

Topdeck

DELVE DEEP: TURKEY



TRIP CODE:

TTUII3

TOPDECKER, meet Europe (TD)

TRIP VIBE = iconic sights and in-depth adventures with a local Trip Leader. An intoxicating mix of continents, culture and cuisine, Turkey is everything you've heard... and then some. Go deeper than the balloon-filled skies of your Instagram account and uncover the real Turkey – from tucking into dinner with a local Cappadocian family to wandering the ancient Greek city of Ephesus, paying your respects at Lone Pine or cruising the aquamarine waters of Fethiye's jagged coast. Oh, and there's more to eat here than Turkish Delight and kebabs.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Delve Deep



Nights



Download app



Meals

Thanks for choosing to holiday with Topdeck

Ready for the time of your LIFE?

The countdown's on...

ABOUT YOUR TRIP NOTES

These Trip Notes contain everything you need to know before your trip departs – from where to meet your Topdeck fam to what we suggest you bring.

Read them on the train, in the supermarket queue or on the loo – we don't mind, just look through them carefully so you know what to expect on your trip. We recommend you download this document so it's with you when you travel (and give a copy to your MVPs so they know what you're up to).

IMPORTANT: please refresh this doc as close to your departure as possible. This means you'll have the most up-to-date info available.

INCLUDED EXPERIENCES

- Walking tour of Istanbul with Trip Leader
- Entry to Topkapi Palace
- Entry to Hagia Sophia
- Entry to Basilica Cistern
- Entry to the Blue Mosque
- Orientation walk of Eskisehir with Trip Leader
- Photo opportunity at Tuz Gölü (Salt Lake)
- Visit Love Valley
- Photo opportunity at Avcilar Valley
- Orientation walk of Antalya with Trip Leader
- Visit Saklikent Gorge
- Visit the ruins of Hierapolis
- Visit Pamukkale Natural Park
- Entrance to the ancient Greek city of Ephesus
- Entrance to Pergamon Acropolis
- Entrance to Troy, a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Gallipoli visit including Lone Pine, Chunuk Bair and ANZAC Cove

YOUR TRIP WILL START

PICK UP:

Istanbul
Turkey

YOUR TRIP WILL FINISH

DROP OFF:

Istanbul
Turkey

TRIP CURRENCIES

- Turkey - TRY

YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 | ISTANBUL (TURKEY)

Ancient ruins. Colourful bazaars. Intoxicating flavours. And a unique culture waiting to be discovered. Welcome to Turkey! Check into the hotel and meet the gang – we're a mixed bunch but are all in it together, just like it should be. Tonight, start your Turkish love affair with an included dinner at a local restaurant – then watch Hagia Sofia turn a million shades of orange as the sun sets on your first day. Sh*t, this is gonna be good.



MEALS:

- Dinner

DAY 2 | ISTANBUL

Rise and shine – if the call to prayer didn't wake you, the anticipation for today will. First up: a walking tour to soak up the city's icons. We'll roam the courts and pavilions of Ottoman sultans at Topkapi Palace. Wander the home of Byzantine entertainment at the Hippodrome. Gawp at the mesmerising interior of the Blue Mosque. Head into the cavernous depths of the Basilica Cistern. And be swept away in Hagia Sophia's beauty. Then? The rest is up to you. Get lost amongst the maze of jewellery, lanterns, rugs and everything-in-between stalls of the Grand Bazaar. Sip on Turkish coffee at one of Yildiz Park's old-school pavilions. Or take the ferry across to Asia for an explore (yeah, this place straddles two continents – cool, right?). Tonight, seek out somewhere local for a drool-worthy kebab or share meze with your trip mates. Think: Turkish tapas board. Mmm.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Istanbul with Trip Leader
- Entry to Topkapi Palace
- Entry to Hagia Sophia
- Entry to Basilica Cistern
- Entry to the Blue Mosque

DAY 3 | ISTANBUL – ESKISEHIR

Wave goodbye to Istanbul – we're rolling on to the vibrant city of Eskisehir (es-kee-sheh-heer). Literally meaning 'old city', this place has a history that dates back to 3000 BC. Get your bearings on an orientation walk with our expert Trip Leader – before heading out to do your own thing. Need some suggestions? Wander the banks of the Porsuk River. Check out the old Odunpazari quarter. Then, seek out a local haunt for some çigbörek – meat filled pastries deep fried to perfection. Yes please. Thanks to the university here, the nightlife is pumping – so gather the gang, track down a bar and get ready to discover it like a local.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Orientation walk of Eskisehir with Trip Leader

