

The Ultimate Turkey & Greek Island Adventure



23 May to
16 June 2024

24 Days



Premium Travel



Istanbul



Ephesus



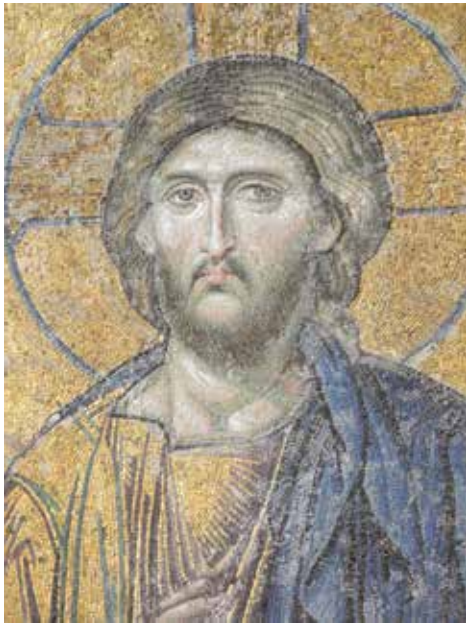
Cappadocia



Greek Islands

Plus: Antioch & Gaziantep

Limited to
20 Guests



Visit incredible Istanbul, imbibing the rich history and wonderful food of this amazing city. Fly to Turkey's exotic southeast where you will discover authentic markets, rich food and the superb museums. Experience Cappadocia, where you will see some of the most amazing landscapes in the world. Then head to the west coast and visit impressive archaeological sites of biblical and historical significance. Finally, spend a week relaxing on a luxury gulet sailing the crystal clear waters of the Aegean and visiting stunning Greek islands. The ship's crew cater for your every need, preparing local delicacies as you relax on board.

Luxury hotels, expert commentary, great travel companions and spectacular sites make this the holiday of a lifetime, while the many incursions make this a hassle-free holiday.

Estimated Cost:

Includes luxury accommodation, domestic flight, meals, drinks on boat, entrance fees, tips & taxes.

\$8,490pp (twin share)

International airfare not included.

Subject to conditions over.

Single supplement: \$2,490.





Day 1: Thur 23 May Departure from Australia

Embark on our journey to the lands of ancient treasures and rich history with an overnight flight to Turkey.

Day 2: Fri 24 May Arrive in Istanbul

We transfer to our hotel which is perfectly located in the heart of the Old City. Free time to relax, recover and settle in. Dinner at our hotel's rooftop restaurant overlooking the Blue Mosque and Sea of Marmara.

Day 3: Sat 25 May Relaxed Day in Istanbul

Set your own pace as you adjust to the wonderful sights and smells of Istanbul. Optional relaxed ferry ride to the Asian side for lunch. At 3pm the program starts with a guided walking tour which will include a visit to the Basilica Cistern, Blue Mosque and Hippodrome.



Day 4: Sun 26 May Iconic Istanbul

This is a day of iconic sites full of history including the Hagia Sophia, largest and most significant church in Christendom for over 1,000 years, the Hagia Irene where much of the Nicene Creed was written and then on to Topkapi Palace. Lunch on your own and free afternoon to explore the Grand Bazaar.

Day 5: Mon 27 May Street Food of Istanbul

We begin today with the wonderful mosaics of the Chora Church. We visit the bustling Spice Market before taking a cruise on the Bosphorous Strait that divides Europe and Asia. After coffee at trendy Ortakoy we take our bus to Taksim Square and the New District where we experience modern Istanbul. Along the way you will experience Istanbul's amazing street food, tasting at least a dozen local delicacies.



Any tour needs to have flexibility and I think that was a great feature of this tour - Tim's calm adaption to changing times, circumstances and people. Tim was very conscious of the group he was leading and gave enough, not too much academic/historic perspectives. The logistics were well managed which relieves stress on group tours. – Geoff





My tour highlights: Drinks on the rooftops in Istanbul, everything about Cappadocia lovely friendly small group, dynamic tour leader – knowledgeable, caring and passionate about the subject, life on the gulet and swimming in the Aegean. Smooth organisation and fabulous food everywhere we went! – Sarah

Day 6: Tue 28 May Fly to Antakya

Antakya, also known as Antioch, is an ancient city of biblical and historical importance. As well as stunning mosaics and significant Roman ruins, it boasts a wealth of interesting local and regional dishes. In between eating, we will tour the archaeology museum and Peter's Grotto. Our accommodation for the next two nights is The Museum Hotel, an architecturally stunning building centred around ancient ruins and offering modern designer rooms.

