

www.traveltalktours.com

traveltalk

Travel Talk tours will take you on a pilgrimage of culture, history, adventure, fun and relaxation. You will visit sites of antiquity, explore the treasures of Turkey, venture into the surreal region of central Cappadocia and experience sun-kissed days on pristine beaches...

Before you leave for your adventure, it is important that you read this pre-departure information to ensure that your trip begins, and proceeds, as smoothly as possible. While we appreciate that you are embarking on an "adventure holiday" that will produce its own share of surprises, it is also true that forewarned is forearmed. This information is not written with the intention of being anything other than general information that we hope will help you come more prepared for your holiday. The philosophy of Travel Talk is simple: to provide excellent value for money for budget-conscious and adventurous travellers without compromising their experiences, and providing quality transportation, accommodation, sightseeing and information services. We hope that our philosophy will exceed your expectations and the following information will help you enjoy a memorable journey in Turkey.

FACTFILE

Area : 779.452 sq km
(483.260 sq mi)
Population : 70.5 million
Capital City : Ankara
Language : Turkish
Religion : Islam
Government : Republic
GDP : US\$ 409 billion
GDP per head : US\$ 6200
Annual growth : 6 %
Inflation : 8 %



VISAS & CUSTOMS

Visa requirements change periodically, therefore you need to check the requirements before travelling.

British, Irish, Australian, Canadian and United States passport holders can obtain a 3 month tourist visa upon arrival in Istanbul at the following current costs:

UK GBP 10
Canada USD 60 or 45 euros
Australia USD 20 or 15 euros
NZL No visa required

Only UK nationals can pay in GBP sterling.

Please go to the visa counter first, before proceeding to the immigration desk. There are often long queues and you will only be sent across to the visa counter anyway.

It is your responsibility to ensure you have the relevant documents/visas and Travel Talk will accept no responsibility for being refused entry through incorrect documentation.

INTRODUCTION

Customs formalities are very lax when arriving in Turkey. There is a duty-free allowance of 200 cigarettes and 50 cigars or 200 grams of tobacco and 3 litres of alcohol. Prices of duty-free shops are usually in Euro with a conversion to other currencies. Please remember that it is a criminal offence to export antiquities out of the country.

DOCUMENTS

Please make sure that you have all the necessary travel documents ready before you leave your country.

PASSPORT

In many countries you'll be required to have a passport valid for 6 months starting from the entry date. If you are holding a passport with less than 6 months' validity or a few pages remaining, we suggest you to apply for a new one before you depart.

traveltalk traveltip

It's vital to take a photocopy of the important pages of your passport (pages of personal data, passport number, visas etc) and keep these copies separate from your passport.

VISA

Check your visa when it's issued to ensure that it contains the correct figures. Please bear in mind that a visa does not guarantee you enter a country as the final decision will be given by the authorities at the immigration.

TOUR VOUCHER

When you book a trip, you'll be provided with a tour voucher showing the details of your tour. You'll need to hand over this voucher to your tour leader to join the tour. The tour leader reserves the right to refuse serving any passenger failing to provide the tour voucher. If you have booked extra services like pre- and post tour accommodation and transfer, please make sure that these services are also shown on your tour voucher.

FLIGHT TICKET / CONFIRMATION

Do not forget to check your name, surname, flight details and other necessary information placed on your flight ticket/confirmation voucher at least 3 days before you leave your country.

BEFORE YOU GO

While it's your own choice and responsibility regarding what type of clothing, belongings, luggage, bags and other items to take with you, we try to share our experiences with you to help you have a comfortable journey in Turkey.

ESSENTIALS

Before you leave your country, we recommend you to make sure you have the followings with you :

- ✓ Passport
- ✓ Airline or transportation ticket
- ✓ Tour voucher
- ✓ Insurance policy
- ✓ Visas (if necessary)
- ✓ Label on your travel bag
- ✓ Pre-departure information
- ✓ Money
- ✓ Debit or credit card

PACKING

Please remember that the airline baggage allowance is 20 kilos and you should not pack more than you can comfortably carry.

traveltalk traveltip

When packing, the golden rule is : decide how many clothes you want to take, halve the amount and that's how much you'll need.

We also recommend you to bring a frame backpack or a suitcase. In addition to your main bag, you'll need to have a smaller day pack and a money belt.

What about the souvenirs? Make sure that you leave some space for souvenirs in your luggage. There are a wide range of fantastic things to buy in the Middle East and in Mediterranean countries, not only for your mates, also for yourself!

We have also compiled a list of things that you might need on the tour:

Clothing : Depending on the season; a warm jacket or wool sweater, a rain jacket, walking boots, thick socks, flip-flops or waterproof sandals, shorts, light slacks (men), loose-fitting pants or long skirts (women), short sleeves, t-shirts, underwear and socks. Please also keep in mind that when visiting religious sites, appropriate attire is required (scarf for women etc).

Useful equipment : Water bottle with strap, torch and batteries, international adapter, travel alarm, playing cards, walkman or mp3 player, discs, laundry detergent

Toiletries : Towels, soap, toothbrushes, talcum powder, razors, deodorant, tampons, sunscreens, contact lenses (bring enough extra pairs and solution), glasses (and a copy of your prescription in case you need emergency replacements), a roll of toilet paper, hygienic wetpipes.

First-aid kit : Bandages, pain reliever, antibiotic cream, a thermometer, moleskin, decongestant, insect repellent, burn ointment, personal medicine.

Others : Converters and adapters, camera, films, flash, batteries, money belt and additional belongings that you think will be useful during your journey.

ARRIVAL

AIRPORT TRANSFER

The arrival airport transfer from Ataturk International Airport (IST) and Sabiha Gokcen Airport (SAW) is included in the price of the tour (A complementary transfer to the Travel Talk Hotel only applies to Easy Jet flight flying non stop from Luton and Gatwick to Sabiha Gokcen on the Saturday the tour starts, Day 1 of the itinerary).

You'll be met by our local representative at the airport who arranges the transfers from the airport to your hotel.

Please make sure that you inform your agent of your flight details (arrival date, time, flight code and flight number) in order to be picked up from the airport.

Please remember that if you miss your transfer at the airport (due to the rescheduling your flight, delay or any other reason) you'll need to make your own way to the arrival hotel. Please view page 15 for the details of **SELF TRANSFER** from Ataturk and Sabiha Gokcen Airports.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Please also note that you can call the following numbers in case of **emergency** : 0090 542 779 04 34 or 0090 544 522 54 74

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If you're taking a taxi to your hotel or around the city, close your ears to the common claims of taxi drivers telling newly arrived travellers that their hotel has closed down, full or poor and that they know a better hotel etc... Just insist on being taken to your hotel and once you arrive, go to the reception desk if you need further assistance.

