

A Private Anatolian Adventure

September 30 – October 14, 2010 (15 days/14 nights)

\$2999 USD pp double occupancy



Join Brenda Farrell, Lifestyle and Turkey Travel Specialist with [Renshaw Travel Ltd.](#) on a two-week private adventure in Turkey that includes city, village, islands, river, sea and fascinating lunar landscapes. A frequent visitor to Turkey, a collector of ancient and traditional crafts and textiles and a self-proclaimed “foodie” Brenda knows the who... what ... and where ...in many of the areas we will visit and your experience on this trip will provide you with a lifetime of stories to share with friends and family at the dinner table for years to come. *Please note that space on this unique trip is limited to just 12 guests.*

September 30, Thursday, arrive ISTANBUL

Upon arrival at the Istanbul International Airport, meet your guide in the arrivals hall and transfer to your hotel. Remainder of day at leisure.

Dinner suggested at your hotel.

Overnight at [Blue House Hotel](#)

October 1, Friday, ISTANBUL

Today enjoy your walking tour in the old city. Start with a visit the **Underground Cistern**. It was built by Justinian in the 6th century. It is 70 meters wide and 140 meters long, with a capacity of 80,000 m³ of water. It has 336 beautiful columns that support the cistern, two of which are carved with the head of Medusa on the plinth.



Next visit will be to the **Hippodrome**, which was one of the largest chariot race grounds of the Byzantine Empire. You will take a short walk to the **Blue Mosque**, completed in 1616, it is a triumph of harmony, proportion and elegance. The mosque was a part of a complex also including, tombs, fountains, kitchens, and a bath. Its colourful 260 windows enable the sunlight to reach inside. This makes the interior unusually light. The blue Iznik Tiles covering the walls have given the mosque its popular name, Blue Mosque.



Your guide will suggest a restaurant for your lunch.

After your lunch you will walk to **St. Sophia**, the church of the Divine Wisdom, the architectural marvel of all time. It was built during Emperor Justinian reign (AD 537) and it remained the greatest church in Christendom until the conquest of Constantinople in 1453 by Sultan Mehmet II who ordered to convert Hagia Sophia into a Mosque. In 1934, Atatürk proclaimed it a museum. The walls of this beautiful piece



of architecture are decorated with gorgeous mosaics.

Visit the 16th Century palace of the Sultan's Grand Vizier, Ibrahim Pasa, which today houses the **Turkish and Islamic Art Museum**. The museum contains what many consider to be the finest collection of Islamic artifacts in the world. The museum is well laid out and contains more rare examples of ceramics, Koran cases, calligraphy, textiles, metalwork and illuminated manuscripts. Its antique carpet exhibit is renowned; the carpets, kilims and prayer rugs form one of the richest and oldest collections in the world.

At the end of your day, you will return to your hotel.

Tonight dinner will be served at **Hamdi Restaurant** which serves unrivalled delicious kebabs of Southeastern Region of Turkey.

Overnight at Blue House Hotel (B/D)

October 2, Saturday, ISTANBUL

Today, we will explore the Princes Islands that lie approximately seven miles off Istanbul without a Guide. We will take public ferry to visit the two islands of **Buyuk Ada** and **Heybeli**.

The nine islands that make up the Princes Islands have a colorful history of being home to many banished members of royal families and public figures. In the later half of the 19th century several wealthy families and foreigners settled on the islands, leaving a legacy of ornate Victorian mansions and beautiful churches. Another quaint feature of the islands is that motorized transport is banned, so to get around the islands you can hire a bicycle or a horse drawn phaeton.



First visit **Heybeli**, the second largest island. Heybeli is home to a Naval High School and a Greek Orthodox School of Theology (the school is closed but the library is still open for Orthodox scholars.) It is enjoyable to wander the streets of Heybeli admiring the architecture of the Victorian mansions.

Next is **Buyuk Ada**, the largest island, here it is recommended you tour the island by horse drawn phaeton. At the highest point of Buyuk Ada is the Monastery of St George, it is a 20 minute walk to the monastery from the phaeton park. Returning to the town centre you may like to enjoy **lunch** at one of the seafood restaurants.



In the afternoon catch the ferry back to Istanbul.

