ENCOUNTERS TRAVEL

Your passport to adventure

Eastern Turkey Encounters

COUNTRY(IES)	Turkey
TOUR TYPE	Small Group
TRANSPORT	A/C minibus/coach, domestic flight
GROUP SIZE	Min: 2 | Max: 12
DURATION	9 days
STARTS	Istanbul, Turkey
ENDS	Istanbul, Turkey
MEALS	Breakfasts - 8, Lunches - 0, Dinners - 5

TOUR ROUTE MAP **9 Days**



ROUTE: **Istanbul** (Start) → **Cappadocia** → **Adiyaman** → **Anliurfa** → **Istanbul** (End)

HIGHLIGHTS

Old Istanbul, Underground cities of Cappadocia, Mount Nemrut sunset, Adiyaman, Sanliurfa, Gobekli Tepe Ancient Site, Harran, Gaziantep

Itinerary

DAY 1 Arrive into Istanbul, transfer to hotel

Transfer from Istanbul Airport to your hotel and spend some time at leisure after arrival. You may choose to rest or take a short walk around the local area before attending the welcome meeting. The session provides useful orientation and introduces the arrangements for the upcoming days while allowing the arrival itself to remain relaxed and unhurried.

ACTIVITIES

- **Arrive at Istanbul Airport**
  You arrive at Istanbul Airport in Istanbul, Turkey, marking the beginning of your journey in this historic transcontinental city.

- **Drive from Istanbul Airport to Istanbul Hotel**
  You are transferred from Istanbul Airport to your hotel in central Istanbul, Turkey, passing through vibrant urban districts.
- **Free Time in Istanbul**
  You enjoy free time to explore Istanbul, Turkey, discovering its streets, markets, and historic landmarks at your own pace.
- **Welcome Meeting in Istanbul**
  You attend a welcome meeting in Istanbul, Turkey, meeting your guide and fellow travellers and reviewing the journey ahead.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS	EXTRAS
Istanbul hotel	None	Single room supplement (TUSGTE), Extra day in Istanbul - pre-tour

DAY 2 Exploring Istanbul including Topkapi Palace, Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia & Hippodrome. Optional afternoon Bosphorus cruise

Spend the day among Istanbul’s principal imperial landmarks, including Topkapi Palace and Harem, Hagia Irene, the Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia and the former Hippodrome. These sites provide a broad look at both Byzantine and Ottoman history and reveal how government, worship and public life developed in the historic peninsula. Their close proximity keeps the focus firmly on the city’s central heritage district.

ACTIVITIES

- **Explore Topkapi Palace in Istanbul**
  You tour Topkapi Palace in Istanbul, Turkey, the former residence of Ottoman sultans filled with courtyards and royal chambers.
- **Explore Hagia Irene in Istanbul**
  You visit Hagia Irene in Istanbul, Turkey, a historic church within the Topkapi Palace complex with a long Byzantine past.
- **Explore Topkapi Palace Harem in Istanbul**
  You explore the Harem section of Topkapi Palace in Istanbul, Turkey, seeing the private quarters associated with the Ottoman court.
- **Explore Blue Mosque in Istanbul**
  You visit the Blue Mosque in Istanbul, Turkey, admiring its grand domes, minarets, and intricate Ottoman-era tilework.
- **Explore Hagia Sophia in Istanbul**
  You explore Hagia Sophia in Istanbul, Turkey, a monumental structure reflecting Byzantine and Ottoman history.
- **Explore Hippodrome of Constantinople in Istanbul**
  You visit the Hippodrome of Constantinople in Istanbul, Turkey, once the ceremonial and sporting center of the Byzantine Empire.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Istanbul hotel	Breakfast

DAY 3 Fly to Cappadocia and begin exploring the 'fairy chimneys' and underground city

