# Trip Details

## Essential Turkey

Essential Turkey tour combines history, culture, wonders and natural phenomena.
Discover the vibrant culture and welcoming tradition together with countless unique travel experiences. Roam the incredible palaces, bazaars and mosques of Istanbul before cruising right between Europe and Asia. Then journey into the bizarre as you explore other-worldly Cappadocia and balloon over fairy-chimneys. Walk among the impressive ancient wonders of Pergamum & Ephesus and the natural treasures of Pamukkale. Pay your respects for the fallen at the shores of Gallipoli before returning to Istanbul.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Duration** | 9 Days | **Group Size** | 12 People Max. |
| **Destination** | Turkey | **Age Req.** | 18+ |
| **Start/Ends in** | Istanbul/Istanbul | **Trip Theme** | Classic, Overland |
| **Hotels** | 5 & 4 Star | **Departs** | All Year Round |

## Why You Will Love This Tour

* Feel the beating heart of Istanbul from your hotel in the old town beside monumental landmarks such as the Hagia Sophia. Join an optional Bosphorus Cruise to watch Europe and Asia unfold on your
* Stay in hand-picked, centrally located and authentic 5 & 4-Star hotels and ride in private modern coaches.
* Travel with an expert local guide throughout your trip, get the best introduction and insights into Turkish culture.
* Visit the shores of Gallipoli to honour the fallen during one of the greatest battles of WWI & tour famous ancient cities in Anatolia; Troy, Pergamum, Asklepion and Cappadocia.
* Explore the well-preserved ruins of Ephesus delving into ancient times and soak in the gorgeous Library of Celsus.
* Walk among cottonlike pools of travertine in Pamukkale and soak in the magical landscape of Cappadocia with options for an unforgettable hot-air ballooning adventure and Turkish Bath.
* No night drives; however some long rides are required to cover all these incredible places. You may check other tour options in Turkey for alternative routes including flights.

## Arrival Details

The group welcome meeting with you guide and other travellers is held around 18:30 at the hotel lobby on Day 1 of your tour, unless otherwise notified.

### Meeting Point

The meeting point for the Essential Turkey tour is:
**Legacy Ottoman Hotel – ISTANBUL**
**Address :** Hobyar Mahallesi, Hamidiye Cd. No:16, 34112 Fatih, Istanbul, Turkey
**Phone :** +90 (0212) 527 67 67 **Emergency Number:** +44 (0) 208 099 75 36

### Airport Transfers

Complementary arrival airport transfer is available between 05:00 and 23:00 on the first day of the tour (Day 1) from both international airports in Istanbul. Arrival airport transfer is also available if you book pre-accommodation with us.

To arrange your airport transfer please email us the following information at least 2 weeks before your departure date. info@traveltalktours.com

•Travel Date •Flight Number •Local Arrival Time •Name/s of the Passengers

### Making Your Own Way to the Starting Point

The Istanbul Airport (ISL) is located 45 km North-west of Old Town. Before you exit the terminal you will need to go down below Level 2 for the Havaist shuttle which will take you to Sultanahmet (Old town) for 18TL and the drive takes approx. 80 minutes. The payment method for the shuttle is IstanbulKart that you can easily get from the machines at airport (works for allpublic transportation in Istanbul & can be refilled). From Sultanahmet, you will need to take the tram to Eminönü. The arrival hotel is only a couple of minutes' walk from Eminönü tram station. The total cost is approximately 25TL. You can also take a taxi from the airport directly to the hotel and can expect to pay around 150-200 TL.

The journey from Sabiha Gokcen Airport (SAW) to Istanbul is straightforward and inexpensive. After you leave the terminal you will see Havabus shuttle which will take you to Taksim for 18TL (cash accepted) and the drive takes approx. 90 minutes. From Taksim, you will need to take the funicular to Kabatas, then catch the tram to Eminönü (will require IstanbulKart to ride the tram). The total cost is approximately 28TL. If you prefer to take a taxi straight to the hotel, it will cost around 160TL.

