

16 Days Footsteps of St.Paul Turkey & Greek Island Cruise Tour (16 Days / 15 Nights)

From March till November 2017

Day 1 (D)

Istanbul

- Following our guests' arrival in Istanbul, our staff will meet our guests and transfer them to the hotel. After check-in, our tour director will brief our guests about the Biblical Itinerary.
- Dinner and an overnight stay will be at the hotel.

Day 2 (B-D)

Istanbul

- After breakfast, we will start our full day sightseeing tour of Istanbul. First we will visit **Blue Mosque**, famous for its blue Iznik (modern name of Nicaea) tiles and unique with its' 6 minarets. After Blue mosque we will walk to **Hippodrome**, which was the center of sports (chariots races, athletic games) events and political activities in the old city. From Hippodrome we will walk to **Hagia Irini Church** (in Topkapi Palace Garden). It was built as a church dedicated to divine peace on the former site of a temple of Aphrodite. **Constantine the Great** had it built in 324 AD. In the afternoon we will continue with a tour of the **Topkapi Palace Museum**, which was the imperial residence of Ottoman Sultans. Today in the rooms of this palace, there are exhibits of imperial treasury, Chinese porcelain, weapons and Holy Relics (**Sword of King David, staff of Moses, Turban of Joseph, Relics of St John the Baptist**). We will end the day after a visit to the **Grand Bazaar**. It is the **biggest oriental bazaar** (market) in the World with around 4000 shops which sell antiques, jewelry, gold, carpets, leather, etc. **** Unique Moment:** During the visit of the Grand Bazaar we will taste **Turkish coffee** in **Sark Kahvesi**, a 400 years old Turkish Coffee House. Each variety of Turkish coffee is prepared with a love for he coffee.
- Dinner and overnight stay will be at the hotel.
- **Welcome Dinner at Hamdi Restaurant, www.hamdi.com.tr**



Hamdi Restaurant has been serving its traditional kebabs from southeast Turkey since its' foundation in 1970 and is the place to go for this famous Turkish dish. The popular restaurant is located in the historical Eminönü district (West of Sultanahmet), and offers stunning sea views looking over the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus. The menu has a wide choice of meat dishes and superior quality of service, making Hamdi Restaurant one of Turkey's first class restaurants.

Menu

White Flat Bread & Water

¼ Turkish "Tulum" Cheese (Nomadic cheese made in goat skin)

Served with fresh butter



Findik Lahmacun (Mini Turkish Pizza)
Bulgur rolls stuffed with meat and walnuts.
Appetizers
Spoon Salad
A plate of Kebabs (a variety);
(Served with Rice, Tomatoes, Pepper, Onion)
½ Pistachio Kebab
½ Vegetable Kebab
2 Pieces of Lamb Kebab
2 Pieces of Chicken on Skewers Kebab.
2 Slices of Baklava (Dessert)

- Dinner and overnight at the hotel in Istanbul.

Day 3
(B - D)

Istanbul

- After After breakfast, we set off for a full day of sightseeing tour in Istanbul. We start our day with a visit to the **Chora Church (Kariye Museum)**, originally built as the primary structure of a Byzantine monastery. It is the only church **dedicated to Jesus Christ the Savior**. Today, this church has the best-preserved Byzantine Mosaics in Turkey and they can compete with Ravenna Mosaics. After our visit to the Chora Church, we will go to the **Spice Market**; the second biggest oriental market in Istanbul consisted of 400 shops. This bazaar has long and traditionally specialized in spices, herbs, vegetables, and fruits. **** Unique Moment:** During the visit of Spice Market we will have a short break at Ali **Muhiddin Hacı Bekir's shop** – the inventor of Turkish delight. Since its' foundation in 1777, the name Hacı Bekir has become a legend in Ottoman and Turkish confectionery and a leading symbol of this gastronomical art. We will continue our day with a **Cruise along the Bosphorus** on an exclusive boat. As we cruise along the strait of Istanbul, we will have a chance to see the Imperial Palaces built out of marble, beautifully built humble Ottoman mosques, Ottoman Mansion (called as Yali in Turkish), Ottoman Fortresses and the Bridges that connect Asia to Europe. Our day will end with the visit to the **Hagia Sophia**, the Church of Divine Wisdom. The Byzantine Emperor Justinian built this awe-inspiring building in the 6th Century. Having been there for 1500 years, it is still the 4TH Largest Basilica in the world.
- Dinner and Overnight stay will be at our Hotel in Istanbul.



