

PRIVATE TURKEY TOUR ENDING IN BODRUM

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.
(B)

Istanbul

- This morning we will visit the renowned **Dolmabahçe Palace** was built between the years 1843 and 1856 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. We will 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 Hacı Bekir's shop** – the inventor of Turkish delight. From the time of its founding during the Ottoman Empire, the name Hacı 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)

Istanbul / Cappadocia

- After breakfast, we will drive to the Istanbul (Ataturk) Airport to catch our morning flight to Kayseri (Cappadocia). Arrive in Kayseri airport and private transfer to our hotel in Cappadocia on th way we will visit the following sites;





- First, we will visit **Devrent Valley**. One magical corner in the countless panoramic valleys of Cappadocia, here is an unbelievable landscape with its rock formations and savage feeling; one of the best introductions to understanding the formation of fairy chimneys. Then, we will continue to **Pasabag Valley** where the formation of “fairy chimneys” can be best observed. Pasabag, the Pasha's Vineyard, is surrounded by incredible natural rock formations; a spectacular scene. Then, drive down into the village of Urgup, where you will see the blending of landscape and buildings. Last, we will walk through the **Guvercinlik Valley**. The Pigeon Valley is one of the most famous valleys of Cappadocia and its name comes from the pigeon-cotes carved on its walls.
- We will spend our night at our hotel in Cappadocia.

DAY5.
(B-L)

Cappadocia

- After breakfast, our first stop at **Uchisar** where is situated at the highest point in Cappadocia, The top of the Uchisar Castle, provides a magnificent panorama of the surrounding area with Mount Erciyes in the distance. Many rooms hollowed out into the rock are connected to each other with stairs, tunnels and and passages. At the entrances of the rooms, there are millstone doors, just like the ones in the underground settlements, used to control access to these places. Due to the erosion in places of this multi-leveled castle, it is unfortunately not possible to reach all the rooms. Most of the rooms, located on the north side of the castle are in use as pigeon houses (dovecuts) today. Farmers used these cave pigeon houses to collect the droppings of pigeons which is an excellent natural fertilizer for the orchards and vineyards. We will continue with visit of **Goreme** area. The small town of Goreme is situated in the middle of the Valley of Fairy Chimneys, surrounded by the eerie shapes and fantastic rock formations that have made the region famous. It is one of the few remaining villages where fairy chimneys and rock-hewn houses are still inhabited, and several restaurants and cafes are carved into the rock. Its biggest attraction is the Goreme Open-Air museum with over 30 beautifully frescoed Byzantine rock churches. The town makes an excellent base from which to explore the surrounding rock formations, villages, vineyards and attractions. For shoppers, carpets and Kilims are plentiful. **Goreme National Park** which was the official state during the period of the Roman Empire, was named “Cappadocia”, which means “The Country of White Horses” in Persian. The Goreme Open-Air Museum is the most visited of the monastic communities in Cappadocia and is one of the most famous sites in central Turkey. It is a complex comprising more than 30 rock-hewn churches and chapels containing some superb frescoes, dating from the 9th to the 11th centuries. Inconspicuous from the outside, the interiors are characteristically Byzantine with a central dome and a floor plan in the shape of a cross. We will have **lunch at a local village house** where you see may groups of women are cooking local bread together, these lovely people invite you to join them and to sit together. If you want you may try to cook traditional Turkish bread. Then you are going to be taken to a traditional Turkish house, to meet the members and to interact with the family. If you have already learned a little Turkish this is the right time to use local language. After lunch, we will continue our day descending below the earth's surface into the **Kaymakli Underground City**, where five levels extend below ground and include; living quarters, kitchens, wine presses, storage rooms, stables and ventilation shafts. Early Christians carved out these subterranean complexes to avoid invaders who swept across the plains of Anatolia from the 6th to the 9th Century. Shopping time for the well-known merits of the area



before returning to the hotel.

- We will spend our night at our hotel In Cappadocia.

DAY6.
(B)

Capadocia / Izmir / Sirince

- After breakfast, we will drive to the Kasyeri Airport to catch our flight to Izmir via Istanbul. Arrive in Izmir, transfer to our hotel in Sirince.
- Overnight at our hotel in Sirince.

DAY7.
(B)

Sirince / Ephesus / Sirince

- After breakfast, we will 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**. Remainder of the day at your own leisure.
- Overnight at our hotel in Sirince.

DAY8.
(B)

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

- After breakfast, we will 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. We 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. We will also visit the Carian Princess section to see a beautiful tiara of gold. Next, we 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. At the end of our visits, we will transfer to hotel in Bodrum. Accomodation at requested hotel.
- End of our services.

B = Breakfast

L = Lunch

D = Dinner



Our Services Include:

- 6 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 (6 Breakfast, 1 Lunch)
- Mineral Water during lunches & dinners
- 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.

SELECTED UNIQUE MOMENTS (included in our package)

- **Turkish Blue Eyed Bead**
- Turkish coffee from **Sark Kahvesi**
- **Baklava** from the masters Unchanging taste in **Karakoy Gulluoglu Baklavicisi**
- **Turkish Delight at Ali Muhiddin Hacı Bekir's shop**
- Lunch at a local village house in Cappadocia