### Finishing Point

The finishing point for the Essential Turkey tour is:
**Legacy Ottoman Hotel – ISTANBUL**
**Address :** Hobyar Mahallesi, Hamidiye Cd. No:16, 34112 Fatih, Istanbul, Turkey
**Phone :** +90 (0212) 527 67 67 **Emergency Number:** +44 (0) 208 099 75 36

## Highlights

* Istanbul: Istanbul is a major city in Turkey that straddles Europe and Asia across the Bosphorus Strait. Its Old City reflects cultural influences of the many empires that once ruled here.
* Blue Mosque: The exterior features a beautiful cascade of domes and six minarets and blue Iznik tiles adorn the interior giving the building its unofficial but commonly used name.
* Topkapi Palace: Home of the Sultans, heart of the Ottoman Empire… Roam through the royal palace of the Ottomans and follow their footsteps to see their most valued treasures.
* The Hagia Sophia: The Hagia Sophia, among the Seven Wonders of the World, awaits you with all its magnificence. The hundreds of years old structure will fascinate you on sight.
* Cappadocia: A region of exceptional natural and man-made wonders. Take the chance to discover underground cities carved into rock, fairy chimneys and many more…
* Pamukkale: Home of the world-famous travertines, the cotton castle. You will witness the unusual and beautiful scenery just near the ancient city of Hierapolis.
* Asklepion: The Asklepion is a famed ancient medical center built in honor of Asclepius, the god of healing. It was also the world's first psychiatric hospital.
* Ephesus: The best preserved ancient town in Turkey, Ephesus embarks you on a journey to ancient times while roaming the streets.Celcius Library is the most important remains of it.
* Troy: Troy is the name of the Bronze Age city attacked in the Trojan War. The legendary city where you can outline layers of ruins of cities built on top of each other…
* Gallipoli: Lone Pine, Chunuk Bair, Anzac Cove, Johnston's Jolly, North Beach, Ari Burnu, Hell Spit, Brighton Beach, Shrapnel Valley, Artillery Road, Quinn's Road and more…

# Itinerary

Please note that the itinerary may be subject to small changes depending on the conditions during the tour. Alternative accommodation of similar standards may be used depending on the group size and hotel availability.

### Day 1: Istanbul

Welcome to Turkey! At the Istanbul airport terminal keep your eyes peeled for the Travel Talk sign for your transfer to the hotel. Meet in the hotel lobby at 7:00pm for an informal meeting with your group and guide. Until then, you can start to explore Istanbul like climbing to the top of the Galata Tower for epic views or splash some cash at the Grand Bazaar. After the meeting, join in an optional group dinner at a local restaurant to get to know your new travel mates.

- **Accommodation**

Ottoman Legacy Hotel – 5 Star

- **Included Activities**

Welcome Meeting

- **Optional Activities**

Group Dinner

### Day 2: Istanbul City Tour

After breakfast, we begin to explore the magical old town of Istanbul. Stroll through the historical heart of the old city, making stops along the way to the Blue Mosque, Hippodrome, majestic Topkapi Palace and the Hagia Sophia. In the afternoon take an optional cruise down the Bosphorus river and see the epic skyline.

- **Accommodation**

Ottoman Legacy Hotel – 5 Star

- **Meals Included**

Breakfast

- **Included Activities**

Sightseeing of Blue Mosque
Sightseeing of Hagia Sophia Museum
Sightseeing of Topkapi Palace Museum

- **Optional Activities**

Bosphorus Boat Cruise - EUR 10

- **Entrance Fees**

Blue Mosque - Free
Hagia Sophia Museum – Free
Topkapi Palace Museum 100 TL

### Day 3: Cappadocia

Today we sit back and relax in the coach. Watch the amazing Turkish scenery unfold before us and see small towns and villages as we pass on by. We will drive through the capital city of Ankara before we reach Cappadocia. In the afternoon, we will visit Derinkuyu Underground City, a city complete with a church, wells, food stores, and even stables which is all located 60m under the ground. End the day with an optional traditional Hammam (Turkish bath).

