Trip Highlights

- The stunning Hasop Castle that straddles the famous Silk Road.
- Van - 3000 year old citadel in all its glory at sunset.
- Akdamar Island and a beautifully restored 10th century Armenian church.
- The massive Ataturk Dam
- The magnificent funerary sanctuary at Akdamar Island and Van.
- Koycegiz lake cruise and mud baths
- The magnificent Theatre of Aspendos
- Pamukkale thermal pools and Roman Hierapolis
- The massive Ataturk Dam
- Cappadocia - Uchisar Castle, fairy chimneys and underground city
- Troy - Troy horse and ancient ruins
- Aegean coast and islands
- Roman ruins of Ephesus and Pergamum
- Pamukkale thermal pools and Roman Hierapolis
- Carpet weaving demonstration and leather showrooms
- Greek villages of Sirince and Kayakoy
- Marmaris, Sakilkent Gorge, Antalya and the ancient theatre of Aspendos
- Konya - Silk Road, ancient caravanserais and Mevlana Whirling Dervish Museum
- Fethiye and Koycegiz - lake, turtle beach & mud baths
- Akdamar Island and Van.
Day 3 : Gallipoli’s Battlefields

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 understatements. Mortar shell and deep earth, the trenches are 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.

Crossing the Dardanelles by ferry (offering panoramic views of the entire Gallipoli Peninsula) we proceed to our hotel for a little rest and relaxation. Overnight - Canakkale (B, D)

Day 4 : Troy & Kusadasi

Gallipoli Region - 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 beloved Helen and Hector – Prince of Troy on the Trojan side and Agamemnon and Achilles on the Trojan side, and Agamemnon and Achilles on the Achaean (Greek) side. The legend of the lost city of Troy and Homer's epic have been 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!

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Driving further south to the ancient ruins of Pergamum, 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. We continue to Kusadasi on the Aegean Coast. Overnight - Kusadasi (B, D)

Day 5 : Ancient Ephesus

Kusadasi – Sirince. Today, we enjoy a guided tour at the 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. It revelled in its prosperity from commerce and visiting pilgrims who came to see the immense Temple of Artemis - one of the Seven Ancient Wonders. Exemplifying the finesse of Roman urban life, we'll see the Great Theatre, Curetes Way, the Temple of Serapis, ancient toilets and a public brothel. 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 : Stunning Pamukkale

Kusadasi – Pamukkale – Marmaris. Meandering through the sweeping plains and endless cotton farms we arrive at the ruins of Roman Hieropolis and the hot springs of Pamukkale. Admire this surreal landscape created by frequent earthquakes in the fault depression of the Menderes river basin. Marvel at the crystalline marble, quartzites and stalagmites, which shimmer in the sunlight. There will be time to paddle our feet as you walk the terraces or opt for a dip in the thermal baths. Later we stop at a leather manufacturing house. Overnight - Marmaris (B, D)

Day 7 : Mud Glorious Mud!

Marmaris - Greek Kayakoy - Fethiye. Arriving at the lakeside town of Koycegiz, we embark upon a boat cruise to turtle beach and smother ourselves in mud at the local mud bath. A stop is made en route to explore the quaint Greek Village of Kayakoy. Overnight - Fethiye (B, D)

Day 8 : Discover the Med

Fethiye. Today offers free time for you to independently explore the stunning Mediterranean coastline. Spend the day by the beach or shopping the markets of Fethiye or alternatively cruise the coastline. Spend the day by the beach or shopping the markets of Fethiye or alternatively cruise the coastline.

