ENCOUNTERS TRAVEL

Your passport to adventure

Istanbul to Athens Explorer

COUNTRY(IES)	Turkey , Greece
TOUR TYPE	Small Group
TRANSPORT	AC minibus/coach
GROUP SIZE	Min: 4 | Max: 18
DURATION	15 days
STARTS	Istanbul, Turkey
ENDS	Athens, Greece
MEALS	Breakfasts - 14, Lunches - 0, Dinners - 6

TOUR ROUTE MAP **15 Days**



ROUTE: **Istanbul** (Start) → **Bosphorus** → **Goreme Open Air Museum** → **Kaymakli** → **Konya** → **Pamukkale** → **Ku Adasi** → **Athens** → **Nafplion** → **Delphi** → **Trikala** → **Athens** (End)

HIGHLIGHTS

Istanbul Old City, Cappadocia scenery, Underground city, Pamukkale, Ephesus ruins, Acropolis & Parthenon in Athens, Epidaurus, birth place of the Olympics at Olympia, Temple of Apollo at Delphi, clifftop monasteries at Meteora

Itinerary

DAY 1 Arrival in Istanbul

Begin your journey in Turkey with a smooth arrival into Istanbul, where East meets West at the crossroads of history and modern life. After landing at Istanbul Airport, you are transferred directly to your hotel, allowing you to settle in comfortably and take in your first views of the city. The remainder of the day is free to explore at your own pace, whether that means wandering local streets, enjoying Turkish cuisine, or resting after your journey. This introduction sets a relaxed tone while offering flexibility to experience Istanbul's atmosphere independently. It provides a gentle transition into the cultural, historical, and urban layers that define the city.

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.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS	EXTRAS
Istanbul 4-star hotel	None	Single room supplement (TUSGTG), Extra day in Istanbul - pre-tour

DAY 2 Istanbul Old City Tour

Spend time among the principal landmarks of Istanbul’s old city and examine the architectural legacy left by both Byzantine and Ottoman rulers. Religious monuments, palace complexes and civic spaces provide insight into how power, faith and public life were expressed over many centuries. The visits focus on the historical core of the city and provide a broad introduction to the influences that shaped Istanbul into an imperial capital.

ACTIVITIES

- **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.
- **Explore Grand Bazaar in Istanbul**
  You visit the Grand Bazaar, one of the largest covered markets in the world. The bazaar contains thousands of shops selling textiles, jewellery, spices, and souvenirs.
- **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 Harem**
  Step inside the Harem and discover the private world of the Ottoman court, from its ornate rooms to the stories of those who once lived there.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Istanbul 4-star hotel	Breakfast

DAY 3 Bosphorus Cruise. Fly to Cappadocia

Begin with a cruise along the Bosphorus and see Istanbul from the water before transferring to the airport for a domestic flight east. Arrive in Kayseri and continue by road into Cappadocia, where the landscape changes dramatically to volcanic terrain and distinctive rock formations. The day connects Istanbul's maritime character with central Anatolia through a combination of sightseeing, air travel and the final transfer into one of Turkey's most recognisable regions.

ACTIVITIES

- **Bosphorus Cruise on Istanbul**
  You take a cruise along the Bosphorus Strait in Istanbul, Turkey, viewing historic landmarks from the waterway dividing Europe and Asia.
- **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.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Cappadocia boutique hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 4 Cultural Sites and Carpet Weaving Village

Spend the day among Cappadocia's archaeological and natural landmarks, beginning with the cave churches of Göreme before visiting the striking formations at Pasabag. Continue to Uchisar Castle for elevated views over the region, then visit a village associated with traditional carpet weaving. The combination of carved religious sites, volcanic scenery and local craft provides a varied look at Cappadocia.

ACTIVITIES

- **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 Pasabag Fairy Chimneys in Cappadocia**
  You explore the fairy chimneys of Pasabag in Cappadocia, Turkey, renowned for their unusual volcanic rock formations.

- **Explore Uchisar Castle in Cappadocia**
  You visit Uchisar Castle in Cappadocia, Turkey, enjoying panoramic views from the region's highest rock fortress.
- **Explore Carpet Weaving Village in Cappadocia Region**
  You visit a carpet weaving village in the Cappadocia region of Turkey, learning how traditional Turkish carpets are produced.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Cappadocia boutique hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 5 Kaymakli, Sultan Hani Caravansary, Mevlana Museum

Begin at Kaymakli Underground City before travelling south towards the great caravanserai at Sultanhani, where the scale of Seljuk trade architecture can still be appreciated. Continue to Konya and visit the Mevlana Museum and Alaeddin Mosque. These final stops introduce the religious and political heritage of central Anatolia after the very different cave settlements and volcanic landscapes of Cappadocia.

