

Christmas Turkey

12 days | Starts/Ends: Istanbul



CHRISTMAS TOUR: There's no stuffing birds or entertaining aunts! Enjoy snowflakes on fairy chimneys, legendary sites at Ephesus, Troy and Aspendos, thermal springs at Pamukkale and Christmas Eve at St Nic's!

HIGHLIGHTS AND INCLUSIONS

Trip Highlights

- Istanbul - Sultanahmet (Old Istanbul), Hippodrome, Blue Mosque, Hagia Sofia, Underground Cistern and Topkapi Palace
- Gallipoli Peninsular - ANZAC Cove, memorials, trenches and battlefields
- Troy - Trojan horse and ancient ruins
- Aegean Coast
- Roman ruins of Pergamum and Ephesus
- Pamukkale - Thermal pools and Roman Hierapolis
- Demre - Home of the original St Nicholas
- Ancient ruins of Perge and Aspendos
- Konya - Silk Road and Mevlana Whirling Dervish Museum and Ancient caravanserais en route
- A jolly red suited man flying overhead... calling on Dasher and Dancer and Prancer!
- Cappadocia region - UNESCO World Heritage listed Goreme Valley, Kaymakli Underground City and Uchisar Castle

- Leather and carpet manufacturing houses

What's Included

- Breakfast daily and 6 dinners inclusive of a special Christmas Eve Dinner in Antalya overlooking the Mediterranean Sea
- 10 nights 4 star and special class hotels, 1 night 5 star hotel
- Guided sightseeing - Istanbul including the Blue Mosque, Underground Cistern, Topkapi Palace, Hippodrome and Hagia Sofia
- Guided sightseeing - Gallipoli, Troy, Ruins of Ephesus and Pergamum, Pamukkale and Roman Hierapolis, Perge, Aspendos, Konya and Cappadocia
- Escorted by an English speaking, degree qualified Turkish tour guide
- Airport arrival transfer on day 1 and departure transfer (to Istanbul International Airport) on day 12
- Relevant transfers and transportation in private modern air-conditioned vehicles

What's Not Included

- Tipping Kitty: USD\$40pp, paid in local currency
- Entrance Fees: USD\$115-130pp, paid in local currency
- International flights and visa
- Tip for your tour guide and driver. We recommend you allow USD\$5 - 7 per day, per traveller as a tip for your guide and

USD\$2 per day for your driver. Tipping your guide and driver is an entirely personal gesture

COVID SAFE GUIDE

ITINERARY

Day 1 : Welcome to Istanbul

18 December. Welcome to Turkey! Arrive Istanbul and transfer to hotel. Remainder of the day and evening at leisure. **Overnight - Istanbul**

Day 2 : Old City Sights



Enjoy a tour of old Istanbul. The only city to span two continents sits on the Bosphorus - the strait of water that divides the continents of Europe and Asia. Its illustrious past leaves a rich legacy of churches, mosques, palaces and museums, complemented by the behemoth Grand Bazaar and colourful street life.

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Sultanahmet, the compact old city of Istanbul, is full of parks, gardens and stunning sights. The Blue Mosque is famed for its blue Iznik tiles and unique 6 minarets. The Hagia Sofia, constructed in the 6th century and considered by some to be the epitome of Byzantine architecture, reigned as the grandest and biggest church in Christendom until the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, when it became a mosque.

Just around the corner is the stunning Topkapi Palace and the Underground Cistern. Rest of day free. Tonight, we are free to explore or relax in our hotel. **Overnight - Istanbul (B)**

Day 3 : Gallipoli



Istanbul – Gallipoli/Canakkale. Today, we enjoy a visit to battle-scarred Gallipoli. On the 25th April 1915, under the guidance of the British Command, the combined forces of Australia and New Zealand, otherwise known as the ‘ANZACs’, mounted an assault at a beach in North-Western Turkey. The futile campaign, infamously known as Gallipoli, is poignantly etched in history due to the enormous loss of lives and the impossibly hopeless situation faced by these brave young soldiers, many of whom had left home for the first time, destined never to return. In the fierce struggle for Turkish territory, thousands perished as the odds were resolutely stacked against them. The Turks sustained terrible losses. Thousands of British, French and Indian Allied troops also died. As always in war, common men died, cruelly robbed of their potential because of actions and decisions of military leaders. **Overnight - Canakkale (B, D)**