Day 9 : Saklikent Gorge

Fethiye - Antalya. Today we visit the stunningly beautiful Saklikent Gorge, Turkey’s longest and deepest canyon, take a walk through nature, or just relax and watch the world go by from the fig tree-shaded wooden platforms that overlook the river. Weaving our way through the Taurus Mountains we arrive to Antalya visiting the Duden Waterfalls on route. Overnight - Antalya (B, D)

Day 10 : Whirling Dervishes

Antalya – Cappadocia. Early morning departure for Konya, en route we visit the ancient theatre of Aspendos. Arriving at Konya, we tour the monastery of the Mevlana whirling dervishes and the mausoleum of Mevleva Celaleddin Rumi. A further stop is made along the Silk Road at the Seljuk - a fine example of an ancient Silk Road caravanserai. Overnight - Cappadocia (B, D)

Day 11 : Underground Cities

Cappadocia. Today we tour the stunning Cappadocia region - an extraordinary national treasure. The utter improbability of the seemingly surreal landscapes have to be seen to be believed, where whole troglodyte villages, subterranean churches and fortress have been hewn from the soft, porous, eroded rock of Cappadocia. The crumbling legacy of persecuted Christians trying to escape the Muslim onslaught in 1st - 10th centuries AD by effectively heading underground is one of Turkey’s finest attractions.

A guided tour of the region includes the World – Heritage listed site of the Göreme Valley to see stunning examples of rock-cut Byzantine churches and chapels. Kaymakli Underground City and Uchisar Castle. Stopping on the outskirts of boat to the 12 islands costs approx USD$30 and can be booked locally with a number of local charter companies. Overnight - Fethiye (B)

East Meets West - 18 days

updated on 03-12-2012
Goreme Village we have the opportunity to see Pigeon Valley where century’s old pigeon houses are carved into the surrounding cliffs, the pigeon droppings that litter the area have been used as fertilizer on crops for generations. Here you will also have the opportunity to visit an Onyx shop, specialising in historic jewellery designs unique to Turkey and using local materials and craftsmen. For those not interested in shopping spend a little time relaxing and grab a drink from the local cafe. An optional Turkish dinner and folklore evening is available tonight. Overnight - Cappadocia (B)

Day 12 : The Silk Road

Cappadocia – Kahta. This morning we leave the weird rock formations of Cappadocia and head out across Turkey’s hinterland following the ancient Silk Road route via Kayseri. Along the way we stop at Karatay Han, a well-preserved caravanserai with ornately carved features. Proceeding to Mt. Nemrut in Adiyaman, discover the magnificent funerary monument that stands at the peak of the mountain, a testament to an ancient king’s ambition. Overnight - Kahta (B, D)

Day 13 : Ataturk Dam

Kahta – Uraf. Today we continue to the massive Ataturk Dam on our way to Ura, the ancient city of prophets. It was here where the biblical patriarch Abraham was supposedly born and we’ll visit the cave and shrine that marks his birthplace. Nearby are the sacred pools of Abraham filled with sacred carp that are fed by the many pilgrims who visit this holy site. Later in the afternoon we visit the famous beehive houses of Harran, an ancient city mentioned in Genesis as the place where Abraham lived. Overnight - Sanli Uraf (B, D)

Day 14 : Gobekli Tepe

Uraf – Gobekli Tepe –Diyarbakir. Our morning begins with a visit to the ongoing archaeological dig at Gobekli Tepe. Relatively unknown, Gobekli Tepe is possibly one of the most important archaeological sites in the world and mystery surrounds how the 60 tonne pillars were erected some 12,000 years ago. Diyarbakir, another ancient settlement, is our next stop. An overwhelmingly Kurdish city, Diyarbakir is famed for its ancient city walls built from massive black basalt blocks by the Romans. After the Great Wall of China, Diyarbakir has the longest continuous defensive wall in the world. Overnight - Diyarbakir (B, D)

Day 15 : Saffron Monastery

Diyarbakir – Mardin – Tavan. Arriving at the ancient town of Mardin, located on a high hill overlooking the plains of southern Turkey and Syria, we visit the Deir-Al-Zafaran (Saffron Monastery). An active monastery and the centre of the Syrian Orthodox Patriarchy, the site of the Saffron Monastery has been considered sacred for hundreds of years. We later drive to Hasankeyf! to visit the many caves, hidden waterways, tombs and palaces, as well as the ruins of the Great Mosque. Situated by the Tigris River, Hasankeyf is soon to be submerged under the flood waters of a new dam. We continue on to Tavatn where we spend the night Overnight - Tavatn (B, D)

Day 16 : Akdamar Island

After breakfast we begin our journey to the sophisticated city of Van. Along the way we visit the beautifully restored 10th century Armenian Church of the Holy Cross on the island of Akdamar. The church was built as part of a palace and religious complex between 915 and 921 by an Armenian King, and enjoys a stunning mountain setting on Lake Van.

