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# PLAN YOUR TRIP

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## YOUR PLANNING TOOL KIT

Photos, itineraries, lists and suggestions to help you put together your perfect trip

**18 TOP EXPERIENCES**

ATMs are widely available. Credit cards are accepted by most businesses in cities and tourist areas.

To stay for up to 90 days, you can buy a visa at the airport.

**Money**

ATMs are widely available. Credit cards are accepted by most businesses in cities and tourist areas.

To stay for up to 90 days, you can buy a visa at the airport.

**Websites**

- Lonely Planet ([www.lonelyplanet.com/turkey](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/turkey)) Info, bookings and forum.
- Turkey Travel Planner ([www.turkeytravelpinner.com](http://www.turkeytravelpinner.com)) Useful travel info.
- Turkish Cultural Foundation ([www.kishculture.org](http://www.kishculture.org)) Culture and heritage.

**Exchange Rates**

Australia	A
Canada	C
Europe	C
Japan	Y
New Zealand	N
UK	£
USA	\$

**Important**

**Iznik & the North Aegean**

**History** [View](#) [Road](#)

**Village Life** [View](#) [Road](#)

**History** The northern Aegean coast has long been a major centre for the Hittite, Greek and Roman empires. Iznik, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, was a major centre of the silk trade and the production of Iznik tiles. The region is also famous for its pottery and its traditional wooden houses.

**Village Life** The northern Aegean coast has long been a major centre for the Hittite, Greek and Roman empires. Iznik, the capital of the Byzantine Empire, was a major centre of the silk trade and the production of Iznik tiles. The region is also famous for its pottery and its traditional wooden houses.

**Food** [View](#) [Road](#)

**Sun & Surf** [View](#) [Road](#)

**Crafts** [View](#) [Road](#)



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# UNDERSTAND TURKEY

## GET MORE FROM YOUR TRIP

Learn about the big picture, so you can make sense of what you see

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**population per sq km**

25 people

**Turkey Today**

During the Ottoman and Byzantine eras, Istanbul was a global stage. Its position at the crossroads of the world has, the result of the Ottoman and Byzantine eras.

**c 6500 BC** The world's first city, Catalhöyük, was founded here. Over time 13 layers of houses were built, beehive style, interconnected and with ladders to reach the city.

**c 4000–3000 BC** Hattian culture develops at Alacahöyük during the early Bronze Age. Although settlement has been continuous since the Chalcolithic age, the Hatti develop distinctive jewelry and metalwork.

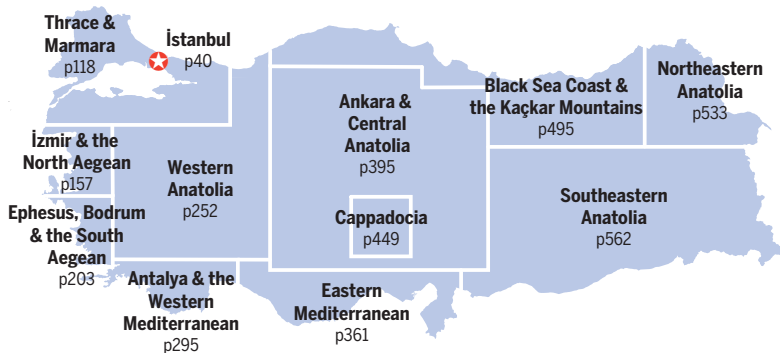
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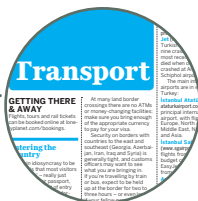
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THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

**James Bainbridge**

**Brett Atkinson, Jean-Bernard Carillet, Steve Fallon, Will Gourlay,  
Virginia Maxwell, Brandon Presser, Tom Spurling**



Look out for these icons:



