

TURKEY

PRE-DEPARTURE GUIDE



Travel Talk tours will take you on a pilgrimage of culture, history, adventure, fun and relaxation. You will visit historic sites, explore the treasures of Turkey, venture into the surreal region of central Cappadocia and experience sun-kissed days on pristine beaches... Before you leave for your adventure, it is important that you read this pre-departure information to ensure that your trip begins and continues to run as smoothly as possible. While we appreciate that you are embarking on an "adventure holiday" that will produce its own share of surprises, it is also true that forewarned is forearmed. This information is not written with the intention of being anything other than general information that we hope will help you become more prepared for your holiday. The philosophy of Travel Talk is simple: to provide excellent value for money for budget-conscious and adventurous travellers without compromising their experiences. We do this by providing quality transportation, accommodation, sightseeing and information services. We hope that our philosophy will exceed your expectations and the following information will help to ensure you have a memorable time in Turkey.

VISAS

From the 10th of April 2014, citizens of countries requiring visas must arrange a visa on-line, prior to arrival in Turkey. For the on-line visa applications & costs, please visit the following link: www.evisa.gov.tr

No visa fee currently applies for New Zealand passport holders.

Applications are very straightforward & only take a few minutes.

ESSENTIALS

Before you leave your country, we recommend you to make sure you have the followings with you ;

- ➔ Passport
- ➔ Airline or transportation ticket
- ➔ Tour voucher
- ➔ Insurance policy
- ➔ Visas (if necessary)
- ➔ Pre-departure information
- ➔ Label on your travel bag
- ➔ Money (cash and/or travellers cheques)
- ➔ Credit card

HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is recommended to all passengers travelling on Travel Talk tours to have insurance cover to assist with any unforeseen costs, especially medical expenses. It is advised to take a copy of your policy with you. While there are no mandatory vaccinations for travellers to Turkey it is advisable to ensure your vaccines are up to date. Some travellers feel more confident with hepatitis and meningitis inoculations. Rabies exists only in the rural areas of Turkey and it is very unlikely that you will come in contact with a rabid animal.

Immunisation is available in a series of three injections over a period of one month (lasts 3 to 5 years) or a single visit booster dose (lasts only 6 to 12 months). Please consult a medical practitioner for advice. Each year, thousands of visitors return home from Turkey with nothing but happy memories. Turkey is a safe country compared to some parts of the world. Street crime is not a current problem but you should always make sure to take the normal travel precautions. It is not wise to accept gifts, food or drink from strangers. Take care with your passport, credit cards and money - a money belt to fit beneath your clothes is highly recommended. It is also recommended that you pack at least one set of modest clothing. It is a sign of respect to cover your shoulders and legs when visiting mosques and also detracts from unwanted attention. For females, a headscarf is necessary when visiting mosques.

WHAT TO WEAR...

In Spring (April-May) and **Autumn** (October-November) it will be comfortable during the day but may be cool or even chilly at night and you may encounter rain. It is advised to bring a warm jacket or sweater and a windbreaker. In the Central Anatolian region, be prepared for near-winter conditions. It will be warm in the Southeast region, so pack for mild summer conditions.

In Summer (June-September) wear cool, cotton clothing, a hat and sunblock lotion. It is recommended to have a light sweater for cool evenings but rain won't be a big problem. In the South, get ready for hot, hot weather. **In Winter** (December-March) you will need warm, woolen clothing and rain gear, even though some days will be sunny. In general, the weather is warmer along the seacoasts and in the Mediterranean coast and cooler at higher altitudes.

Please also keep in mind that when visiting religious sites, appropriate attire is required (scarves for women etc).

MONEY

We recommend you carry a mixture of cash and a debit/credit card. The Turkish Lira is fully convertible and can be obtained before departure or upon arrival. ATM facilities, banks and Exchange booths are available in all major cities and towns. Avoid changing the bulk of your money at the airport as the exchange rates are usually more favourable in the city.

WEATHER

Istanbul has wet, cold and often snowy winters and has the highest rainfall from November to February. Spring in Istanbul is damp with mild temperatures and it is relatively dry in the summer. The city also tends to be windy. The southern, coastal regions of Turkey are warm and pleasant during the summer. In winter the temperatures rarely fall below 7°C making the Turquoise coast an ideal destination even in early spring and late autumn. The central Anatolian plateau (because of the altitude) can make Cappadocia cool in the evenings, even in the summer, but it remains hot during the day - often in the mid thirties. Spring and autumn can be very crisp and suitable clothing is advised.