Next visit the cavernous **Egyptian Spice Bazaar** where tastes and smells from the orient assault your senses. The Spice Bazaar continues to be an exotic trading house for dried herbs, spices and exotic condiments. You can also find colorful local produce, fresh cheeses, pickles and other Turkish specialties such as sucuk (chorizo-like sausages) and pastirma (cured beef). There will be ample time to stock up on saffron, Turkish apricots and freshly made Turkish Delight.



Last, you will visit the famous **Grand Bazaar** to explore ninety-two streets of the largest and oldest covered bazaar in Turkey with more than 4,000 shops. A variety of Turkish Handicrafts, Oriental carpets, rare jewels and inexpensive souvenirs all sold in small shops next to each other. The streets are named according to the trades, such as gold and silver sellers, carpet sellers, booksellers, etc. The most oriental atmosphere in Istanbul is found in the bazaar. At the end of the day, walk to your hotel.

Tonight we will explore the local area and have dinner at one of the excellent koftecisi in Sultanahmet. **Overnight at Blue House Hotel (B)**

October 3, Sunday, ISTANBUL to BOZCAADA

Today enjoy a relaxed morning at your hotel. **At 2:00pm** depart your hotel and transfer to the Istanbul Airport for your flight **TK2586** departing at **4:15pm** and arriving Canakkale at **5:15pm**. Transfer to the pier and embark on a ferry to Bozcaada departing at 7:00pm.

Arrive in Bozcaada, transfer to your hotel, check-in and relax.

Overnight at Kaikias Hotel (B)

October 4, Monday, BOZCAADA

After breakfast you will discover **Bozcaada Island**. Bozcaada is believed to have been established by Pelags two thousand years ago. A few hundred years after its establishment, the island was captured and destroyed by the Persians, as was many other islands in the area. The Persian incursions were followed by the attacks of Alexander the Great, Romans, the Crusaders and soldiers from Venice, Genoa and Byzantines. The island became a part of the Ottoman Empire in the 15th century after the Turkish people started to settle on the island in the 14th century. During the 18th century, it was briefly captured by the Russians and then taken back by the Ottoman navy.



We will enjoy lunch in a local restaurant. After lunch you will discover the small Rengigul Art Gallery where you can see the different paintings of various artists. The Gallery was a Greek Mansion built in 1876 and it began to serve as an Art Gallery in 1997.



Next we will have a special visit to the **Corvus Vineyards** where we will enjoy tasting local wines and exploring the processes behind production of their delicious wines.

Dinner is suggested at one of the local restaurants in the island.

Overnight at Kaikias Hotel (B)

October 5, Tuesday, BOZCAADA to AYVALIK

After checking out of our hotel we will take a ferry back to the main land and drive to Ayvalik, surrounded by the olive groves that produce much of Turkey's best olive oil. Ayvalik has an interesting history. After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Ottoman Greeks of Ayvalik moved to Greece, and Turkish citizens of Greece moved to Ayvalik. Thus, even after the Greeks left, you could still hear Greek spoken in the streets of Ayvalik, although the speakers were Turkish Muslims who had grown up in Greece.



Enjoy a walking tour in the beautiful Aegean town of Cunda.

Overnight at Halic Park Hotel in Ayvalik (B)

October 6, Wednesday, AYVALIK to ALACATI

After your breakfast depart your hotel and drive to **Alacati** which is one of Aegean Turkey's up-and-coming vacation getaway havens. Visitors come for the charming old stone houses on narrow streets lined with sidewalk cafes, restaurants and boutiques. Among the most eager visitors are windsurfers, who come for the predictable brisk winds in a safe, sandy Bay.



Enjoy a walking tour in this charming village.

Do not miss trying the local preserves, coffee, ice cream and desserts made with mastic gum from the local Mastic trees - which are a specialty of the region.

Tonight dinner is suggested at Tuval Restaurant.

Overnight at Alacati Zeytin Konak Hotel (B)

October 7, Thursday, ALACATI to BODRUM

After your breakfast depart your hotel and drive approximately 3 ½ hours to reach Bodrum. Along the way, we will stop for photo opps as they occur and street markets as discovered.

Enjoy an afternoon at leisure.

Overnight at Marina Vista Hotel (B)

October 8, Friday, BODRUM

After your breakfast depart hotel for your full day Bodrum tour.