Leave Istanbul for the airport and fly to Kayseri, then transfer into Cappadocia for a full introduction to the region’s unusual geology and historic settlements. Explore the churches of Göreme Open Air Museum, visit areas of fairy chimneys and enter an underground city. The combination of flight and sightseeing brings you quickly from Turkey’s largest city into one of its most distinctive archaeological landscapes.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Istanbul Hotel to Istanbul Airport**
  You are transferred from your hotel in Istanbul to Istanbul Airport, Turkey, for your onward departure.
- **Travel from Flight Istanbul to Kayseri**
  You fly from Istanbul to Kayseri, Turkey, gateway to the Cappadocia region.
- **Drive from Kayseri Airport to Cappadocia**
  You travel by road from Kayseri Airport to Cappadocia, Turkey, arriving among its unique volcanic landscapes.
- **Explore Goreme Open Air Museum in Cappadocia**
  You visit the Goreme Open Air Museum in Cappadocia, Turkey, exploring rock-cut churches decorated with early Christian frescoes.
- **Explore Fairy Chimneys in Cappadocia**
  You visit the fairy chimneys in Cappadocia, Turkey, viewing surreal volcanic formations shaped by centuries of erosion.
- **Explore Underground City in Cappadocia**
  You explore an underground city in Cappadocia, Turkey, discovering tunnels and chambers carved for refuge and daily life.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Cappadocia Cave hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 4 Continue exploring Cappadocia with visits to the Pigeon and Red Valleys. Also visit Cavusin and Avanos to learn about pottery

Spend the day visiting Pigeon Valley, Red Valley, Çavuşin and Avanos. The Red Valley section includes a gentle hike, while Çavuşin includes the Church of St John the Baptist. In Avanos, the pottery workshop demonstrates traditional ceramic production using clay associated with the Kızılırmak River. Trying the wheel is presented as a possibility rather than a guaranteed activity, so it should remain optional in the wording.

ACTIVITIES

- **Explore Pigeon Valley in Cappadocia**
  You walk through Pigeon Valley in Cappadocia, Turkey, known for rock-carved pigeon houses.
- **Explore Red Valley in Cappadocia**
  You visit Red Valley in Cappadocia, Turkey, famous for its colourful rock formations and scenic views.
- **Explore Cavusin Village in Cappadocia**
  You explore Cavusin Village in Cappadocia, Turkey, one of the region's oldest settlements carved into rock.
- **Explore Avanos Pottery Workshop in Cappadocia**
  You visit a pottery workshop in Avanos, Cappadocia, Turkey, learning about traditional ceramic-making techniques.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Cappadocia cave hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 5 Drive to Adiyaman via Kahramanmaras. Witness a spectacular sunset from Mount Nemrut

Travel from Cappadocia through Kahramanmaras towards Adiyaman before continuing to Mount Nemrut. The long overland journey crosses a substantial section of Turkey and ends among one of the southeast’s most striking archaeological settings. Time at the summit is planned around sunset, with the monumental stone heads, burial complex and surrounding highland scenery providing the main focus at the end of the day.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Cappadocia to Adiyaman via Kahramanmaras**
  You drive from Cappadocia to Adiyaman, Turkey, passing through Kahramanmaras and diverse Anatolian landscapes.
- **Explore Mount Nemrut Sunset Viewpoint**
  You visit Mount Nemrut near Adiyaman, Turkey, watching sunset over colossal statues and the tomb sanctuary of Commagene.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Adiyaman hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 6 Onwards to Sanliurfa via the Ataturk Dam and Harran

