

Turkey Private Journey

ISTANBUL, CAPPADOCIA, AND THE TURQUOISE COAST



WHEN TO GO

May to October

For our Private Journey trips, you choose your own group and your preferred dates—there are no set departure dates. Private Journeys are available to groups as few as two people or as large as you like. While many guests choose to book this tour exactly as is, our Area Specialists can work with you to customize it to your wishes. Contact us for availability, questions, or to book your adventure!

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Turkey Private Journey

ISTANBUL, CAPPADOCIA, AND THE TURQUOISE COAST

This Private Journey is an inspired Mediterranean sojourn that brings you sunny skies, a warm, translucent sea, pine-forested coasts scented by wild herbs, tiny seaside villages, and a dream world of astounding treasures: rock-cut Lycian tombs, ruined Byzantine monasteries, ancient Roman baths, and towering Greek amphitheaters. Sailing along the exquisite Turquoise Coast by private gulet (sailing yacht), you'll head ashore for hikes, visits to archaeological sites, lunch with a farm family in a beautiful pastoral valley, a soak in thermal mud baths, and a chance to witness life in coastal villages. The pace is a relaxed one, with time each day for swimming, snorkeling, and pampering by your chefs, who serve mouth-watering feasts al fresco on deck. You will have a private guide with you in Istanbul, a private guide on the Turquoise Coast cruise, and a private guide in Cappadocia.

ABOUT PRIVATE JOURNEYS

Wilderness Travel Private Journeys are designed for people who want to travel with their own small private group, but who still want to experience the same superb itinerary design, great accommodations, and signature quality of Wilderness Travel's escorted group trips. These Private Journeys allow you to choose your own dates and your traveling companions—and enjoy the WT touch on all aspects of the journey.



Wilderness Travel

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Itinerary (Eastbound)

EASTBOUND ITINERARY

Note: The trip begins the morning of Day 1. We highly recommend you arrive in Istanbul before the trip starts to rest up from your flights. We are happy to book a night at the Hotel Levni for you before the trip begins (at extra cost).

Below is a suggested itinerary for the Eastbound direction. Please note that the Cappadocia section of the itinerary may come before or after the cruise section, depending on your boat and your dates of travel. You will receive a personalized itinerary with confirmation of your private journey.

DAY 1

ISTANBUL, TURKEY

Meet in Istanbul at the airport or at the hotel in the morning to begin your day of exploring this illustrious city. Istanbul's legacy as the only city in the world to have been the capital of consecutive Christian and Islamic empires is very much in evidence in the cultural heart of the metropolis, with its grand edifices and remnants of walls from the time of The Emperor Justinian. Your explorations today include the Topkapi Palace, a marvelous imperial labyrinth of mysterious harem quarters and displays of the bejeweled treasures of the sultans, and the Hagia Sophia, once the greatest church in Christendom. It has now been converted back to a Mosque; please be advised that entry is not allowed for anyone with bare shoulders or shorts. You will also visit the ethereal Blue Mosque, with its slender minarets visible for miles around. (Please note: the Blue Mosque is undergoing restoration and if not completed we will visit the Suleiman Mosque as an alternative, one of the most famous Mosques of the Ottoman period overlooking the Bosphorus.) We also visit the Hippodrome, the Basilica Cisterns, and the Rustem Pasa Mosque, which boasts the finest Iznik tiles found in any mosque in Turkey, followed by lunch. The timing and order of visitations may be adjusted in an effort to avoid crowds. Tonight, head out on a sunset cruise on the Bosphorus to see the classic silhouette of Istanbul's skyline bridging Europe and Asia, then enjoy a seafood dinner at a café along the Bosphorus waterfront. Overnight at Hotel Levni in the heart of Istanbul's fascinating walking district...LD

About Istanbul: The Old City, or Stamboul as it is sometimes known, is a great district to explore on foot. Many of its most famous sights are within easy walking distance of one another. The Hagia Sophia was once the largest enclosed space in the world and the greatest church in Christendom. Set atop a hill, the domed basilica of this 6th century cathedral, known as the Church of Holy Wisdom, was the dominant feature of the city's skyline until the 16th century. Memhet the Conqueror converted the Hagia Sophia into a mosque following the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, and Ataturk converted it into a museum in 1935. The restored Basilica Cistern, close to the Hagia Sophia, is an underground chamber built by Justinian in A.D. 532 for storing the imperial water supply. We descend into the cistern and walk along platforms above reflecting pools, where soft lighting illuminates the hundreds of carved Doric, Ionian, and Corinthian columns that support the cistern roof.



TRIP DETAILS AT-A-GLANCE

- Length:** 11 days
Arrive: Istanbul, Turkey
Depart: Istanbul, Turkey
Lodging: 3 nights in 4-to 5-star hotels, 5 nights private Turkish gulet yacht, 2 nights boutique cave hotel in Cappadocia
Meals: All meals included except 1 breakfast and 1 dinner (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
Activity: Archaeology, Cultural Adventures, Small Boat and Yacht Cruising, Snorkeling, Walking
Trip Level: 1 ② 3 4 5 6
Yacht-based exploration with optional kayaking, snorkeling, and hiking. Easy walking and cultural exploration in cities and ancient sites.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the Turquoise Coast aboard your own traditional gulet (sailing yacht) with private guide and crew
- Cappadocia, with its otherworldly landscapes
- Magnificently restored Ephesus, exotic Istanbul

Itinerary (Eastbound cont'd)

Also nearby is the Sultan Ahmet Camii, or Blue Mosque, with its six slender minarets visible for miles around. It is known as the Blue Mosque for its blue-themed interior, replete with panels of floral-motif tiles (20,000 of them) and graceful arabesque stenciling. Topkapi Palace, the heart of the Ottoman Empire and home of the sultans for four centuries, is a marvelous imperial

labyrinth set on the tip of a peninsula where the Golden Horn joins the Bosphorus. Although the original palace was constructed in the 15th century, most of the buildings we see today date from the 18th century. Of particular fascination is the Harem, the set of "forbidden" apartments where the Sultan's wives, concubines, and eunuchs lived. Topkapi is also the place to feast your eyes on the fabulous treasures of the sultans, from jewel-encrusted daggers to golden caskets to the 86-carat Spoonmakers Diamond.



“Can't thank you enough for encouraging us to put aside our worries, and proceed with our planned trip to Turkey. All three guides were outstanding and the gulet with its crew couldn't have been nicer!!!! We were treated royally and infused with knowledge. Many, many, many thanks!”

