

JEWELS OF TURKEY (9 NIGHTS – 10 DAYS)

DAY 1.
(-)

Istanbul

- Following our arrival in Istanbul we are met at the airport and transferred to our hotel where we will have our overnight stay.

DAY 2.
(B)

Istanbul

- Welcome Gift, **Nazar Boncuk (Turkish Blue Eyed Bead)** Nazar Boncugu is a glass bead that protects the holder from evil eye. It is pretty common in Turkey. Have a look around and you might discover countless Nazar Boncuks dangling from cars, from rear-view windows, backpacks, on necklaces and bracelets, pinned to the sweaters of babies and small children, and hanging above doors in restaurants, hotels, stores, and apartments.



- We set off on a full day of sightseeing in Istanbul. We will start off with a visit to the renowned Sultanahmet Mosque, known popularly as **The Blue Mosque**, an incredibly beautiful mosque known for its blue Iznik (Nicaea) tiles are unique for the fact that it has six minarets. We continue on to the **Hippodrome**, once the vast arena that functioned as the heart of sporting (chariots races and athletics) events and political activities of the old city. From here we go to the nearby **Hagia Sophia**, the Church of Divine Wisdom. Ranking as one of the greatest marvels of world architecture, this awe-inspiring building was constructed as a basilica in the 6th century by Byzantine Emperor Justinian. From here short walk to the **Underground Cistern**, the largest of the many underground cisterns built during the Byzantine Empire to supply the city with water. This cistern is especially fascinating because the Byzantine builders recycled many stone structures—capital heads and columns-- that had been used in earlier temples. Now an upside down Medusa stares out at us from her watery home. We continue our tour with a visit to the **Topkapi Palace**. This visit to the imperial palace of the Ottoman Sultans will include tours of the imperial treasury, the Chinese porcelain section, the calligraphy section and many more. We will also visit the jewelry collection segment of the palace. The tour will end with a visit to the **Grand Bazaar**, the vast and legendary covered market that is the biggest souk in the world with nearly 4000 shops of antiques, jewelry and carpets. During the visit of the **Grand Bazaar** we will be experiencing **Turkish coffee** from **Sark Kahvesi**, historical coffee roasters located in the Grand Bazaar. Each variety has been prepared with a blend of traditional knowledge, experience and an abiding “Love of Coffee”
- Overnight stay at our hotel in Istanbul



DAY 3.

Istanbul

- This morning we visit the renowned **Dolmabahce Palace**, was built between the years 1843 and 1856



(B)

by the armenian architects the Balyans. The design contains eclectic elements from the Baroque, Rococo and Neoclassic styles blended with traditional Ottoman architecture to create a new synthesis. It is the largest Palace in Turkey, its monoblock building occupies 45.000 m2. Continue our tour with a visit to the **Rustem Pasha Mosque**. Designed by the Ottoman imperial architect Mimar Sinan for Grand Vizier "Son-in-Law" Rüstem Pasha (husband of Princess Mihrimah Sultana, one of the daughters of Suleiman the Magnificent), the construction was carried out from 1561 to 1563. The Rüstem Pasha Mosque is famous for its many exquisite Iznik tiles that depict a wide variety of beautiful floral and geometric designs. These priceless tiles have been used to decorate the *mihrab*, *minbar*, walls, columns and the interior and exterior façades of the enclosed portico. These tiles use the cherry red that is characteristic of the early Iznik period (1555-1620). No other mosque in Istanbul makes such a lavish use of these tiles. Short walk to **Spice Market**. Built in 1664, this large, old stone building includes a large number of shops (and a restaurant on the second floor that has long held a venerable place in the life of the city). This collection of shops was actually part of the complex of the adjacent Yeni Camii (the "New Mosque," whose construction started in 1597 and finished decades later). Since its construction, the Egyptian Spice Market has specialized in the sale of exotic spices. Today, these lovely small shops continue to sell spices and now also sell dried fruits, nuts, seeds, and other edibles. Some of the shops are gradually being transformed into shops featuring jewelry and other high margin items. During the visit of Spice Market we will have a short break at **Ali Muhiddin Haci Bekir's shop** – the inventor of Turkish delight. From the time of its founding during the Ottoman Empire, the name Haci Bekir has become a legend in Ottoman and Turkish confectionery and a leading symbol of this art. Late afternoon we will have a **Cruise on the Bosphorus** with a regular boat. We'll cruise up Istanbul's winding straits and relax and admire the shoreline of beautiful mosques, lavish palaces, and decadent yalis. You'll see Dolmabahçe Palace, Beylerbeyi Palace, Ottoman summer mansions, the Ortaköy Mosque, the defensive Rumeli Fortress, and the Bosphorus Bridge, one of the world's largest suspension bridges, all while passing fishing boats, yachts, huge cargo ships, and tankers.