Travelling from Adıyaman towards Şanlıurfa, stop at the Atatürk Dam, a major engineering project on the Euphrates, before continuing to Harran and its distinctive beehive houses. In Şanlıurfa, visit the Pools of Abraham and Cave of Abraham, bringing together modern infrastructure, traditional settlement architecture and sites that hold an important place in local religious tradition.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Adiyaman to Sanliurfa**
  You travel from Adiyaman to Sanliurfa, Turkey, journeying across southeastern Anatolia.
- **Photo Stop in Ataturk Dam**
  You stop at the Ataturk Dam in southeastern Turkey, viewing one of the country's major engineering landmarks near Sanliurfa.
- **Explore Harran Beehive Houses**
  You explore Harran in Sanliurfa Province, Turkey, famous for its distinctive beehive-shaped mud-brick houses.
- **Explore Pools of Abraham in Sanliurfa**
  You visit the Pools of Abraham in Sanliurfa, Turkey, a sacred complex of tranquil pools and gardens tied to local religious tradition.
- **Explore Cave of Abraham in Sanliurfa**
  You visit the Cave of Abraham in Sanliurfa, Turkey, believed to be the birthplace of the Prophet Abraham.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Sanliurfa hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 7 Visit ancient Göbeklitepe and explore more of Şanlıurfa.

Leave Sanliurfa for Gobekli Tepe and spend time among the carved pillars and archaeological remains that have reshaped ideas about early human society. Back in the city, continue through the Haleplibahce Mosaic Museum, Kizilkoyun Necropolis and Archaeology Museum, bringing together prehistoric, classical and Roman-era material from the wider region.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Sanliurfa to Gobekli Tepe**
  You travel from Sanliurfa to Gobekli Tepe in southeastern Turkey, heading to one of the world's oldest known temple sites.
- **Explore Gobekli Tepe**
  You explore Gobekli Tepe near Sanliurfa, Turkey, a prehistoric sanctuary dating back over 11,000 years.
- **Drive from Gobekli Tepe to Sanliurfa**
  You return by road from Gobekli Tepe to Sanliurfa, Turkey, continuing your exploration of the city's museums.
- **Explore Haleplibahce Mosaic Museum in Sanliurfa**
  You visit the Haleplibahce Mosaic Museum in Sanliurfa, Turkey, viewing Roman-era mosaics recovered from the region.
- **Explore Kizilkoyun Necropolis in Sanliurfa**
  You visit the Kizilkoyun Necropolis in Sanliurfa, Turkey, exploring rock-cut tombs and an ancient burial landscape.
- **Explore Sanliurfa Archaeology Museum**
  You visit the Sanliurfa Archaeology Museum in Turkey, displaying artifacts from prehistoric to classical periods.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Sanliurfa hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 8 Exploring Gaziantep and the sunken city of Halfeti. Fly to Istanbul

Leave Şanlıurfa for Gaziantep and head onwards to Halfeti for a boat excursion on the Euphrates. After seeing the waterside landscapes and submerged remains, return to Gaziantep and explore the Zeugma Mosaic Museum. The final part of the day is devoted to onward travel, with a transfer to Gaziantep Airport and a domestic flight to Istanbul bringing the southeastern section to an end.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Sanliurfa to Gaziantep**
  You travel from Sanliurfa to Gaziantep in southeastern Turkey, known for its rich culinary and cultural heritage.
- **Drive from Gaziantep to Halfeti**
  You travel from Gaziantep to Halfeti, Turkey, heading toward the Euphrates River for a boat excursion.
- **Boat Trip on Halfeti Sunken City**
  You take a boat trip at Halfeti, Turkey, viewing the partially submerged buildings of the Euphrates River's sunken settlement.
- **Drive from Halfeti to Gaziantep**
  You return by road from Halfeti to Gaziantep, Turkey, continuing your sightseeing in the city.
- **Explore Zeugma Mosaic Museum in Gaziantep**
  You visit the Zeugma Mosaic Museum in Gaziantep, Turkey, home to world-renowned Roman mosaics.
- **Drive from Gaziantep Hotel to Gaziantep Airport**
  You transfer from central Gaziantep to Gaziantep Airport, Turkey, for your flight back to Istanbul.
- **Travel from Flight Gaziantep to Istanbul**
  You fly from Gaziantep to Istanbul, Turkey, returning to the country's main cultural and transport hub.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Istanbul hotel	Breakfast

DAY 9 Istanbul, free time, transfer to airport

Enjoy your final hours in Istanbul at your own pace before departure. The free period can be used for last-minute shopping, revisiting a favourite area, walking nearby streets or simply relaxing before leaving the city. Later, transfer from your hotel to Istanbul Airport for the onward flight, creating a straightforward conclusion that combines flexible personal time with the final included departure service.