Our author's  
recommendation



A green or  
sustainable option



No payment  
required

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# Turkey



**Bucharest**  
**ROMANIA**

**Gallipoli Peninsula**  
Now-tranquil site of the WWI battles (p130)

**BULGARIA**

**Edirne**  
Olive oil-drenched wrestlers grapple (p119)

**Safranbolu**  
Storybook town of Ottoman houses (p411)

**İstanbul**  
Historic sights; ferries between Europe & Asia (p40)

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**Lesvos**

**Chios**

**Ikaria**

**Crete**

**Ephesus**  
Best-preserved ruins in the Mediterranean (p205)

**Pamukkale**  
Calcite shelves and a Roman pool (p279)

**Fethiye**  
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Ruins and Turkey's longest sand beach (p330)

**Lycian Way**  
Walk past mountains, villages and ruins (p29)

**Lefkoşa/Lefkosia (Nicosia)**

**CYPRUS**  
**MEDITERRANEAN SEA (AKDENİS)**

Sevastopol

**BLACK SEA (KARADENİZ)**

Burgas

Edirne

Bandırma

Balıkesir

Manisa

Izmir

Bodrum

Patara Beach

Megiste

Fethiye

Patara Beach

İstanbul

İstanbul

İstanbul

Bursa

Kütahya

Afyon

Denizli

Burdur

Antalya

Antalya

Antalya

Antalya

Kocaeli (İzmit)

Kocaeli (İzmit)

Kocaeli (İzmit)

Adapazarı

Eskişehir

İsparta

İsparta

Antalya

Antalya

Antalya

Antalya

Antalya

Bolu

Bolu

Bolu

Gordion

Polatlı

Akşehir

Beysşehir

Beysşehir

Antalya

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Antalya

Karabük

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Yozgat

Yozgat

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Konya

Konya

Konya

Konya

Konya

Konya

26°E

28°E

30°E

32°E

34°N

34°E

30°E

32°E

34°E

36°N

# Top Experiences >



# itineraries

*Whether you've got six days or 60, these itineraries provide a starting point for the trip of a lifetime. Want more inspiration? Head online to [lonelyplanet.com/thorntree](http://lonelyplanet.com/thorntree) to chat with other travellers.*



One to Two Weeks

## Classic Turkey

Most first-time visitors to Turkey arrive with two ancient names on their lips: **İstanbul** and Ephesus. You'll need at least three days in the continent-straddling megacity to even scrape the surface of its millennia of history. Without a doubt, the top three sights are the **Aya Sofya**, **Topkapı Palace** and **Blue Mosque** but there's a sultan's treasury of other sights and activities, including a **crui**se up the Bosphorus to the Black Sea (Karadeniz), the **nightlife** around the heaving İstiklal Caddesi and the **Grand Bazaar's** 4000-plus shops.

You can head straight to **İzmir**, near Ephesus, on the ferry and train, but if you have time, meander via the **Gallipoli Peninsula**, most pleasantly reached on the ferry and bus via **Çanakkale**. An afternoon tour of the poignant battlefields, still haunted by ghosts of the WWI campaign, is a memorable experience. The north Aegean is rich in ruins and you could climb the hill to the Temple of Athena at **Behramkale**, but you may prefer to relax in tumbledown **Ayvalık** and save your energy for glorious **Ephesus**, the best-preserved classical city in the eastern Mediterranean.



10 Days to Two Weeks

## Cappadocia Express

Decisions, decisions. Travellers are often confronted with a tough choice when deciding where to head for in Turkey: Cappadocia or the coast. If you feel drawn to the former's fairytale landscape, follow the previous itinerary in **Istanbul** and hop on a fast train to the Turkish capital or, with more time, bus along the top of the country to **Safranbolu**. This Ottoman town, with half-timbered houses among rocky bluffs, is a wonderful introduction to rural Anatolian life.

**Ankara** is no match for that show-stealer on the Bosphorus, but two key sights here give an insight into Turkish history, ancient and modern: the **Anıt Kabir**, Atatürk's hill-top mausoleum, and the **Museum of Anatolian Civilisations**, a restored 15th-century *bedesten* (covered market) packed with finds from the surrounding steppe. Tying in with the latter, a detour east of Ankara takes in the isolated, evocative ruins of **Hattuşa**, the Hittite capital in the late Bronze age.

