

TURKEY PROGRAM 15 – 27 October, 2024

Departure on 14th of October from Singapore, arrive back on the 28th of October 2024

DAY 1 - 15 October 2024, Tuesday

Arrival/ Istanbul/ Izmir (B,D)

Upon arrival in Istanbul, connecting to domestic flight to Izmir.

Upon arrival in Izmir, meet with your guide and transfer to the hotel. Dinner will be served at a local restaurant.

Overnight in Izmir

DAY 2 - 16 October 2024, Wednesday

Izmir / Bergama / Izmir (B,L,D)

After Breakfast, depart for a full day city tour including visits to Acropolis and Asclepion in Bergama. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant.

Dinner will be served at a local restaurant.

Overnight in Izmir.

PERGAMUM ACROPOLIS

Pergamum was an ancient city founded by colonists on the Aegean coast of Anatolia at the site of the present-day city of Bergama.

First visit Acropolis where the temple of Athena, Altar of Zeus, Temple of Dionysus will be seen.

PERGAMUM ASCLEPION

There was a treatment centre established in the name of Asklepios, the god of health, outside the acropolis of Pergamon in the 4th century BC. It had the title of the most important treatment centre of Western Anatolia with its advanced architectural layout and treatment methods. The surviving remains of Asclepion belong to the arrangements made by the Roman Emperor Hadrian in the 2nd century AD. The Asclepion shows the distinction of being a sacred area even earlier than its foundation date.

DAY 3 - 17 October 2024, Thursday

Izmir / Kusadasi (B,L,D)

After breakfast, check out and depart for Sardis Ancient City. After the visit, we continue to Kusadasi. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant. Dinner will be served at hotel.

Overnight in Kusadasi.

SARDIS - The Acropolis;

Known biblically as the home of the church that received the fifth of letters to the seven churches in Revelation, Sardis was the capital of the Lydian empire and one of the greatest cities of the ancient world. Located on the banks of the Pactolus River, Sardis was 60 miles inland from Ephesus and Smyrna. The city was home to the famous bishop Melito in the 2nd century. Temple of Artemis; Artemis was the main goddess of the city and the temple dedicated to her in Sardis was one of the seven largest Greek temples

DAY 4 - 18 October 2024, Friday

Kusadasi(B,L,D)

After breakfast, depart for a full day tour including visits to Ephesus Ancient City, House of Virgin Mary and Basilica of St John. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant. Dinner will be served at the hotel.

Overnight in Kusadasi.

EPHESUS

Ephesus was famous in antiquity for its temple of Diana -one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World- and later the home of Saint John. During the years of the Roman Empire, the port of Ephesus became the greatest city in Asia Minor. The Ancient City of Ephesus, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is an outstanding example of a Roman port city, with sea channel and harbour basin, established in ca. 10th century B.C.

THE HOUSE OF VIRGIN MARY

This small building is believed to be St. Mary's home. It is one of the most important highlights in Turkey for Christian pilgrims. It is known that Jesus gave his mother into the care of St. John at the crucifixion, and considering St. John spent part of his life in Ephesus, it is believed that St. Mary also lived in the city and on her death was buried there.

BASILICA OF ST JOHN

The Basilica of St. John was a great church in Ephesus constructed by Emperor Justinian in the 6th century. It stands over the believed burial site of St. John, who is identified as the apostle, evangelist (author of the Fourth Gospel) and prophet (author of Revelation).

DAY 5 - 19 October 2024, Saturday

Kusadasi / Pamukkale(B,L,D)

After breakfast, check out and depart for Pamukkale. Visiting Aphrodisias, Laodicea en route. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant. Dinner will be served at the hotel.

Overnight in Pamukkale

APHRODISIAS

During the Hellenistic and Roman periods, this small city, named after the goddess Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty, love, nature and fertility, was a major source of marble. The stone was quarried from nearby hills and shipped all over the ancient world for use in building facades and sculptures. The marble statues that came to life in the city, which was an art centre with the famous sculpture school in the Roman Period, are exhibited in the museum in the ancient city today. The temple of Aphrodite, the monumental gate Tetrapylon, the best preserved stadium in the ancient world, the baths of Hadrian, the grandiose temple complex Sebasteion, the theatre, the odeon and the agora are worth seeing.

LAODECIA

The name of the city is mentioned in the ancient sources as “Laodikeia on the shore of Lykos” since it was founded in the south of the Lykos river. According to other ancient sources, the city was founded between the years of 261-263 BC, by Antiokhos and the city was named after Laodike, the wife of Antiochus.

DAY 6 - 20 October 2024, Sunday

Pamukkale(B,D)

After breakfast, depart from the hotel for the visit to Hierapolis. After the visit, the rest of the day is at leisure. Dinner will be served at the hotel.

