



TURKEY

**12-day adventure for women
Sep 2025**

Day 1 - Istanbul

Merhaba! Welcome to Turkey where your adventure starts in Istanbul – the continent-straddling metropolis that the Greeks, Romans, Byzantines and Ottomans have all previously called home. You'll have a welcome meeting at 1 pm at your hotel. After, take a short walk to KEDV – a social enterprise that supports the economic empowerment of low-income women. Learn about the important work they do here before perusing the handicrafts in the Nahil Dukkan store. Then, head to the Old Town on a leader-led orientation walk through the Hippodrome Square and explore the Grand Bazaar – a labyrinth of bustling alleys and stalls filled with colourful textiles, ceramics, spices and jewellery.

Accommodation: Istanbul 2 nights

Day 2 – Istanbul

B,L

Today, head to Topkapi Palace & Harem and learn about The Sultanate of Women – a period when wives and mothers of the Sultans of the Ottoman Empire exerted extraordinary political influence. You'll then meet a local mother and daughter in their home, where you can sample some homemade borek and Turkish coffee. Learn about the traditionally female art of fortune-telling from coffee grounds, which is passed down between generations in Anatolian culture. This afternoon, explore the Spice Bazaar (also known as the Egyptian Market) and meet a local spice merchant to learn about Turkey's best blends. Satisfy your sweet tooth with a visit to a traditional Turkish Delight merchant.

Day 3 – Cappadocia

B,D

Take a mid-morning flight to Kayseri in the Cappadocia region today. Then, drive to Goreme – sitting in a valley of cones, needles and columns carved by nature, the city is honeycombed with caves, churches and dwellings known as fairy chimneys. In times of peace, the people in this region lived on the land, but in times of war or persecution they took to living underground. When you arrive, head out for a walk with your leader and visit the Goreme Open Air Museum – a UNESCO World Heritage site of ancient rock-cut

churches and monasteries. For dinner tonight, head to the small town of Avanos for a home-cooked meal with impact. Oznur, her husband and three children moved from the city of Hatay after the major earthquakes of February 2023, where they lost their home and relatives. Hatay is a UNESCO World City of Gastronomy, where several cultures have lived together peacefully for centuries and is known for its rich, delicious cuisine – tonight, Oznur will bring these culinary secrets to life.

Accommodation: Kayseri 2 nights

Day 4 - Cappadocia

B

Optional Hot Air Balloon early this morning (own cost) - this is a fantastic way to take in the fascinating Cappadocian landscape from above. Later this morning we'll head off to explore the region, visiting Pigeon Valley and Soganli Valley on an easy 3 km hike, taking in the arid surrounds and towering vistas. Then, learn how to make the popular Cappadocian souvenir 'kitre' – the local women make these rag dolls using Anatolian patterned fabrics and it's their main source of income. The rest of the day is free for you to explore at your own pace. For dinner, you might want to try the local regional specialty testi kebab – your leader will recommend the best place for this delicious claypot dish.

Day 5 - Konya

B

After breakfast, watch the Turkish countryside pass you by as you drive to Konya. When you arrive, you'll learn how traditional Turkish arts are at high risk of dying out and like so many traditions, there's a lack of new felt makers to keep the art alive. Meet one of the remaining female artists at her atelier and learn about the background of felt making. The rest of the day is free to relax or explore at your leisure.

Accommodation – Konya 1 night

Day 6 - Pamukkale

B

Drive to Pamukkale today – a UNESCO World Heritage site where you'll step back in time and explore the ancient city of Hierapolis. When you arrive, learn about the rich history as you wander through the ruins, which include an impressive theatre and ancient Roman baths. Then, explore the iconic travertine terraces – the fresh deposits of calcium carbonate here give these formations a surreal white coating. The Turkish name Pamukkale means 'cotton castle', which is derived from this striking landscape. Get a photo of these amazing cascades and bright blue waters, then the rest of the afternoon is free to chill out or wander at your own pace.

Accommodation – Pamukkale 1 night

Day 7 – Selcuk

B,L

You'll drive to Selcuk today and visit a local social enterprise along the way – Sultankoy – for a carpet weaving demonstration. Learn about the art of traditional carpet weaving, which holds an incredible history in Turkey, dating back to the early Neolithic age. Sultankoy provides local women with employment while protecting and developing the ancient tradition. For lunch, head to a restaurant run by a local woman and enjoy some local traditional dishes. Hatice started her journey when her husband's business went bankrupt. Until that time, she had been a housewife for 18 years and had never worked outside home. She first started cooking Gozleme on the roadside where her own restaurant is located today and is now a well-known local chef providing opportunities to other local women in the region. Later, enjoy an orientation walk around the town with your leader.

Accommodation – Selcuk 2 nights

Day 8 - Ephesus | Sirince

B,L

Visit the ruins of the ancient city of Ephesus – one of the best-preserved Greco-Roman classical cities in the world. Considering their age, the ruins are in incredible shape, and it's not difficult to imagine them in their full glory from over 2000 years ago, equipped with running water, public toilets, a medical institute, a brothel and Roman baths. The theatre is well preserved and regularly hosts concerts, but it's the library that is perhaps the most striking. After, drive past apple and peach orchards to the village of Sirince and taste some locally produced fruit wines. Drop by a local wine house where you'll get to try a sip of kiwi, pear, peach and quince. This authentic Greek Ottoman village seems to have been overlooked by modern development and the unique local architecture within in the hills make for a gorgeous photo. This afternoon you'll learn the art of making Manti (a traditional Turkish dumpling) from women in a local restaurant. Delve into the secrets of creating the delicate dough and learn the intricate folding techniques that make Manti a culinary masterpiece. Back to Selcuk for the night.

