



Travel Information for Turkey

- A. Travel and Transportation
- B. Timeline Checklist
- C. While There

Weather Data Websites

View historical weather information for your destination.

- www.weather.com
- www.wunderground.com
- www.eurometeo.com

Flight & Travel Websites

View itineraries to book your trip.

- www.kayak.com
- www.orbitz.com
- www.expedia.com
- www.whichairline.com
- www.yapta.com (to track flight prices)

Currency Conversion Websites

View exchange rates for local currencies. Turkey's currency is the euro €.

- www.xe.com/ucc/
- www.oanda.com/convert/classic

A. Travel and Transportation

Passport and Visa

You need a passport. Check yours today to see that it is valid for at least six months beyond the date you intend to return to the U.S. You can obtain application and renewal forms for U.S. passports on-line at www.travel.state.gov or at a local Post Office. It can take up to six weeks to receive your passport. American passport holders do not need a visa in advance; however, a visa will need to be purchased (cash) at your point of entry into Turkey. On your trip, you will exit Turkey for a boat ride to Greece (from Kas to Meis) and then re-enter Turkey that same day for an additional entry fee. You do not need to purchase the more expensive multiple entry visa. Canadian and UK passport holders should check single-entry and multiple entry visa costs to determine for the most economical purchase selection. You can find complete VISA information on the [Turkish Foreign Affairs website](#)

Booking your Flights

Most international flights leave Europe in the morning, often requiring you to book your homebound flight for the day after the tour ends. Check your ExperiencePlus! *Getting To and Away* information for your tour's starting and ending towns and airports.

Tips for booking flights:

- Search the web. Be sure to review their policies for restrictions and cancellation penalties.
- Contact your travel agent. A good agent can help you find a competitive fare. He or she will charge a fee for this service.
- Fly into smaller airports. Some airlines have competitive prices if you fly into large European hubs such as London (British Airways), Frankfurt (Lufthansa), or Amsterdam (KLM) and then connect to a smaller airport in your destination country.
 - Look at flying into major European hubs with standard airlines and then book internal European flights using low cost airlines. See www.whichairline.com

ExperiencePlus! Travel Agent Services – complimentary and personalized

Marie Lavigne is our dedicated travel agent and can help you with your trip travel arrangements. Including our Getting To and Away document (GTA.pdf) for your tour as an email attachment when contacting her is an easy way to share your ExperiencePlus! tour starting and ending information. The following services are complimentary to you when you

VAT (Value Added Tax) Refunds

The VAT collected on purchases is included in the price that you pay for an item, but there is a system that allows tourists to receive a refund. The time to decide if you want to pursue the VAT refund is at the time of purchase, not after you return home. We have provided links to websites that provide general information on VAT along with rate and minimum requirement charts to help you to decide if it is worth your time to pursue the refund. Keep in mind that both the VAT rate and the minimum amount for the expenditure (per shop) vary per country. If you choose to pursue the refund at your departure airport, remember to bring all of your paper work and allow enough time prior to your flight to stop at the Customs office to complete the process. If your vendor works with a refund service such as [Global Blue](#) or [Premier Tax Free](#), then stop by their respective refund desk. Expect to receive your refund in local currency. If your merchant does not work with such a service, you will need to contact the merchant for your refund either from the airport or from home.

For general information on VAT:
www.ricksteves.com/plan/tips/vat.htm
www.reidsguides.com/t_mo/t_mo_vat.html

reserve your space on tour: air reservations, rail reservations, and pre/post tour hotel reservations. For a fee, Marie can also assist you with additional services such as pre/post tour travel itineraries, cruises, car rental, international cell phone rental, guided city tours etc.