Myra and Buzzy H., Baltimore, MD

DAY 2

CAPPADOCIA / UCHISAR

Morning transfer to the airport and fly to Kayseri. Meet your private guide and van at the airport for a 1.5-hour drive to Uchisar. Views of Mt. Erciyes, the 12,000-foot volcano

responsible for forming the remarkable landscape of Cappadocia, are ever present on the drive. After a late lunch in the village of Sinasoss, stretch your legs on a hike to the little village of Avcilar via the Pigeon Valley. The hike includes a cultural stroll around Uchisar village en route to Avcilar. Tonight, enjoy a whirling dervish “Sema” ceremony at the original 12th century Seljuk caravanserai of Saruhan. This dance of the whirling dervishes is inspired by Rumi, the mystic poet, and is part of Turkish culture. Overnight at a “cave hotel” with comfortable and tastefully decorated rooms with private bath...BLD
Approximate Hiking Time: 2 hours

DAY 3

CAPPADOCIA / GOREME / AVANOS

Frescoed Byzantine cave churches, welcoming villages, a magical landscape of tufa towers, and unique traditional art forms, from pottery to weaving, are the hallmarks of Cappadocia. At dawn this morning you have the option of participating in a thrilling hot air balloon ride (at additional cost—if interested, please contact us). Enjoy a morning hike of about two hours to the fascinating open-air museum of the Goreme Valley, with its fantastic rock-cut churches. After lunch, set out for a 2-hour hike in the Valley of Spears and visit the pottery workshops in the pretty riverside village of Avanos. Overnight at hotel...BLD

Approximate Hiking Time: 4 hours (2 hours morning, 2 hours afternoon)

DAY 4

KUSADASI / EPHEBUS

Transfer to Kayseri airport and fly to Kusadasi via Izmir, with lunch en route. This afternoon, explore Ephesus, one of the most beautifully restored ancient cities in the world. Ephesus was the third largest city in the Roman Empire,

after Rome and Alexandria. In this metropolis where St. Paul lived and preached to the Ephesians, explore the remains of fine marble homes with well-preserved mosaics, stroll the mile-long marble-paved Arcadian way from the theater to the harbor, and feel transported back to Roman times. Ephesus is one of the few Greco-Roman sites that gives a true sense of the glory of bygone days. One of its treasures is the reconstructed facade of the Library of Celsus, dedicated in 120 AD. Its theater, once the largest in the world, could hold 25,000 spectators and has superb acoustic qualities. You will also visit the impressive Ephesus Museum, with its statues of the goddess Artemis (also known as Cybele) and gladiator artifacts. Overnight at a waterfront hotel in Kusadasi...BLD

DAY 5

APHRODISIAS* / GOCEK / EMBARK / TURQUOISE COAST

This morning, there may be an option to drive 2-3 hours to visit Aphrodisias, a fascinating World Heritage Site set in a mountain-ringed valley watered by the River Dandalaz. The city is crafted almost entirely of white marble and has a theater, a stadium capable of seating up to 30,000 people, a charming concert hall, two large agoras, two baths, and the huge Temple of Aphrodite, which was converted into a Byzantine church in the 6th century. From the acropolis hill behind the Aphrodisias theater, archaeologists have unearthed stone and bronze idols dating as far back as 3,000 BC, making Aphrodisias one of the earliest settlements in Asia Minor dedicated to the Megalo-Mater, the great mother. From Aphrodisias, continue about 2-3 hours to Gocek, where you board your private gulet (yacht), a comfortable wooden motor-sailer with a wide beam for stability. The yacht is your home for a six-day cruise that explores the endless bays, coves, and crystal-clear waters of the Turquoise Coast. Sail to Yassica Island for overnight aboard your gulet...BLD

*Note: Depending on where you board your gulet, there may not be enough time to visit Aphrodisias comfortably in the time allotted. We appreciate your understanding and know that we will offer you the best itinerary possible considering the boat pick-up and drop-off points.

DAY 6

TURQUOISE COAST / AG LIMANI / GOCEK LAGOON

Cruise this morning to a beautiful cove called Ag Limani. Enjoy a hike across a peninsula marked by the ruins of Lydae, an unexcavated site reached only by sea. Once a Lycian outpost with spiritual importance, today it is inhabited only by nomads. En route, you may visit with the nomads over some sage tea, or clamber on the remains of a temple dedicated to Apollo. There are also Byzantine cisterns and monumental temple-tombs to explore. At



Itinerary (Eastbound cont'd)



the end of your hike, arrive in the southern reaches of Gocek Lagoon, where you find Cleopatra's Sunken Bath, a half-submerged ruin also known as Batik Hamam, or "Sunken Bath," in Turkish. Your boat will meet you here. This area usually has reliable winds, and if so, the Captain will raise the sails and glide to a wilderness cove for lunch and a relaxing afternoon with a chance to swim. Overnight aboard your gulet...BLD
Approximate hiking time: 2-3 hours

DAY 7

TURQUOISE COAST / GEMILER ISLAND / KAYA KOY / SOGUK BAY

Sail across Fethiye Bay to Gemiler Island and head ashore for a hike up to the striking Byzantine ruins tucked in amid the olive trees. This was a monastic settlement established in the 4th century AD. In addition to the great view from the hill crowning the island, there are numerous ruined churches, monks cells, tombs, and a unique covered street to enjoy. We take a short drive to Kaya Koy, a once affluent but now abandoned village that was originally inhabited by Ottoman Greeks. A "population exchange" agreement in 1924 between the Greek and Turkish governments reduced it to an eerie ghost town. From Kaya Koy, enjoy a hike on a trail lined with aromatic herbs including thyme, oregano, and sage to Soguk Bay. Overnight aboard your gulet...BLD
Approximate hiking time: 3 hours (optional 1.5 hours in morning, 1.5 hours in afternoon)

DAY 8

TURQUOISE COAST / KALKAN / BEZIRGAN / XANTHOS / PATARA

Cruise to Kalkan, a quaint town of traditional white-washed houses perched on a hill. Narrow winding streets lined with shops lead down to the charming marina. After docking at the harbor, drive inland to Bezirgan, a traditional farming village. Here you enjoy lunch in a family home, a wonderful opportunity to meet local villagers and get a glimpse of village life in this



lovely rural valley. Continue on to Xanthos, ancient capital of Lycia, virtually intact when British explorers arrived in 1838 (unfortunately, the British carted away many of the artifacts of Xanthos). Explore the two impressive tombs that tower above the upper seats of the Xanthos theater. The Harpy Tomb got its name from the reliefs around the top, which appeared to be Harpies, female figures from Greek mythology. Scholars believe they are depictions of Sirens carrying away the souls of the dead. The other tomb, a sarcophagus standing atop a pillar, is believed to be from the 3rd century BC. The remains of an agora, a basilica, a monastery, and some Byzantine walls are also at this site. In the late afternoon, drive to Patara, birthplace of St. Nicholas, with its long, isolated beach, and visit the ruins of a Roman and Hellenistic theater and acropolis overgrown with olive trees. From the top of the theater, views stretch across the south Lycian coastline. The day concludes with a drive back to Kalkan, with overnight on board in a sheltered lagoon...BLD

