

Classic Turkey & Greek Islands

Country(ies): Turkey & Greece

Tour type: Small Group

Transport: A/C minibus & local ferries

Group size: Min: 2 | Max: 20

Days: 14 Days

Start location: Athens, Greece

End location: Istanbul, Turkey

Departs On: Wednesday

Meals: Breakfasts - 12, Lunches - 0, Dinners - 5

Highlights: Acropolis, Parthenon, Greek islands of Santorini, Mykonos & Samos, Ephesus, Pamukkale & Hieropolis, Cappadocia landscape & underground cities, Istanbul

Places Visited: Athens, Santorini, Mykonos, Samos, Kusadasi, Konya, Goreme, Ankara & Istanbul



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in Athens, transfer to hotel

We'll greet you on your arrival at Athens airport and transfer you to your hotel. The rest of the day is free for you to settle in and start exploring this ancient city before you meet up with your tour leader and fellow travelling companions this evening. Extra nights in the Athens hotel are available before the tour starts if you'd like to spend more time here.

OVERNIGHT: Athens hotel

MEALS: None

EXTRAS: Single room supplement (TUSGTG) || Extra day in Athens - pre-tour

Day 2: Athens, half day Acropolis tour

We include a half day tour this morning to visit the ancient Acropolis which sits on top of a rocky hill overlooking the city, providing great views. You'll see the temple of Olympian Zeus and Hadrian's Arch, which formed a symbolic entrance to the city. You'll also tour the Temple of Nike, the most famous of Greek relics, the Parthenon, and see the original home of the marble sculptures removed by Lord Elgin that are now held in the British Museum in London. At the Acropolis you'll also visit the impressive museum, the towering entrance of Propylaea and the Temple of the Athene Nike. You'll also stop at the Panathenaikon (Kallimarmaro) Stadium and learn about the first Olympic Games of the modern era which were held here in 1896. The rest of the day is free for you to explore Athens yourselves; whether you'd like to concentrate on more history, see the modern centre or find a cafe in a square to relax is up to you.

OVERNIGHT: Athens hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 3: Ferry from Athens to Santorini, free time

We'll leave Athens this morning and take to the sea for the fast ferry crossing to the volcanic island of Santorini (approx. 5 hours). The present shape of the island was formed after a huge volcanic eruption around 3,600 years ago at the time of the height of the Minoan civilisation. Subsequent caldera collapses have left a large central lagoon with high cliffs surrounding it on three sides. The land then slopes down to some lovely beaches, formed of different coloured sand and pebbles, including the Black Beach White Beach and Red Beach. The weather here is consistently good through the summer months and you can spend your free time here relaxing on the beaches or perhaps exploring the picturesque capital, Fira.

OVERNIGHT: Santorini hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 4: Santorini, free time & optional tours

Your day is free to spend on Santorini today. You could relax on the beach, or take an optional boat trip into the volcanic lagoon to see the surrounding crater walls. You can also visit the active volcano, take a relaxing and therapeutic mud bath, and swim in the warm waters.

OVERNIGHT: Santorini hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 5: Ferry from Santorini to Mykonos

You head to sea again today and take the ferry from Santorini to Mykonos (approx. 3 hours), another of the Cyclades group of Greek islands. Mykonos is one of the most popular Greek islands, and for good reason. Mythology suggests that the island was formed by the bodies of petrified giants, killed by Hercules. Today it is a cosmopolitan island that attracts tourists from Greece and around Europe who come to enjoy the great weather, historic towns and whitewashed and colourful buildings, busy shopping streets, great cafes and restaurants, and a thriving night-time clubbing scene. Known as the 'Island of the Winds', Mykonos also is a great place for watersports with some excellent windsurfing and surfing beaches. Also popular are sailing trips and diving or snorkelling. Your time is free here to take advantage of whatever aspects of the islands attractions most suit you. Your tour leader will assist with any arrangements you may like to make.

OVERNIGHT: Mykonos hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 6: Mykonos, free day & local options

Your day is free to relax or explore Mykonos today, again with the assistance of your tour leader. You could chill on the beach or visit some of the small villages on the island which can feel like a large open-air museum. Worth seeing are the rows of windmills built above Chora by the Venetians in the 16th century; 'Little Venice' - the most picturesque and colourful quarter of the capital Chora; the Neolithic site at Ftelia in the north of the island; several interesting museums and churches, and of course the famous beaches. Late this evening we transfer to the ferry port to catch the overnight ferry to Samos (approx. 5-7 hours).

