

TURKISH DELIGHTS

5 September 2026

15 Day Small Group Hosted Tour
From your Front Door & Back Again





TURKISH DELIGHTS

A Journey Through Turkey's Timeless Wonders

Experience the magic of Turkey on this 15-day immersive adventure, where ancient history, breathtaking landscapes, and rich culture come together in an unforgettable journey.

Begin in Istanbul, where the iconic Hagia Sophia, Blue Mosque, and Topkapi Palace reveal centuries of grandeur. Stroll through the Grand Bazaar, a labyrinth of vibrant stalls, before venturing to Gallipoli, a place of deep significance for Australians and New Zealanders, where we pay tribute at Anzac Cove, Lone Pine Cemetery, and Chunuk Bair.

Step back in time at Troy, the legendary city of the Trojan War, before admiring the Temple of Athena in Assos, perched above the Aegean. Walk the ancient marble streets of Ephesus, home to the stunning Library of Celsus, and visit the Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

Marvel at the Cotton Castle of Pamukkale, where dazzling white travertine terraces cascade down the mountainside, and explore the sacred city of Hierapolis with its vast necropolis and ancient hot springs. Continue to the Turkish Riviera, where the coastal city of Antalya awaits with its fascinating archaeological museum and visits to the ancient cities of Perge and Aspendos, home to one of the world's best-preserved Roman theatres.

Travel inland to Konya, the spiritual heart of the Mevlevi Whirling Dervishes, and visit the Mausoleum of Rumi, whose poetry and philosophy have inspired generations. Then, journey to the otherworldly landscapes of Cappadocia, where fairy chimneys, cave dwellings, and rock-hewn churches tell the story of a civilization carved into stone. Explore the Göreme Open-Air Museum, discover an underground city, and witness the artistry of traditional pottery-making in Avanos.

With expert local guides, hand-picked accommodations, and unforgettable cultural experiences, this tour is designed to showcase the best of Turkey, leaving you with cherished memories and a deep appreciation for this remarkable country.

Join us for an extraordinary journey through history, culture, and breathtaking beauty!



Trip Highlights

- **Istanbul** – Explore the vibrant city straddling two continents, including the Hagia Sophia, Blue Mosque, Topkapi Palace, and the bustling Grand Bazaar.
- **Gallipoli** – Pay tribute to the ANZAC soldiers at Anzac Cove, Lone Pine Cemetery, Chunuk Bair, and other key memorial sites.
- **Troy & Assos** – Step into mythology at ancient Troy and admire stunning Aegean views from the Temple of Athena in Assos.
- **Ephesus & Şirince** – Walk the ancient marble streets of Ephesus, visit the Temple of Artemis, and experience the charm of the Greek village of Şirince.
- **Pamukkale** – Marvel at the dazzling white travertine terraces of "Cotton Castle", soak in the Sacred Pool, and explore the ancient ruins of Hierapolis.
- **Antalya & the Turkish Riviera** – Wander through the Antalya Archaeological Museum, explore the ancient ruins of Perge and Aspendos, and admire Turkey's Mediterranean beauty.
- **Konya & the Mevlana Museum** – Discover the spiritual home of the Whirling Dervishes and the tomb of Rumi, a poet and philosopher of love and wisdom.
- **Cappadocia** – Experience the surreal landscapes of fairy chimneys, explore the Göreme Open-Air Museum, discover hidden cave churches, and descend into a fascinating underground city.
- **Istanbul at Leisure & Farewell Dinner** – Enjoy a day to explore, relax, or shop before gathering for a special farewell dinner, reminiscing about the unforgettable experiences shared on this journey.

TURKISH DELIGHTS

5 to 19 September 2026

SAT 5 Home to Istanbul

Today, we meet our fellow travellers at Auckland International airport as we embark on our unforgettable adventure to Turkey. With Istanbul as our first destination, we settle in for our onward flight, enjoying in-flight meals and entertainment.

As we soar across continents, we anticipate the extraordinary destinations that waits us in the days ahead.

SUN 6 Welcome to Istanbul

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İstanbul'a Hoş Geldiniz! Welcome to Istanbul!

Upon arrival in **Istanbul**, we are greeted by our English-speaking local guide, who will accompany us throughout our journey, sharing expert insights and unveiling the rich history and culture of Turkey. After a warm welcome, we transfer to our hotel and settle in for a comfortable two-night stay in this enchanting city.

Later, we come together for a special welcome dinner at a local restaurant. This relaxed and intimate evening offers the perfect opportunity to connect with fellow travellers, share our excitement for the journey ahead, and experience Turkey's legendary hospitality.