Month	Istanbul		Selcuk		Fethiye		Cappadocia	
	C	F	C	F	C	F	C	F
Jan	5	41	9	48	10	50	0	32
Feb	6	43	10	50	11	52	1	34
March	7	45	11	52	13	55	5	41
April	12	54	16	61	16	61	11	52
May	16	61	20	68	20	68	26	61
June	21	70	25	77	25	77	20	68
July	23	73	28	82	28	82	23	73
Aug	23	73	27	81	28	82	23	73
Sept	20	68	23	73	24	77	18	64
Oct	16	61	18	64	20	68	13	55
Nov	12	54	15	59	15	59	8	46
Dec	8	46	10	50	12	54	2	36



EATING & DRINKING

Turkey is a food connoisseur's paradise! Don't let the clichés fool you; there is more to Turkish cuisine than just doner and shish kebabs (which many unadventurous travellers solely consumes during their stay). Start your day with a delicious "Turkish Breakfast" of Turkish breads, pastries, cheese, olives, tomatoes, cucumber, boiled eggs and of course, Turkish tea. There are two types of restaurants in Turkey: restaurants which have an a-la-carte menu and "ready meal" restaurants which have a range of preprepared dishes in warming trays for you to choose from. The beauty of this is that you can sample a wide range of dishes for a relatively cheap price. In more upmarket restaurants you can order "meze" (appetizers) and sample a bewildering array of dishes ranging from stuffed vegetables and tightly rolled cheese pastries to pickled vegetables usually accompanied with an array of purees and vinaigrettes - vegetarians are especially catered for in mezes.

Main dishes are generally on display, so you can select the piece of meat or fish that you want prepared for you (fish is usually charged by weight). Shish and doner kebabs are served everywhere, but perhaps a better alternative are the Adana kebabs - spicy minced meat with a sprinkling of purple sumac herb. Don't forget to save room for dessert! Some traditional sweets to try include "baklava" (a sweet, flaky pastry usually with pistachio), "kadayif" (shredded pastry dough filled with nuts and drenched in syrup), "tavukgogusu" (a creamy and signature dish made with chicken and milk), and "helva" (sesame paste). Tourists are often surprised to find out that tea (cay) is the national drink of Turkey rather than coffee. It is served in a small fluted glass with a very small spoon and saucer and cubes of sugar (although it is normally sweet enough). There are various flavours of tea to try from the traditional to apple and lemon. Of course there is also Turkish coffee, which is generally very strong and thicker than what you would get at Starbucks, but worth a try. And in answer to a popular question - yes, you will find a wide variety of alcoholic drinks here too. Beer (bira) is very popular, local brands include Efes, Pilsen and Tuborg and go down well after a long day of sight seeing in the sun. sight seeing in the sun.

"Raki", is the national aperitif served with ice and water which turns the clear spirit into a cloudy liquid. This is how it should be drunk, not in shot-form like many tourists... try either way, but you will see which leaves you feeling better in the morning! It also goes very well accompanying meze. Domestically produced gin, vodka and brandy are also available in most of the bars, pubs and restaurants.

SHOPPING

Shopping in Turkey is one of the great experiences of visiting this fantastic country; the colours, textures, sights and sounds will have you spell-bound. It is a beautiful chaos so don't let the seeming madness fool you. The markets are generally laid out in an organized manner with each of the vendors displaying their particular wares; whether it be spices, clothing garments or jewellery. You will find similar stands throughout the stalls so be sure to peruse at your leisure. There are plenty of bargains to be found and while haggling can be a stressful experience for some, for most it is all part of the fun. Often you will be invited into the shop for tea or coffee while you and the shopkeeper chat and negotiate.

OPENING HOURS

There are no hard and fast rules for opening hours in Turkey, but banks and main post offices are generally open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 12.00 midday and 1.30pm to 5.30pm. Shops are usually open from around 9.00am to 6.00pm, later in bazaars and shopping malls. They are usually closed on Sunday.

ELECTRICITY

All appliances require a double round pin type plug for 220 volts AC, 50- hertz.

TIPPING

Tips are a common reward for service staff in Turkey. Your tour guide and crew will be especially appreciative and honoured with this kind of traditional gratitude at the end of your tour. If you join a belly dancing show, the dancer will expect a tip of around £2.

DISTANCES

The following information will give you a better idea of the times travelled to help you plan your day:

- ➔ Istanbul-Gallipoli: 295 kms 5 hours
- ➔ Gallipoli-Troy-Pergamum-Selcuk: 382 kms 11 hours.
- ➔ Selcuk-Pamukkale: 193 kms 3.5 hours
- ➔ Pkale-Cappadocia: 630 kms 11 hours
- ➔ Cappadocia-Ankara : 287 kms 3.5 hours
- ➔ Ankara-Istanbul : 443 kms 5 hours
- ➔ Pamukkale- Istanbul : 664 kms 9 hours.
- ➔ Marmaris- Fethiye : 126 kms 2 hours.
- ➔ Selcuk-Fethiye: 288 kms 4.5 hours
- ➔ Marmaris-Pamukkale: 211 kms 4 hours

ARRIVAL

Istanbul Arrival (Turkey Only Tours)

On arrival at the airport you will be met by our local representative who will arrange your transfer to the hotel.

Please make sure that you inform us, in advance, of your correct arrival details (date, time, flight code). Please find below the address details of your arrival hotels/meeting points.

Guide Meeting

Please note that your guide will meet you for a briefing about the days ahead at 06:30pm on day 1 at your arrival hotel, unless otherwise notified.

