



Turkey

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Why Go?

While many Turks see their country as European, Turkey packs in as many towering minarets and spice-trading bazaars as its Middle Eastern neighbours. This bridge between continents offers travellers historical hot spots, mountain outposts, expansive steppe and loads of the exotic, without foregoing comfy beds and buses.

Despite its reputation as a continental meeting point, Turkey can't be pigeonholed. Cappadocia, a dreamscape dotted with fairy chimneys (rock formations), is unlike anywhere else on the planet. Likewise, spots such as Nemrut Dağı (Mt Nemrut), littered with giant stone heads, and Olympus, where Lycian ruins peek from the undergrowth, are quintessentially Turkish mixtures of natural splendour and ancient remains.

The beaches and mountains offer enough activities to impress the fussiest Ottoman sultan, accompanied by worldly pleasures such as savouring meze on panoramic terraces and, of course, Turkey's famous kebabs.

Best Places to Eat

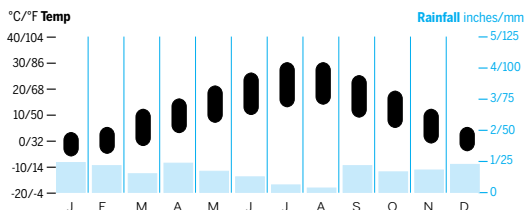
- » Zübeyir Ocakbaşı (p1161)
- » Ahırkapı Balıkçısı (p1162)
- » Bodrum Fish Market (p1169)
- » Şaraphane (p1173)

Best Places to Stay

- » Hotel Ibrahim Pasha (p1159)
- » Atilla's Getaway (p1167)
- » Hotel Canada (p1173)
- » White Garden Pansiyon (p1174)

When to Go

Ankara



Apr–May Spring sunshine without summer crowds; apart from Istanbul, where it is high season.

Jun–Aug Istanbul's shoulder season, with music festivals and summer days by the Bosphorus.

Sep–Oct Autumn walking and diving; crowds thin outside Istanbul (where it's high season again).

AT A GLANCE

- » **Currency** Turkish lira (TL)
- » **Language** Turkish, Kurdish
- » **Money** ATMS wide-spread; credit cards accepted in cities and tourist areas
- » **Visas** On arrival

Fast Facts

- » **Area** 783,562 sq km
- » **Capital** Ankara
- » **Country code** 90
- » **Emergency** Ambulance 112, fire 110, police 155

Exchange Rates

Australia	A\$1	TL1.88
Canada	C\$1	TL1.77
Euro Zone	€1	TL2.32
Japan	¥100	TL1.94
New Zealand	NZ\$1	TL1.51
UK	UK£1	TL2.75
USA	US\$1	TL1.80

Set Your Budget

- » **Budget double room** TL80
- » **Two-course meal** from TL12
- » **Museum entrance** TL5
- » **Beer** TL6
- » **City transport ticket** TL2

Resources

- » **Go Turkey** (www.go-turkey.com)
- » **Hürriyet Daily News** (www.hurriyetdailynews.com)
- » **Culinary Backstreets** (www.culinarybackstreets.com)

Connections

İstanbul is well connected to Europe, with two international airports. Buses leave the *otogar* (bus station) for countries including Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Romania and Slovenia.

Currently, the only daily train between İstanbul and Europe is the overnight Bosphorus/Balkan Express to Bucharest (Romania, 21 hours), Sofia (Bulgaria, 13 hours) and Belgrade (Serbia, 21½ hours). A suggested train route from London to İstanbul is the three-night journey via Paris, Munich, Vienna, Budapest and Bucharest; see www.seat61.com/turkey for more information and other routes.

Ferries connect Turkey's Aegean and Mediterranean coasts with Greek islands; İstanbul with Ukraine; and Trabzon on the Black Sea coast with Russia.

ITINERARIES

One Week

Devote a few days to magical İstanbul, then cross the Sea of Marmara to Anatolia and head south to laid-back Selçuk or coastal Kuşadası, both convenient bases for visiting the marvellous ruins of Ephesus.

Two Weeks

From Ephesus, head inland to Pamukkale's shiny travertine formations, then return to the coast at Fethiye, with its island-dotted bay and Lycian rock tombs. Work your way around the glorious Teke peninsula to the vibrant city of Antalya, its Ottoman quarter overlooking the Roman harbour. Possible stops en route include Patara for Turkey's longest beach, Kaş for activities and boat trips, and Çıralı to see the eternal flame of the Chimaera.

Essential Food & Drink

Turkish food is a celebration of community and life in its home country.

- » **Kebaps** Available everywhere and swooningly succulent.
- » **Yaprak dolması** Stuffed vine leaves filled with subtly spiced rice.
- » **Köfte** Spicy meatballs.
- » **Meze** Small plates of food, including dips, vegetables and a wide range of traditional fish and meat dishes.
- » **Lahmacun** Arabic pizza.
- » **Gözleme** Thin savoury crêpes.
- » **Mantı** Turkish ravioli.
- » **Börek** Filled pastries.
- » **Çay** Tea.
- » **Rakı** A fiery, highly alcoholic aniseed drink, best accompanied by meze, especially *beyaz peynir* (ewe's- or goat's-milk cheese) and melon, and *balık* (fish).