Let the adventure begin!





MON 7 A Day of Discovery in Istanbul

(B)

After breakfast, we set out on a full-day exploration of Istanbul's most captivating landmarks, where ancient history and vibrant culture intertwine.

Admire the awe-inspiring **Hagia Sophia**, a masterpiece of Byzantine architecture. Originally built by Emperor Justinian in 537 AD, this iconic structure has served as a cathedral, mosque, and now a museum, standing as a symbol of Istanbul's rich and diverse heritage.

Step into history at the **Byzantine Hippodrome**, once the grand stage for chariot races and imperial ceremonies. Here, we admire impressive relics, including the striking 3,500-year-old red granite obelisk, originally from Egypt and erected here in 390 AD.

The Ottoman era gifted Istanbul with remarkable architectural wonders, and today, we explore two of its most magnificent creations. We visit the **Topkapi Palace**, the opulent former residence of Ottoman sultans, where exquisite courtyards and priceless treasures offer glimpses into royal life. Then, we marvel at the **Blue Mosque**, renowned for its six minarets and stunning blue Iznik tiles, a true jewel of Istanbul's skyline.

Our day concludes with an immersive experience at the **Grand Bazaar**, one of the world's oldest and most vibrant marketplaces. With its maze of bustling alleys, colourful textiles, handcrafted treasures, and aromatic spices, this legendary bazaar invites us to explore, shop, and embrace the lively spirit of Istanbul.

After a day rich in discovery, we return to our hotel to unwind. The evening is at your leisure, with dinner at your own arrangements.

An unforgettable day in the heart of Istanbul!



TUE 8 Istanbul – Gallipoli – Çanakkale

(B)(D)

This morning, we depart Istanbul and travel to **Gallipoli**, a site of profound historical significance, especially for Australians and New Zealanders.

Here, we visit the battlefields and memorials of the Gallipoli Campaign, reflecting on the courage and sacrifice of those who fought here during World War I. Key sites include:

- **Anzac Cove** – the landing site of ANZAC troops in April 1915.
- **Lone Pine Cemetery** – a solemn tribute to fallen Australian soldiers.
- **Johnston's Jolly** – preserved Turkish and Allied trenches and tunnels.
- **The Nek** – site of one of the campaign's most tragic charges.
- **Chunuk Bair New Zealand Memorial** – commemorating the role of New Zealand forces.

After a lunch stop, we continue exploring before heading to **Çanakkale**, where we check into our hotel for the night.

This evening, we gather for dinner at a local restaurant, reflecting on a deeply moving day of history and remembrance.

WED 9 Çanakkale – Troy – Assos – Kuşadası

(B)(D)

Today, we travel to **Kuşadası**, our home for the next two nights, with stops at some of Turkey's most legendary sites.

This morning, we journey to the legendary city of **Troy**, an archaeological site dating back 5,000 years. Here, we explore the ruins of this ancient city and see the reconstruction of the fabled Wooden Horse, a symbol of the Trojan War and one of mythology's most famous tales.

Next, we travel to **Assos**, a picturesque coastal town known for its stunning beaches, charming village atmosphere, and deep historical roots. We take in the breathtaking views from the **Temple of Athena**, which overlooks the Aegean Sea and the Greek island of Lesbos. At the ancient harbour, enjoy some free time to wander the scenic streets, soak in the local culture, or relax by the water.

Continuing south, we make our way to Kuşadası, a vibrant seaside town and our home for the next two nights. Upon arrival, we check into our hotel and take time to refresh and unwind before gathering for a delightful dinner at the hotel.



THU 10 Exploring Ephesus & Shrine

(B) (D)

Today, we step back in time with a full-day exploration of some of Turkey's most treasured historical and cultural sites.

Our journey begins at the **Temple of Artemis**, once one of the **Seven Wonders of the Ancient World**. Though only fragments remain, this ancient site still holds a fascinating legacy.

Next, we explore the breathtaking **Ancient City of Ephesus**, home to some of the world's best-preserved classical ruins. Wander along marble streets lined with grand theatres, ornate fountains, and iconic landmarks, including the famed **Library of Celsus** and the impressive **Great Theatre**, once a hub of entertainment and public gatherings.

From here, we visit the quaint hillside village of **Şirince**, renowned for its olive oil, fruit, and local wine production. With its cobblestone streets and charming boutiques, this former Greek village offers a delightful glimpse into local life.

We then experience the centuries-old tradition of **Turkish carpet weaving** with a visit to a carpet village, where skilled artisans demonstrate the intricate craftsmanship behind these handmade masterpieces.