OVERNIGHT: Ferry reclining seats

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 7: Samos to Kusadasi

You arrive in the Greek island of Samos early this morning. Samos is the southernmost island of the Aegean and sits just off the Turkish coast. Later in the day we will transfer you via ferry to Kusadasi on the Turkish coast. Depending on the ferry schedules, you'll have time to explore the towns of Samos or Kusadasi during the day. You'll be welcomed in Turkey by our team there and meet your professional Turkish tour guide who will accompany you for the rest of the trip.

OVERNIGHT: Kusadasi hotel

MEALS: Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 8: Kusadasi, Ephesus Roman ruins tour

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 Mediterranean. 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.

OVERNIGHT: Kusadasi hotel

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 9: Drive to Pamukkale and Hierapolis

You can see a display of locally handcrafted leather goods this morning before we travel east to Pamukkale, site of the famous 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 then head to the adjacent ancient city of Hierapolis where you 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 hotel

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 10: Drive the Silk Road to Konya

Travel back in time today as we follow the ancient Silk Road towards Konya. We learn more about the history of this important trade route with a stop at the Sultanhani Caravanserai before arriving in Konya where we include a visit to the Mevlana museum - the former home of the original Mevlevi Whirling Dervishes.

OVERNIGHT: Cappadocia hotel

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 11: Cappadocia, full day tour

Today we set out to explore the beautiful and surreal landscape of Cappadocia. Unlike anywhere else on earth, this bizarre setting creates a fairytale view full of improbable rock formations and underground villages. Often described as the jewel of Turkey we have a full tour here to explore the Goreme Valley Open Air Museum, the fairy chimneys, and we'll also explore an underground city full of subterranean churches, living areas, schools and shops used by Christians to avoid persecution over a thousand years ago.

OVERNIGHT: Cappadocia hotel

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

EXTRAS: None

Day 12: Cappadocia, drive to Ankara before returning to Istanbul

We leave early this morning for the drive to Ankara, Turkey's modern day capital city. We visit Anitkabir - mausoleum of the famed Mustafa Kemal Ataturk before returning to Istanbul by road. This is a long day's drive, and we can arrange an upgrade to an internal flight from Kayseri in Cappadocia if you prefer (please ask for current times & prices).

OVERNIGHT: Istanbul hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 13: Istanbul, old city tour

Today's tour of the old city of Istanbul provides an introduction to the history and some of the most important sites in this fascinating city. Straddling two continents Istanbul (or Constantinople as it was previously known) played an integral role in the development of both the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. We'll visit the 17th century Blue Mosque, the Aya Sofya museum and explore the former residence of the Ottoman Sultans at Topkapi Palace before ending at the famous Hippodrome.

OVERNIGHT: Istanbul hotel

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: None

Day 14: Istanbul, departure transfer to the airport

Your time is free today for some last minute sightseeing and shopping in Istanbul before we transfer you to the airport for your flight home. Optional tours are available locally to see more of Istanbul, and we can also add extra nights in the Istanbul hotel if you'd like to spend more time exploring the city.

OVERNIGHT: N/A

MEALS: Breakfast

EXTRAS: Extra day in Istanbul - post-tour

Included

- All accommodation as stated in the itinerary
- All transport and transfers
- Greek island ferry crossings as per itinerary
- Port-hotel transfers on Greek islands
- 24-hour airport arrival & departure transfer service
- Services of a local tour leader throughout
- Entrance fees to sites visited in Turkey
- Services of a Greek tour leader from Athens to Samos
- Services of a professional Turkish tour guide from Kusadasi to Istanbul
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Tipping kitty

Excluded

- International flights (available on request)
- Visa fees
- Travel insurance (compulsory, available on request)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Entrance fees in Athens (allow approx. EUR 17 for the Acropolis and Acropolis Museum)
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tips for guide & driver
- Port or border fees
- Optional tours
- Any other items not mentioned above

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 (TUSGTG)

Min numbers: 2 Adults

Price: \$850.00

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 aim to pair you up with another traveller of the same sex. If a room share is available, you will not need to pay the supplement.

Note: The price shown is a low season price. Slightly higher prices may apply during high and peak seasons - the exact price for your dates will be shown on the online booking form and is always available on request.

Extra day in Istanbul - post-tour

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$35.00

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). Your airport departure transfer is still included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Extra day in Athens - pre-tour

Min numbers: 1 person

Price: \$80.00

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). Your airport arrival transfer is still included. Prices shown are per person and based on two people sharing.