DAY 4 | ESKISEHIR – CAPPADOCIA

No lies – today is a bit of a drive day. BUT we've got some awesome stops to make. First: check out the out-of-this-world Tuz Gölü (aka Salt Lake). Then: there's the opportunity to head underground and take a peek at Cappadocia's famous cave dwellings. Used as a place of hiding for centuries, this maze of hand-carved passages, tunnels and rooms is 100% worth an explore. Trust us. Feeling a bit tense from all the coach-napping and cave-exploring? We got you. Sign up for an optional Turkish Bath experience later. The Ottomans have been raving about it since 1405. Meaning? It's gotta be good. Tonight's included dinner is Turkish home-cooking at its best. Grab a cushion and tuck in – this is as authentic as it gets.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Photo opportunity at Tuz Gölü (Salt Lake)



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Visit Saratli Underground City: from 25 TL
- Turkish Bath experience: from €45

DAY 5 | CAPPADOCIA

You've seen the balloon-filled skies of Cappadocia on Instagram. Now it's time to experience it without the filter. Jump on an optional hot air balloon ride, and watch the sun rise over the otherworldly valley – prepare to be WOWed. Then? We'll head to Göreme National Park to explore more 4th-century dwellings, rock-carved churches and Byzantine artwork. Take in all the views from Uchisar Castle, before we check out the impressive structures of Love Valley. Tonight, let the pros show you how it's done at a traditional Turkish dance show. Disclaimer: don't try Dervish whirling unsupervised.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit Love Valley
- Photo opportunity at Avcilar Valley



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Visit Göreme Open-Air Museum: from 150 TL
- Visit Uchisar Castle: from 50 TL
- Traditional Turkish dance show: from €45
- Hot air balloon ride: from €320

DAY 6 | CAPPADOCIA – ANTALYA

Onwards! We're swapping psychedelic rock valleys for glittering turquoise beaches. Today's drive to Antalya is your chance to catch up on some zzzs, pump the tunes and message the rents (you'll be too busy later, trust us). Dump your stuff at the hotel and head out on an orientation walk with your in-the-know Trip Leader. Then: the rest is up to you. Soak up some rays at Konyaalti Beach. Relax at a local hammam. Explore the cobblestone streets of Kaleiçi. Seek out some fresh AF seafood and meze. Then, head up to Karaalioglu Park for alllll the sunset views over the Med.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Orientation walk of Antalya with Trip Leader

DAY 7 | ANTALYA – FETHIYE

Squeeze in one last dip before we make tracks to Fethiye (feh-tee-yeh). But first: we'll make a pit stop at one of the world's deepest canyons. You charged your camera, right? Take an optional wading tour through the crystal-clear water of Saklikent Gorge – surrounded by towering canyon walls and rushing rapids, sexy reef shoes are a must. Or sit back with a Turkish tea and enjoy the serenity. Later we'll roll into the aquamarine paradise of F-Town. Locals say this place was gifted to Earth by God – when you see the beaches, you'll know why. Tonight, get the gang together for an included dinner and watch the sunset over the harbour. This is livin'.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit Saklikent Gorge



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Saklikent Gorge tour: from 25 TL

DAY 8 | FETHIYE

You've got 24 hrs to do your own this-is-what-I-came-for-thing. Need some suggestions? Sign up for an optional cruise around the islands, and spend the day worshipping the sun aboard a traditional Turkish gulet. Treat your eyeballs to some I-N-C-R-E-D-I-B-L-E views, in between refreshing dips in turquoise water and catching some zzzs above deck. Prefer dry land? Easy. History buffs should take a trip to the ghost city of Kayaköy. Adrenalin enthusiasts find a seat at Zirve Bar to watch the paragliders do their thing off Mt Babadag (or partake, if that's your thing). Then, burn off those second helpings of baklava with a hike to Amyntas Rock Tomb. Top tip: go later for alllll the sunset views.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Islands of Fethiye day cruise: from €60

DAY 9 | FETHIYE – PAMUKKALE – KUSADASI

That's not a hot spring, THIS is a hot spring. We're headed inland to check out the World Heritage-listed 'Cotton Castle' of Pamukkale. The gleaming white terraces are on alllll the socials (eye roll), but they're even more incredible in person. Trust us. Wade in the warm, mineral-rich waters. Explore the ancient Greek-Roman ruins of Hierapolis. Or unleash your inner Cleopatra with a soak in the Antique Pool. Then? We've got our GPS set for Kusadasi, where an included dinner and rooftop cocktails along the glittering Aegean Coast awaits.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit the ruins of Hierapolis
- Visit Pamukkale Natural Park



