Anzac Express 2020
4 days | Starts/Ends: Istanbul

ANZAC Day Tours, Gallipoli.

Starts: 23rd April. Straight to the point our 4 day tour offers 4 star accommodation and is ideal for those who are short on time and just want to get down to ANZAC Cove for a slice of the action.

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights
- Istanbul - time to independently explore
- Cruise along the Bosphorus Strait with views of the city skyline, Ottoman architecture and waterside palaces
- Gallipoli Peninsula - ANZAC Cove, memorials, trenches and battlefields
- ANZAC Dawn Service and option to attend Australian or New Zealand Memorial Services

What's Included
- 2 nights Special Class (4 star) hotels - No hostels or tents!
- 1 night at the Dawn Service site
- 2 breakfasts
- Airport arrival transfer on day 1 from Istanbul International Airport at any time of day or from Sabiha Gokcen Airport at 11am and 3pm
- Morning boat cruise along the Bosphorus straight – Istanbul
- Modern air-conditioned touring coach
- English speaking tour organiser

What's Not Included
- Tipping Kitty: USD$15-25pp, paid in local currency
- Guided commentary is not given on this tour
- International flights and visa
- Tip for your tour guide and driver: as a guideline we recommend you budget USD $3-5 per day, per traveller for your guide and USD $1-2 per day, per traveller for your driver. Tipping your tour guide and driver is an entirely personal gesture
- Attendance Pass for ANZAC. Please see the Trip Notes for information on how to obtain your attendance pass - these are free of charge but need to be registered for in advance.

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: 23 April - Istanbul
Monday 23 April 2020. Welcome to Turkey and your ANZAC experience! Airport to hotel arrival transfer. The earlier you arrive the more time you’ll have to independently explore the city its fantastic sights.

Istanbul is easy to get around on foot and there are plenty of attractions dotted about the old city known as Sultanahmet. Maybe head to the Grand Bazaar or Egyptian Spice Market, both open today!

This evening after our welcome meeting opt for a drink in the bar, a great way to break the ice and meet fellow travellers. Overnight - Istanbul

Day 2: ANZAC Eve - Gallipoli
Istanbul - Gallipoli. This morning we drive to Gallipoli. Wake up call, which your guide will arrange (please set your personal alarm as well to avoid missing the bus). Please bring your bags with you and place them on the bus. Pay all room bills and hand your key into reception before going to breakfast.

Be sure to have separated your luggage into a smaller day pack that you want to keep with you at Anzac Cove, ie warm clothes, blankets, snacks, toiletries etc and place them on the bus with you. Large bags will go underneath the coach and will not be accessible until the following morning. At this point it is a good time to fix in your mind the letter of your coach.
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All On The Go coaches are clearly identifiable by an On The Go Tours sign on the right side of the windscreen front and more importantly remember your coach letter – ie – coach A, B C etc. 07.00hrs: Departure to the WW1 battlefields on Gallipoli Peninsula. En route to Gallipoli a stop will be made at a supermarket with adjoining fast food restaurant or similar facility for you to stock up on food and snacks for the evening and the following day at lower prices than on the peninsula.

You will be travelling from Istanbul today with fellow passengers on our Digger tour. They all have the ANZAC Eve BBQ included on their tour - you will also be at that BBQ and you will have the opportunity to purchase from the BBQ on the day if you like.

Whilst some hot food can be purchased at Gallipoli from Turkish vendors, some people consider the range limited and expensive. It may be a good idea to have some extra snacks packed for sustenance as we won’t have a chance to buy snacks/food again until after our departure from Gallipoli. Arrival at Gallipoli dependent on site opening hours, you will be given instructions about where to meet with your coach on 25 April. It is very important you follow meeting instructions in order that you rendezvous with your correct coach. Whilst drop-offs usually run smoothly, be prepared for a long walk from where your coach is ordered to stop, to get to ANZAC Cove proper on ANZAC Eve. Overnight - Dawn Service site (ANZAC Cove) (B)

Day 3 : ANZAC Day - Gallipoli

Gallipoli. Today, the 25th April is the reason we came to Turkey and Gallipoli. Dawn and first light signals the commencement of the annual Dawn Service, attended by Australian, New Zealand and other foreign dignitaries, military personnel and a strong following of regular Australian and New Zealand folk. The poignant and emotive service commemorating this important and historical date allows us time to reflect. Lest we forget.