DAY 9

TURQUOISE COAST / KAS / APERLAE / SIMENA

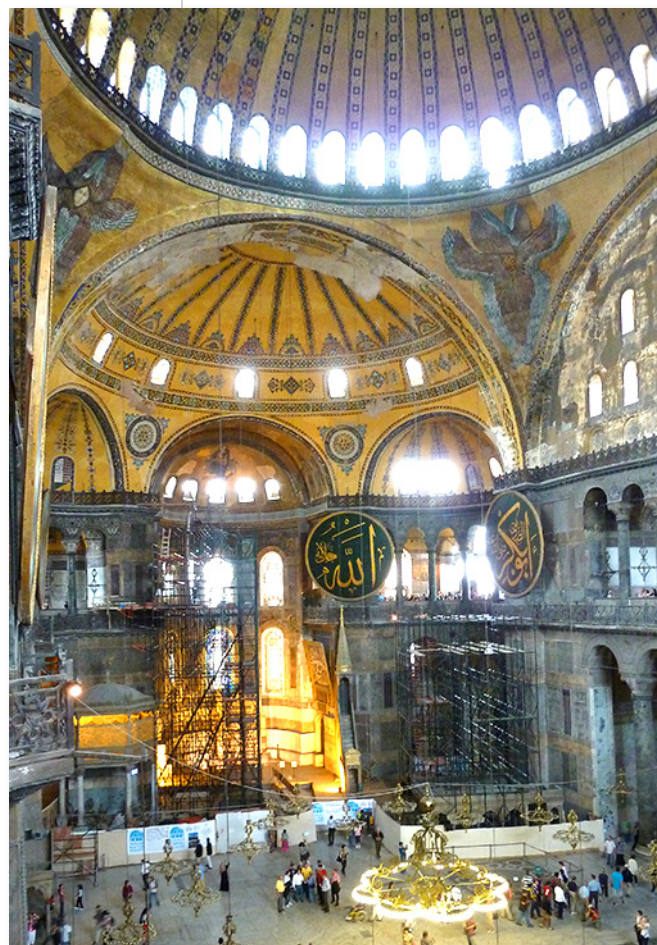
A two-hour cruise brings you to Kas, a lovely harbor and fishing village with a Greek flavor. As a center for arts and crafts, notably jewelry and textiles, Kas is a wonderful place to find fine examples of Turkish kilims and carpets. The Hellenic town of Antiphellus once stood here, and its well-preserved Hellenistic theater remains. There are Lycian rock tombs above it and the sparkling Mediterranean makes a fine backdrop.

Kas was home to many ethnic Greeks until the 1920s when Turkey and Greece separated their minority populations. The Greek influence is reflected in the classically inspired architecture and tiny Greek homes. Continue to the ancient city of Aperlae to snorkel above ruins long buried by the sea, then cruise to Kekova Sound to visit Simena, a timeless village accessible only by sea. Simena is a highlight of any Turquoise Coast cruise, offering breathtaking bay views from the Crusader-era castle above it. Overnight aboard your gulet...BLD

DAY 10

TURQUOISE COAST / DISEMBARK / ANTALYA / ISTANBUL

Cruise to Andriace, the harbor for Myra, bid farewell to your crew, and disembark. Visit the ancient Lycian city of Myra to see fine examples of Lycian funerary architecture set high in the hillsides. There is also a vast Roman amphitheater built into the cliff face with many of its carved friezes and cavernous tunnels intact. Also in Myra is the lovely Church of St. Nicholas, who was known as the patron saint of children. Born about 300 AD, this famous saint is steeped in legend, particularly of the miracles he performed in his lifetime that left him identified as Santa Claus or Father Christmas. Drive to Antalya, a principal Mediterranean resort with a majestic coastline of beaches and rocky coves and the towering Taurus Mountains as a magnificent



“This trip was our fifth trip with WT and it keeps getting better. We had a private group and our experience was simply wonderful.”

Peter T., Stockton, CA

Itinerary (Westbound)

backdrop. Since its founding in the 2nd century BC by Attalus II, king of Pergamon, Antalya has had a vibrant history. Romans subsequently occupied the city, then later the Selçuks, who built impressive mosques and minarets with elaborate tile decorations, marble pools, and stone carvings. Visit the city's exquisite Archaeological Museum and walk through Antalya's city gate (Hadrian's Gate), a stately structure of white marble constructed in honor of the Emperor Hadrian's visit in 130 AD. Transfer to the airport and fly to Istanbul, with an overnight at the Hotel Levni...BL



DAY 11 DEPART

Transfer to the airport and depart on homeward-bound flights...B

WESTBOUND ITINERARY

Note: The trip begins the morning of Day 1. We highly recommend that you arrive in Istanbul before the trip starts to rest up from your flights. We are happy to book a night at the Hotel Levni for you before the trip begins (at extra cost).

Below is a suggested itinerary for the Westbound direction. Please note that the Cappadocia section of the itinerary may come before or after the cruise section, depending on your boat and your dates of travel. You will receive a personalized itinerary with confirmation of your private journey.

DAY 1 ISTANBUL, TURKEY

Meet in Istanbul at the airport or at the hotel in the morning to begin your day of exploring this illustrious city. Istanbul's legacy as the only city in the world to have been the capital of consecutive Christian and Islamic empires is very much in evidence in the cultural heart of the metropolis, with its grand edifices and remnants of walls from the time of The Emperor Justinian. Your explorations today include the Topkapi Palace, a marvelous imperial labyrinth of mysterious harem quarters and displays of the bejeweled treasures of the sultans, and the Hagia Sophia, once the greatest church in Christendom. It has now been converted back to a Mosque; please be advised that entry is not allowed for anyone with bare shoulders or shorts. You will also visit the ethereal Blue Mosque, with its slender minarets visible for miles around. (Please note: the Blue Mosque is undergoing restoration and if not completed we will visit the Suleiman Mosque as an alternative, one of the most famous Mosques of the Ottoman period overlooking the Bosphorus.) We also visit the Hippodrome, the Basilica Cisterns, and the Rustem Pasa Mosque, which boasts the finest Iznik tiles found in any mosque in Turkey, followed by lunch. The timing and order of visitations may be adjusted in an effort to avoid crowds. Tonight, head out on a sunset cruise on the Bosphorus to see the classic silhouette of Istanbul's skyline bridging Europe and Asia, then enjoy a seafood dinner at a

“We have extremely fond memories of Turkey, its people, the food, and its culture. We learned so much on this trip and we are so glad you put together this itinerary. We loved every region of the country and your wonderful guides made that experience so much more meaningful.”