ACTIVITIES

- **Explore Kaymakli Underground City in Cappadocia**
  You explore Kaymakli Underground City in Cappadocia, Turkey, discovering tunnels, chambers, and living spaces carved into rock.
- **Drive from Cappadocia to Sultan Hani Caravanserai**
  You travel from Cappadocia toward Konya, Turkey, stopping along the historic Silk Road route.
- **Explore Sultanhani Caravanserai**
  You visit Sultanhani Caravanserai near Konya, Turkey, a grand Seljuk-era trading stop.
- **Drive from Sultan Hani Caravanserai to Konya**
  You continue by road to Konya, Turkey, an important historical city in central Anatolia.
- **Explore Mevlana Museum in Konya**
  You visit the Mevlana Museum in Konya, Turkey, the spiritual center of the Whirling Dervishes.
- **Explore Alaeddin Mosque in Konya**
  You visit Alaeddin Mosque in Konya, Turkey, a historic Seljuk-era mosque complex on the city's central hill.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Konya 4-star hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 6 Pamukkale, Hierapolis

Leave Konya for Pamukkale and spend time among its famous travertines before exploring the ruins of Hierapolis and the Temple of Apollo. The geothermal landscape and ancient city provide two closely connected views of the

area’s history. A later leather workshop display introduces a different local tradition and completes the scheduled activities before the day comes to an end.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Konya to Pamukkale**
  You travel from Konya to Pamukkale, Turkey, crossing central Anatolian landscapes.
- **Explore Pamukkale Travertines**
  You visit the white travertine terraces of Pamukkale, Turkey, formed by mineral-rich thermal waters.
- **Explore Hierapolis Ancient City**
  You explore the ancient city of Hierapolis in Pamukkale, Turkey, including Roman ruins and thermal pools.
- **Explore Temple of Apollo in Hierapolis**
  You visit the Temple of Apollo in Hierapolis, Pamukkale, Turkey, dedicated to the Greek god of healing and prophecy.
- **Explore Leather Workshop Display in Pamukkale Region**
  You see a display of locally handcrafted leather goods in the Pamukkale region of Turkey as part of the day's touring.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Pamukkale 4-star hotel	Breakfast

DAY 7 Laodicea

This journey links the inland archaeological landscapes of southwestern Anatolia with the Aegean coastline. travelling from Pamukkale to Laodicea introduces an important ancient city known for its role in trade, early Christianity, and Roman urban planning. Exploring the archaeological site reveals well preserved streets, theaters, and public buildings that reflect the city’s former prosperity. The route then continues westward toward Kusadasi, marking a shift from classical ruins to the coastal region. Together, the day connects ancient urban centres with modern seaside destinations.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Pamukkale to Laodicea**
  You travel from Pamukkale to the ancient city of Laodicea in Turkey's Lycus River Valley.
- **Explore Laodicea Archaeological Site**
  You explore the ruins of Laodicea in Turkey, a once-prosperous Roman city known as the City of Zeus.
- **Drive from Laodicea to Kusadasi**
  You continue by road from Laodicea to Kusadasi, Turkey, a lively resort town on the Aegean coast.
- **Free Time in Kusadasi**
  You have free time in Kusadasi, Turkey, to relax by the Aegean Sea or explore the town independently.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Kusadasi boutique hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 8 Ephesus

Travel from Kuşadası to Ephesus and spend time exploring the archaeological site before visiting a local carpet-weaving community in the surrounding region. The two visits provide very different perspectives on western Turkey, from monumental Roman-era urban remains to skills still practised today. Afterwards, transfer for the flight from Izmir to Athens and continue into Greece.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Kusadasi to Ephesus**
  You travel from Kusadasi to the ancient Roman city of Ephesus in western Turkey.
- **Explore Ephesus Archaeological Site**
  You explore the Roman ruins of Ephesus near Kusadasi, Turkey, walking marble streets and grand monuments.
- **Explore Carpet Weaving Village in Kusadasi Region**
  You visit a carpet weaving village in the Kusadasi region of Turkey, seeing how traditional weaving techniques are carried on today.
- **Travel from Flight Izmir to Athens**
  You travel to Izmir Airport and fly onward, leaving Turkey and heading to Athens in Greece.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Athens 4-star hotel	Breakfast

DAY 9 Free Day in Athens

Enjoy a full period of leisure in Athens and make your own plans around the city. There are no included visits or transfers, giving you complete flexibility to rest or explore independently. Historic districts, museums, archaeological sites, cafés and shopping areas provide numerous possibilities, while those wanting a slower day can simply enjoy the atmosphere of the capital without a fixed timetable.