• **Accommodation**
Avrasya Hotel - 4 Star

• **Meals Included**
Breakfast, Dinner

• **Included Activities**
Sightseeing of Derinkuyu Underground City

• **Optional Activities**
Turkish Bath Experience - 130 TL

• **Entrance Fees**
Derinkuyu Underground City - 50 TL

### Day 4: Cappadocia

Rise and shine, it will be an early start for our optional sunrise hot air balloon ride over the stunning landscapes and fairy chimneys of Cappadocia. Or if preferred enjoy a leisurely start to the morning before we all fill up on breakfast. We will explore the UNESCO World Heritage listed Göreme, and tick off bucket list sights along the way including Göreme Musuem, Pigeon Valley, Uchisar and Cavusin. Tonight, get your dancing shoes on for our optional Turkish Night.

• **Accommodation**
Avrasya Hotel - 4 Star

• **Meals Included**
Breakfast, Dinner

• **Included Activities**
Goreme Open Air Museum Visit
Sightseeing of Cavusin
Sightseeing of Pigeon Valley
Sightseeing of Uchisar

• **Optional Activities**
Turkish Night Show - 160 TL
Hot Air Balooning - 130 EUR

• **Entrance Fees**
Goreme Open Air Museum - 75 TL

### Day 5: Pamukkale

It’s time to hit the road to Pamukkale. Along the way we will stop at Ihlara Valley, a unique honeycombed canyon with rock-cut underground dwellings and churches from the Byzantine period. Time to rest up at our overnight stay in Pamukkale.

• **Accommodation**
Hierapark Hotel - 4 Star

• **Meals Included**
Breakfast, Dinner

• **Included Activities**
Sightseeing of Ihlara Valley

## Day 6: Pamukkale, Ephesus, Kusadasi

Get your cameras ready, as it is time to visit Pamukkale, or 'cotton castle' in Turkish. Pamukkale is a natural site that contains hot springs and travertine, giving the appearance of terraces made by carbonate minerals left by the flowing water. The ancient city of Hierapolis was built on top of the white castle and people have bathed in its pools for thousands of years. Our next stop is the spectacular, well preserved ancient city of Ephesus. Ephesus was cited in the book of Revelations, and historians believe the Gospel of John was written here. Famed for the Temple of Artemis which was completed around 550 BC and is one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. We will sleep overnight in the seaside town of Kusadasi.

- **Accommodation**

Marina Hotel - 4 Star

- **Meals Included**

Breakfast, Dinner

- **Included Activities**

Sightseeing of Pamukkale White Terraces
Sightseeing of Ephesus Ancient City

- **Entrance Fees**

Pamukkale White Terraces - 80 TL
Ephesus Ancient City - 100 TL

## Day 7: Kusadasi, Pergamum, Troy, Canakkale

After breakfast we continue to Pergamum, and the ruins of the Asklepion, an ancient healing centre. We will then depart for ancient city of Troy. You may of heard of Troy from Greek mythology or maybe just watched the Brad Pitt movie, but now you will visit the ruins and archaeological site of the city of Troy, and of course the famous wooden horse. We will stay overnight in Canakkale. You will have the evening to relax and discover the town.

- **Accommodation**

Kolin Hotel - 5 Star

- **Meals Included**

Breakfast, Dinner

- **Included Activities**

Sightseeing of Asklepion Ancient City
Sightseeing of Troy Ancient City

- **Entrance Fees**

Asklepion Ancient City - 45 TL
Troy Ancient City - 50 TL

## Day 8: Canakkale, Gallipoli, Istanbul

Today we depart for the shores of Gallipoli. A place of important significance for Aussies and Kiwis, we will visit the beach and cemeteries at ANZAC Cove, before paying our respects at memorial sites Chunuk Bair and Lone Pine. In the afternoon, we will drive back to where our adventure began, Istanbul.