Days 4-5 : Troy & legendary Ephesus

Gallipoli - Kusadasi. Step back in time as we visit the legendary Roman ruins of Pergamum and Troy - inspiration for Homer's Iliad and much more recently the movie Troy. On day 5, we explore ancient Ephesus. Exemplifying the finesse of Roman urban life, Ephesus boasts carefully restored elements including a Great Theatre, Curetes Way, the Temple of Serapis and the Library of Celsus. Stop by the ancient public toilets and public brothel! Afterward, we stop at a local leather manufacturer. Turkey produces some of the finest leather goods in the world and many are made here before branding in Italy. **Overnight - Kusadasi (B:2, D:1)**

Day 6 : Pamukkale



Kusadasi – Pamukkale. Today we visit the famous gleaming white calcium terraced pools of Pamukkale. Known locally as the Cotton Castles, they are a natural phenomena and gift of Mother Nature. We can also opt to enjoy a unique and very pleasant dip in the warm waters at the Pamukkale Thermal with its submerged fragments of fluted marble columns near the centre of the ruined spa town of Hierapolis, which was a Roman curative centre. **Overnight - Pamukkale (B, D)**

Day 7 : Xmas Eve at St Nic's

Pammukale - Demre - Antalya. The legend of Saint Nicholas (aka Santa Claus) began in Turkey! St Nicholas - a 4th century bishop gave anonymous gifts to dowryless village girls. He would drop bags of coins down the chimneys of their houses and this ‘gift from heaven’ would allow them to marry. We visit the church and tomb of St Nicholas in Demre before continuing to coastal Antalya for a fantastic Christmas Eve dinner on a hilltop

restaurant overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. **Overnight - Antalya (B, D)**

Day 8 : Christmas Day & Roman Ruins



Kemer - Konya. Merry Christmas! En route to Konya we tour the incredible Roman ruins of Perge and Aspendos. Settled first by the Hittites around 1500 BC, Perge was an important city in Pamphylia (today's Mediterranean region). The ruins of the ancient theatre (capacity 12,000 people) boasting marble reliefs depicting the life and times of Dionysos along with the remains of the first church built in Perge, and various temples can be seen. Nearby Aspendos is famous for its well-preserved theatre of antiquity. **Overnight - Konya (B, D)**

Days 9-10 : Cappadocia



Konya – Cappadocia. Day 9 we tour Konya and the Mevlana monastery before heading north east to Cappadocia. We stop en route at an ancient caravanserai and later take a short walk through the beautiful Ihlara Valley. In the evening, opt for a traditional Turkish dinner and folklore evening. On day 10, we explore the stunning Goreme Valley, fairy chimneys, amazing troglodyte villages, Uchisar Castle and Derinkuyu underground city.

Stopping on the outskirts of Goreme Village we have the opportunity to see Pigeon

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Valley where century's old pigeon houses are carved into the surrounding cliffs, the pigeon droppings that litter the area have been used as fertilizer on crops for generations. Here you will also have the opportunity to visit an Onyx shop, specialising in historic jewellery designs unique to Turkey and using local materials and craftsmen. For those not interested in shopping spend a little time relaxing and grab a drink from the local cafe. **Overnight - Cappadocia (B:2, D:1)**

Day 11 : Back to Istanbul



Cappadocia - Istanbul. Today we head back to Istanbul, stopping en route for lunch (payable locally). **Overnight - Istanbul (B)**

Day 12 : Istanbul

29 December. After breakfast our tour concludes with an onward departure transfer to the airport. We hope you had a wonderful Christmas in Turkey!(B)

HOTELS

Highlighted below are some of the hotels which we frequently use on this tour, though we reserve the right to substitute these hotels to ones of a similar standard.

