

Biblical and Early Christian Sites in Türkiye

September 24 - October 10, 2027



Join the Diocese of Texas and Virginia Theological Seminary as we walk in the footsteps of apostles, where ancient prophets once journeyed, and witness the rise of early Christianity.

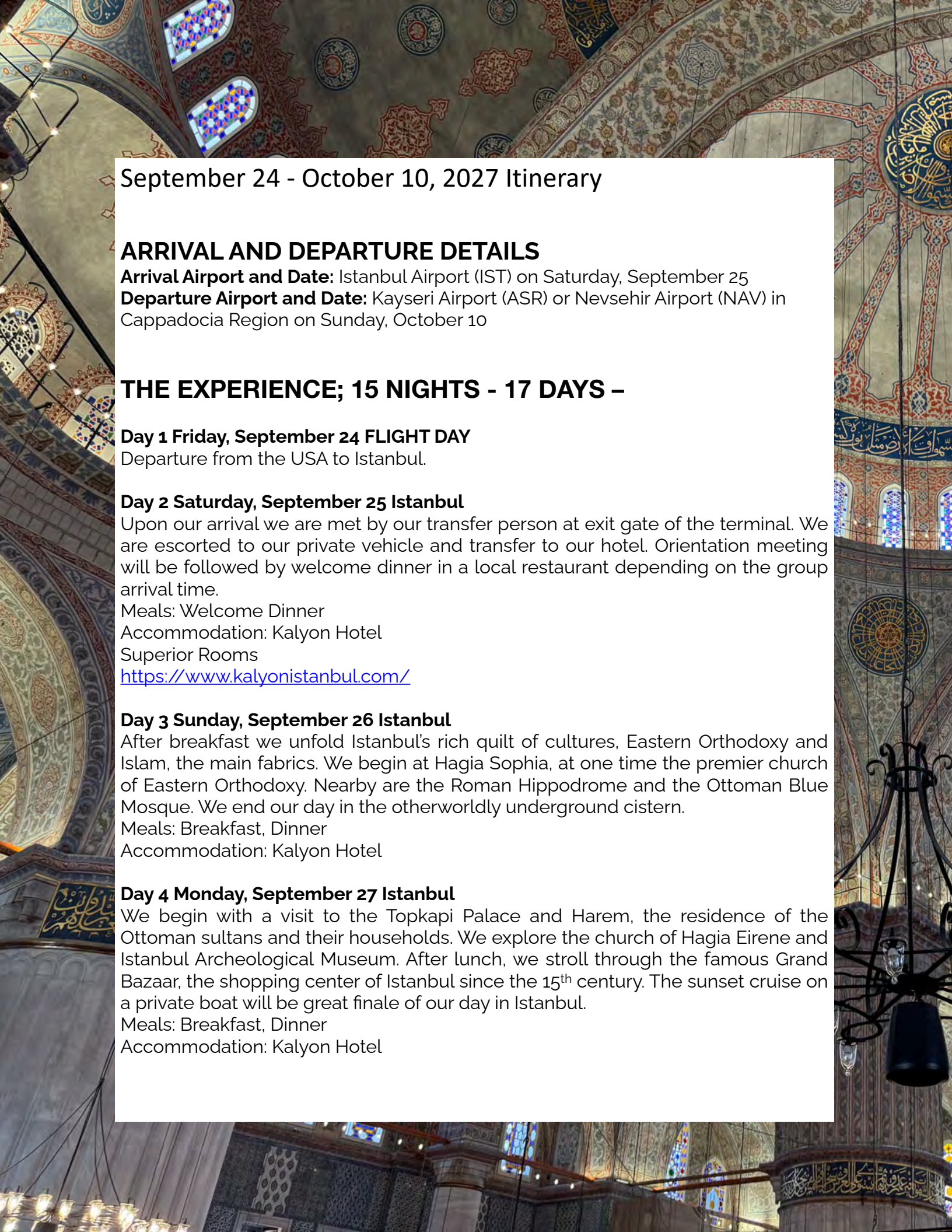
What We Offer:



- VIP treatment in comfort of luxury travel itinerary
- Renowned Turkish hospitality
- Spiritual leadership from The Rt. Rev. C. Andrew Doyle, IX Bishop of Texas, The Very Rev. Ian S. Markham, PhD, and The Rev. J. Barney Hawkins IV, PhD.