First you will see the collections of the **Museum of Underwater Archeology**, located inside the castle. The museum, the most important of its kind in the world, contains treasures from a series of historic wrecks discovered along Turkey's southern shores. Mycenaean and Canaanite artifacts recovered from an 12th century B.C. wreck found off Cape Gelidonya (Antalya) in 1960 formed the original core of the museum. On display in the castle's Gothic Chapel is a full-scale reconstruction of one third of an Eastern Roman wreck from the 7th century A.D. You will also see the finds from the world's oldest known shipwreck, a 14th century B.C. vessel excavated off Uluburun (Kas).



In the castle, you will also visit the **Glasswreck Hall**. During the summers of 1977 through the Institute of Nautical Archaeology (INA) with the Bodrum Museum of Underwater Archaeology excavated a medieval shipwreck at Serce Limani, a natural harbor on the southern Turkish Coast. The ship had set sail in around 1025 A.D from the southern part of the Syrian coast, then ruled by the Fatimid Caliphs, and was carrying a variety of cargoes, including 3 tons of glass cullet in the form of raw glass and broken glassware.

In another section is the **Carian Princess** exhibit which evokes the last days of the ancient greatness of Halicarnassus, the capital city of Caria and the site on which today's Bodrum stands. It is a reminder of the Hecatomnid dynasty that ruled Caria from 392 B.C. until the city fell to the Macedonian armies of Alexander the Great, a disaster from which it never recovered.

Next, transfer to Bodrum Marina to embark your gulet. Board your privately chartered **Gulet**, a typical wooden sailing yacht from the region. The gulet will cruise and anchor in secluded bays where you can enjoy swimming in the crystal waters of the Aegean Sea. Your chef will prepare a fresh seafood lunch to enjoy on the stern deck of the gulet, with chilled wine, beer or soft drinks. There is plenty of space on the yacht to enjoy both sunbathing and relaxing in the shade.

Overnight at Marina Vista Hotel (B, L)



October 9, Saturday, BODRUM to SIRINCE

After your breakfast, depart your hotel and drive approximately 3 hours to reach the peaceful village of **Sirince**. It is an old Greek village most famous for its local wine, olive oil. Today the village is a perfect synthesis of Turkish-Greek culture and the architecture displays a good example of 19th century Anatolian style where houses are rather well preserved.

We will have a quiet walk through the village and you are reminded to try some of the local fruit wines. Also, browse in the market area where you can find some charming handicrafts made by village women.

Dinner tonight is suggested in the restaurant of your beautiful boutique hotel.

Overnight at Gullu Konaklari (B)

October 10, Sunday, EPHEBUS

First, you will visit the **House of the Virgin Mary**, where it is believed she spent the last years of her life. The house was discovered in 1891 based on the visions of a German nun. Pope Paul VI visited the shrine in 1967, Pope John Paul II came in 1979 and Pope Benedict XVI visited in 2006. You will celebrate a private mass just outside the Virgin Mary House which is a truly humbling experience.

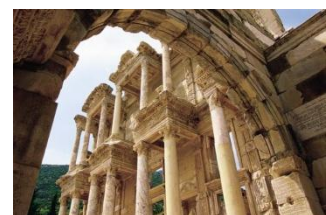
Next visit the site of **Ephesus**. Paul lived, taught and preached here for two years of his life and Ephesus was the first church addressed in the Revelations (*1:11, 2:1-7 Acts 18:19-28, 19:1-41*) (*Ephesians 19:24-40*).

Next you will see one of the first monuments **Hadrian's Temple**. It was dedicated in 118 AD to Hadrian, Artemis, and the people of Ephesus but greatly reconstructed in the 4th century. This impressive Corinthian style temple has beautiful reliefs on the porch. According to the belief of Ephesians, the Medusa head on the porch, would protect the city from its enemies.



Next visit the spectacular **Terrace Houses** (Villas) located on the hillside within the City of Ephesus. They were inhabited by wealthy Ephesians, and are finely decorated with mosaics and frescos. The Terrace Houses were brought to light in excavations carried out since the 1980's. Along with those in Pompeii, they constitute some of the most vivid examples of Roman domestic architecture to survive to the present.

