

TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline

TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Visit the famous historical sites in Istanbul
- ▶ Explore the ancient cities of Ephesus, Cibyra and Cappadocia
- ▶ Immerse yourself in the breathtaking landscape of the Kekova area on a private boat tour
- ▶ Enjoy a private cruise along the Bosphorus Strait

TRIP ROUTE



TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline

QUICK VIEW ITINERARY

- Day 1 arrive in Istanbul, welcome dinner
- Day 2 walking tour of the famous sites of Istanbul
- Day 3 visit Topkapi Palace, fly to Izmir and the Selçuk area
- Day 4 discover Mary's House, the ancient city of Ephesus and Sirince Village, visit Artemision
- Day 5 visit Ephesus Museum, drive to Pamukkale and its fascinating self-built travertine pools and ruins
- Day 6 discover the ancient city of Cibyra, head to the charming coastal town of Kalkan
- Day 7 spend the day in the Kekova area, enjoy a private boat tour in a marvelous landscape, discover the medieval fortress of Simena
- Day 8 visit Antalya Old Town, enjoy a seaside lunch and a free afternoon
- Day 9 fly to Cappadocia, visit Uchisar Rock Fortress, Goreme Air Museum, discover Pashabag epic fairy chimneys
- Day 10 explore Kaymakli Underground City, Avanos, Red Valley hike
- Day 11 fly to Istanbul, visit the spice Bazaar, Bosphorus private cruise
- Day 12 depart Istanbul

ACTIVITY LEVEL

Moderate

TRIP PRICE

Main Trip: \$6,495

Optional Single Accommodations: \$1,300

Internal Air: \$600

TRIP DATES

October 17 - 28, 2025

TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline



your adventure
in depth

DAY 1
Friday
10/17/25

Arrive in Istanbul

Welcome to Turkey! From the beauty of Istanbul's mosques to the spectacular ruins of Ephesus, the mystery and magic of extraordinary Turkey are yours to discover in this memory-making adventure.

Arrival Information

Arrive in Istanbul, Turkey (IST) by 1:00PM today.

Arrive in Istanbul

You'll be met by your guide at the airport and transferred to your hotel. There will be one group transfer provided (time TBD based on flights). Private transfers at other times can be purchased for an additional fee.

Check-in and Relax

Check into your hotel and relax before dinner tonight.

Welcome Dinner

Enjoy a lively welcome dinner at a local restaurant as you get to know your fellow travelers this evening. Share stories and learn about why everyone is excited to explore the Turkish sites (and sights!).

Accommodations
Armada Istanbul

Meals Included
dinner

TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline



your adventure
in depth

DAY 2
Saturday
10/18/25

Istanbul

Straddling 2 continents at the crossroads of East and West, it's no surprise that Istanbul is a cultural and ethnic melting pot steeped in historical legends that reach back thousands of years. The soaring tips of minarets define the city skyline while below, bustling marketplaces, ancient monuments, and non-stop water traffic are part of Istanbul's daily scene.

Visit Istanbul and Its Famous Sites

Today, after breakfast, you'll visit Hagia Sophia, one of the most extraordinary buildings in the history of architecture. Dating from 537 CE, it is a monument to the golden age of the Byzantine Empire.

Continue to the ancient Hippodrome, where you can still see the arched brick wall and standing monuments that defined this center of Byzantine social life in ancient Constantinople.

The Blue Mosque is officially known as the Sultan Ahmed Mosque. It is one of the most iconic landmarks in Istanbul. The Blue Mosque is an excellent example of Ottoman architecture, featuring a striking combination of domes, semi-domes, and slender minarets.

Next is Basilica Cistern, the largest underground cistern of Byzantine Istanbul, which was erected in the 530's.

Finally, visit the Grand Bazaar which was built in 1460 and is home to thousands of shops and workshops.

Dinner

Enjoy dinner on your own this evening.

