CLASSIC TURKEY

DETAILED ITINERARY **EAST MEETS WEST AT THE CROSSROADS OF HISTORY** Oct 20/26


Library at Ephesus

Turkey, the fabled land that joins the familiar West with the mystery of the East, is a prime destination for the adventure traveler. The history and legend of Turkey presents an eclectic mix of new and ancient in the warmth of an open and welcoming culture.

Our adventure begins in Istanbul, the great city that links Europe to Asia across the Bosphorus. Istanbul was once the capital of the "civilized" world in the early days of Christendom and continues to be the heart of Turkey today. Encounter the ancient and the modern through active bazaars situated alongside grand monuments such as Topkapi Palace, the 1,500-year old Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque.

Heading west, we follow the Sea of Marmara and visit the World War I battle site of Gallipoli and its monuments. We stop in ancient Troy, tour a family-owned olive oil processing plant and hike around the local village. At Ephesus, we explore one of the best-

FACTS & HIGHLIGHTS

• 21 land days • Maximum 16 travelers • Includes 1 internal flight • Start & finish in Istanbul • All meals included • Visit 8 UNESCO World Heritage Sites • Hike to the Giant Stone Heads on Mt. Nemrut • Discover the Museum of Anatolian Civilization in Ankara • Discover ancient Troy • Sail on a gulet, a traditional Turkish yacht • Visit the ancient classical city of Ephesus • See the underground cities of Cappadocia • Visit a family-owned olive oil factory

DEPARTURE DATES & PRICE

Sep 06 - Sep 26, 2027	-	**$9295 USD**
Sep 04 - Sep 24, 2028	-	**$10295 USD**

Activity Level: 2
Comfort Level: Some long drives. Several long walks on uneven terrain and cobblestone streets and steps.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Comfortable, well-located traditional accommodations with private bathrooms. 3 nights on a traditional gulet (yacht) with private facilities.

preserved classical sites still in existence. We board a gulet, a traditional Turkish yacht, for three days of cruising on the Mediterranean. In Antalya, we take in the bustling activity of the ancient harbor and the narrow streets of the "old city".

Leaving the coast, we head to Cappadocia, where wind and water have sculpted the volcanic bedrock into bizarre formations. Here, ancient peoples built entire cities below ground. The deep canyons and lush fertile valleys are the perfect place for a unique balloon flight (an optional tour). We explore the natural and man-made phenomena that make Cappadocia a destination for history and archaeology buffs. Hike up Mt. Nemrut to see the giant heads mysteriously looking out to the surrounding valleys for 2 millennia.

In Ankara, we visit the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, reputed to be one of the best museums in the world. Heading to the inner Black Sea region, we stop in Safranbolu, a unique and well-preserved Ottoman town. Our adventure concludes in Istanbul.




Blue Mosque

DAY 1 · ARRIVE IN ISTANBUL

Arrive in Istanbul and transfer to our hotel. Tonight we meet as a group for dinner and orientation.

Overnight in Istanbul.

DAY 2 · SPICE MARKET, BOSPHORUS CRUISE

This morning, we start with a visit to the Blue Mosque and the Hippodrome. We then board our chartered boat and enjoy a leisurely cruise along the Bosphorus Strait, which connects the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara. We stop for lunch by the Golden Horn, a natural harbor and estuary in Istanbul. After, we visit the spice market and the Chora Church to admire the exquisite mosaics and frescoes.

Overnight in Istanbul.


Topkapi Palace


Amphitheare at Ephesus

DAY 3 · MARMARA SEA, GALLIPOLI, TROY

Today we drive along the Marmara Sea to Assos. Enroute, we stop in Gallipoli and Anzac Bay where a famous memorial commemorates the Turkish and Allied soldiers that died here in WWI.

After lunch we continue to the Dardanelles Strait, where we cross by ferry, observing two 15th century fortresses, one on each side. We visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of ancient Troy and continue on to the fishing village of Assos.

Overnight in Assos.

DAY 4 · OLIVE OIL FACTORY, ALTAR OF ZEUS, TEMPLE OF ATHENA

This morning we depart for a sightseeing tour of Assos. We visit the Temple of Athena, then continuing our scenic drive by olive groves and along the Aegan Sea to reach the village of Adatepe.

Enroute, we visit a family-owned olive oil factory and museum. Here we learn about traditional olive oil extraction from the personable people who run the factory. Also today, we visit the Altar of Zeus.

Overnight in Ayvalik.

DAY 5 · PERGAMUM & ASCLEPION

Our journey continues to Selcuk, stopping enroute to visit Pergamum where we explore the Acropolis. Next, we visit Asclepion, an ancient healing center.

