



Aegean Legacy

Country(ies): Turkey

Tour type: Small Group

Transport: A/C minibus & gulet sailing boat

Group size: Min: 2 | Max: 16

Days: 13 days

Start Location: Istanbul, Turkey

End Location: Istanbul, Turkey

Meals: Breakfasts - 12, Lunches - 2, Dinners - 5

Highlights:

Gallipoli Battlefields, Ancient city of Troy, Calcium Travertines of Pamukkale, Hieropolis, traditional Gulet Cruise along the Mediterranean coast, Selcuk, Cappadocia, Goreme Valley, Ankara



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in Istanbul

Upon arrival into Istanbul make your way to the starting hotel (transfer not included but available as an optional extra). There will be a welcome meeting in the hotel reception this evening, where you can meet your guide and the rest of the group. Airport transfers and extra nights in the hotel in Istanbul are available before the tour starts if you would like to spend some more time in this fascinating city.

OVERNIGHT: Istanbul 3-star hotel

MEALS: None

EXTRAS: Single room supplement (TUSGAL) Extra day in Istanbul - pre-tour Istanbul Arrival Transfer

Day 2: Istanbul, old city tour, optional Bosphorous cruise

Following a leisurely breakfast, you'll embark on a comprehensive, fully guided tour of Istanbul, the only city in the world that straddles two continents. This fascinating metropolis offers a unique blend of cultures and historical influences, and our tour will showcase some of its most iconic landmarks. We'll begin with a visit to the magnificent Blue Mosque, renowned for its stunning blue tiles and intricate architecture. Next, we'll explore the Hagia Sophia (St Sophia Museum), a masterpiece of Byzantine architecture that has served as both a church and a mosque throughout its long and storied history. We'll then continue to the opulent Dolmabahçe Palace, the last residence of the Ottoman sultans, offering a glimpse into their lavish lifestyle. Our tour will also include a visit to the ancient Hippodrome, once the centre of Byzantine life, where chariot races and other public events were held.

In the afternoon, you have the opportunity to experience Istanbul from a unique perspective with an optional half-day Bosphorus cruise. This unforgettable journey will take you along the stretch of water that divides Europe and Asia, offering breathtaking views of the city's skyline, including elegant waterfront mansions, historic palaces, and charming villages nestled along the shores. It's a perfect way to relax and soak in the beauty of Istanbul from a different angle.

OVERNIGHT: Istanbul 3-star hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 3: Gallipoli battlefields and memorials tour

We depart Istanbul this morning for the drive to the Gallopoli peninsular where we will receive a fully guided tour of this important World War I battlefield site. Although home to some of the fiercest fighting during the War, today the site is full of poignant memorials set against a subdued wooded landscape. Our tour will include the Lone Pine and Chunuk Bair memorials, ANZAC Cove, Johnston Jolly, The Nek and will will provide a chance to see the original trenches and tunnels used during the war. We'll spend the night in nearby Canakkale.

OVERNIGHT: Canakkale hotel **MEALS:** Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 4: Tour of Troy including Troy Museum. Onwards to Behramkale village

Our journey begins in Çanakkale, from where we'll set off to explore the legendary city of Troy, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here, we'll delve into the rich history and mythology of this ancient city, witnessing its remarkably preserved ruins and gaining insights into its significance. Our exploration will also include a visit to the newly opened, award-winning Troy Museum, which houses a fascinating collection of artefacts unearthed from the site, providing a comprehensive understanding of Troy's past.

Following our exploration of Troy, we'll journey onwards to the charming, traditional village of Behramkale. This picturesque settlement, with its characteristic stone houses and narrow, winding streets, offers a captivating glimpse into authentic Turkish village life. You'll have ample time to wander through the village at your leisure, soaking in the tranquil atmosphere and admiring the beautiful surrounding scenery. Perhaps you'll choose to relax and enjoy a traditional Turkish tea or coffee at one of the local cafés, providing an opportunity to interact with the friendly villagers and experience their hospitality.

From the idyllic setting of Behramkale, our journey continues southwards to the vibrant coastal town of Ku?adas? and onwards to Selcuk where we spend the night.

OVERNIGHT: Selcuk 3-star hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 5: Ephesus ancient site, Temple of Artemis, Wine tasting

After breakfast we drive to the Roman site of Ephesus. The city at one time housed 250,000 people and is regarded as one of the best preserved ancient cities in the whole Mediterranean region. We visit the Temple of Artemis, and explore the ancient marble streets of this ruined Roman city. This afternoon we visit the fruit wine growing village of Sirince and learn about the history of carpet weaving in Turkey.

