

Timeless Turkey

18-day Escorted Tour from

\$8,675 per person solo occupancy

09 September – 27 September 2020

Solo Travellers Club members only



With one foot in Asia and the other in Europe, Turkey holds a unique place in history. From Achilles to Alexander the Great, empires have founded and fallen here leaving a complex and fascinating trail through time.

The city of Istanbul showcases its cultural heritage alongside an increasing number of trendy eateries and cutting-edge bastions of 'cool'. Historic monuments, testament to its opulent past, remain Istanbul's largest attractions, but the element of surprise lies in just how European this city feels.

Witness the ravages of religious and political history at the ruins of Ephesus and the poignant memories of the Anzacs' presence at Gallipoli. Fabled stories help to bring to life in your imagination the mythological battle between Greek and Trojan heroes, who fought for the honour of Helen of Sparta, in the legendary city of Troy.

Wander the narrow, weather-worn streets of ancient Karmylassos, now known as the ghost town of Kayaköy. Nestled in the Taurus mountains stands a modern ruin - thousands of abandoned stone houses and structures, lost in time. Surreal and eerie, this deserted village now forms a memorial to Turkish-Greek peace initiatives.

Spend a day on the water around the Teke peninsula and Turquoise Coast from your base in Kas. Protected inlets and picturesque bays are ideal for underwater pursuits. Enjoy the mellow atmosphere on board a boat cruise hosted by locals, share in their love of the sea and of food!

The unique landscapes of Pamukkale and Cappadocia are two extraordinary natural wonders. Pamukkale's terraces cascading with warm, mineral-rich water, were once the treasured healing baths of Hierapolis, while the lunarscape of Cappadocia, with its underground cities, cave churches and houses, makes you feel like you have left Earth and descended on another planet! Step inside an incredible troglodyte city located more than 60 metres underground, where a maze of passages and tunnels leads to rooms where people once worked and worshipped.

Be mesmerised by the mystical Sufism practice of 'whirling' – a ceremonial ritual of spirituality. Dine on delicious Mediterranean cuisine in local restaurants and shop in the ateliers for intricately decorated Turkish pottery – this tour of Turkey captures timeless Ottoman, Greek and western influence in both its history and cuisine.

With the warmth of its people and breath-taking landscape – Turkey is back!

Highlights:

- Visit the opulent Topkapi Palace Museum, exquisite Blue Mosque and world-renowned Grand Bazaar
- Gallipoli - historic sites of Anzac Cove, Lone Pine Cemetery and Chunuk Bair
- Archeological guided site visit to Troy
- Wine-tasting in Sirince
- Explore the 2,000 year old colonnaded streets of Ephesus
- Experience first-hand Turkish rug weaving
- Visit the white travertine terraces of Pamukkale and Roman health spa of Hierapolis
- Wander through the ghost village of Kayaköy
- Boat trip excursion along southern Turkey's 'Lycian' coast
- Cappadocia's "fairy chimneys" and clustered rock formations of Göreme
- Archeological Museum of Antalya
- Delve through the underground city of Derinkuyu
- Bosphorus dinner cruise

Itinerary:

09 Sep Christchurch – Istanbul

Depart Christchurch in the evening, via Dubai, arriving Istanbul mid-afternoon on 10th September.

10 Sept Istanbul

Welcome to Istanbul; the continent-straddling metropolis that the Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, and Ottomans have called home. You'll be transferred to your hotel upon your arrival at the airport, and your Welcome Meeting will be at 6pm, followed by a fun dinner at a local belly dancing restaurant! (D)

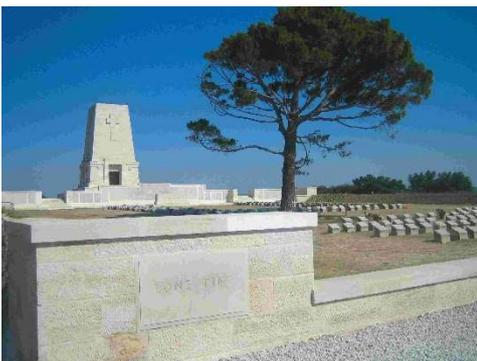
11 Sep Istanbul

This morning, you will have a city tour around Istanbul, starting at the Hippodrome. The Hippodrome of Constantinople, located in Sultanahmet/Istanbul, was a public arena mainly for chariot races. The word "hippodrome" comes from the Greek hippos (horse) and dromos (way). The Hippodrome of Constantinople was also home to gladiatorial games, official ceremonies, celebrations, protests, torture to the convicts and so on. Blue Mosque will be your next stop. Also known as the Sultan Ahmet Camii (or Sultan Ahmed Mosque), this breath-taking building is one of the most majestic Ottoman mosques in all of Turkey.

Then, you will visit the Topkapi Palace which is the biggest and one of the most popular sites to visit in Istanbul. It was built between 1466 and 1478 by the sultan Mehmet II on top of a hill in a small peninsula, dominating the Golden Horn to the north, the Sea of Marmara to the south, and the Bosphorus Strait to the north east, with great views of the Asian side as well. The palace was the political centre of the Ottoman Empire between the 15th and 19th centuries, until they built Dolmabahce Palace by the waterside.