ARRIVAL HOTELS

Please find below the address details of your arrival hotel in Istanbul :

Hotel Legacy Ottoman
Hamidiye Cad.No:64
Eminonu-Istanbul-Turkey
Tel : 0090 212 527 67 67
www.legacyottomanhotel.com

If you are on T1-04032010 tour, the tour starts from the hotel below:

Grand Washington Hotel
Aga Yokusu Caddesi 7
Laleli-Istanbul
www.grand-washington.com

GUIDE MEETING

Please note that your guide will meet and brief you about the next days of your tour at the arrival hotel at 06:30 p.m.

PRE-TOUR ACCOMMODATION

Should you require pre- or post tour accommodation, please notify us (or your agent) at the time of booking. This information has to be also clearly stated on your voucher (check-in date, check-out date, number of travellers etc).

Unless a room is immediately available, most hotels will not allocate your room until at least mid day, it may be later than this if the hotel has had high occupancy the previous night.

Pre and post tour rates are as follows (per person per night including breakfast) :

- ↻Double, twin or triple room GB£ 40
- ↻Single room GB£ 65

Solo travellers need to stay as single for extra nights.

LEFT OR LOST LUGGAGE

If you discover upon arrival that your luggage is missing, or has arrived incomplete, you should report this immediately to the information desk in the baggage hall.

Please remember that lost luggage is a matter between you and the airline/airport authority and the recovery of your luggage is your own responsibility and at your own expense.

ABOUT THE TOUR

Please remember that the tour price covers specific services offered during your trip, not your entire travel cost. Your expenses will vary depending on your interests and budget and your tour leader will be always ready to inform you of the local prices and possible travel costs.

THE TOUR PRICE AND THE LOCAL PAYMENT

We know that it's not easy to get your cash together to cover the entire travel cost, especially when you book your flight ticket and the tour at once. We ease your cash needs by dividing the tour cost into two payments : tour price and local fund. You just need to pay the tour price to purchase your travel. The compulsory local payment will be done when you join the trip. The local payment is a part of the tour cost (a tool to ease your cash need on booking date) and it does **not** cover any extra costs like meals, entry fees, drinks, tips, personal expenses or other type of travel costs.

SERVICES INCLUDED

We run numerous tours in Turkey and the services differ depending on the type, length and character of the trips. As a general rule, the following services are included in your tour price :

- ✓Arrival airport transfer
- ✓Accommodation in 4-5 star hotels
- ✓Breakfasts during the journey
- ✓Diners at the hotels except Istanbul
- ✓Transportation in air-conditioned, non-smoking coaches or mini-buses
- ✓Services of experienced guides licenced by the Ministry of Tourism

If you're joining a tour with gulet cruise, 3 nights gulet cabin accommodation (with breakfast, lunch and diner) will be also included in the services.

SERVICES NOT INCLUDED

We know that the inclusions mentioned above look fantastic, but you'll still need to bring enough funds with you to cover the possible extra expenses. The tour price does not cover the following :

Any flights, insurance, meals not stated in the itinerary, drinks, items of a personal nature, tips, visa fees, entrance fees to the sights and museums, other services not stated in the "services included" section, optional activities and excursions.

ENTRANCE FEES

The entry fees to museums and sights are not included in the tour price. Please bear in mind that the entry fees change periodically and we recommend you to contact us for the latest prices. Below prices are given in Turkish Lira (1 GBP is about 2.40 Turkish Lira):

Topkapi Palace 20,00
 Hagia Sophia Museum 20,00
 Blue Mosque Free
 Hippodrome Free
 Kabatepe Anzac Museum 3,00
 Troy 15,00
 Pergamum 20,00
 Ephesus 20,00
 Hierapolis 20,00
 Kayakoy 5,00
 Saklikent 8,00
 Goreme Open Air Museum 15,00
 Uchisar 2,00
 Ihlara 8,00
 Kervansaray 3,00
 Underground City 15,00

Mevlana Museum 3,00
 Mud Bath 4,00
 Iztuzu Beach 2,00
 Olympos 3,00
 Simena Castle 8,00

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Though history and culture abound, there are plenty of things to see and do in Turkey. With more than 7000 km of coastline, it's an excellent destination for water sports and gulet cruising, especially along the Mediterranean. It is also a fantastic travel destination offering numerous optional adventurous activities and excursions.

Depending on the tour you've booked, you'll be able to join the optional activities stated below :

- ✓ Mud bath in Dalyan
- ✓ Hot-air ballooning in Cappadocia
- ✓ Turkish Bath in Cappadocia
- ✓ Traditional Turkish Night in Cappadocia
- ✓ Scuba diving in Kas

Please contact your tour leader for prices, availability and the details of the above activities.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is essential to all passengers travelling on Travel Talk tours to have personal insurance to cover all medical and repatriation costs. Please take your insurance policy with you.

While there are no mandatory vaccinations for travellers to Turkey it is advisable to ensure inoculation are up to date. Some travellers feel more confident with hepatitis and meningitis inoculations as well. Rabies exists in Turkey in rural areas although it is very unlikely that you will come in contact with a rabid animal. Immunisation is

available in either a series of three injections over a period of one month (lasts 3-5 years) or a single visit booster dose that lasts only 6-12 months. Please consult a medical practitioner for advice.

Bottled water is readily available throughout your tour and we recommend that you purchase this rather than drink the local tap water. Whilst the local water is usually heavily chlorinated and safe many people find they get upset stomachs after drinking these supplies.

traveltalk traveltip

It is advisable to carry some Imodium with you in case you get an upset stomach from the difference in cuisine. The different spices and foods may be a little upsetting to your stomach and it is best to be prepared... just in case.

It is often difficult to find the precise medication that is available in one's home country and for this reason we recommend that you carry all current medication with you.

Toilet paper is rarely provided so it is a good idea to carry a spare roll in your bag. It should be placed in the basket beside the toilet, not flushed away, as you might block the pipes.

Each year, thousands of visitors return home from Turkey with nothing but happy memories. Turkey is a safe country compared to most of the world. Street crime is not a big problem - yet. You should always take the normal travel precautions.

It is wise not to accept gifts or food or drink from any strangers for the risk of possibly being a victim of theft by drugging. Take care with your passport, credit cards and money - a money belt to fit beneath your clothes is highly

recommended. It is also recommended that at least one set of modest clothing is taken with you. It is a sign of respect to cover your shoulders and legs when visiting mosques and also attracts less unwanted attention. A headscarf for women is necessary when visiting mosques in Turkey.