Marie Lavigne
Email: travel.agent@experienceplus.com
Telephone: 303 248 2631
Monday-Friday 8:30am-5:00pm MST

Airport Transportation Information

1) Istanbul Ataturk International Airport

Name and airport code: Ataturk International Airport (IST)
Website: www.ataturkairport.com/eng/index.php

This airport is located 24km (15 miles) from the Istanbul city center. We recommend getting to and from the airport by taxi. It costs around TRY 40 from the airport to the historic Old Istanbul "Sultanahmet" district.

(Please note: there is another airport in Istanbul, but it is further from town and is rarely used by international flights. If you do fly into it, a taxi to the hotel should cost around TRY 90.

2) Antalya International Airport

Name and airport code: Antalya International Airport (AYT)
Website: www.aytport.com

There are several flights daily from Istanbul to Antalya by several airlines, including: TURKISH AIR (www.thy.com) and ATLASJET (www.atlasjet.com.tr/). You can easily buy tickets online. You may also schedule direct flights or charter flights from many major cities in Europe. We recommend getting to and from the airport by airport shuttle.

You can take the airport shuttle, (found outside the main terminal), to and from downtown Antalya for approximately TRY 10. The shuttle leaves the airport based on incoming flight times. It leaves the city center at the following times: 3:30, 06:00, 07:00, 08:00, 09:00, 11:00, 12:00, 15:00, 16:00, 17:00, 18:00, 19:00, 20:00, 21:00, 22:30

There is a taxi option from the Antalya International Airport but it costs more than taking the shuttle bus. All taxis have meters, so you do not have to negotiate for the cost. Expect to pay around 40 TL from the Antalya Airport to Antalya Old City

3) Bodrum

Name and airport code: Bodrum / Milas Airport (BJV)
Website: www.bodrum-airport.com

This is the closest airport to the tour end, and is located just 25 miles from Bodrum, and 10 miles from Milas.

Getting from the tour's ending hotel to the Bodrum / Milas Airport:

You can take a taxi for approximately TRY 80 – 90. Allow an hour for the trip.

Flying from Bodrum to Istanbul:

VoIP Phone Calls

Make free (computer to computer) and low-cost (computer to phone) calls with VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol). Try Skype (www.skype.com), Google Talk (www.google.com/talk/), or VoipBuster (www.voipbuster.com).

Travel Language Guides

Learn the lingo with WorldNomads' language guides. Download free foreign language podcasts to your iPod or mp3 player. iPhone apps are available for purchase. Visit <http://journals.worldnomads.com/language-guides>

Date Formatting

The European date format is *dd/mm/yy*.

May 31, 2011 is 31/05/11

Commas and Decimals

Commas are decimals and decimals are commas.

One thousand units of an item is written as 1.000.

Five euro is written as TRY 5,00.

Turkish Airlines

Website: www.thy.com.tr

Ideas to extend your travel from Bodrum

By car: Rent a car and drive north towards Izmir, Miletos, Dydim, Priene, Ephesus and even more north to Pergamon, Assos, Troy and to Istanbul. Contact Hike'n Sail Turkey if you are interested, as they can arrange private tours on this route with a van and a guide for 4 to 12 people, or a driver and car.

Travel to Cappadoccia: Fly from Bodrum to Ankara, Kayseri via Istanbul to extend the trip to Cappadoccia.

By ferry to Greece: Take a ferry from Bodrum to Kos and Rhodes, and hop onto the other Greek Islands.

Train Transportation Information

Training in Antalya:

Trams depart on the hour and half-hour from the terminal (east and west), and reach Kalekapisi (downtown) between 10 and 15 minutes later. The one-way fare is under TRY 2.00. The route goes from the Antalya Museum and Antalya Beach Park (at Konyaalti Beach) along the main boulevard to the city center at Kalekapisi, Hadrian's Gate, Karaalioglu Park, and ending at the deluxe Talya Oteli.