Day 9 – Ayvalik

B

Drive to the charming coastal town of Ayvalik today. When you arrive, head out on an orientation walk along the streets, admiring the colourful Ottoman houses and cute cafes. Visit the Cop Madam (garbage lady) project, which transforms waste material into creative, reproducible handbags and learn about the work the women are doing here. While creating awareness about the environment, each bag creates a sustainable income for the local women and currently has 150 employees in various provinces such as Balikesir, Istanbul and Diyarbakir. The rest of the afternoon is free, so maybe grab some lunch or go another self-paced walk to explore.

Accommodation – Ayvalik 2 nights

Day 10 – Assos | Adatepe

B,L

This morning you'll head to Assos – a coastal town steeped in ancient history and natural beauty. Its streets, lined with stone houses and cafes, lead to the Temple of Athena and a hilltop acropolis, offering views of the azure sea below. Head to a local restaurant and watch how the women expertly make gozleme – a traditional Turkish dish consisting of a thin, hand-rolled dough filled with cheese, spinach, minced meat or potatoes. The dough is then expertly folded and cooked on a griddle until it turns golden brown and crispy. Watch the women make these delicious treats, then sit down for lunch together. Later, head to Adatepe for a half-day trip – this small Greek-Turkish village on the foothills of the Ida Mountains offers an oasis in nature, away from the stress of busy, urban life. Explore its cobbled streets, lined with traditional stone houses and vibrant garden. Visit the Altar of Zeus – an ancient archaeological site on Mount Ida, where you can see the ruins of an ancient temple. Soak in the panoramic views, then return to Ayvalik for the night.

Day 11 - Istanbul

B

After breakfast, you'll begin your journey back to Istanbul. When you arrive, finish your adventure with a women's only hammam, designed by the renowned architect Mimar Sinan in 1584. The concept of hammams was initially for men only, but eventually, women who were unwell or recovering from childbirth were permitted until finally, all women were allowed. Traditionally, many women considered a visit to the hammam a release from the isolation of home and a place where older women could look for potential wives for their sons. Today, this ritual is still a segregated retreat complete with baths, food, music and fun. Tonight, maybe head out for a last dinner with your group.

Accommodation – Istanbul 1 night

Day 12 – Istanbul

B

Your Turkish adventure ends after breakfast today.

DATES

20 Sep – 01 Oct 2025

COST

NZ\$4995 per person twin share

NZ\$1290 single supplement (excludes Days 1, 2 & 11 and is subject to availability)

INCLUDED

- Local guide
- Transportation by minicoach
- Domestic flight Istanbul-Kayseri (15kg checked luggage, 8 kg hand luggage)
- Meals (B=11 breakfasts, L=4 lunches, D=1 dinner)
- 11 nights Standard Accommodation - Guesthouse (5 nights), Hotel (6 nights)
- Istanbul - Grand Bazaar
- Istanbul - Historic Peninsula orientation walk
- Istanbul - Visit to Nahil Dukkan by KEDV Foundation
- Istanbul - Spice Market
- Istanbul - 5 o'clock Tea & coffee in a local home
- Istanbul - Topkapi Palace & Harem Guided Tour
- Cappadocia - Goreme Open Air Museum
- Goreme - Orientation Walk
- Goreme - Cooking Class with Oznur
- Cappadocia - Soft Hike in Soganli Valley
- Cappadocia - Doll making with local woman
- Konya - Felt Making Atelier & artist visit
- Pamukkale - Hierapolis Ancient City & Travertines (Cotton Castle)
- Selcuk - Sultankoy Carpet Cooperation
- Selcuk - Leader-led orientation walk
- Selcuk - Hatice Lunch
- Selcuk - Ephesus Ancient City
- Sirince - Village visit and fruit wine tasting
- Sirince - Manti Cooking Class
- Ayvalik - Copmadam (trashyteyze / Tara Hopkins)
- Ayvalik - Leader-led Orientation Walk
- Assos - Temple of Athena
- Assos - Leader-led walking tour
- Adatepe - Village Tour & Alter of Zeus
- Istanbul - Turkish Hamam

EXCLUDES

- Transportation to/from Istanbul
- Airport transfers (these can be added at additional cost)
- Meals & refreshments not mentioned in itinerary
- Tipping
- Travel Insurance
- Visa
- Optional activities:
 - Istanbul - Hagia Sophia - EUR25
 - Cappadocia - Kaymakli Underground City - EUR13
 - Cappadocia - Hot Air Balloon Regular Flight - EUR275
 - Cappadocia - Hot Air Balloon Deluxe Flight - EUR325
 - Goreme - Whirling dervish performance - EUR30
 - Konya - Visit to Mousaleum of Rumi - Free
 - Pamukkale - Cleopatra Ancient Pool - TRY340
 - Selcuk - Meryemana (Mary's House) - EUR15

GROUP SIZE

Minimum 1 / maximum 12

NOTE

This tour is locally escorted and does not include a representative from Roam Travel Adventures.

