

FINDERS & KEEPERS SAFARIS

A LIFE OF MAKING MEMORIES

PRIVATE JOURNEY

Empires, Balloons & the Turquoise Coast

“Hagia Sophia, a sunrise balloon over the fairy chimneys, the white terraces of Pamukkale and the Turquoise Coast”

10

DAYS

1

SUNRISE BALLOON FLIGHT

3

UNESCO SITES

30000

SEATS IN EPHEBUS' THEATRE

FROM

\$11,900

PER PERSON

PREPARED EXCLUSIVELY FOR YOU · FINDERSANDKEEPERS.COM

Overview

Turkey's definitive highlights, in one journey: the Byzantine and Ottoman marvels of Istanbul, the surreal fairy chimneys of Cappadocia, the thermal terraces of Pamukkale, the marble streets of Ephesus, and finally the turquoise Mediterranean at Antalya. The sunrise balloon flight over Cappadocia is the day everything else is arranged around.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Hagia Sophia, the Blue Mosque, the Hippodrome and the Basilica Cistern
- A guided street-food journey through the Spice Bazaar and Eminönü
- Two nights at the Museum Hotel, the only Relais & Châteaux member in Cappadocia
- The Göreme Open-Air Museum, Love Valley and Pasabag
- The Pamukkale travertines and the ancient city of Hierapolis
- Topkapi Palace and four hundred years of Ottoman sultans
- A Bosphorus dinner cruise between two continents
- A sunrise hot-air balloon flight over the fairy chimneys — the hero of the journey
- Kaymakli or Derinkuyu underground city, carved eight levels into the rock
- Ephesus — the Library of Celsus, Curetes Street and the Terrace Houses

Hagia Sophia, a sunrise balloon over the fairy chimneys, the white terraces of Pamukkale and the Turquoise Coast

The Itinerary

01

ISTANBUL

Day 1 | Arrival in Istanbul

Land at Istanbul Airport and transfer to the Four Seasons at Sultanahmet — a neoclassical building of 1918–19, originally the city's first modern prison, now sixty-five rooms arranged around an enclosed garden courtyard, and a few minutes' walk from the Blue Mosque and Hagia Sophia. The afternoon settles you into Sultanahmet, where Byzantium and the Ottoman Empire stand side by side on the same square. An evening walk takes in the Hippodrome, where chariots once raced, and the exteriors of Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque as the lights come on. A welcome dinner introduces the food: meze, kebabs, pide, salad, baklava and Turkish tea.

- Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at Sultanahmet
- Dinner

02

ISTANBUL

Day 2 | Imperial Istanbul

A full private day. Hagia Sophia first — a sixth-century cathedral, a mosque from 1453, and for fifteen hundred years the single building that explains this city. Then the Blue Mosque across the square: six minarets, twenty thousand handmade Iznik tiles, and best entered early. The Hippodrome holds the Egyptian Obelisk, the Serpentine Column and the Fountain of Wilhelm II. Below it, the Basilica Cistern — the largest of several hundred beneath the city — holds 336 marble columns in the half-dark, two of them standing on Medusa heads nobody can fully explain. The afternoon is Topkapi Palace: four hundred years of sultans, the imperial treasury, and pavilions with the Bosphorus below. Dinner is on a rooftop with Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque lit.

- Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at Sultanahmet
- Breakfast, Dinner

03

ISTANBUL

Day 3 | Eating Istanbul & the Bosphorus

The Spice Bazaar first, built in the 17th century and still the best concentration of spice, dried fruit, nuts and sweets in the city: lokum in rose, pistachio and pomegranate; Gaziantep pistachios; Turkish coffee and tea; cheese, olives and spice by the kilo. Then out into Eminönü on foot for the street food that actually is Istanbul — simit, döner, pide, lahmacun, börek, midye dolma from a pavement tray, and baklava with coffee to finish. The afternoon crosses the Galata Bridge into Karaköy, past the Galata Tower and along İstiklal Avenue to Taksim. The evening is a Bosphorus dinner cruise between Europe and Asia, with the palaces and mosques lit along both shores.

- Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at Sultanahmet
- Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

04

CAPPADOCIA

Day 4 | Istanbul » Cappadocia

A domestic flight of about an hour and twenty, then a private transfer to the Museum Hotel in Uçhisar — the only Relais & Châteaux member in Cappadocia, furnished throughout with genuine antiques and looking out over the fairy chimneys towards Mount Erciyes. The afternoon begins in Göreme and the Open-Air Museum, a UNESCO site of rock-cut churches with frescoes from the 10th to 12th centuries painted directly onto the tuff. Then Love Valley for the tallest of the chimneys, and Pasabag — Monks Valley — for the mushroom-capped ones. A stop at a pottery village where the craft has been worked for centuries, then a Cappadocian dinner in a cave restaurant: pottery kebab, and wine from local grapes.

