

## **G Adventures: Cultural Wonders of Turkey**

### **Day 1: Istanbul**

Arrive at any time.

### **Day 2: Istanbul**

Start the day with breakfast at the hotel before walking to Topkapi Palace. Built between 1460 and 1478, Topkapi Palace is one of the world's largest surviving palaces and served as the home of the Ottoman Sultans for almost 4 centuries. A unique mix of Islamic, European and Ottoman architecture, the palace contains over 400 rooms, including opulent pavilions, a jewel-filled treasury and a sprawling harem. In the afternoon, opt for a visit to the Archaeological Museum or the Basilica Cistern on your own. Then, set out on a guided visit of the Old City, the Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia and the Hippodrome, an arena used for chariot racing throughout the Byzantine period. In the evening, enjoy dinner at your leisure.

### **Day 3: Istanbul/Çanakkale**

In the morning, transfer from Istanbul to Gallipoli, where you'll visit the WWI site of the Battle of Gallipoli and learn the somber story behind its war monuments. After lunch in town, travel to Anzac Cove and join your Chief Experience Officer at Lone Pine Memorial, which commemorates the 4,932 Australian and New Zealand servicemen who died in the Anzac area. Stop at the Dardanelles—a narrow 60-mile-long (97 km) strip of water dividing Europe from Asia—and admire a location that has been of great strategic significance for centuries. End the day in Çanakkale, a busy harbor town with a thriving student population. Enjoy dinner, then perhaps take an evening stroll along the lovely waterfront.

### **Day 4: Çanakkale/Selçuk**

Following breakfast, head out for a visit to the city of Troy with your Chief Experience Officer. With its 4,000 years of history, Troy is one of the most renowned archaeological sites in the world. Upon its discovery in the mid-19th century, the site became culturally important due to its profound influence on literary works and the arts for more than 2 millennia. After the tour, attend a Trojan War and Mythology talk with the author of the book, *Troja*, where you'll learn about the Trojan War and how legend has been woven into history's understanding of this event. Next, travel from Troy to Bergama—a renowned town in Hellenic and Roman times, known for its great library—and enjoy lunch at a local restaurant. Afterwards, visit the Pergamon Acropolis with your Chief Experience Officer for a tour of its monumental temples, theatres, porticoes, gymnasium and library. In the evening, arrive in Selçuk, where dinner will be at your leisure.

### **Day 5: Selçuk**

Begin your morning with a tour of the ruins of Ephesus, an ancient Greek city on the coast of Ionia. The city was famous for its Temple of Artemis, which was completed around 550 BC and named one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The Temple was destroyed in AD 268 in a raid by the Goths. Within the temple's ruins, you'll visit the Terrace Houses, the museum, the Monastery of St. John and the library, which was built in AD 124 and once held nearly 12,000 scrolls. From Ephesus travel to Kirazli Village, where you will participate in a cooking class to learn about and savor traditional Aegean cuisine, prepared with fresh, seasonal ingredients from a local market. After your class, dine on your delicious creations for lunch. In the afternoon, spend time exploring

Kirazli, which means “Cheery Village.” Walk through the peaceful streets, enjoy the green scenery of the olive and grape farms in the distance, and have a cup of Turkish tea at a local coffee house. Travel back to Selçuk for dinner on your own and an evening to explore this historical town at your leisure.

### **Day 6: Selçuk/Pamukkale**

This morning after breakfast, leave Selçuk and travel to Laodikeia for a Chief Experience Officer-led visit of this landmark. Within the settlement lies the church of Laodicea, which is the last of the 7 churches of Asia Minor that St. John addresses in the Bible. Wander the ruins before continuing on to Pamukkale for lunch in the village. Then, set out on a guided walk of Pamukkale and the ancient city of Hierapolis, which was founded by one of Alexander the Great’s generals for the purpose of using the mineral hot springs in the area. View the unreal landscape of mineral forests, petrified waterfalls and a series of terraced basins known as Pamukkale (Cotton Palace). Learn about these striking natural formations and the development of a complex system of canals, which brings the thermal water to nearby villages and fields. Enjoy the rest of the afternoon at your leisure and opt for a mineral bath in Pamukkale.