- **Accommodation**

Ottoman Legacy Hotel – 5 Star

- **Meals Included**

Breakfast

• **Included Activities**
Sightseeing of Anzac Cove
Sightseeing of Beach Cemetery
Sightseeing of Lone Pine
Sightseeing of Chunuk Bair
Sightseeing of War Trenches

### Day 9: Istanbul

Our trip will end in Istanbul after we say goodbye to our new friends over breakfast and check-out of the hotel by 11:00am.

• **Meals Included**
Breakfast

## Inclusions & Exclusions

The tour price covers the following services:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Accommodation:** | 5 and 4 star hotels |
| **Airport Transfer:** | From Istanbul Airport and Sabiha Gokcen Airport (on day 1) |
| **Meals:** | 8 breakfasts \| 5 dinners |
| **Transportation:** | Air-conditioned modern non-smoking coach or mini-bus |
| **Guide:** | Services of experienced Travel Talk local guides licenced by the Ministry of Tourism |
| **Sightseeing:** | Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia, Topkapi Palace Museum, Derinkuyu Underground City<br>Goreme Open Air Museum, Pigeon Valley, Uchisar, Ihlara Valley, Ephesus Ancient City<br>Cavusin, Pamukkale White Terraces, Asklepion Ancient City, Troy Ancient City<br>Anzac Cove, Beach Cemetery, Lone Pine, Chunuk Bair, War Trenches |

**What is NOT included in the tour price?**

• Any flights not mentioned above
• Travel insurance
• Meals not stated above
• Items of a personal nature
• Tips & gestures
• Entrance fees to the sights and museums
• Optional activities
• Other services not stated in the itinerary

## Hotels & Accommodation

Please note that the hotels are subject to change depending on the group size and availability. Hotels of similar standards will be used where available in case of a change.

Solo travellers will be roomed with another solo traveller of the same gender in a twin or triple room, or can upgrade to a solo room by paying the single supplement. You may choose the solo room option when booking online or contact us to arrange a private room. Solo rooms are not available on gullets. Your tour leader will allocate rooms upon arrival at the starting hotel in accordance with the rooming lists, last minute changes may not be guaranteed.

**LEGACY OTTOMAN HOTEL – ISTANBUL – 5 Star**
Hotel continues its deep meaning that coming from its history which is adjacent to the most important historical monuments of the city, is the only five-star hotel in the region.

**KOLIN HOTEL – CANAKKALE – 5 Star**
The 5-star hotel in Gallipoli is a perfect place to relax and prepare for the upcoming big tour. The large swimming pool and the delicious open buffet add up to the comfortable rooms they offer.

**MARINA HOTEL – KUSADASI – 4 Star**
This hotel has a seafront location in the Aegean coast, only 250 metres from the beach. The hotel offers an outdoor pool and a terrace with panoramic views of the sea and Kusadasi Marina.

**HIERA PARK DELUXE HOTEL – PAMUKKALE – 4 Star**
This hotel is located in Karahayit regions where is famous with it's mineral hot waters and this hotel offers an absolute relaxation with it's hot thermal pools & spa center.

**AVRASYA HOTEL – CAPPADOCIA – 4 Star**
This is a very special place in Cappadocia which has been shaped by magic hands of nature. The hotel is in the intersection of the real world and the world of fairies. Also in a very good location.

## Distances

Please find below the distances between the sights visited in Turkey and the approximate driving times. We will always strive to take a short break every few hours to enable passengers to stretch their legs, purchase snacks and use wash facilities during long drives.