Day 7: Wed 29 May Antakya

This morning we head to the coast to see Seleucia Pieria the ancient seaport for Antioch, from where St Paul departed in his journeys. It is also the site of the spectacular tunnel of Vespasian and Titus. You have a free afternoon to explore the beautiful Antakya old town or visit the bazaar district where you will find locally-made olive oil-and-laurel soap and silks, among other items.

Tour Leader

Tim Foster has been leading group tours to Turkey, Greece, Italy and Israel for over a decade. His experience ensures the best guides, excellent hotels, a well-paced itinerary and group dynamics that make each trip a success.

"Tim is an excellent, knowledgeable, enthusiastic tour leader who knows when to keep things moving and how to accommodate the various needs of the group. He is also a lot of fun." Ian

"I love going on tours led by Tim as you can be assured you will see a place for what it has to offer and not just tourist sites." Sarah



Day 8: Thu 30 May Gaziantep, Mosaics

We drive a few hours to Gaziantep, the source for many of Turkey's iconic dishes – the city's famous baklava is without compare and its kebabs are truly works of art. We begin with lunch (what else, but kebabs), and visit the famous mosaic museum that features ancient mosaics rescued when the nearby Euphrates River was dammed. You can relax, or experience a very authentic Turkish bath at a nearby hamam. Our hotel is a charming family run former Armenian school. Dinner is at a renowned restaurant offering a huge variety of regional dishes.



Day 9: Fri 31 May

Gaziantep Food & Markets

Enjoy a breakfast of katmer, a baked flaky pastry stuffed with clotted cream, sugar, and pistachios. After a tour of a baklava shop which exports their product all over Europe we visit a culinary museum before strolling through the bazaar and the copper market. Along the way we enjoy the libations and surrounds of a Turkish tea house (a great place to try real Turkish coffee). Free time for shopping, wandering or relaxing in the delightful courtyard of our hotel.

Day 10: Sat 1 June

Tarsus & Adana

We drive to Tarsus visiting the massive Roman Donuktaş temple, archaeology museum and Roman street; then drive to Adana – the home of the spicy 'Adana Kebab' to see Noah mosaic and walk across the Roman bridge before checking into our hotel.

Day 11: Sun 2 June

Cappadocia Wonders

We drive over the Taurus Mountains and on to Cappadocia. We will walk the pretty Ihlara Valley and eat gozleme on the river's edge. Then onto the underground city of Kaymakli, where local people sought protection from marauding bandits over thou-

sands of years. We check into our cave hotel for an early night.

Day 12: Mon 3 June

Cappadocia

You may begin the day with an optional early morning (4:00am pick up!) hot air balloon ride over this stunning landscape (extra cost). After a late breakfast we visit the Goreme Open Air Museum where you will see rock formations as well as a complex of churches cut into volcanic rock during the Middle Ages decorated with frescoes. In Avanos we'll visit a local potter for a demonstration of their amazing craft. We will have some free time in Goreme and then enjoy afternoon tea overlooking the Pigeon Valley.

Day 13: Tues 4 June

Cappadocia & Konya

This morning we explore more of the natural wonders of Cappadocia including the Citadel of Uchisar and drive through the Rose and Derwent Valleys. After lunch we drive 3 hours west to Konya, ancient Iconium. Konya is a significant place for Christians because Paul came to the city on his first journey in Asia Minor in 50 AD. It is also the home of Sufism, the mystical Islamic sect that produced the whirling dervishes. We will see a dervish show before dinner.

Cappadocia – the balloon ride, the accomodation, the area was amazing. – Libby





Day 14: Wed 5 June

Laodicea

We have a five hour drive through the heart of Turkey as we head to Laodicea. This ancient site is mentioned in the Bible and contains many acres of recent excavations to visit, including one of the earliest Christian churches dating to the 4th century. We spend the evening at a spa hotel in Pamukkale. After dinner enjoy a stroll through the local village.