Other Types of Transportation

Bus:

There are numerous bus companies that offer reliable and comfortable transportation throughout Turkey. The buses are modern and comfortable, service is frequent, and fares are low to moderate. Every major city and most smaller ones have bus lines of some sort. There's even service to Greece, Bulgaria and other Balkan countries, and Europe. We recommend Best Ulusoy - <http://www.ulusoy.com.tr> and Varan - <http://www.varan.com.tr>

Taxi:

Taxis are numerous and are recognizable by their yellow color and lighted "taksi" signs on top. Each taxi is metered. If convenient, ask the hotel reception to call a taxi for you. Keep in mind that the cost may vary depending on traffic in the city.

Rental Car:

You usually save money arranging your rental from the U.S.. Be sure to get the exact address of the rental car agency, (preferably at your arrival airport). We recommend renting a car only from major chains to avoid misunderstanding. It is advised to verify that all insurances are included.

B. Timeline Checklist to Prepare for your Tour

Upon Booking

- Check your passport. For US residents the expiration date should extend six months past your date of return to the US.
- Purchase trip cancellation/interruption insurance within 14 days of booking to comply with time sensitive coverage clauses. Visit our Travel and Planning Information Page for more information

Safety Information for Traveling

- Be careful of pickpockets and purse snatching --

Do not wear valuable or showy jewelry and keep your wallet somewhere safe. Use common sense as you would in any large city.

- Keep a watchful eye on your personal belongings; never leave your luggage unattended. It takes seconds for someone to steal your things. Keep important documents such as passports, licenses, and money in a waist belt or passport holder around your neck. You can purchase these from your local discount retailer or specialty travel/luggage shop.

Passport Photocopies

Carry a copy with you, separate from your passport, and leave another copy with someone at home.

Credit Card Photocopy

Carry a copy in a safe place with you.

Insurance Information

Bring health and travel insurance policy numbers and phone numbers. Toll free numbers will not work internationally so bring the regular published number.

Chip and PIN, Chip and Signature, and Magnetic Strip credit cards

Europe tends to use the chip-and-PIN type of credit and

www.experienceplus.com/travelinfo.

- Submit your *Customer Information Form* on-line. Access the form at www.experienceplus.com/travelinfo/tourcif.
- Start checking air fare. Contact us to see if your departure is guaranteed to run before you reserve a nonrefundable flight.

2 - 4 Months Prior to Departure

- Reserve your flights if you have not yet done so.
- Plan your pre and post-tour transportation. Refer to the *Getting To and Away* (an email attachment named GTA) for details. Bring this with you on the plane.
- Reserve your pre and post-tour extra hotel nights. The hotel contact information is in your *Getting To and Away* (an email attachment named GTA).
- Evaluate your conditioning and begin training using our Joel Friel Bicycle Program available on our Travel and Planning Information Page. www.experienceplus.com/travelinfo.
- Final payments are due 90 days prior to departure. Refer to your *Deposit Payment Letter* and *Final Payment Reminder* email for details

2 - 4 weeks Prior to Departure

- Review your flight and other transportation tickets and extra night hotels reservations.
- Refer to the *Bicycle Tour Packing List* available on our Travel and Planning Information Page at www.experienceplus.com/travelinfo and verify your packing needs.
- Distribute the *Hotel Itinerary* attached to your Final Mailing email to a responsible person so they can reach you in an emergency.

Day of Your Flight

- Make sure you have your tour specific *Getting To and Away* (an email attachment named GTA) that provides our staff contact numbers and meeting time and location.
- Drink plenty of water and little or no caffeine or alcohol to help reduce jetlag and try to get as much sleep as possible.
Have a great trip, smile and we will see you there!

C. While There

Currency and Banking Information

Currency: Turkish Lira

Exchange Rate: please see www.xe.com

Even though you may pay a fee, you usually get the best exchange rate using ATM machines for ready cash. Check with your bank to be sure that your standard PIN number will work, as some cards require an international PIN. Many towns along the tour have ATM machines, but fewer towns have places to change dollars. Most of our customers withdraw or change money two - three times during the trip. We suggest withdrawing or changing \$300 at your arrival airport. Be aware that some machines limit the amount you can withdraw. Once on tour the best place to change dollars is at the post office. Changing money in Turkey will get you a better exchange rate than if you change money in the U.S.

