



## Turkey: History and Culture of the Past and Present

**DURATION** | 11 Days

**TRIP LEVEL** | Moderate

# Trip Overview

Explore the architectural splendor of Istanbul and the natural beauty of the Turkish countryside in this 11-day adventure with AdventureWomen! From Istanbul to Ephesus and the villages in between, experience the life and culture of modern and ancient Turkey. Istanbul, a cultural and ethnic melting pot at the crossroads of East and West, is 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 modern charm. A trip highlight is the unique opportunity to take part in the annual rose petal harvest in Isparta, aptly named "The Land of the Roses", which accounts for 65% of the country's annual rose production.

# Trip Highlights

- Experience Istanbul, where history comes alive. Wander through the majestic Hagia Sophia, marvel at the intricate designs of the Blue Mosque, and explore the bustling Grand Bazaar. Each site offers a glimpse into the city's rich past and vibrant culture.
- Wonder at the magic of the Bosphorus Strait on a private cruise. Enjoy the stunning views of Istanbul's skyline, dotted with minarets and palaces. As you sail, indulge in a seaside dining experience, savoring delicious Turkish cuisine while the gentle waves lap against the boat.
- Step into the ancient world with a visit to Ephesus. Walk through the well-preserved ruins of this once-thriving city, where history echoes in every corner. From the grand Library of Celsus to the impressive Great Theatre, Ephesus offers a fascinating journey through time, showcasing the grandeur of ancient civilizations.

# Map View



# Trip Itinerary

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## Day 1

### Arrive in Istanbul

Arrive in Istanbul, Turkey (IST) by 1:00 PM today. You'll be met by your guide at the airport and transferred to the hotel. There will be one group transfer provided (time TBD based on flights).

Transfers for other arrival times can be purchased for an additional fee. Check into your hotel and relax before dinner tonight. 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!).

Meals: dinner | Overnight: Kalyon Hotel



### Kalyon Hotel

Kalyon Hotel Istanbul, a charming four-star boutique hotel, offers an ideal location in the heart of Sultanahmet, Istanbul's historic peninsula. Easily accessible from the city's airports, the hotel is within walking distance of iconic landmarks such as the Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia, Grand Bazaar, and Topkapi Palace. Set along the scenic shores of the Sea of Marmara, guests can enjoy breathtaking views of the sea and watch ships traverse the ancient maritime route that links the Mediterranean to the Black Sea.

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, minibar, safe, flatscreen TV, Wi-Fi, air conditioning



# Trip Itinerary

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## Day 2

### Explore Istanbul by Foot and Private Cruise

Today, you'll walk throughout the city of Istanbul, stopping for lunch along the way as you take in the ancient sites including Topkapı Palace and the ancient Hippodrome. Then, venture on to the Grand Bazaar which was built in 1460 and is home to thousands of lively shops and workshops. In early evening, you'll take a private boat trip along the Bosphorus, the natural strait that forms part of the boundary between Asian and European continents. Along the shores of the Bosphorus are old Ottoman villas, old palaces, fortresses and parks that contribute the beauty of the strait. Enjoy dinner on your own tonight after the cruise

Meals: breakfast, lunch | Overnight: Kalyon Hotel



# Trip Itinerary

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## Day 3

### Hagia Sophia, Basilica Cistern and Spice Bazaar

After breakfast today you'll visit Hagia Sophia, a monument to the golden age of the Byzantine Empire dating from 537 CE. Next is Basilica Cistern which was the largest underground cistern of Byzantine Istanbul erected in the 530's. Finally, visit the Spice Bazaar that dates to the 1600's when it was the last stop for the camel caravans that travelled the Silk Road from China, India, and Persia. Spices were also brought by ships from Alexandria in Egypt and docked just in front of the Bazaar. Enjoy dinner on your own this evening.

Meals: breakfast, lunch | Overnight: Kalyon Hotel



# Trip Itinerary

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## Day 4

### Istanbul to Cappadocia

After breakfast, head to the airport for a 90-minute flight to Cappadocia, a historical region in Turkey. Upon arrival, drive for 90 minutes to Uchisar, known for its many rock-cut structures, churches, dwellings, and castles. Enjoy lunch in Goreme town. Continue to Pashabag, a monastic settlement within a unique landscape filled with fairy chimneys. Then visit Devrent to explore the lunar surroundings and view naturally shaped statues on foot.