Istanbul – Cappadocia: 760 km – 11 hours
Cappadocia – Pamukkale: 630 km – 10 hours
Pamukkale – Kusadasi: 193 km – 3.5 hours
Kusadasi – Pergamum – Troy – Gallipoli: 450 km – 10 hours
Gallipoli – Istanbul: 295 km – 5 hours

## Budgeting

Please note that entrance fees to sights and optional activities are not included in the tour price. Optional activities are not operated by Travel Talk and may require a certain number of attendees to run. Your guide will be happy to inform you further about the available optional activities at the start of your tour. Optional activities are also listed under each day in your tour itinerary.

### Entrance Fees

**Istanbul**

| | |
|---|---|
| Topkapi Palace | 100 TRY |
| Blue Mosque | Free |
| Hagia Sophia | Free |

**Cappadocia**

| | |
|---|---|
| Underground City | 50 TRY |
| Goreme Museum | 100 TRY |
| Pigeon Valley | Free |

**Pamukkale**

| | |
|---|---|
| White Terraces | 80 TRY |
| Ephesus Ancient City | 100 TRY |

**Canakkale**

| | |
|---|---|
| Asklepion Ancient City | 45 TRY |
| Troy Ancient City | 50 TRY |

| | |
|---|---|
| **TOTAL** | **525 TRY (approx. 70 USD)** |

## Optional Activities

Please note that Optional Activities are not operated by Travel Talk.

| | |
|---|---|
| Hot-Air Ballooning | 130 EUR |
| Turkish Night Show | 160 TRY |
| Turkish Bath Experience | 130 TRY |
| Bosphorus Cruise | 10 EUR |

## Personal Spending

The Turkish Lira is the currency of Turkey. While every person has different spending habits, we have estimated your average daily expenses to help out with the planning. Please find below in USD the approximate spending to expect for meals not included and more.

**Meals**

| | |
|---|---|
| Lunch at restaurant | 5-7 USD |
| Dinner at restaurant | 10-15 USD |
| Simit - Turkish Bagel | 1-2 USD |
| Sandwich at a stall | 0,15 USD |

**Drinks**

| | |
|---|---|
| Bottle of water | 0.15 USD |
| Coffee | 1-1.5 USD |
| Tea | 0.5-1 USD |
| Bottle of beer | 2-3 USD |

**Tipping**

Tipping good service is common in Turkey, typically ~ 10% for a restaurant meal. No need to tip taxi drivers, however you can round up the fare for convenience. Your guide and driver would also appreciate this kind of traditional gratitude at the end of your tour.

## Shopping

With plenty of markets, stores, shops and bazaars to choose from you're able to discover a wide range of beautiful unique crafts, textiles, jewellery, clothing and furniture. Turkey is also home to the Grand Bazaar; the biggest old covered bazaar in the world, with over 3,000 shops of all kinds. Haggling is also part of the experience, so brush up on your skills. Turkey is especially known for its:

**Pottery & Ceramics**

Famous for its fertile lands and other-worldly landscape, the volcanic soil of Goreme, Cappadoccia has allowed for marvellous works of pottery for centuries. A perfect souvenir that comes in many shapes and sizes! Prices may range from 1 to 100 USD.

**Hand-woven carpets**

Famously known for its high-quality hand-woven carpets, it might be the best souvenir to give yourself or to a loved one… Prices may range from 100 to 1000+ USD.

**Evil-eye Talisman**
Believed to ward of the evil, these bright blue eyes of glass (Nazar Boncugu) are found in many sights visited and come in various sizes as decorative items, keychains and more. Prices may range from 0.50 to 50 USD.

### Opening hours

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

# Essential Information: Turkey

## Passport & Visas

Most nationalities require a visa to enter Turkey, which can be applied for online via www.evisa.gov.tr. Travellers from the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Ireland, South Africa and the USA can apply for a 90-day e-visa online. Although this process usually takes only several minutes, we recommend to obtain it at least 2 weeks before you arrive in Turkey.

Citizens of the following countries do not require a visa if staying for less than three months: New Zealand, France, Germany, Japan, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland.

Passport validity entry requirements: Travellers entering Turkey must carry a passport or travel document valid for at least 60 days from the expiry date of their visa.