The service lasts for an hour and public wreath laying at the ANZAC Memorial site is possible afterwards. Later this morning Australian’s have the opportunity to visit the Lone Pine Memorial Service at the cemetery that begins at 09:30. Our New Zealanders are invited to attend the New Zealand service at Chunuk Bair at 11:30. Everyone will be picked up after the service at Chunuk Bair (exact time and location to be confirmed with your guide). We anticipate and early afternoon departure time from Gallipoli for onward travel to Istanbul.

With On The Go’s precision organisational skills and plans honed through many years, we take the sweat and frustration out of visiting during the region’s busiest time. Still, it’s important that you take any little hiccups during the hosting of such a large event, in your stride. Remember our Diggers had it a lot harder. Evening arrival back to Istanbul. (Timings on 25 April subject to coach traffic).

Overnight - Istanbul

Day 4 : 26 April - Istanbul

Tuesday 26 April 2020. Istanbul. After breakfast (approximately 09:00am), you’re welcome to join us for a 2 hour cruise along the Bosphorus. The Bosphorus stretches out in front of the old city and is the strait of water that divides the continents of Europe and Asia. The city of Istanbul straddles both Europe and Asia. Returning to the hotel before 12 noon, hotel check out marks the end of a memorable 4 day ANZAC experience. (B)

HOTELS

The hotels listed below are ones which we frequently use on this tour. We reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard when necessary.

Ramada Old City

A member of the reputable Ramada chain, the Istanbul Old Town property is modern and comfortable with excellent amenities. Guestrooms are bright and spacious with contemporary amenities. Two restaurants are on offer and our personal favourite is the wonderful rooftop restaurant, serving delicious local cuisine coupled with a magnificent view of the City and Sea. The perfect way to end the day. Located very close to the Historical part of the city with major Monuments are all walking distance.

Entrance Fees & Tipping

Entrance fees are not included in the cost of our tours. Funds will be collected in Turkey (and Egypt if travelling on one of our combo tours) for entrance fees are payable in local currency - Turkish Lira and Egyptian Pounds and will be collected by your tour guide.

Your tip kitty as noted in the ‘Not Included’ section of our trip notes is collected in local currency - we don’t have one for Turkey but we do in Egypt for those travelling onward to Egypt the kitty relevant to the Egypt section of your holiday is payable in Egyptian Pounds (EGP).

The kitty will be collected from all tour participants to cover tips throughout your holiday. This saves you the hassle of knowing when and how much to tip bellhops, luggage luggers, antiquity guards, housekeeping, waiters and other support staff throughout the tour.

This tip kitty amount does not include a tip for your tour guide OR driver. For a job well done, we would suggest USD$3 - 5 per day for your tour guide and USD$1 - 2 for your driver. Tipping your guide and driver is an entirely personal gesture and ultimately the amount is up to you.
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Registration For ANZAC
For those attending the ANZAC commemorations at Gallipoli it is necessary for everyone to register for an attendance pass with the Australian Government in advance. The passes are offered free of charge by the Australian Government using a first-in approach. You will need to register for your pass yourself and they will be instantly confirmed via email. Physical passes will be sent out approximately 1 month before the commemoration. Each individual can register up to 10 individuals under their account login. The registration form will pre-populate most fields to help families putting in multiple registrations.

The registration process will open in November 2019, at which point we will provide more information, so please check back with us then.

Arrival Instructions
AIRPORT TRANSFERS
An arrival transfer/shuttle bus from Istanbul International Airport is provided on day 1 of your tour from 00:01 through to 06:00 on day 2 (or relevant day if travelling on a tour that commences in Egypt and travels to Turkey at a later stage). If arriving to via Sabiha Gökçen Airport an arrival transfer is available on day 1 at 11am & 3pm. If you are making your own way to the start hotel on day 1, please do so after 14:00 (standard hotel check in time).

ARRIVAL INSTRUCTIONS
Upon arrival to Istanbul International Airport or Sabiha Gökçen Airport please proceed to the Arrival Hall. Upon entering the Arrival Hall turn LEFT. Here, you will be met by an On The Go Tours representative, carrying an On The Go Tours sign. Please present your tour voucher to our representative as you meet. Later you will need to hand it to your tour guide at your welcome meeting on the evening of day 1 (or relevant day). If, for any reason you are unable to commence your tour as scheduled, or on arrival are unable to make contact with our rep after 30 mins of waiting in the Arrival Hall (at the Information Desk located to the left of the Arrivals Area, please do not exit the airport or make your own way to the start hotel, please call one of our 24 hour contact persons, of which the telephone numbers can be found on your voucher.

