

**Classical Turkey (7 Nights / 8 Days)**  
***Istanbul, Cappadocia, İzmir (Ephesus)***

**Duration** : 7 Nights / 8 Days

**Departure days** : The program starts from Istanbul on Thursdays.

**Hotels** :

Category	ISTANBUL Hotels	CAPPADOCIA Hotels	İZMİR Hotels
Option 1	Crowne Plaza Old City – 5 Star	Perissia – 4 star	İzmir Mövenpick – 5 star
Option 2	The President Hotel – 4 star	Perissia – 4 star	İzmir BW Konak Otel – 5 star

**Meal Plan** : 7 breakfasts + 4 lunches + 2 dinners

**Domestic Flights** : Istanbul to Ankara and İzmir via İstanbul domestic flight is needed.

**Remarks** :

- Depending on the availability, similar hotels may be used.
- For all tour departures, guests will be picked up from their hotels and at the end of the program they will be dropped off back to their hotels.
- Duration of each day is mentioned in below itinerary.
- Beverages during the meals are not included.

**Day 1 – Arrival in Istanbul**

Arrival in Istanbul and transfer to the hotel.  
The remaining of the day is at leisure.



**Day 2 – Full Day Classical Istanbul Tour with lunch**



After breakfast, drive to old town and visit **Hippodrome Square**, the scene of Chariot races and the center of Byzantine civic life which was originally built by Roman Emperor Septimus in 203 AD. Then visit **Blue Mosque**, built in early 17<sup>th</sup> century and known as Blue Mosque because of its magnificent interior decoration with blue İznik tiles. It is also unique in the world to have 6 minarets.

Continue to **St. Sophia Museum**, built by Emperor Constantius in 360 AD. St. Sophia was for many centuries the world's largest church and today is the fourth largest one after St. Paul's in London, St. Peter's in Rome and Duomo in Milan.

Throughout its Byzantine history, St. Sophia served as the cathedral of the city where emperors were crowned and victories celebrated.

After his conquest of the city in 1453, Sultan Mehmet II ordered for the building to be converted into a mosque by the addition of Islamic elements such as a mihrab, a mimber, minarets etc.

After having served this time as a mosque for 481 years, the building became a museum in 1934 by the order of Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey.



After lunch visit **Topkapı Palace**, built by Sultan Mehmet II after the conquest of Istanbul in 15<sup>th</sup> century. The palace housed the sultans and their exotic entourage until mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. The complex is a group of structures which incorporates works from successive periods of Ottoman reign. Today the museum displays priceless collections of the imperial treasury, numerous pieces of Chinese porcelain, traditional costumes of the sultans and their families and special section for the preservation of the relics of Prophet Mohammed.

Last stop will be at famous historical **Grand Bazaar**, the largest "souk" covered oriental shopping mall in the world, where you will find 4,400 shops under one roof where each trade has its own street. There is a wide selection of leather, jewelry, antiques, copperware, souvenirs, and famous hand-made Turkish carpets displayed in this historical shopping center.



Overnight in Istanbul

Duration : 08h00-18h00

Meal Plan : Breakfast & Lunch

St. Sophia: Closed on Monday

Grand Bazaar: Closed on Sunday

Topkapı Palace: Closed on Tuesday

### Day 3 – Free day at Leisure

Free day at Leisure.

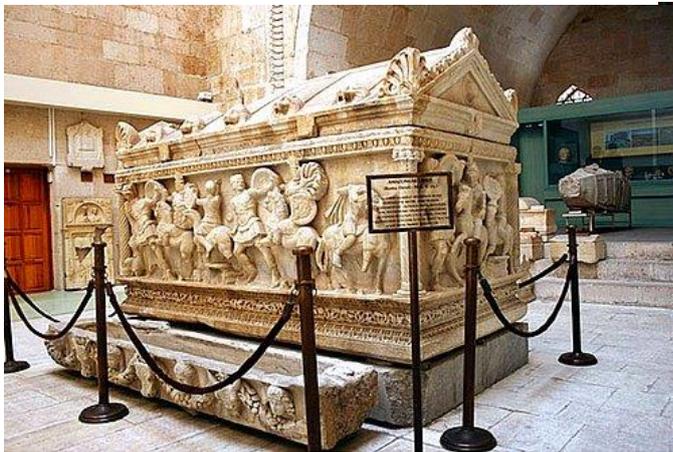
## Day 4 – Istanbul / Ankara / Cappadocia

Early morning transfer to Istanbul airport for flight to Ankara.

Start to visit *Mausoleum of Ataturk*, founder of the Turkish Republic. Completed in 1953, it is an impressive fusion of ancient and modern architectural ideas and remains unsurpassed as an accomplishment of modern Turkish architecture. There is a museum housing writings, letters and items belonging to Ataturk as well as an exhibition of photographs recording important moments in his life and the establishment of the republic. An important exhibition of the War of Liberation is also open to the public.