As the day winds down, we enjoy a delicious seafood dinner at a local restaurant, savouring fresh fish and regional specialties before returning to **Kuşadası** for the night.

FRI 11 Kuşadası – Pamukkale

(B) (D)

This morning, we depart Kuşadası and travel to the breathtaking natural wonder of **Pamukkale**, a UNESCO World Heritage site renowned for its thermal spring waters and striking white travertine terraces. Often referred to as "**Cotton Castle**", these dazzling formations have been sculpted by mineral-rich waters cascading down the mountainside, creating a truly otherworldly landscape.

We explore the travertine pools before visiting the ancient city of **Hierapolis**, a fascinating archaeological site dating back to the 2nd century BC. Home to Anatolia's largest necropolis, with over 1,200 tombs, Hierapolis also boasts a stunning Sacred Pool, where thermal waters ripple over ancient Roman ruins submerged beneath the surface.

After a day of discovery and relaxation in these rejuvenating thermal waters, we settle in for the evening at our Pamukkale hotel, where we enjoy a delightful dinner and unwind in this serene setting.

SAT 12 Pamukkale – Laodicea – Antalya

(B) (D)

This morning, we depart Pamukkale and journey towards the stunning resort town of **Antalya**, stopping en route to visit the fascinating ancient city of **Laodicea**.

Once the chief city of the Lycus River Valley, Laodicea ad Lyceum (formerly known as Diospolis, "The City of Zeus") thrived as a prosperous centre with a significant Jewish population and later became one of the earliest Christian communities. Walking through its well-preserved ruins, we gain insight into the city's historical and religious significance.

Continuing our drive, we arrive in **Antalya**, a vibrant coastal city nestled along the **Turkish Riviera**, where we check in to our hotel for a two-night stay.

This afternoon, we explore the **Antalya Archaeological Museum**, one of Turkey's most impressive museums. Spanning 13 exhibition halls and an open-air gallery, the museum houses an extraordinary collection of over 5,000 artifacts, ranging from Neolithic relics to Roman sculptures and Ottoman treasures. The exhibits provide a captivating journey through thousands of years of history, offering a deeper understanding of Turkey's rich cultural heritage. After an insightful day, we return to our hotel to relax before gathering for dinner, surrounded by the charm of this beautiful Mediterranean city.

SUN 13 Exploring Perge & Aspendos

(B)

Today, we embark on a full-day tour of two of Turkey's most remarkable ancient sites - **Perge and Aspendos**.

Perge is a city renowned for its well-preserved ruins and stunning mosaics. Often referred to as "Turkey's second Zeugma", Perge was once one of the most prosperous cities of the ancient world. As we explore its colonnaded streets, grand stadium, and impressive baths, we uncover the architectural brilliance of this once-thriving metropolis.

We visit the awe-inspiring **Aspendos**, home to one of the best-preserved Roman theatres in the world. Built in the 2nd century AD, this grand **amphitheatre**, with a seating capacity of 15,000, still stands as a testament to Roman engineering. Beyond the theatre, we explore the ruins of the **Temple of Apollo** and other ancient structures that tell the story of Aspendos' historical significance. After a day of fascinating discoveries, we return to Antalya, where the evening is free for you to relax or explore the city at your own pace.



MON 14 Antalya – Konya – Cappadocia

(B)(D)

Today, we leave the Mediterranean coast behind as we journey through Turkey's central heartland, making our way to the magical landscapes of **Cappadocia**.

Our first stop is the **Sultanhanı Caravanserai**, a remarkable 13th-century Seljuk trading post along the ancient Silk Road. Once a key resting place for merchants and travellers, this grand structure provides a fascinating glimpse into the region's rich commercial history.

We continue to **Konya**, home to the **Mevlana Museum**, also known as the **Green Mausoleum**. This revered site is the spiritual centre of the **Mevlevi Whirling Dervishes**, a Sufi order inspired by the teachings of Jalaluddin Rumi. We visit the **tomb and shrine of Rumi**, where his timeless philosophy of love, unity, and wisdom continues to inspire visitors from around the world.

Arriving in Cappadocia, we check in to our hotel, surrounded by the region's breathtaking rock formations and fairy-tale landscapes. After time to settle in, we enjoy a relaxing dinner, preparing for the incredible experiences ahead in this unique destination.

TUE 15 Exploring the Wonders of Cappadocia

(B)

This morning, we embark on a journey through Cappadocia's most breathtaking landscapes and ancient villages.