Vivian K., Pasadena, CA

café along the Bosphorus waterfront. Overnight at Hotel Levni in the heart of Istanbul's fascinating walking district...LD

About Istanbul: The Old City, or Stamboul as it is sometimes known, is a great district to explore on foot. Many of its most famous sights are within easy walking distance of one another. The Haghia Sophia was once the largest enclosed space in the world and once the greatest church in Christendom. Set atop a hill, the domed basilica of this 6th century cathedral, known as the Church of Holy Wisdom, was the dominant feature of the city's skyline until the 16th century. Memhet the Conqueror converted the Haghia Sophia into a mosque following the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, and Ataturk converted it into a museum in 1935. The restored Basilica Cistern, close to the Haghia Sophia, is an underground chamber built by Justinian in A.D. 532 for storing the imperial water supply. We descend into the cistern and walk along platforms above reflecting pools, where soft lighting illuminates the hundreds of carved Doric, Ionian, and Corinthian columns that support the cistern roof. Also nearby is the Sultan Ahmet Camii, or Blue Mosque, with its six slender minarets visible for miles around. It is known as the Blue Mosque for its blue-themed interior, replete with panels of floral-motif tiles (20,000 of them) and graceful arabesque stenciling. Topkapi Palace, heart of the Ottoman Empire and home of the sultans for four centuries, is a marvelous imperial labyrinth set on the tip of a peninsula where the Golden Horn joins the Bosphorus. Although the original palace was constructed in the 15th century, most of the buildings we see today date from the 18th century. Of particular fascination is the Harem, the set of "forbidden" apartments where the Sultan's wives, concubines, and eunuchs lived. Topkapi is also the place to feast your eyes on the fabulous treasures of the sultans, from jewel-encrusted daggers to golden caskets to the 86-carat Spoonmakers Diamond.



DAY 2

ANTALYA / TERMESSOS / FINIKE / EMBARK / TURQUOISE COAST

A morning flight brings you to Antalya, a principal Mediterranean resort with a majestic coastline of beaches and rocky coves. The towering Taurus Mountains provide a magnificent backdrop. Since its founding in the 2nd century BC by Attalus II, king of Pergamon, Antalya has had a vibrant history. Romans subsequently occupied the city, then later the Selçuks, who built impressive mosques and minarets with elaborate tile decorations, marble pools, and stone carvings. Above Antalya, visit the immense acropolis of Termessos, one of the most enchanting sites in western Asia Minor, set high in a densely wooded, mountainous area. The impregnable walls and high peaks that surround Termessos so daunted Alexander the Great when he came through in 333 BC that he decided to just pass on by. The vast remains include a magnificent theater, agora, gymnasium and odeon. Later, visit the city's exquisite Archaeological Museum and walk through Antalya's city gate (Hadrian's Gate), a stately structure of white marble constructed in honor of the Emperor Hadrian's visit in 130 AD. From Antalya, a two-hour drive brings you to



Itinerary (Westbound cont'd)

Finike, a small town surrounded by citrus plantations, tea gardens, and hidden rocky bays. In Finike, board your private luxurious gulet (yacht), a comfortable wooden motor-sailer with a wide beam for stability. The yacht is your home for a six-day cruise that explores the endless bays, coves, and crystal-clear waters of the Turquoise Coast. Sail to a private cove for overnight aboard your gulet... BLD



*"A terrific combination of sites and experiences. We loved the trip. The captain and crew were 'over the top.' We miss them!"
Dee and Lewis N., Baltimore, MD*

DAY 3

TURQUOISE COAST / MYRA / KEKOVA SOUND / SIMENA

Cruise to Andriace, the harbor for Myra, and visit the ancient Lycian city of Myra. Here you find some of the finest examples of Lycian funerary architecture set high in the hillsides. There is also a vast Roman amphitheater built into the cliff face with many of its carved friezes and cavernous tunnels intact. Also in Myra is the lovely Church of St. Nicholas, who was known as the patron saint of children. Born about 300 AD, this famous saint is steeped in legend, particularly of the miracles he performed in his lifetime which left him identified as Santa Claus or Father Christmas. Rejoin your boat and cruise to Kekova Sound. This afternoon enjoy a hike from Gokkaya Bay to Simena, a timeless village accessible only by sea. Your boat meets you in Simena at the conclusion of your hike. Simena is a highlight of any Turquoise Coast cruise, offering breathtaking bay views from the Crusader-era castle above it. Overnight in Simena aboard your gulet...BLD
Approximate hiking time: 1.5 hours

DAY 4

TURQUOISE COAST / KAS / BEZIRGAN / FIRNAZ COVE

A morning cruise brings you to Kas, a lovely harbor and fishing village, where you can visit its Lycian rock tombs and splendid Greek amphitheater overlooking the sea. As a center for arts and crafts, notably jewelry and textiles, Kas is also a wonderful place to find fine examples of Turkish kilims and carpets. From Kas, drive inland to Bezirgan, a traditional farming village. Here you have a wonderful opportunity to meet local villagers and glimpse village life in a lovely rural valley as you enjoy lunch in a private home. This afternoon, return to the coast and sail to Firnaz Cove. At dusk, enjoy a short hike (one hour round trip) to a rarely visited early Roman-era aqueduct, a true masterpiece of its time. Overnight in Firnaz Cove aboard your gulet...BLD

DAY 5

TURQUOISE COAST / GEMILER ISLAND / KAYA KOY / SOGUK BAY

Sail to Gemiler Island and head ashore for a hike up to the striking Byzantine ruins tucked in amid the olive trees. This was a monastic settlement established in the 4th century AD. In addition to the great view from the hill crowning the island, there are numerous ruined churches, monks cells, tombs, and a unique covered street to enjoy. A short drive brings you to Kaya Koy, a once affluent but now abandoned village that was originally inhabited by Ottoman Greeks. A "population exchange" agreement in 1924 between the Greek and Turkish

governments reduced it to an eerie ghost town. From Kaya Koy, hike a trail lined with aromatic herbs including thyme, oregano, and sage to Soguk Bay.

