

16 Days Pilgrimage - Three Continent Voyages Cruise through Turkey, Israel, Egypt & Athens - 2018

2018

**Day 1
Thursday
(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
Friday
(B-D)**

Istanbul

- After breakfast, we will start our full day sightseeing tour of Istanbul. First we will visit the **Blue Mosque**, famous for its blue Iznik (modern name: Nicaea) tiles and unique with its' 6 minarets. After the Blue mosque, we will walk to the **Hippodrome**, which was the center of sports events (chariots races and athletic games) and political activities in the old city. From the Hippodrome, we will walk to **Hagia Sophia, which** is right across from the Blue Mosque. Built as the church of divine wisdom, it is still one of the greatest marvels of architecture in the World. The Byzantine Emperor Justinian constructed it as a basilica in the 6th century. In the afternoon, we will continue with a tour of the **Topkapi Palace Museum**, which was the imperial residence of Ottoman Sultans. That day in the rooms of this palace, there are exhibits of the imperial treasury, Chinese porcelain, weapons, and holy relics (**the Sword of King David, the staff of Moses, the 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 4,000 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 year old Turkish Coffee House. A variety of Turkish coffee and tea is available.
- Dinner and overnight stay will be at the hotel.



**Day 3
Saturday
(B-D)**

Istanbul / Canakkale

- After breakfast, we set off on a half-day tour of Istanbul. First, we will visit the **Underground Cistern**, the largest of the many underground cisterns built during the Byzantine Empire to supply the city with water. Byzantine builders recycled many stone structures like column capitals, which had been used in earlier temples. After that, we will drive to the **Chora Church (Kariye Museum)**. It was originally built as the primary structure of a Byzantine monastery, and it was dedicated to Jesus Christ the Savior. That day, visitors flock to see its exquisitely beautiful frescoes and breathtaking Byzantine Mosaics. After the Chora Church visit, we will go to the **Spice Market**, a covered market of 400 shops that have long and traditionally specialized in spices, herbs, vegetables, and fruits. **** Unique Moment:** During our visit of Spice Market, we will have a short break at **Ali Muhiddin Hacı Bekir's shop** – the inventor of Turkish delight. Since 1777, the name Hacı

Bekir has become a legend in Ottoman and Turkish confectionery and a leading symbol of this gastronomical art. In the afternoon, we will drive to **Gallipoli**, a scenic ride that will take us through the European (Thracian) lands of Turkey. Crossing the Dardanelles by ferry to Canakkale, we will check in to our hotel.

- Dinner and an overnight will be at Tusan Hotel in Canakkale.

**Day 4
Sunday
(B-D)**

Canakkale / Troas / Assos

- After breakfast we depart our hotel to go to the ancient city of **Troy** with its 4,000-year-old history, which recalls the epic struggle of the Iliad. We will also visit the **Alexandrian Troas** (Acts 16: 8-11; 20:5, 6, 11; Tim. 4:13; II Cor. 2:12), which was a significant port for travelling between Anatolia and Europe during the Roman era. Paul of Tarsus sailed to Europe for the first time from Alexandria Troas.
- Dinner and an overnight stay will be at the hotel in Assos (Acts 20:13, 14).

**Day 5
Monday
(B-D)**

Assos / Pergamon / Thyatira / Izmir

- After breakfast, we will visit the ancient ruins of **Assos**. Next, we will drive to **Pergamum** (Rev. 1:11; 2:12), where the first Christians were put to death by the Roman state. We will visit the ancient ruins of the **Acropolis** and **Asclepion**, an ancient medical health center. We will see the **Red Basilica**, which was built for the Egyptian gods and goddesses during the Roman era, and it was converted into a Christian Basilica and dedicated to St. John during Byzantine era. We will stop briefly in **Thyatira** (Acts 16:14, Rev. 1:11; 2:18-24) to take a look at the ancient roadway and columns before we continue our drive to Izmir.
- Dinner and an overnight at our hotel in Izmir.

**Day 6
Tuesday
(B-D)**

Izmir / Ephesus / Kusadasi

- After breakfast, we will drive shortly to the town of Selcuk for a visit to the **Basilica of St. John**, housing an immersion baptism pool and believed to be the final resting place of John. From this point, a wide-open view overlooking the former harbor of the ancient city of Ephesus can be seen. Also, the only single standing column of the **Temple of Artemis**, which was **one of the Seven Wonders** of the ancient world can be seen. After the visit of the Basilica of St John, we will walk downhill to visit the **14th century Isabey Mosque**. Following this visit, our driver will pick us up to drive shortly to the ruins of **Ephesus** (Acts 18:19-24, 19:1-35, 20:16-17, 21:29; I Cor. 15:32, 16:8; I Tim. 1:3; II Tim. 1:18, 4:12; Rev. 1:11, 2:1), the city mentioned in the Bible several times. We will stroll through the extensively excavated archeological site with the **Great Theatre where St Paul had preached** and the **Church of the Councils** (two of the Christian Councils were held here). Ephesus was once a thriving port town of 250,000 people and it was one of the 4 biggest cities of the Roman Empire during their heyday. That day you can still see the spectacular excavations on the major streets in this ancient city, where we also see the library, Agora, theatre, and mosaic covered sidewalks. Our final stop will be the **House of Virgin Mary**, where she was believed to have spent her last years.

- Dinner and an overnight stay will be at our hotel in Kusadasi.