For more information:

Barney Hawkins, 864-720-8825, bhawkins@vts.edu, or
Victoria Elie, velie@vts.edu



September 24 - October 10, 2027 Itinerary

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE DETAILS

Arrival Airport and Date: Istanbul Airport (IST) on Saturday, September 25
Departure Airport and Date: Kayseri Airport (ASR) or Nevsehir Airport (NAV) in Cappadocia Region on Sunday, October 10

THE EXPERIENCE; 15 NIGHTS - 17 DAYS –

Day 1 Friday, September 24 FLIGHT DAY
Departure from the USA to Istanbul.

Day 2 Saturday, September 25 Istanbul
Upon our arrival we are met by our transfer person at exit gate of the terminal. We are escorted to our private vehicle and transfer to our hotel. Orientation meeting will be followed by welcome dinner in a local restaurant depending on the group arrival time.
Meals: Welcome Dinner
Accommodation: Kalyon Hotel
Superior Rooms
https://www.kalyonistanbul.com/

Day 3 Sunday, September 26 Istanbul
After breakfast we unfold Istanbul's rich quilt of cultures, Eastern Orthodoxy and Islam, the main fabrics. We begin at Hagia Sophia, at one time the premier church of Eastern Orthodoxy. Nearby are the Roman Hippodrome and the Ottoman Blue Mosque. We end our day in the otherworldly underground cistern.
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
Accommodation: Kalyon Hotel

Day 4 Monday, September 27 Istanbul
We begin with a visit to the Topkapi Palace and Harem, the residence of the Ottoman sultans and their households. We explore the church of Hagia Eirene and Istanbul Archeological Museum. After lunch, we stroll through the famous Grand Bazaar, the shopping center of Istanbul since the 15th century. The sunset cruise on a private boat will be great finale of our day in Istanbul.
Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
Accommodation: Kalyon Hotel

Day 5 Tuesday, September 28 Nicaea - Bursa
After breakfast and check out, we drive along the ancient city walls to the charming church of Holy Savior in Chora (Kariye Mosque). We visit and admire its superb frescoes from 13th century after the Latin occupation of the city. We drive to Iznik via the old bridge over the Bosporus and the new bridge over the Sea of Marmara with a lunch break on the way. Setting around the serene lake, the city of Iznik, ancient Nicaea, was the site of the First and Seventh Councils of Nicaea. Nicene Creed was originated in the city in 325 when Constantine the Great summoned more than 300 bishops in his summer palace. We drive to Bursa and enjoy the thermal facilities of the hotel in the afternoon.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation: Celik Palas Thermal Hotel Bursa, https://www.hotelcelikpalas.com/en or Movenpick Thermal Hotel Bursa, https://movenpick.accor.com/en/europe/turkey/bursa/hotel-thermal-spa-bursa.html

Day 6 Wednesday, September 29 Canakkale
After breakfast and check-out, we explore Bursa, the first capital city of the Ottoman Empire. We visit Ulu Mosque, Silk Bazaar, and ancient inns for the shopping in the morning. After lunch in Bursa, we drive to the site of legendary Troy. We visit the new museum and site overlooking Dardanelles and rejoice the Iliad and its heroes in the afternoon. We enjoy free time and dinner on our own in the charming town of Canakkale.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation: Double Tree Hilton Canakkale
https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/ckzcddi-doubletree-canakkale/



Day 7 Thursday, September 30 Ayvalik
After breakfast and check-out, we drive to Ezine town and visit the ancient granite quarries supplying the gigantic columns to the ancient monuments. We explore the Biblical sites of Alexandria Troas (Acts 16:8–11, 20:5-12; 2 Cor. 2:12-13; 2 Tim. 4-13) and Assos (Acts 20:13 -14) Drive to our resort hotel along the bay in the afternoon.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
Accommodation: D-Resort Hotel Ayvalik, https://www.dresortayvalik.com/

Day 8 Friday, October 1 Ayvalik
After a leisurely breakfast, enjoy your free day at leisure. Optional visit to Cunda Island in the afternoon. Celebrate the Holy Eucharist before the dinner.
Meals: Breakfast
Accommodation: D-Resort Hotel Ayvalik