Overnight in Soguk Bay aboard your gulet...BLD

Approximate hiking time: 3 hours (optional 1.5 hours in morning, 1.5 hours in afternoon)

DAY 6

TURQUOISE COAST / FETHIYE BAY / AG LIMANI / GOCEK LAGOON

Cruise across Fethiye Bay this morning to a beautiful cove called Ag Limani. After a chance to swim, enjoy a hike across a peninsula marked by the ruins of Lydae, an unexcavated site reached only by sea. Once a Lycian outpost with spiritual importance, today the ruin is inhabited only by nomads. En route, you may visit with the nomads over some sage tea, or clamber on the remains of a temple dedicated to Apollo. There are also Byzantine cisterns and monumental temple-tombs to explore. At the end of your hike, arrive in the southern reaches of Gocek Lagoon, where you find Cleopatra's Sunken Bath, a half-submerged ruin also known as Batik Hamam, or "Sunken Bath," in Turkish. Your boat will meet you here. This area usually has reliable winds, and if so, the Captain will raise the sails and glide to a wilderness cove for lunch and a relaxing afternoon with a chance to swim. Overnight aboard your gulet...BLD

Approximate hiking time: 2-3 hours



Itinerary (Westbound)



DAY 7

TURQUOISE COAST / DISEMBARK / EPHESUS / KUSADASI

Sail to Gocek this morning to disembark. Bid farewell to your gulet crew, then drive to Ephesus, one of the most beautifully restored ancient cities in the world. Ephesus was the third largest city in the Roman Empire, after Rome and Alexandria. In this metropolis where St. Paul lived and preached to the Ephesians, explore the remains of fine marble homes with well-preserved mosaics and stroll the mile-long marble-paved Arcadian way from the theater to the harbor, feeling transported back to Roman times. Ephesus is one of the few Greco-Roman sites that gives a true sense of the glory of bygone days. One of its treasures is the reconstructed facade of the Library of Celsus, dedicated in 120 AD. Its theater, once the largest in the world, could hold 25,000 spectators and has superb acoustic qualities. You will also visit the impressive Ephesus Museum, with its statues of the goddess Artemis (also known as Cybele) and gladiator artifacts. Continue to Kusadasi, where you overnight at a beautifully appointed waterfront hotel...BLD

DAY 8

IZMIR / KAYSERI / CAPPADOCIA

This morning, fly from Izmir via Istanbul to Kayseri. Meet your private guide and van at the airport for a 1.5-hour drive to Uchisar. Views of Mt. Erciyes, the 12,000-foot volcano responsible for forming the remarkable landscape of Cappadocia, are ever present on the drive. After a late lunch in the village of Sinasoss, visit the unique troglodyte city of Kaymakli, with its labyrinth of hand-carved tunnels burrowing 12 stories deep into the soft tufa rock. You may also stroll around the village of Uchisar, a natural citadel at the center of Cappadocia's magnificent lunar landscape, and time permitting, hike to the fascinating open-air museum of the Goreme Valley, with its fantastic rock-cut churches. Overnight at a "cave hotel" with comfortable and tastefully decorated rooms with private bath...BLD

Approximate Hiking Time: 2 hours

DAY 9

FAIRYTALE CAPPADOCIA

With its ancient cultural heritage and unique landscape of tufa towers on the Anatolian steppes, Cappadocia is breathtaking. At dawn this morning (or on the following morning), you have the option of participating in a thrilling hot air balloon ride (at additional cost—if interested, please contact us).

Hiking is the other best way to appreciate the fantastic scenery of this region. Enjoy a hike from Ortahisar to Cavusin via the valleys of Gulludere and Kizilcukur, where you can explore hidden frescoed cave churches in a surreal landscape. After lunch, enjoy a hike in the Valley of Spears, and visit the pottery workshops in the pretty riverside village of Avanos. Tonight, enjoy a whirling dervish "Sema" ceremony at the original 12th century Seljuk caravanserai of

Saruhan. This dance of the whirling dervishes is inspired by Rumi, the mystic poet, and is part of Turkish culture. Overnight at hotel...BLD
Approximate hiking time: 5 hours (2.5 hours in morning, 2.5 hours in afternoon after lunch)

DAY 10
CAPPADOCIA / ISTANBUL

Morning transfer to the airport and fly to Istanbul where you have the afternoon free to explore on your own. Overnight at Hotel Levni...B

DAY 11
DEPART

Transfer to the airport and depart on homeward-bound flights...B



Trip Cost, Payment & Insurance

TRIP COST

Prices are per person, valid through 2025

\$6,795 (6-7 members)

\$7,495 (5 members)

\$8,295 (4 members)

Single supplement: \$545 (hotels only)

Internal airfare: \$460 (subject to change)

Optional Wine Tasting in Cappadocia: \$55

Optional Cooking Class in Cappadocia or Istanbul: \$110

Optional Hot Air Balloon Ride in Cappadocia from: \$325

Optional Full day Tour of Pera District in Istanbul from:
\$295

Prices are based on double occupancy and not guaranteed until services are confirmed.

Make it Your Trip!

The prices above are for the ready-to-book adventure outlined in this Detailed Itinerary, a popular option that has been handcrafted by our Area Specialists to include the best of every destination. While many travelers choose to book this tour as is, our Area Specialists are also happy to work with you to customize this Private Journey to suit your specific interests and style of travel. We can arrange for longer or shorter stays, or add an extension to additional places of interest. We can even add special activities or customize excursions depending on your interests. We invite you to contact us to discuss your options!

CURRENCY EXCHANGE RATE

Because the prices published for our program are set so far in advance of the trip dates, we are occasionally faced with exceptional cost increases and/or currency fluctuations that affect the actual cost of running the trip. In most years, no price changes are necessary. However, we do reserve the right to raise or lower the trip price if there is a significant change in costs or exchange rates. If this is the case, your final invoice will reflect the difference in trip cost.

