


Women's Travel Connection
where adventures begin...

Turkish Delights!

*Experience the Mystery of Turkey with Cathy
May 12 to 23, 2012*



Turkey is one of the most unique places in the world. It is an Asian – Middle Eastern country and yet European too - a home to many world civilizations. From breathtaking Istanbul, the only city in the world that spans two continents, to Cappadocia with its underground cities and "Fairy Chimneys" this is a one of a kind tour not to be missed! We will explore the Spice Bazaar of Istanbul, enjoy a



Turkish cooking class, a wine tasting, experience an all-women hamam (Turkish bath), enjoy a Turkish massage and spend the last few days relaxing at a beautiful resort in Bodrum, the St. Tropez of Turkey! Join Cathy for this wonderful introduction to the Byzantine, Ottoman and Turkish land of past and present.

Your package includes:

- Return flights from Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary or Toronto (ask about other cities)
- All internal flights in Turkey as shown
- All meals as shown (all-inclusive in Bodrum)
- Private transportation throughout
- Private tours and entrance fees and activities as per itinerary
- All accommodations as per itinerary

Price per person \$4999.00* including return airfare from Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary and Toronto. (*based on two sharing and limited to 12 passengers) Hold your space with a \$500 non-refundable deposit. Not included: Turkish visa, personal expenses, air taxes, meals not specified, tipping

For further details or to book:

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TRAVEL GROUP • GROUPE VOYAGES
CRUISES & VACATIONS

Sunday, May 13:

ISTANBUL

We will be arriving in Istanbul Ataturk Airport International Terminal. We will obtain our Turkish visa's at the Visa Counter prior to going through Passport Control. Our local escort will meet us outside the Baggage Claim and take us to the *Sirkeci Konak Hotel*. Balance of the day will be at our leisure.



Monday, May 14:

ISTANBUL

This morning at 9:00 a.m. our guide will take us on a walking tour: First, visit the **Blue Mosque**, with its six graceful minarets and superb interior, highlighted with more than 20,000 blue Turkish tiles. Then, see the **Hippodrome**. Visit the **Underground Cistern**, dating from the 6th Century, supported by 336 Corinthian columns as was seen in the James Bond movie, "From Russia with Love". Enjoy lunch at the Sultanahmet Koftecisi, the famous Turkish meatball restaurant which started serving their delicious food in 1920. Afterwards, visit the **Topkapi Palace**, home of the Ottoman Sultans for centuries. It is famous for its Treasury displaying the famed "Topkapi Dagger", and the "Topkapi Diamond". Then, visit the **Covered (Grand) Bazaar**, one of the largest and oldest covered markets in the world, with more than 58 covered streets and over 4,000 shops under hundreds of domes and arches, four fountains, two mosques, two hamams (*Turkish Baths*), and multiple restaurants and cafes. Also enjoy a demonstration of the old Turkish art of marbling. Our guide will take us back to our hotel in late afternoon. Tonight, enjoy dinner at the Hamdi Restaurant or similar offering great Turkish food. **(Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner)**



Tuesday, May 15:

ISTANBUL

Your guide will meet you at 9:00 a.m. at the lobby of your hotel and take you for another full-day tour of Istanbul: First, enjoy a **cruise on the Bosphorus** on a local ferry. You will have an opportunity to see Istanbul from the best vantage point, sailing between Asia and Europe. You will see the wonderful Ottoman Palaces like the Dolmabahce Palace in Europe and Beylerbeyi Palace in Asia, as well as old wooden mansions and modern villas, some of the most expensive real estate in the world. You will sail



under the Bosphorus Bridge going by Ortakoy, a quaint village which is the center of night life nowadays, and finally to Rumelihisar, the Fortress that was built in the 1400's by Mehmet the Conqueror, who conquered Constantinople from the Byzantines and made the city, now called Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire. At the end of your cruise enjoy lunch at a seafood restaurant along the Bosphorus. In the afternoon visit **Rustem Pasa Mosque**, famous for its large quantities of exquisite İznik tiles, set in a very wide variety of beautiful floral and geometric designs. Then, stop at the **Spice Bazaar** (Egyptian Bazaar) from the 17th Century, one of the oldest bazaars in the city and the second largest covered shopping complex after the Grand Bazaar. The Spice Bazaar is an "L"-shaped building, consisting of 88 vaulted rooms. Enjoy the aromas and colors of exotic spices and herbs, and food items like the famous Turkish Delight. End your tour with a visit to the **Museum of St. Sophia**, first built



as the biggest Basilica of its time, then converted into a mosque; and it now serves as a museum, displaying beautiful mosaics and great architecture. Then, get your first experience of a **Turkish bath**, in Cagaloglu Hamami, built in the 15th century. You will get a scrub that you never had before! Return to your hotel around 7:00 p.m. Dinner will be either at your hotel restaurant, or at another interesting venue.