You'll finish your tour with a visit to the Grand Bazaar, one of the largest and oldest covered markets in the world, with 61 covered streets and over 4,000 shops. The Grand Bazaar at Istanbul is often regarded as one of the first shopping malls of the world, and is an absolute feast for the senses! Dinner tonight is at a local restaurant. (B, D)

12 Sep Istanbul - Çanakkale



Early this morning, after breakfast we begin the drive to Çanakkale, located on the shores of the Dardanelles, which connects the Sea of Marmara to the Aegean Sea and touches both Europe (with the Gallipoli Peninsula) and Asia (with the Biga Peninsula).

After lunch we will visit Gallipoli to see the beach and cemeteries of Anzac Cove. Later, we'll head up the hill toward the poignant memorials of Lone Pine and Chunuk Bair. It's a sobering afternoon as you look down upon the rough hills and gullies that became the graveyard for so many thousands of young men from both sides. You will tour the former battlefields and find remnants of trenches used by the Turkish soldiers. Return to Çanakkale for dinner at a local restaurant. (B, D)

13 Sep Çanakkale - Selcuk

En route to Selcuk today you'll stop at the site of Troy. As well as seeing the remnants of the ancient city walls and the famed wooden horse, you will learn more about the ground breaking archaeological digs here and how the site has baffled historians.

Before arriving at Selcuk you'll visit a Carpet Weaving Centre and take some time to learn about this ancient art, wander the grounds and the store at your leisure or simply sit, relax and enjoy some Turkish tea. Arrive at Selcuk later in the day and visit Sirince to enjoy a tasting of local fruit wine. You will have your dinner at a local restaurant. (B, D)



14 Sep Selcuk - Ephesus

This morning enjoy an orientation walk around the village of Selcuk, a sprawling town lying at the base of the ancient Aysoluk Hill fortress. You'll visit the last remaining column of the Temple of Artemis, the ancient aqueducts and the 14th-century Isabey Mosque.

Later this afternoon visit Ephesus, one of the best-preserved classical cities in the Eastern Mediterranean and arguably the greatest Greco-Roman site in the world. Tour around the amphitheatre, stroll the marble streets once walked by Cleopatra and Mark Antony, and marvel at the gymnasium, baths and beautifully restored Library of Celsus. Dinner will be enjoyed at a local restaurant. (B, D)

15 Sep Pamukkale

After breakfast this morning we drive to Pamukkale, also known as 'Cotton Castle' and a truly unique sight. This magical and spectacular natural phenomenon was created by deposits from thermal waters that cascaded down the mountainside over hundreds of years, forming a myriad of pools and terraces. As the water overflows from the pools, dazzling cream-coloured stalactites are formed that, from afar, resemble cotton or snow. The pools are filled with hot spring waters that supposedly have healing properties for a person's circulation and digestive systems. Close to Pamukkale are the ruins of Hierapolis, which



was founded by the King of Pergamon in 190 BC and by the 2nd century AD it had become an important Roman bath centre. The extensive ruins of Hierapolis are well worth exploring and include a theatre, temple, holy area, monumental fountain, bath, basilica and necropolis. You will have your dinner at a local restaurant. (B, D)

16 Sep Pamukkale - Fethiye

This morning we journey to the Mediterranean coast, arriving first in the Greek ghost-town of Kayakoy. Stroll around and take in the eerie atmosphere, due in no small part to population repatriation and earthquake damage. Continue on to Fethiye, a culturally fertile town located on a bay, surrounded by pine forests and islands. Dinner is at a local restaurant tonight. (B, D)

17 Sep Kaş

Continue on to the seaside village of Kas. Here you'll see charming whitewashed houses covered in bougainvilleas as well as an ancient Greek theatre. Sample the local cuisine and enjoy the night in the town's quaint centre. You will have your dinner at a local restaurant. (B, D)

18 Sep Kas - Kekova

Drive to Kekova and embark on a boat cruise around the local islands. Your hosts Mehmet and Sebahat are definitely people of the Mediterranean. Hailing from the small village of Ucagiz on the Turkish Mediterranean Coast they married young, bought a boat and went fishing. Like a lot of our oceans their home became a victim to over fishing through new and modern methods of reaping the perfect catch. They had a boat, and they had one of the best cooks in the district so they set out to share their love of the sea and their love of food.

The cruise takes you to the settlement of Ucagiz and the village of Simena. You'll also sail from the large bays in to beautiful protected inlets where you can go for a swim. On board the boat you'll enjoy lunch in Tersane Bay. The water here is deep but you can still see the bottom; the shore is lined with the ruins of an ancient city long ago sunken into the clear waters. Look out for rock formations and houses that have been submerged under the clear water. Return to Kas in the evening and enjoy dinner on the boat. (B, L, D)

19 Sep Kas – Antalya

Continuing our exploration of the Mediterranean we take a 3.5 hour scenic drive to the jewel in the Mediterranean crown - Antalya. Your hotel is located in the Kaleiçi (old city) and you'll go on an afternoon walk to see Hadrian's Gate,

the old Roman Harbour and the turquoise waters of the Mediterranean, and take a guided tour of the Antalya Museum this afternoon. Dinner will be enjoyed at a local restaurant. (B, D)

20 Sep Antalya - Konya

Continue on to Konya, an ancient city important in Roman times, and where the mystic Sufi practice of 'whirling' originates. You'll visit the mausoleum of the famous mystic Mevlana, the museum housing manuscripts of his works, as well as various artefacts relating to the mystic sect.