Day 1 - Hotel Check-in & Welcome Meeting
Upon arrival, please check in with the hotel reception, you will need to complete a hotel registration card and hand over your passport to which you can collect from reception later in the day. Please look for the welcome sign located in the hotel foyer which will outline our arrangements for the coming days (including the exact time of your welcome meeting this evening, usually at 8pm) and the name of your tour guide. You’ll then receive a room key and you can head up to your room.

Please note that most accommodation is based upon twin share, i.e. rooms are made up as twin rooms with two single beds. At time of booking we do take requests for those who wish to share a double bed though with the constraints of each hotels inventory this cannot be guaranteed.

Guides & Groups
Some of our group tours are sectors of a larger tour. Some travellers on your trip may only travel with you for part of your tour. It also might be that you end your holiday part way through a longer tour and others in the group continue on.

Time Keeping
In order that we show the best of Turkey in a non-hurried fashion to you, it is imperative you are ready for departure each day. Please do not delay and inconvenience fellow travellers. It is your responsibility to be at the proposed meeting point for the group in time. We will depart at our specified times.

Climate In April
Temperatures in April can spring up surprising results. Days can be amazingly warm, though temperatures do drop at night so it’s important to pack some warmer clothes.

The weather on the Gallipoli Peninsula in April can be very hot during the day and bitterly cold overnight (with temperatures below freezing). Rain and very cold winds are possible and you can also get burnt from the sun and wind. It is important to ensure you have sufficient warm and protective clothing for all weather conditions.

Essential Packing For ANZAC
- If spending the night at the Dawn Service site you will need snickers and water, warm clothes, hat/beanie, scarf, gloves, WC paper, wet wipes, camera and cushion. A torch is also handy. Blankets & compact sleeping bags are permitted. Temperatures can be sub - zero and there is always the threat of prevailing threat of rain
- Your ANZAC Commemoration Attendance Pass from the Australian Government which you should have registered for in advance.
- For those not staying out all night you will still need to bring along warm clothes and possibly a cushion to sit on
- Voltage in Turkey is 220V and outlets fit a two-pin European plug. Pack a Universal Adapter suitable for Turkey. It may also be advisable to take a portable charger for your phone or camera so you can charge on the go as well as when at the hotels
- Spare camera batteries and memory cards
- A small day pack for day to day use and while at ANZAC Cove - large bags or back packs are not permitted in ANZAC Cove

The Gallipoli Environment
The Anzac Day Dawn Service is held at the Anzac Commemorative Site in the Gallipoli Campaign Historical Site, which is in an isolated area within a national park and has no permanent infrastructure or shelter. You will be exposed to the elements for the entire period you are onsite – which can be up to 24 hours.

Very basic and limited facilities including temporary seating, lighting and portable toilets are available onsite for the period of the commemorations. Limited rubbish disposal facilities are available, and where possible, visitors are asked to take rubbish with them.
There is no running water or power onsite, except for those in use for the services. You will need to bring adequate supplies of non-perishable food and unopened bottled drinking water with you – there are no cooking facilities onsite. Bottled water and limited...
Anzac Express 2020 supplies of Turkish food can be purchased from vendors onsite.

Mobile phone coverage is available at the commemorative sites.

Arriving At Gallipoli
Several kilometres from the Anzac Commemorative Site, coaches and their passengers will be welcomed by a member of the visitor services team. Each coach will be registered and given a coach identification number. Each passenger on the coach will be provided with a tag with the coach identification number, helping passengers to identify their coach number when departing Gallipoli on 25 April. Important information will also be provided during the coach registration process.

Visitors who arrive before the Anzac Commemorative Site is opened will have their coach registered then disembark their coach at the Mimoza Park Otopark and wait in Mimoza Park (across the road from the Otopark) until the site opens. If you have waited in Mimoza Park, when the Anzac Commemorative Site is opened you can walk or catch a shuttle bus to the site.