Day 4
(B-D)

Istanbul / Nicaea / Bursa

- After breakfast, we will drive to **Nicaea (Iznik)**. The importance of Nicaea in Christian history is because of the two major Christian meetings that were held here: **the first**



	<p>Ecumenical Council of 325 and the seventh Ecumenical Council of 787. Nicene Creed was written here. In this fascinating town we will visit the museum that was formerly the Church of Divine Wisdom. After the visits, we will leave Nicaea and drive to Bursa. We will explore Bursa by visiting the Grand Mosque, the Green Mausoleum and the Old Silk Market in the Covered Bazaar.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dinner and overnight will be at the Hotel in Bursa.
Day 5 (B-D)	<p><u>Bursa / Canakkale / Ayvalik</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• After breakfast, we will drive to the city of Canakkale. We visit the ruins of legendary Troy. We will continue our journey to Alexandria Troas, which was visited at least twice by St. Paul. We know that in his third journey St. Paul also traveled by land from Alexandria Troas to Assos. In Troas we visit the theater, the Temple of Athena and the agora.• Dinner and overnight will be at our Hotel in Ayvalik.
Day 6 (B-D)	<p><u>Ayvalik / Pergamon / Thyatira / Izmir</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• After breakfast, we will drive to Pergamum to visit the Asklepion and the Acropolis. On the 1200ft. high Acropolis we will see the steepest sloped theater of the ancient world, the temple of Athena and the Altar of Zeus, which St. John denounced to Pergamum church members as a “Throne of Satan.” In his letters to Seven Churches of Revelation. After Acropolis, we will visit the Asklepion, which was one of the 3 famous hospitals of the ancient world. After we finish the visits around Pergamum, we make our way for Thyatira, whose church members were commended for their “steadfastness against libertarianism,” which was viewed as a constant threat to the Christian church.• Dinner and overnight will be at Hotel in Izmir. <p>** Unique Moment; Tonight you will enjoy a short ride on a Fayton (typical horse carriage of Izmir) tour in Izmir along the famous coastal promenade called Kordonboyu.</p>
Day 7 (B-D)	<p><u>Izmir / Ephesus / Miletus / Kusadasi</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• After breakfast, we will drive through the farming lands of Western Turkey to the town of Selcuk which is the home to the world wide known ruins of Ephesus, the House of Virgin Mary and The Basilica of St John of Patmos. Our first stop will be the House of Virgin Mary. The belief is that the Virgin Mary had spent her last years in the vicinity of Ephesus. After the visit of Virgin Mary’s House, we will drive shortly to the ruins of Ephesus, which was one of the 4 biggest Roman cities during the heydays of Roman Empire. St Paul came here twice and he preached in the great theatre of Ephesus. Our next visit will be the St. John’s Basilica. It is believed that the evangelist St. John had spent his last years in the region around Ephesus and buried in the southern slope of Ayosolug Hill. From here continue our drive to The Ancient City of Miletus, which was considered as one of the greatest and wealthiest of Greek cities.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dinner and overnight will be at our Hotel in Kusadasi.
Day 8 (B-L-D)	<p><u>Kusadasi / Patmos (Cruise)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• After breakfast, we will be transferred to Kusadasi Port to embark on a 3 nights Cruise of the Aegean Islands. Our first stop in the cruise will be Patmos; this island is known as the location of the apocalyptic revelations of St. John the Divine, written here during his exile by the Roman Empire. The cave where he lived is near the site of the Monastery of the Apocalypse. The Monastery of St. John built on one of the island's highest points, houses priceless icons and manuscripts in its Treasury.• Dinner and overnight will be on board.
Day 9 (B-L-D)	<p><u>Patmos / Crete-Heraklion / Santorini (Cruise)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This morning following our arrival in Heraklion, we will visit the fantastic ruins of the Palace of Knossos. Discovered in 1899 and partially reconstructed, the elaborate Palace is believed to be the mythical Labyrinth of King Minos and the seat of ancient Minoan culture (Minotaur comes from here). The next island to visit will be Santorini and perhaps the most breathtaking of all the Greek Islands, with its whitewashed houses, narrow streets, open-air cafes and glittering boutiques.• Dinner and overnight will be on board.
Day 10 (B-L-D)	<p><u>Santorini / Athens / Mykonos (Cruise)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We arrive in Piraeus, the port city of Athens, cradle of democracy, and birthplace of Western Civilization. Athens is a vibrant city where old and new co-exists. The majestic Parthenon rises above the city and its ancient glory is still visible in the timeworn Stones. The last island to visit will be Mykonos. Hundreds of tiny chapels, beautiful windmills and blue-white buildings adorn this island. Find a table on the waterfront and enjoy the serenity of the sunset while looking at its picturesque harbor.• Dinner and overnight will be on board.
Day 11 (B-D)	<p><u>Mykonos / Kusadasi / Sardis / Hierapolis / Pamukkale</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will disembark our boat in Kusadasi at around 07.00 o'clock and we will drive to Sardis. This ancient city was the capital of ancient Lydia and was also one of the Seven Churches of Revelation. In the vicinity of this ancient town we will visit the temple of Diana (which later became a Church), the beautiful synagogue, and the gymnasium. After Sardis we will head to Laodicea, which has been extensively excavated non-stop all year around since 2009. Laodicea was one of the 7 Churches and this is the only one among 7 Churches today where the exact location of the Church has been discovered. We will



visit its theaters, Odeon, gymnasium and the newly excavated temple. The day will end with the visit of **Hierapolis** with its necropolis, baths, theater and the site of the martyrdom of **St. Philip**.

- Dinner and overnight will be at the hotel in Pamukkale.