Leave three days to explore **Cappadocia**, where there are valleys of fairy chimneys (rock formations) and rock-cut churches with Byzantine frescoes, underground cities and horse-riding to get through. You also need to leave time to just sit and appreciate the fantastical landscape in çay-drinking villages such as **Mustafapaşa**, with its stone-carved Greek houses and stone grapevine on the 18th-century church.





Three to Four Weeks

## Eastern Delights

Head south from buzzing Trabzon to **Sumela Monastery**, which peers down on a forested valley from its rockface. The onward route is best tackled by car to appreciate the scenery, particularly the valleys of medieval **Georgian churches** after Erzurum. Around the rafting and trekking centre of **Yusufeli**, the drive is one of Turkey's most scenic, heading over mountains, through gorges and past crumbling castles.

**Ani** is the star attraction of Russian-influenced **Kars**; once a thriving Armenian capital, it's now a field strewn with magnificent ruins next to the border of modern Armenia. Next, head south to the predominantly Kurdish town of **Doğubayazıt**, nicknamed 'doggy biscuit' by travellers on the hippie trail. Six kilometres uphill from town, the almost impossibly romantic **İshak Paşa Palace** surveys the plains near the Iranian border.

Further south is **Van**, on the southeastern shore of a vast, mountain-ringed lake. Make sure you eat lots of the famously tasty local *kahvaltı* (breakfast) because there are numerous sights to get through, including the 10th-century **Akdamar church**, the sole inhabitant of an island in Lake Van (Van Gölü), and the recently restored **Hoşap Castle**. Heading west, don't miss **Hasankeyf**, with its rock-cut castle by the Tigris River, and honey-coloured **Mardin**, overlooking the roasting Mesopotamian plains.

Head northwest and enter the Byzantine city walls at **Diyarbakır**, the heartland of Kurdish culture, then climb **Nemrut Dağı** (Mt Nemrut) to see the gigantic stone heads. Finish near the Syrian border in **Harran**, which hosted Abraham in 1900 BC and is one of the oldest continuously inhabited spots on earth.



Three to Four Weeks

## Palm Trees & Fairy Chimneys

If you have a kind boss, you don't have to choose between Cappadocia's wavy valleys and the coast's white-sand beaches – prepare to spend many hours on buses and check out both areas. Follow our first itinerary, plus, to see some of Turkey's most awe-inspiring Roman ruins, stop in **Pergamum**, the empire's pre-eminent medical centre, and climb the hill to the **acropolis**.

After **Ephesus**, take a day trip from your base at **Selçuk** to the travertines and ruins of **Hierapolis** at Pamukkale. The brilliant white terraces can be dizzying in the midday sun, but swimming among submerged marble columns in the **Antique Pool** will restore your cool. Nearby **Afrodiasias** is at least as impressive and less crowded – the only other people among the soaring colonnades might be archaeologists.

Returning to the coast, head along the chichi **Bodrum Peninsula** or the **Datça** and **Bozburun Peninsulas**, where the mountain towns and fishing villages are best explored by scooter. Continuing southeast, beautiful **Ölüdeniz** is the spot to paraglide over the Mediterranean or lie low on a beach towel. You're now within kicking distance of the 509km-long **Lycian Way**. Hike for a day through superb countryside to overnight in heavenly **Faralya**, overlooking Butterfly Valley, and further inroads into the trail will definitely top your 'next time' list.

Continuing along the coast, have a pit stop at laid-back **Kaş**, its pretty harbourside square alive nightly with the hum of friendly folk enjoying the breeze, views, boutique browsing and a beer or two. One of Turkey's most beguiling boat trips departs from here, taking in the sunken Byzantine city at **Kekova Island**. From Kaş, it's a couple of hours to **Olympos**, where you can spend a few days unwinding at the beach tree houses.

