



Day 1: Fly to Turkey

Meet your group and travel on an overnight flight to Istanbul.

Day 2: Istanbul

Arrive in Istanbul: Welcome to Istanbul, Turkey's most populous city. Depending on your arrival time, you may have free time to settle in and explore.

Day 3: Istanbul

Sightseeing tour of Istanbul: Nestled between the Black Sea and the Dardanelles, Istanbul is the world's only city spanning two continents, Europe and Asia. Your local guide will show you some of Istanbul's ancient Hippodrome, which once served as the public center of Byzantium. Make your way to the breathtaking Blue Mosque, built by Sultan Ahmet and decorated with exquisite blue Iznik tiles. Then, the magnificent Topkapi Palace, once the residence of the Ottoman sultans, impresses with its architecture and vast collection of ancient relics, and nearby, the stalls at Istanbul's legendary Grand Bazaar offer an array of treasures from brassware to spices.

➦ **Bosphorus cruise:** Set sail on an optional half-day cruise through the Bosphorus Strait, the waterway that separates Europe and Asia. Those who do not join the cruise will have free time in Istanbul.

Day 4: Istanbul | Çanakkale

Hagia Sofia: Also known as the Church of Divine Wisdom, the Hagia Sofia is nearly 1,000 years older than St. Peter's in Rome. This breathtaking building was the pride of Christendom until the city fell to the Turks in 1453.

Travel to Çanakkale: Make your way to the sea town of Çanakkale for the night.

Day 5: Troy

Sightseeing tour of Troy: Journey to Troy, the city from which the beautiful Helen incited the Trojan War in the 12th century B.C. The best-remembered part of the 10-year war is its conclusion—according to the epic poet Virgil, the Greeks hid in a wooden horse that the Trojans mistakenly believed was a peace offering. The Greeks then emerged from the horse and ransacked the town. Tour the ancient site, which houses excavated remains of multiple civilizations.

Free time at the beach: This afternoon, soak up the Aegean sun and enjoy free time on the shores of Troy.

➦ **Gallipoli:** Opt to visit Gallipoli (literally, "Beautiful City"), the site of an important WWI victory for the Ottoman Empire. Led by military officer Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who reversed the battle orders he was given, farmers and other Turkish civilians staunchly repelled the Allied forces' attack on their homeland. Tour the various battlefields, cemeteries, and memorials associated with this eight-month campaign. Those who do not join the excursion will enjoy free time in Troy.

Day 6: Pergamon | Kusadasi

Sightseeing tour of Pergamon: A stronghold of the Greek Attalid dynasty, Pergamon was known as one of the world's most magnificent cities. Here you'll visit the impressive Acropolis, home to one of the best ancient Greek libraries.

Free time at the beach: Enjoy free time to dip your toes in the water as you explore the Turkish shores.

Travel to Kusadasi: Later, make your way to the coastal town of Kusadasi.

Day 7: Ephesus | Kusadasi

Ephesus: Once a sacred center for the cult of Artemis, Ephesus is one of the Mediterranean region's best-preserved classical cities. See the Temple of Hadrian and the elaborate Library of Celsus. Then, travel to the House of the Virgin Mary, where she is said to have spent her final days.

Free afternoon: In Kusadasi, enjoy free time this afternoon to explore on your own.

Days 8-9: Greek Island cruise

Two-day cruise: Get ready to set sail on a Greek cruise from Kusadasi, Turkey, to Athens, Greece. Continue to Crete, home of the Minotaur: a mythical half-man, half-bull creature. Then, breathtaking views of the volcanic Caldera cliffs await you in Santorini. Your cruise finishes in Athens, a cradle of Western civilization. At points of disembarkation you may choose to participate in excursions offered by the cruise line.

Day 10: Athens

Sightseeing tour of Athens: Disembark from your cruise in Athens, the capital city of Greece. Your local guide will lead you up to the Acropolis to view the Parthenon, an enduring symbol of Athenian democracy. See the Temple of Athena Nike, which once housed a gold statue of the goddess, her wings clipped to prevent her from deserting the city.

Explore Athens: Discover the ancient city named for Athena, goddess of war and wisdom. A walking tour of Athens will take you through the Plaka district and the Temple of Olympian Zeus, built in 515 B.C. to honor the most powerful of all Greek gods.

➦ **Cape Sounion:** Take a sunset excursion to Cape Sounion and view one of the most imposing sights in the ancient world. High above the sparkling Aegean Sea, the Temple of Poseidon dominates the landscape. Sixteen elegant Doric pillars remain today, and on a clear day, you can view up to five Aegean Islands from the site. Students who do not join the excursion will enjoy free time in Athens.

Day 11: Athens

Free time in Athens: Enjoy free time to explore Athens on your own. Take in some last-minute sightseeing or relax with friends.

➦ **Delphi:** Join an excursion to Delphi and visit the archaeological site and museum centered around the Oracle of Delphi. Ancient military leaders were known to leave offerings here in the hopes of earning luck in battle. Then, climb the ruins of the Temple of Apollo. According to legend, this is where the god Apollo chose to communicate with mortals. At the Delphi Museum learn more about the mythical past of Greece.

Day 12: Depart for home

Your Tour Director assists with your transfer to the airport, where you'll check in for your return flight home.