Proceed to **Celsus Library** the best preserved structure of its kind. The inscription on the side of the building's front staircase says that the library was built by Julius, in his father's honour. Celsus was the Roman governor of Asia Minor early in the 2nd Century AD. The façade of the library is embellished with four statues personifying virtue, wisdom, fate and genius.



The **Great Theatre** in Ephesus, dates back to the Hellenistic period. In the 1st century AD it was successfully reconstructed, expanded by the Romans until it reached the seating capacity of 25,000. This is where

Paul was known to preach and it still used for classical performances today. The **Marble Road**, runs between the Library of Celsus and the theater and is a part of the sacred walk way.

Lunch is suggested at **Selcuk Koftecisi** where you can taste local-style meatballs. If you are vegetarian, don't fret as you will always find something delicious to eat in Turkey!

After your lunch visit the **Ephesus Museum**. Many of the artifacts displayed here were found in Ephesus and other ancient sites in the region. Highlights include the Fresco of Socrates and the Statues of Eros. There are also crosses, coins and many objects from the 1st century AD, such as glass trays and theatrical masks.

At the end of the day you will return to your hotel. Dinner suggested in a restored stone school house building, now the **Artemis Restaurant**.

Overnight at Gullu Konaklari (B)

October 11, Monday, IZMIR to CAPPADOCIA

After an early breakfast depart your hotel at **8:00am** and transfer to Izmir Airport for your flight **TK2313** departing at **10:00am** and arriving Istanbul at **11:10am**. Connect to your flight **TK2012** departing at **12:00pm** and arriving Kayseri at **1:25pm**.

The region of **Cappadocia**, the jewel of Central Anatolia, and home to a bewitching landscape of spectacularly eroded tuff (hardened volcanic ash). The most famous and characteristic feature of the landscape are the remarkable conical rock outcrops know as fairy chimneys. The softness of the tuff made it easy to excavate and create dwellings; whole cities were constructed underground as well as hundreds of rock-cut chapels, beautifully frescoed churches and monasteries.



First drive to **Mustafapasa** (Sinassos), a charming village with spectacular old Greek style houses, and fine examples of typical Greek stone house architecture. Lunch is suggested at the **Old Greek House Restaurant**, where you can taste a homemade meal cooked by the local village women.

Visit **Zelve**, where three canyons meet in the Valley of Monks. The rock face at Zelve is honeycombed with caves and churches, and much of the decoration inside the churches is symbolic. You will visit the two most interesting churches; The Church of Grapes and the Fish Church. Next, you will drive through the spectacular **Pasabag Valley**, enjoy a photo stop and capture wonderful images of the unique landscape.

At the end of the day check into your hotel and relax.

Overnight at Yunak Houses in Cappadocia (B)

October 12, Tuesday, CAPPADOCIA

Wake-up early to get ready for your morning ballooning experience. You will float over Cappadocia for one hour and see the fantastic landscape, going down into the valleys. It is an unforgettable experience. After your experience, you will return to your hotel for breakfast. **(OPTIONAL)**



First you will visit the **Pigeon Valley**. The name refers to the thousands of pigeon houses that have been carved into the soft tufa since ancient times. Although they can be found throughout Cappadocia, they are especially plentiful in this valley which must have one of the greatest collections of pigeon lofts in the world. They were carved wherever space allowed including abandoned caves and the walls of collapsed churches.

Then, we make a stop in the picturesque village of **Uchisar**; the village offers great views of the Cappadocian landscapes. If you are feeling energetic you can climb the medieval rock-cut castle for unparalleled views over the valleys.



Next you will visit the **Goreme Open Air Museum**, Goreme valley holds the highest concentration of rock-cut chapels and monasteries in Cappadocia. View the churches with superb Byzantine frescoes depicting scenes from the Old and New Testaments, the life of Christ and deeds of the Saints.

Lunch is suggested at **Dimrit Restaurant**.

After your lunch you will visit the pretty town of **Avanos**, which has long been a centre for pottery artisans as it lies on the banks of the **Red River** where clay supplies were traditionally abundant. Enjoy a visit to a pottery workshop to meet the artisans and see their collections displayed in a vast underground cave complex.

Next you will drive to the **Ozkonak Underground City**. In order to protect themselves from invading armies, Cappadocians dug complete cities underground. Whenever they felt threatened, they would move their families and livestock into underground cities where they could live comfortably for many months. You can see evidence of stables, grain storage rooms, wineries, kitchens and ventilation systems.