Banks in Turkey are typically open 9:00am - 5:00pm. Some banks (Halk, IS,

debit cards, meaning the “smartcard” contains a microchip that automatically authenticates the card with the use of a PIN at the time of the transaction. At this time, credit and debit cards issued in the United States are of the Chip and Signature or the magnetic strip type, with a very few companies starting to offer the Chip and PIN. U.S. credit card holders travelling in Europe can expect to find that some self-serve vending machines or kiosks such as those at train or metro stations, luggage lockers, toll booths, and fueling stations will not accept the magnetic strip or the Chip and Signature cards. You may wish to pay the transaction in cash, or make the transaction directly at a staffed window. Some smaller shops and vendors may not want to accept the magnetic strip card as they have to pay higher fees for those transactions. Again, having cash on hand for these transactions is advised. By far, the majority of hotels, restaurants and shops will accept a magnetic strip and the Chip and Signature cards.

International Time Zone

Turkey is 6 hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time. If it's 8 am in New York it's 2 pm in Turkey.

Credit Cards

Visa and Master Card are equally accepted in Turkey. American Express is often not accepted.

Electrical Appliances

Electric current in Turkey is 220V as opposed to the 110V in the U.S. and Canada. Electrical outlets have two

Vakif Banks) have a lunch break at 12:30 – 1:30pm, while others do not close at lunch time. Banks are not open on weekends or holidays.

Hotels and most restaurants and stores accept credit cards. (Be aware that many credit card companies charge a foreign transaction fee – check your card's policies before you leave home.) Visa and Master Card are equally accepted. American Express is not widely accepted.

Attire and Etiquette

When visiting a mosque, please remember to cover your shoulders and legs – shorts and sleeveless tops are not allowed. Most large mosques have wraps to be worn around the waist available for both male and female visitors. The Turquoise Coast and Istanbul are visited by many tourists and modern attire is worn. Wearing typical “cycling lycra” attire is acceptable on the bike tour. Adding a light-weight top with sleeves to your bike pack may be advised.

Traveling with your Cell Phone

Cell phones that support the GSM Wireless system (Global System for Mobile Communications) work in Europe. Most cell phone providers do provide GSM capable phones, although you may have to call your service provider to have the technology “turned on”. If you have T-Mobile or AT&T you will need to “unlock” your GSM phone. You can also rent GSM capable phones. You must have an international plan turned on in order to make phone calls, and remember you will be charged for both outgoing and incoming phone calls. See Alternative cell phone ideas presented below. . You are required to register your number when you go through Customs in Turkey, otherwise your phone might not work.

Before you travel with your cell phone please check with your cell phone provider and make sure you know the answers to these questions:

1. Is my cell phone GSM capable?
2. If yes, is that option on and can I use it abroad or can I “unlock” the GSM?
3. What are the international calling and/or data plan options and fees for the country(ies) I am traveling in.
4. If no, can I rent a GSM phone?.

Alternative ideas:

1.If your cell phone is GSM compatible (and unlocked) you may wish to consider purchasing a local SIM card in your country of travel that allows international calling without going through you cell phone carrier's plan. Most medium sized towns or larger will have a cell phone store outlet and sell SIM cards and prepaid credit.

2. If your cell phone is GSM compatible (and unlocked) you may wish to consider purchasing a prepaid international SIM card plan. Look at the Passport SIM card from [Telestial](#), and [OneSimCard](#).

3. Mobal International Cell Phones, www.mobal.com offers international phones and phone service with no monthly plan. You pay only for the minutes you use and they don't expire. You can add minutes by credit card. Mobal also sells SIM cards for those that already have a GSM cell phone.

round pins, so you'll need a converter for the voltage and an adapter to plug in your device. Many modern electronics have a built-in voltage converter. In that case, you will only need an adapter. Both items can be found at a hardware or travel store.