Accommodations
Armada Istanbul

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch

TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline



your adventure
in depth

DAY 3
Sunday
10/19/25

Selçuk and Ephesus

Today you will head to the Selçuk area to visit one of the most reputed ancient sites of the world, Ephesus. Famous throughout history for its Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, this city was the most important shrine of Asia Minor. Of the cities visited by St. Paul, this is where he stayed longest. And it is where St. John lived and died. According to legend, the Virgin Mary spent her last years in Ephesus.

Topkapi Palace Following breakfast, head out to Topkapi Palace, located in the historic district of Istanbul, on the Sarayburnu promontory, and overlooking the Golden Horn, the Bosphorus, and the Sea of Marmara. A historic palace, it served as the primary residence of Ottoman sultans for nearly 400 years. The palace complex is an architectural masterpiece, showcasing a mix of Ottoman, Persian, and Islamic architectural styles. Topkapi Palace is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, attracting millions of visitors who come to explore its rich history, architecture, and cultural significance.

Fly to Izmir Head to the airport where you will board your 75-minute flight to Izmir, the largest city on the Aegean Sea.

Check-in and Relax Upon arrival, you will be transported to your hotel in Selçuk. Check-in and unwind before dinner.

Dinner Enjoy dinner as a group this evening.

Accommodations
Kalehan Hotel

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline



your adventure
in depth

DAY 4
Monday
10/20/25

Selçuk and Ephesus

A true highlight, the amazing wonders of Ephesus— the greatest Greco-Roman site in the world—await exploration. In the First Century B.C.E., the population of Ephesus topped a quarter million people, and the scope of this archaeological wonderland is, simply, remarkable.

Mary's House and Ephesus

Explore an ancient cottage on the slopes of the mountains that is believed to be Mary's last home. The House of the Virgin Mary is a catholic shrine located in the vicinity of Ephesus. Next, head to the city of Ephesus, one of the largest and most important cities in the ancient Mediterranean world. Discover its marble-paved avenues, wonderfully preserved homes, temples, theaters, baths, markets, libraries, and gymnasiums bringing you back to the splendor of the ancient world.

Sirince Village

Walk along the stone-paved streets of Sirince Village, which was abandoned by the Greeks during the population exchange of 1923. The settlement is now occupied by Turks who continue the Greek tradition of wine production.

Lunch

Following lunch and some additional sightseeing, drive back to Selçuk.

Artemision

Visit Artemision, the Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world. Dating back to the 4th century BC, the remaining columns give you a sense of the magnitude of the original structure.

Dinner

Return to the hotel after your day of exploration, and enjoy dinner.

Accommodations
Kalehan Hotel

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline



your adventure
in depth

DAY 5
Tuesday
10/21/25

Ephesus to Pamukkale

It will feel like you've stepped onto another planet when you first lay eyes on the bright white travertine thermal pools at Pamukkale. This area has been renowned for its healing baths for over two millennia. There is plenty of time for your family to stroll barefoot through the brilliantly blue, mineral-rich waters before exploring the nearby ruins of Hierapolis. These impressive ruins and the nearby springs are a UNESCO World Heritage site.

Ephesus Museum

Located in Selçuk, the Ephesus Museum is home to an impressive collection of archaeological artifacts unearthed from Ephesus. Diverging from the conventional chronological arrangement, this museum organizes its galleries thematically, featuring exhibits on sculptures, Terrace Houses, coins, and more.

Drive to Pamukkale

Drive for approximately 2.5 hours to Pamukkale, famous for its natural travertine pools and channels and fascinating ruins.

Check-in and Dinner

Check into your hotel before enjoying dinner with the group tonight.

Accommodations
Colossae Thermal

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline



your adventure
in depth

DAY 6
Wednesday
10/22/25

Kalkan

Kalkan is a picturesque town located on the southwestern Lycian coast of Turkey in the Antalya Province. Kalkan is renowned for its stunning coastal scenery, with crystal-clear turquoise waters and a backdrop of the Taurus Mountains. The town is built on a steep hillside, providing panoramic views of the Mediterranean. Offering a unique blend of natural beauty, historical charm, and modern amenities, Kalkan is a popular destination for both local and international travelers.