TRIP COST INCLUDES

- Accommodations in hotels/shared yacht cabins
- All meals included except 1 breakfast and 1 dinner as indicated in the Detailed Itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner)
- Bottled drinking water throughout
- Yacht staff and local guide
- Entrances to museums and sites as noted
- Whirling Dervish ceremony
- Airport transfers, ground transportation

TRIP COST DOES NOT INCLUDE

International airfare, any meals not specified after each itinerary day, beverages at restaurants or hotels, any activities described as optional, airport departure taxes, optional tipping or gratuities to staff, additional hotel nights made necessary by airline schedule changes or other factors, pre-trip expenses such as medical immunizations (if any), travel insurance, or passports and visas; and other expenses of a personal nature (alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

SIGNING UP FOR A TRIP

Early reservations are recommended since accommodations often sell out far in advance. Please call 1-800-368-2794 and ask for our Europe Manager or email us at europa@wildernesstravel.com with any questions that you may have about this trip. To reserve your Private Journey, we will need to know your preferred dates of travel. We will then check availability and send you a proposed itinerary with exact pricing for your adventure. We can typically hold a provisional booking for one week. At that time, we must collect your initial deposit or accommodations will be released. We accept Visa, Mastercard, or American Express card. Upon receipt of your deposit, we will send you a Welcome Packet that includes a letter of confirmation, Detailed Itinerary, Trip Application, Medical Form, and Pre-Departure Information Booklet with information to help you prepare for your adventure. Please see our Cancellations and Transfer Fee Schedule for specific payment information.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

At time of reservation: \$1,000
170 days prior to departure: 50%
90 days prior to departure: Balance

CANCELLATION AND TRANSFER FEE SCHEDULE*

Minimum fee: \$1,000 per person
121-170 days prior to departure: 25% of trip cost
61-120 days prior to departure: 50% of trip cost
60 days or less: 100% of trip cost

*Please note that this differs from our regular catalog departures.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend you purchase travel insurance. You can take advantage of a comprehensive Travel Protection Plan designed for Wilderness Travel by Travelex, or purchase other insurance on your own. See our website for details: www.wildernesstravel.com/insurance

Arrival & Departure

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

Upon confirming your trip reservation, we will send you a Welcome Packet that includes a list of documents (passport, visas, etc.) required for your trip. Please feel free to call if you would like this information before making your air arrangements.

Istanbul is the starting point of the trip. You will be met and transferred to the hotel upon arrival at the airport on Day 1. At the end of the trip on Day 11, you will be transferred to the airport in Istanbul for outbound flights. Our Arrival & Departure Logistics memo, included in your confirmation packet, has details.

FLIGHT ARRANGEMENTS

Trip members are responsible for making their own arrangements for air transportation. Please do not purchase your airline tickets until you are confirmed on the trip and have reviewed your proposed air schedule with our office. Once your tickets have been purchased, please send us a copy of your airline schedule so that we can send it on to the local guide (make sure to include your Trip Name and Trip Dates on it). Note: The name on your airline ticket must match the name on your passport exactly; otherwise you may be denied boarding. Please remember this when reserving your flights. In addition, your passport must be valid for at least six months after your date of return to the US (in most cases).

Optional Extension: Inside Istanbul

We are delighted to offer this special, in-depth guided exploration of Istanbul that visits intriguing sites not seen on our trip's one-day Istanbul visit. Set astride both land and sea, Istanbul is truly the bridge between Asia and Europe and it's a wonderfully walkable city full of delights. We highly recommend extending your time in this fascinating city.

PRE-TRIP ITINERARY

DAY 1

ARRIVE IN ISTANBUL

You will be met upon arrival at Istanbul airport and transferred to your hotel. The drive takes you along the shores of the Sea of Marmara and past the ramparts of Istanbul's old city walls. Meals are on your own today. Overnight at Hotel Levni.

DAY 2

PRINCE'S ISLANDS

Enjoy a scenic ferry ride to the Prince's Islands, an archipelago in the Sea of Marmara just off the Asian coast of Istanbul. These islands have always been considered one of the most picturesque spots of Istanbul. In the 19th century, grand Ottoman mansions were built here, complete with lovely gardens. Much of the beauty and romance of that time still survives today. Explore Prinkipo



(Buyukada), the largest of the islands, by circling its coastline by electric carriage—gasoline powered vehicles are not allowed on this lovely island. Your ride takes you to the wilder and less populated part of the island, through forests of age-old pine trees and alongside seaside cliffs. Lunch is at one of the famous fish restaurants along Prinkipo's seaside. After lunch, walk up to the monastery of St. George on Yucetepe Hill, perhaps lingering to taste some of the local wine produced here. Return to Istanbul on an early afternoon ferry. Later this afternoon, we can arrange an optional visit to the Turkish Hamam Bath for a traditional bathing experience. These historic baths are near your hotel, so those who do not wish to attend may return to the hotel. (The cost of the bath is not included—approximately \$30 per person.) Dinner is on your own, overnight at Hotel Levni...BL

DAY 3 PERA DISTRICT

Ride the streetcar to the Galata Bridge, then take the "Tunel," Istanbul's underground metro, for a quick one-stop ride to the Pera District. Walk over to the Galata Tower, a 14th century Genoese monument that offers breathtaking views of all of Istanbul and its shores. Stop in for a visit to the Calligraphy Museum that doubles as the local Convent of Whirling Dervishes. The Pera District is the new and fashionable part of "old Stamboul." This is where the embassies are located and where we see the real "Stamboullou" locals promenade. Walk along Istiklal Avenue, a pedestrian street lined not only with embassies and churches but also with smart cafes, *patisseries*, great restaurants, and interesting shops in interior passageways, and stroll through the Flower Passage and Fish Market. After lunch at one of the many great restaurants in Istanbul, visit the sumptuous Dolmabahce Palace on the Bosphorus, the final residence of the Sultans, or the Maritime Museum, one of Istanbul's most interesting little museums, where among other things are palatial Ottoman *caiques* (private boats once used by the sultans). Dinner is on your own. Overnight at Hotel Levni...BL

ITINERARY-IN-BRIEF FOR POST-TRIP EXTENSION

Day 1: Explore Prince's Islands (same as Day 2 of previous itinerary).

Day 2: Pera District (same as Day 3 of previous itinerary).

Day 3: Depart Istanbul



2025 INSIDE ISTANBUL TRIP COST

Pre-Trip (3 nights hotel in Istanbul)

From \$1,495 per person

Solo Traveler: from \$2,495

Single supplement: \$415 (for groups of 3 or more)

Post-Trip (2 nights hotel in Istanbul)

From \$1,395 per person

Solo Traveler: from \$2,195

Single supplement: \$345 (for groups of 3 or more)

Extension Cost Includes: Same private guide throughout, all hotel accommodations, meals as noted, entrances to museums and sites as noted, bottled drinking water, ground and ferry transportation.