Continue to visit, *The Museum of Anatolian Civilizations*, close to the citadel gate, a 15th century Ottoman bedesten has been beautifully restored and since 1921 it houses a marvelous and unique



collection including Paleolithic, Neolithic, Chalcolithic, Hatti, Hittite, Phrygian, Lydian, Urartian and Roman works. In 1997 this great museum won the "European

Museum of the Year" award among 65 museums from 21 European countries. After lunch, drive to Cappadocia for the dinner and overnight.

Duration : 05h00-19h00  
Meal Plan : Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner  
Overnight : Cappadocia

## Day 5 – Cappadocia

After breakfast, start the visits with *Goreme Valley* museum consists of steep cliffs and many hidden churches dating from second half of 9<sup>th</sup> C.



Then visit *Pasabag* in Cappadocia is located on the road coming from Goreme. Highly remarkable earth pillars can be seen here, in the



middle of a vineyard, hence the name of the place which means: the Pacha's vineyard. Pacha means General", the military rank, in Turkish and it is a very common nick name. This site is also called **Monks**

**Valley.** The name was derived from some cones carved in tuff stones which stand apart. Currently, there is a vineyard and a number of tuff cones standing right next to the road.

Continue to visit the villages of **Avanos**, is a small town famous for its pottery. It is built along the banks of Kizilirmak (Hayls River), the longest river originated and ending within the borders of Turkey; 842 miles. Those who want may enjoy famous “testi kebab”. After lunch, visit traditional pottery making house where guests will see their own talents in producing their own potteries.

Then continue to visit one of the **Underground City** made to accommodate several thousands of



people with seven subterranean floors. So far 36 underground cities have been discovered some of them being very recent. It is also estimated that most of them are connected to each other. But it is difficult to identify these connections.

After lunch visit **Cavusin village**, a Greek town whose history goes back to the Early Christian Period. The rock cut buildings have collapsed because of erosion but the churches are still in place and being used as dovecotes.

Duration : 09h00-18h00  
Meal Plan : Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner  
Overnight : Cappadocia

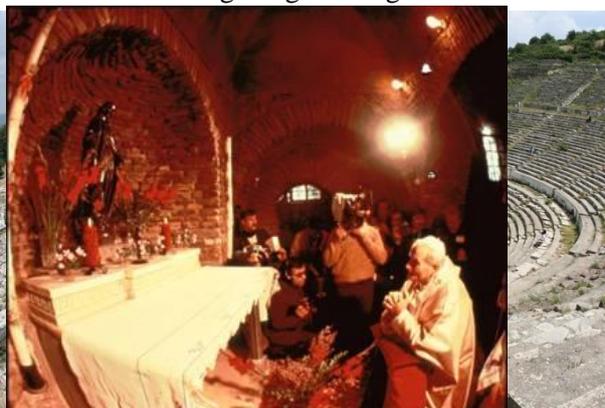
#### Day 6 – Road to İzmir

After breakfast drive to Kayseri transfer to the airport for flight to İzmir via İstanbul. Transfer to the hotel in İzmir.

Overnight: İzmir

#### Day 7 – İzmir

Visit to **Ephesus**, the Roman capital of Asia minor which remains to be the best preserved ancient city in the world. During the golden age of the Roman



Empire (2<sup>nd</sup> century AD), Ephesus was an important commercial and cultural center. The protector of the city was Artemis, the Goddess whose temple was one of the “Seven Wonders of the Ancient World”. The Ephesians still

worshipped Artemis when St. Paul came to the city to win converts. St. John brought Virgin Mary to Ephesus after the death of Jesus Christ and she lived until the age of 101 in a small house built for her on Mt. Koressos. Now, the popular place of pilgrimage for Catholics and Muslims, the house received the official sanction of the Vatican and a commemoration ceremony is held every year on August 15<sup>th</sup>. The third church council in 431 was held in the Basilica of Virgin Mary in Ephesus.

Continue to visit, the *House of the Virgin* where it's believed that she passed last years of her life and died. She came to Ephesus together with St. John and taken up to Panaghia Kapulu Mountain to survive the Roman persecutions. The House was destroyed by many earthquakes and not discovered until 1951 thanks to a German Nun Catherine Emmerich who saw its location in her visions. It is recognized as a shrine by Vatican. Now the House of Virgin Mary is renovated by George Quatman Foundation from Ohio and serves as a small church which attracts many Christians as well as Muslims coming to pray for her.

Duration : 07h00-20h00  
Meal Plan : Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner  
Overnight : Izmir

### **Day 8 – Departure**

Transfer from the hotel to the airport.