MONEY

The local currency is Turkish Lira (1 US\$ is about 1.50 TL, 1 GB£ is around 2.50 TL).

Please do not bring Scottish banknotes as they are not changable abroad.

It is cheaper to convert money in Turkey than at home. Using an ATM or a credit card will often get you the best possible rates; however the exchange offices and banks offer very reasonable rates, too.

It is difficult to specify the amount of money that you can spend per day, however as a general rule US\$30 to US\$40 or GB £20 to £30 per day can provide you with additional meals and optional entrances. Should you wish to purchase souvenirs - of which there is a diverse range - and optional activities, you will have to budget for these.

A mixture of traveller's cheques for obvious security reasons and cash are the best forms of currency.

Credit cards are also accepted in most of the restaurants, bars and pubs. MasterCard and Visa are most welcomed; American Express cards work at some ATMs and AmEx offices. Credit cards are also useful for cash advances, which allow you to withdraw Lira instantly from associated banks and ATMs throughout Turkey. Cash cards - popularly called ATM cards - are relatively widespread in most of Turkey: in Istanbul, Canakkale, Selcuk, Pamukkale, Fethiye, Kas, Antalya and Cappadocia... When travelling with Travel Talk, plan your budget and use the ATM machines before leaving the main towns.

EATING & DRINKING

Turkey is a gourmet's paradise although many unadventurous travellers come away having only consumed vast quantities of doner and shish kebab that they are familiar with from home.

You can start your day with a delicious "Turkish breakfast": Turkish bread, white cheese, tomatoes, olives, cucumbers, boiled egg, jam or honey and of course Turkish tea. At most of the Travel Talk hotels, you will be served "buffet breakfast" with a wide variety of foods.

There are two types of restaurants in Turkey: restaurants which have an a-la-carte menu with food on display that will be cooked for you and "ready meal" restaurants which have a range of previously prepared dishes in warming trays for you to choose. The beauty of "ready meal" restaurants is that you can try a wide range of small dishes for a relatively cheap price.

During your journey, we will give lunch breaks at these types of restaurants to save your money and time.

In more salubrious restaurants you can order "meze" (appetizers) where a bewildering array of dishes is available. These are small dishes ranging from stuffed vegetables and tightly rolled cheese pastries to pickled vegetables, courgettes and aubergines in their many guises. Vegetarians are especially catered for in mezes, which usually come with a range of purees and vinaigrettes.

Main dishes are generally on display; you choose and the meat or fish is taken away to be prepared. Fish is usually charged by the weight. Shish and doner kebabs are served everywhere but perhaps better still are Adana kebabs - spicy minced meat with a sprinkling of the purple sumac herb.

Do not forget to save room for dessert, which is almost always sweet! Highlights include "baklava" (a flaky, sweet nut pastry, usually with pistachio), "kadayif" (shredded pasty dough filled with nuts and drenched in syrup), "tavukgogsu" (a creamy sweet made of pulverised chicken fibres), and "helva" (sesame paste).

Travellers often find it surprising that tea (cay) rather than coffee is the national drink of Turkey. Grown along the Black Sea coast it has become an essential element of socialising. It is served in small fluted glasses with a very small spoon and saucer and cubes of sugar alongside. Coffee is also popular in Turkey and you can find numerous alternatives of Cappuccino, Nescafe, Espresso and traditional Turkish coffee...

Carbonated soft drinks are available everywhere in Turkey - Cola or Pepsi, Fanta, Sprite, natural fruit and pulp drinks served in bottles include orange, lemon, apricot, peach and sour cherry.

You will also find a wide variety of alcoholic drinks in Turkey. Beer (bira) is ever popular: Efes Pilsen and Tuborg are the leading brands, which are very refreshing in the summer. They are sold in bottles, cans and draught. You can also find many international beer brands throughout Turkey.

Wine is grown in areas as diverse as Thrace and Cappadocia. The best domestic white wines are "Cankaya", "Villa Doluca", and "Kavaklidere", made in Cappadocia, while "Yakut" and "Kavalikdere" produce the finest red.

"Raki", the national aperitif served with ice and water which turns the **clear** spirit cloudy, is a very warming drink although you may find it a bit rough at first - persevere. Domestically produced gin, vodka and brandy are also available in most of the bars, pubs,

and restaurants. A basic lunch and dinner (main meal + salad) in a local restaurant will cost you between GB £3.00 and £5.00 (US\$5.50 and \$9.00), a soft drink about £ 0 . 7 5 (U S \$ 1 . 4 0) . The beer prices differ depending on the region (town) and the atmosphere of the bar-pub-cafe-restaurant-disco etc. A bottle of beer will cost you between GB £1.50 and £2.50 (US \$2.70 and \$4.50) in a backpacker pub and bar.

LUNCH BREAKS

Geographically Turkey is a big country and the distances between the regions do not allow us to give long lunch breaks. Most of the lunch breaks will be given during the day drives at buffet restaurants with limited traditional meal options. That's not the case for dinner, as you will find many traditional and international meal options throughout your journey.

SHOPPING

Shopping in Turkey is one of the great experiences of travelling in this country and there are still bargains to be had although you have to be very careful to ensure that the products are authentic.

Turkish carpets are world famous and can vary from a few pounds or dollars to thousands of pounds or dollars depending on size, quality, dyes, materials etc. Together with naturally dyed woollen carpets there are machine made carpets from man made fibres. Cappadocia has the widest range of carpets by virtue of buying carpets from all over Turkey and they are the cheapest.

Kilims or pileless rugs are also very popular in Turkey. These are woven rather than knotted to a base and are also sold as large pillows where you provide the filling once you get home.

Copper and brassware are some of the other attractive souvenirs for the house and can serve a utilitarian function. Turkey is also popular for its jewellery, gold and silver.

traveltalk traveltip

You need to bear in mind that haggling (in traditional bazaars and small shops) is a way of life in the Middle East. Haggling should always be relaxed and can be a lot of fun – you will find most shop owners are very friendly and will probably invite you in for a cup of tea to break the ice before the haggling starts.

OPENING HOURS

There are no hard and fast rules for opening hours in Turkey, but banks and main post offices are generally open from 8.30am to 12.00 midday and 1.30pm to 5.30pm Monday to Friday. Shops are generally open from around 9.00am to 6.00pm, later in bazaars and shopping malls. They are usually closed on Sunday.