Day 15: Thu 6 June

Hierapolis

Hierapolis is a very impressive site which was once an ancient centre for pagan cults. We see the necropolis, colonnaded street, baths and the recently discovered entrance to the underworld (Hades). The Apostle Philip lived and was martyred here, and his tomb was only recently discovered. Hierapolis is visited by many tourists drawn by the thermal springs and spectacular scenery which you

will enjoy. We drive down the Meander Valley with a short detour for the best pide in Turkey in a local village. We spend three nights at a stunning hotel on the Aegean in Kusadasi.

Day 16: Fri 7 June

Ephesus

This morning we travel to nearby Ephesus, which was once a thriving port city. Today you can still see the spectacular excavations of the major streets in this ancient city where we view the library, agora, temples, odeon, terraces and numerous other ruins which give you a sense of ancient life. St. Paul visited the city twice, living here for over two years and may have been imprisoned here. We have lunch at a Turkish Carpet Training Centre where there is an opportunity to purchase one of these heirlooms. After lunch a wealth of artefacts awaits us at the excellent Ephesus museum.

Don't like boats?

You can take the tour right up to Day 17 and leave at Kusadasi or Bodrum.

Cost: \$5,479 (single supp. \$950)

What is a Gulet?

A gulet is a traditional wooden sailing vessel from the southwestern coast of Turkey. Our gulet, *Aegean Clipper*, is 33 metres long and classed as 'luxury'. She is quite stunning, full of character and is fitted out with all standard mods cons. She is one of the largest gulets in Turkey, offering plenty of spaces in which to relax and includes ensembles in all cabins and full service.





Day 17: Sat 8 June

Free Day

You have the day to yourself to relax by the pool, swim the Aegean, stroll down to the port with its many shops and restaurants or do as you please.

Day 18: Sun 9 June

Miletus, Bodrum & Kalymnos

Miletus is where Paul met the Ephesian elders. The site is full of incredible ancient remains including a 15,000-seat theatre from Greek period. We then travel to Bodrum where we will board our Gulet (traditional wooden boat) and, after clearing customs cruise the turquoise waters to a bay on the Greek island of Kalymnos.

Day 19: Mon 10 June

Kalymnos, Leros

We head into the port of Kalymnos for immigration procedures and then have the morning wandering the town. For decades, Kalymnos was well-known as the island of the sea-

sponge harvesters. You will have the morning to explore the town on your own, and enjoy the cafes and shops. After lunch on board we head to a secluded bay north of Kalymnos for swimming and the evening on board.

Day 20: Tues 11 June

Leros

A short cruise brings us to the port of the island of Leros. Ironically, one reason for its tranquillity and laid-back charm is that it served as a place of exile as recently as the 1970s during a period of political upheaval in Greece. Our time on the island include a guided tour of a medieval castle, a fascinating war museum (the famed "Guns of Navarone" was based on Leros), and a charming church accessible by a narrow causeway.

Day 21: Wed 12 June

Patmos

We sail a few hours north to Patmos. This island on which St John was

This trip far exceeded my expectations. The tour was well planned and organized with lots of wonderful experiences and sufficient 'free' time to satisfy everyone. Some of the highlights were Istanbul (everything), culinary diversity, hot air ballooning, historical and biblical cities and ruins, hiking in the valley, sailing the Greek Islands and the best Intrepid Leader in Tim. - Meizie





Every day a highlight! Or two or three! Marvellous - Inspiring - Sites, sounds, culture, history, food, people, experiences, life... Helen

exiled and where he wrote the Book of Revelation is a tour highlight. We take a local bus to the Monastery of Saint John and explore the extraordinary chapel built over a thousand years ago on the site of a pagan temple. We then walk to the Grotto of St John and down to the local village.

Day 22: Thu 13 June

Patmos & Lipsi

Much of the day is free for you to relax, walk the streets and explore the boutique shops of Patmos. A lovely beach is right around the corner for swimming. Rent a car (international licence needed) and explore the island or explore on foot. At around 3pm we leave for the island of Lipsi. On arrival at Lipsi you will have time to visit the lovely town, before we indulge in some local barbecued octopus and ouzo before a late dinner on our gulet.



