



# Turkey

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## Best for Nature

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## Best for Culture

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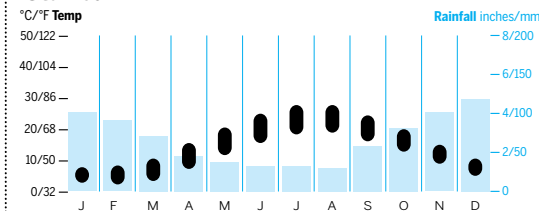
## Why Go?

Turkey is where Asia and Europe meet and meld together. The 'bridge between continents' tag may be a cliché but this nation's juxtaposition of modern sophistication and ancient tradition is a surprising and heady brew that turns many travellers' first perceptions on their head. Steeped in age-old culture but imbued with a contemporary go-getting pulse, Turkey defies being pinned down and is the perfect introduction to the Middle East.

Every empire builder worth his salt has left their mark here. Stare in wonder at İstanbul's deluge of Byzantine and Ottoman finery or explore the rambling ruins of Ephesus – actually just trip over a rock in Turkey and it's probably going to be rubble from some long-gone empire's era of glory. Afterwards, hike the moonscape of Cappadocia or sun-bake on a beach backed by lush Mediterranean coastline and you'll discover a countryside just as mesmerising as its monuments.

## When to Go

### İstanbul



**Apr–May** Hit the trails. Spring is perfect for tackling Turkey's long-distance Lycian Way.

**Jul–Sep** Sun-sloth time. The Mediterranean coast sizzles and the sand beckons.

**Oct** Prices drop but Turkish weather forgets it's off season. Blue-sky days without the crowds.



## Turkey Highlights

- 1** Craning your neck to gaze at Byzantine fresco frippery and Ottoman artistry before haggling your heart out in the Grand Bazaar, in **Istanbul** (p416).
- 2** Channelling your inner Roman amid the ruins of **Ephesus** (p450).
- 3** Scoping out the moonscape of **Cappadocia** (p474) from a hot-air balloon.
- 4** Dipping your toes in thermal pools after scaling the hillside of **Pamukkale** (453).
- 5** Remembering the fallen at the WWI battlefields on the **Gallipoli Peninsula** (p441).