ACTIVITIES

- **Free Time in Istanbul**
  You enjoy free time to explore Istanbul, Turkey, discovering its streets, markets, and historic landmarks at your own pace.
- **Drive from Istanbul Hotel to Istanbul Airport**
  You are transferred from your hotel in Istanbul to Istanbul Airport, Turkey, for your onward departure.
- **Departure from Istanbul Airport**
  Your tour concludes at Istanbul Airport, where you complete departure formalities and continue with your onward flight.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS	EXTRAS
N/A	Breakfast	Extra day in Istanbul - post-tour

INCLUDED

- All accommodation as stated in the itinerary
- All transport and transfers
- 24-hour airport arrival & departure transfer service
- Domestic flights between Istanbul-Cappadocia & Gaziantep-Istanbul
- Services of a local tour guide throughout
- Entrance fees to sites visited
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary
- Tipping kitty

EXCLUDED

- International flights (available on request)
- Visa fees
- Travel insurance (compulsory, get a quote here)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tips for guide and driver
- Any other items not mentioned above

Tour 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.

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.

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.

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.

Single room supplement (TUSGEE)

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.

Important Notes

1 Dates & Prices

We run regular small-group departure on this tour. All departures are guaranteed to run with a minumum of 2 people. The tour is also available privately if you do not want to join a group, or our departure dates do not work for you. Please contact us for details and for a personalised quote based on your preferred departure date and the number of people in your party.

2 ANZAC Day Departures

ANZAC Day means many different things to different people. To some it is a true memorial service to pay respects to and remember family members or countrymen who lost their lives defending their homeland in World War I, while to others it symbolises a sense of community or belonging to the New Zealand and Australian way of life. For non Anzac nationals it remains a moving and important ceremonial day that brings thoughts of the sacrifices that previous generations have made for us, wherever we may come from.

Whichever may apply to you, this is a very special event that brings together many thousands of people every year on the shores of the Gallipoli peninsular on the western coast of Turkey.

We run special ANZAC day departures on all of our Turkey tours. The standard itineraries for each tour are adjusted slightly on these departures to coincide with the memorial services and to make the most of your time at Gallipoli. These special departures are indicated on the dates & prices table for each tour. Due to demand, group sizes on these dates may increase to a maximum of 45.

All of our ANZAC departures arrive at Gallipoli Cove early in the afternoon on the 24th giving us enough time to visit the museum and secure space for our groups. We then spend the night outdoors at the Cove waiting for the evocative dawn service to start. Afterwards, depending on the makeup of our group, the Australians will head to Lone Pine and the New Zealanders to Chunuk Bair for their country’s individual memorial service. Rest assured though that these special departures are not just about the ANZAC service. They all have their standard itineraries built around the service so you will still get to experience the history, culture and amazing sites that Turkey has to offer.

3 Health and Vaccinations

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

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.

More information is available here: Turkey

Malaria map - there is low risk malaria in some south eastern regions, not visited on our tours.

Yellow fever certificates are not required.

4 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

From the 2nd March 2020 all UK nationals **will not** need to obtain a visa for Turkey (for visits of up to 90 days in each 180 day period). This will also apply to citizens of the Schengen area countries Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain and Poland.

5 Transport

Our trips feature a mix of different transport options. We want you to feel like you’re really experiencing the country you’re travelling through, but at the same time we want you to finish journeys refreshed enough to enjoy the next stage of the tour. The distances involved in Turkey mean that we use private vehicles and tourist coaches throughout this tour.