This evening we'll visit a local vineyard and learn about how wines have been produced in this region over the centuries. You can taste 3 iwnes from the local region in the vineyard garden before we return to our hotel in Selcuk.

OVERNIGHT: Selcuk 3-star hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 6: To Fethiye, start Gulet Cruise

We drive further south this morning and the port town of Fethiye. Here we'll board our Gulet in Fethiye Harbour at around 3pm. After introductions on board as we set sail, you'll have time to enjoy some swimming or snorkeling in Turunc Bay or Tarzan Bay. The boat will cruise on past several small islands through the Gulf of Fethiye towards Tersane Island (Dockyard Island). Here you should be able to explore the ruins of an old Greek town and naval shipyard. We'll spend the night on board the boat in one of the sheltered bays.

Fully staffed and housed with individual en-suite double cabins these vessels offer us the perfect chance to unwind and enjoy the sunshine. Twin bedded cabins are not generally available, but most people tend to spend the nights sleeping under the stars on matresses on the deck of the boat.

OVERNIGHT: On board Gulet at Tersane Island

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 7: Gulet cruise, Gocek Bay

You can take an early swim before breakfast if you wish today, after which we will sail on around the coastline to Hamam Bay. This large bay is surrounded by pine trees and is famous for the ruins of Cleopatra's Baths which was possibly destroyed by an earthquake in the region. Legend has it that Marc Anthony built the bathhouse here as a wedding gift for Cleopatra, even having golden sands imported from Egypt. The site was chosen because a hot water spring was found above the bay, supplied by the thermal waters of a crater lake in the mountains north of the bay. Stories tell of the couple visiting here on what would have been their honeymoon. We'll then continue our cruise to Sarsala Bay from which a pleasant 45 minute hike brings you to an ancient Lycian town which has several walls with inscriptions dating from the 3rd century BC. Our day's cruising then finishes at Bedri Rahmi Bay, named after the famous Turkish writer and painter, Bedri Rahmi Eyuboglu. On one of his cruises in 1973 he painted a fish on a rock in the bay and it has since been renamed after him. The bay is protected and surrounded by pine trees, olive trees and oleander flowers. You can find several Lycian rock tombs hidden in the trees and some historians believe this is the location of the ancient Lycian town of Crya. We'll overnight here.

OVERNIGHT: On board Gulet in Bedri Rahmi Bay

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 8: Gulet cruise back to Fethiye

We'll sail on through the Gulf today, passing Gocek and Yassica Islands. One of these islands, Saytanli Ada, is said to be the place the devil chose to live when he was denied entry to heaven. Some of the islands are very close together and can be swum between. There are several ruins on the island and in the waters between them, suggesting they used to be connected. The area is not under protection and there are safe anchorages and secluded sandy beaches making them a great place to swim, soak up the sun, or take your snorkelling gear and swim over the ruins. We have one final stop today at Red Island (or Kizilada in Turkish). The island is known for the red colouration of its rocks and hillside which become even more pronounced as the sun sets. The island is popular for both swimming and walking, with the hilltop protecting the beaches and bays from the wind. Finally we'll return back to Fethiye harbour for our last night on board.

OVERNIGHT: On board Gulet in Fethiye harbour

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 9: Pamukkale and Hierapolis

We will see a display of locally handcrafted leather goods this morning before heading inland to Pamukkale, site of the well known white calcium terraces known as Travertines. Pamukkale translates as 'cotton castles' and the naturally occurring geology here has created cloud like formations unlike anywhere else. We also tour the ancient city of Hierapolis twhere and you can can enjoy a dip in the hot thermal pools lodged amongst ancient columns left by the Romans who used the pools for their therapeutic powers.

OVERNIGHT: Pamukkale 4-star hotel

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS:

Day 10: Follow the Silk Road to Cappadocia

We'll follow the route of the ancient Silk Road today as we head into central Turkey and our next destination, Cappadocia. Along the way we will stop to visit the Sultanhani Caravansary, and also the Mevlana museum in Konya. This evening there is an optional traditional Turkish folklore evening which is always a lot of fun.