Set off on an afternoon hike through Red Valley, another captivating landscape dotted with hidden rock-carved churches, then, make your way to the hotel and check in.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: MDC Hotel (or similar)



### MDC Hotel (or similar)

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: complimentary toiletries, minibar, bottled water, tea/coffee maker, safe, flatscreen TV, Wi-Fi, air conditioning

# Trip Itinerary

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## Day 5

### Mesmerizing Cappadocia

Today you'll 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. Enjoy a delicious lunch in the village of Ayvali.

There are several ancient underground cities in Cappadocia, and you will have the chance to explore some of the amazing stone architecture hidden beneath the ground. You'll also see beautiful examples of Turkish pottery this afternoon before you head back to the hotel for dinner.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: MDC Hotel (or similar)



# Trip Itinerary

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## Day 6

### Travel Day: Cappadocia to Isparta

Today you will travel just over 300 miles to Isparta with several stops along the way. First visit the Sultanhanı Caravanserai, a major medieval inn that sheltered travelers along the famous Silk Road trade route. Built in 1229, this massive structure is decorated in ornamental marble and stonework. You will also stop in Konya to visit the Mausoleum of the poet and mystic Rumi, founder the Order of the Whirling Dervishes. Enjoy lunch as a group in a local restaurant before traveling to the town of Egirdir, home to a beautiful freshwater lake. You'll explore the town by the lake and walk around the Yesilada (Green Island). After your walking tour, you'll drive just over 20 miles to Isparta where you'll dine at the hotel as a group.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Barida Hotels



### Barida Hotels

Located in Isparta's city center, the Barida Hotels are comfortably elegant. The property features a spa with both a sauna and a Turkish bath as well as an indoor pool.

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, minibar, safe, flatscreen TV, Wi-Fi, air conditioning





# Trip Itinerary

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## Day 7

### Traditional Rose Harvest

Enjoy breakfast at your hotel before a quick drive to Güneykent (or Ardıçlı) Village one of many rose-growing centers in region. Try your hand at harvesting roses alongside a village woman who will demonstrate the proper method to pick and handle the delicate flowers. Then visit a traditional distiller to view the process first-hand and have the chance to buy rose products like rose oil and rose water. Enjoy a lunch at a local restaurant in the village.

After lunch, you'll pass through Isparta on your way to Golcuk, a volcanic lake in the middle of the caldera. Set out on a 2.5-mile hike around the lake and take in the scenic views. Join your fellow travelers for dinner at the hotel tonight.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Barida Hotels



# Trip Itinerary

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## Day 8

### Isparta to Pamukkale

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.

After lunch in a local restaurant, drive for about 90 minutes to Pamukkale. This town is famous for the thermal waters which flow over the breathtaking travertine terraces that line the hillside.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Colossae Thermal



### Colossae Thermal

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

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, hair dryer, minibar, coffee / tea maker, electric kettle, safe, flatscreen TV, cable / satellite TV, Wi-Fi, air conditioning

# Trip Itinerary

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## Day 9

### Pamukkale to Selcuk

Enjoy your visit to Hierapolis-Pamukkale, famous for its self-built travertine pools and channels and its fascinating ruins. Today's lunch will be at a restaurant along the way. After lunch, you'll visit historic Artemision, the Temple of Artemis, which dates to the 4th century BC. Then walk along the stone-paved streets of Sirince Village, abandoned by the Greeks during the population exchange of 1923 and now occupied by Turks who continue the Greek tradition of wine production.

Check in your hotel in Selcuk after your day of exploration, and enjoy dinner at the hotel tonight. After dinner, you will be joined by the hotel owner who will share her grandparents' experiences, detailing their migration from Greece to Turkey during one of the significant episodes of relocation between the two countries.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Kalehan Hotel



### Kalehan Hotel

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

Amenities: complimentary toiletries, minibar, bottled water, safe, Wi-Fi, air conditioning

# Trip Itinerary

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## Day 10

### Tour Esphesus

After breakfast, you'll tour glorious Ephesus, one of the best-preserved ancient cities in the world. Marble-paved avenues, wonderfully preserved homes, temples, theaters, baths, markets, libraries, and gymnasiums bring us back to the splendor of the ancient world.

After lunch, you'll visit an ancient cottage on the slopes of the mountains that is believed to be Virgin Mary's last home. Head to the airport this afternoon for your flight back to Istanbul for a celebratory farewell dinner in a local restaurant.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner | Overnight: Kalyon Hotel



### Kalyon Hotel

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Amenities: complimentary toiletries, minibar, safe, flatscreen TV, Wi-Fi, air conditioning



# Trip Itinerary

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## Day 11

### 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.

# What's Included

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## What's 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

*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.*