Day 7
Wednesday
(B-D)

Kusadasi / Sardis / Hierapolis / Pamukkale

- After breakfast, we will drive to **Sardis**, the capital of ancient Lydia, which was known also as one of the Seven Churches of Revelation. There, we will visit the temple of Diana (which later became a church), the earliest built synagogue discovered in Turkey so far, and the gymnasium. After our visit, we will drive to **Laodicea**, which have been extensively excavated, non-stop all year round since 2009. Laodicea was one of the 7 Churches and **this is the only one today where the exact location of the Church has been discovered.** Our next visit will be to the ruins of **Hierapolis**, with its beautiful calcium deposit covered travertine terraces, the ancient Necropolis, baths, theatre and **St. Philips's.**
- Dinner and an overnight stay will be at the hotel in Pamukkale.



Day 8
Thursday
(B-D)

Pamukkale / Pisidian / Konya

- After breakfast, we will drive to **Antioch of Pisidia**, the city where **St. Paul** preached his first recorded sermon and was later expelled. Among the ruins, we will 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 an overnight stay will be at the hotel.



Day 9
Friday
(B-D)

Konya / Lystra / Derbe / Cappadocia

- After breakfast, we will set off for Cappadocia. On the way we stop at **Lystra**, also a place that was visited several times by St. Paul. From there we continue on to **Derbe**, where St. Paul and St. Barnabas had preached and had converted many people. After these visits, we will head to Cappadocia to spend the night.
- Dinner and an overnight stay at the hotel in Cappadocia.

Day 10
Saturday
(B-D)

Cappadocia

- After breakfast, we will explore the famous **valleys** of Cappadocia. **A unique location in the world** with one of a kind natural rock formation. A very long time ago, volcanic eruptions caused a 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. **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**, the **Underground City of Kaymakli** and **Avanos**, the latter providing us with the opportunity to purchase some pottery made by the kick-wheel method.
- Dinner and an overnight will be at the hotel in Cappadocia.



Day 11
Sunday
(B-D)

Cappadocia / Istanbul / Cruise

- After breakfast, we will have a **private mass** at one of the oldest churches in the 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 that are the mushroom shaped natural rock formations. **** Unique Moment: Cave house visit:** There you will visit a historic cave house and experience how the locals still live in the caves. At the end of this visit, we will start our ride towards to Antalya. Following our arrival in Antalya city, we will drive to the port to embark on the 4 night, 3 day Continent Cruise with Crystal Olympia.
- Dinner and an overnight stay will be on board.

Day 12
Monday
(B-L-D)

Antalya / Perge / Aspendos /Cruise

- Available shore excursion options
1 -) Antalya Old Town & Perge
2 -) Perge & Aspendos (extended Half Day)
- Dinner and an overnight stay will be on board.

Day 13
Tuesday
(B-L-D)

Ashdod / Israel /Cruise

- Available Shore excursion options
1-) Jaffa & Tel Aviv - Half Day
2-) Jerusalem & Bethelheim Full Day

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dinner and an overnight stay will be on board
Day 14 Wednesday (B-L-D)	<u>Port Said / Egypt /Cruise</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available shore excursion options <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Classic Cairo Full Day (with lunch) The Pyramids and the river Nile in style Full Day (with lunch) Dinner and an overnight stay will be on board
Day 15 Thursday (B-L-D)	<u>At Sea /Cruise</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoy a full day cruise from Egypt to Athens. Dinner and an overnight stay on board.
Day 16 Friday (B)	<u>Athens (Lavrion) Greece</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrival in Athens. Disembark.

B = Breakfast

L = Lunch

D = Dinner

TOUR DEPARTURE DATES FROM ISTANBUL - 2018

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JANUARY	18,25
FEBRUARY	01, 08, 15, 22
MARCH	01, 08, 15, 22, 29
APRIL	05, 12, 19, 26
MAY	03, 10,17
SEPTEMBER	27,
OCTOBER	04, 11, 18, 25
NOVEMBER	01, 08,

INCLUDING

- Hotel accommodations throughout the tour at selected 4-5 star hotels
- Sightseeing tours as per above itinerary (Except the shore excursions during the cruise)
- Entrance fees of the specified museums in the itinerary
- Specified meals (15 breakfasts & 4 lunches & 15 dinners)
- 4 nights 3 Continent Cruise with Celestial Olympia with the respective cabin type
- Unlimited non-alcoholic beverage package during the cruise
- Transportation via air-conditioned deluxe vehicle
- Professional tour guide throughout the tour
- Tips for hotels, restaurants and onboard the cruise vessel
- Port, Service and local taxes for all the tour

EXCLUDING

- Flight tickets (International)
- Drinks and meals which are not listed in the itinerary
- Shore excursions during the cruise
- All personal expenses
- Tips for the tour guide and driver

SUGGESTED HOTELS

ISTANBUL

Grand Hotel Gulsoy, 4 Star Old Town,
www.grandhotelgulsoy.com
 or similar,

ASSOS

Assos Nazlihan Boutique Hotel,
www.assosnazlihan.com
 or similar,

KUSADASI

Ilayda Avantgarde Hotel, 4 Star
www.ilaydaavantgarde.com
 or similar,

KONYA

Novotel Konya, 4 Star
www.novotel.com
 or similar,

CANAKKALE

Kolin Hotel, 5 Star
www.kolinhotel.com
 or similar,

IZMIR

Ramada Plaza İzmir Hotel, 4 Star
www.ramadaplazaizmir.com
 or similar,

PAMUKKALE

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

CAPPADOCIA

Kapadokya Lodge Hotel, 4 Star
www.kapadokyalodge.com
 or similar,