ACTIVITIES

- **Free Time in Athens**
  You enjoy free time in Athens, Greece, to relax after your flight and explore the surrounding area independently.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Athens 4-star hotel	Breakfast

DAY 10 Athens City Tour

Spend the day visiting key sites across central Athens, including the Panathenaic Stadium, Hadrian’s Arch, Temple of Olympian Zeus and Syntagma Square. Continue to the Acropolis and Parthenon for the city’s defining classical

monuments, then explore the Academy, University and National Library, three neighbouring buildings that highlight a later chapter in Athens' architectural history.

ACTIVITIES

- **Explore Panathenaic Stadium in Athens**
  You visit the Panathenaic Stadium in Athens, Greece, learning about the first modern Olympic Games held here in 1896.
- **Explore Hadrian's Arch in Athens**
  You see Hadrian's Arch in Athens, Greece, marking the boundary between the ancient Greek and Roman city.
- **Explore Temple of Olympian Zeus in Athens**
  You visit the Temple of Olympian Zeus in Athens, Greece, one of the largest ancient temples ever built in the Greek world.
- **Explore Syntagma Square in Athens**
  You visit Syntagma Square in Athens, Greece, a central plaza surrounded by key civic buildings and city life.
- **Explore Acropolis in Athens**
  You explore the Acropolis in Athens, Greece, viewing the Parthenon, Erechtheion, Propylaea, and Temple of Athena Nike.
- **Explore Parthenon in Athens**
  You see the Parthenon on the Acropolis in Athens, Greece, one of the most famous surviving monuments of ancient Greece.
- **Discover the Athenian Trilogy: Academy, University and National Library**
  The three neoclassical buildings lining Panepistimiou Street, the Academy of Athens, the University of Athens and the National Library, capture the making of modern nineteenth-century Athens. Together with the classical monuments that surround them, they tell the story of a city reborn.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Athens 4-star hotel	Breakfast

DAY 11 — Corinth Canal and Mycenae

Travel from Athens into the Peloponnese with a stop at the Corinth Canal before continuing to Mycenae. Visit the archaeological site and Lion Gate, then continue to Nafplion on the Argolic coast. The day combines a major engineering landmark with Bronze Age history and the distinctive character of one of the Peloponnese's most historic coastal towns.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Athens to Corinth Canal**
  You depart Athens and drive toward the Corinth Canal in Greece, crossing from mainland Greece toward the Peloponnese.

- **Explore Corinth Canal Viewpoint**
  You stop at the Corinth Canal in Greece, viewing the narrow man-made waterway that separates mainland Greece from the Peloponnese.
- **Drive from Corinth Canal to Mycenae**
  You continue by road toward Mycenae in the Argolis region of Greece, travelling to an important Mycenaean archaeological site.
- **Explore Mycenae Archaeological Site**
  You visit the archaeological site of Mycenae in Greece, exploring the Lion Gate, royal tombs, and Cyclopean walls.
- **Explore Lion Gate in Mycenae**
  You see the Lion Gate at Mycenae in Greece, the iconic entrance to the ancient citadel.
- **Drive from Mycenae to Nafplion**
  You travel by road from Mycenae to Nafplion, Greece, a picturesque seaside town in the Argolis region.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Nafplion 4-star hotel	Breakfast

DAY 12

Olympia

Travelling from Nafplion, visit ancient Olympia and its archaeological museum to explore the sanctuary associated with the origins of the Olympic Games. The remains provide insight into the athletic, religious and civic traditions of classical Greece. Afterwards, the road turns north towards Delphi, moving from the heritage of Olympia towards another important centre of ancient pilgrimage and worship.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Nafplion to Olympia**
  You continue by road from Nafplion to Olympia, Greece, traveling deeper into the Peloponnese.
- **Explore Ancient Olympia**
  You visit Ancient Olympia in Greece, the birthplace of the Olympic Games, exploring temples, stadium, and sacred ruins.
- **Explore Archaeological Museum of Olympia**
  You explore the Archaeological Museum of Olympia in Greece, home to significant sculptures including Hermes of Praxiteles.
- **Drive from Olympia to Delphi**
  You travel north from Olympia to Delphi, Greece, crossing the Rio–Antirrio Bridge and scenic countryside.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Delphi 4-star hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 13

Delphi

Spend time at Delphi visiting the Temple of Apollo, Sanctuary of Athena Pronaia and Castalian Spring within the wider archaeological area. The sites provide context for Delphi’s role as a major pan-Hellenic sanctuary and centre of prophecy. Once the visits are complete, continue by road to Kalambaka, moving from the slopes of Mount Parnassus towards the plains beneath the Meteora rock formations.

