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TURKEY | 15DAYS / 14NIGHTS

Route: From and to Istanbul

Type of tour: Culture

TOUR OVERVIEW

This itinerary covers the most important of the many highlights Turkey has to offer, including four sites in the UNESCO World Heritage List. It starts off with one of the oldest and most historical cities in the world, Istanbul, covering emblems like the Blue Mosque, Hagia Sofia and Topkapi Palace. The setting of Homer's epic poems and a UNESCO World Heritage member, the ancient town of Troy is the next stop. Pergamon and Ephesus are not only the most glorious witnesses of the peak times of the Roman Empire, with Ephesus hosting one of the largest theatres of the entire ancient world, but they are listed to be among the first seven Christian communities in Asia Minor. Another UNESCO World Heritage member, Pamukkale, with its white cotton-like travertine terraces is the next stop. After Turkey's major resort area, Antalya, comes yet another UNESCO member, Cappadocia. With its amazing and astonishing landscapes, this landscape is completely unique. Then visit the museum in Ankara, which hosts thousands of items dating from the Neolithic age, i.e. 8th millennium B.C. The roundtrip concludes in Istanbul.

DAY BY DAY

DAY 1 | ISTANBUL

Meet and greet at the Atatürk International Airport and direct transfer to the Istanbul Hotel.

- **Overnight stay in Istanbul on a half-board basis.**

DAY 2 | ISTANBUL

Departure for a full day Istanbul tour. Visit the 6th-century Hagia Sophia, nowadays serving as a museum, and the Sultanahmet Mosque, commonly known as the 'Blue Mosque'. Next, visit the Grand Bazaar, one of the world's largest and oldest markets. Visit the Egyptian Bazaar (Spice Market) in the afternoon, followed by a pleasant Bosphorus cruise.

- **Overnight stay in Istanbul on a half-board basis.**

DAY 3 | ISTANBUL

Visit the large palace Topkapi Palace, once residence of Ottoman Empire sultans, in the morning. After the visit to this World Heritage Site, enjoy the rest of the day at leisure.

- **Overnight stay in Istanbul on a half-board basis.**

DAY 4 | ISTANBUL – ÇANAKKALE

Start the day with an enjoyable ferry ride to Çanakkale, the nearest major town to the ancient site of Troy. The setting of Homer's epic poems and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Troy is a peak into past ancient life of the area.

- **Overnight stay in Çanakkale on a half-board basis.**

DAY 5 | ÇANAKKALE – KUŞADASI / SELÇUK

Drive to Kuşadası. Visit the ancient Greek Pergamon Acropolis en route.

- **Overnight stay in Kuşadası or Selçuk on a half-board basis.**

DAY 6 | KUŞADASI / SELÇUK

Today, visit the historic site of Ephesus and the House of the Virgin Mary. In the afternoon, visit of the quaint old Greek village of Şirince.

- **Overnight stay in Kuşadası or Selçuk on a half-board basis.**

DAY 7 | KUŞADASI / SELÇUK – PAMUKKALE

Departure from the hotel in Kuşadası and drive to Aphrodisias, one of the most interesting ancient Greek towns of Anatolia. Continue to Pamukkale, meaning 'cotton castle' in Turkish. Visit the stunning Pamukkale Terraces and the Hierapolis archaeological site.

- **Overnight stay in Pamukkale on a half-board basis.**

DAY 8 | PAMUKKALE – ANTALYA

Breakfast at the hotel. Drive to Antalya. Possibility to visit the Termessos Antique Site en route.

- **Overnight stay in Antalya on a half-board basis.**

DAY 9 | ANTALYA

Today, enjoy a visit to Aspendos and its remarkable Roman theatre. Then visit the historical remains of Perge.

- Overnight stay in Antalya on a half-board basis.

DAY 10 | ANTALYA – KONYA – CAPPADOCIA

Drive to Konya and visit the Mevlana Museum, a holy site for Muslims. Continue to Cappadocia.

- Overnight stay in Cappadocia on a half-board basis.

DAY 11 | CAPPADOCIA

Visit the unique and colourful structures and painted churches of Göreme Open Air Museum and the ancient Zelve Open-Air Museum. Visit the Derinkuyu or Kaymakli underground city. A stop in the town of Mustafa Pasha is also scheduled.

- Overnight stay in Cappadocia on a half-board basis.

DAY 12 | CAPPADOCIA

Today we will drive to the Ihlara Valley and will have a walking tour through the valley and its large canyons. In the afternoon, we see the small towns of Ortahisar, Uçhisar and Cavusin.

- Overnight stay in Cappadocia on a half-board basis.

DAY 13 | CAPPADOCIA – ANKARA

Today, opt for an optional hot-air balloon ride over Cappadocia in the early morning. Then, we drive to Ankara. Visit the Sultanhanı Caravanserai en route. Upon arrival, visit the Museum of Anatolian Civilisations.

- Overnight stay in Ankara on a half-board basis.

DAY 14 | ANKARA – ISTANBUL

Today we drive to Istanbul and enjoy the day at leisure.

- Overnight stay in Istanbul on a half-board basis.

DAY 15 | DEPARTURE ISTANBUL

Depending on the flight departure time, transfer to the Istanbul Atatürk airport for your departure flight back home.

END OF SERVICES

INCLUDED

TOUR GUIDE:

- Local guides. Licensed German, English, French or Dutch speaking tour guide

ACCOMMODATION:

- 14 nights' accommodation in middle-class hotels on a half-board basis

MEALS:

- Breakfast and dinner at the hotels

ENTRANCE FEES AND ACTIVITIES:

- Admissions to attractions, sites and museums as outlined in the program

TRANSPORT:

- During transfers and tour based on newer air-conditioned vehicles. Depending on the number of passengers, minibus, midibus or full-size bus will be used.

NOT INCLUDED

- Flights and/or airport fees of any kind
- Lunches
- Drinks/beverages
- Optional excursions and activities