Back in the city, **Antalya's** Roman-Ottoman quarter, Kaleiçi, is worth a wander against the backdrop of a jaw-dropping mountain range. Next, drag yourself away from the beach and catch the bus north to claim your cave in **Göreme**. This travellers' hang-out is the most popular base in Cappadocia, a surreal moonscape dotted with often-phallic tuff cones. The famous formations line the roads to sights including the rock-cut frescoed churches of **Göreme Open-Air Museum** and the Byzantine underground cities at **Kaymaklı** and **Derinkuyu**.



Four Weeks

## Anatolian Circle

This trip only leaves out eastern Anatolia, a mission in itself, and takes in obscure gems as well as prime sights, including **Edirne**'s Selimiye Camii. The 16th-century mosque is the finest work of the great Mimar Sinan. Next, spend a few days among more mosques, palaces and some 13 million folk in **Istanbul**, former capital of the Ottoman and Byzantine empires, before heading east to **Safranbolu**, with its winding streets of Ottoman mansions. From here, turn north to **Amasra**, which is a low-key Black Sea port town, but more importantly the beginning of the drive to **Sinop** through rugged hills.

South of Samsun, **Amasya** matches Safranbolu with its Ottoman houses, as well as having Pontic tombs, a castle and less of a tourist industry. Heading south, pause in Sivas and detour up a mountain valley to **Divriği**, an Alevi town that offers a taste of eastern Anatolia. The 800-year-old, Unesco-protected **Ulu Cami** mosque and hospital complex has stone doorways with intricate carvings.

The next stop, **Cappadocia**, is wholeheartedly back on the beaten track. However, instead of joining the rest on a tour bus or hot-air balloon, explore the fairy chimneys and cave churches by **walking** or **horse-riding**. Göreme and Ürgüp are the usual bases, but you could stay in a less-touristy village such as **Ortahisar**, with its craggy castle.

South of central Cappadocia, see rock-cut churches without the worst of the crowds in **Soğanlı**, where Byzantine monastic settlements occupy two valleys. If you really want to get away from it all, head into the **Ala Dağlar National Park** for some of Turkey's most breathtaking scenery in the Taurus Mountains (Toros Dağları).

You're now fit for the journey across the hazy plains to **Konya**, a convenient stop en route to the Mediterranean and the birthplace of the Mevlâna (whirling dervish) order. The turquoise-domed **Mevlâna Museum**, containing the tomb of the order's 13th-century founder, is an enduring symbol of Turkey.

When you glimpse the glittering Med, follow the coastal part of the previous itinerary. You won't have time to stop everywhere if you want to sunbathe and hit the hamam – **Antalya**'s Seljuk Sefa Hamam is a good one – so pick some highlights, such as the ruins at **Kekova Island**, **Ephesus** and **Pergamum**.



## OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Melbourne, London and Oakland, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

## OUR WRITERS



### James Bainbridge

**Coordinating Author; Thrace & Marmara, Izmir & the North Aegean** The last few years have been all about Turkey for James. While coordinating the previous edition of *Turkey*, he researched Cappadocia and Central Anatolia, then wrote up his kebab-stained notes at home in Hackney, a Turkish enclave of London. For this edition he moved to Istanbul. When he hasn't been learning to love suffixes on a Turkish course, or sitting among Mac-toting artists in Cihangir's trendy cafes, he has written about the city for worldwide publications. James' travel writing on Turkey, and other countries from India to Ireland, has appeared in a dozen Lonely Planet guidebooks and publications including the *Times* and the *Guardian*.



### Brett Atkinson

**Black Sea Coast & the Kaçkar Mountains, Southeastern Anatolia** Since first visiting Turkey in 1985, Brett Atkinson has returned regularly to one of his favourite countries. Highlights have included ballooning in Cappadocia, discovering the poignant remains of Ani and Afrosdisias, and honeymooning with Carol in Istanbul. For this research trip he visited southeastern Anatolia for the first time, and the region's stunning scenery, Kurdish culture, and excellent food didn't

disappoint. Brett has written about over 40 different countries as a guidebook author and travel writer. See [www.brett-atkinson.net](http://www.brett-atkinson.net).