6 Transfers

The majority of our Turkey tours include an airport meet and greet and transfer service on the first day of your tour (a limited number of our Turkey Tours do not include airport transfers - please be sure to check the individual tour page inclusions/exclusions). This is available from/to both of Istanbul's airports; Istanbul Ataturk (IST) and Sabiha Gokcen (SAW). Our representative will be holding an Encounters Travel signboard with your name displayed for easy identification. If you can't find our representative, our emergency contact numbers are given in your tour confirmation voucher.

No refund is available on missed transfers or portions of your trip owing to incorrect flight details being provided or delayed flight arrival. Any additional cost incurred in order to meet up with your group is at your own expense.

If your flights arrive/depart before/after the tour starts/ends then we will be very happy to arrange additional accommodation and airport transfers for you. We will aim to book these in the same hotel as the main tour, though this will be subject to availability (upgraded hotels are also available on request). If you do not book your additional accommodation through us, then our arrival/departure service is not included and you will need to make your own airport transfer arrangements.

Welcome meeting: Our group tours will commence with a welcome meeting at 7pm in the reception of your hotel, where you will have the chance to meet your guide and the rest of your tour group. For those arriving after 7pm, details regarding Day 2 activities will be left at reception.

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7 Entrance Fees

The tour price includes entrance fees to all the tourist sites mentioned in the itinerary . You will need to cover the cost of entrance to any other extra sites that you may wish to visit **(this excludes tours which feature a gulet - on these tours entrance fees are not included and any required entrance fees should be paid locally).**

Camera Fees: Photography is restricted in various ways at different sites. Often flash photography is often forbidden to protect the exhibits and ancient pigments, and sometimes cameras are not allowed in at all. Please respect these rules as they are there partly for your benefit. Tickets are not required for normal cameras, but if you have a video camera, if its use is permitted there will normally be a charge.

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8 Tipping

Tipping or Bahsis (bahk-sheesh) is common practice in Turkey, as a sign of appreciation for services provided for everything from table service in a restaurant to a massage in a Turkish bath. Wages for service staff in Turkey are very low and tips are a necessary supplement to meagre incomes.. Your tour price includes a contribution to various tips that your tour guide and driver will make along the way to ensure the smooth running of your tour.

This tipping kitty does not cover your tour guide or driver though. You may therefore wish to tip them at the end of the time they spend with you. You should not feel obliged to tip any particular amount, and should consider your personal budget and your satisfaction with the service provided. We are often asked to provide a guide however:

Restaurants and taxis: Local markets and basic restaurants - leave the loose change. For more up-market restaurants we suggest 5% to 10% of your bill.

Local guides: Throughout your trip you may at times have a local guide in addition to your tour guide or tour leader. We suggest around GBP 1.50 / EUR 2.0 / USD 2 per person per day for local guides.

Drivers: You may have a range of private drivers on your trip. Some may be with you for a short journey while others may be with you for several days. We would suggest a higher tip for those more involved with the group however GBP 1.50 / EUR 2 / USD 2 per person per day is generally appropriate.

Gulet Boat Trips: If you are travelling through Southern Turkey on a Gulet boat trip we suggest GBP 1.50 / EUR 2 / USD 2 per person per day for the boat staff.

Tour guide: As a guideline we suggest around GBP 20-35 / USD 35-50 / EUR 25-45 per person for the whole tour, but this is ultimately up to you.

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9 Time

Turkey 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.

10 What to take

Luggage: Suitcases, rucksacks or fabric holdalls are all fine to bring with you to Turkey. 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 – you will not need to carry it far, and there are nearly always hotel porters to assist.