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Hierapolis Archaeology Museum: from 200 TL

DAY 10 | KUSADASI, INCLUDING EPHEBUS

Ready to tick a Wonder of the Ancient World off your list? Thought so. Channel all the Indiana Jones vibes as we check out the ruins of Ephesus. Jump on a guided tour or explore the Temple of Hadrian, forgotten city halls, massive amphitheatre and statue-lined Curetes Way on your own. Don't leave without gawping at the Temple of Artemis – this one's for the memory bank. Back in Kusadasi, the afternoon is yours for the taking. Cross over to Pigeon Island and check out the Byzantine fortress (birds not included). Hit the beach in town or journey south to buzzing Kadinlar Denizi. Flex your haggling skills at the Grand Bazaar. Or hunt down a harbourfront restaurant for fresher-than-fresh seafood. This is what you came for.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Entrance to the ancient Greek city of Ephesus



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Guided tour of the ancient Greek city of Ephesus: from 200 TL

DAY 11 | KUSADASI – TROY – ÇANAKKALE

From one ancient archaeological site to another – we're making tracks to the impressive Pergamon Acropolis. Catch all the panoramas as we ride the cable car to the top. Then: wander through the colossal marble columns, explore ancient libraries, altars and temples – and soak up the views from the world's steepest ancient amphitheatre. Tip: don't look down. After, we're setting our sights on the Ruins of Troy. Thanks to Brad Pitt's oiled six-pack you know part of the story, but our expert Trip Leader will help set the REAL scene as we wander around what's left of this legendary city. We're winding things up in the waterfront city of Çanakkale tonight.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Entrance to Pergamon Acropolis
- Entrance to Troy, a UNESCO World Heritage Site

DAY 12 | ÇANAKKALE – GALLIPOLI – ISTANBUL

Today, we'll make our way back to Istanbul. But first: Gallipoli – the historic peninsula with views stretching out over idyllic sandy beaches. We'll pay our respects at the Australian War Memorial at Lone Pine and the New Zealand Memorial at Chunuk Bair. Then it's onto ANZAC Cove and the Turkish Memorial for a chance to stop and reflect on a piece of the past that changed the histories of Australia, New Zealand and Turkey forever. Back in Istanbul, we've got one last group dinner together. Suck up those tears – we're going to give this unbelievable trip the send-off it deserves!



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Gallipoli visit including Lone Pine, Chunuk Bair and ANZAC Cove

DAY 13 | ISTANBUL

1 country. 13 days. Ancient wonders. Scenic stunners. And countless good times with a bunch of randoms, who are now like family. Get down to breakfast and swap those contact deets – you're going to need them for that reunion trip. Then, squeeze in one last dondurma (Turkish ice cream) before you go. Where to next?



MEALS:

- Breakfast

OTHER INFORMATION

TOPDECK APP

Feeling appy? Download the Topdeck app and get PUMPED for the adventure ahead. Best bit is: from 45 days before departure you'll be able to chat with your soon-to-be tripmates.

Plus, get your itinerary at your fingertips – so you know where you'll be going and what you'll be doing on each day of your trip. Nice!

Links:

Apple <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/topdeck/id994727866>

Android <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.FlexiTechSolutions.TopDeck&hl=en>



YOUR SAFETY

NIGHTS OUT

We love a good night out – experiencing the nightlife and entertainment places have to offer is a big part of travelling. But alongside the fun it's important to be aware of your surroundings and personal safety.

When you're out late, remember to avoid walking alone – particularly through deserted areas like beaches and back streets. Always stick together, take a registered taxi where possible, and keep a note of your accommodation so you can find your way back to your fellow Topdeckers if you become separated. Make sure you have your trip mates' mobile numbers in case you need to get hold of them while out and about.

In some countries, alcoholic measures can be considerably larger than what you may be used to. Try to keep track of what you're drinking – and if you see one of your trip mates looking a little worse for wear, take them back to your accommodation. Never leave your drink unattended.

It's also important to be aware that what you might consider harmless flirting may be interpreted differently in some countries. Be yourself and have fun, but stay savvy – you don't want to find yourself in an uncomfortable situation.

DRUG USE

Topdeck has a strict zero-tolerance drug policy. Customers should not bring any illegal substances onto the Topdeck coach or into any of the accommodation we stay in on our trips. This includes marijuana – even if it is legal in some of the states your trip passes through. If you are found in possession of drugs, you will be removed from the trip immediately. All instances of drug possession will be reported to Topdeck Head Office, who may consider alerting the relevant authorities.