Does Not Include: Any activities described as optional (Turkish Hamam Bath), meals not specified (BLD) in this itinerary, airport transfers, beverages at restaurants or hotels, customary gratuities to staff, additional hotel nights made necessary by airline schedule changes or other factors, and other expenses of a personal nature (alcoholic beverages, laundry, etc.).

Accommodations

DAY 1 (1 NIGHT), DAY 10 (1 NIGHT): ISTANBUL, TURKEY



HOTEL LEVNI

This hotel's location could not be better—it's within close walking distance to all the major sights (you can see the outer walls of the Topkapi Palace from the hotel's front door). Guest rooms are well appointed, with comfortable beds and modern furnishings, and there is a Turkish bath, heated indoor pool, and fitness center on site. The service here is exceptional—the friendly and helpful staff goes the extra mile to make you feel welcome.

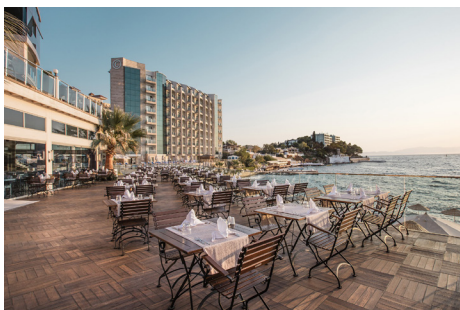
DAYS 2 TO 3 (2 NIGHTS): UCHISAR, CAPPADOCIA, TURKEY



KALE KONAK CAVE HOTEL

With views of Uchisar Castle on one side and the magnificent valley on the other, this boutique hotel is a wonderful base to explore the area. Like the name suggests, it is a cave hotel, and guest rooms are very atmospheric with beautiful arched ceilings that are carved right into the rock. Enjoy a delicious breakfast spread (the hotel's co-owner is a renowned chef), and feel free to unwind on the terrace, where you may see hot air balloons floating above the valley, or at the hotel's hamam (Turkish bath).

DAY 4 (1 NIGHT): KUSADASI, TURKEY



CHARISMA HOTEL

The Charisma is set right on the beach, with ocean-swimming access from a private dock as well as a huge swimming pool and open-air restaurant facing the water. Spacious guest rooms have a sea view and a balcony for watching sunset over the Aegean.

These are our signature accommodations for this trip. Although it is highly unlikely, we may make substitutions when necessary. To see more photos and descriptions, please visit our *Turkey Private Journey* webpage and click on "Accommodations."

Our Yachts in the Turquoise Coast

DAYS 5 TO 9 (5 NIGHTS): TURQUOISE COAST, TURKEY



TRADITIONAL GULET CAVURALI (FOR 2-6 MEMBERS)

The Cavurali, a classic 65-foot, single-masted yacht with beautiful handmade teak hull and decks that is ideal for a journey with friends or family. (Note—for groups of nine people or more, we charter a larger gulet. Please call us for details.) Smaller and more intimate than the traditional wooden motor-sailers used on our group departures, the Cavurali features four comfortable cabins with beautiful mahogany paneling and private bathrooms (two cabins have single beds and two have double beds, each with comfortable mattress toppers). Linens and towels are provided, including beach towels for swimming. We suggest you pack light because bunk and luggage space aboard is limited.



Spacious shaded aft, bow, and fore decks with chaises and floor cushions provide comfortable outdoor dining and lounging. Full air conditioning is available as an option, but the Cavurali's natural ventilation is usually sufficient even during hot mid-summer days (many trip members enjoy sleeping out on the deck under the stars for fresh air, as the locals do).



Four ocean kayaks (three single, one double) are available on board for exploring secluded coves and marine caves. A sailboard is also provided. To maximize time for exploration, we normally proceed under motor power. When conditions permit, and at the captain's discretion, sails will be raised. The Cavurali has a crew of three.

This is not a luxury cruise aboard a big cruise ship, but it's easy to adjust to yacht life, and we think you'll find this to be one of the most pleasant and relaxing journeys imaginable.



TRADITIONAL GULET (FOR 7-11 MEMBERS)

The yachts we charter are traditional wooden motor-sailers called gulets, especially designed for cruising this beautiful coastline. They are typically 90 feet in length with a 21-foot beam, twin masted, and feature teak hulls and decks and mahogany interiors. There are six double cabins, each with private toilet and shower. The food prepared and served on board features many local specialties, including fresh-caught seafood. To maximize time for exploration, we normally proceed under motor power. When conditions permit, and at the captain's discretion, sails will be raised. Kayaks and snorkeling equipment are available to use. The gulets feature a crew of four, including the captain.



Trip Details

WHAT THE TRIP IS LIKE

This trip is rated Level 2+, Easy to Moderate. It is a relaxed cruising adventure, with hikes that should be “easy-to-moderate” for the average active traveler. The hikes are a focus of the trip, often bringing us to small villages or off-the-beaten-path ruins accessible only on foot, although all hikes are optional, should you prefer to relax on board the yacht. We have several hikes during the trip, 2-4 hours each, all with some uphill and downhill walking. Several hikes are of moderate difficulty, following coastal paths that can be steep and rocky. Even if you choose not to participate in the optional hikes, most visits to archaeological sites require walking or hiking on sometimes rocky, uneven paths. For your enjoyment of the trip, you should be a fit walker and bring lightweight hiking boots. Having at least one hiking pole can be very helpful on the hikes as well.

Being able to swim is important on any boating trip, and the warm waters make this an ideal trip for those who like to swim and snorkel. While there is some snorkeling equipment available on board, we cannot guarantee the quality and the fit of the equipment. We highly recommend bringing your own snorkel and mask to assure a proper fit. To get on and off the boat, there is a gradual 45-degree incline on the suspended sea ladder that allows easy access. The dinghy can take up to five guests at a time and has an outboard engine. To ensure an enjoyable adventure in Turkey, you should make a special effort to be in good physical condition by engaging in a regular exercise regimen before the trip.

For trips with less than seven group members, the yacht we use is the Cavurali, a classic 65-foot, single-masted yacht with beautiful handmade teak hull and decks that is ideal for this type of journey. The Cavurali features four comfortable cabins with beautiful mahogany paneling and private bathrooms (two cabins have single beds and two have double beds). All cabins have en suite facilities, including a shower stall, and there are marine windows that open. Linens and towels are provided, including beach towels for swimming. We suggest you pack light because bunk and luggage space aboard is limited. There are 220-volt electrical outlets in the bedroom and bathroom (you will need a plug adaptor with two round prongs), plus an outlet in the salon that supplies power around the clock for charging batteries; it’s a useful source when the generators are not on. For trips with more than seven group members,

a larger six-cabin yacht is used. They are generally about 90 feet in length with a 21-foot beam and are similar to the Cavurali in that they feature teak hulls and decks and mahogany interiors. All cabins have a private toilet and shower.