ACTIVITIES

- **Explore Delphi Archaeological Site**
  You explore the archaeological site of Delphi in Greece, including the Temple of Apollo, Oracle, and Castalian Spring.
- **Explore Temple of Apollo in Delphi**
  You visit the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, Greece, central to the site's historical role as a major religious sanctuary.
- **Explore Sanctuary of Athena Pronaia in Delphi**
  You visit the Sanctuary of Athena Pronaia at Delphi, Greece, an important complex associated with the wider Delphi sacred landscape.
- **Explore Castalian Spring in Delphi**
  You visit the Castalian Spring at Delphi, Greece, a historic water source linked to ritual purification at the sanctuary.
- **Drive from Delphi to Kalambaka**
  You travel inland from Delphi to Kalambaka, Greece, passing through traditional villages of Central Greece.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Kalambaka 4-star hotel	Breakfast,Dinner

DAY 14

Meteora

Explore the Meteora monasteries before leaving the region and travelling south towards Thermopylae. The rock-top religious complexes provide the first focus, followed by a visit to the Leonidas Monument and the historic battlefield area associated with the Spartan defence. Continue to Athens afterwards, completing the north-to-south overland journey without additional sightseeing once you return to the capital.

ACTIVITIES

- **Explore Meteora Monasteries**
  You visit the monasteries of Meteora near Kalambaka, Greece, perched atop dramatic rock pillars above the valley.

- **Drive Kalambaka → Thermopylae**
  You travel south toward Athens, Greece, stopping along the route near the historic area of Thermopylae.
- **Explore Leonidas Monument in Thermopylae**
  You stop at the Leonidas Monument in Thermopylae, Greece, commemorating the Spartan stand against the Persian army.
- **Drive from Thermopylae to Athens**
  You continue by road to Athens, Greece, returning to the capital for your final night.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
Athens 4-star hotel	Breakfast

DAY 15 — End of tour

Transfer from your Athens hotel to the port and prepare for onward travel. This is a straightforward departure movement rather than a sightseeing period, allowing you to leave the city and continue to the next destination without additional stops. The service provides the practical connection needed between your accommodation in Athens and the harbour.

ACTIVITIES

- **Drive from Athens Hotel to Athens Port**
  You are transferred from your Athens hotel to the port to begin your island journey. This transfer connects the mainland portion of the tour with the Cyclades islands.
- **Departure from Athens Airport**
  Your tour concludes at Athens Airport, where you complete departure formalities and continue with your onward flight.

OVERNIGHT	MEALS
N/A	Breakfast

INCLUDED

- All accommodation as stated in the itinerary in 4-star & boutique hotels
- All transport and transfers in AC vehicles
- 24-hour airport arrival & departure transfer service
- Domestic flight from Istanbul to Kayseri
- Services of local tour guide in Turkey and Greece
- Entrance fees to sites visited in Turkey
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (14 breakfasts, 7 dinners)
- Tipping kitty

EXCLUDED

- International flights
- Visa fees (if required)
- International flight between Izmir (ADB) and Athens (ATH)
- Travel insurance (compulsory, get a quote here)
- Meals not indicated in the itinerary
- Entrance fees to sites visited in Greece (allow approx. EUR 79 (Apr-Oct) or EUR 45 (Nov-Mar)
- Greek hotel residence tax (allow EUR 10.50p/p for shared rooms, EUR 21 for single rooms, see Tour Notes)
- Drinks, snacks and other personal expenses (e.g. laundry)
- Tips for guide & driver
- Optional tours
- 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 - 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.

Kusadasi Cooking Class

Min numbers: 1

Venture into the Turkish countryside and cook authentic dishes such as Sultan Köfte, Mantı, 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.

Important Notes

1 **Accommodation**

This tour uses a range of good quality hotels mainly at the local 4-star level but with some interesting boutique style hotels included too. 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 may be slightly different in Turkey and Greece 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.), so that your guide can assist with any problems if required.

