



Turkish Delights Tour!

Main Tour Dates: 2 Departures!

Saturday, April 7 - Sunday, April 15, 2012

Saturday, November 17 - Sunday, November 25, 2012

Once you set foot in Turkey, Eurasia's heady mix of east and west, it doesn't take long to realize you're not in Kansas anymore. Here, one exotic city straddles two continents, an incredibly preserved metropolis reveals an ancient past, and magical, mystical landscapes of cotton castles and fairy chimneys lead to a vast underground city that invites endless exploration. Join Hermes Tours, and we'll unravel endless mysteries of an enchanting land as only a small group can!

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Istanbul Tour**, including Topkapi Palace, Hagia Sophia, The Blue Mosque, and Hippodrome
- Visit to the Grand Bazaar
- Take a cruise up the Bosphorus
- **Ephesus Tour**, including the Antique City, Temple of Artemis, Virgin Mary's House, Selçuk Ephesus Museum, and St. John Church
- **Pamukale Tour**, including ancient Hierapolis and its Theatre, Apollo Temple, Necropolis, and more
- **Konya Tour**, including Mevlana Mausoleum and Karatay Theological School
- **Cappadocia Tour**, including Pigeon Valley and Open Air Museum in Göreme, and Kaymakli Underground City
- **2 internal flights** from Istanbul to Izmir and Cappadocia to Istanbul
- Accommodations for 8 nights in 3 - 5-star hotels
- Services of a Hermes Tours escort
- Services of an expert, local guide in all cities
- **\$100 per person savings if you reserve 5 months before departure!**

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 – Saturday, April 7, 2012 - Arrive in Istanbul (D)

Welcome to Turkey! We arrive at Istanbul Airport, then privately transfer to our hotel. This intoxicating city is the only one in the world to straddle two continents, with Europe to the west of the Bosphorus Strait and Asia to the east. Tonight, we gather for a special Hermes Welcome Dinner.

Day 2 - Tour of Istanbul (B)

Byzantium, Constantinople, Istanbul. Its three names span more than 2,600 years, and our full-day tour today spans its most notable and historic landmarks. We visit the Topkapi Palace, home to Ottoman sultans for 400 years; Hagia Sophia, the basilica-turned-mosque-turned-museum; The Blue Mosque, named for its countless blue tiles that adorn its interior; and the Hippodrome, where chariot races and the Byzantine riots took place.

By tour's end, we'll be browsing the exotic halls of the Grand Bazaar, and endless maze of 1,200 shops along 58 covered streets brimming with kilims, jewelry, pottery, spices, and all things Turkish.

Day 3 - Ephesus (B,L,D)

After breakfast, we fly to Izmir and continue to Ephesus, an incredibly preserved ancient city where St. Paul is said to have preached. During our eye-opening tour, we'll see the Temple of Artemis, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world; the Virgin Mary's House; St. John Church; and the Selçuk Ephesus Museum. We spend tonight in Kusadasi.

Day 4 - Pamukale (B, D)

The "cotton castle" mineral deposits of Pamukale cast a magical glow over Pamukale, as we'll see today. We also tour Hierapolis, the ancient spa city fed by the same hot springs that created the surrounding white fairyland. Admire its bowled Theatre, Apollo Temple and sprawling Necropolis. After lunch we visit ruins and museum. Spend tonight in Pamukkale.

Day 5 - Drive to Cappadocia (B,L,D)

En route to Cappadocia, we visit the Mausoleum of Mevlana, the famed mystic and poet known to many as Rumi. Later, we admire the beautiful tiles of the Karatay Theological School. After lunch, stop at the 13th-century Sultanhan Caravanserai, a masterfully constructed travelers' inn from the Seljukian dynasty. We arrive in Cappadocia this afternoon.

Day 6 - Cappadocia (B,L,D)

Join an early-morning, optional hot-air balloon ride over Cappadocia for a breathtaking view of this spectacular, otherworldly landscape. After breakfast, we head to Goreme's remarkable Open Air Museum. Start the day with a visit to some early Christian churches adorned with unique frescoes depicting biblical scenes. After lunch in a local restaurant, we take time to explore the breathtaking Kaymakli Underground City, a vast network of 100 tunnels where early Christians hid from persecutors. We'll also see the Zelve Monastery artfully carved into a hillside, then stop in Avanos to shop for its famed earthenware pottery.