Note: Single room and peak season supplements apply.

Tour Notes

1. Accommodation

This tour uses a range of hotels mainly at the local 4-star level. Please check the Accommodation section for more information on the normal hotels used on this tour. This list is given as a guide though and hotels may change from time to time to others of a similar standard.

Accommodation levels and hotels are slightly different in Greece and Turkey to general Western standards. We regularly inspect all the hotels we use to ensure that the service you receive is as close as possible to your expectations. Please check your hotel room when you first arrive (hot water, cleanliness etc.), as our rep will wait in the hotel reception for at least 15 minutes to help in case of any problems.

We will contact you with your arrival hotel details normally a couple of weeks before departure.

Rooming Arrangements: Single, Twin, and Double bedded rooms are available in all of the hotels used on these tours. Single, Twin, and Double bedded rooms are available in all of the hotels used on these tours. If you are a single traveller who is happy to share then please let us know and we will aim to pair you up with another traveller of the same sex. If this is not available then the single supplement will be added to your booking, but will be refunded if we are later available to arrange a share. Room shares are arranged in order of booking.

Check In Times: Official hotel check-in times in Greece and Turkey are between 14.00 and 15.00. However, we do always try to ensure that if you arrive early, you can check into your room as soon as possible. We can nearly always get you into your hotel rooms by midday, but please understand that it is out of our control if the hotel is full and it takes a little longer. You will have full use of the hotel facilities while you wait if there is a short delay.

2. Transport

Our Turkey & Greece tours use a mix of air conditioned minivans, minibuses and coaches depending on the size of the group.

Ferry journeys to the Greek islands are booked in advance and approximate timings are given in our tour itineraries. These are subject to change however, and any tour that visits the islands is subject to adjustments and amendments based on the available ferry schedules. While it does not happen often, sometimes ferry schedules are changed without notice and ferries may also be cancelled completely due to poor weather conditions. In this event the program may need to be adjusted and you may end up spending more or less time in one location than originally planned. This is the nature of travel between the islands and we thank you for your patience and understanding in the rare event of this occurring.

3. Transfers

The tour includes a 24-hour airport arrival transfer service in Athens airport and departure transfer service to either of Istanbul's two airports. All other transfers throughout the tour including between ferry ports and hotels are also included.

4. International Flights

We want to give you as much flexibility as possible when it comes to booking your holiday with us. So, to take account of people with varying travel plans, we don't include your international flights in the main tour price. We are however very happy to suggest flights to go with the tour. Please contact us with your preferred dates and departure

airport and we'll give you a selection of airlines, times and fares to choose from.

Your airport arrival & departure transfers are included on the first and last days of the tour.

5. 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 group departures on this tour to have a maximum of 20 travellers (dedicated Anzac Day tour groups may be larger).

In Greece we provide a professional tour guide for the tour in Athens, and a tour leader to accompany throughout the whole tour until you board the ferry for Turkey in Samos.

In Turkey we provide a fully trained, local English-speaking guide to accompany you all the way from Kusadasi to the end of the tour in Istanbul. They will escort you on all of the sightseeing tours.

At Encounters Travel we try to use local guides and reps as much as possible. We feel this gives you the best experience of the country and the sites you are seeing.

6. Entrance fees, Hotel fees & permits

Entrance fees to all sites visited during the tour while in Turkey are included in the price. However entrance fees to sites visited in Athens are not included. Please allow approx. EUR 25 to cover the Acropolis and Acropolis Museum.

Greece Hotel Residence Fees: The Hellenic National Tourism Organization has announced that a residence fee will be applied on all hotel accommodation, starting from 1st January 2018. The fees must be paid by guests directly to the hotel before the end of their stay and are therefore not included in the tour price. Fees are per room per night (not per person) and have been set at EUR 1.50 for 3* hotels, EUR 3.00 for 4* hotels and EUR 4.00 for 5* hotels.

7. Tipping

Tipping is common practice in Turkey and Greece, as a sign of appreciation for services provided. Your tour price includes a kitty contribution to various tips that your tour guide/leader will make along the way to ensure the smooth running of your tour. This does not cover your tour guide, driver(s) or transfer staff though.

Turkey tour guide & Greece tour leader: If you feel that your tour guide and tour leaders in Turkey and Greece have worked hard and been of good assistance to you, then they will certainly appreciate a tip at the end of your time with them. How much you tip is subject to your satisfaction with their service and your personal budget. You should not feel pressured to tip any particular amount. As a guideline, we can suggest that for good service, approximately GBP 2-4 / USD 3-6 / EUR 3-5 per day would be appropriate.