We will contact you with your arrival hotel details normally a couple of weeks before departure. Further hotels through the tour are not advised in advance.

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.

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2 Transport including Izmir-Athens flight

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

The international flight between Izmir (ADB) and Athens (ATH) is not included in the price of the tour and should be booked separately. Good flight options are available with Turkish Airlines and some low cost airlines. You may be able to include this flight on your overall flight ticket if you fly with Turkish Airlines (eg. Home-Istanbul Izmir-Athens, Athens-Home).

Your airport transfers are included in Izmir and Athens regardless of the time of your flight. Please contact us if you have any questions about booking this flight.

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3 Transfers

The tour includes a 24-hour airport arrival transfer service in either of Istanbul's two airports (IST or SAW), as well as a departure airport transfer in Athens (ATH). All other transfers throughout the tour including to the airport in Izmir are also included.

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4 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. Instead, we set group departures on this tour to have a maximum of 20 travellers in Turkey and a minimum of 4.While in Greece, the tour is arranged differently on a 'seat in coach' basis with a maximum group size of 50.

In Turkey we provide a fully trained, local English-speaking guide to accompany you all the way from Istanbul to the end of the tour in Kusadasi. You are also transferred by the guide or one of our other representatives to the airport in Izmir for your departure to Greece.

In Greece a fully trained, local English-speaking guide accompanies you for all the sightseeing tours through Nafplion, Olympia, Delphi, Meteora and back to Athens.

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.

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5 Entrance fees, Hotel fees & permits

Entrance fees to all sites visited in Turkey are included in the tour price.

However, due to a higher risk of changing prices, entrance fees to the tourist sites visited in Greece are not included and you will need to cover the cost of these as you go along. Current prices are shown below, though these are subject to change by the local authorities at any time. A 50% discount is currently available on some fees during the winter months of November to March. Not all of the entrance fees below apply to all tours - please check your itinerary and the inclusions/exclusions section for a budget for your trip.

Athens - Acropolis - Summer EUR 20, Winter EUR 10

Athens - Acropolis Museum - Summer EUR 5, Winter EUR 5

Athens - Hadrian's Arch - Free

Athens - Panathenaic Stadium - Free

Athens - Parthenon - Free

Athens - Propylaea - Free

Athens - Temple of Athena Nike - Free

Athens - Temple of Olympian Zeus - Free

Corinth Canal - Free

Delphi Ancient Site & Museum - Summer EUR 12, Winter EUR 6

Delphi - Temple of Apollo - Free

Delphi - Treasury of Athens - Free

Mycenae - Tomb of Agamemnon - Summer EUR 12, Winter EUR 6

Nafplio - Palamidi Fortress - EUR 8

Olympia Ancient Site & Museum - Summer EUR 12, Winter EUR 6

Olympia - Temple of Zeus - Free

Meteora - 2 monasteries - Summer EUR 6, Winter EUR 6

Camera Fees: Photography may be 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 generally required for normal cameras, but if you have a video camera, if its use is permitted there will sometimes be a charge.

Hotel Residence Fees: The Hellenic National Tourism Organization operates a residence fee which is applied on all hotel accommodation. The fees should be paid by guests directly to the hotel before the end of their stay and are 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.

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6 Tipping

Tipping is common practice in Greece, though not as extensive as in Turkey. In both countries, for basic restaurants, taxis and local markets, leave the loose change. For more up-market restaurants we suggest 5% to 10% of your bill.

We include a 'tipping kitty' in your tour price which your tour guide will use to tip a wide range of people along the way to help ensure the smooth running of the tour. This does not include your tour guide(s) or driver(s) though.

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.

Tour guides: If you think you tour guide and/or tour leader has worked hard and provided a good service then s/he will appreciate a tip of a few Euros. 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, a tip of EUR 3-5 per person per day for local tour guides or local tour leaders would be fine.

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7 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 transfers on this tour, between hotels and several airports. 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: 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.

The weather in Greece is similar but a bit less extreme both in summer and winter and the dress code a bit more relaxed too.

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

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8 Dates & Prices

We run regular small-group departures on this tour approximately every 2 weeks through the year. All departures are guaranteed to run with a minimum of 4 travellers. Departure dates and prices are listed on our website and on a separate dates & prices sheet available on request.

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9 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.

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10 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.

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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11 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.

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 at visas for foreigners.

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12 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.

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13 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.

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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.

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.

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.

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21 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.

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22 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.

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23 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)