Explore Cibyra

Today you will explore the ancient city of Cibyra along with Associate Professor Sukru Ozudogru who will give an informative talk about the many excavations that are underway in the area. You can try your hand at excavation under the watchful eye of local archeologists.

Drive to Kalkan

Drive for approximately 2 hours to Kalkan, a small town in the Antalya Province of Turkey and beautifully located on Turkey's Mediterranean coast.

Check-in and Dinner

Check-in at your hotel. Tonight, dinner is on your own and you have the flexibility to choose from a diverse selection of local restaurants.

Accommodations
Payava Hotel

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch

TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline



your adventure
in depth

DAY 7
Thursday
10/23/25

Kekova to Antalya

Kekova is a picturesque region on the Mediterranean coast of Turkey, known for its stunning natural beauty, historical sites, and the submerged ruins of the ancient city of Simena.

Private Boat Tour and a Day of Exploration

Following breakfast, leave Kalkan and journey to Ucagýz, where you will explore the enchanting Kekova area by private boat. Immerse yourself in the breathtaking landscape of small islets, coves, and submerged ruins.

Enjoy a delightful lunch on board.

The tour includes a visit to the medieval fortress of Simena, boasting 5th-Century BC rock tombs and the world's smallest ancient theater. Explore the legendary Lycian sarcophagi just outside the fortress lining along the ridge. You will also have plenty of opportunities to swim!

Meet a Local Female Ice Cream Maker

Following your tour of the Simena Fortress, engage with a local female ice cream maker in Kekova. She will share insights into her ice cream-making process and gladly respond to any questions you might have.

Proceed with a 95-mile drive to Antalya.

Check-in and Dinner

Check-in at your hotel in Antalya. Enjoy dinner with your group tonight.

Accommodations
Crowne Plaza

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline



your adventure
in depth

DAY 8
Friday
10/24/25

Antalya

The 14th century Arab traveler Ibn Battuta wrote that Antalya (or Adalia as it was first known) was “one of the most splendid cities in the world.” Atatürk—the father of the Turkish Republic—agreed, adding that Antalya was also the “finest town on the Turkish coast.” Free time today gives you the chance to explore the town for yourself and see if you agree—we think you will! As you walk around, be sure to look for Hadrian’s Gate, a beautiful Roman ruin built circa 130 A.D. to commemorate the Emperor’s visit here.

Antalya Old Town

After breakfast, head out to Antalya Old Town, also known as Kaleiçi, the historic heart of Antalya. It is characterized by narrow winding streets, Ottoman-era architecture, and historical buildings that date back centuries. The area has a unique atmosphere, blending the old-world charm with vibrant local life.

Lunch and Afternoon at Leisure

Enjoy lunch at a seafront restaurant. Return to the hotel and take advantage of some free time to indulge in swimming and stroll along the seaside in the afternoon.

Dinner

Have dinner as a group tonight.

Accommodations
Crowne Plaza

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline



your adventure
in depth

DAY 9
Saturday
10/25/25

Cappadocia

Once an active volcanic region, Cappadocia claims a landscape of surreal beauty—where strange and fanciful rock formations, known as the fairy chimneys, rise from the surrounding countryside. Entire underground villages carved out of tuff, soft volcanic stone, are tucked into this region and we explore the underground passageways, chambers, and monasteries that have sheltered thousands of people through the centuries.

Fly to Cappadocia

After breakfast, head to the airport where you will board your 90-minute flight to Cappadocia, a historical region in Turkey.

Drive to Uchisar

Upon arriving in Cappadocia, drive for about 90 minutes to Uchisar, a huge outcropping of tufa rock, used as a shelter and fortress in old times. View the rock fortress and accompanying conical rocks from below and have lunch in Goreme town.

Visit Goreme Open Air Museum

Visit the Goreme Open Air Museum, a collection of churches and monasteries set amidst the rocky landscape for which this area is famous. Take in the beautiful frescoes and art displayed in the churches that are a part of this UNESCO World Heritage site.