Drivers: You may have a range of private drivers on your trip. For those you see for at least several days and who are more involved with the group, a tip of around EUR 1-2 per person per day is generally appropriate.

8. Health and Vaccinations

You should ensure you are fully insured for medical emergencies including emergency evacuation and repatriation.

UK travellers visiting European Union countries including Greece should also carry the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) as it entitles travellers to reduced cost, sometimes free, medical treatment in most European countries.

Recommended vaccinations and other health protection measures vary according to the country you are visiting and where you are travelling from. We recommend you contact your GP/medical practitioner or a travel clinic for current information on vaccinations needed for your destination.

You should ensure that you are up to date with vaccines and boosters recommended for your normal life at home, including for example, vaccines required for occupational risk of exposure, lifestyle risks and underlying medical conditions. In addition, additional courses or boosters normally recommended for Turkey are Hepatitis A and Tetanus. No additional courses or boosters are generally recommended for Greece.

More information is available here: [Turkey](#), [Greece](#)

[Malaria map](#) - there is low risk malaria in some south eastern regions of Turkey, not visited on our tours.

[Malaria map](#) - there is low to no risk of malaria in Greece, none in tourist areas.

Yellow fever certificates are not required for either country.

9. Passports and Visas

Passports should be valid for at least six months after your departure from the country. Please do not bring an almost full or almost expired passport. Visa arrangements are the responsibility of the traveller, and requirements are subject to change by the local authorities.

Most foreign nationals require a visa to enter Turkey, and need to obtain it in advance online through <http://www.evisa.gov.tr>. Applicants just need to log on to the following link, provide the requested information, (after the application is approved) make online payment and download their e-Visa. More information is available here <http://www.mfa.gov.tr/visa-information-for-foreigners.en.mfa>

Some foreign nationals require a visa to enter Greece, though many do not (including UK, EUR, US, CA, AU, NZ, SA). More information is available [here](#).

10. Time

Both Greece and Turkey's standard time is GMT plus 2 hours. Daylight saving adjustments of 1 hour are applied, starting at the end of March and finishing at the end of October. Exact dates vary from year to year.

11. Voltage

Sockets are two round pronged and 220 volts (Type C). Universal adaptors are available in most airport shops if you don't have one already. Standard European adapters will work fine, though sometimes they may feel a little loose in the sockets. All hotel rooms have electrical sockets where you can re-charge cameras, phones etc. Hair dryers are normally available on request from the hotel reception if not in your room already.

If you have US appliances (110 volts) you will need a voltage converter as well as a plug adapter.

12. Money - Turkey

The Turkish lira was re-valued at the end of 2004 to become the 'New Turkish Lira'. The word 'New' has now been dropped, and we are back to 'Turkish Lira' again (TRY).

It is normally cheaper to convert money to Turkish Lira in Turkey than at home. Using an ATM or a credit card will often get you the best possible exchange rates; the post and telephone office (PTT) and banks offer very reasonable rates, too. Try to use ATM machines that are attached to banks while they are open, so that if your card is

swallowed you can go into the bank and get it released back to you.

It is difficult for us to specify the money that you will spend per day, however, as a general rule USD 20-50 per day can provide you with additional meals, tipping, snacks & drinks. Should you wish to purchase many souvenirs or other luxuries, of which there is a diverse range, you will have to budget for these.

A mixture of cash and credit cards are the best forms of currency. Credit cards are accepted in most restaurants, bars and pubs. MasterCard and Visa are most welcomed; American Express cards work at some ATMs and AmEx offices. Credit cards are also useful for cash advances, which allow you to withdraw Lira instantly from associated banks and ATMs throughout Turkey. Cash cards and ATM's are widespread in most of Turkey including in Istanbul, Canakkale, Selcuk, Marmaris, Pamukkale, Fethiye, Kas, Cappadocia, and Ankara.

13. What to take

Luggage: Suitcases, rucksacks or fabric holdalls are all fine to bring with you on the tour. You should also bring a small daypack/bag to take out during the day. Your main luggage will normally be left in the hotel during your sightseeing trips. However, you do have lots of transfer on this tour, between ferries, through ports and hotels. So, please only bring as much as you are comfortable carrying yourself.

Luggage limits: There is no luggage limit for this tour. However, most airlines restrict you to between 20kg and 25kg for your hold luggage and between 5kg and 10kg for hand luggage. Please check with your airline before travelling to the airport.