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: Turkey's climate changes drastically, with cold winters and hot summers. In western Turkey from late March to May, spring brings with it average temperatures of around 15C, though the weather does gradually warm up with sunny days interspersed with rain showers. From May to the end of October, the climate is hot and sunny, getting cooler as the year progresses. In Central Turkey around Cappadocia, the climate is cold with regular snowfalls from the end of November until late February. With spring the weather warms and the snow disappears altogether, though it still remains cold at night and first thing in the morning. Summer starts from May onwards, with temperature reaching around the mid 30's. The East of Turkey from late May has warmed up considerably, and stays hot until late September with sunny days, but the night time temperatures start to drop. By the end of October you can expect the first of the winter snows. So you must pack for cool and potentially wet conditions late in the year.

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). In Eastern Turkey villages, and any mosques throughout the country, legs and arms should be covered. Attidudes are more relaxed in the seaside resorts.

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

11 Accommodation

Our tours in Turkey use a range of hotels at the local 3, 4 and 5-star level with some boutique style properties also used on some tours. 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 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 or your guide will be available to assist in case of any problems.

Please check the Single Room Supplement option for details on room sharing options and charges for solo travellers on this tour.

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

Check-in Times: Official hotel check- in times in 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 well before 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.

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12 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. Nearly all our Turkey tours start and finish in Istanbul and are served by Istanbul airport (IST). Transfers from other airports are also available on request but may incur an extra fee.

We do also sometimes advertise flight inclusive packages from selected airports. Where these are shown on our website, prices are correct at the time of quoting, but are subject to continued availability of the fare used. Prices will be reconfirmed at the time of booking, and we will also provide the flight times and airline details before tickets are issued.
Flight inclusive prices are based on the cheapest Economy ticket class available which is generally non-refundable and non-changeable unless the flight is cancelled for reasons such as Covid-19, in which case the airlines are more flexible. More flexible ticket options, as well as Premium Economy and Business Class tickets are available on request for an additional supplement. Any changes made to flight inclusive bookings will be subject to the airline rules on your ticket.

Flight CO2 Emissions:

Traveling by air is an amazing way to explore the world, but flights also contribute to carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions that impact the environment. By considering the airline's CO2 emissions when you choose your flight, you can help minimize your travel footprint.

When selecting your international flights and airline, we do therefore recommend that you try and also take into account the flight CO2 emissions. Some airlines and flight search websites (eg. Google Flights, Skyscanner) do publish this information, so you can compare between your flight options and make an informed decision. Thankfully, many airlines are working towards sustainability efforts, and choosing a greener option allows you to contribute to positive change while still enjoying your incredible adventure.

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13 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 have 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 between 12 and 20 travellers (dedicated Anzac Day tour groups may be larger). Please check the tour page for the maximum group size on your chosen trip.

In Turkey we provide a fully trained, local English-speaking guide for all of the sightseeing tours. Our local reps in some of the towns and cities en-route are also at your service. 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.

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14 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.

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15 Financial Security

We are a UK registered company and are committed to providing our customers with financial protection to provide peace of mind and to allow you to book with confidence.
We have therefore partnered with Trust My Travel Ltd., which provides financial protection services to over 2000 partners around the world. Funds paid to us by our customers are protected via an Insurance policy held by Trust My Travel. Each traveller and the description of services sold is declared against Trust My Travel's insurance policy directly against our financial failure. In the event of our insolvency, you will be refunded for any unfulfilled products and/or repatriation to the UK (where applicable). Please see our website or booking conditions for more information.

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16 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).

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17 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

https://x.com/encounterstravl (yes, without the 'e')

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18 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).

Considering travel insurance for your trip? World Nomads Travel Insurance offers coverage for more than 150 adventure activities as well as emergency medical, lost luggage, trip cancellation and more.

If your tour includes car hire, or 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.

Covid-19

Before purchasing any travel insurance, please check the coverage provided for situations related to Covid-19, and for the rules about government travel advice. Your normal policy may not be suitable.