OVERNIGHT: Cappadocia hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 11: Cappadocia tour, Goreme Valley & underground city

Today we set out to explore the beautiful and surreal landscape of Cappadocia. Unlike anywhere else on earth, this bizarre setting is full of improbable rock formations and underground villages. Often described as the jewel of Turkey we have a full tour here to visit Goreme Valley and the aptly named 'fairy chimneys' of Pasbag before hearing underground to explore the subterrenean churches and fortresses used by Christians to avoid persecution over a thousand years ago.

OVERNIGHT: Cappadocia hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 12: Drive to Ankara and Istanbul

We leave Cappadocia early this morning and drive to Turkey's capital Ankara to visit Anitkabir, mausoleum of the Mustafa Kemal Ataturk the country's famous leader during the Turkish war of independence and the founder of the modern Turkish republic. The mausoleum is one of Turkey's best examples of modern architecture and sits on a hill overlooking the city. From here we continue back to Istanbul for the final night of the tour. An optional morning flight to Istanbul is available from Kayseri in Cappadocia to avoid the long drive today (please contact us for current flight times and prices).

OVERNIGHT: 3-star hotel in Istanbul

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS:

Day 13: Tour ends in Istanbul

The tour ends in Istanbul today. Airport transfers and extra nights in the hotel in Istanbul may be added on request.

OVERNIGHT: N/A **MEALS:** Breakfast

EXTRAS: Extra day in Istanbul - post-tour Istanbul Departure Transfer

Included:

- All accommodation as stated in the itinerary
- All transport and transfers (excluding airport transfers)
- Services of a local tour leader throughout
- · Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Tipping kitty

Excluded:

- International flights (available on request)
- Airport Transfers (available on a request basis)
- Visa fees
- Entrance fees to sites being visited (approx. 245)
- Travel insurance (compulsory, available on request)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tips for guide, driver & gulet crew
- · Any other items not mentioned above

Notes

Gulet itineraries are subject to change at very little notice due to weather conditions and other local logistical reasons. While overnight stops may take place in different bays, the same overall experience is maintained.

Options

Our tours are designed to include all that you need to enjoy a really special time in the destination you're visiting. However, we do also offer some extra options to complement the tour and add some additional sightseeing or activities, or some extra time at either end of the tour.

All accommodation based options (e.g. Single supplements, extra nights, cruise upgrades) should be booked and paid for in advance so that we can make the appropriate arrangements. Other options may either be booked and paid for in advance or while you are on the tour, though we recommend booking in advance to ensure there are no issues with availability.

Many options are priced the same throughout the year, but some may incur single or high season supplements - full details are given on the tour reservation form or on request.

Single room supplement (TUSGAL)

Min numbers: 1

The tour price is based on 2 people sharing twin/double rooms. This option books a single room in all the accommodation throughout the tour. If you are a single traveller and would be happy to share a room, let us know and we will see if we can pair you up with another single traveller of the same sex. If a room share is not available when you book then we will add the single room supplement to your booking and it will be payable with your balance payment unless we have arranged a room share for you by then. If a room share is arranged after you have paid the supplement then we will refund it to you. Room shares are arranged in order of booking.

Note: Single supplement prices may vary seasonally.

Extra day in Istanbul - post-tour

Min numbers: 1

This option adds an extra day to the end of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). On tours which includes airport transfers, these are still included on your extra day. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Extra day in Istanbul - pre-tour

Min numbers: 1

This option adds an extra day to the start of your tour, staying in the same hotel as the main tour itself (subject to availability). On tours which includes airport transfers, these are still included on your extra day. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Kayseri to Istanbul Flight Upgrade (inc. transfers)

Min numbers: 1

This option exchanges the drive from Cappadocia to Istanbul (via Ankara) with a flight from Kayseri to Istanbul. All transfers are included. Please note that if this option is selected, it does mean that you will miss the included sightseeing in Ankara.

Notes: Flights are subject to availability. Single room supplements apply.

Istanbul Arrival Transfer

Min numbers: 1

This option adds an arrival airport transfer in Istanbul to your tour with us. If you are arriving prior to day 1 we can only provide arrival transfers if you have also booked your pre-trip accommodation with us.

Note: The displayed price is based on 2 passengers sharing a transfer together, single person rates apply.

Cappadocia Cooking Class

Min numbers: 1

Join an immersive cooking experience from 17:30 to 21:30 in a Turkish village house, where you'll learn to prepare a three-course meal primarily using the traditional 'Tandir' method. After the cooking session, you'll get to enjoy your delicious creations in a traditional village setting, truly immersing yourself in Turkish culinary traditions.