Pashabag

Drive for about 90 minutes to Pashabag, an old monastic settlement with a unique landscape filled with fairy chimneys. Continue to Devrent where you will explore the lunar surroundings on foot and take in the interesting rock formations of the area.

Check-in and Dinner

Check-in at your hotel in Cappadocia. Enjoy dinner with your group tonight.

Accommodations
MDC Hotel

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline



your adventure
in depth

DAY 10
Sunday
10/26/25

Cappadocia

One of the few completely land-locked regions of Turkey, Cappadocia covers an area of approximately 116 square miles. The volcanic material deposited by the eruption of Mount Erciyes and Mount Hasan made this an extremely fertile area for agriculture. Cherries, grapes, apricots, and chickpeas are among the many crops exported throughout the world.

Explore an Underground City

There are several ancient underground cities in Cappadocia, and you will have the chance to explore some of the amazing stone architecture that is hidden beneath the ground. Meander through tunnels and see how the ancient people lived within this unique structure.

Visit Avanos

Head to Avanos, a small town in the Cappadocia region. Avanos has a long history of pottery making, dating back thousands of years. The town's red clay, sourced from the Kızılırmak River, is ideal for pottery production. Discover numerous pottery shops and witness skilled artisans crafting traditional ceramics. Avanos also has vibrant local markets where you can explore and purchase handmade crafts, textiles, and souvenirs.

Lunch

Enjoy a delicious lunch at Kizilvadi restaurant, located in the garden of a natural rock-cone house.

Hike in Red Valley

Set off on an afternoon hike through Red Valley, another captivating landscape dotted with hidden rock-carved churches. After the hike, make your way to the hotel and check in. Enjoy dinner as a group this evening.

Accommodations
MDC Hotel

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline



your adventure
in depth

DAY 11
Monday
10/27/25

Cappadocia to Istanbul

Bid farewell to the enchanting landscapes of Cappadocia as you make your way back to the captivating city of Istanbul.

Fly to Istanbul

After breakfast at the hotel, you'll head to the airport for your morning flight back to Istanbul for a final day of exploration in this majestic city.

Spice Bazaar

Visit the Spice Bazaar, dating to the 1600's when it was the last stop for camel caravans traveling the Silk Road from China, India and Persia. Spices were also brought by ships from Alexandria in Egypt, and unloaded from the docks nearby.

Bosphorus Cruise

In the early evening, you'll take a private boat trip along the Bosphorus, the natural strait that forms part of the boundary between the Asian and European continents. Along the shores of the Bosphorus are Ottoman villas, old palaces, fortresses, and parks that contribute to the beauty of the strait.

Farewell Dinner

Share stories with your traveling companions about your mutual exploration of Turkey during a celebratory farewell dinner in a local restaurant.

Accommodations
Armada Istanbul

Meals Included
breakfast, lunch,
dinner

TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline



your adventure
in depth

DAY 12
Tuesday
10/28/25

Depart Istanbul

All great adventures must one day come to an end. This morning, enjoy your last breakfast in Turkey and say “hoşça kalın” to your new friends before departing for the airport.

Depart Istanbul After breakfast at the hotel, you'll transfer to the airport for your flight home. The group transfer will be provided when most guests depart (exact time to be determined). Private transfers at other times are available for purchase.

Departure Information Depart Istanbul, Turkey (IST).

Please note: AdventureWomen will attempt to adhere to the itinerary as much as possible. However, certain conditions (political, climatic, environmental, and cultural) may necessitate changes in the itinerary. AdventureWomen reserves the right to alter any itinerary at any time, if necessary. We will attempt to notify participants of changes as far in advance as possible. Costs incurred by such changes will be the responsibility of the participants.

Meals Included
breakfast

TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline



your adventure
in depth

Accommodation Details

Armada Istanbul

The Armada is a centrally-located hotel that is within walking distance to many of the city's famous sites and has great views of the Blue Mosque and the Hagia Sophia from its rooftop terrace.

Amenities: soap, shampoo, conditioner, flatscreen TV, hair dryer, safe, air conditioning, Wi-Fi.

