



Eastern Turkey Tour 6 September 2020



TOUR PROGRAM

Day 1	Sunday 6 Sept 2020	Brisbane – Singapore	BNE-SIN 1445-2045 SQ236 A359
Day 2	Monday 7 Sept 2020	Singapore – Istanbul – Gaziantep	SIN-IST 0145-0745 SQ392 A359 IST-GZT 1200-1350 TK222 B738 Meet your private vehicle and drive and transfer to your hotel in Gaziantep. Tuğcan Hotel, Gaziantep 4* (D)
Day 3	Tuesday 8 Sept 2020	Gaziantep	After breakfast, we will visit the ancient Roman city of Zeugma and tour Gaziantep, visiting the Mosaic Museum where the superb Roman mosaics of Zeugma are displayed. Gaziantep (also known as a food lovers paradise) has 30 different local dishes registered for the region as official dishes of culture and there are a few special ones that you must try. With 'Baklava' available on every corner, Antep is truly a paradise for those with a sweet tooth. Afternoon at leisure. Tuğcan Hotel, Gaziantep 4* (B, D)
Day 4	Wednesday 9 Sept 2020	Gaziantep – Urfa (Sanliurfa) 150 kms	After an early breakfast, we proceed to Sanliurfa (commonly referred to as Urfa). An important stage on the "Fertile Crescent" route from the Mediterranean shore to Upper Mesopotamia, Urfa saw the rival armies pass beneath her walls. Tradition has it that Abraham was born at the mosque of Halil Rahman which will be one of the highlights. Visit the famous "beehive" houses of Harran (referred to in Genesis (XI, 31,32; XII, 4,5) as Charan). Among the ruins we shall visit are the Citadel, the Grand Mosque and the city walls. See the Lake of Sacred Fish at Urfa. Dedeman Hotel Urfa 4* (B, D)

Day 5	Thursday 10 Sept 2020	Urfa – Kahta 114 kms	On our way to Kahta from Urfa this morning, we will visit Gobekli Tepe before travelling on to Kahta. Time to explore the town before dinner and overnight. Nemrut Kervansaray Hotel 3* (B, D)
Day 6	Friday 11 Sept 2020	Kahta – Mardin 265 kms	We leave very early in the morning for Mt. Nemrut . Sunrise from the top of Mount Nemrut will be incomparable to anything you have seen before. This is where King Antiochus I of Commagene built a colossal funerary sanctuary, a temple dedicated to himself, to the Greco-Persian gods and to his Persian ancestors. The East and West terraces have a central courtyard surrounded with colossal statues of lions, eagles, etc. Colossal statues of seated figures are Apollo, Hermes, Zeus and Hercules. Continue to Mardin for dinner and overnight. Tuğhan Hotel, 3* (B, D)
Day 7	Saturday 12 Sept 2020	Mardin	Today we will visit the Deyrulzafaran Assyrian Monastery (Saffron Monastery) which is considered as the centre of all the Assyrians in the world for a long time with its authentic structure. Continue to the ancient Roman city of Dara and explore the Necropolis and Cisterns. Afterwards, we will return to Mardin's Kasimiye Madrasah and you will see the fascinating view of the Mesopotamian Plain. Walk the city centre with our guide and discover its historic stonework, streets, Kirkklar Church, Abbaralar, Old Post Office Building, Ulu Mosque and Şehidiye Mosque. Afternoon at leisure. Tuğhan Hotel, 3* (B, D)
Day 8	Sunday 13 Sept 2020	Mardin – Van 466 kms	We leave early in the morning for our drive to Van. After a short drive we will arrive in Midyat (60km) and you will see the best examples of stonework. We will first visit the metropolitan centre and Mor Gabriel Monastery, the largest monastery in the region. We will visit the shops where legendary filigree is manufactured and sold. Also visit the famous buildings where local TV series shot. Travel to Van having a stop by the Malabadi Bridge. Afternoon at leisure. Ramada by Wyndham, Van 4* (B, D)
Day 9	Monday 14 Sept 2020	Van	We will visit Hoşap Castle which sits high above the surrounding landscape and was used to control and tax the road to Persia. Enjoy the stunning scenery! After Hoşap we will head to Gevas, on the coastline of Lake Van, where we will have lunch before taking a boat to the most famous location in the Lake Van District, Akhtamar Island. Akhtamar is home to the Armenian Cathedral of the Holy Cross, a beautifully preserved example of the architecture of 10th Century Armenian architecture. Decorating the exterior walls of the cathedral are an extensive array of carved Biblical reliefs, depicting scenes such as David and Goliath, and the Virgin Mary.