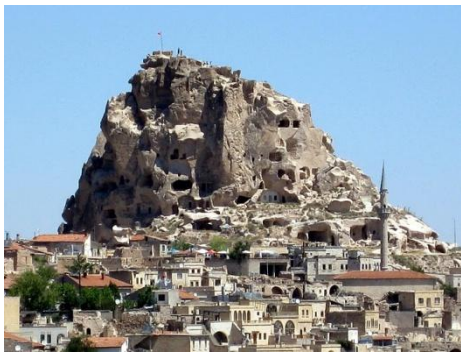
(Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner)

Wednesday, May 16:

CAPPADOCIA

This morning you will be transferred from your hotel to the Istanbul Airport for your flight departing at 12:00

p.m. to Kayseri, one of the two gateways of Cappadocia. This ancient region called Cappadocia means “The Land of Beautiful Horses”. It is indeed a natural wonder that might be reminiscent of lunar landscape with unusual rock formations, but at the same time another wonder created by people with underground cities, cave churches and cave living! When you arrive you will be met by your guide who will start showing you this amazing area with a visit to an underground city,



Kaymakli. Archaeologists estimate that there are at least 30 underground dwellings, some connected by tunnels built over millennia, and first started by the

Hittites around 2,000 B.C. The underground city has 8 stories carved into the ground beneath the surface. They are well lit and there is good ventilation; and it is easy to see the living rooms, dining rooms, kitchens, staples, churches, etc. but you do need to stoop over as the ceilings are very low at certain places. You will be transferred to the *CCR Hotel* in Cappadocia around 5:30 pm. Tonight go to a cave night club where you can watch a Turkish folk dancing/belly dancing and whirling dervishes. **(Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner)**



Thursday, May 17:

CAPPADOCIA

Very early this morning (around 5:30 a.m.) there is an optional hot-air balloon ride, which is an amazing experience as you fly over this unbelievable landscape. When you return at around 8:00 a.m., you can have your breakfast. Afterwards, you will spend the entire day, visiting this amazing land with natural and man-made wonders! Visit the **Goreme Valley, the open-air museum** with its many rock churches that are decorated with frescoes; visit the Peri Bacalari (“Fairy Chimneys”) the towering rock formations that are now the symbol of Cappadocia, and quaint hamlets such as ancient Sinassos (current Mustafapasa) and Avanos, famous for its potteries. Lunch will be in a little village where you can enjoy a home-cooked meal with the villagers, while learning some of the dishes. In Avanos, you can try your hand on an old-fashioned potter’s wheel to make your masterpiece!



Stop at **Zelve, another Open-Air Museum**, where you can see the rock caves used by the early Christian monks in the three valleys of Zelve. Stop at a **local winery** and taste some of the wines produced in this region for thousands of years. Return to your hotel in late afternoon. Dinner will be at a local restaurant. **(Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner)**

Friday, May 18:

EPHESUS / KUSADASI

We will be picked up at 7:15 am for your flight departing Kayseri at 9:10 am and arriving into Izmir at 10:45 am.



