

Full Itinerary

CAPTIVATING CAPPADOCIA EXTENSION TO TURKISH DELIGHTS



TALK TO OUR WELL
TRAVELLED TEAM OF
EXPERTS

Toll Free US and
Canada:
1.855.624.4386

Monday - Thursday 9:00am -
8:00pm, Friday 9:00am - 5:30pm
(London time)



JOURNEY SNAPSHOT

ACTIVITY LEVEL:

Level 2

DESTINATION:

Captivating Cappadocia
Extension to Turkish Delights

DURATION:

4 days / 3 nights

FLIGHT INFORMATION:

Please arrange your flights to Kayseri Airport [ASR] to arrive on Day 1 and to depart from Istanbul Airport [IST] at the end of the main tour

PICKUP LOCATION:

Kayseri Airport [ASR]

OVERVIEW

10 - 13 May, 2025

Extend your stay in Turkey and discover the captivating region of Cappadocia, full of history and stunning scenery before heading to Istanbul for the main tour

Cappadocia is a region of central Turkey based around a triangle formed by the towns of Nevsehir, Nigde and Kayseri. Famous for its 'fairy chimneys', unique geological formations created from volcanic detritus of porous rock that is easily carved, chipped and eroded by the elements, this region is also known for its early Christian history with St. Peter referring to Christians living in Cappadocia as early as the 1st century AD.

On this short extension prior the main tour, discover the stunning vistas, fascinating history and tales and stay in a cave hotel hewn out of the rock. What's more, there is also the option to take a hot air balloon ride as the sun rises over the distinctive scenery. The many balloons floating high over the unique landscape of Cappadocia is one of Turkey's most famous sights.

ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAY 1 - Welcome to Cappadocia

DAY 2 - Captivating Cappadocia & Sunrise Hot Air Balloon

DAY 3 - Underground Cities & Whirling Dervishes

DAY 4 - Journey to Istanbul

FULL ITINERARY

DAY 1 - WELCOME TO CAPPADOCIA

Upon arrive into Kayseri Airport, you will be met by your driver, who will transfer you to your hotel and assist check-in at hotel in Cappadocia situated amid the rock-carved dwellings.

The rest of the day is yours to explore your surroundings before this evening, enjoy your dinner together at the hotel.

Included meals: Dinner

Accommodation: Gamirasu Cave Hotel, Cappadocia (or similar)

Optional extras: Dawn Hot Air Balloon Ride

DAY 2 - CAPTIVATING CAPPADOCIA & SUNRISE HOT AIR BALLOON

The most iconic sight of Cappadocia is of hot air balloons rising over the majestic scenery at dawn. This morning, join an optional excursion and take to the skies for a hot air balloon ride over Cappadocia. An early departure for a short transfer to the take-off field where the balloons are being prepared. Following the safety briefing from the pilot, the balloon takes off to be airborne just before sunrise. Following the landscape contours of Cappadocia, and flying high enough to enjoy the topography from above and low level too, you'll soar above the stunning scenery for approx 45 minutes. Return to your hotel for breakfast

Later this morning, the group meets our guide and driver as we begin a full day exploring Goreme. There are over ten cave churches in the Goreme Open Air Museum, including the Tokali (Buckle) Church, the Chapel of St. Basil, the Elmali (Apple) Church, the Chapel of St. Barbara, the Yilani (Snake) Church, the Chapel of St. Catherine, eht Carikli (Sandals) Church and others. Along with rectories, dwellings, and a religious school, they form a large monastic complex carved out of a roughly ring-shaped rock formation in the other worldly landscape of Cappadocia. Each church has a modern Turkish name, given by local villages based on a prominent feature. Most of the churches are fully painted inside with beautiful and historically important Byzantine murals dating from 900-1200 AD. Most are in remarkably good condition, although nearly all the eyes of the painted figures have been gouged out by superstitious locals afraid of the Evil Eye.

Afterwards, we visit with the rock formations in Derwent Valley; then continue to the cliff dwellings in the three valleys of Zelve, which is home to intense chimney rocks formed in the volcanic tufas. The chimneys rocks from the valley have large pointed tops and large trunks. There are many settlements used for hiding by the first Christians trying to escape from the Roman soldiers, with many abbeys and churches.

The last stop will be to Avanos where we'll visit to a local pottery art workshop and see how people survived and created beautiful art in this region dating back to the Hittite period and learn about local art.

After a delicious local lunch, we will drive back to the hotel stopping for some other photo breaks to see Uchisar Castle, was once used as a fortification and offers a magnificent panoramic view of Cappadocia and Mt. Erciyes in the distance and the famous Pigeon Valley.

This evening, we enjoy a delicious dinner of local fare while watching an engrossing folkloric performance.