This information is provided as a guidance, we strongly advise that you check with the consulate or embassy as this information can change. Please note, visa costs can change at any time and with little notice depending on the political climate of the region. It is your responsibility to make sure that all the required travel documents are ready when travelling.

## Travel Advice

We are closely monitoring the latest travel updates to Turkey and follow the advice of the UK Foreign Office. For the latest travel advice from UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO), please visit: https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/turkey

We recommend all travellers to check their Government National Travel Advisory prior to their departure:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Australia | - | https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/ |
| Canada | - | https://travel.gc.ca/ |
| New Zealand | - | https://www.safetravel.govt.nz/ |
| USA | - | https://travel.state.gov/ |

## Travel Insurance

All passengers travelling with Travel Talk are required to have personal travel insurance before participating in any of our tours. Your guide will collect your travel insurance details on the first day of your trip. It is your responsibility to make sure you have an adequate and suitable travel insurance for you in place, you may read more at https://www.traveltalktours.com/travel-insurance

## Health & Safety

The health and safety of our passengers, staff and communities visited is of utmost priority. As we monitor and comply with the official advice from the UK Foreign Office, as well as World Health Organization and government authorities regularly, we have implemented several policies and precautions on our tours for your wellbeing.You may find our Safe Travels Protocols at https://www.traveltalktours.com/safe-travels

Travel Talk Adventures has received the Safe Travels stamp by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), which allows travellers to recognise companies around the world that have adopted health and hygiene global standardised protocols – so consumers can experience 'Safe Travels'.

Please make sure to regularly check your Government's travel advice before travelling and be well-informed of any requirements. Your tour guide will also notify you of the regulations and protocols to follow throughout your trip with us.

Please note that if any traveller is unable to complete the itinerary or possess a potential risk to themselves and/or the rest of the group, we reserve the right to remove them from all or part of a trip.

Please consult with your doctor for the latest medical travel information and any vaccinations you may need. We recommend that you bring any personal medical requirements and medications with you as these may be difficult to obtain while on tour.

## Weather

Istanbul has wet, cold and often snowy winters and has the highest rainfall from November to February. Spring in Istanbul is damp with mild temperatures and it is relatively dry and hot in the summer. The city also tends to be windy. The southern, coastal regions of Turkey are warm and pleasant 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. Due to the high altitude of the central Anatolian plateau, Cappadocia can be cool in the evenings, even in the summer, but it remains hot during the day - often in the mid-thirties. Spring and autumn can be very crisp and suitable clothing is advised. Please find below the average temperatures for each month in different parts of Turkey.

| | Istanbul | | Cappadocia | | Ephesus | | Fethiye | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Months | C° | F | C° | F | C° | F | C° | F |
| January | 6 | 43 | 0 | 32 | 9 | 48 | 10 | 50 |
| February | 6 | 43 | 1 | 34 | 9 | 48 | 10 | 50 |
| March | 8 | 46 | 5 | 41 | 13 | 55 | 13 | 55 |
| April | 13 | 55 | 10 | 50 | 17 | 63 | 17 | 63 |
| May | 17 | 63 | 14 | 57 | 21 | 70 | 21 | 70 |
| June | 21 | 70 | 18 | 64 | 26 | 79 | 26 | 79 |
| July | 24 | 75 | 23 | 73 | 27 | 81 | 29 | 84 |
| August | 24 | 75 | 23 | 73 | 27 | 81 | 28 | 82 |
| September | 21 | 70 | 17 | 63 | 24 | 75 | 25 | 77 |
| October | 16 | 61 | 11 | 52 | 20 | 68 | 21 | 70 |
| November | 12 | 54 | 6 | 43 | 14 | 57 | 16 | 61 |
| December | 8 | 46 | 1 | 34 | 10 | 50 | 12 | 54 |

## Money Matters

The Turkish Lira (TRY) is the local currency. Although you can pay with USD and EUR in some places, you'll always get a better deal paying in the local currency.