Day 7 - Return to Istanbul (B)

After breakfast, we transfer to the airport and our flight to Istanbul. Upon arrival, you are assisted to your hotel and the rest of the day is free. You might sample an age-old Turkish tradition by stopping by a *hammam*, an authentic bath where locals undergo rigorous massage.

Day 8 - Bosphorus Cruise & Free Time Istanbul (B, D)

This morning we take in the vibrant scents and colors at the city's spice market. Then, embark a 2-hour cruise on the Bosphorus, with Europe to port and Asia to starboard. Your afternoon is free to make more discoveries, or revisit some favorite spots. Tonight, join us for our special Hermes Farewell dinner.

Day 9 - Depart for Home (B)

Our tour ends after breakfast with a private transfer to the airport.

TO RESERVE YOUR SPACE:

Please visit https://www.formdesk.com/happygaytravel/hermes_tours_reservation to make a reservation. A \$500 deposit is required. Payments may be done via any major credit card or check. Final payment is due 80 days prior to departure via credit card or check.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

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Price:

- \$2,445 per person, double occupancy, land only. Includes your domestic flights.
- *Book 5 months before departure and save \$100!*
- **Single Supplement:** \$425 USD, Not Required. Hermes Tours can match you with another traveler should you wish at no cost.
- Please note that there is a limited number of single rooms available.

Pre/Post Tour Hotel Rates in Istanbul:

- \$88 per room, single basis
- \$120 per room, double basis.

Airport Information:

Please arrive & depart from Istanbul airport (IST).

Hotels:

Istanbul:

- April 2012 Trip: Istanbul Golden City Hotel 4*
- November 2012 Trip: Daphne Hotel 4*

Kusadasi: Charisma Hotel 5*

Pamukkale: Hal Tur Hotel 3* - Not fancy, but among best available.

Cappadocia: Gamirasu Cave Hotel 4*

Included:

Please note that the above cost includes all accommodation in gay friendly hotels, with private bath or shower, hotel taxes, portage, tips and service charges. All activities as outlined in the itinerary; airport transfers on designated arrival/departure days; all meals as per itinerary; 2 domestic flights as per itinerary; the services of a Hermes Tours Escort throughout the trip; all ground transportation as per itinerary; entrance fees to all sites on itinerary.

Not Included:

International airfare to/from Istanbul; passport & visa fees if applicable; personal travel and cancellation insurance; meals and activities not specifically included in the itinerary; services of a personal nature like alcohol; soft drinks; bottled water; laundry; telephone calls; faxes as well as customary tips to drivers and guides.

Visas:

Canadian and American passport holders are required to have visas to enter Turkey for tourism purposes. Visas may be obtained upon arrival at the Istanbul Airport.

Shots and Immunizations:

There are no shots that are required for travel to Turkey but Hermes Tours does recommend that your tetanus booster be up to date.

Currency and Money Issues:

It is very easy to withdraw money from ATMs located throughout the country as well as to use your Visa or MasterCard. The American Express card is less widely accepted. Travelers checks are also accepted however can carry a heavy commission fee. We recommend to travelers to bring only a small amount of cash and/or travelers checks and to rather use their ATM and credit cards while traveling.

LIABILITIES / DISCLAIMERS

Making a reservation with a deposit will be considered to be consent to the following conditions:

Hermes Tours reserve the right to accept or decline any person as a member of the tour at any time and to make whatever changes become necessary with or without notice.

Guaranteed departure with a minimum of 8 participants.

Hermes Tours is not responsible for airline cancellation or change penalties incurred by individual tour participants for air tickets purchased prior to notification that the tour is a confirmed departure.

Hermes Tours does not accept responsibility in whole or in part for any delay, loss, accidents, personal injury, sickness, medical expenses, or property damage occasioned by fault of any person from whatever cause. All participants are required to sign a standard liability form.