Please refer to your Tour Voucher for your confirmed arrival hotel and further arrival information.

Kent Hotel

The charming Kent Hotel is a great example of contemporary design and a friendly atmosphere. Guest rooms are superbly equipped with modern facilities including Wi-Fi connectivity, state of the art technology and bright marbled bathrooms. Enjoying a delicious Turkish meal at the in house Calcedoine Restaurant after a hard days sightseeing is highly recommended. The

hotel is also fantastically located within a 10-minute walk of the Grand Bazaar and Old Town in the Bayazit area in the European side of Istanbul.



Kolin Hotel

Looking out across the Dardanelles, the modern and bright Kolin Hotel offers well appointed rooms with hard wood flooring and tasteful decor. The hotel also boasts a luxury spa, wellness centre and a number of mouth watering restaurants all set within perfectly manicured lawns. Sipping a sundowner on the roof bar, overlooking the beautiful strait, is the perfect way to end the day. The hotel is located on the water's edge a short drive from the town centre with beautiful views out to sea.



Charisma Hotel

The Charisma is a modern and elegant hotel with spacious rooms. The rooms are equipped with jacuzzi, LCD screen television, split air conditioning, mini-bar, electronic safe box, hairdryer and free internet connection. Towering over the Aegean Sea's outstanding view, the Hotel is just 15 minutes by walk from Ku#adas#'s shopping and entertainment area.



Pamukkale Doga Thermal Hotel

Complete with both indoor and outdoor pools, the Doga Thermal Hotel is a modern hotel with excellent amenities. Guest rooms are bright and spacious with wonderful en suite facilities. There is complimentary Wi-Fi offered throughout and a sumptuous buffet served for breakfast and dinner. The spa facilities on offer include sauna, Turkish bath, hot spring bath, massage treatments and a fitness centre.



Best Western Khan Hotel

Modern and elegant, the Best Western Khan has good sized rooms with en suites and a range of modern amenities, and free transportation to Konyaalt#, one of the most beautiful beaches in Antalya. A breakfast buffet is served in the hotel's restaurant on a daily basis and various Turkish delicacies can be found here as well. The hotel also has a pool and fitness centre. The hotel is located in the city centre, within easy walking distance of the Old Town and Marina.



Hilton Garden Inn

Centrally located with excellent facilities, the Hilton Garden Inn is modern and right next door to the Mevlana Culture Centre - home to the famous Whirling Dervishes. Rooms are spacious and benefit from 24 hour high speed internet and the renowned Garden Sleep System mattresses - guaranteed to provide a great nights sleep. Discover traditionally brewed Turkish coffee and refreshing tea every morning before breakfast at the mouthwatering Sumac Grill. The hotel is located within walking distance of a range of shopping and business districts.

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Crowne Plaza Nevsehir

Situated only 15 minutes from the UNESCO World Heritage-listed site of Goreme, this modern hotel boasts an excellent location in Cappadocia. Its guestrooms are located in quiet zones to ensure you have a restful sleep and offer modern amenities including free WiFi so you can stay connected to friends and family back home. Guests can unwind in the indoor pool or book a revitalizing treatment at the onsite spa centre. A rich breakfast is served in the Gurme Restaurant, then for dinner head to the a la carte Manzara Roof Restaurant on the top floor for some delicious international cuisine.



PRICES / DATES 2021

Date	Twin Share	Single
18 Dec	USD 1,995	USD 2,545

PRICES / DATES INFO

Departure dates noted with a 'G' are guaranteed to operate. All other departure dates are guaranteed with a minimum of 4 persons. Prices shown are per person when there are 2 persons sharing a room. The 'Single supplement' is compulsory for solo travellers or if your booking party cannot reach the minimum of 2 persons in a room and the amount needs to be added to the per person price. The single supplement offers the comfort of your own room and is also available to any other person wanting their own room.

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