- Museum Hotel
- Breakfast, Dinner

05

CAPPADOCIA

Day 5 | Sunrise Over the Fairy Chimneys

Awake before dawn for the morning this whole journey is built around. The balloon lifts as the sun breaks over the valleys, and for the next hour you drift silently above the chimneys with a hundred other balloons rising around you. It is, by common consent, one of the great experiences in travel, and photographs consistently undersell it. Champagne on landing. Back to the hotel for a served breakfast of Anatolian produce, much of it grown on site. The afternoon goes underground to Kaymakli or Derinkuyu — whole cities carved eight levels into the volcanic rock by early Christians sheltering from invaders, complete with ventilation shafts, churches and stables. Then Pigeon Valley, named for the thousands of dovecotes cut into the cliffs, and Uçhisar Castle for the view across the region. Dinner is traditional, with local music.

- Museum Hotel
- Breakfast, Dinner

06

PAMUKKALE

Day 6 | Cappadocia » Pamukkale

A private drive west across central Anatolia, with stops along the way through country most visitors fly over. Check in at Doga Thermal, and spend the afternoon in the hotel's thermal pools — the geothermal water here is high in calcium and has been used therapeutically since antiquity. At sunset you walk the travertines: white calcium terraces built up over millennia by water spilling down the hillside, and the single most photographed landscape in Turkey. In the late gold light the whole hill glows.

- Doga Thermal Health & Spa
- Breakfast, Dinner

07

EPHESUS & SELÇUK

Day 7 | Pamukkale » Ephesus

The morning walks barefoot up the terraces — socks are not permitted — through the flowing water that made them. Above sits Hierapolis, the ancient city built on top of the formations, with a remarkably well-preserved theatre looking out over the valley. Cleopatra's Pool, for those who want it, is a swim among the fallen columns. The afternoon is Ephesus, one of the great ancient cities of the Mediterranean: the Library of Celsus and its two-storey facade; the Great Theatre, Turkey's largest, which held up to thirty thousand and whose acoustics still work; marble-paved Curetes Street; the Temple of Hadrian; and the Terrace Houses, where the frescoes and mosaics of the wealthy survive under cover. On to the coast at Kusadasi for the night.

- Korumar Ephesus Beach & Spa Resort
- Breakfast, Dinner

08

ANTALYA

Day 8 | Ephesus » Antalya

South towards the Mediterranean, stopping at Perge — one of the most impressive sites in Turkey and one of the least crowded. A long colonnaded street, the agora, a Roman theatre for fifteen thousand, and a stadium among the best preserved in the ancient world. Check in at Maxx Royal Belek on the Mediterranean coast, with seven swimming areas, a Colin Montgomerie golf course and a spa. The evening explores Kaleiçi, Antalya's old town: cobbled streets of Ottoman houses, Hadrian's Gate of 130 AD, and the old harbour with its yachts and waterfront restaurants.

- Maxx Royal Belek Golf Resort
- Breakfast, Dinner

09

ANTALYA

Day 9 | The Turquoise Coast

A private boat along the Turkish Riviera, where the Mediterranean is as clear as its reputation. Swimming, snorkelling, hidden coves reachable only from the water, and coastal waterfalls that drop straight into the sea. Lunch aboard or at a waterside restaurant. The afternoon is yours: the resort's pools, beach and spa; the Düden Waterfalls, where the river plunges directly into the Mediterranean; or more of Kaleiçi at a slower pace. A farewell Turkish-Mediterranean dinner closes the journey.

- Maxx Royal Belek Golf Resort
- Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY BY DAY (CONTINUED)

10

ANTALYA

Day 10 | Departure

Breakfast at the resort and, depending on your flight, a final swim or spa treatment. Private transfer to Antalya International Airport, with VIP fast track.

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- Breakfast

INVESTMENT

Pricing & Inclusions

PER PERSON SHARING

\$12,600

SINGLE TRAVELLER SUPPLEMENT

On Request

Pricing is an estimate subject to confirmation based on season, room category, and final accommodation selection.

SEASONAL PRICING

Nov – Mar	BEST VALUE	\$11,900
Snow on the fairy chimneys, empty sites		
Jun – Aug	PEAK SEASON	\$14,600
Hot interior, perfect Mediterranean		
Apr – May, Sep – Oct	SHOULDER SEASON	\$13,200
Best balloon weather and clear skies		

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- » Private transfers and licensed guides throughout
- » 9 nights accommodation across four properties
- » Domestic flight Istanbul – Cappadocia
- » Private vehicle and driver for the Cappadocia – Pamukkale – Ephesus – Antalya route
- » Daily breakfast, plus meals as detailed in the itinerary
- » Hagia Sophia, Blue Mosque, Hippodrome, Basilica Cistern and Topkapi Palace entry
- » Guided Istanbul street-food journey through the Spice Bazaar and Eminönü
- » Bosphorus dinner cruise
- » Sunrise hot-air balloon flight over Cappadocia, with champagne on landing
- » Göreme Open-Air Museum, Love Valley, Pasabag and Uçhisar Castle entry
- » Kaymakli or Derinkuyu underground city entry

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- International flights to Istanbul and from Antalya
- Cleopatra's Pool at Hierapolis (separate ticket, payable on site)
- Green fees on the Colin Montgomerie course, and helicopter tours
- Lunches and dinners not listed in the itinerary
- Gratuities for guides, drivers, balloon crew and boat crew

FINDERS & KEEPERS SAFARIS

Tell us what you have in mind.

This itinerary is a starting point, not a fixed departure. The pace, the lodges, the length, the dates and the party travelling can all be reshaped around you.

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HOURS

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