			<p>Van was the capital of the Kingdom of Urartu and the castle dates back to the 9th century. The museum in Van contains some very impressive Urartian jewellery, inscriptions, cylindrical seals, bronze belts.</p> <p>Ramada by Wyndham, Van 4* (B, D)</p>
Day 10	Tuesday 15 Sept 2020	Van – Doğubeyazit 249 kms	<p>We drive to Doğubeyazit in the morning. We will travel to Durupinar, at the foot of Mt. Ararat, which some believe is the final resting place of Noah's Ark, and visit the open air museum. We return to Doğubeyazit where we will visit the spectacular Ishak Pasha Palace, built in 17th century, with its unique fusion of architectural styles from Seljuk, Ottoman, Georgian, Armenian and Persian traditions – an amalgamation of castle-palace-mosque.</p> <p>Butik Ertur Hotel 3* (B, D)</p>
Day 11	Wednesday 16 Sept 2020	Doğu Beyazit – Kars 192 kms	<p>We start early in the morning for our trip to Kars, which got its name from Turco-Bulgarian tribe called Karsaks during the 1st cent. BC.</p> <p>Kars was held by the Russians between 1878-1920 which accounts for the 19th century Russian aspect of the town. We drive east to visit Ani that was the capital of, first an Urartian State, later, Capital City of the Armenian Kingdom. Byzantines took it over in the 11th century. In 1239 the Mongols arrived and cleared everybody out and the place became a ghost city. The castle and the ruins of 8 churches date from the 10th and 11th centuries. Afternoon at leisure.</p> <p>Katerina Sarayi, Kars 3* (B, D) (built as a palace by Tsar Nicholas II)</p>
Day 12	Thursday 17 Sept 2020	Kars – Erzurum 203 kms	<p>We drive to Erzurum in the morning exploring Sarikamis on the way. Erzurum is the largest city of Eastern Anatolia, the transport hub for the region, a university city with 100,000 students and hosts major ski resorts.</p> <p>Afternoon at leisure.</p> <p>Polat Palandoken Hotel, Erzurum 4* (B, D)</p>
Day 13	Friday 18 Sept 2020	Erzurum	<p>City tour this morning and the highlights are Cifte Minareli Medrese (the twin minaret) an outstanding example of Seljuk architecture, the Yakutiye Theological School which dates back to 1310, the time of the Mongols, and the Uli Cami & Lala Pasa Mosques. After lunch at the historic Ottoman Pavilion, we will also visit Erzurum Castle which was built by Roman Emperor Theodosius. Afternoon at leisure.</p> <p>Polat Palandoken Hotel, Erzurum 4* (B, D)</p>
Day 14	Saturday 19 Sept 2020	Erzurum – Rize 257 kms	<p>We will enjoy a very scenic drive via Ayder Plateau, a Turkish paradise. We will see the best examples of the Eastern Black Sea vegetation such as chestnut, alder, eastern spruce and take a photo break at the historical stone bridges. Taking a walk in the</p>

			<p>plateau which is the best point in Kackar Mountains will give you a chance to see the local villagers and chat with them.</p> <p>Tonight's hotel is set among the tea plantations for which the Black Sea Coast is renown.</p> <p>Kaf Dađi Konak Hotel, Rize 3* (B, D)</p>
Day 15	Sunday 20 Sept 2020	Rize – Trabzon 80 kms	<p>Leaving Rize behind us we proceed westward to Trabzon along the coast of the Black Sea that will give us some magnificent views of the mountains on one side and the inviting Sea on the other. We will visit the famous Greek Sumela Monastery built on a steep and rocky slope in the 6th century and abandoned in 1923. The various chapels and rooms are mere shells but with a good deal of fine fresco paintings. It is mysterious and impressive. Afternoon at leisure.</p> <p>Yalipark Hotel, Trabzon 4* (B, D)</p>
Day 16	Monday 21 Sept 2020	Trabzon – Antalya	<p>After check out we will drive to the airport for our morning flight to Antalya.</p> <p>TZX-IST 0920-1135 TK2827 B738 IST-AYT 1340-1515 TK2416 A332</p> <p>Afternoon at leisure & overnight in Antalya.</p> <p>The Mediterra Art Hotel - 4* (B, D)</p>
Day 17	Tuesday 22 Sept 2020	Antalya	<p>Aspendos, Perge, Side Guided Tour.</p> <p>Perge was the capital of Pamphylia. The Roman Baths, the Agora, Colonnaded Street, Nympharium and the stadium are all on the visit. Then we depart for the Aspendos Ancient Theatre. This incredibly well preserved ancient theatre was built in the 2nd century A.D., it has a capacity of 15,000 people and its still being used for festivals and music concerts. Side is one of the best classical ancient cities in Turkey, it was a port city that served the largest slave market in this region. During Roman times much construction took place in Side including a large theatre, Roman Baths and the Temple of Apollo. We will have free time here to enjoy the sea and the city. On the way back, we will stop at the Kusunlu Waterfall then return to Antalya for overnight.</p> <p>The Mediterra Art Hotel - 4* (B, L, D)</p>
Day 18	Wednesday 23 Sept 2020	Antalya - Kaş	<p>This morning we travel to Kaş (2.5 hrs) which is a seaside town on the Mediterranean coast in south-western Turkey and is a complete contrast to what we have just experienced in Eastern Turkey. The modern town occupies the site of ancient Antiphellos, with still-visible ruins including a theatre. The 4th-century-B.C. Lion Tomb, with 2 carved lion heads, is one of many Lycian rock tombs in the area. The town centre has whitewashed houses and buildings covered in bougainvillea. The Lycian Way, a</p>
Day 19	Thursday 24 Sept 2020	Kaş	
Day 20	Friday 25 Sept 2020	Kaş	