Included meals: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

Accommodation: Gamirasu Cave Hotel, Cappadocia (or similar)

DAY 3 - UNDERGROUND CITIES & WHIRLING DERVISHES

After breakfast, we meet our guide and driver and head to the amazing underground city of Kaymakli.

Signs of an early troglodyte lifestyle are evident in the communal kitchens blackened by smoke, stables and storage spaces carved into the rocks as need arose. The maze of living quarters hundreds of feet below ground is startling proof that tens of thousands of people existed deep within the earth.

We then continue to the small village of Mustafapasa (Sinassos), which has old stone houses with attractive carved facades dating back to the end of the 19th century, and a cluster of small churches. Once known as Sinassos when it was a thriving Greek community before World War I. Places of interest include a 19th century medrese, the Ayios Vasilios Church, and the Church of Sts Constantine and Helena. We enjoy lunch at an Old Greek House this afternoon before continuing to Avanos.

Located on the banks of Kizilirmak River, the ancient name of Avanos used to be Vanessa. The city's most famous historical feature, which is

still relevant and very visible today, is its production of earthenware pottery. The ceramic trade in this district and its countless pottery factories date right back to the Hittites. We visit one of the handicraft centers to see the production and to get brief information on the art of pottery. We then continue to a famous winery to sample some of the wine produced in the area before returning to the hotel for some free time.

Late afternoon, we meet together as we head out to Sarihan to watch a Whirling Dervishes performance (also known as a Sema). Dervishes, initiates of the Sufi Islam sect, are famous for their practice of twirling in an exquisite spiritual ceremony that UNESCO named a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. The old Saruhan Caravanserai, built in 1249 and totally restored, is the place for the holy ceremony of the whirling dervishes in Cappadocia. The ceremony, inspired by the great Mevlana (1207-1273), is part of the Turkish history, tradition, culture, and beliefs. Performed only by religious men, while whirling endlessly, they have their arms open, their right hands directed to the sky, and the left ones turned toward the earth. They turn from right to left. Pivoting around the heart, conveying God's spiritual gifts to the people - to us. Watching this ceremony, carried over for hundreds of years, is an experience that a visitor in Turkey should not miss! During the ceremony the audience is not allowed to drink, eat, speak, or taking photos since it is a religious practice.

We return to the hotel for an evening at leisure.

Included meals: Breakfast & Lunch

Accommodation: Gamirasu Cave Hotel, Cappadocia (or similar)

DAY 4 - JOURNEY TO ISTANBUL

After breakfast, we check out and make our way to Cappadocia Airport for the flight to Istanbul.

Upon arrival in Istanbul, we meet our assistant and transfer to the hotel where we will start our main tour.

After check-in, the remainder of the day is free for you to explore the city at your leisure before we meet our fellow travellers for a welcome dinner together.

Included meals: Breakfast

Accommodation: The Bank Hotel, Istanbul (or similar)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Meet & Greet at Kayseri Airport [ASR] on arrival
- One-way domestic economy flights: Kayseri Airport [ASR] - Istanbul Airport [IST]
- Transport as detailed in the itinerary
- Accommodation as detailed in the itinerary (or similar standard)
- Meals as detailed in the itinerary
- English speaking tour guide throughout
- All activities, visits and excursions as detailed in the itinerary

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Flights to Kayseri Airport [ASR] to arrive on Day 1 and depart from Istanbul Airport [IST] at the end of the main tour
- Drinks
- All entrance fees to non-stipulated attractions
- Visas, travel insurance
- Any personal items and anything not mentioned under included in price above
- Any meals not mentioned in itinerary
- Any optional activities offered
- Gratuities
- Any COVID tests or related entry & exit requirements

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Please let The Big Journey Company know prior to travelling if you have any medical needs or take any medication that we need to be made aware of to ensure that you have a safe and pleasant journey.
- Check in is after 2-3pm and check out is before 10am unless otherwise specified in the itinerary.
- Cancellation 90 - 0 days prior to departure cancellation fee is 100%. It is your responsibility to ensure the correct travel insurance in place to protect you against the need to cancel your holiday. Deposits are non-refundable.
- A non-refundable deposit is due at the time of booking. Full balance will be due 14 weeks prior to departure.
- Further terms and conditions apply and will be provided upon request or at the time of booking. The Big Journey Company reserves the right to withdraw any offer prior to accepting a reservation request. This does not affect your statutory rights. This offer is subject to availability and space is limited.
- Please consult your doctor letting them know your travel plans so that they can advise you about any vaccinations/medications you may need to take.
- Please let The Big Journey Company know prior to travelling if you have any medical needs or take any medication that we need to be made aware of to ensure that you have a safe and pleasant tour
- Prices are based on two people sharing and do not include increases in government taxes, fuel surcharges.

BOOK YOUR JOURNEY

Choose from the list of dates below

CASH ONLY OPTION

10 MAY - 13 MAY 2025

FROM \$2,549 PER PERSON.

Call to Book

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