Kalehan Hotel

The Kalehan Hotel is a family-owned property that was built in the style of a traditional Ottoman Inn.

Amenities: hair dryer, air conditioning, Wi-Fi

Colossae Thermal

Just adjacent to the UNESCO World Heritage Pamukkale Hierapolis, the Colassae Thermal features a spa and pool.

Amenities: soap, shampoo, hair dryer, air conditioning, Wi-Fi

Payava Hotel

Payava Hotel is located in the ancient and charming Greek fishing village, Kalkan. Payava Hotel is a contemporary and refined boutique hotel offering a delightful open buffet breakfast featuring natural, fresh offerings and freshly roasted coffees. Positioned strategically, Payava provides an excellent base for discovering all the attractions the area has to offer. Whether you visit in spring or winter, the heated outdoor pool ensures you can uncover the beauty of Kalkan throughout the year.

Amenities: soap, shampoo, conditioner, safe, air conditioning, free Wi-Fi

Crowne Plaza

Nestled beside the renowned Konyaalti Beach, Crowne Plaza Antalya provides a 5-star accommodation experience. Renovated in 2020, the hotel features both indoor and outdoor pools, and a comprehensive spa.

Amenities: soap, shampoo, conditioner, hair dryer, flat-screen TV, minibar, safe, air conditioning, free Wi-Fi

MDC Hotel

Located in a historical building in Ürgüp's Old Town, this cave hotel features panoramic valley views and offers spacious rooms with flat-screen TVs and spa baths. Rooms also have heated marble floors, arched ceilings and stone fireplaces.

Amenities: Flat-screen TV, Tea/Coffee Maker, Air Conditioning, Wi-Fi

TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline

your adventure
in depth

Included:

- ▶ Accommodations as per itinerary based on double occupancy
- ▶ All meals as listed in the itinerary
- ▶ All ground transportation
- ▶ One group transfer on arrival and departure
- ▶ Guided sightseeing and activities as indicated in the itinerary
- ▶ All gratuities except for head guide

Not Included:

- ▶ International airfare
- ▶ Cost of hospitalization or evacuation
- ▶ Fees for passport, visas, immunizations, or travel insurance
- ▶ Items of a personal nature
- ▶ Meals not specified in the itinerary
- ▶ Alcoholic beverages (unless otherwise specified)
- ▶ Gratuities for head guide

TURKEY

History, Culture, and the Mediterranean Coastline

Cancellations and Refunds

Notification of cancellations must be received in writing. Full payment is due 90 days prior to departure date, and the registration deposit is non-refundable.

For cancellations received 61-90 days prior to the trip departure date: 50% of the total trip cost is non-refundable. For cancellations received 1-60 days prior to the trip departure date: 100% of the total trip cost is non-refundable.

You are highly encouraged to purchase trip cancellation insurance to cover emergency situations. Travel insurance information will be sent to you once you have registered for your trip.

Switching Trips

Our deposits are nonrefundable and nontransferable. If for some reason you need to switch to a different trip, please call us and we will do our best to accommodate you, but switching is not guaranteed.

No Smoking Policy

Beginning in 1995, our trips became smoke free. Please note that there will be no smoking by any participants on AdventureWomen vacations.

Health Insurance

You must have your own health insurance to participate in an AdventureWomen trip.

Adventure Travel Today

At AdventureWomen, we want everyone to understand that our excursions are adventure travel vacations and not "tours." We define "adventure travel" as travel in which one **actively participates**, as opposed to a "tour," in which one is more or less a passive observer. AdventureWomen designs and organizes vacations all over the world for women who want to **experience an active, out of the ordinary vacation, and meet new friends**. Most of all, we want our trips to be **fun!**

good-natured realist and have a sense of humor! Adventure vacations, by nature, require that participants be self-sufficient, flexible, and able to accept situations as they exist, and not just as they would have preferred or expected them to exist. The constraints of scheduled group traveling also necessitate that each of us be understanding of and sensitive to others. **Being on time** is important, and contributes to the congeniality, success and well-being of both individuals and the group!

In this spirit, the successful adventure traveler should be a