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19 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.

travel aware
gov.uk/travelaware

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20 Reduce Plastic Waste with Water-to-Go Filter bottles

Traveling responsibly means minimizing plastic waste, but staying hydrated on the go is essential. At Encounters Travel we are committed to reducing single-use plastics, which is why we've partnered with Water-to-Go. Their portable filtration system removes over 99.9% of contaminants from any non-saltwater source, turning even questionable water sources into safe drinking water.

Given that tap water is un-safe to drink in many of the countries in which we operate, we recommend purchasing a Water-to-Go bottle prior to departure. This will help you avoid the use of single use plastic bottles and keep you hydrated on the go.

Save big! Get a huge 25% off your Water-to-Go bottle and other Water-to-Go products (such as filters, lids, and carriers). Use code **ENCOUNTERS25** at checkout (valid in the UK, USA and Canada).

How Water-to-Go Technology works:

- Their reusable, BPA free water bottles contain their own unique 3-in-1 filtration technology effectively providing clean safe drinking water from any non-salt water source around the world.
- Three different (1 traditional and 2 nano) technologies are combined in one filter cartridge to remove up to 99.9999% of microbiological contaminants in water.

The three technologies used in a Water-to-Go filter are:

- Mechanical filtration – A tiny pore size, so small contaminants can’t fit through.
- Electrical – A positive charge reduces the pore size even further and attracts contaminants like a magnet, trapping them inside the filter.
- Activated Carbon – Unlike most carbon based filters, instead of using adhesives to glue the carbon particles together, (which vastly reduces the carbon’s efficiency) it is contained within the membrane, helping to reduce contaminants whilst eliminating bad tastes and odours. Try filtering water from your tap at home and taste the difference!

Water-to-Go filter bottles deliver safe, healthy water worldwide

- Water-to-Go filters remove bacteria, viruses, waterborne disease, protozoa, heavy metals such as lead as well as harmful chemicals.
- Their filters remove Chlorine and Fluoride from tap water.
- The filter will eliminate harmful contaminants from the water but allow beneficial minerals such as sodium and magnesium to pass through leaving you with the healthiest water possible.
- Water-to-Go filters have been independently tested against internationally recognised standards by industry specialists including The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine (UK), BCS Laboratories (USA), Bangalore Test House (India) and IMI (China).

Use Water-to-Go products and you’ll be healthier, wealthier and helping to make the world a better place!

- Depending on filter size, each Water-to-Go filter is able to replace 260 or 400 single-use plastic water bottles!
- They ensure you have access to safe water anywhere in the world without ever having to buy environmentally damaging bottled water.
- Their water bottles deliver safe, clean drinking water at just 5p per litre.
- The filter membrane is biodegradable and the shrouds are recyclable.
- The water bottles are used and approved by everyone from backpackers to commuters, gym users to expecting mums. Perfect for everyday, outdoor and travel.

21 Private & Tailor-made Tours

While our group departures offer a fantastic way to explore with like-minded travellers, we understand that some guests prefer a more exclusive experience. Most of our group tours can be booked on a private basis, allowing you to enjoy the same expert-led routes with your own dedicated party. The primary advantage of choosing a private arrangement is the flexibility it provides; we can easily customise the itinerary to include your preferred style of accommodation or adjust the pace to suit your needs. Private tours can be run on the same start days as our group tours, or on other dates. However, some activities within our trips are restricted to particular days of the week - we will advise you on anything like this that we need to work around. Pricing will be based on the number of travellers in your party, and any customisations you may like to make.

For those seeking something truly unique, our specialist sales team is available to collaborate with you on a completely tailor-made tour, designed from the ground up to match your specific interests, accommodation level and requirements.

To request a quotation for a private or tailor-made tour, please contact us.

22 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.

23 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.

24 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)
No = Hayir (hah-yuhr)
Maybe = Belki (behl-key)
Please = Lutfen (loot-fen)
Thank you = Tesekkur (tesh-eccur)
Pardon me = Pardon (phar-don)
Who = Kim (kim)
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)