Clothing: This tour only runs during the warmer summer months between June and September. The climate is hot and sunny, getting cooler as the year progresses. Modesty rates highly in some parts of Turkey, especially for women and in the East, so please ensure clothes are loose fitting and not too revealing. Loose shorts are OK in tourist sites, as are T-shirts, but these should not show too much bare flesh (your shoulders should remain covered). The Greek islands are more relaxed.

Other items: We also recommend you bring a sun hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, a basic first aid kit, toiletries, money belt, small torch, camera & charger.

14. Dates & Prices

We run regular small-group departures on this tour approximately every 2 weeks from June to September. All departures are guaranteed to run with a minimum of 2 travellers. Departure dates and prices are listed on our website and on a separate dates & prices sheet available on request.

15. Language - Turkey

The official language of Turkey is Turkish. In addition, between 10 per cent and 15 per cent of the population speaks a different mother tongue, usually Kurdish or Arabic. Turkish words are spelled with an adapted Roman alphabet. The language is phonetic; each letter has only one sound that is always pronounced distinctly.

You'll find you won't have much of a problem with the language barrier. English is well communicated by many Turks. Below you will find some important phrases that will have you sounding like a Turk in no time!

Yes = Evet (eh-vet)

Maybe = Belki (behl-key)

Thank you = Tesekkür (tesh-eccur)

Who = Kim (kim)

No = Hayir (hah-yuhr)

Please = Lütfen (loot-fen)

Pardon me = Pardon (phar-don)

When = Ne zaman (neh zah-mahn)

Today = Bugun (boo-ghoon)	Yesterday = Dun (dhuen)
Tomorrow = Yarin (yar-in)	I'm sorry = Ozur dilerim (oz-oor del-eh-rim)
Help = Imdat (eem-daht)	Police = Polis (po-lis)
Hello = Merhaba (mehrhaba)	Goodbye = Hoscakal (hosh-cha-khal)
Good night = Iyi geceler (ee-yee geh-jeh-lehr)	How are you ? = Nasilsin ? (nah-sil-sihn)
Open = Acik (ach-oek)	Closed = Kapali (kap-ah-lee)
Bad = Kotu (koh-too)	Good = Iyi (eeh-yea)
Hot = Sicak (sijark)	Cold = Soguk (sooh-ook)
Bill, please = Hesap lutfen (hesarp, lewtfen)	My name is Paul = Ismim Paul (Eas-meem Paul)
I am a vegetarian = Vejeteryanim (vej-e-tar-ian-eam)	I need a doctor = Doktora ihtiyacim (dohk-tor-ah eeh-tee-yajum)
Do you speak English ? = Ingilizce biliyor musun (een-geal-je bee-leh-your-moe-sean)	
I don't speak Turkish. = Turkce bilmiyorum (Terkche-bil-me-you-room)	
I don't understand = Anlamiyorum (ahn-luh-mee-your-room)	

16. Booking & Payment

If you would like to book a place on this tour, please complete the online reservation form on our website (via the Dates & Prices tab on the tour page). You may make a deposit or full payment online, or just hold a reservation if you prefer (full payments are due 8 weeks before departure). We will then contact you with more details about how to complete your booking. Payments may be made by debit or credit card (subject to a card processing fee), or by making a bank transfer, or posting us a cheque/bank draft. Full details will be provided in your booking confirmation email. Please [contact us](#) if you would like any more information or have any questions before making a booking.

17. Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory on all of our tours and needs to cover personal accident & liability, medical expenses and repatriation, travel delay & abandonment. We also strongly recommend that you take out cover against cancellation and lost/stolen baggage. Personal medical insurance does not normally provide sufficient cover and is generally not suitable for travel on our tours. You will not be able to join your tour if you have not provided us with details of your insurance or if you arrive without cover in place (no refunds will be due in this event). [More information...](#)

You may arrange your own insurance, or you can take advantage of a comprehensive policy that we can arrange for you through Endsleigh Insurance which has been designed to be suitable for our tours. The policy is available to travellers of all nationalities and you do not need to live in the UK to take out the policy. For full details of cover provided, prices and to apply for one of our policies, please complete [travel insurance application form](#).

Note: Any country that borders the Mediterranean is considered as 'Europe' for the purposes of travel insurance (including Turkey, Israel, Egypt and Morocco). If you are doing a tour that visits one country in 'Europe' and one that is 'Worldwide' (for example, an Egypt and Jordan tour), then you need a 'Worldwide' policy. When completing the form you should enter your travel dates including any extra days involved in overnight flights or connecting travel between your home and the tour. Our policies are not able to cover any extra time or activities other than your tour and options booked with us and your travel to & from home.