Overnight in Pamukkale

HIERAPOLIS

Hierapolis was the ancient Greek city on top of hot springs located in south western Turkey near Denizli. Hierapolis is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The hot springs there have been used as a spa since the 2nd century BCE, and people came to soothe their ailments, with many of them retiring or dying here. The large necropolis is filled with sarcophagi, including the Sarcophagus of Marcus Aurelius Ammianos. The great baths were constructed with huge stone blocks without the use of cement, and consisted of various closed or open sections linked together. There are deep niches in the inner section of the bath, library, gymnasium and other closed or open locations. The complex, which was constructed in the 2nd century BC, constitutes a good example of vault type architecture. The complex is now an archaeological museum.

DAY 7 - 21 October 2024, Monday

Pamukkale / Antalya(B,L,D)

After breakfast, check out and depart for Antalya. Visiting Sagalassos en route. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant. Dinner will be served at the hotel.

Overnight in Antalya

SAGALASSOS

Sagalassos is another ancient city in Turkey, located in the Burdur Province. It was an important city during the Hellenistic, Roman, and Byzantine periods. The archaeological site of Sagalassos features well-preserved structures such as the Antonine Nymphaeum, the Upper Agora, and the Roman baths. The city is renowned for its monumental architecture and has provided valuable insights into the ancient history of the region.

DAY 8 - 22 October 2024, Tuesday

Antalya (B,L,D)

After breakfast, depart for a full day tour including visits to Perge, Aspendos and Side. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant. Dinner will be served at the hotel.

Overnight in Antalya.

PERGE

Perge being one of the Pamphylian cities, Perge was founded between BC 12-13. It is the most attractive and well-preserved Pamphylian city. The ancient theatre, stadium, towers, Agora, Acropolis and the Palaestra which is given to Imperial Claudius are the highlights of the ancient city.

ASPENDOS

Though it is well-known for its theatre with a capacity of 30,000 people, there is a stadium, an acropolis, and a fountain as well where you can enjoy yourself. It was founded in BC 5-4 by the colonists from Argos. All the ruins in the city have remained from the Roman period. The theatre is still being used for contemporary concerts.

SIDE

Side is located in the region of Pamphylia in Anatolia and was both a prosperous Aegean trading centre in Hellenistic and Roman times and a base for Cilician pirates in the 1st and 2nd centuries BCE. It is also one of the best preserved classical sites in Turkey. The ancient city of Side is found on a small peninsula measuring about 1 km by 400 m. Side is a site with a long history which has left behind numerous buildings and ruins for us archaeology and history fanatics to explore. The most complete ruin at Side is the theatre complex which is the largest in the Roman style in the region. It could seat around 15,000 people and was converted into an open-air sanctuary with two chapels during the Byzantine Era. The seats still contain the inscriptions of names of patrons and on occasion shows are still carried out there. The city walls also remain alongside the Hellenistic main gate. There are colonnaded streets with many of the marble columns still standing and many others nearby.

DAY 9 - 23 October 2024, Wednesday

Antalya (B,L,D)

After breakfast, depart for a full day tour including visits to Termessos Ancient City and free time in the Old Town. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant. Dinner will be served at the hotel.
Overnight in Antalya.

TERMESSOS

Termessos was a Pisidian city built at an altitude of more than 1000 metres at the south-west side of the mountain Solymos (modern-day Güllük Dağı) in the Taurus Mountains.

What is known of Termessos' history commences principally at the time that Alexander the Great surrounded the city in 333 BC; he likened the city to an eagle's nest and in one of few cases, failed to conquer it.

It was approved by the Roman Senate that Termessos, which had cooperation with Rome, was independent in its internal affairs. There is no clear information about the city's situation, which seems to have preserved its independence with the coins it minted during the Roman Imperial Period, and after the Byzantine Period. The city did not see a new settlement after it was abandoned. It has been well preserved until today.

ANTALYA OLD TOWN (KALEİÇİ)

Antalya's Old Town, or Kaleiçi, is a captivating district that transports visitors to a bygone era with its historical charm and architectural beauty. Kaleiçi is a maze of narrow cobblestone streets lined with well-preserved Ottoman-era houses and traditional Turkish architecture. The buildings, adorned with wooden shutters and balconies, evoke a sense of nostalgia.

Encircled by ancient Roman walls, Kaleiçi stands as a testament to Antalya's rich history. These sturdy walls, some of which date back to the 2nd century, provide a protective embrace around the district.

The entrance to Kaleiçi is marked by Hadrian's Gate, a majestic Roman triumphal arch built in the honour of Emperor Hadrian in the 2nd century. This iconic landmark is a blend of finely crafted stone and intricate reliefs.

DAY 10 - 24 October 2024, Thursday

Antalya / Istanbul (B,L,D)

After breakfast, check out from the hotel and visit the Antalya Archeology Museum. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant. After lunch, transfer to Antalya Airport for the flight to Istanbul. Upon arrival, transfer to your hotel.