Our journey to Konya is approximately 6 hours; on the way glimpse beautiful views of the Taurus Mountains and enjoy a special moment as we stop at Beyşehir to see the Eşrefoğlu Mosque, a fine example of Seljuk Turkish architecture. You will have your dinner at a local restaurant. (B, D)

21 Sep Konya - Cappadocia

Today's itinerary includes a visit to the incredible underground city of Derinkuyu. See dwellings that span seven levels beneath the ground. From here you'll make your way to the archaeological site of Asikli Höyük, which was first settled in 8,000 BC. Then settle into the relaxed pace of Goreme for the next three nights. Dinner is at your hotel. (B, D)



22 Sep Goreme

Early birds have the option of taking a hot air balloon over the otherworldly Cappadocian landscape. The scene at sunrise is sure to take your breath away. After a relaxing breakfast from your Terrace overlooking the valley we visit the Goreme Open Air Museum. See the many incredible houses, churches and monasteries carved out of the soft cliff face. The Christian sanctuaries contain many examples of Byzantine art, cave chapels and colourful biblical frescoes from the 10th–12th centuries. Later in the afternoon, you'll go on a short walk through 'Love Valley' which is famous for its phallic rock formations! Then head back to your hotel in Goreme. Perhaps take an optional Turkish bath to unwind at the end of the day. At night, you will enjoy the meal at a local house with a local family! (B, D)

23 Sep Goreme



Enjoy a relaxing breakfast and then go for a walk to the most beautiful valley in Cappadocia, Kizilcukur. You'll see fascinating rock formations such as cones, peaks and fairy chimneys, as well as manmade cave chapels from early Christian times. Later in the afternoon visit the red river of Cappadocia, famous for its clay which is still used to make magnificent pieces of art. Learn about this ancient craft today when on your visit to a local potter. Tonight you will enjoy your meal while watching the Whirling Dervishes whirl! This is a religious dance performed to express emotion and achieve the wisdom and love of God. It's a beautiful display of devotion, and certainly fun to watch! (B, D)

24 Sep Kayseri - Istanbul

This morning say goodbye to Cappadocia and fly to Istanbul. On arrival into Istanbul you will be transferred to your hotel. The afternoon is yours to explore some of the hidden charms of Istanbul. Tonight, we farewell Timeless Turkey with a relaxing farewell dinner aboard a river cruise of the Bosphorus. (B, D)

25 Sep Istanbul

After breakfast, you will be transferred to the airport in time for your mid-afternoon departure flight, arriving Dubai in the evening, checking in to your transit hotel for your overnight's stay. (B)

26 Sep

Depart Dubai mid-morning

27 Sep

Arrive Christchurch early afternoon, where your tour concludes.

Inclusions:

- Economy class return airfares from Christchurch
- 3-4 star hotels in single-occupancy rooms
- All transfers in private vehicle transport
- Meals: 15 breakfasts (B), 1 lunch (L), 15 dinners (D)
- Entrance fees to included sights
- Sightseeing and excursions as per itinerary
- Gratuities/tipping for leader, guides, driver and restaurants
- English-speaking tour leader throughout
- Tour escort

Not included:

- Travel insurance (compulsory)
- Any meals/beverages not specified
- Airport portorage
- Items of a personal nature
- Visas (if applicable)

Tour price from:

- \$8,675 per person solo occupancy

To secure your place: Send your \$1000.00 non-refundable deposit per person with completed Booking Form to Discover Travel, PO Box 2477, Christchurch; or email: ideas@discovertravel.co.nz

***CONDITIONS: Price** - of \$8,675.00 per person is based single occupancy. **Land-only:** should you wish to extend your stay, please talk to us. We are happy to provide a land-only price and airfare and pre/post tour arrangements. **Business Class Supplement** – available on request, please discuss with your Discover Travel Consultant. **Payments** - The price quoted is for payment by cash, cheque or direct bank transfer. Cheques: should be made payable to 'Discover Travel'. Our postal address is PO Box 2477, Christchurch. **Bank Transfer:** 06 0801 0495605 02 - Discover Travel Worldwide Ltd, using 'Turkey' as a reference. **VISA or Mastercard** payments will incur a 2% convenience fee and American Express a 3% fee. In order to confirm your booking, a non-refundable deposit of \$1000.00 per person is required. **Final payment will be due no later than 09 May 2020.** Prices are based on a minimum group size of 11 passengers (maximum of 15), excluding the tour escort. Should the group size be less than 15, a small group surcharge may be applied.