Overnight in Selcuk.

DAY 6 · EPHESUS

We drive to Ephesus to explore this ancient Greek city which boasts the grandest ruins on the Aegean coast. After lunch, we visit the Ephesus Museum where we can see statues, friezes and artifacts from the site.

Overnight in Selcuk.

DAY 7 · APHRODISIAS, BOARD GULET YACHT

Today we explore the ruins of Aphrodisias and then it's onward to Ekincik where we board our gulet yacht for our 3-day Mediterranean cruise. Gulets are traditional Turkish yachts that have cabins with private baths. All meals are cooked and served on board. After a brief cruise, we moor in Ekincik Bay, where we stay for the night.

Overnight aboard the gulet.

DAY 8 · MEDITERRANEAN CRUISE — CAUNOS

On the first day of our Mediterranean adventure, we take an excursion to Caunos, home to the Lycian Rock Tombs, which date back to the 4th century B.C. Throughout our journey, there are opportunities for hiking and swimming along the route.

Overnight aboard the gulet.

DAY 9 · MEDITERRANEAN CRUISE — SCENIC COASTLINE

Today, we continue our adventure on the Mediterranean with stops to go ashore. The scenery along the coast is fantastic. Brilliant turquoise waters lap up against limestone cliffs, with water that is perfect for swimming.

Overnight aboard the gulet.

DAY 10 · RUINS OF XANTHOS, TO ANTAYLA

In the morning, we disembark from our gulet at Fethiye and drive to Antalya. Enroute, we view the stunning UNESCO World Heritage Site at Xanthos, once the grandest city in all of Lycia. We stop for lunch in Kas.

Overnight in Antayla.

DAY 11 · ANTALYA SIGHTSEEING

Today, you have the option of Antalya sightseeing or a day of leisure. For those going sightseeing, we begin with a visit to the archaeological museum followed by a brief walking tour of the old city, with its collection of narrow streets and quaint buildings surrounding the old port. The remainder of the time in Antalya is free to explore on your own.

Overnight in Antalya.

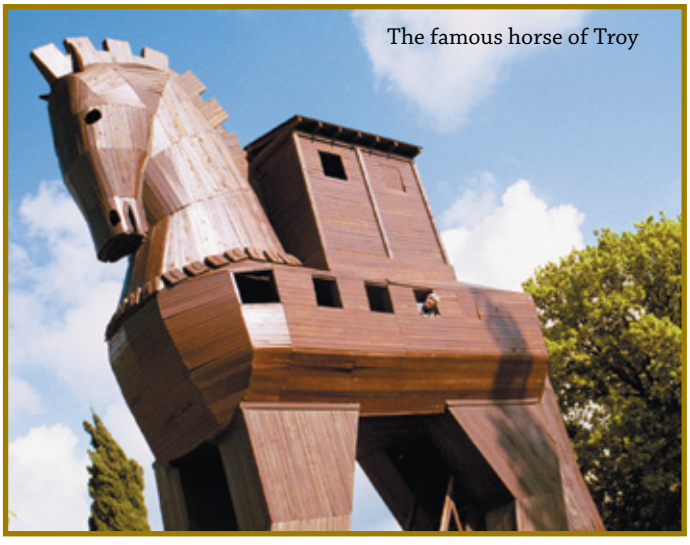
DAY 12 · TO KONYA VIA ASPENDOS

Today, we embark on a scenic journey to Konya, travelling through the beautiful landscapes of southern Turkey. En route, we stop at Aspendos, home to one of the best-preserved Roman theatres in the world. Built in the 2nd century AD, this remarkable structure is renowned for its impressive architecture and exceptional acoustics.

In Konya, we visit the Mevlana Museum, dedicated to the 13th-century poet and mystic Rumi, and famous for its association with the Whirling Dervishes.

Overnight in Konya.





The famous horse of Troy



Our traditional Turkish Gulet

DAY 13 · CAPPADOCIA, IHLARA GORGE HIKING

Today, we visit the underground city of Kaymakli. For those keen to hike, we offer an adventure option of hiking in the Ihlara Gorge. It's a spectacular walk that takes you down into a gorge known for its hundreds of churches and mosaics that are carved into the gorge walls.

Overnight in Cappadocia.

DAY 14 · CAPPADOCIA, BALLOONING OPTION

We trek in the moonscape-like valleys that surround Cappadocia - a true natural wonder. The UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the Goreme and Urgup valleys feature secret dwellings carved out by earlier Christians, and there are also fantastic towering "fairy chimneys" formed from eroded volcanic deposits. For those who choose a scenic flight over the picturesque valleys and canyons of the region, we have an option this morning to balloon over Cappadocia. We later hike through the Zelve valley and overnight in Cappadocia.