Dinner will be served at a local restaurant.

Overnight in Istanbul.

ANTALYA ARCHEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

Antalya Archeological Museum is one of Turkey's largest museums; it includes 13 exhibition halls and an open air gallery. It covers an area of 7,000 m² (75,000 sq ft) and 5000 works of art are exhibited. In addition a further 25,000–30,000 artefacts which cannot be displayed are in storage.

As a museum exhibiting examples of works, which illuminate the history of the Mediterranean and Pamphylia regions in Anatolia, Antalya Museum is one of the most important of Turkey's museums.

The Museum won the "European Council Special Prize" in 1988.

DAY 11 - 25 October 2024, Friday

Istanbul (B,L,D)

After breakfast, meet your guide in the lobby and depart for a full day tour including 1,5 hour Bosphorus cruise by private boat, Spice Bazaar and Grand Bazaar.

Lunch will be served at a local restaurant.

Dinner will be served at a local restaurant.

Overnight in Istanbul.

CRUISE ALONG BOSPHORUS

One of the most beautiful sights in the world, the Bosphorus, is a strait that runs a winding course between the two continents from one sea to another. It is a natural border between Europe and Asia. With old seaside mansions, mosques, palaces, restaurants and beaches along its shores, the Bosphorus resembles a wide river. Woods and residences cover the hills rising behind its shores.

SPICE MARKET

This extensive market was built in the 17th century to finance the upkeep of the nearby mosque, Yeni Cami. The bazaar is often referred to as the "Egyptian Market" due to the fact that spices used to come to the market from India and Southeast Asia via Egypt. There is plenty to discover for the "foodie." This market is one of Istanbul's most colourful, vibrant and accessible shopping spots. Many traders have been in business since the early to mid 1900s and the more famous ones really need no introduction.

GRAND BAZAAR

Located in the old city, The Grand Covered Bazaar is one of the most fascinating and irresistible attractions of the city. It is a labyrinth in which one takes delight in getting lost and finding one's way out, after who knows how many purchases and other adventures. It is a city in itself with more than 4000 shops, 2000 ateliers, 500 stalls, 12 storehouses, 18 fountains, 12 mescits or small mosques. Some of the most interesting and valuable objects are sold here like brass and copper, ancient swords and weapons, antique jewellery and costumes, fine glassware, antique coins, classical and Byzantine pottery and figurines.

DAY 12 - 26 October 2024, Saturday

Istanbul (B,L,D)

After breakfast, meet your guide in the lobby and depart for a full day old city tour including visits to Topkapi Palace, Hagia Sophia, Blue Mosque and Basilica Cistern. Lunch will be served at a local restaurant.

Dinner will be served at a local restaurant.

Overnight in Istanbul.

TOPKAPI PALACE

The residence of the Ottoman Sultans between the 15th and 19th centuries. It was here that the power politics of ruling an empire, stretching from the gates of Vienna to the Persian Gulf, were played off against a background of Harem intrigue. The jewelled turban crests, silken caftans and priceless Chinese porcelains of the palace bear witness to the grandeur of a bygone era. The porcelain collection is considered the finest anywhere outside china.

HAGIA SOFIA

Hagia Sophia (Ayasofya-i Kebir Mosque); then the Church of the Divine Wisdom, was dedicated by Justinian in 537 A.D. For nearly a thousand years Hagia Sophia served as the cathedral of Constantinople and was the centre of the religious life of the Byzantine Empire, and almost five centuries after the Turkish conquest it ranked first among the imperial mosques of Istanbul. Hagia Sophia remains one of the truly great buildings in the world with its unique mosaics and marble decorations.

BLUE MOSQUE

Right next to the Hippodrome rises the Sultanahmet Mosque. It was founded by Sultan Ahmet I and constructed by the architect Mehmet Aga between 1609 and 1616. Therefore, local people call it the Sultan Ahmet Mosque whereas tourists call it the Blue Mosque, because of its blue interior decorated with 21,000 blue Iznik tiles.

What is original and very beautiful in the decoration of the interior is the revetment of tiles especially in the galleries. The magnificent floral designs display the traditional lily, carnation, tulip and rose motifs. The Blue Mosque which is the only one in the world with six minarets is still in service for the local Moslems.

BASILICA CISTERN

Beneath Istanbul lie hundreds of gloomy Byzantine cisterns.

They're left from the days when Istanbul was Constantinople. The grandest of all is Yerebatan Saray Sarnici, called the Basilica (or Sunken Palace) Cistern because of its size (70 x 140 metres, or 2.4 acres), its capacity (80,000 cubic metres—over 21 million US gallons) and its 336 marble columns. Walkways and atmospheric lighting were installed during the 1990s so you can see all its curious Corners.

DAY 13 27 October 2024, Sunday

Departure

After breakfast, check out from the hotel and transfer to Istanbul airport for your flight back home to Singapore.