

**TURKEY JOURNEY
OCTOBER 17 – 29, 2009
ITINERARY OVERVIEW**

hosted by
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SAT. 17 OCT: Canada to Athens.

Today we depart from Toronto on our overnight flight to Athens, Greece. Group seating will be pre-assigned by the airline for our flight. Dinner and complimentary in-flight service will be provided this evening. **(D)**

SUN. 18 OCT: Athens to Turkey

Upon arrival at Athens Airport we are met by our guide. Boarding our luxury touring coach we relax and enjoy the day touring Athens, including the **Acropolis** and **Mars Hill**. Later this afternoon we take the short flight to Istanbul. Once through passport and visa formalities we meet by our Turkish tour manager and driver. Driving through the Marmara region we arrive at the gateway between Europe and Asia, Istanbul (Constantinople.) Here we check-in to **The President Hotel**, for the next two nights. Dinner is at our hotel tonight. **(B,D)**

MON. 19 OCT: Istanbul.

After breakfast we enjoy our full day historical Istanbul tour. Visit the **Hagia Sophia Museum** (built in the 6th century), the **Topkapi Palace** with priceless collections of jewelry and rare porcelain, the **Blue Mosque**, famous for its blue Iznik tiles, the **Hippodrome Square** where ancient chariot races were held, and the **Grand Covered Bazaar** in search of treasures. Dinner and overnight at the hotel. **(B,D)**

TUE. 20 OCT: Istanbul, Adana.

This morning we begin with a visit to take in the aromas of the **Egyptian Spice Market**, followed by a boat tour on the **Bosphorus**, viewing the picturesque beauty of the European and Asian shorelines on either side. In the afternoon visit of the **St. Sauveur in Chora** church, containing the most beautiful Byzantine mosaics in the Mediterranean. At the end of our afternoon we depart for the airport and board our flight to **Adana**. Here we check-in for dinner and overnight stay at the hotel **Mavi Surmeli**. **(B,D)**

WED. 21 OCT: Adana, Antioch.

After breakfast we drive to **Antioch**, the main headquarters for Paul's missionary journeys. Once the third largest city of the Roman Empire, Antioch was only surpassed by Alexandria and Rome. It was here that Peter, Paul, Barnabas and Timothy preached and where followers of Jesus were first called "Christians." As we enter the Iron Gate into Biblical Antioch we stroll through the streets where the Apostles had previously walked.

Just a short drive from Antioch is **Seleucia Peria**, mentioned in the Bible as the port where Paul and Barnabas set sail on their first missionary journey. From the ancient site of the Temple of Zeus we enjoy a beautiful view of the harbour and Mediterranean Sea.

After a memorable day we return to our hotel in Adana for dinner and overnight stay. **(B,D)**

THU. 22 OCT: Tarsus, Cappadocia.

This morning we drive to the port of **Tarsus**, birthplace of Paul. From Tarsus we begin our journey inland to the staggering geological Central Anatolian region of **Cappadocia**. Truly one of the most unique landscapes in the world, it was here that early inhabitants carved into the soft volcanic rock to create underground dwellings, that eventually grew to become entire cities. Over one thousand elaborate places of worship, Early Churches, were carved out from the landscape. Many of the lavishly decorated frescoes, from as early as 5th century, can be seen today. Sometimes as many as six thousand Christians escaped from persecution by hiding in this region.

Our overnight and dinner will be at **The Peri Tower Hotel** during the next two days. **(B,D)**

FRI. 23 OCT: Cappadocia.

Today we remain in the Cappadocia region and spend the full day exploring such sights as **the Goreme open air museum, the underground city of Kaymakli, the pottery town of Avanos, the natural Citadel of Uchisar, the monastic Zelve valley and the carpet factory.**

Dinner is at our hotel this evening. **(B,D)**

SAT. 24 OCT: Cappadocia, Konya.

Today we can take the opportunity to have our own, private, service inside one of the cave churches in the valley.

Our afternoon sees us travel west towards the Aegean coast. Our first stop is the ancient mystic city of **Konya**. Here we will visit the **Mevlana Museum** and the **Whirling Dervish Monastery**, before arriving at our hotel, **The Ozkaymak**, for dinner and overnight stay. **(B,D)**

SUN. 25 OCT: Pisidian Antioch, Laodicea.

Today our journey follows that of Paul and Barnabas as we stop in **Pisidian Antioch**. Here we will visit the site of the synagogue that Paul visited during his journey. The ruins of an early Byzantine church are still visible with a mosaic of Psalm 42:4 found during recent excavations.

From here we enjoy a scenic journey through the mountains of Galatia until we arrive at ancient cities of **Colossae** and **Laodicea**.

Laodicea- The “luke warm” church that is neither hot nor cold. (Rev. 3:14-22)

Our day ends with a visit to the natural salt flats of **Pamukkale**, a truly spectacular sight indeed!

Dinner and overnight stay will be at **The Lycus River Hotel**. **(B,D)**

MON. 26 OCT: Ephesus.

Today we have a full day visit to the unforgettable ruins of **Ephesus**:- The ‘desirable church’ that left its first love. (Rev. 2:1-7.)

In the ancient world, Ephesus was a center of travel and commerce. Situated on the Aegean Sea at the mouth of the Cayster River, the city was one of the greatest seaports of the ancient world. It was here that Paul visited, whilst on his return to Israel, but was forced to leave the city, vowing to return.

He never returned to Ephesus but, instead, held council from Melitus during his Third journey. Our day also includes a visit to the church of Apostle John.

Dinner is back at our hotel, **The Prestige Hotel**, Izmir. **(B,D)**

TUE. 27 OCT: Smyrna, Pergamon, Thyatira and Sardis

After breakfast we depart for a day visiting some more sights of the Seven Churches of Revelation.

Smyrna- The persecuted church that suffered poverty and martyrdom. (Rev. 2:8-11.)

Pergamum- The worldly church that mixed doctrines and needed to repent. (Rev. 2:12-17.)

Thyatira- The false church that followed a seductive prophetess. (Rev. 2:18-29.)

A truly memorable day ends with a return to our hotel for dinner and overnight stay. **(B,D)**

WED. 28 OCT: Izmir to Istanbul.

This morning we take our domestic flight from Izmir to Istanbul. This afternoon has been left open for free time before our evening flight and overnight in Athens. **(B,D)**

THU. 29 OCT: Homeward bound.

After breakfast we board our morning flight Departure, which brings us back to Toronto in the early afternoon. Complimentary in flight service is provided on our flights, including breakfast and lunch. **(B,L)**

B = Breakfast. L = Lunch. D = Dinner.