Note - to comply with insurance sales regulations, our travel insurance policies are only available to customers booking directly with us. If you have booked through a travel agent you will need to arrange your own insurance.

If you plan to arrange a hot air balloon flight locally, or do some scuba diving during your tour, you should check the small print in your policy to make sure these are covered (these are covered in our policy). Please also check the maximum altitude that you will be reaching and that full cover including emergency evacuation is provided up to this altitude.

If you are taking expensive camera gear or other electronic equipment with you then please check the coverage and the fine print of your policy to ensure that you have sufficient cover.

IMPORTANT: We must have your travel insurance details (policy number and type of insurance) before you depart or you may not be allowed to join the tour. If you haven't told us already, please let us know the details when you can. You should take a paper copy of your insurance policy with you as you may be asked to show this at the start of the tour.

18. Financial Security

We are a UK registered company and an ABTA Member (Y4447) and you can be confident when booking with us that your money is safe and protected.

Financial failure insurance is also provided through Affirma to protect all customers for the land portion of your tour. Please see [our website](#) or [booking conditions](#) for more information.

19. Responsible Tourism

It is impossible not to have an impact on the local environment, cultures and eco-systems when you travel. However, it is very possible to try and ensure that these impacts are as limited, or positive as possible. We are committed to ensuring that we try to leave our host countries in a better state than we found them and encourage and assist our travellers to help us with this.

The following are a few simple tips that require very little effort on your part but which will help ensure that any effect you have on the locations you visit is positive rather than negative.

- Don't prejudge: Things in different countries will almost certainly be different. That doesn't make them worse or inferior, just different.
- Communicate: Don't expect locals to speak your language. Take the trouble to learn a few words or phrases of the local language. Don't worry about sounding silly. Most locals are patient and accommodating and appreciate you making the effort to communicate in their language.
- Conserve energy: Be careful not to waste valuable resources. Use local resources sparingly. Switch off lights, air-conditioning and fans when you leave the hotel room and don't waste water. Remove superfluous packaging. Many countries have far less efficient waste disposal systems than ours. Remove packaging from newly acquired items before leaving home.
- Don't litter: No matter how untidy or dirty the country you're travelling in may look to you, avoid littering, as there is no need to add to the environment's stress. Many of the countries we visit have a tough challenge dealing with rubbish and waste. Please consider taking home as much plastic waste as you can (e.g. water bottles).
- Choose environmentally friendly products: By using environmentally friendly (bio degradable) sun creams, shampoos and detergents you can help reduce pollution.
- Respect local customs and traditions: As you are a guest in these countries, you should also comply with the local customs. If you are friendly and well mannered, the locals will reciprocate and it will only enhance your experience. It's important to follow dress and behaviour guidelines especially when visiting religious or sacred sites (your tour leader will advise you how best to do this).
- If a client commits an illegal act the client may be excluded from the tour and Encounters Travel shall cease to have responsibility to/for them. No refund will be given for any unused services.

All porters are employed and equipped following guidelines set by the International Porter Protection Group (IPPG).

20. Follow Us Online

You can stay in touch with us online by following us on Facebook and Twitter. We post updates on relevant travel news in our destination countries, special offers and discounts and other interesting travel related news and information.

www.facebook.com/encounterstravel

www.twitter.com/encounterstravl (yes, without the 'e')

21. Before you travel

It is important when considering and preparing to travel anywhere in the world that you have a good understanding of the country you are visiting, its laws and customs, and the possible risks and situations that may occur. This includes specific risks related to your itinerary (eg. does it involve water & can you swim, are you fit enough for the activities included), as well as more general risks such as terrorism and natural disasters.

General details and links to more information about health risks, visa requirements, money, and travel insurance are given in these tour notes. We recommend that you re-read all these before your departure as well as the small print of your travel insurance policy so you know exactly what is covered and what is not.

You should take copies of your important travel documents with you and ideally also store them online securely as a backup. Make sure that you have given us your emergency contact details and told that person where and when you are travelling. Ensure you take enough money with you and that you have access to emergency funds.

Finally, you should read through and stay updated with the current [official government travel advice](#) for your destination. We are registered partners with the UK Foreign Office's ['Travel Aware' campaign](#) which provides further useful and invaluable information.



Note: Please [download an up-to-date copy](#) of these tour notes shortly before you travel as itineraries and information does change from time to time.