Visitors who arrive after the site has opened will have their coach registered then disembark their coach at the Mimoza Park Otopark, before driving on to set down passengers at Beach Cemetery, which is about 1km from the Anzac Commemorative Site.

When you disembark your coach, you should take everything you need for your entire stay as coaches depart the area and you will not be able to access your coach again until you depart on 25 April. Please ensure you have everything you need for the overnight stay ready before you disembark your coach.

Timing of the Commemorative Services
The Anzac Commemorative Site, where the Dawn Service is held, closes to the public on the morning of 24 April. Following a full security sweep, the Anzac Commemorative Site opens for visitor entries at approximately 6pm.

Coach registration at Mimoza Park Otopark commences from around 09:30pm on 24 April. The road into Anzac Commemorative Site is closed to further arrivals at 3am on 25 April. The overnight reflective program commences at 11pm on 24 April and runs until the early hours of 25 April. The reflective program includes documentaries and interviews about the Gallipoli campaign, as well as musical performances by the Defence Force band. The Dawn Services commences at 5.30am and concludes at 6.30am.

After the Dawn Service Australian’s have the opportunity to visit the Lone Pine Memorial Service at the cemetery that begins at 09:30. Our New Zealanders are invited to attend the New Zealand service at Chunuk Bair at 11:30. Everyone will be picked up after the service at Chunuk Bair (exact time and location to be confirmed with your guide). We anticipate and early afternoon departure time from Gallipoli for onward travel to Istanbul or Ayvalik.

Please note that the arrangements of the afternoon are subject to change as traffic flow and road closures are determined by the local authorities at the time.

ANZAC: The Weather
Anzac Day commemorations are held in the Gallipoli Historical National Park, which has no permanent infrastructure or shelter. You will be exposed to the elements for up to 24 hours (including overnight) and can experience all extremes of weather. Typically, it can drop to below 0 degrees Celsius in the early hours before the Dawn Service, but warm up considerably in the afternoon. Rain and very cold wind are also possible in April, as is unseasonal heat.

A moderate level of fitness is required as you will walk around 10km during the commemorative period. The terrain includes reasonably flat sealed roads, sloped and uneven gravel tracks and grassed areas (which can become slippery or muddy when wet), as well as walking uphill on a very steep graded dirt road. You will also need to stand for long periods at times, including in queues for security screening to enter each commemorative site. Some assistance is available, by advance application, for visitors with mobility issues.

All of the basic facilities like portable toilets, lighting and non-drinking water are brought in for the commemorations. Seating is not allocated and is extremely limited at all services.

ANZAC: Health, Fitness And First Aid
A moderate level of fitness is required as visitors can expect to walk several kilometres over 24-25 April. The terrain includes reasonable flat sealed roads, cobblestone paths, sloped and uneven gravel tracks and grassed areas (which can become slippery or muddy when wet) as well as very steep ungraded paths. Access to seating in the stands requires climbing stairs.

Visitors will often need to stand and queue for long periods at times, for security screening to enter the commemorative site, as well as for the limited public amenities. If the site is nearing the safe capacity, visitors on the grassed areas will be asked to stand.

Limited medical support is provided by local Turkish health authorities from the evening of 24 April to the morning of 25 April. If you require any medical aides or equipment, including medications, wheelchairs or mobility aids, you will need to bring these with you.

You should bring your own prescription medication (if required) and basic first aid supplies, including non-prescription pain relief medication and band-aids. The medical support provided is equipped for medical emergencies and is not designed to treat minor ailments.

ANZAC: Safety & Security
You are responsible for your own safety, welfare and security of belongings at all times. Security and crowd management are the responsibility of Turkish security personnel with airport-style screening of visitors at the entry point to the commemorative site, including bag searches.
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Due to cultural sensitivities, visitors are likely to be separated into male and female lines to go through security checkpoints.

You should follow the instructions of Turkish security personnel at all times

Children and Infants
Please seriously consider how well your child or infant would cope with the travel and environmental conditions at Gallipoli, including overnight in the open in cold temperatures, with no shelter. It is important to remember that there are only limited toilet facilities, with no infant changing or parenting facilities at the commemorative site.

ANZAC: Seating at the Commemorations
Seating at the commemorations is not allocated or reserved (other than for registered Assisted Mobility visitors) and is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Seating is available in temporarily erected metal grandstands with plastic bucket-style seats or on grassed areas (with no seats). Some seating may have restricted views, however large screens are available to view the service.