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traveltalk
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AIRPORT TRANSFER

Your arrival airport transfer is included if:

- You fly into the city in which your tour starts
- You arrive on the first day of your tour OR you have booked pre-accommodation through us
- You forward your flight details to us, at least 10 days in advance, including:

- Date of flight
- Flight number
- Arrival time
- Name of traveller/s to be picked up

If you do not want an airport transfer to the hotel, please let us know by either phoning the office (0208 099 95 96) or sending us an email (info@traveltalktours.com). Please note that check-in time is 13:00 and we have no airport transfer service for `Sail Turkey` tours.

SELF TRANSPORTATION

Ataturk Airport (IST) is only a short trip from the centre of Istanbul. The cheapest method is to take the metro from the airport, Ataturk - Havalimani, get off at Zeytinburnu and take the connecting tram to Sultanahmet. The total cost is approx 5TL and the arrival hotel is only a couple of minutes walk from Sultanahmet tram station. You can also take a taxi from the airport directly to the hotel and can expect to pay around 60TL. The journey from Sabiha Gokcen Airport (SAW) to Istanbul is straightforward and inexpensive. On exiting the terminal you will see the Havatas bus which will take you to Taksim for 15TL and will take approx. 1 hour. If you prefer to take a taxi straight to the hotel, it will cost you around 130TL

ACCOMMODATION

Travel Talk Turkey tours use 4 or 5-star hotels, with some 3-star hotels used in the Mediterranean Region. The main criteria used for hotel selection is: cleanliness, private bathroom facilities and location (generally central). If you are travelling on your own, you will be allocated into a twin or triple room with other group member/s of the same gender. Travellers who have paid a single supplement will stay in single rooms except on the Gulet cruise, if booked. Unfortunately we can not guarantee the availability of double beds, but will try our best. Your tour leader will allocate rooms upon arrival at the hotel in accordance with the rooming lists, therefore, any last minute changes can not be guaranteed.

PRE&POST TOUR ACCOMMODATION

Should you require pre or post tour accommodation, please notify us (or your agent) at the time of booking and we can make the arrangements for you. This information will be clearly stated on your voucher.

TRANSPORTATION

You can expect comfort and reliability on our modern coaches and mini buses. Most vehicles feature air-conditioning, safe and secure luggage storage, comfortable seats, and a sound system.

TOUR LEADER

Your tour leader's role is to ensure that all aspects of the trip run smoothly. He/she will share their local knowledge, advise you on ways to spend your free time and coordinate the day-to-day running of the tour. From time to time situations can occur and things may not go according to plan, and your leader may require your cooperation and understanding. If you have any problems on tour, please let your leader know so that the correct steps can be taken. Please bear in mind that when you travel on a combined tour, you will have different groups and a different leader for each leg.

ENTRANCE FEES

- ➔ Topkapi Palace 60 TL
- ➔ Hagia Sophia Museum 60 TL
- ➔ Blue Mosque Free, Hippodrome Free
- ➔ Kabatepe War Museum 13 TL
- ➔ Troy 35 TL
- ➔ Pergamum (Asklepion) 35 TL
- ➔ Ephesus 40 TL
- ➔ Saklikent 5 TL
- ➔ Hierapolis 35 TL
- ➔ Goreme Open Air Museum 45 TL
- ➔ Underground City 45 TL
- ➔ Dalyan Mud Bath 5 TL
- ➔ Iztuzu beach 3,5 TL
- ➔ Pamukkale 40 TL

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- ➔ Hot-air ballooning 150 Euro (Cappadocia)
- ➔ Turkish Bath 130 TL (Cappadocia)
- ➔ Turkish Night 160 TL (Cappadocia)

MISSED YOUR WELCOME MEETING ?

Being avid travellers ourselves, we know that unforeseen circumstances arise. If you are late and miss the welcome meeting, don't stress, just check the information board in the hotel lobby for the next day's programme. Should you be a day late, contact your leader for arrangements to meet up.

THE TOUR PRICE AND LOCAL PAYMENT

We ease your cash needs by dividing the tour cost into two payments: tour price and local payment. You only need to pay the tour price in advance to be able to book on tour and the compulsory local payment needs to be paid when your trip commences. The local payment is part of the tour cost and does not cover any extra costs like meals, entrance fees, drinks, tips, personal expenses or other type of travel costs.

LANGUAGE

The official language of Turkey is Turkish. Below you can find some important phrases that will make your stay in Turkey a little easier:

Yes	Evet
No	Hayir
Maybe	Belki
Please	Lutfen
Thank you	Teshekkur
Pardon me	Pardon
Who ?	Kim ?
When ?	Ne zaman ?
Today	Bugun
Yesterday	Dun
Tomorrow	Yarin
I'm sorry	Ozur dilerim
Help	Imdat
Police	Polis
Hello	Merhaba
Goodbye	Hoshchakal
Good night	Iyi geceler
How are you ?	Nasilsin ?
Bill, please	Hesap, lutfen
Open	Acik
Closed	Kapali
Bad	Kotu
Good	Iyi
Hot	Sicak
Cold	Soguk
How much?	Ne kadar ?
Too much !	Pahali
Water	Su
Coffee	Kahve
Tea	Chai
OK	Tamam