			<p>marked trail, passes by the town. Three days to explore Kaş and surrounds or just to sit back and watch the world go by.</p> <p>On Thursday 24 Sept, we will board a traditional Turkish gulet (yacht) and sail to Kekova Island. The sunken city of Simena is located here and your day will be filled with mini-stops for swimming, snorkelling and enjoying the balmy Turquoise Coast. Lunch onboard before returning to Kaş in the afternoon.</p> <p>Other options include boating day trip to nearby islands including the Greek island of Kastellorizo (known as Meis in Turkey), Gombe's Green Lake or to just relax and explore Kaş.</p> <p>Aqua Princess Hotel – 4* (B) 3 nights</p>
Day 21	Saturday 26 Sept 2020	Kaş – Istanbul	<p>After check out we drive to Antalya for our flight to Istanbul in the late afternoon and transfer to hotel.</p> <p>AYT-IST 1220-1355 TK2413</p> <p>Yasmak Sultan Hotel – 4* (B)</p>
Day 22	Sunday 27 Sept 2020	Istanbul	<p>Spend today in UNESCO World Heritage listed Old Istanbul, the world's only city straddling two continents. The city of Istanbul dates back to antiquity, its grand monuments bear testament to the ancient empires that made it their capital. Your day of sightseeing includes visits to the magnificent Blue Mosque and Byzantine Hippodrome, known as Sultanahmet Square. Other highlights are St Sophia Basilica, the former cathedral nearly 1,500 years old and Topkapi Palace, once home of Sultans and now housing Ottoman Empire treasures. Enjoy haggling at the amazing Grand Bazaar where there are over 4,000 market stalls.</p> <p>Yasmak Sultan Hotel – 4* (B)</p>
Day 23	Monday 28 Sept 2020	Istanbul - Singapore	<p>We have time for a leisurely breakfast this morning ahead of our transfer to the airport for our lunchtime flight from Istanbul or your continuing land arrangements. (B)</p> <p>IST-SIN 1330-0500+1 SQ391 A359</p>
Day 24	Tuesday 29 Sept 2020	Singapore - Brisbane	<p>SIN-BNE 0740-1705 SQ265 A359</p> <p>We travel to Brisbane via Singapore today, arriving in the late afternoon. Transfer to Lismore or connecting flight to departure airport.</p>

Hotels to be used

Gaziantep	Tuğcan Hotel 4*	2 nights	Erzurum	Polat Palandoken Hotel 4*	2 nights
Urfa	Dedeman Hotel Urfa 4*	1 night	Rize	Kaf Dağı Konak Hotel, 3*	1 night
Kahta	Nemrut Kervansaray Hotel 3*	1 night	Trabzon	Yalipark Hotel 4*	1 night
Mardin	Tuğhan Hotel 3*	2 nights	Antalya	The Mediterra Art Hotel (4 star)	2 nights
Van	Ramada by Wyndham 4*	2 nights	Kaş	Aqua Princess (4 star)	3 nights
Dogbeyazit	Butik Ertur Hotel, 3*	1 night	Istanbul	Yasmak Sultan 4*	2 nights
Kars	Katerina Sarayi 3*	1 night			

Inclusions:

- * Turkish domestic airfares as required* (Istanbul/Gaziantep, Trabzon/Antalya, Antalya/Istanbul)
- * 21 nights 3 & 4 * hotel accommodation with private facilities
- * 21 Breakfasts, 3 Lunches & 16 Dinners
- * Aspendos Day Trip and Kekova Boat Tour
- * Arrival & Departure transfers
- * A/C vehicle for all transfers & tours
- * Licensed, English-speaking professional Guide during tours and comprehensive sightseeing
- * Entrance fees to museums specified in the tour itinerary
- * Comprehensive Travel Insurance
- * Turkish visa (for Australian passport-holders)
- * Tipping for guide and driver
- * Drink bottle and daily refills
- * *above airfares are subjected to change without prior notice.*

Exclusions:

- * Personal expenses & shopping
- * Airport or hotel portorage
- * Meals or beverages not stated
- * Pre-existing Medical Condition Travel Insurance
- * any items not mentioned in the Itinerary
- * International Airfares