REMEMBER: if you are found in possession of drugs, not only do you risk getting in trouble with the local police, but our Driver will also be held responsible if they are found on the Topdeck coach. Trust us, you don't want that to happen to any of our Drivers – they're awesome.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Culture shock, homesickness, random periods of feeling down – these things happen and are totally normal. You can rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Topdeck crew will do their utmost to cheer you up.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- Call home. Sometimes it's nice to hear a familiar voice and have a good old-fashioned catch up with your loved ones
- Eat well. Never underestimate the power of a good, wholesome meal. Nobody feels at their best when they're hungry!

- Drink responsibly. Not only will you swerve the dreaded hangover, but by keeping an eye on what you drink you could also avoid getting into any potentially uncomfortable situations
- Talk to your Trip Leader. Don't forget, they're probably far from home too – so they're sure to know some tried- and- tested ways to beat the blues
- Integrate with your fellow Topdeckers. This one is key! The more fun you're having on your trip, the less likely you are to feel homesick (fact!)

TRAVEL SINCE COVID-19

Travel looks a bit different since COVID-19. That's why we've put some new procedures in place to help keep you safe on the road.

What remains the same? Your Topdeck trip will be run hygienically, responsibly, and with your safety at the forefront of everything we do. End of.

Here's the info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/travel-safely>

RESPECT ON THE ROAD

RESPECTING FELLOW TRAVELLERS

Our trips are for everyone. We're a family – and we want every Topdecker to have an incredible time.

What we're not about is excluding people or making them feel like they don't belong. That's why we always encourage Topdeckers to be kind and courteous to their fellow tripmates . The golden rules? Respect each other's space, be mindful of causing excessive noise in shared accommodation, and treat others how you'd wish to be treated. Easy!

HOW TO BE A RESPONSIBLE TRAVELLER

Responsible travel isn't difficult to achieve. With a little conscious thought and preparation, you can have an awesome adventure AND a positive impact on the places you visit. Sweet!

Here are five things you can do to ensure you're travelling responsibly:

- Conserve water. You know the drill – reuse your room towels, take short showers and remember to turn off the tap when you're brushing your teeth
- Reduce your waste. Ditch the plastic bag, refuse unnecessary packaging, dispose of your waste responsibly and recycle as much as possible
- Go local. Hunt down locally owned and operated restaurants and bars, shop in local markets, and book tours and activities run by local guides
- Consider the wildlife. Avoid any attractions that involve closely engaging with wild animals
- Respect local people and culture. Obeying local laws is a given – but also remember to dress and behave in a manner appropriate to the community. Be polite and keep an open mind!

INSURANCE

Before your trip departs, it's compulsory for all passengers to take out comprehensive travel insurance covering cancellation, medical expenses (including repatriation), loss or damage to baggage and personal belongings, money and personal liability.

Head to our FAQ for more info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/faqs-0>

Got more Qs? Chat with our Customer Service team: <https://www.topdeck.travel/about-us/contact>

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Please make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your trip. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your trip's departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling. Check out our handy interactive map showing global visa requirements:

<https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/latest-border-restrictions>

PLEASE NOTE: some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure, as requirements do change periodically.

TIPPING

Basically: it's not necessary.

Your Trip Leader and Driver don't expect tips, and they won't ask for any either. Meaning? More dollar to spend on optional activities (and a souvenir for your nan).

WHAT TO BRING

Based on our experience, these items are key. Everyone's different though – so if you want to bring more or less, go for it (as long as you don't exceed your 20kg allowance, that is!).

Off to Japan? Your luggage must be no bigger than 160cm in total (height x width x length). So maybe leave the hairdryer at home.

Psst: this is a packing list for Topdeck trips in general. Obv you'd look silly splashing around the Greek islands in a snowsuit.

- 1 pair of comfortable walking shoes + 1 pair of smart casual shoes
- 1 pair of thongs/jandals/flip-flops
- 2 pairs of jeans/trousers
- 2 pairs of shorts/skirts
- 4 shirts/T-shirts
- 2 sweaters/jumpers
- Smart casual evening wear
- 1 warm jacket + 1 rainproof jacket

- Underwear and socks + swimwear
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Hat and sunscreen
- Basic medical kit (including plasters, aspirin etc)
- Adaptor plug
- Reusable water bottle
- Snow gear



THAT'S IT!