TIPPING

Tips are a common rewards for service staff in Turkey like everywhere in the world. Your bus driver and guide can especially be honoured with this kind of traditional appreciation at the end of the trip. If you join a belly dancing show, the dancer will expect a tip of around £1.

WEATHER

The southern coastal regions of Turkey are warm and pleasant even at night during the summer. In winter the temperatures rarely fall below 7°C making the Turquoise coast an ideal destination even in early Spring and late Autumn, in fact many of the resorts stay open all winter.

The central Anatolian plateau (because of the altitude) can make Goreme cool in the evenings, even in summer but during the day it can be hot - often in the mid thirties. Spring and autumn can be very crisp and suitable clothing is advised.

TEMPERATURES

Region	January		April		July		October	
	C	F	C	F	C	F	C	F
Marmara	5	41	12	54	23	73	16	61
Aegean	9	48	16	61	28	82	18	64
Med	10	50	16	61	28	82	20	68
Central	0	32	11	52	23	73	13	55

Marmara: Istanbul, Gallipoli
Aegean: Ephesus, Pamukkale
Med : Fethiye, Kas, Olympos, Antalya
Central : Cappadocia, Ankara

DISTANCES

The following information will give you a better idea of the times travelled to help you plan your day:

Istanbul-Gallipoli: 295 kms 5 hours
Gallipoli-Troy-Pergamum-Selcuk: 382 kms 11 hours
Selcuk-Pamukkale: 193 kms 3.5 hours
P.kale-Cappadocia:630 kms 11 hours
Cappadocia-Ankara : 287 kms 3.5 hours
Ankara-Istanbul : 443 kms 5 hours
Pamukkale-Fethiye: 230 kms 4.5 hours
Fethiye-Kas: 120 kms 2 hours
Kas-Olympos: 180 kms 2.5 hours
Olympos-Antalya : 82 kms 1.5 hours
Antalya- Cappadocia : 562 kms 11 hours

ELECTRICITY

All appliances require a double round pin type plug for 220 volts AC, 50-hertz.

ACCOMMODATION

The hotel selection on Travel Talk tours is 4 and 5 star locally rated and the main criteria in the hotel selection process is cleanliness, private bathroom facilities, usually but not always centrally located.

If you are travelling on your own, you'll be allocated a twin or triple room with other group members of the same gender.

Travellers who have paid a single supplement will stay in single rooms except Gulet cruise if booked. We can not guarantee the availability of double beds for couple travellers.

Your Tour Leader will organise the rooming arrangements when checking into the hotels according to the rooming lists sent by the operation department. Therefore we can also not guarantee any last minute changes to suit personal requirements of our passengers.

GULET

A Gulet is a traditional Turkish all wooden, handmade, motor sailing yacht built for cruising the coasts in the calm, warm waters of the Mediterranean. These yachts are built to centre life on deck during the charter. A spacious deck and a large, half-moon shaped stern, dining and lounging areas are their main features. Accommodation is from 6 to 24 persons in separate double cabins.

While on board you could lounge on the deck sunbathing, sipping your drink, read your favourite novel or explore the turquoise waters with your snorkel. Deck ladders down to the sea and deck showers to wash salt off come in really handy.

You need casual wear only; non slip foot wear, swim suit, a sun hat, some t-shirts and shorts, a sweater for cool evenings; and for excursions and climbs, strong footwear. Please be forewarned that electrical appliances may only be connected while the yacht is tied up to land.

When travelling on the Gulet section of your tour the Travel Talk tour leader may not accompany you. You will however have the services of an experienced crew. The crew usually consist of a captain, cook and a seaman/mechanic. They are very friendly, ready to help you and most importantly to ensure everyone has a good time. The crew members are usually a good source of information on the local history and surroundings, able to advise you on the best places to snorkel and anchor etc. You can also get some tips from the cook on local cuisine.

Please also remember that you need to book the gulet cruise (the relevant tour including gulet) in advance to guarantee your space as it's nearly impossible to find vacant gulets in the high season in Turkey.

TOUR LEADER

Your Tour Leader's role is to ensure that all aspects of the trip run smoothly. He/she will share their local knowledge, advise you on how to fill your free time and coordinate the day to day running of the tour – although occasionally your Tour Leader may need your understanding if things do not go according to plan. If you have any problems on the tour, please let your Tour Leader know so that steps can be taken out put it right. Please also bear in mind that, when you travel on any of the combination programs, you will be travelling with different tour groups and different tour leaders during each leg of the combination.

LANGUAGE

The official language of Turkey is Turkish. Turkish words are spelled with an adapted Roman alphabet. The language is phonetic; each letter has only one sound that is always pronounced distinctly. Below you'll find some important phrases that will make your travel easier :

Yes	Evet
No	Hayir
Maybe	Belki
Please	Lutfen
Thank you	Teshekkurlar
Pardon me	Pardon
Who ?	Kim ?
When ?	Ne zaman ?
Today	Bugun
Yesterday	Dun
Tomorrow	Yarin
I'm sorry	Ozur dilerim
Help	Imdat
Police	Polis
Hello	Merhaba
Goodbye	Hoshchakal
Good night	Iyi gejeler
How are you ?	Nasilsin ?

Bill, please	Hesap, lutfen
Open	Acik
Closed	Kapali
Bad	Kotu
Good	Iyi
Hot	Sicak
Cold	Soguk
How much?	Ne kadar ?
Too much !	Pahali
Water	Su
Coffee	Kahve
Tea	Chai
OK	Tamam

BRIEF INFO ABOUT THE SIGHTS

Before you explore the fantastic sights of this unique country, we hope that the below information will give you a basic idea of the sites you'll visit.

Istanbul

According to Strabo, Istanbul is thought to have been founded by the colonists from Megara led by Byzas in the 7C BC. Popular legend has it that Megarians, before coming here, went to the oracle in Delphi and asked his instruction on the place to found their settlement. The answer was "opposite the city of the blind". When they came to the peninsula of the old city, after seeing an earlier settlement in the Asian side, they concluded that these people must be blind as not to see the beautiful place on their side. And remembering the words of the Delphic oracle, they founded their city "Byzantium" which derived from their leader's name "Byzas".

Over the next thousand years,

Byzantium became a trade and commerce center. But despite great prosperity, Byzantium never distinguished itself culturally, as did so many contemporary cities in Anatolia. In 324 AD, Constantine I defeated Licinius and became sole ruler of the Roman Empire. He also began to build a new capital at Byzantium, later named Constantinople (Constantine's "polis" or city).