**Day 12
(B-D)**

Pamukkale / Pisidian / Konya

- After breakfast, we drive to **Antioch of Pisidia**, the city where **St. Paul** preached his first recorded sermon and was later expelled. Among the ruins we also visit the remains of two basilicas. After that, we will drive to the city of **Konya** (ancient Iconium), where **St. Paul and St. Barnabas** had spent time in the synagogue. We will visit the museum of the **Whirling Dervishes**. Which is also the site of the **Mausoleum of Mevlana** (Rumi), the philosopher, mystic and poet.
- Dinner and overnight stay will be at the Hotel.



**Day 13
(B-D)**

Konya / Lystra / Derbe / Cappadocia

- After breakfast we will begin our ride to Cappadocia. On the way we will stop at **Lystra**, a place that was visited several times by **St. Paul**. After there we will keep driving to **Derbe**, where St. Paul and St. Barnabas had preached and converted many people.
- Dinner and overnight will be at the hotel in Cappadocia.

**Day 14
(B-D)**

Cappadocia

- After breakfast, we will explore the famous **valleys** of Cappadocia. It is a **unique location in the world** with one of a kind natural rock formation. A very long time ago, volcanic eruptions caused the lava flow that dried above the Earth's crust and formed tufa rocks. Erosion shaped them into famous formations called "fairy chimneys," but it is not only the landscape that makes this place unique. Hittites chiseled the soft tufa stones to **carve out this fairy tale world** into homes, stables, shops, churches, hospitals, etc., etc. **Early Christians** carved caves and made frescoes of Biblical scenes on the walls of these rock-carved chapels. Some of these frescoes are still incredibly vivid, attesting to the skills and religious fervor of the faithful. Within the Cappadocia region we will visit the **Open Air Museum of Goreme, Underground City of Kaymakli** and **Avanos**, the latter providing us with the opportunity to purchase some pottery made by kick-wheel method.
- Dinner and overnight will be at the hotel in Cappadocia.





<p>Day 15 (B-D)</p>	<p><u>Cappadocia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After breakfast, we will have a private mass at one of the 4th Century churches in Cappadocia Region from the 4th century A.D. We will continue our day with a visit to the Devrent Valley to see some spectacular rock formations. Then we will drive to Pasabag (Monk's Valley) to see the best-formed fairy-chimneys, which are the name for the mushroom shaped natural rock formations. In the afternoon we will visit the town of Uchisar, which has the highest altitude in Cappadocia. We will hike up to Uchisar Fortress/ Rock Formation, which offers magnificent view of the surrounding area with Mount Erciyes in the distance. The castle features many rooms hollowed out from the rock connected to each other with stairs, tunnels and passages. Today most of the rooms on the north side of the castle have become home to pigeons, which supply farmers, their droppings that are the best fertilizer for volcanic soil. ** Unique Moment: Cave house visit: Here you will visit a historic cave house and experience how the locals still live in the caves. Dinner and overnight stay will be at the hotel in Cappadocia.
<p>Day 16 (B)</p>	<p><u>Cappadocia / Istanbul / UK</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After breakfast, departure transfers from our hotel to Kayseri Airport for our departure flight to Istanbul. Upon arrival in Istanbul there will be connection flights to...

B = Breakfast

L = Lunch

D = Dinner

INCLUDING	EXCLUDING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hotel accommodation throughout the tour at specified selected hotels or similar Sightseeing tours as per above itinerary (Except the shore excursions during cruise and optional tours) Entrance fees of the specified museums in the itinerary Specified meals 3 nights Greek Islands Cruise with Celestial Olympia with the respective cabin type Unlimited non-alcoholic beverage package during the Cruise Transportation by A/C deluxe vehicle English speaking professional tour guide throughout the tour Tips to hotels, restaurants and on board of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Flight tickets Drinks and meals which are not listed in the itinerary Shore Excursions during cruise All personal expenses Tips to the tour guide and driver.

the cruise vessel

- Port, Service and local taxes for all the tour
- Cappadocia – Istanbul domestic flight ticket on day 16.

\$ 1,800 pp is valid for min 15 people and commissionable to the Travel industry
Please note that we can price the tours for different number of participants as well.

SUGGESTED HOTELS

ISTANBUL

DoubleTree by Hilton Istanbul Old Town, 5 Star
www.DoubleTree.com
or similar,

AYVALIK

Grand Hotel Temizel , 5 Star
www.temizel.com.tr
or similar,

KUSADASI

Charisma De-Luxe Hotel, 5 Star
www.charismahotel.com
or similar,

KONYA

Hotel Dedeman, 5 Star
www.dedeman.com
or similar,

BURSA

Almira Hotel, 5 Star
www.almira.com.tr
or similar,

IZMIR

Hilton Hotel, 5 Star
www.hilton.com
or similar,

PAMUKKALE

Spa Hotel Thermal Colossae, 5 Star
www.colossae.com
or similar,

CAPPADOCIA

DoubleTree by Hilton Avanos Cappadocia, 5 Star
www.DoubleTree.com
or similar,