Tour includes Transportation in a fully air-conditioned, Pick up & drop off from/to your hotel, English speaking chef and cooking class.

Note: A minimum of 2 passenger are required for this option to operate.

Kusadasi Cooking Class

Min numbers: 1

Venture into the Turkish countryside and cook authentic dishes such as Sultan Köfte, Mant?, and Yaprak Sarma alongside a professional chef. Afterwards, savour your culinary creations with local wine in a tranquil village setting.

Tour includes Transportation in a fully air-conditioned, Pick up & drop off from/to your Kusadasi hotel, English speaking chef and cooking class.

Note: A minimum of 2 passenger are required for this option to operate.

Istanbul Cooking Class

Min numbers: 1

Uncover the secrets of traditional Turkish cuisine with a local chef in the hotel kitchen. You'll create, cook, and then enjoy your own Turkish meal, all while taking in a stunning rooftop view.

Tour includes Transportation in a fully air-conditioned, Pick up & drop off from/to your Istanbul hotel, English speaking chef and cooking class.

Note: A minimum of 2 passenger are required for this option to operate.

1. Turkish Gulets

Spending a few days on a traditional Turkish gulet (a handmade, motorised wooden yacht) is one of the highlights of exploring Turkey. You can enjoy plenty of swimming and snorkelling and explore loads of natural and historical sites along the way. As you cruise you can sunbathe on the deck, or read a book or play games on the cushioned seating in the shadow of the aft deck.

Most of the gullets we use feature an interior salon/bar area, both indoor and outdoor eating areas, and a fully equipped galley. The most common gulets have 4 to 10 double cabins, which can accommodate 8 to 20 people. All cabins have ensuite toilet & shower facilities. Single or twin bedded cabins are not generally available unless we have an odd number of people travelling so be prepared for a same-sex room share if you are travelling alone. This being said, most people choose to sleep under the beautiful Mediterranean sky on mattresses on the deck, and only use their cabins as a wardrobe.

The gulets we use are motorised pleasure craft with sails, and while they can manoevre under sail, the majority of the time the motor will be used. This is particularly the case during July and August when winds are very low. Strong winds also cause them to bank steeply and so time actually under sail is generally very limited. These are not sailing vessels where you are expected to help with the rigging or take part in sailing as an activity.

The gulets come with facilities for both outdoor and indoor dining. There are freezers to keep drinks cold, a CD player (so bring your music!), snorkels and masks, fishing lines and some board games.

You will need to bring your own beach towel, soap, shampoo and other personal items with you. Charging points are available for your electronic devices on deck and in some cabins (you will need to bring an adapter).

Health & Safety:

A dinghy with outboard, a ship-to-shore radio, mobile telephone and life jackets are also provided. Lifejackets are stored under your bed inside the cabin.

Please keep away from ropes and hawsers while sailing. Do not jump into the sea while the engine is running. In case of fire please check the position of your nearest life jacket and fire extinguisher - alert everybody on board and put on your life jacket immediately.

All the gulets we use are government approved with fully qualified captains.

Accessibility:

The boats we use are not suitable for passengers with special mobility needs. Embarkation gangways do not fit all types of wheelchairs and cabin bathrooms and staircases have restricted space and are generally unsuitable for people with limited mobility.

If you have other physical disabilities please contact us with any queries. It is expected that any passengers requiring special attention, assistance or treatment will be travelling with an escort.

2. Group Size/Tour Leaders/Guides

We are committed to being a small group operator, as we feel this gives everyone in the group the best chance to get to know their fellow travellers and to hear and make the most of their guide. There's no point in us providing great guides if you've got to peer over 30-40 shoulders to see them! So, we won't ever put you in a 50-seater coach with 49 other people and just one guide. Instead, we set our Turkey group departures to have a maximum of 20 travellers (Anzac Day departures may be larger).

In Turkey we provide fully trained, local English-speaking guides for all of the sightseeing tours. Our local reps in all the towns and cities en-route are also at your service, and will be handling all the practical arrangements for the tour. At Encounters Travel we try to use local Turkish guides and reps as much as possible. We feel this gives you the best experience of the country and the sites you are seeing.

3. Dates & Prices

| We run regular small-gr | oup departures on this tour be | etween April and Octobe | er. All departures are | guaranteed to |
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