You should be aware that large groups may not be able to sit together and you may be separated from your group and/or tour guide. You should make sure you have your tour guide’s contact details in case you are separated.

On The Go requests that you try to obtain seating (when facing the stage) in the grandstand on the far right. We will try to gather as many On The Go groups here as possible to maintain commraderie for the evening.

ANZAC: Assisted Mobility Visitors
Attending Anzac Day is physically challenging and given the conditions, can be potentially hazardous to the very young, very old or those with medical conditions. You should advise your doctor of the conditions you are likely to experience overnight and seek their advice about your suitability to safely travel to Gallipoli and attend the Anzac Day commemorations.

Extremely limited onsite assistance is available to visitors who have a health or mobility issue. Visitors will need to request this assistance at the information tent when they arrive at Gallipoli. The number of places available for Assisted Mobility visitors is very limited and will be allocated on a most-need basis. Access to this assistance cannot be guaranteed.

Eligible Assisted Mobility visitors will be provided with an access pass and are able to have one carer with them to provide personal assistance. Onsite assistance comprises of reserved seating, access to several dedicated toilets and transport from the coach set down point to the Anzac Commemorative Site.

There is a distance of approximately 400 meters from the entry point to the Assisted Mobility seating area over uneven ground and assisted mobility visitors will need to traverse this distance unaided. The assisted mobility seating area is accessed via steps.

While staff are allocated to monitor the assisted mobility seating area they are unable to provide one-on-one or personal carers or provide medical aids and wheelchairs on request. If mobility aids are required visitors should ensure they bring them when they depart their coach.

ANZAC: What To Take And What Not To Take

What to Take
• When you disembark your coach on arrival, you will need to ensure you are carrying everything you need for that night and the next day, including a sleeping bag, food, water, prescription medications, protective clothing, torch, sunscreen, camera, etc.
• As you will be seated for a long period of time, for extra comfort we recommend bringing a foam cushion to pad your seat.
• En route to the Gallipoli Peninsula from Istanbul we stop at a supermarket giving you the chance to pick up reasonably priced snacks and drinks.
• Your main luggage will be stored securely in the coach.

• You will not be able to return to your coach if you have forgotten something or wish to return prohibited items.
• You will not return to your coach until the end of the commemorations period on the afternoon of 25 April.

What is prohibited?
• You can not take large backpacks or luggage, camping or cooking equipment, opened bottles of liquid, flammable liquids, weapons or sharp objects, other large objects or alcohol to the commemorative sites.
• Drones, remote control devices and selfie sticks.
• Intoxicated persons will be denied entry to the commemorations.
• Alcohol is prohibited at the site.
• Smoking is not permitted in the stands and enclosed areas.
• Professional photographic equipment (including zoom lenses, audio visual or cinematographic equipment).
• You should be aware that Turkey has very strict penalties for the possession of drugs.
• Swimming in the waters off the Anzac area is prohibited.
• As the area is a national park, the lighting of fires on the Gallipoli Peninsula is prohibited.

ANZAC: Laying Wreaths Or Floral Tributes

Wreathlaying by invited official representatives will occur during the Dawn Service at the Anzac Commemorative Site. Members of the public who wish to lay a wreath or floral tribute will have the opportunity to do so at the conclusion of the service.

If you wish to lay a wreath or floral tribute, you will need to bring this with you and register your details at the information tent when you arrive at the Anzac Commemorative Site. The proceedings will be announced by the Master of Ceremonies who will call individuals in order to lay their wreath or tribute.

Please note that you will need to organise your own wreath or floral tribute. It is your responsibility to carry it with you, care for it and transport it to the Anzac Commemorative Site. There are no facilities or arrangements to store your wreath or floral tribute.

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This information has been compiled with care and good faith. They give an accurate illustration of the proposed arrangements for this holiday. Circumstances beyond our control such as changes in local conditions, inclement weather or other reasons could force us to make changes to this itinerary. Any costs shown are subject to change, though are an accurate reflection of costs at time of writing. Please also note that visa requirements are subject to change and are the responsibility of the traveller and not that of On The Go Tours.
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for storage or transport of personal wreaths at the commemorations.

ANZAC: Departing The Gallipoli Peninsula
Following the conclusion of the Dawn Service, coaches will commence loading from the Anzac Commemorative Site. Please wait inside the commemorative site with your coach group until your coach number is called.