In 330 AD, Christianity was declared the official religion of the Roman Empire and Constantinople was dedicated as capital of the Byzantine Empire and splendidly rebuilt by Constantine I. Constantinople itself was not only the new capital of the Empire but also the symbol of the Christian triumph. Istanbul is famous as one of the most often besieged cities in the world. Before it was conquered by the Turks, its assailants included the Persian Darius (513 BC), the Athenian Alcibiades (408 BC), the Macedonian Philip II (339 BC), the Arabs (673-78, 717-18 AD), the Bulgarians (813, 913 AD) and the armies of the Fourth Crusade, which twice succeeded in taking the city (1203, 1204 AD). After Constantinople was taken by the Turks in 1453, the city became the capital of the Ottoman Empire until 1923, when the newly founded Turkish Republic declared Ankara (then Angora) the capital. From 1918 until 1923 Great Britain, France and Italy occupied the city.

HIPPODROME

The original building of the Hippodrome was built by the Roman Emperor Septimus Severus in 203 AD when he rebuilt Byzantium. Constantine the Great reconstructed, enlarged and adorned it with beautiful works which were brought from different places in the Roman Empire when he chose Byzantium as his new capital. During the Byzantine period, the Hagia Sophia was the religious center, a place which belonged to God; the palace belonged to the emperor; and the

hippodrome was the civil center for the people.

The hippodrome was destroyed and plundered in 1204 by the Crusaders. After the Turks it lost its popularity and especially with the construction of the Blue Mosque and the ancient hippodrome changed its name and became At Meydani (Horse Square) a place where Ottomans trained their horses. The only three remaining monuments from the original building are the Egyptian Obelisk, the Serpentine Column and the Constantine Column.

The Egyptian Obelisk

It was originally one of the two obelisks which were erected in the name of Thutmose III in front of Amon-Ra Temple in Karnak in the 15C BC. It is a monolith made of granite and the words on it are in

Egyptian hieroglyphs which praise Thutmose III. The original piece was longer than today's measurement of 19.60 m / 64.30 ft which is thought to be two thirds of the original. It was broken either during shipment or intentionally to make it lighter to transport.

The Roman governor of Alexandria, sent it to Theodosius I in 390 AD. The obelisk is situated on a Byzantine marble base with bas-reliefs. These reliefs give some detail about the emperor from the Kathisma and races of the time. The Emperor Theodosius I, on four sides of the obelisk, is watching the erection of it, or a chariot race, receiving homage from slaves or preparing a wreath for the winner of the race.

The Serpentine Column

After defeating the Persians at the battles of Salamis (480 BC) and Plataea (479 BC), the 31 Greek cities, by melting all the spoils that they obtained, made a huge bronze incense burner with three entwined serpents to be erected in front of the Apollo Temple in Delphi.

Originally it was 8 m / 26.3 ft high, but today it is only 5.30 m / 17.4 ft. This column was brought here from Delphi by Constantine I in 4C AD. By looking at records, it is possible that it remained there until the 16C. However it is not known what happened to the serpent heads after the 16C.

The Constantine Column

Unlike the Egyptian Obelisk, this is not a monolith but a column built of stones. Who erected it and when it was built is not known. According to the inscriptions, it was renovated and restored to have a more beautiful appearance by Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus and his son Romanus II in the 10C AD. The original column should have been from the 4C or 5C AD.

It is 32 m / 105 ft high and after three steps comes the marble base at the bottom. It is also thought that all the surfaces of the column were covered with bronze relief pieces which probably were plundered during the 4th Crusade in 1204, and today it is possible to find some of these pieces used in the decoration of St. Mark Square in Venice.

BLUE MOSQUE

Built by Sultan Ahmet I as a part of a large complex, among the Turkish people it is called Sultan Ahmet Mosque. However, tourists fascinated with the beautiful blue tiles always remember it as the Blue Mosque. The complex consisted of a mosque, tombs, medreses, fountains, a health center, kitchens, shops, a bath, rooms, houses and storehouses.

The architect was one of the apprentices of Sinan, Sedefkar Mehmet Aga. He

designed one of the last examples of the classical period's architectural style. The mosque is situated in a wide courtyard which has five gates. There is an inner courtyard next to the mosque with three entrances. The inner courtyard is surrounded by porticos consisting of 26 columns and 30 domes. The sadirvan in the middle is symbolic, because the actual ones are outside on the walls of the inner courtyard. There are three entrances to the main building, one from the inner courtyard and two from both sides of the building. There are four minarets at the corners of the mosque having three serefes each. The two minarets at the far corners of the courtyard have two serefes each. There are six minarets in all, each of which is fluted. There are 260 windows which do not have original stained glass any longer. The walls all along the galleries are covered with 21 thousand 17C Iznik tiles having many flower motifs in a dominant blue color.

HAGIA SOPHIA (ST. SOPHIA)

The Hagia Sophia was probably the largest building on earth, barring the Egyptian Pyramids, or the Great Wall of China. For many centuries it was the largest church and today it is the fourth largest in the world after St. Paul's in London, St. Peter's in Rome and the Duomo in Milan. The great Ottoman architect Sinan, in his autobiography, says that he devoted his lifetime in the attempt to surpass its technical achievements. It was dedicated to the Hagia Sophia which means the Divine Wisdom, an attribute of Christ.

Today's Hagia Sophia is the third building built on the same spot. The first one was a basilica with a wooden roof and was built in 390 AD. This original church Megale Ecclesia (Great Church) was burned down in a rumpus in 404. Theodosius replaced it with a massive basilica which was burned down in the Nika Revolt against Justinian in 532.

Justinian began rebuilding the Hagia Sophia in the same year. The architects were two Anatolian geniuses, Anthemius of Tralles, an engineer and a mathematician and Isidorus of Miletus, an architect. They started collecting materials from all over the empire. In the construction ten thousand workers worked under the supervision of one hundred master builders.

Justinian reopened it in 537 entering the Hagia Sophia with the words "Solomon, I have surpassed you!". Throughout Byzantine history, the Hagia Sophia played an important role as emperors were crowned and various victories were celebrated in this remarkable building. The Hagia Sophia even gave refuge to criminals. In time Ayasofya became a complex consisting of tombs, a fountain, libraries, etc. It has been thought that when Turks converted the church into a mosque, all the pictures were covered which is not correct. According to the narration of travelers, pictures were still standing but figures' faces were covered.

Ayasofya was used as a church for 916 years and as a mosque for 481 years. In 1934, by the order of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, it was made a museum and has since been open to visitors.

