



Turkey: A Tapestry of Ancient Wonders and The Land of Roses

DURATION | 12 Days

TRIP LEVEL | Moderate

Trip Overview

Explore the architectural splendor of Istanbul and the natural beauty of the Turkish countryside in this 12-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



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Trip Itinerary



Day 1

Welcome to Istanbul!

Arrive in Istanbul, Turkey (IST) by 1:00 PM today, where you'll be met by your guide at the airport and transferred to your hotel. (There will be one group transfer provided to align with most common departures). Check into your hotel and relax before dinner tonight, where you'll 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 Turkey

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



Day 2

Istanbul Historical City Tour

Today, explore Istanbul on foot and stop for lunch along the way as you take in some of the ancient sites. Enter Topkapi Palace, administrative headquarters of Ottoman Sultans for 400 years. Then, see the Hippodrome, where you can still see the arched curving brick wall and the standing monuments. Finally, venture to the Blue Mosque and the Grand Bazaar which was built in 1460 and is home to thousands of shops and workshops. Enjoy dinner on your own this evening.

Meals: breakfast, lunch | Overnight: Kalyon Hotel



Trip Itinerary



Day 3

Journey to Ephesus

Today, head to the airport where you will board your flight to Izmir, the largest city on the Aegean Sea. Enjoy lunch in Selcuk as a group after arrival. Then, tour glorious Ephesus, one of the best-preserved ancient cities in the world. Marble paved avenues, wonderfully preserved homes, temples, theaters, baths, markets, brothels, libraries, and gymnasiums bring us back to the splendor of the ancient world. Enjoy dinner as a group this evening.

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



Day 4

Ismir Province

Begin your day with an authentic hands-on cooking workshop set in a beautiful garden kitchen near Kusadasi. Guided by an expert chef, you will learn the secrets of traditional Turkish cuisine and enjoy a delicious meal you've created. After lunch, visit ancient sites including the Temple of Artemis, which dates to the 4th century BC and an ancient cottage on the slopes of the mountains believed to be Mary's last home. Walk along the stone-paved streets of Sirince Village, an abandoned settlement now occupied by Turks who continue the Greek tradition of wine production.

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



Trip Itinerary



Day 5

Marble Quarries in Aphrodisias and Whirling Dervishes

Drive this morning to explore Aphrodisias, named after Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, an ancient Hellenized city known for marble sculpture that today is an archeological site and a marble quarry. Enjoy an authentic Turkish lunch restaurant with a dancing parrot. Then, drive to Pamukkale, famous for its natural travertine pools, channels, and fascinating ruins with an optional Whirling Dervish performance in the early evening.

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



Day 6

Archeological Discovery in Cibrya

Drive to the ancient city of Cibyra today. Listen to an informative talk with a local assistant professor about excavations underway in the area as you try your hand at excavation under the watchful eye of local archeologists. Enjoy lunch as a group near the town of Golhisar. Next, head to Isparta, where you'll check in at your hotel. In the evening, gather for a group dinner at the hotel's restaurant.

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



Day 7

Rose Harvest

Drive to Güneykent (or Ardıçlı) Village in the mountains, one of the many rose growing places in Isparta province. Learn the proper method to pick and handle the flowers from a local woman before trying your hand at harvesting roses. See the process first-hand at a local distiller and have the chance to buy rose products before lunch at a local restaurant. Then, pass through Isparta on your way to Golcuk, a volcanic lake where you'll hike 2.5 miles around the lake. Join your fellow travelers for dinner at the hotel tonight

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



Trip Itinerary



Day 8

Traveling to Cappadocia

Today will be travel day to Cappadocia with several riveting stops along the way. Your first stop is at the beautiful freshwater lake of Egridir. Next, stop in Konya, where you will visit the Mausoleum of the mystic Rumi, famous for founding the Order of the Whirling Dervishes. Then enjoy lunch as a group at a local restaurant. Reach the Sultanhanı Caravanserai, one of the major medieval inns that sheltered caravans and travelers along the famous Silk Road trade route and stop in Acla. Reach Urgup and enjoy dinner as a group upon arrival.

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



Day 9

Trip to Goreme Outdoor Museum

Visit Devrent where you will explore the surroundings on foot and view naturally shaped statues. Next, explore the Goreme Open Air Museum, a collection of renowned churches and monasteries amidst the rocky landscape. 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 Red Valley before driving to Uchisar, a huge outcropping of tufa rock, used as a shelter and fortress in old times. Enjoy 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 enjoy dinner as a group

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



Trip Itinerary



Day 10

Underground Cities

Start your day with an optional early morning hot air balloon ride available for an additional fee.

Then, visit amazing stone architecture hidden beneath the ground among the underground cities. Next, journey to Soghanli Valley, where you can marvel at 11th-century rock-cut churches adorned with vibrant frescoes, as well as ancient refectories and dormitories carved into the stone. Enjoy lunch at a unique family-run restaurant located in an apple orchard and see some 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



Day 11

Istanbul's Historic Destinations

After breakfast at the hotel, you'll head to the airport for your morning flight back to Istanbul. Once you land, explore various architectural wonders, including Hagia Sophia, Basilica Cistern, and the Spice Bazaar. In the early evening, take a private boat trip along the Bosphorus, the natural strait forming the boundary between the Asian and European continents. Along the shores of the Bosphorus are Ottoman villas, old palaces, fortresses, and parks. Share your favorite moments of your trip during a celebratory farewell dinner in a local restaurant.

Meals: breakfast, lunch, 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



Day 12

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. Depart Istanbul, Turkey (IST).

What's Included

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.