There may be hundreds of coaches at the commemorations, so long waits and delays can be expected. You should not make any onward travel arrangements or connections for the afternoon or evening of 25 April. Please be patient while the process occurs.

There are several coach loading zones for visitors. Coaches will not arrive in numerical order, so it is impossible to predict in advance which loading zone would be utilised by which coach. Arriving coach numbers will be called by an announcer and displayed on screens.

Once your coach number has been called, visitors should move to the coach loading zone and board the coach after it has come to a complete stop. Please follow the instructions of service officials and be mindful of your safety.

Visitors who arrive at the commemorations in private vehicles are responsible for returning to their vehicle to depart Gallipoli. Visitors who arrive at the services by taxi are responsible for their own departure from the peninsula.

Visitors who choose to depart Anzac Commemorative Site on foot after the Dawn Service must ensure that they have arranged with their tour provider where they will be picked up from.

ANZAC: Assistance To The Commemorations
The Department of Veterans’ Affairs receives a great many requests from groups and individuals wishing to contribute to the Anzac Day commemorations at Gallipoli.

The Dawn Service at Gallipoli follows a traditional format and structure agreed by the governments of Australia, New Zealand and Turkey. Many hundreds of thousands of Australians are descendants of a veteran of the Gallipoli campaign and feel an emotional connection to the commemorations. Given the above, unsolicited offers or requests to provide content or performing a role within the ceremony will not be accepted. This includes offers of artefacts or relics, bugles or other musical instruments, songs, poems, speeches or readings.

Conservation Volunteers, provides volunteers to assist with the annual commemorations at Gallipoli. Conservation Volunteers advertise for applications each year. More information is available at the Conservation Volunteers website.

The choir that supports the services at Gallipoli is the combined choir of students from St Joseph’s College and All Hallows’ College.

Conservation Volunteers and the choir were both engaged through a tender process. Medical support is provided by Turkish health authorities. Interpreters are provided by the 18 March University in Canakkale.

ANZAC: The ANZAC Campaign
The Gallipoli and ANZAC Campaign - With the intention of capturing and securing the Ottoman capital of Istanbul, thus opening the road to Eastern Europe during World War One, Winston Churchill, British First Lord of the Admiralty, organised a naval assault on the strait. A strong Anglo - French fleet tried first in March 1915 but failed to secure the region.

Then, on a date now etched in history – 25 April, 1915 - British, Australian, New Zealand and Indian troops landed on Gallipoli at what is now known as ANZAC Cove. It is thought that the small harbour of Kabatepe Village may have been the object of the Allied landings on this fateful date but in the darkness of the early morning the landing crafts were swept northwards by uncharted currents to the very steep cliffs of Ariburnu. Unfortunately whilst the Allies were forced to advance inland up and over the steep cliffs, Mustafa Kemal (Atatürk) had foreseen the landing here and sent his Turkish troops here to do ferocious battle with the partly unsuspecting Allies. Both Allied and Turkish troops fought desperately and gallantly, slaughtering one another in vast numbers.

After nine months of ferocious and often futile battle whilst trying to push forth, the Allied forces were withdrawn in January 1916. The 13,000 souls who rest in unidentified graves in the cemeteries, together with more than 14,000 whose remains were never found, are individually commemorated by name on the Lone Pine Memorial (Australian and New Zealand servicemen), the Twelve Tree Copse, Hill 60 and Chunuk Bair Memorials (New Zealand servicemen) and also Helles Memorial (British, Australian and Indian servicemen).

Turkey Country Guide
Blue Mosque Renovations
The Blue Mosque (also known as Sultanahmet Camii in Turkish) is currently undergoing renovations and for the foreseeable future there will be scaffolding erected inside and other construction works will be taking place. Whilst we will visit the inside of the Blue Mosque when included on a tour, please be aware that some parts of the Mosque may be off limits to tourists.

Turkey: 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 and Irish 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...
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require a visa for a stay not exceeding 3 months.

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

After suspending all visa services for U.S citizens in October 2018, the Turkish Government have now announced the resumption of limited visa services for U.S. citizens. U.S citizens are not eligible for E Visas and must apply for a visa via their nearest consulate or embassy. Please note that the Turkish Government may change the visa requirements/restrictions at any time. If you are a U.S Citizen who plans to visit Turkey, it is essential that you contact your local Turkish embassy/consulate for the latest advice.