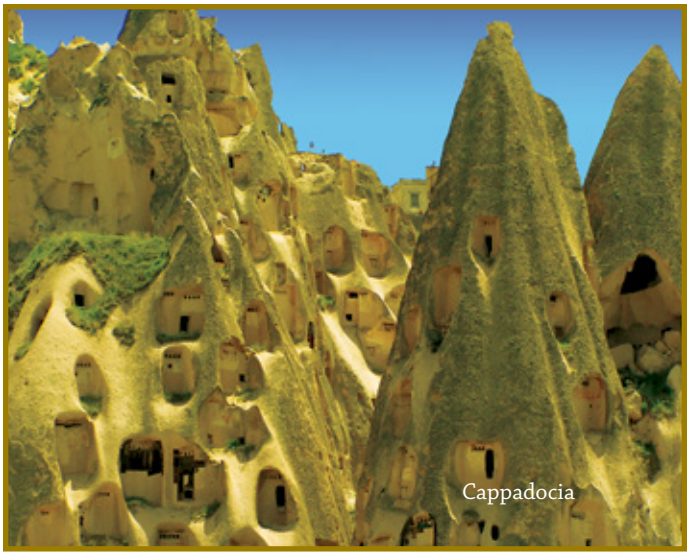
CAPPADOCIA BALLOONING

Cappadocia is an area of extreme beauty, combining a dramatic nature with a fascinating culture and history. Hittites, Byzantines and early Christians established important landmarks here, as did mother nature with her stunning erosion of the soft volcanic deposits. The deep canyons and lush fertile valleys provide our balloons with an ideal playground for a unique and memorable flight. Gentle winds carry us over places that could never be reached except by balloon. Join us for the flight of your life.

Please note: This option is not included in the tour price.

DAY 15 · TO GAZIANTEP VIA TARSUS

Today we leave the magical environment of Cappadocia as we drive to Gaziantep. Enroute, we stop in Tarsus, an ancient city on the alluvial plain of ancient Cilicia, and the birthplace of Paul the Apostle. With a history dating back over 6,000 years, Tarsus was an important stop for traders and a focal point of many civilizations. During the Roman Empire, Tarsus was the capital of the province of Cilicia and was the scene of the first meeting between Mark Antony and Cleopatra. We continue to Gaziantep, famous for its


Cappadocia


Ballooning in Cappadocia

gastronomic heritage and charming old town tin and brass workshops where craftsmen shape household utensils by hand.

Dinner and overnight in Gaziantep.

DAY 16 · SUNSET AT THE GIANT STONE HEADS OF MT. NEMRUT

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, Mt. Nemrut standing 2,134m (7,001 ft), is believed to be the burial site of King Antiochus I, in 62 BC. Although the actual grave has never been found, today's attraction is two sets of giant heads, one viewing sunset and one viewing sunrise. The mysterious and impressive heads are not easy to reach, but the rewards are great. Each set of heads represent the gods of Zeus, Apollo, Hercules, the goddess Kommagene and King Antioch, having placed himself in such elite company. These heads are flanked by a lion and an eagle.

After breakfast, we visit the famous Zeugma Mosaic Museum before continuing on to Nemrut. Enroute, we make stops at a Roman bridge, four ancient pillars and a stone relief, which are dotted through the spectacular countryside surrounding Mt. Nemrut, as well as a fortress perched on a vertical mount just before we start our driving ascent.

We will have plenty of time to take in the scenery, the mystery and the aura of Mt. Nemrut, as we stay until sunset - the perfect way to bid farewell to the ancient gods sitting atop Mt. Nemrut for over two thousand years.

We make our way to Adiyaman for dinner and overnight.

DAY 17 · TO URFA, BIRTH PLACE OF ABRAHAM, FLY TO ANKARA

After breakfast, we depart for Urfa, the birth place of Abraham. Enroute we will have the opportunity to view Gobekli Tepe (Potbelly Hill). Perhaps the oldest known human made religious structure, it is likely 12,000 years old. Urfa is an important pilgrimage site for Jews, Christians and Muslims. We will visit the cave where Abraham was born, as well as spend some time at the hilltop ruins, mosque and surrounding park with its holy lake. Because the site attracts people from all over the world, one can enjoy some delicious Turkish tea by the lakeside and relax just people watching.

Later in the afternoon, we will catch a flight to Ankara where we will overnight.