Day 9 Saturday, October 2 Izmir
After breakfast and check-out, we drive to Bergama. We explore the acropolis of Pergamum (Rev. 2:12-17) and the altar of Zeus described as “the throne of Satan” in the Book of Revelation. We tour the Asclepion, the ancient healing sanctuary of

Asclepius and Apollo. We drive to Sardis Rev. 3:1-6) with a lunch in a local tavern on the way. Sardis is the second UNESCO site of the day for the biggest and best-preserved diaspora synagogue and Roman Gymnasium. Our final destination is Izmir, ancient Smyrna (Rev. 2:8-12). Founded by Alexander the Great, the ancient Smyrna and its agora is another UNESCO site with its distinctive and impressive features.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
Accommodation: Movenpick Hotel Izmir,
https://movenpick.accor.com/en/europe/turkey/izmir/hotel-izmir.html

Day 10 Sunday, October 03 Ephesus - Pamukkale



After breakfast and check-out, we drive to the town of Selcuk. Our focus today is Ephesus (Letter to the Ephesians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Revelation 1:11, 2:1-7; Acts 18:19-28, 19:1-41) the most impressive archeological site in Turkey. Paul spent almost three years in Ephesus between ca 52 and 55. Our excursion visits the great theater, the site of the scene of the riot (Acts 19). We explore the Temple of Artemis (Roman Diana), one of the Seven Wonders of the World, Selcuk Museum and the Basilica of John. We celebrate the Holy Eucharist in the house of Virgin Mary in the afternoon. We drive to Pamukkale in the late afternoon. Dinner will be served in the hotel.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation: Colossae Thermal Hotel,
www.colossaehotel.com

Day 11 Monday, October 04 Antalya

After breakfast and check out, we explore the Biblical sites of Lycus valley (Letter to the Colossians and Letter to Philemon), Hierapolis (Col. 4:13) and Pamukkale, famous for its wonderful white travertine cliffs and mineral baths. We continue to Laodicea, one of the seven churches in the Revelation of John (Rev. 3:14-22; Col. 2:1, 4:13-16). We drive to Antalya in the afternoon. The city of Antalya sits on sheer cliffs above the blue Mediterranean with a green plateau stretching behind the city to magnificent pine forests.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation: Ramada Plaza Hotel, https://ramadaplazaantalya.com/En/Index

Day 12 Tuesday, October 05 Antalya



Today we visit Perge, a reconstructed Hellenistic city, with a marvelous city plan, including baths, temples, an agora and a theater; a site of Paul's preaching (Acts 13:13-14, 14:25). After lunch enjoy strolling through the streets of the old harbor of Antalya, ancient Attalia in the afternoon.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation: Ramada Plaza Hotel

Day 13 Wednesday, October 06 Konya
After breakfast and check out, we cross the Taurus Mountain range by following the route of Paul's first journey up to Pisidian Antioch (Acts 13:14-52, 16:2; 2 Tim. 3:11), present day town of Yalvac. Pisidian Antioch was a Roman Colony with an imperial cult center dedicated to Augustus. This is an important city in Paul's first journey where he gave his first recorded sermon in Acts. We continue for Eflatun Pinari, a water sanctuary from the Hittites dating back to 13th Century BC on the way to Konya. This city was known as Iconium in antiquity in the vicinity of Lystra and Derbe, which were visited by Paul in his first missionary journey (Acts 13:51, 14:1-6, 19; 2 Tim. 3:11). We enjoy our dinner in a local restaurant specializing regional Konya cuisine.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation: Novotel Konya, https://all.accor.com/hotel/9329/index.en.shtml

Day 14 Thursday, October 07 Cappadocia
After breakfast and check out, we visit the Mevlana Museum, burial site of Rumi, famous Sufi poet and founder of Whirling dervishes and the local food and vegetable market afterwards. We tour one of the oldest Seljuk Mosques dating back to 12th century before the departure from Konya. Following the track of the ancient travelers including the early Christian Missionaries from Antioch and Jerusalem and the route once used also by caravans on the Silk Road, we visit a 13th Century caravanserai on the way to Cappadocia. At the end of the day, we explore the labyrinths of Kaymakli Underground City before checking in our cave hotel.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodation: Seraphim Cave Hotel, https://www.seraphimcavehotel.com/