At the end of the day we will return our hotel.

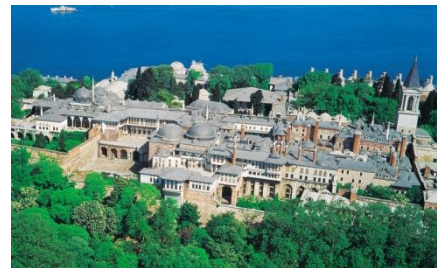
Dinner is suggested at **Somine Restaurant** in Urgup where you will taste delicious local cuisine in an authentic atmosphere.

Overnight at Yunak Houses in Cappadocia. (B)

October 13, Wednesday, CAPPADOCIA to ISTANBUL

Depart your hotel at **10:30am** for your flight to Istanbul TK2009, departing Nevsehir at **12:00noon** and arriving Istanbul at 1:20pm.

Visit the magnificent **Topkapi Palace Museum**. Gain a fascinating insight into this grandiose complex of buildings that formed the residence of the Sultans and the women of the Harem for 400 years. There are four main courtyards which contain extensive gardens, pavilions, fountains, royal gates, divans, kitchens, library, mosques and the Harem. Visit the **Treasury** which houses a glittering collection of jewels, arms and armor, ceramics, imperial costumes and miniatures. It is in the Treasury you will find the famous Spoonmakers Diamond and Topkapi Dagger. Explore the private areas of the palace and learn some of the colorful stories of the infamous **Harem** – the residence of the Sultan's wives, concubines and children who were guarded by black eunuchs. There will be time for contemplation in the pavilions while imagining a scene when the gardens were once lit by candles atop tortoises' backs.



Next enjoy shopping in the **Fatih Market** which is one of the most famous local street markets in Istanbul. Shop around the market area where you can find many charming textile fabrics, handicrafts etc.

At the end of the day return to your hotel.

Tonight you will enjoy a lovely farewell dinner in the courtyard garden of a **restored Ottoman Mansion. *Overnight at Blue House Hotel (B/D)***

October 14, Thursday, depart ISTANBUL

Depart your hotel and transfer to Istanbul International airport for your homebound flight. **(B)**

Price

\$2999 USD per person, land only, based on double occupancy.

Single supplement: **\$795 USD** pp.

A 20% deposit will hold your place. Balance is payable 60 days prior to departure.

Hot Air Balloon Special: **120 Euros** per person payable in Cappadocia for one hour flight.

Included Services:

- 4 nights accommodation at Blue House Hotel in Istanbul, Standard Rooms
- 2 nights accommodation at Kaikias Hotel, Standard Rooms
- 1 night accommodation at Halic Park Hotel in Ayvalik, Standard Rooms
- 1 night accommodation at Alacati Zeytin Konak, Standard Rooms
- 2 nights accommodation at Marina Vista Hotel in Bodrum, Standard Rooms
- 2 nights accommodation at Gullu Konaklari Boutique Hotel in Sirince Village, Mansion Room
- 2 nights accommodation at Yunak Houses Hotel in Urgup, Standard Rooms
- 11 days of private sightseeing
- Licensed professional tour guide in English language
- Entrance fees to all museums, parks, and historic sites as marked on the itinerary
- A deluxe air-conditioned vehicle with a professional driver
- Daily Breakfasts, 1 lunch and 2 Dinners
- Two drinks per person (soft, beer or wine) included with lunches
- Domestic flights Istanbul/Canakkale, Izmir/Istanbul/Kayseri, Nevsehir/Istanbul, economy class
- Private Gulet Charter on October 8th with lunch on board
- Ferry tickets to and from Bozcaada
- All arrival and departure transfers and baggage handling
- All guide and driver meals where necessary
- Restaurant gratuities for all included meals
- Hotel gratuities
- Unlimited bottled water provided throughout the tour
- Welcome Package
- All taxes

Not included:

- International airfares
- Meals not shown as included in the itinerary
- Transportation to suggested dinners
- Gratuities for guides, drivers and gulet crew
- Passport or Turkish visa charges
- Items of a personal nature
- Activities on October 2nd
- Hot Air Ballooning in Cappadocia on October 12th