Cappadocia

DAY 18 · ANKARA, MUSEUM OF ANATOLIAN CIVILIZATIONS, TO SAFRANBOLU

This morning, we visit the renowned Museum of Anatolian Civilizations. This is Ankara's premier museum and a must-see for anyone interested in Turkey's ancient past. The museum is housed in a restored covered market built by the order of Grand Vizier Mahmut Pasa in 1471. The museum is often referred to as one of the world's great museums. After lunch we continue driving to Safranbolu, a unique and well preserved Ottoman town located in the inner Black Sea region.

Dinner and overnight in Safranbolu.

DAY 19 · SAFRANBOLU, TO ISTANBUL

After breakfast, we enjoy time in the charming little town of Safranbolu, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. A leisurely stroll through the lovely winding cobblestone streets brings us views of local artisans working, little shops with interesting crafts and, of course, the 200-year-old wooden Ottoman houses for which this town is famous. A welcome respite before we drive back to the excitement of the big city.

Dinner and overnight in Istanbul.

DAY 20 · ISTANBUL CITY SIGHTS

After a traditional Turkish breakfast, we explore the UNESCO World Heritage Sites of Old Istanbul, a symbolic city of eastern culture, on foot. We visit the Yerebatan Cistern (an underground cistern) and continue to the Topkapi Palace, the residence of Ottoman sultans for almost 400 years.

Our next site of interest is the Hagia Sophia, one of the most magnificent museums in the world. In the afternoon we explore the Grand Bazaar. Tonight we will enjoy our farewell dinner.

Overnight in Istanbul.