Major credit/debit cards are widely accepted in Turkey. Some shops at small towns and rural areas may not accept cards, we would recommend carrying some cash with you for small purchases, just in case. ATMs can be easily found in many places in the cities however are not as common in rural areas. Avoid changing the bulk of your money at the airport as the exchange rates are usually more favourable in the major cities. Your tour leader will be happy to help if you need any assistance!

Please remember that everyone has different spending habits, some prefer to spend more on souvenirs, some on experiences and others on a night out! Make sure to budget your trip to your spending habits for shopping, drinking, and tipping.

Tipping is not compulsory, but is commonplace, with locals and tourists alike tipping good service. We recommend tipping ~10% of the total bill when dining in a restaurant, if a service fee has not already been applied. However, simply rounding up the fare in a Taxi for convenience is acceptable and appreciated also. Your guide and driver would also appreciate this kind of traditional gratitude at the end of your tour.

## Eating & Drinking

The Turkish love to eat out and it's easy to see why! Turkish cuisine is filled with a unique blend of Eastern European, Central Asian and Middle Eastern flavours. Don't let the clichés fool you; there is more to Turkish cuisine than shish kebabs!

No one does breakfast, or Kahvalti, quite like the Turkish. Expect to see the table covered in a variety of meze dishes and gastronomic delights served on small plates including cheeses to olives, eggs. breads and pastries. There are two common restaurant styles in Turkey – A-La-Carte and 'ready meal'. Ready meal restaurants offer a range of pre-prepared, buffet-style dishes and are a fantastic opportunity to sample a wide variety of traditional cuisines for reasonable prices. Meanwhile, in more upmarket restaurants, we recommend sampling a range of 'Meze' platters (appetizers) to get a taste for the unique local tastes. Searching for authentic dishes to your taste can be a challenge with so many incredible options, so here's a few must-try dishes to get you started in Turkey.

**Gozleme:** Thin savoury Turkish pancakes filled with cheese, meat, mushroom, spinach or potato.

**Pide:** A savoury bread baked with feta cheese, parsley, and mozzarella, sprinkled with nigella seeds. You can also fill with lamb which is like Lebanese lamb fatayer.

**Simit:** Bread ring studded with sesame seeds. Sold in bakeries and by street vendors.

**Cig Kofte:** A simple snack made from cracked wheat mixed with raw meat, tomato paste and lots of spices. Usually served on lettuce leaves with lemon juice, it is a spicy, crisp, and refreshing flavour.

**Adana kebabs:** Similar to the widely popular Shish and doner kebab, Adana is a spicy minded meat kebab sprinkled in purple sumac herb.

**Baklava:** Don't forget to save room for traditional dessert… A deliciously rich, buttery, sweet dessert made from phyllo dough, finely ground pistachios, butter, and a syrup made from sugar, water and lemon juice.

**Kadayif:** Shredded pastry dough filled with nuts and drenched in syrup.

**Lokum (Turkish Delight):** A family of confections based on a gel of starch and sugar. Premium varieties consist largely of chopped dates, pistachios, hazelnuts, or walnuts bound by the gel and flavoured with rosewater.

There is a common misconception that Turkish Coffee is the nation's traditional drink, brewed thick and powerful yet drank in just a couple of short sips. However, Tourists are often surprised to learn that tea (cay) is far more popular amongst locals. It is served in a small fluted glass with a small spoon and saucer. There are various flavours of tea to try from the traditional to sweet apple and lemon. You'll also find a wide variety of alcoholic drinks on offer with Beer (bira) the most popular. Local beer brands include Efes and Tuborg. While 'Raki' is the national aperitif served with ice and water.

## Internet Access

Free WIFI can be found throughout an abundance of cafes, shopping malls and restaurants in Turkey's major cities and stopover, however quality of connection differs. While the Travel Talk Hotel accommodations almost always include WIFI, meaning there will be plenty of time to upload those travel pics and give your friends and family back home a call!