Please note that the Cappadocia section of the itinerary may come before or after the cruise section, depending on your boat and your dates of travel.

WEATHER

The climate along the Turquoise Coast is predominantly Mediterranean. Summers are hot and usually dry, as the rainy season along the coast is November to March. It is generally quite warm even during rain showers. Normally there is not much wind, and the afternoon breezes arrive regularly to cool off the coastline. April/May and October departures may be cooler and we suggest bringing warmer clothing for these dates.

ACCOMMODATIONS

The spacious gulets have shaded aft and fore decks with chaises provide comfortable outdoor dining and lounging. Full air conditioning is available as an option, but the Cavurali's natural ventilation is usually sufficient even during hot mid-summer days (many trip members enjoy sleeping out on the deck under the stars for fresh air, as the locals do).

Four ocean kayaks (three single, one double) are available on board for exploring secluded coves and marine caves. A sailboard is also provided. To maximize time for exploration, we normally proceed under motor power. When conditions permit, and at the captain's discretion, sails will be raised. The Cavurali has a crew of three.

This is not a luxury cruise aboard a big cruise ship, but it’s easy to adjust to yacht life, and we think you’ll find this to be one of the most pleasant and relaxing journeys imaginable.

CUISINE

Meals on board have a wide variety of meats, fruits, and vegetables produced in Turkey and the bounty of fish in the Mediterranean, the Turks have developed a sumptuous and rich cuisine, influenced by its position as a cultural and geographical crossroads between Asia and Europe.

We enjoy Turkish cuisine at its best aboard our yacht. In fact, for some trip members, meals on board become as much of a trip highlight as hiking and discovering ancient ruins! Breakfasts include fresh yogurt, local honey, fresh-baked breads, eggs, and Turkish breakfast items such as feta cheese, olives, and sun-ripened tomatoes and cucumbers. Lunches and dinners offer an array of appetizers, a variety of salads and vegetable dishes (eggplant in olive oil is a favorite), plus a main entree of lamb, beef, chicken, or fish, grilled, baked, or prepared in other styles. Main dishes are often served with side dishes such as rice pilaf seasoned with currents or pine nuts. Some days, our crew fishes and serves us their “catch of the day.” Desserts include fresh fruits or assorted local pastries such as baklava (nuts and honey in puff pastry). Thanks to the balmy Mediterranean climate, we enjoy our meals in the open air of the yacht’s deck, sitting around a large table under a shade awning, with the fragrant breezes blowing. On occasion, we eat a lunch or dinner at a local town we are visiting. Wine, beer, and sodas are available for purchase. You can run a tab for your drinks and pay at the end of the cruise in Turkish Lira, Euros or US Dollars (credit cards are not accepted on the gulet). Complimentary drinking water, coffee, and tea are provided.

PRIVATE JOURNEY GUIDED SERVICES

There are three separate components to this trip, each with its own specialist private guide. You have a guide with you in Istanbul, a veteran Wilderness Travel Trip Leader for the Turquoise Coast cruise and Ephesus portion, then a private guide in Cappadocia. All three of them have worked with us for many years on our regular group adventures in Turkey.

CHILDREN

This is an excellent trip for children and families. The recommended minimum age is 8.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TRIP

Adventure travel often involves exotic destinations, unusual levels of physical exertion, or activities you may not have participated in previously. We work hard to help you choose the right trip for you, paying attention to your individual interests, abilities, and needs. If you have questions about the level of comfort or any of the activities described in this itinerary, please call Wilderness Travel at 1-800-368-2794 and ask for the Europe Manager or email us at europa@wildernesstravel.com.

REFERENCES

We’d be happy to put you in touch with a past client that has traveled with us on this or a similar trip.

ABOUT PRIVATE JOURNEYS

Wilderness Travel Private Journeys are designed for people who want to travel with their own small private group, but who still want to experience the same superb itinerary design, great accommodations, and signature quality of Wilderness Travel’s escorted group trips. These Private Journeys allow you to choose your own dates and your traveling companions—and enjoy the WT touch on all aspects of the journey.

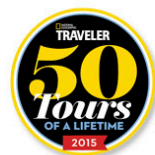
TOUCAN CLUB

Please note that Toucan Club discounts do not apply for our Private Journeys. However, your participation on these trips will count toward your Toucan discount on future departures of Wilderness Travel’s regular expeditions. For more information regarding our Toucan Club bonus program, please visit our website at www.wildernesstravel.com/resources/toucan-club/

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

At www.wildernesstravel.com, you can find out about added departures, last-minute deals, and one-time Limited Edition adventures that aren’t listed in our catalog. You can also access our complete library of detailed itineraries filled with enticing photos and videos, read bios of our Trip Leaders, find descriptions of trip accommodations, and check real-time availability of any trips that interest you.

Travel Notes



WILDERNESS TRAVEL HAS BEEN AWARDED:

Best Travel Specialists in the World: *Conde Nast Traveler*, 2024, 4-time winner

World's Best Tour Operators: *Travel + Leisure*, 11-time winner

Best Wildlife, Hiking & Walking Trips: *AFAR Magazine*, 3 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *USA Today*

Trip of the Year: *Outside Magazine*, 9-time winner

50 Tours of a Lifetime: *National Geographic Traveler*, 9 years in a row

Best Adventure Travel Companies: *National Geographic Adventure*, 3-time winner

Please be advised that California has established a Travel Consumer Restitution Fund under the California Seller of Travel Law that took effect January 1, 1996. This fund is designed to protect consumers from unscrupulous practices by discount airfare ticket sellers or air charter operators. Unfortunately, this law does not cover non-California residents and, even in the case of California residents, it does not cover any foreign travel where the foreign "providers of transportation or travel services" are not in compliance with the Sellers of Travel Law (compliance being defined as registered as a Seller of Travel in California and a participant in the Travel Consumer Restitution Fund). Thus none of Wilderness Travel's tours qualify and we are required by law to advise each client that they are not covered by the California Travel Consumer Restitution Fund. California law requires sellers of travel to maintain a trust account or bond. This business has a trust account. California Seller of Travel #100769640

While as accurate as possible at the time of printing, this itinerary should be considered an approximate indication of the schedule and scope of activities and trip routing, rather than an inflexible schedule of events; it is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control. This trip is subject to the Limitation of Liability and all the terms and conditions as detailed in the General Information section of the Wilderness Travel Catalog.

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