



# TIMELESS

## TOURS & TRAVEL

FOR THE DISCERNING TRAVELLER

### 2018 ISTANBUL REGULAR TOUR ITINERARIES

All prices are in Australian Dollars unless otherwise stated

27/7/18

#### 1. IMPERIAL TOUR – Mornings, Daily plus Tuesday Afternoons \$71 per person

The tour begins in Sultanahmet district, the heart of old Istanbul, at **Saint Sophia**. Built by Roman Emperor Justinian in the 6<sup>th</sup> century AD, this church is one of the marvels of world architecture and its massive dome dominates the skyline. It is famed for its frescoes and mosaics, including glittering portraits of emperors and empresses. Next, visit the **Blue Mosque**, which owes its name to the exquisite tiles adorning its interior. Dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it is the only imperial mosque with six minarets. Next visit the **Hippodrome**, the stadium of ancient Byzantium which held 100,000 spectators and featured objects from all corners of the empire. Of these, an **Egyptian obelisk** and a bronze sculpture of three entwined serpents from Delphi survive. The **Grand Bazaar** was the commercial heart of the old city and its 4,000 shops are still full of treasures – including carpets and kilims, silks, jewellery, ceramics, icons, and leather goods. Wander through the Bazaar and do some shopping, Ottoman style.

*Note: On Mondays when Saint Sophia is closed, visit Chora Church, also renowned for its mosaics and frescoes. The Grand Bazaar is closed on Sundays.*

#### 2. OTTOMAN SPLENDOURS – Afternoons except Tuesdays \$71 per person

We begin at **Topkapı Palace**, which, from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, was the principal residence of the Ottoman Sultans. Visit the fabulous **Imperial Treasury** and the **Baghdad Kiosk**. Topkapı Palace, now a museum, has unrivalled collections of jewellery, including the **Spoonmaker's Diamond**, the third largest in the world, Ottoman court costumes and ceramics, notably one of the world's finest collection of early **Chinese ceramics**, much of it gifts from other rulers. Interestingly, some of the ceramics have a special glaze that was said to change color in the presence of poison. We also visit the **Imperial Armoury**, displaying centuries of Ottoman weaponry. But perhaps the loveliest features of Topkapı Palace are its courtyards with their ancient trees and it is easy to imagine the sultan strolling here far from the cares of state and empire. The **New Mosque** was opened, along with the neighbouring Spice Bazaar, in 1663 and replaced an earlier Mosque destroyed in the Great Fire of Istanbul in 1660.

#### 1 & 2. SPECIAL FULL DAY OLD CITY TOUR Combines tours 1 & 2 – Except Tuesdays \$138 per person

#### 3. BOSPHORUS CRUISE – Mornings, Daily \$59 per person

We begin with a brief visit to the 17<sup>th</sup> century **Spice Bazaar**, one of Istanbul's most colourful and bustling attractions. Next, take an unforgettable cruise along the **Bosphorus**, the majestic strait that runs through Istanbul, linking the Black and Marmara Seas and separating Europe and Asia. From our cruise boat we see the dramatic sights lining the Bosphorus' wooded shores: mosques, a bridge that for a time was the world's longest and the massive **Rumeli Hisari**, a fortress built by Fatih the Conqueror in just three months as he prepared to take Istanbul. Also noteworthy are the **19<sup>th</sup> century mansions** of the Ottoman elite and the Sultan's fanciful gingerbread **palaces and hunting lodges**.

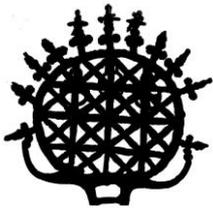
#### 4. BOSPHORUS CRUISE – Afternoons, Daily \$59 per person

We cruise the **Bosphorus** and from the deck of our cruise boat take in the sights and sounds of this legendary waterway, that is lined with **historic villages**, grand wooden **mansions**, imposing **fortresses**, like **Anadolu Hisari** and the **Baroque palaces** of the late Ottoman sultans. After our cruise, we visit the **Spice Bazaar**, a thrilling riot of colours, sounds and the rich smells of exotic spices.



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### 5. ASIA – Afternoons, Daily except Mondays and Thursdays \$59 per person

We begin by driving across the first **Bosphorus Bridge** and head for the summit of **Çamlıca Hill** for panoramic **views of Istanbul**, the **Sea of Marmara** and the **Princes' Islands**. From here a short drive brings us to the **Beylerbeyi Palace** on the shore of the Bosphorus. Perhaps the most elegant of the late Ottoman palaces, Beylerbeyi boasts six sumptuously furnished reception halls.

### 3 & 5. SPECIAL FULL DAY BOSPHORUS TOUR Combines tours 3 & 5 – Daily \$117 per person

### 7. PRINCES' ISLANDS – Full Day, Daily \$105 per person

To escape from the bustle of Istanbul for a day nothing could be easier than to join a ferry bound for the charming **Princes' Islands**. Our destination is **Büyükdada**, the largest of the island chain, but we will pass four other islands on the way. All are famous for their mild climates, lush vegetation and ornate Ottoman houses, and on all of them, cars are banned. The preferred means of transportation is the charming **horse-drawn carriage** known as the phaeton, which we will use on our circular tour of Büyükdada, passing **elegant mansions** draped in brilliant purple **bougainvillea**. You will feel as though you have stepped back to a more leisured and gracious age, almost expecting grand 19<sup>th</sup> century ladies and gentlemen to come strolling down to the waterfront on an afternoon promenade. **Lunch** will be at one of the many excellent traditional **fish restaurants** on the waterfront, gazing across the water at the Asian shore of Istanbul, close but feeling a world away.

### 8. BURSA & CUMALIKIZIK – Full-Day, Mondays, Thursdays, Saturdays minimum 8 required \$157 per person

Travel by ferry to **Yalova** then by luxury coach to **Bursa**, the first capital of the Ottoman Empire and one of the great treasure houses of Islamic architecture. Visit the **Green Mosque** and the neighbouring **Green Mausoleum**, both world-renowned for their superb tile decoration, as well as the late 14<sup>th</sup> century **Great Mosque** and the **Koza Han**, which for centuries was the centre of the silk trade. See the **Ottoman Village of Cumalikizik** before enjoying a **cable car ride** up the slopes of **Uludağ** (Turkish Mount Olympus). Lunch is at one of Bursa's finest Turkish restaurants, the *Darüzziyafe*, where you will enjoy the finest Ottoman cuisine in a historic setting where Sultan Murat the Second once dined.

**Full day tours include:** Lunch (but not drinks with lunch)

**All tours include:** Hotel pick-up/drop off, transport, professional English language guide & site entry fees.

**Tours exclude:** Tips to guide, drinks and other personal expenses.

**Children:** Under 3 years – free; 3-6 years – 50%; 7 years and above: adult price

**Morning Hotel Pick up Times** (subject to variation):

Sultanahmet Hotels: 8:20am; Taksim Hotels: 08:30am. No airport area transfers.