Day 15 Friday, October 08 Cappadocia
Optional Balloon Ride before breakfast.
Today we enjoy touring through perhaps the most surreal landscape on earth, Cappadocia Region (Acts 2:9; 1 Pet. 1:1). Thousands of years of erosion of the earth have formed the so-called Fairy Chimneys. The first Christians came to settle in the natural grottoes where they created rock carved churches and underground cities, and painted the churches with important narratives from the Bible in luminous colors. We tour the less visited sites of the regions with charming village of Mustafa Pasa and Keslik Monastery. We take pleasure of our lunch being prepared by the villagers in Ayvali Village while we get accustomed to rural life in Turkey. We enjoy a lecture about the traditional rug weaving in the afternoon and optional hike in one of the valleys of the region.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Seraphim Cave Hotel

Day 16 Saturday, October 09 Cappadocia
We explore the Goreme Monastery, Zelve Valley, Uchisar and Cavusin Villages where the Cappadocian fathers formulated their Trinitarian theology. We tour the pottery making town of Avanos by the Red River in the afternoon. Optional hike in the love valley in the late afternoon.
Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Farewell Dinner. Accommodation: Seraphim Cave Hotel

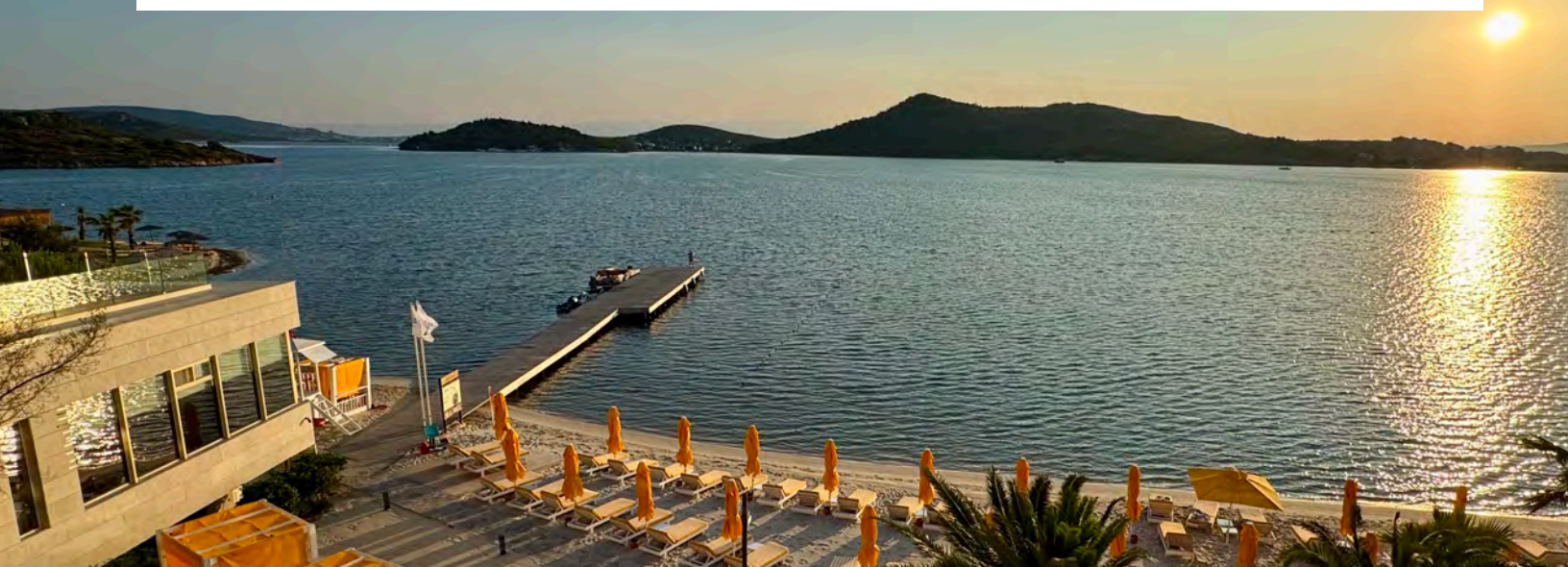
Day 17 Sunday, October 10 DEPARTURE
After breakfast, we transfer to Kayseri or Nevsehir Airports of Cappadocia and fly back home via Istanbul.
Meals: Breakfast

What is included?

