

## TURKEY: GROUP TRAVEL PROGRAMS - 1

### CLASSICAL ANCIENT TURKEY

*9 nights: Arrive Istanbul, 4 nights; fly to Izmir, 2 nights; fly to Istanbul and Kayseri (Cappadocia), 2 nights; fly to Istanbul, 1 night.*

#### **Day 1, Sunday: Arrive Istanbul**

Arrive Istanbul airport. Transfer to Swissotel The Bosphorus/Hyatt Regency Istanbul, both deluxe luxury hotels with first class facilities and service, very central. Take the rest of the day at leisure.

#### **Day 2, Monday: Istanbul**

Morning, take a driving tour of the European section of Istanbul city. Visit the spice markets and New Mosque, the grand Blue Mosque of Sultan Ahmet, a triumph of harmony, proportion and elegance; and the hippodrome and obelisk of Theodosius brought in from Egypt. In the afternoon, explore the eerie underground Roman cisterns and Grand bazaar.

**B**

#### **Day 3, Tuesday: Istanbul**

Morning, take a boat cruise on the Bosphorus waterway that connects the Black and Marmara Seas, visiting en route the Beylerbeyi Palace, Goksu Pavilion and Rumeli Hisari fortress. Lunch at a restaurant in Ortakoy. Then, visit the Dolmabahce Palace, where elegance and grandeur are richly preserved.

**B, L**

#### **Day 4, Wednesday: Istanbul**

Morning, visit the magnificent Topkapi Palace, home to Ottoman sultans for nearly four centuries, including treasure rooms and harem room. Also see costumed palace guards and band performance. Afternoon, visit Hagia Sofia, an architectural marvel and beautiful church-turned-mosque now museum, with some free time afterwards to explore the city on your own.

**B**

#### **Day 5, Thursday: Istanbul - Izmir**

Transfer to airport for a flight to Izmir, TK 320, 11 AM-12 Noon. Transfer to Izmir Palas hotel. Afternoon, visit the Roman agora, archaeological museum, ruins at Kadeifekale on Mount Pagos, Temple of Athena, and other ruins at Bayrakli (Tepekule).

**B**

#### **Day 6, Friday: Izmir - Ephesus - Izmir**

Full day excursion to Ephesus: Visit the ruin city of Ephesus, including Hadrian's Temple, library, agora and amphitheater. Visit the small but well displayed archaeological museum at Selcuk, followed by lunch in the ambience of a local restaurant. Then, visit St. John's Church and tomb, Temple of Artemis, and Mary's home and chapel. Also visit a carpet weaving center and pottery workshop. Return to Izmir.

**B, L**

#### **Day 7, Saturday: Izmir - Istanbul - Kayseri (Urgup, Cappadocia)**

Morning, visit St. Polycarp Church, the old Jewish Quarter at Asanor and historic elevator, and Ben Israel synagogue. Take a late afternoon flight to Istanbul, TK 325, 3-4 PM. Connect with flight to Kayseri, TK 264, 6:15-7:40 PM. Transfer to Urgup in Cappadocia and stay at Yunak Evleri hotel in picturesque rooms with windows, styled as rock caves.

**B**

#### **Day 8, Sunday: Urgup, Cappadocia**

Full day excursion: Visit Pigeon Valley, Kaymakli underground city, Ihlara Valley, and churches along the Melendiz River gorge to Belisirma (have lunch here) and Selime. Then, visit a caravan serai at Agzikarahan, fort at Nevsehir, and rock castle at Ortahisar before returning to Urgup.

**B, L**

**Day 9, Monday: Urgup, Cappadocia - Istanbul**

See nature's surreal fairy chimneys at Devrent and Pasabaglari, and visit St. Simon's cave and church. Lunch at a restaurant in Avanos. Then, visit a winery and Uchisar rock castle. Finally, explore the amazing Goreme open air museum and church caves. Take a late evening flight from Kayseri to Istanbul, TK265, 8:30-9:45 PM. Transfer to Swissotel The Bosphorus/Hyatt Regency Istanbul.

**B, L**

**Day 10, Tuesday: Depart Istanbul**

Morning transfer to Istanbul airport for international departure.

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