

Turkey Optional Extension

Istanbul & the Heritage of Early Christianity - 4 Days / 3 Nights

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Extension Highlights

Hagia Sophia • Byzantine Constantinople • Hippodrome • Chora Church • Topkapi Palace • Grand Bazaar • Bosphorus Cruise

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Day 1 – Tel Aviv • Istanbul

Transfer to Ben Gurion Airport for the flight to Istanbul, Turkey, the historic city of Constantinople and for centuries one of the great centers of Christianity.

Upon arrival, meet your local guide and transfer to the hotel. Depending on arrival time, enjoy an orientation tour introducing this remarkable city situated between Europe and Asia.

Dinner & Overnight: Istanbul

Day 2 – Byzantine & Christian Constantinople

Spend the day discovering Istanbul's extraordinary Christian and Byzantine heritage. Visit the magnificent Hagia Sophia, commissioned by Emperor Justinian in the 6th century and for nearly a thousand years one of the most important churches in Christendom. Continue to the Hippodrome, once the center of public life in Byzantine Constantinople, and visit the impressive Basilica Cistern, constructed during the reign of Justinian.

Continue to the Church of St. Savior in Chora (Chora Church), renowned for its remarkable Byzantine mosaics and frescoes depicting scenes from the lives of Christ and the Virgin Mary.

The day also provides an opportunity to explore the historic neighborhoods and remains of ancient Constantinople.

Dinner & Overnight: Istanbul

Day 3 – Istanbul • Bosphorus • Ottoman Heritage

Continue exploring Istanbul, beginning with Topkapi Palace, the former residence of the Ottoman sultans and an important part of understanding the city's history following the fall of Constantinople.

Visit the historic Grand Bazaar, one of the world's oldest and largest covered markets.

In the afternoon, enjoy a cruise on the Bosphorus, sailing between Europe and Asia while viewing Istanbul's palaces, mosques, fortresses, and historic waterfront.

Conclude the pilgrimage extension with a farewell dinner at a local restaurant.

Dinner & Overnight: Istanbul

Day 4 – Istanbul • Departure Home

After breakfast, transfer to Istanbul Airport for your return flight to the United States.