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

Turkey: Fact File
Official Name: Republic of Turkey
Capital: Ankara
Population: 70 million
Total Area: 780,580 square kilometres
Official Language: Turkish, Kurdish, English and French also spoken
Religions: Islam 99.8%, Christian and Jewish 0.2%
Voltage: 230 volts
Dialling Code: +90
Time Difference: GMT/UTC +2. For other time differences please visit www.timeanddate.com

Turkey: Brief history
Present-day Turkey was created in 1923 from the Turkish remnants of the Ottoman Empire. In 1945 Turkey joined the UN, and in 1952 it became a member of NATO. Turkey intervened militarily on Cyprus in 1974 to protect Turkish Cypriots and prevent a Greek takeover of the island; the northern 37 percent of the island remains under Turkish Cypriot control. Relations between Turkey and Greece have improved greatly over the past few years. Politically, modern Turkey was almost entirely the creation of one man, Mustafa Ataturk.

Turkey: 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 generally require the 3 round-pin variety, similar though not identical to European sockets. Greek sockets are of the 2 round-pin variety. We recommend that you pack a universal travel adaptor. You will need a voltage converter and plug adaptor to use U.S. appliances.

Turkey: 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 Airport offers currency exchange facilities. 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.

Turkey: Geography And Climate
Turkey has borders with Greece, Bulgaria, Armenia, Georgia, Iran, Iraq and Syria with easy land and sea access to the Gulf States, the Levant and North Africa. It is the ninth largest country in the Middle East and the third largest in Europe. Turkey only consists of 23,000 sq. km in Europe: the remainder is in Asia. The Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits separate the European (Thrace) and Asian (Anatolian) parts of Turkey. Anatolia is a high plateau region, rising progressively towards the east and broken by the valleys of some 15 rivers, including the Tigris and the Euphrates. There are numerous lakes including Lake Van, which is really an inland sea. In the north the chain of the Pontine Mountains runs parallel to the Black Sea; in the south, the Taurus Mountains almost touch the narrow, fertile coastal plain. The climate is temperate with hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters (harsher in interior).

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.

Visit www.worldclimate.com to get an idea of what the weather will be like on your tour.

Turkey: Money
ALL prices stated in this dossier are given as a guide only and are subject to change. All prices are quoted in US dollars.

Local currency
The monetary unit in Turkey is the lira, TL. For up to date exchange rates with your own currency visit www.oanda.com or www.xe.com. Changing money, credit cards & ATMs

Rates for foreign currency are always better inside Turkey. Private exchange offices have competitive rates and no commission. Banks are generally open Monday – Friday 8.30am – noon and 1.30pm -5pm. Most charge
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a commission of US$2.50 for travellers checkpoints. ATMs are widely available in cities.

Entrance fees
Generally speaking most entrance fees will be covered by the recommended spending money. There are, however, other sites and museums that are not part of the tour programme which you may wish to visit in your free time. If you have an International Student Card you will often be entitled to reduced entrance fees.

Tipping
Many workers in Turkey are poorly paid and depend on tips for their main income. As tips are a normal part of everyday culture in Turkey we operate a compulsory tipping kitty to save you money and embarrassment. Each member of the group contributes to the kitty (approx US $15 per person per week) and this is then used to pay tips to any people who provide services to the group as a whole e.g. porters, housekeeping staff in hotels etc. Except at the cheapest restaurants, a 10%-15% charge is added to the bill. As the money does not necessarily find its way to the waiter, you may want to leave an additional 10% on the table or hand it to the waiter.

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 Turkish Lira from the ATM facilities at the airport upon arrival
• Buy a phrasebook and practice your Turkish
• Keep a supply of small notes for local transactions

Is This Holiday For You?
Travelling to far-flung corners of the earth often involves encountering lifestyles and conditions that are very different from what you are used to back home. As such it is important to come prepared for unusual situations, local inadequacies and unpredictable events as and when they occur. Foreign travel is definitely not suitable for people who expect everything to go exactly as planned, as things can and do change in foreign countries. The people, customs, creed and languages are different from one region to the next.

Turkey is a country of unparalleled contrasts, a destination where you’ll be afforded plenty of unique encounters, and if you can travel with an open mind you will have a wonderful time here. In return, please remember to demonstrate sensitivity and respect for local customs.

