

The Footsteps of St. Paul in Turkey (13 Days / 12 Nights)

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 the coffee.

- **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 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 Haci Bekir's shop** – the inventor of Turkish delight. Since its' foundation in 1777, the name Haci 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 Mansions (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 (Izник)**. The importance of Nicaea in Christian history is because of the two major Christian meetings that were held here: **the first 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**.
Dinner and overnight will be at the Hotel in Bursa

**Day 5
(B-D)**

Bursa / Canakkale / Ayvalik

- 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)**

Ayvalik / Pergamon / Thyatira / Izmir

- 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.
**** 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>	<p><u>Izmir / Ephesus / Miletus / Kusadasi</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After breakfast, we will visit the extensive ruins of Ephesus, which was one of the Seven Churches. There, we will set foot on the theater where St. Paul had preached to the Ephesians. We will take a stroll through the library, Odeon, Virgin Mary Church where the Third Ecumenical Council was held in 431, and the Marble Road. We will leave the ruins of Ephesus to visit St. John's Basilica and the nearby House of the Virgin Mary. After lunch, we will drive to Miletus, which was one of the principal Ionian cities and the home of Thales, the geometrician. There, we will visit the very well preserved theater, the Byzantine Fortress, the Delphinium, the Nymphaeum, the Bouleterium, and the Faustina Baths. At the end of the day, we will return to the town of Kusadasi. • Dinner and an overnight stay will be at the hotel.
<p>Day 8 (B-D)</p>	<p><u>Kusadasi / Sardis / Hierapolis / Pamukkale</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
<p>Day 9 (B-D)</p>	<p><u>Pamukkale / Pisidian Antioch/ Konya</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
<p>Day 10 (B-D)</p>	<p><u>Konya / Lystra / Derbe / Cappadocia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
<p>Day 11 (B-D)</p>	<p><u>Cappadocia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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



	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dinner and an overnight will be at the hotel in Cappadocia.
<p>Day 12 (B-D)</p>	<p>Cappadocia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. In the afternoon we will continue our visit to the Uchisar, a pretty village located at the highest point in Cappadocia. We will visit Uchisar Fortress, which offers a magnificent panoramic view of the surrounding area with Mount Erciyes in the distance. The fortress has many rooms hollowed out from the rock connected to each other with stairs, tunnels and passages • ** Unique Moment: Cave house visit: There you will visit a historic cave house and experience how the locals still live in the caves. • Dinner and overnight at Hotel in Cappadocia.
<p>Day 13 (B)</p>	<p>Cappadocia / Istanbul / UK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After breakfast, we will drive to Kayseri Airport for our departure flight to Istanbul. From Istanbul our guests will get to their 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 • Entrance fees of the specified museums in the itinerary • Specified meals • Transportation by A/C deluxe vehicle • English speaking professional tour guide throughout the tour • Tips to hotels, restaurants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International & Domestic Flight tickets • Drinks and meals which are not listed in the itinerary • All personal expenses • Tips to the tour guide and driver.



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,