## Essentials to Bring

* Face mask/cover and hand sanitiser enough for your personal use throughout the trip – See more at https://www.traveltalktours.com/safe-travels
* Travel Documents: Passport, Visa (if required), flight or transport ticket (and photocopies)
* Travel Talk Tour Voucher (printed or digital)
* Travel Insurance Policy (and photocopy)
* Personal medical kit and medicine
* Money (cash, credit card, travellers' cheques)
* Power Adapter
* Reusable water bottle
* Ear plugs and eye mask
* Sun protection – hat, sunglasses, sunscreen
* Comfortable, closed walking shoes
* Wind/water proof jacket
* Warm clothes, hat, and gloves for cold weather
* Sandals, swimwear, shorts for warm weather

## Culture and Traditions

Turkish Culture has its share of interesting traditions that you are unlikely to find anywhere else in the world. Due to its proximity to diverse cultures and its vast history, you will discover remarkable samples of Ancient Greek, Byzantine and Ottoman influences around the country. Depending upon the region of Turkey you are travelling to, cultural practices dialect vary significantly. Turkish are renowned for being extremely friendly, polite and hospital. However, it is important to remember that while most Turkish cities are modern metropolises, Turks can still be quite traditional. The villages of Turkey tend to be more modest, with the sale of alcohol less common. Turkish bathhouses (Hamams) and Coffee Houses are popular past-times and traditions amongst the locals while nightclubs and bars are the standard form of entertainment for young Turks in the big cities.

## Religion, Etiquette and How to Dress

Turkish people are seen to be polite and formal with both greetings and attire. The vast majority of the population in Turkey identify as Muslim and Islamic holidays, such as Ramadan, are recognised as public holidays. It is important to be aware and respectful of local customs. Please feel welcome to speak with your tour leader if you have any questions regarding local customs, religions, or appropriate clothing to wear while on tour. With this in mind, we strongly recommend wearing clothing that covers both from your shoulders to knees when visiting or nearby mosques and other religious complexes in Turkey. It is also recommended that female travellers carry a scarf on them to wear when visiting mosques.

## Solo Travellers

We have many solo travellers joining our tours. Solo travellers will be roomed with another traveller of the same gender. If you would like a private solo room, subject to availability and a single supplement, please contact us.

## Rules to Follow

We are committed to ensuring a safe and enjoyable experience for everyone. We do not tolerate any form of violence (physical or verbal), bullying or harassment involving customers, partners, Travel Talk staff or locals. Sexual relationships between a tour leader and a passenger are forbidden.

We will not tolerate any illegal activity, including but not limited to: use and possession of illegal drugs, trespassing, and disrupting public order. If you consume alcohol, please ensure that you drink responsibly and follow the local laws and regulations.

You must follow the advice of your tour leader and local officials regarding health and safety measures. We operate all tours under Safe Travels protocols for the wellbeing of our passengers, staff and communities visited. Please ensure that you have read the https://www.traveltalktours.com/safe-travels/ and are fully prepared for your trip.

If someone is acting inappropriately regarding these matters, please notify your tour leader immediately or contact us on the emergency contact number provided below.

Your tour leader has the right to remove from the group anyone not abiding by these rules, with no right of compensation or refund. See more at https://www.traveltalktours.com/booking-terms/

Please remember that our travellers come from different parts of the world and will have various needs and preferences. Be understanding and patient with your fellow travellers, and always strive to be on time.

## Responsible Travel

We believe that travel is a force for good and show our support through various initiatives and charity organizations, as well as keeping the principals of responsible and sustainable travel at the core of our ethos. These values are engrained in our business culture and the design of our trips just the same. Together with you, we strive to make a positive impact on local people and economies, respecting the local culture, environment, social fabric and customs; encouraging respectful and meaningful cross-cultural exchange.
Read more at https://www.traveltalktours.com/responsible-travel/