TOPKAPI PALACE

The Topkapi Sarayi was the second palace in Istanbul after the conquest. The first was in the Bayezit area and it was called the Old Palace after the construction of Topkapi. Called the New Palace initially it was named as the Topkapi Palace after a summer palace near the sea at Sarayburnu in the 19C. The construction of the Topkapi Palace, including the walls, was completed between 1465 and 1478. The Topkapi Sarayi was a city-palace with a population of approximately 4,000 people. It covers an area of 70 hectares / 173 acres. It housed all the Ottoman sultans from Sultan Mehmet II to Abdulmecit, nearly 400 years and 25 sultans. In 1924 it was made into a museum.

The first courtyard which was open to the public began after the Bab-i Humayun (Imperial Gate). This was the service area of the palace consisting of a hospital (with a capacity of 120 beds), a bakery, an arsenal, the mint, storage places for various items and some dormitories. This courtyard acted something like a city center. The Enderun, inner palace, began after the Babussaade and was surrounded by the quarters of the inner palace boys who were in the service of the sultan and the palace. The first building after entering into the third courtyard is Arz Odasi, the Audience Hall. Many important ceremonies also took place there. Foreign ambassadors and results of Divan meetings were presented to the sultan in this chamber.

Life at the Court

The focal point of the court was the sultan, of course. The sultan's daily life was very simple. In addition to daily regular activities, sultans, in order to broaden their perspectives, gathered scholars, poets, artists and historians at the palace. Most of the sultans in the Ottoman Empire united many skills in themselves. They commissioned new works, manuscripts and bindings, were ardent readers, competent calligraphers, poets, archers, riders, cirit (javelin) players, hunters, composers, etc.

In daily life at the palace, silence was dominant. Hundreds of people tried not to meet the sultan unless they needed to and in keeping voices down, it was even said that, people of the court sometimes developed a body language system among themselves.

The Harem

The concept of the harem has provoked much speculation. Curiosity about the unknown and inaccessible inspired highly imaginative literature among the people of the western world. People always basically thought that in a harem there were hundreds of beautiful girls and a sultan who had fun with all of them. This is generally not correct as the sultan could not, perhaps unfortunately for him, just leap into a roomful of beauties and have his way. There were certain rules with life in the Harem.

The word harem which in Arabic means "forbidden" refers to the private sector of a Moslem household in which women live and work; the term is also used for women dwelling there. In traditional Moslem society the privacy of the household was universally observed and respectable women did not socialize with men to whom they were not married or related. Because the establishment of a formal harem was an expense beyond the means of the poor, the practice was limited to elite groups, usually in urban settings. Since Islamic law allowed Moslems to have a maximum of four wives, in a harem there would be up to four wives and numerous concubines and servants. Having a harem, in general, was traditionally a mark of wealth and power. Though the women of the harems might never leave its confines, their influence was frequently of key importance to political and economic affairs of the household, with each woman seeking to promote the interests of her own children. The most famous harems were those of the sultans of the Ottoman Empire. The harems of the Ottoman Turkish rulers were elaborate structures concealed behind palace walls, in which lived hundreds of women who were married, related to, or owned by the head of the household.

Gallipoli & Dardanelles

The Dardanelles is the 61-km-long (38-mi) strait between the Aegean Sea and the Marmara Sea. It is the westernmost section of the waterway that divides Europe from Asia and connects the Mediterranean and Black seas.

The name Dardanelles comes from Dardanus, mythical ancestor of nearby Troy. It was also called the Hellespont in ancient times.

Unlike the Bosphorus in Istanbul, there is no bridge today on the Dardanelles. In the 5C BC the Persian King Xerxes built a pontoon bridge which stretched from Abydus to Sestus on his expedition against the Greeks.

Canakkale Battles (The Gallipoli Campaign) 1915

The Gallipoli campaign of 1915 was an Allied attempt to knock Ottoman Turkey out of World War I and reopen a supply route to Russia.

February to March : Naval attempts to force the Straits

May to July : Attempts to expand beachheads in Helles and Anzac; arrival of reinforcement

September to November: Static trench warfare with no major attacks by either side.

December : Evacuation of Anzac and Suvla Bay positions

January 1916 : Evacuation of Helles, end of campaign

Estimates of Allied casualties for the entire campaign are about 252,000, with the Turks suffering almost as many casualties.

Troy

The name Troy refers both to the remains of a Bronze Age fortress and city at Hisarlik, near the entrance to the Dardanelles and to the legendary city of King Priam that was destroyed by the Achaeans in the Trojan War. There are reasons to believe that the physical remains in Troy today correspond to the city in mythology. Troy was also once known as Ilios or Ilium; this is reflected in the name of Homer's epic poem the Iliad, a work that claims to relate the story of Troy's fall.

Troy was rediscovered and excavated by Heinrich Schliemann (1870-90). Many excavations have been carried out by different archeologists from different countries. From the evidence recovered by archeologists, there had been settlement in Troy from 3000 BC until 400 AD in nine different layers, each established on the previous layer.

Pergamum

Pergamum was an ancient city founded by colonists on the Aegean coast of Anatolia at the site of the present-day city of Bergama. It was on a tributary of the Bakircay (Caicus River), enclosed by high mountains. Fertile, self-contained and easily defended, it provided the perfect setting for the maintenance of a city state.

Acropolis

The function of the acropolis in Pergamum was never the same as the function of the acropolis in Athens. In Athens everything was focused on religion, whereas in Pergamum it was on social and cultural activities, or in other words, daily life.

The Library of Pergamum, built by Eumenes II, was the second of the three famous ancient libraries. It contained 200,000 volumes. A century later Mark Antony gave them to Cleopatra as a wedding present to be added to the collection of the library in Alexandria.

Manuscripts were written on parchment then rolled or folded and put on shelves. When the Egyptians prohibited the export of papyrus, the King of Pergamum ordered that a new material be found. The new discovery was "parchment", a fine material from sheep or goat skin, highly polished with pumice stone and slit into sheets. Therefore the name of Pergamum has been perpetuated and seen as synonymous with the word "parchment".

Ephesus

It can be said that Ephesus is one of the most beautiful ancient cities in the world. In ancient times its favorable location at the mouth of the Cayster River made it the foremost commercial city of a coastal region that also included the cities of Miletus, Smyrna and Pergamum, but the silting up of its harbor gradually resulted in the loss of this preeminence.

The city has been excavated for more than one hundred years; the extensive remains are predominantly from the later Roman period. Ephesus formed a focal point in the ancient world because of its protected harbor and as a starting point for the Royal Road via Sardis to Susa. It was also a cult center attracting thousands of pilgrims for traditional worship of the female, first Cybele, then Artemis and finally the Virgin Mary.