Bicycle Safety - Wear your Helmet Always

Be sure your bicycle helmet is properly adjusted to correctly fit your head. Always wear it when you ride your bike.

Hotel Check-in and Check-out

Hotel check out time in Turkey varies, but is typically around 11 a.m. Check-in time is around 2-3 p.m. Occasionally your room may be ready early.

Hotels are required to log passport information for each traveler, so the front desk will ask you for your passport when you check in. As a convenience to you, ExperiencePlus! provides this information to the front desk while you are traveling with us on tour.

Drinking Water

Tap water throughout Turkey can be unsafe, so we recommend drinking bottled or filtered water (ask at hotels if water is filtered).

Language Lessons

Hello – *Merhaba*
Thank you – *Teshekkur*
Ederim
How are you? – *Nasilsiniz?*
I am fine - *lyiyim*

Eating and Drinking

Turkey is a country on the cross-roads of continents, trade routes, immigration routes, and has four seasons, with various geographical regions. This makes the cuisine extremely rich and diverse. There are many options to eat, from casual street food to posh restaurants. One can enjoy eating “Doner Kebap” on the street cafes, or one of the many choices of warm toasted sandwiches. There are many restaurants in small towns that provide home-style food that include numerous vegetable options. They are very inexpensive, fast and authentic. Another restaurant type is Kebab Restaurants, where you can find soups, salads and a large variety of kebabs. If dining in a nice sea food restaurant you will need to check the cost of the menu item before you order.

Personal Care

Restrooms (WC) Along the Route

We design our routes to pass through villages. Most restaurants along the route will have nice restrooms. If there is no restaurant around, we suggest going to the mosques (no shorts or sleeveless allowed) or gas stations. These are generally fine. Some gas stations look fancy, with a market, cafeteria, etc, and they tend to have better restrooms. However, sometimes the next town is too far, so you can often use the “green door” (outdoors).

When you stop at a local store or cafe, please note it's an expected courtesy to purchase a small item such as bottled water, coffee, or a snack when using their facilities. Carry some tissue with you, since not all public restrooms have toilet paper. Folks often stop at a bar for a mid-morning coffee or beverage, use the bathroom, and fill their water bottles from the tap.

Laundry Facilities

Some towns in Turkey have do-it-yourself Laundromats, but most are in big cities such as Istanbul. More often you'll find laundry services where they'll wash, dry, and iron your clothes for a weight-based fee. Usually these require 24-hours. Some hotels have laundry service; it's usually more expensive and also requires a 24-hour stay. Many hotels allow you to do laundry in your room, so bring some laundry soap and a portable laundry line (nylon rope will do).

We recommend doing laundry on your two night stays in Kas and Dalyan -- hotels provide laundry service.

Hair dryers

Most of our hotels have hair dryers; either in the room or at the front desk. If you use a hair dryer regularly, we recommend you bring your own. Bring the correct electrical adaptor and or convertor.

Tipping Guidelines

Tipping in restaurants

For a good restaurant with good service in a city, leaving a 10-12% tip is acceptable. In touristy restaurants, they may add a service charge to your bill. This is a hidden cost for the meal and the waiters typically do not get it (the service charge goes to the owner of the restaurant). In this case, if service is good, it is appropriate to add a 5% tip.

Tipping Your Tour Leader Team

If your tour leader team has done their job well, we recommend each

Bike mechanic – Bisiklet
tamirgisi
Restroom – Tuvalet

traveller tip the team €18 - €25 per day for a 7 day tour. For longer tours, please use your discretion and add an amount that you feel is appropriate. Feel free to give the tip to the head tour leader who will then divide it between the team. In order to avoid social tensions, we encourage you to tip as individuals and not as a group. If you find your tour leader team has not done their job well, please let us know.