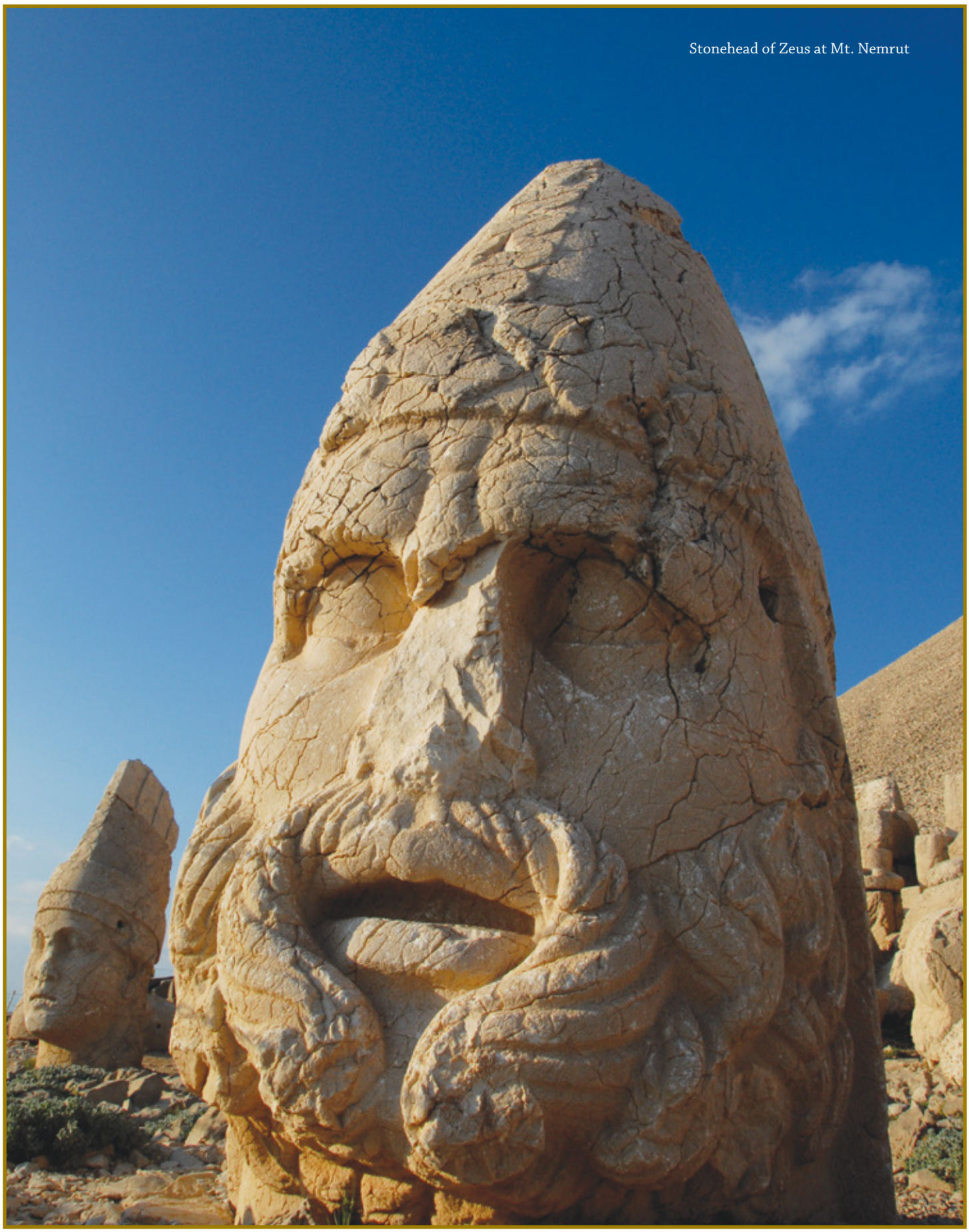
DAY 21 · DEPART ISTANBUL

Transfer to Istanbul airport for departing flights homeward.





Mosaic at Ephesus



Stonehead of Zeus at Mt. Nemrut

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

1. HOW BIG ARE THE GROUPS?

Each group is limited to 16 participants. Small groups are an important ingredient in adventure travel. They allow for more interaction and more personalized service throughout the itinerary.

2. WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

All accommodations throughout; all meals, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); bottled drinking water throughout the trip; all internal transportation; airport transfers on day 1 and departure day (i.e. the last day of the ElderTreks tour); all day trips and entrance fees as outlined in the itinerary; tips for hotels (porterage), national guide, restaurants and drivers; services of a trip leader.

3. WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE TOUR PRICE?

International flights, tips to ElderTreks tour leader, alcoholic drinks, visa's and travel insurance.

4. ARE THESE "EDUCATIONAL" TOURS?

Yes, in the broadest sense of the word, "educational". Although we visit many temples and historical sites and although we have talks and discussions on many aspects of Turkish history and culture, this is only one aspect of what we do. We believe that it is equally educational to meet new people on a non-commercial basis, visit their homes, and even try to learn a few Turkish words. Sometimes the most "educational" moments are spent sipping a cold drink in a street market.

5. HOW DO WE TRAVEL WHILE IN TURKEY?

All land transportation is included in the land price of the trip including one domestic flight. We have an air-conditioned tour bus for road travel, we sail the Mediterranean in motorized, traditional style gulets with sleeping cabins, and we also hike.

6. WHAT ARE OUR ACCOMMODATIONS LIKE?

We always stay in very good hotels that have been chosen on the basis of location, atmosphere and local charm. Please note that single accommodation cannot be guaranteed for the three nights on the gulets.

7. WHAT MEALS ARE INCLUDED?

All meals during the itinerary are included, starting with dinner on day 1 and finishing with breakfast on departure day. We eat a variety of local foods prepared in a wide range of settings. In many cases, we simply order a number of dishes and share, allowing you to sample new foods and decide what you enjoy best.

8. WHAT ABOUT WEATHER?

The spring and fall are both wonderful times to visit Turkey where the sun is shining and temperatures are warm throughout the country. You can expect pleasant temperatures in the 70's °F (21°C) , and low 80's °F (27°C) during the day. It is advisable however to bring a sweater incase of inclement weather and cool nights.

9. IS MEDICAL INSURANCE REQUIRED?

Insurance coverage is not included in the cost of your trip. Please note that medical insurance is not required for this adventure but is recommended. ElderTreks offers comprehensive travel insurance and we are happy to provide you with a quote if you call our office. If you are purchasing insurance elsewhere, please ensure you provide the details to ElderTreks as soon as possible.

Please note those travelers with pre-existing medical conditions must take out travel insurance at the time of deposit

10. WHAT SHOULD I TAKE ON THE TOUR?

There is a detailed "What to Take" list in our Trip Kit, which we will send to you after you have booked the trip.

11. WHEN IS PAYMENT DUE?

A non-refundable deposit of $500 USD (plus insurance if you want it) is due as soon as you decide to go and will reserve your place on the tour. Payment in full of the land cost is due 120 days before departure. Cancellation charges are applicable and these are outlined in the "Terms and Conditions" section of our brochure.

12. CAN YOU ARRANGE MY FLIGHTS?

We would be happy to take care of your air arrangements. ElderTreks offers personalized flight itineraries — not group flights. Stop over enroute, come in a few days early, or extend your stay. Call us for a customized itinerary.

13. WHAT IF I WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION?

If you have any further questions about the trip, please do not hesitate to contact our office for additional information. A Trip Kit containing further details on the destination will be sent to you once you have booked the trip.


Library at Ephesus