Want to visit Gallipoli?

Ask about a one-day extension visiting Capes Helles, ANZAC Cove, Lone Pine & the Nek.



Day 23: Fri 14 June

Kos

Our last Greek Island is Kos, the second largest in the Dodecanese. We will take a walking tour of Kos Town which will be like travelling through the centuries as we visit an ancient Roman agora, medieval castle of the Knights of Saint John, Ottoman mosques and Italian buildings of the 1930s.

Day 24: Sat 25 June

Bodrum

We head back to Turkey and our starting point of Bodrum. The Castle of St Peter, built by the Knights of St. John, is the most prominent feature of Bodrum. Inside is the Bodrum Museum of Underwater Archaeology (optional) which offers some significant insights into Roman and later shipping. There is also opportunity to relax on the beach, enjoy a taverna or grab a bargain at the many shops.

Day 25: Sun 16 June

Fly home

We say good-bye to our crew and disembark our gulet and head for the airport for flights to Istanbul for connections back to Australia or elsewhere.

Bookings, Terms & Conditions

Tour Cost

The estimated cost of the tour is \$8,490 per person, twin share subject to the terms and conditions below. Final cost will be confirmed by August 1, 2023 due to exchange rate uncertainty.

Airfare from/to Australia NOT included. Airfare from Bodrum NOT included.

Single Supplement - \$2,490

Included in the Tour Price

Domestic airfare Istanbul to Antakya, 7 nights on a luxury gulet in a twin or double ensuite cabin with all meals and drinks, plus tours of Patmos, Leros and Kos, Greece customs and port fees. Plus 16 nights lodging in superior hotels (most 5 star), breakfast, 15 lunches, 16 dinners, tour leader and guide, services of air conditioned deluxe coach, entrances as described in the itinerary except those described as 'optional', touring and transportation as appears on itinerary. Baggage handling at hotels. Tips to driver, guides, cruise and hotel staff are also included. Istanbul transfer.

Not Included in the Tour Price

Anything not explicitly included. International airfare from Australia, final flight from Bodrum, travel insurance, 1 lunch, Turkey visa, hot air balloon ride and personal expenses are not included.

Expression of Interest & Bookings

Booking form is available on the Blue Water Travel website at [bluewatertravel.au](https://www.bluewatertravel.au). Places are limited to 20 passengers.

Final Payment

An invoice will be issued for final payment which is due on February 1, 2024.

Expression of interest:

<https://bit.ly/BWTEOI>



Bookings:

bit.ly/turkey2024



Cancellation

If the tour is cancelled by Blue Water Travel prior to 30 March, 2024 due to unforeseen circumstances such as Coronavirus we will refund all payments. After Blue Water Travel will refund all payments, less those unable to be recovered from suppliers.

If participants cancel the following penalties apply:

Before Jan 31, 2024	\$500
Jan 31 to March 30, 2024	50% refund
After Mar 31, 2024	No refund

Age & Fitness Limitations

The tour is not particularly strenuous, although it does involve walking, some of which is over uneven ground as well as stairs. It is possible to opt out of those activities. Participants must be capable of self care throughout the tour. Children under 15 are not permitted.

Travel Insurance

Participants are required to have travel insurance. It is the responsibility of the participants to obtain insurance.

Air Transport

Participants are responsible for purchasing their own airfares from and to Australia, and from Bodrum to Istanbul. Flight details will be provided upon acceptance of booking. Participants are not required to travel with the group. Istanbul to Cappadocia return is included.

Passports, Visa Requirement & Privacy

All international tours require a passport with at least 6 months validity from the end of the tour. Names on airline ticket will appear as shown on passport. Depending on your nationality, you will need to purchase a visa for Turkey at least one month prior to departure. Details of how to obtain a visa will be provided. You will need to provide full passport details to the tour operator for flights and hotels. This information is held securely and in strict confidence and deleted at the end of the tour.

Dietary Requirements

While most special dietary requirements can be met at our hotels and restaurants, certain needs cannot always be met.

Bookings:
www.bluewatertravel.au