### **Day 7: Pamukkale/Antalya**

After breakfast, leave Pamukkale and transfer to Termessos for a Chief Experience Officer-led visit of this ancient city that was founded by the Solims who lived in the Psidia Region. Termessos sits over 3,280 ft (1,000 m) above sea level and is known as the Eagle’s Nest. Visit the amphitheater and take in the stunning panoramic views of the Pamphylia region and Taurus Mountains as you enjoy a picnic. Arrive at Antalya, a lovely seaside town, in the late afternoon and wander the charming hillside streets on a walk with your Chief Experience Officer.

### **Day 8: Antalya**

Enjoy a full day on your own to partake in the optional activities offered in the area. Choose to visit Ancient Perge or the Archaeological Museum in Antalya to learn more about the ancient architecture of the area or explore the Old Harbor along the marina. You may also go for a refreshing swim in the aquamarine waters at Lara Beach.

### **Day 9: Antalya/Konya**

Travel from the coast of Antalya inland to Konya, stopping along the way to visit the ancient city of Aspendos in Southern Turkey. Ruled by Greeks, Persians and Romans, Aspendos was once an important trade center. Today, a number of ancient structures survive, including the basilica and the Aspendos Theatre, considered to be the best preserved ancient theatre in the world. From here, travel onwards to the town of Beysehir for lunch and a visit to the 13th-century Esrefoglu Mosque. Arrive in Konya in the late afternoon and go to the Mevlana Museum and Garden. Once a lodge, the museum now houses a mausoleum known as “Mevlânâ Tomb,” the resting place of 13th-century Persian poet, Islamic theologian and Sufi mystic Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi (or Mevlânâ). The remainder of the evening is yours to explore the area.

### **Day 10: Konya/Cappadocia**

In the morning, visit the Sultanhan Caravanserai. Built in 1229, it was once an important stopover along the Silk Road. From there, you’ll travel to Derinkuyu where you’ll have lunch on your own, then explore the Underground City of Derinkuyu—famously used as hiding places for Christians

escaping the persecution of the Roman Empire between the 5th and 10th centuries. As you walk around, see the new life people created in this underground world, including cellars, rooms for food storage, kitchens, churches, stables, wine presses and shafts for ventilation. Upon arrival in Cappadocia, you'll see a Whirling Dervish performance. Originally practiced as a weekly remembrance of God by the Mevlevi tekke community, this outstanding example of pure dance has been practiced since the 13th century and is part of a Muslim ceremony to glorify God and seek spiritual perfection. It is also believed that while revolving from right to left, the dervish embraces all humanity with love. After the performance, dinner will be at your leisure.

### **Day 11: Cappadocia**

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel before visiting the Göreme Open-Air Museum on a Chief Experience Officer-led tour of these vibrant painted cave churches, which were carved out by Orthodox monks nearly 1,000 years ago. From here set out on a hike through the UNESCO World Heritage Site-listed "fairy chimneys"—a surreal moonscape created by a series of volcanic eruptions. Over the years, wind and rain sculpted the area into thin valleys, curvy cliff faces and pointy rock formations. The Cappadocians chiseled homes into the soft rock. In the afternoon, enjoy time on your own to visit the Turkish Baths, to see Uchisar Castle or to further explore the main streets of town. Dinner this evening will be enjoyed with a local family around their table in Zelve Village. Try dishes made with local ingredients like eggplant and minced meat as you share stories with the host family.

### **Day 12: Cappadocia/Istanbul**

Start the day by flying to Istanbul, where you'll spend time on your own getting to know this amazing city. You may opt to visit Dolamabahçe Palace, Galata Tower, the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts or the Basilica Cistern. In the evening, set out on a cruise along the Bosphorus Strait, where you'll enjoy stunning views of the Ottoman palaces and the city skyline.

### **Day 13: Istanbul**

In the morning, explore the iconic Grand Bazaar in Istanbul. Along with a specialist guide, you'll listen to a lecture about the Ottoman Empire's ties to the bazaar and learn about its modern secular Turkish founder, Kemal Ataturk. The Grand Bazaar in Istanbul is one of the largest and oldest covered markets in the world and is comprised of 61 covered streets and over 4,000 shops. The tour will finish at an old Ottoman inn for coffee, tea and a chat with your guide. In the afternoon, take advantage of time on your own with a visit to the atmospheric Spice Bazaar. Stroll down one of the most popular streets in Istanbul on the Istiklal Walk—exploring shops, cafés and historic sites along the way. Or visit Galata Tower, which was built as a watchtower over the walls of Galata, and is now an exhibition space and museum. This evening, enjoy a farewell dinner with your fellow travelers.

### **Day 14: Istanbul**

Depart at any time.