- Overnight stay at our hotel in Istanbul

DAY 4.
(B-D)

Istanbul / Gallipoli / Canakkale (310 km – Approx driving time 3 hours and 45 minutes)

- After breakfast we begin our drive to **Gallipoli**, a pleasant drive that takes us through the European (Thracian) lands of Turkey. Walk on the beach at **ANZAC Cove**, visit **the Lone Pine Cemetery** and see **the Turkish Memorial**. We also visit the moving **ANZAC Museum** before crossing the Dardanelles by ferry to Canakkale where we will check into our hotel and enjoy our buffet dinner and overnight stay at our hotel.

DAY 5.
(B)

Canakkale / Pergamon / Sirince (390 km – Approx driving time 5 hours)

- After breakfast we visit the ancient **Troy** where we will see its legendary walls and the replica of the wooden Trojan Horse. From here we begin our drive towards the Aegean and Izmir. Along the way we will stop at the hauntingly beautiful **Pergamon**, including visits to the **Acropolis** and **Asklepion**. Late afternoon we continue our drive to Village of Sirince.
- Overnight at our hotel in Sirince.

**DAY 6.
(B)**

Sirince / Ephesus / Sirince

- After breakfast drive to Ephesus, famous for its **Temple of Artemis** - one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Its cult to Artemis and its Hellen civilization with Heraclites the “Skotinos” philosopher of “Panta Rei”. During the years of the Roman Empire, the Greek port of Ephesus became the greatest city in Asia Minor. Upon arrival at **Ephesus** follow your guide to enter this ancient site through the Magnesian Gate and discover innumerable monuments including the Forum, the Odeon, the Library of Celsus, the Thermal Baths of Scolastika and the Great Theatre built in the Hellenistic period, which is still noted for its remarkable acoustics, and is where St Paul preached. We will also visit **Virgin Mary’s House**.
- Afternoon free at leisure.
- We will spend the night at our hotel in Sirince

**DAY 7.
(B)**

Sirince / Bodrum (175 km – Approx driving time 2 hours 30 minutes)

- After breakfast drive to Bodrum. Situated on a beautiful peninsula, **Bodrum**, home of the famous Greek historian Herodotus. A short bus ride from the new port brings you to **the Castle of St. Peter**. To obtain stone to build the castle, the Knight of Rhodes tore down the famous Mausoleum of Halicarnassus—a magnificent tomb that was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. You will also visit **the Museum of Underwater Archaeology**, whose artifacts were found underwater and date from the Bronze Age through the Middle Ages. Remnants of cargo from a 13th-century BC Syrian trade ship are on display. You will also visit the Carian Princess section to see a beautiful tiara of gold. Next, you will visit the ruins of **the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus**. This is Bodrum’s oldest and most significant treasure. Artemisia II built the tomb in honor of her husband, King Mausolos. The modern generic term for a large tomb is derived from his name. The entire structure stood more than 150 feet tall and featured frescos and other art objects, some of which are now on display in the London Museum. On the way back to the port we will have a chance to take great pictures of Bodrum Peninsula and troll around the narrow streets of the city centre.
- Overnight at our hotel in Bodrum.

**DAY 8.
(B)**

Bodrum

- Breakfast
- Day at leisure
- Overnight at our hotel in Bodrum.

**DAY 9.
(B)**

Bodrum

- Breakfast
- Day at leisure
- Overnight at our hotel in Bodrum.

DAY 10.

Bodrum / Istanbul / UK

- After breakfast we will drive to Bodrum Airport to catch our flight to Istanbul. Upon our arrival in



(B) Istanbul we will transfer to our connection flight back to UK.

B = Breakfast **L** = Lunch **D** = Dinner

Our Services Include:

- 9 nights hotel accommodation throughout the tour at below specified selected hotels
- Sightseeing as per above itinerary
- Selected Unique Moment listed below
- Entrance fees of the specified museums in the itinerary
- Specified meals (9 Breakfast and 1 dinner)
- Private Transportation by A/C deluxe vehicle
- Private English Speaking Professional tour guide
- Mineral water during the touring days
- Tips to the hotel and restaurant staff
- Service charges & local taxes

Our Services do not include:

- Flight tickets (International & Domestic)
- Free Choice Tours
- Suggested Unique Moments
- Drinks and meals which are not listed at the itinerary
- All personal expenses
- Tips to the tour guide and driver.