The city was an Ionian colony formed sometime after 1000 BC. Some authorities have suggested that the history of the city goes back to the

Hittite period, c. 1400 BC, and it was the city which the Hittites called Apasas.

The State Agora was a vast public square laid out and remodeled during the reign of Augustus (27 BC-14 AD). It was a public area where people gathered for political, commercial and social reasons

The Odeon in Ephesus was built in the 2C AD and had a double function. First it was a theater for theatrical performances as well as being the Bouleterion. It was the Senate House which was used by the boule, the advisory council of the city.

The Prytaneion was the official administrative building or the city hall which housed the senior city officials. What characterized a prytaneion was an eternal flame or the sacred hearth of Hestia in the prytaneion which is kept burning eternally by the Curetes, the six (later nine) priestesses of Hestia.

Memmius Monument had an inscription which referred to dictator Sulla's capture of Ephesus in the 1C BC. The monument was a memorial which was dedicated to Memmius, son of Caius and grandson of Sulla.

The Polio Fountain was a 2C AD building which was later restored in the 3C AD. Water brought by aqueducts is distributed from this fountain by a branching system of baked clay pipes.

The Domitian Temple is a 1C AD building. In the substructure of the building, parts of a huge statue which is four times larger than life were excavated and interpreted to be Emperor Domitian's.

The Hercules Gate. The pillars date from the 2C AD but were taken there to be used in the construction of a narrow gate house only in the 6C AD having originally stood elsewhere.

The Curetes Street lies between the Hercules Gate and the Celsus Library. Some name lists of the Curetes were inscribed on marble columns found on the north side of the street.

The Nymphaeum of Trajan is a 2C AD building with two stories built by an Ephesian in memory of the Emperor Trajan. In front of the building there was a pool with water cascading from beneath the colossal statue of Trajan.

The Terrace Houses on the Curetes street belonged to the rich people of Ephesus. They date back to the 1C AD and some of them were used up to the 7C AD.

The Scholastica Baths was built in the beginning of the 2C AD and restored with stones brought from the Prytaneion by a rich Christian lady named Scholastica in the beginning of the 5C AD. The building consists of an L-shaped apodyterium, a frigidarium, a tepidarium and a caldarium.

The Hadrian Temple was built in the 2C AD and renovated in the 4C AD in the name of the Emperor Hadrian.

The Latrines were part of the Scholastica Baths and built in the 1C AD. They were for public use.

The Private House (so-called brothel) was also a part of the Scholastica complex.

The Celsus Library was built in the beginning of the 2C AD by Gaius Julius Aquila to be a memorial to his father Gaius Julius Celsus Polemaeanus, the proconsul of the Province of Asia. The three entrances are flanked by four niches with statues representing the virtues of Celsus, Sophia (Wisdom), Areté (Valor), Ennoia (Thought) and Epistémé (Knowledge).

The Theater is one of the most impressive buildings in Ephesus. It was originally a 3C BC Hellenistic theater which was later restored, adapted and expanded in the 1C AD by the Romans until it reached its present seating capacity of 24,000 people. It was used for the meetings of the demos as well.

■ Pamukkale & Hierapolis

Pamukkale has always been a very popular settlement where the hot springs were believed to have healing powers, so the city became the center of a pagan cult in antiquity and a spa resort today. The terraces were formed by running warm spring water, at a temperature of 35 °C / 102 °F containing calcium bicarbonate. When the water loses its carbon dioxide it leaves limestone deposits.

The ancient city of Hierapolis was founded by Pergamum, probably Eumenes II, in the 2C BC.

The Necropolis is the largest ancient cemetery in Anatolia with approximately 1,200 graves. Although in the cemetery there are free-standing sarcophagi and some round tumuli, the main attraction is provided by large tomb-enclosures housing three or more vessels.

■ Cappadocia

Cappadocia (Kapadokya in Turkish) is the ancient and modern name of a remarkable region in Central Anatolia. The strange but beautiful formation of Cappadocia has had this appearance for millions of years. When the volcanoes in the region were active, the lava which poured out covered all previously formed hills and valleys forming a high plateau.

It is estimated that there are more than 600 rock-cut churches in Cappadocia. These churches that people carved were similar in plan to the ones in the capital. Walls were covered with beautiful frescoes and they were also influenced by the Iconoclast period in the 8C and 9C. In most churches there are many grave pits which are thought to have probably belonged to donors or the church dignitaries as this was the tradition.

Goreme Open Air Museum consists of steep cliffs and many hidden churches dating from the second half of the 9C and afterwards.

Kizlar Manastiri (Convent) to the left of the entrance of the museum is only a ruin today. However, in its heyday, it was a huge complex of more than five floors.

The Church of St. Barbara is an 11C cruciform church with two columns, three apses and a side entrance. Its name derives from a legendary saint, Barbara.

Yilanli Kilise (The Church of the Serpent) is a 11C church and has a single nave covered by a barrel vault and a small apse on the left after entering. An interesting feature in this church is that the frescoes are framed like icons. The name of the church derives from the serpent in one of the frescoes on the left above the apse.

Refectory In addition to churches, suitably to the monastic lifestyle, there was also a refectory, a dining complex, consisting of three rooms in line, a storehouse, a kitchen and a dining hall with a long table cut from the rock for about 30 people and an apsidal place for the father abbot at the top of the table.

Carikli Kilise (The Church of the Sandal) This is a church with a cruciform nave, two columns, three apses and four domes (one central dome and three cupolas). Its frescos date from the 13C. The name of the church derives from a footprint below the Ascension fresco.

Tokali Kilise (The Church of the Buckle), which for convenience is called the "New Church" is the most spectacular of all the rock-cut churches in Cappadocia. The 10C church is different in plan to others in the vicinity, having a transverse nave (Mesopotamian type) with three apses and a narthex hewn out of an earlier church, known as the "Old Church".

Mediterranean Coast

UNDERGROUND CITIES

No one knows when the underground cities of Cappadocia were built, perhaps in Hittite times or as late as the 6C AD. There were certainly underground cities as early as the 5C BC. So far 36 underground cities have been discovered some of them being very recent. It is also estimated that most of them are connected to each other. But it is difficult to identify these connections.

Underground City of Derinkuyu

The underground city of Derinkuyu which means "deep well" is one of the largest. It was opened in 1965. It is 70-85 m / 230-300 ft deep with 53 airshafts. The original ventilation system still functions remarkably well.