### Jean-Bernard Carillet

**Northeastern Anatolia** A Paris-based journalist and photographer, Jean-Bernard has a passion for remote corners and adventure-laden regions – small wonder then that he keeps returning to northeastern Anatolia. He has clocked up five trips there, and each time the area has woven its spell on him a little more (despite a couple of major rental car breakdowns). Seeking out churches and castles of yore lost in the steppe or perched on cliff tops, climbing majestic summits (including

Mt Ararat), hiking in the Kaçkars, rafting the Ispir River – he can't think of a better playground.



### Steve Fallon

**Antalya & the Western Mediterranean, Eastern Mediterranean** Owning a house in Kalkan and being on first-name basis with most of the Turkish Airline in-flight staff currently flying between London and Dalaman, Steve considers Turkey a second home. This assignment took him from the hotspots of Marmaris to the hotpot that is Hatay where he discovered the joys of fresh thyme salad, castles that walk on water and early Christianity. And although *Türkçe'yi hala mağara adamı gibi konuşuyor* (he still speaks Turkish like a caveman), he says only nice things in his new favourite language.

Read more about Steve at:  
[lonelyplanet.com/members/stevefallon](http://lonelyplanet.com/members/stevefallon)

OVER MORE  
PAGE WRITERS

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**Virginia Maxwell**

**Istanbul** After working for many years as a publishing manager at Lonely Planet's Melbourne headquarters, Virginia decided that she'd be happier writing guidebooks than commissioning them. Since making this decision she's covered nine countries for Lonely Planet, most of them around the Mediterranean. Virginia knows Turkey well, and loves it with a passion. As well as working on the previous three editions of this country guide, she is also the author of the Istanbul City Guide

and Istanbul Encounter pocket guide and writes about the city for a host of international magazines and websites.

Read more about Virginia at:  
[lonelyplanet.com/members/virginiamaxwell](https://lonelyplanet.com/members/virginiamaxwell)



**Brandon Presser**

**Ephesus, Bodrum & the South Aegean, Western Anatolia** After earning an art history degree from Harvard University and working at the Louvre, Brandon swapped landscape canvases for the real deal and joined the glamorous ranks of eternal nomadism. Today, Brandon is a full-time travel writer – he's written 20 Lonely Planet titles, from Iceland to Thailand and many 'lands' in between. For this assignment Brandon travelled from the cold and clear Aegean seas to

the dusty backroads of Anatolia; his Turkish adventure will forever remain a cherished memory.

Read more about Brandon at:  
[lonelyplanet.com/members/brandonpresser](https://lonelyplanet.com/members/brandonpresser)



**Tom Spurling**

**Ankara & Central Anatolia, Cappadocia** Tom Spurling first travelled to Turkey in 2003 to spend the low season in Olympos while waiting for the high season in Olympos. For the previous edition of Turkey, he researched the Mediterranean with his pregnant wife and her all-day sickness. For this edition they returned with baby Oliver who was particularly inspired by the Hittite ruins of central Anatolia. When not travelling Tom lives in

Melbourne and teaches high school boys to make the most of their holiday time.

Read more about Tom at:  
[lonelyplanet.com/members/tomspurling](https://lonelyplanet.com/members/tomspurling)

**Will Gourlay**

**History, The Arts, Architecture, The People** A serial visitor to Turkey, Will first arrived in Istanbul almost 20 years ago. His first lengthy foray took him through Southeast Anatolia and into Syria. He returned soon after to teach for a year in Izmir, where he learned the delights of *Iskender kebab* and the perils of raki. Recent trips have been with his wife and children, all of whom are becoming as obsessed with Turkey as he is. Will is now undertaking doctoral research into Turkish culture and society.