Akdamar gets it’s name from a famous Arenian legend. it is believed that once upon a time a princess names Tamar lived on the island, Tamar was in love with common boy from the mainland and every night sh would stand on the shore holding a light for him so he could be guided across the water. unfortunately one day her father found out about the nocturnal visits and in a rage he smashed the lamp. The boy was halfway across the water when this happened and he was left without a guide to direct him. His body, washed upon the shore was found about 5 days later. His body was washed upon the shore in the area that was built to straddle the Silk Road, protecting the thoroughfare and acting as a toll point for passing travellers. From Hasop we return to Van with time for lunch and some free time to explore this sophisticated city. You may notice a few white cats in the city with different coloured eyes, this is the resident Van Cat. The people of Van are very proud of their unique feline, so much so that you will notice an enormous statue of a Van Cat and Kitten standing at the entrance to the city.

We end the day with a visit to the Citadel of Van to enjoy a magical sunset. Once the centre of the Urartian capital, the 3,000 year-old castle stands tall on a large rock outcrop and commands stunning views of Van city and the lake, and the nearby mountains of Suphan and Nemru. Overnight - Van (B, D)

Day 17 : Sunset at Van Citadel

Following the old Silk Road south from Van we arrive at Hosap Castle, a large medieval structure that was built to straddle the Silk Road, protecting the thoroughfare and acting as a toll point for passing travellers. From Hosap we return to Van with time for lunch and some free time to explore this sophisticated city. You may notice a few white cats in the city with different coloured eyes, this is the resident Van Cat. The people of Van are very proud of their unique feline, so much so that you will notice an enormous statue of a Van Cat and Kitten standing at the entrance to the city.

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Day 18 : Van

Tuesday. Today marks the end of our unique adventure. After breakfast and hotel check out we transfer you to the Van airport for your onward departure journey.(B)

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, Anotolia 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 Typhooid 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

East Meets West - 18 days

updated on 03-12-2012

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card purchases. Ensure you have sufficient funds in cash before travelling outside major cities and towns. Travellers cheques are hard to exchange, so be sure to bring them.

**Time & Voltage**

Turkey is 2 hours ahead of GMT. Turkish voltage is 230-240v AC. Turkish sockets are of the 2 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 tipple, 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) If arriving prior to 8am 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.

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 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 Ataturk and Sabiha Gokcen International Airports in Istanbul.

Costs are currently USD$60/ EURO 45 for Australian and Canadian passport holders, USD $20/ EURO 15 for USA and Irish passports, and GBP10/EURO 15 for British passport holders. 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 generally do not require a visa for a stay not exceeding 3 months.

Please 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 Tours.

**Site Opening Times**

Popular sightseeing spots in Istanbul are closed on Sundays.

**Essential Packing**

- Be sure to pack an adaptor.
- As you enter the arrival hall in Ataturk 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.

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**Site Opening Times**

Popular sightseeing spots 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

**Mihrimah Museum**

Open daily 10am – 5pm, closed on Mondays.

**Ara Güler Museum**

Open daily 10am – 5pm, closed on Mondays.

**Suleymaniye Museum**

Open daily 10am – 5pm, closed on Mondays.

**Rumeli Hisari Museum**

Open daily 10am – 5pm, closed on Mondays.

**Hippodrome of Constantinople**

Open daily 10am – 5pm, closed on Mondays.

**Bosporus and Dardanelles**

Open daily 10am – 5pm, closed on Mondays.

**Turkish Delight and Edible Delights**

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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.