IHLARA CANYON (PERISTREMA)

Ihlara Canyon is a deep, narrow river gorge cut through the tufa by the Melendiz River. The river running through the Ihlara Canyon at its lowest level is still contributing to the erosion of it. The canyon runs for 20 km / 12 miles offering one of the most enjoyable trekking routes to those people who can spare the minimum of half a day. In the canyon there are about 60 churches, monasteries and cells of anchorites. There are a few major churches which are easier to reach.

Fethiye

Fethiye has become popular for beach holidays and yacht cruises. The modern town of Fethiye covers the site of ancient Telmessus.

Although it was not then a Lycian city, Telmessus was first mentioned in the tribute lists of the Delian League in the 5C BC. It became Lycian in the 4C BC only after the siege of the city by Pericles, King of Limyra. Later, it was taken by one of the governors of Alexander the Great with a trick similar to the Trojan Horse. An orchestra consisting of women passed the guards and occupied the acropolis.

Telmessus became part of the Roman province of Asia in 133 BC. During the Byzantine period Telmessus was known as Anastasiopolis. Rum population lived in the area until 1922.

Olu Deniz (Dead Sea)

Dead is in the sense of calm. It is a sheltered lagoon of great beauty, almost totally cut off from the sea, at the northern end of a long cove. Stretching from the lagoon to the southern end of the cove is a long, sandy public beach.

Kas

Not much remains from this city since it was established on top of the old city of Antiphellos in Central Lycia. From an inscription written in two languages, we can see that the city under Kas was Antiphellos. But the old name of Kas is Habesos. In the ninth century B.C., Antiphellos was a very small settlement unit and it was the port of Phellos, which is a bit north of Kas. As the Hellenistic age began, Phellos lost its importance while Antiphellos developed and came to the fore. This situation also continued in the Roman era and

Antiphellos developed further by cedar tree trade and sponge fishing. At that time, the city was no longer a port of Phellos but rather a rich and self-sufficient city.

Kas, the closest spot to Meis island, is a heaven for visitors who are fond of historical sites. The Cukurova Peninsula stretches into the sea and there are modern hotels built on this peninsula. The peninsula is also an ideal three-kilometer-long walking track which offers beautiful views along its path.

Inside Kas, there are splendid beaches with clean water like Büyük Çakıl, Küçük Çakıl and Akçagerme. There are six caves around Kas. Mavi Magara (The Blue Cave), the Asirli island sea cave and the Güvercinlik Cave famous for its pigeons are 18 kilometers from Kas, and they are the most famous ones. Kaputas Beach is one of the most beautiful beaches in the world. Besides its historical sites, Kas offers many options including adventurous sports, excursions and optional activities like scuba diving, mountain biking, jeep safari, paragliding, trekking, rafting, sea kayaking, gulet cruising and many others. Kas became one of the most popular backpacker and independent traveller resort in last 5 years (comparable with Dahab in Egypt) because of its fantastic nature, unspoiled beaches, original atmosphere, unexpensive bars, restaurants, pubs and cafes, friendly local people and historical, natural and cultural sights.

Kekova

Kekova is a name given to the most scenic area in Lycia along the Turquoise Coast. It covers a large area consisting of Kekova Island, Kale (Castle) village and Ucagiz (the Three Mouths) village. A sunken city was formed by the submergence of ancient cities probably due to earthquakes. The Tersane (shipyard) can still be seen on the shore of Kekova Island. Both the

sunken city and the Tersane are thought to be from either the Lycian or Byzantine period, but neither of them has been excavated. On a narrow section of the western side of the island are the ruins of a Byzantine Church with its apse still visible.

Simena

The village of Kale has been identified as the Lycian town of Simena where there is still a settlement with stone cottages mixed in with Lycian and Roman remains. A Lycian sarcophagus standing in the shallows of the harbor of Simena is the most notable ruin. From inscriptions at this site, we can date the city to the ninth century B.C. The Simena fortress was used in the Middle Ages. There is a temple and a stoa connected to the temple inside this fortress. Here there is also a theater with seven rows of seats carved into rocks for an audience of 300. This is the smallest theater that was built in a Lycian city.

Olympos

Olympos was set up in the Hellenistic period. In 100 B.C., Olympos became one of the six leading cities that had the right to vote. In the first century B.C., pirates became so fond of the

city that Olympos almost became a settlement area for the pirates. During the Roman era, the city became very famous with the cult of the blacksmith god Vulcan (Hephaestus) in nearby Çirali, where natural gases keep a number of flames perpetually burning. Olympos is spread across the two sides of the creek that passes through it. The hill that rises behind the tombs can be seen from the beach, and this was the acropolis of Olympos. The remains on the hill belong to a fortress built in the Middle Ages. When you look down from this hill, you can see this lovely river which makes the city resemble Venice. The river was directed into a channel with polygonal walls built on its two sides. The two sides were joined by a bridge whose remains are still visible today.

RAMADAN

Ramadan is the most important religious event for Muslims lasting for one month. Around one billion Muslims do not eat and drink from sunrise to sunset which may also effect the usual travel habits of travellers from all over the world.

In 2010 Ramadan is set to begin on 11 August until 9 September.

ENJOY YOUR ADVENTURE !

To the best of our knowledge the above information is accurate. However many things can change after pre-departure information is printed or issued and Travel Talk will not accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses incurred due to such inaccuracies. Should you have a query that is not covered in the following information please contact us for the latest updated information.

SELF TRANSPORTATION FROM ISTANBUL AIRPORTS

Ataturk Airport is only a short trip from the centre of Istanbul.

The cheapest method is;

Take the metro from the airport 'Ataturk Havalimani' to 'Zeytinburnu' where you should get off and take the connecting tram to Gulhane, total cost will be approx 5 TL

The arrival hotel is just a couple of minutes walk from Gulhane tram station.

You can take a taxi from the airport direct to your arrival hotel; you should expect to pay no more than 40 TL.

The journey from **Sabiha Gokcen** (SAW) is very straightforward and inexpensive. On exiting the terminal building you will see the Havas (pronounced Havash) bus which will take you to TAKSIM for 12 TL approx £5 journey time approx 40mins.

From Taksim you can either take a yellow taxi direct to the old city usually 15 TL. (It is possible for the taxi fare to be exaggerated for tourist.)

Or you can take the funicular 2 TL from Taksim (go to the Metro station, you will see the entrance in the square) to Kabatas. From Kabatas take the over ground tram 2 TL to Gulhane. Journey time Taksim to Gulhane is either way approx 25 mins.

The arrival hotel is just a couple of minutes walk from Gulhane tram station.