- ✓ Hotel accommodations as indicated in the itinerary or similar
- ✓ Meals with bottled water as indicated in the itinerary: Breakfast (all breakfasts), Lunch (11 lunches), and Dinner (12 dinners)
- ✓ Professional, English-speaking local guide
- ✓ Air-conditioned vehicle with professional tour bus driver
- ✓ Unlimited bottle water on board coach during the entire program
- ✓ Hotel tips and restaurant tips in the included meals
- ✓ Arrival and departure flight transfers
- ✓ Complete program of the tours as described in the itinerary. All entrance fees, admissions and parking fees
- ✓ Baggage handling
- ✓ Detailed map of Turkey
- ✓ VAT and Accommodation Taxes

What is excluded?

- International airfares, airport taxes and fuel surcharges
- Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages during the meals
- Gratitude for the guides and drivers
- Visa (if required)
- Personal expenses such as minibar, telephone, laundry, etc.
- Travel and health insurance



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The Experience: 15 Nights - 17 Days

Terms

$8,800 Cost per person:sharing a double room with twin beds; for single room there is a supplement.

Single Supplement for single rooms
12-day TURKEY supplement: $1,250

What is included in the tour program?

- Hotel accommodations as indicated in itinerary or similar
- All meals as indicated in itinerary. Most of the meals in restaurants specializing in local cuisine.
- Bottled water with meals and unlimited bottled water on the bus
- Professional, English-speaking guide
- Air-conditioned vehicle with professional driver and its gasoline
- Hotel and restaurant tips in the included meals
- Arrival and departure flight transfers
- Domestic airfare from Istanbul to Antalya in economy class, including 50lbs check-in and 17lbs carry-on luggage and taxes.
- Complete program of the tours as described in the itinerary.
- All entrance fees, admissions, and parking fees
- Baggage handling
- Taxes

What is excluded?

- International and domestic airfares, airport taxes and fuel surcharges
- Alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages during the meals
- Visas (if needed depending on the nationality of travelers, please check https://www.evisa.gov.tr/en/)
- Gratuities for guides and drivers
- Personal expenses such as minibar, telephone, laundry, etc.
- Travel and health insurances
- Tourist tax in the hotels which will be paid during check-out.

Deposit:

Bookings are processed on receipt of a deposit of $1,500 per person. Deposit is due March 1, 2027

Checks are made payable to: Barney Hawkins (for Turkey Pilgrimage)

Mail to:
The Rev. J. Barney Hawkins IV, Ph.D.
P.O. Box 18
Cedar Mountain, NC 28718

Airport, Visa, and Time Zone:

Please refer to the information in the itineraries to choose the best airport for arrivals.
Visas may be required to enter countries depending on the nationality of travelers. Please check https://www.evisa.gov.tr/en
Time Zone: TRT Turkey Time (UTC+3)

For more information

Contact: The Rev. J. Barney Hawkins, IV
Tel + 1 864-720-8825 | bhawkins@vts.edu
Or Victoria Elie at velie@vts.edu

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The Experience: 15 Nights - 17 Days

FULL NAME (S)

ADDRESS, CITY, STATE, ZIP

PHONE/MOBILE AND EMAIL

SIGNATURE AND DATE

- ❑ I prefer a single room
- ❑ I have travel accommodations or allergies

_____
_____
_____

Mail form and deposit to:
The Rev. J. Barney Hawkins IV, Ph.D.
P.O. Box 18
Cedar Mountain, NC 28718

Pilgrim 1 Passport Information

FULL NAME

DATE OF BIRTH PLACE OF BIRTH

DATE OF ISSUE DATE OF EXPIRATION

PASSPORT NUMBER

Pilgrim 2 Passport Information

FULL NAME

DATE OF BIRTH PLACE OF BIRTH

DATE OF ISSUE DATE OF EXPIRATION

PASSPORT NUMBER