day. Naturally though the amount is up to you - tipping is an entirely personal gesture.

**Visas**

Please be advised that visa requirements are subject to change and that visa procurement is the responsibility of the traveller and not On The Go Tours. Please also ensure that your passport is valid for at least 6 months from your planned date of departure from Turkey.

After booking your holiday, please provide us with your passport details as soon as possible.

Australian, British, Canadian, Irish and USA passport holders can obtain a 3 month tourist e-visa online prior to departure. Costs are currently USD$60 for Australian and Canadian passport holders, USD$20 for British, USA and Irish passport holders. South African passport holders currently need an e-visa but there is no charge for this. New Zealand passport holders currently do not require a visa for a stay not exceeding 3 months.

To arrange a Turkey e-visa online go to: https://www.evisa.gov.tr

**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**

You should seek medical advice before travelling to Turkey from your local health practitioner and ensure that you receive all of the appropriate vaccinations. As a guide...
City of Sultans

Diphtheria, Hepatitis A and Tetanus is strongly recommended. The tap water in Turkey is generally considered safe to drink, but as a precaution against stomach upsets you may want to drink bottled mineral water, which is readily available from shops, hotels and restaurants.

Currency
The official currency in Turkey is the Turkish Lira. Euro, British Pounds, US Dollars and other major currencies can be exchanged locally or in advance of departure. Istanbul Ataturk Airport offers speedy currency exchange facilities adjacent to the baggage hall. Additionally, exchange facilities are available at various bureaux de changes and banks in major towns have ATMs. It’s advisable to request bank notes in smaller denominations, as it can sometimes be hard to get change from large notes and smaller notes are handy for smaller purchases and gratuities. Traveller’s Cheques are not recommended as they’re often difficult to exchange and incur high fees.

Time & Voltage
Turkey is 2 hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). From the last Sunday in March to the last Sunday in October, Turkey observes Daylight Saving and is 3 hours ahead of GMT. Standard voltage is 230 - 240 volts. Primary sockets are not identical to European sockets. Greek sockets are of the 2 round-pin variety. You should pack a Universal Adaptor and check that it is suitable for Turkey.

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 tipple, take advantage of Duty Free.
- Take out some TRY from the ATM facilities at the airport upon arrival.
- Buy a phrasebook and practice your holiday Turkish.
- Keep a supply of small notes for local transactions.

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 these trip notes) 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.

SABİHA GOKÇEN 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.

Site Opening Times 2015
Popular sightseeing spot in Istanbul are closed on specific days. Please plan your visit accordingly.

Topkapi Palace - Closed Tuesdays
Grand Bazaar - Closed Sundays
Blue Mosque - Closed during all prayer times
Spice Bazaar and Grand Bazaar closed 30 August, 24 - 27 September, 29 October 2015.

All museums, palaces and touristic sites closed till 1pm on 17 July and 24 September 2015.

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.

Ramazan Dates:
06 June - 05 July 2016
27 May - 25 June 2017.

Shopping
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27 May - 25 June 2017.

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City of Sultans

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 – 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 – 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.

**IMPORTANT FOR ALL SHOPPING**

Set your budget and don’t be swayed, remember the caveat – ‘Let the buyer beware’. Any purchases made whilst on holiday with us, irrespective of whether the store is recommended by us or other, are at your own discretion. Please make sure that you are completely happy with the product you are purchasing and the delivery arrangements (we would recommend you take away with you any purchases rather than rely on shipping services). On The Go cannot be held responsible or accountable for items bought in country or shipping arrangements. We will not become involved later in your holiday or once you return home should your purchase not live up to your expectations. Proceed with caution.