

Turkey – A Journey through Anatolia

Tour Code TA

Departing 21 May 2010

A detailed journey through the Anatolian plains of Asia Minor, we visit the little discovered eastern region of Turkey where great empires have flourished and faded over the millennia, and stunning scenery and landscapes capture the imagination. This area contains the complete spectrum of chronology covering the Bronze and Iron Age, where various cultures came and left their mark including the Assyrians, Hittites and Phrygians. As well as these earlier civilisations there will be an opportunity to admire Byzantine churches and the architecture of the Seljuk and Ottoman Turks. The climax to the trip is the visit to the mountaintop of Nemrut Dag, famed burial place of Antiochus I. We also spend time in the ancient city of Constantinople, Istanbul today



Stone heads, Nemrut Dag
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Day 1 Fly to Istanbul - Friday 21 May

Departure from Heathrow Terminal 3 on Turkish Airlines arriving into Istanbul in the evening. Transfer to the centrally located hotel in the Sultanahmet district for two nights

Day 2 In Istanbul – Saturday 22 May

Today we spend in the great imperial city of Istanbul, crossroads between Europe and the Orient. We visit the famous multi-minareted Blue Mosque, the Hagia Sophia museum, formerly and the oldest basilica in the world, the 16th century Suleymaniye mosque and the unique underground basilica cisterns. Welcome dinner at a local restaurant (B,D)

Day 3 In Istanbul. Fly Trabzon – Sunday 23 May

This morning we visit the fabulous Topkapi Palace, built in the 16th century by the Sultan Mehmet the Great. We include the famous Harem and Treasury with its priceless relics. This afternoon we transfer to the airport for our flight to Trabzon on the Black Sea coast. Two nights at the Usta hotel (B,D)

Day 4 Visit Sumela Monastery – Monday 24 May

This morning we journey inland to the 6th century Sumela Monastery located in a dramatic cliff-top setting over a fertile gorge. Dinner at a local Trabzon restaurant (B,D)

Day 5 Drive to Erzurum – Tuesday 25 May

We journey through the Pontic Mountains on a long but scenic drive to the once Roman outpost of Erzurum. Overnight with dinner at the Palan hotel (B,D)

Day 6 Visit Erzurum. Drive to Kars – Wednesday 26 May

After morning sightseeing in Erzurum including the wonderful 13th century Cifte Minare Madrasa we continue to the remote eastern town of Kars for two nights at the Sim-Er hotel. Dinner in the hotel (B,D)

Day 7 Visit Ani. City tour of Kars – Thursday 27 May

We explore the Armenian border town of Ani this morning, its wonderful church ruins romantically set on plains overlooking the Armenian hills. This afternoon we return to the various sites located around Kars including the dramatic castle overlooking the old city. Dinner in a local restaurant (B,D)

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Day 8 Drive to Dogubeyazit close to Mount Ararat – Friday 28 May

Today's journey takes us on visits to the legendary resting place of Noah's ark near Mount Ararat and to romantic Isak Pasha palace at Dogubeyazit. Overnight with dinner at the Sim-Er hotel (B,D)

Day 9 Drive to Van. In Van – Saturday 29 May

Our journey continues to the lakeside town of Van, the ancient capital of Urartia. This afternoon we visit the old city walls and castle with superb views across the area. Two nights at the Tusba hotel with dinner (B,D)

Day 10 Visit Cavustepe and Akdamar Island – Sunday 30 May

This morning we visit the ancient site of Cavustepe and the dramatic Hosap castle. After a break for lunch on the shores of Lake Van we depart by boat to the stunning Armenian Church ruins of the Holy Cross. Dinner at a local restaurant (B,D)

Day 11 Drive to Diyarbakir – Monday 31 May

A long but interesting drive today brings us to the ancient walled caravan city of Diyarbakir, dating back at least 5,000 years. We stay at the Kervansaray hotel, a renovated caravanserai built in basalt stone. Overnight stay with dinner at a local restaurant (B,D)

Day 12 In Diyarbakir. Visit Nemrut Dag – Tuesday 1 June

We walk through the atmospheric narrow streets and bazaars of Diyarbakir's old city this morning, seeing one of Turkey's oldest mosques. In the afternoon we follow along the Euphrates valley via Siverek to visit Nemrut Dag. The mountaintop burial site of Antiochus I is as equally dramatic in its location as the monumental stone heads themselves. Overnight stay with dinner at the Zeus hotel in nearby Kahta (B,D)

Day 13 In Sanliurfa. Visit Harran – Wednesday 2 June

We continue to Sanliurfa where we visit the pool of Abraham set in a tranquil location beneath the great citadel of the city. This afternoon we drive the short distance to Harran to see its ancient citadel and unique beehive architecture. Overnight stay with dinner at the Edessa hotel in Sanliurfa (B,D)

Day 14 In Gaziantep – Thursday 3 June

We head to our final destination Gaziantep, to spend the day in its extraordinary Archaeological museum with its unrivalled collection of mosaics and other artefacts. Overnight stay at the Anadolou Evleri hotel. A farewell dinner has been arranged at a traditional Gaziantep restaurant. (B,D)

Day 15 Fly to London via Istanbul – Friday 4 June

An early morning transfer to the local airport for our flight to Istanbul to connect with our Turkish Airways flight direct to London Heathrow Terminal 3 arriving in the afternoon (B)

Cost £2195.00 per person in a twin room (excludes international flights)

Single supplement charge £300.00



Price includes –

- ▶ Tour accompanied from London by Patrick Syder
- ▶ Our specialist Turkish guide, Dr Fatih Babaoglu, is an Archaeologist with a PhD in the Hittite Civilisation
- ▶ Two domestic flights with Turkish Airlines
- ▶ All transportation - private a/c coach
- ▶ Full sightseeing programme including entrance fees
- ▶ Quality local three star hotels on a half board basis with some dinners at traditional restaurants
- ▶ All UK and Turkish departure and government taxes
- ▶ All airport transfers
- ▶ Porter, hotel and restaurant staff gratuities

Not included – travel insurance, visa fees, lunches, drinks, guide and driver gratuities, Turkish Airlines international return flight (available with Polani Travel ATOL No.5311 or direct with Turkish Airlines from £250.00)