Our guide will take us to Ephesus, one of the best preserved cities of antiquity and an open-air Museum. One of the original Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the Temple of Artemis (Diana) was in Ephesus. This comprehensive tour will have you walking over the marble streets of **Ephesus**, adorned on both sides with temples, theaters, fountains, and baths, among other ancient structures. You will have the opportunity to visit the Grand Theater that accommodated over 24,000 people, the ancient marble toilets, and the first advertisement carved on the marble street - giving directions to the “house of ill-repute”! Tour

inside the “**Terrace Houses**”, homes to the wealthy Romans that should afford a rare look into everyday life of a family during the Roman period. Then, enjoy lunch at a charming restaurant featuring traditional dishes made by local produce. The greatness and splendor of ancient Ephesus shall come alive again at the



Archaeological Museum in nearby Selcuk - providing an insight into how life was 2000 years ago! Drive by the site of the **Temple of Artemis**, the Mother Goddess, which was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and the **Basilica of St. John**, believed to have been built over the grave of St. John, relatively well preserved and partially restored where you can



still see the baptismal pools. If interested, you can also visit the **House of the Virgin Mary**, believed to be the last house of Mary and now a place of pilgrimage for the Catholics. Before you go to your hotel in Kusadasi, drive up to the charming hillside village of Sirince, just outside of Ephesus, famous for its fruit wines and olive oil. Taste some of the olive oils and sample their various fruit wines. If time permits, walk on the cobblestone streets of the village and shop for handmade olive oil soap and other hand-made items such as embroidered scarves. Then, drive to Kusadasi for overnight stay at the *Pine Marina Hotel*. (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner)

Saturday, May 19:

APHRODISIAS / PAMUKKALE

Today, a National Holiday in Turkey; you may see the whole country decorated with flags. After breakfast, depart around 8:30 am from Kusadasi to go to **Aphrodisias**, an ancient Roman city which rivals Ephesus in its grandeur and dedicated to Aphrodite, the Mother Goddess of the city. Visit the Theater, the large Stadium, the marble Odeon (concert hall), baths of Hadrian, the Gymnasium, Temple of Aphrodite and other spectacular sites. Enjoy lunch in a charming restaurant and watch the making the Turkish Pizza, which tastes out of this world! Then continue to Pamukkale, one of the natural wonders of Turkey: Pamukkale in



Turkish means “Cotton Castle” because it looks like white castles that are formed by limestone-laden thermal springs that creating unbelievable formations of cataracts and stalactites. It was a healing center in the olden times, where people to be cured with the miraculous thermal waters. Before you check in to your hotel, visit the pools and the ancient ruins of Hieropolis with its extensive ancient cemetery and the theater. Overnight will be at the *Spa Hotel Colossae Thermal or similar*, where you will be treated to a great massage! (Breakfast, lunch and Dinner)

Sunday, May 20:

BODRUM

After breakfast, it’s a 3-hour drive to Bodrum, ancient Halicarnassus, considered to be the “St. Tropez of Turkey”. First visit some of the highlights of Bodrum, such as the site of the Mausoleum of Halikarnassus, one of the Seven Wonders of the World which was built for King Mausolos, and the Castle of St. Peter, built by the Knights and



now housing the Museum of Underwater Archaeology. This museum has an ideal setting in this Crusaders’ Castle with towers and beautifully landscaped grounds where peacocks freely roam! The remains of wrecked ships dating back to prehistoric times have been carefully reconstructed here, as well as over the sight of a Carian princess and her funerary finery displayed alongside a reconstruction of what she might have looked like in life. Then check in to your beautiful hotel, *LaBlanche Hotel*. (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner)

Monday, May 21:

BODRUM

Enjoy your day in Bodrum. (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner)

Tuesday, May 22:

BODRUM

Enjoy your day in Bodrum. (We will request a late checkout). At 5:00 p.m. you will be transferred to Bodrum Airport for Turkish Airlines Flight# 2519, departing at 7:10 p.m. and arriving in Istanbul at 8:20 p.m. Transfer on your own to *International Airport Hotel*. (Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner – served on the plane)

Wednesday, May 23:

DEPARTURE

Transfer to Istanbul Airport for your Lufthansa Flight #1305, departing at 5:05 a.m. back home. (Breakfast)

HOTEL WEBSITES:

Istanbul: Sirkeci Konak Hotel: <http://www.sirkecikonak.com/>

Cappadocia: Cappadocia Cave Resort: <http://www.ccr-hotels.com/index1.htm>

Kusadasi: Pine Marina: <http://www.pinebay.com/>

Pamukkale: Spa Hotel Colossae Thermal: <http://www.colossaehotel.com/>

Bodrum: LaBlanche Hotel: <http://www.lablanchehotel.com/>

Istanbul: International Airport Hotel: <http://www.istanbul-airporthotel.com/index.htm>