Our first stop is **Pigeon Valley (Guvercinlik Vadisi)**, named for the countless man-made dovecotes carved into the soft volcanic rock. Since ancient times, pigeons played a vital role in the region, providing fertilizer for the infertile soil and even serving as a source of food. Though no longer essential to daily life, the rock-carved pigeon houses remain a fascinating feature of the landscape, perched atop rock pillars and hidden within ancient cave dwellings.

Next, we explore **Red Valley**, one of Cappadocia's most scenic and photogenic landscapes. Known for its stunning reddish-pink rock formations, the valley transforms into a breathtaking sight at sunset. As we walk along its winding trails, we discover hidden cave churches carved into the rock, each with its own unique history and charm.

Continuing our journey, we visit **Çavuşin Village**, one of the oldest settlements in Cappadocia. This charming troglodyte village is famous for its cave houses and rock-hewn dwellings, offering a glimpse into the region's ancient way of life.

Our final stop takes us to **Avanos**, a town famous for its pottery-making tradition that dates back thousands of years. The **Kızılırmak River (Halys)**, Turkey's longest river, provides the rich red clay used by artisans to craft beautiful ceramics. Here, we witness the traditional pottery-making process and have the chance to admire (or even try) this time-honoured craft.

After a day of exploration, we return to our hotel for an evening at leisure to relax or continue discovering Cappadocia at your own pace.



WED 16 Cappadocia – Istanbul

(B)

Our final morning in Cappadocia begins with a journey through its breathtaking lunar-like landscape, where ancient history and natural wonders blend seamlessly.

We start at the **Göreme Open-Air Museum, a UNESCO World Heritage Site** and one of Cappadocia's most important historical and cultural landmarks. This open-air complex is home to some of the region's best-preserved rock-cut churches, adorned with stunning Byzantine frescoes that have survived for centuries.

Next, we explore **Cappadocia's iconic fairy chimneys**, towering rock formations sculpted by nature over millions of years. As we admire these surreal landscapes, we witness how the rocky topography transforms under the shifting light - glowing red and purple at sunset and shimmering softly under the moonlight.

Before concluding our Cappadocia adventure, we descend into one of the region's fascinating underground cities, a network of multi-level tunnels and chambers that once served as hidden refuges for ancient civilizations. These subterranean dwellings, complete with living quarters, storage rooms, and even chapels, offer an incredible insight into the ingenuity of early settlers.

Later, we transfer to Kayseri Airport for our flight to Istanbul. Upon arrival, we check in to our hotel and settle in for the evening, with time to relax at leisure or explore the city at your own pace.

THU 17 Istanbul – A Day to Relax & Explore

(B)(D)

Today is yours to relax and explore Istanbul at your leisure. Whether you choose to enjoy a leisurely morning, revisit your favourite sights, or indulge in some last-minute shopping, this is the perfect opportunity to soak in the city's vibrant atmosphere.

From the bustling **Grand Bazaar** and **Spice Market** to modern shopping streets and stylish boutiques, there's something for every shopper - whether you're searching for intricate ceramics, Turkish delight, or unique souvenirs.

As the day winds down, we come together for a **memorable farewell dinner**, celebrating the unforgettable moments, friendships, and experiences we have shared on this incredible journey.

FRI 18 Departing Istanbul

(B)

After an unforgettable journey through Turkey's rich history, stunning landscapes, and vibrant culture, it's time to bid farewell to this incredible destination.

At the appointed time, we transfer to Istanbul Airport for our onward flight, taking with us cherished memories, new friendships, and the spirit of adventure that has defined this remarkable experience.

Arriving back into New Zealand on **19 September**.



TURKISH DELIGHTS



15 DAYS • Fully Hosted Small Group Tour

COUNTRY: Turkey

DEPARTS: 5 September 2026

Tour Inclusions:

- International flights ex Auckland
- Other departure locations available on request
- Flight upgrades available upon request
- Home Pick-up/drop-off. T&C's apply
- Quality accommodation
- All domestic flights within Turkey and all gratuities
- Services of local English-speaking guides throughout
- All Meals as per itinerary
- All excursions and activities as per itinerary
- From \$12,950 per person twin share
- Single: From \$15,950 per person



You are invited to join us on our fully hosted small group tour, with a maximum number of guests is 18.

Based on the beautiful Kapiti Coast with our guests joining us from all corners of New Zealand, we believe you will be pleasantly surprised by just how much we include in our tour price.

You can be rest assured that your Tour Host will always be one of our friendly well-experienced YOURTours Team Members providing a relaxed and worry-free holiday from start to finish.



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