



PETEN TRAVELS

TRAVEL BEYOND THE ORDINARY

ISTANBUL EXTENSION TOUR (Highlights of Istanbul) (3 nights)

Treasures of the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires

Constantinople and Istanbul: two names for one great city, the capital of the mighty Byzantine and Ottoman Empires. Istanbul is the only metropolis where East literally meets West as it bridges two continents, Europe and Asia. Its shores are bordered by the Sea of Marmara, the Golden Horn and the Bosphorous Strait, with its monuments spanning over seven hills. Minarets and domes dominate the famous skyline and a stroll through the streets reveal the city's diverse and magnificent heritage. The Hagia Sophia, the great cathedral of Byzantium, the architectural marvel with its marble and mosaics, vies with Ottoman mosques clad in beautiful Iznik tiles. The Topkapı Palace, the luxurious residence of the sultans with the elegant fountains is a stones throw away from the terraced houses and bustling covered markets. Every visit to Istanbul is an adventure and a feast for the senses. It is one of the most fascinating and vibrant cities in the world.

Day 1 Istanbul

Special category (4-star) hotel in the old city

Walking day & Golden Horn and Bosphorus cruise by a private boat

We spend the day exploring the outstanding historical monuments, beginning with the **Hippodrome**, once Constantinople's great arena for chariot races and public entertainment. We continue to the mosque of **Sultan Ahmet**, also known as the 'Blue Mosque', unique in Turkey with its six elegant minarets. From there we walk the short distance to the **Yerebatan Saray**, an extraordinary underground cistern, before we visit the majestic great church of **Hagia Sophia**.

After lunch we enjoy a **private boat trip** along Golden Horn and the Bosphorus, the strait separating Europe and Asia. As we travel this bustling and crucial waterway we enjoy a "front door" view of castles, palaces and ornate Ottoman mansions. A stop along the Bosphorus takes us to the **Sadberk Hanım** Museum, with its fine archaeological and decorative art collections. **(B)**

Day 2 Istanbul

Special category hotel

On foot and private mini-van

We begin our exploration of the Ottoman city with a morning visit to the **Topkapı Palace** including an optional but highly recommended visit to the harem. This palace was once the opulent residence of the Ottoman sultans and the political centre of the Empire, replete with magnificent collections of Chinese porcelain, Ottoman textiles, gold and jewels. A drive along the majestic Land Walls of Constantinople leads us to the little church of the **Saviour in Chora**, a jewel box of Late Byzantine mosaics and frescoes. After lunch we visit the Süleymaniye mosque complex, one of the masterpieces of the great Ottoman

architect Sinan. Guests are then taken to the renowned **Covered Bazaar** where they are left to explore or shop on their own. This huge warren of covered, winding streets has thousands of shops selling everything from the traditional to the modern, from the exquisitely beautiful to the commonplace. Enjoy and practice your bargaining skills! **(B)**

Day 3 Istanbul

Special category hotel

On foot and public transportations

In the morning we visit the later Ottoman palace, the **Dolmabahçe**, to see the opulent state rooms. Its extravagant 4.5 ton chandelier was a present from Queen Victoria to the sultan. We cross the Bosphorous on a public ferry boat to then have **lunch in Asia!** After lunch we explore the markets in Asia after which we take the ferry back to Europe. More explorations follow as we walk through the old **Pera and Galata** districts culminating in an amazing climb up the 14th century **Galata Tower** where the view of the city is magnificent. We end the day at the colorful **Spice Market**. **(B)**

The visiting order to the sites may change in order to accommodate closure days along with your preference.

Tour price

€1450 Euro per person in double occupancy (double or twin bedded room)
€270 Euro single room supplement

What's included in this price?

- 3 nights hotel accommodation based on Bed & Breakfast
- Specialist leadership
- Entrance fees, admission to museums and donations to mosques
- Ferry fares, local taxes and parking fares, local transport fares.
- Private boat trip
- All ground transportation by a/c, deluxe mini-van as noted in itinerary
- Meticulously prepared tour folder with maps and information to help participants get the most from the tour
- Hotel service charges and baggage handling

What's not included?

- International outbound & return flight fare
- Cost of obtaining your passport and visa, airport taxes, excess baggage fee
- Personal expenses such as extra beverages alcohol, laundry, room service, communication charges.

Please note: On request we can also arrange accommodations at the Four Seasons, Çırağan Kempinski Palace or Ritz Carlton hotels. The cost will vary from the price shown.