Turkey: Local food And Drink
Evening meals and lunches will generally be eaten in local restaurants. Please see your tour notes for details about any included meals.

Simple snack - $2-$5
Meal - $5-$15
Fancy restaurant - $20-$25

Your tour leader will take you to local restaurants, so you can experience the vast variety of Turkish cuisine.

Food
Lots of tasty treats are available in Turkey. Snacks include boren or poca (small pastries filled with meat, cheese or potato) sold from snack carts in the street, also slimit (sesame-seed bread rings). Other snacks are lahmacun (small pizzas with meat based toppings) and in coastal cities midye tave (deep fried mussels). Main meals include several variations of the kebab, fish and seafood are good, but usually pricey and sold by the weight rather than by the item. Most budget restaurants are alcohol free. A useful exception is a meyhane (tavern) which usually serves mezes, an extensive array of cold appetisers as well as grilled kebabs and fish. Most common mezes are dolma (pepper or vine leaves stuffed with rice) and patlican salata (aubergine in tomato sauce). The best dessert is undoubtedly the honey soaked baklava. Turkish delight - solidified sugar and pectin, flavoured with rose water or pistachios, and sprinkled with powdered sugar - is another popular sweet.

Drink
All drinks such as bottled water or soft drinks are at your own expense at all times and are fairly inexpensive. Water from a tap or well should not be considered safe to drink. Bottled water, carbonated soft drinks and fruit juices are widely available throughout the country. Alcoholic drinks vary in price, with beer generally being the cheapest option.

1l of water - $0.50
30cl bottle of soft drink - $0.50-$1
40cl bottle of beer - $2-$3

Turkish coffee is served in tiny cups and can be very strong. The same can be said for the tea (cha) which is served in delightful tulip-shaped glasses. The local firewater is anis-flavoured raki, stronger than Greek Ouzo. Alcoholic drinks are available in most places,
but in smaller towns it is not as widely
obtainable.

Turkey: 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 – 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 hawked here at knockdown prices! Real

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.

Turkey: National Holidays
1 January - New Year’s Day
23 April - Children’s Day
1 May - Labour Day
19 May - Youth Day
30 August - Victory Day
6 October - Liberation War Day
25 December - Christmas Day

Important: there are several religious public holidays whose dates are determined by the Islamic lunar calendar and differ every year according to the universal Gregorian calendar.

The month of Ramazan (Ramadan), the ninth of the Islamic calendar, is a great time to travel in the region as you get a real insight into the Muslim faith. It is a time for spiritual reflection, prayer, doing good deeds and spending time with family and friends. The fasting is intended to help teach Muslims self-discipline, self-restraint and generosity. It also reminds them of the suffering of the poor, who may rarely get to eat well.

During the day, people must refrain from eating, drinking, smoking and sexual activity, so if you encounter someone who is a bit grumpy please be understanding, flexible and sympathetic. As tourists you will be generally unaffected although some places may close early, but your tour leader will do their best to plan around this. Most hotels bars and tourist restaurants will remain open.

In the evening you will experience a celebratory atmosphere at iftar, when people break their fast. To witness Ramazan is a real highlight making your tour in the region that bit more interesting. Each year it begins roughly ten days earlier than the year before, according to the Gregorian calendar.

Turkey: Site Opening Times

Topkapi Palace - Closed Tuesdays
Grand Bazaar - Closed Sundays
Blue Mosque - Closed during all prayer times and Friday’s until 3pm

The Spice Bazaar and Grand Bazaar are closed as follows for 2019:
01 January
04, 05, 06 June
11, 12, 13, 14 August
29 October

The Spice Bazaar and Grand Bazaar are closed as follows for 2020:
01 January
24, 25, 26 May
31 July
1, 2, 3 August
29 October

All museums in Turkey will close at 1pm, on the 14th of June and 20th of August 2019
All museums in Turkey will close at 1pm, on the 24th of May and 31st of July 2020

During Ramadan (known as Ramazan in Turkey), some restaurants and shops (excluding those catering mainly for tourists) and attractions may close earlier, so itinerary

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scheduling may be slightly altered to ensure featured attractions are visited.

Approximate Ramazan dates:
24 April - 23 May 2020
13 April - 12 May 2021