

Peace Theological Seminary Travelers Tour of Turkey 2026 18 Days: September 08 to 25, 2026

Please note: The itinerary is subject to change based on availability, local conditions, or unforeseen circumstances.

DAY 1: SEPTEMBER 08, TUESDAY: OUR TOUR BEGINS

Our tour begins with a Group Orientation Meeting at 6:00PM at our hotel – Swiss Hotel- The Bosphorus – followed by a Group dinner at the hotel at 7:30PM.

Hotel: Swiss Hotel The Bosphorus www.swissotel.com/hotels/istanbul/
Address: Acısu Sk. No:19, 34357 Besiktas/Istanbul
Tel: +902123261100

- Nearest Hospital: American International Hospital
Address: Güzelbahçe Sk. No:20, 34365 Teşvikiye, Şişli/İstanbul
Tell: +902124440777
- Nearest Chemist: Validecesme Eczanesi
Address: Suleyman Seba Cad. No:63 Visnezade, Tesvikiye, Istanbul 34357
Tel: +902122602919

DAY 2: SEPTEMBER 09, WEDNESDAY: ISTANBUL: BOSPHORUS CRUISE / TAKSIM SQUARE / ISTIKLAL AVENUE / SPICE MARKET

Today, we transfer by bus to Kabatas Pier to board our private **cruise on the Bosphorus Strait** which connects Istanbul with the Black and Marmara Seas and divides the continents of Asia and Europe (*approx. 1.5 hours*). Afterwards, we will continue touring with **Taksim Square**, one of the busiest spots in Istanbul, to take a closer look at and comprehend the social diversity of the city. We walk through **Istiklal Avenue** to enjoy the view of the 18-19th century buildings of art nuovo and eclectic architecture that currently serve a variety of purposes such as hosting art galleries, restaurants or diplomatic centers and that reflect cultural profundity and richness of Istanbul. After lunch at the **Hamdi Restaurant**, famous for its Turkish kitchen, we visit the **Spice Market** that has been an abode of spice trade for hundreds of years. Dinner tonight is on your own. (B-L)

DAY 3: SEPTEMBER 10, THURSDAY: ISTANBUL: TOPKAPI PALACE / ST. SOPHIA / BLUE MOSQUE / GRAND BAZAAR

Constantinople (Istanbul) became the capital of the Roman Empire under Constantine in 330 A.D., and it remained as capital of the Byzantine Empire until 1453, when the Ottoman army under Sultan Mehmet II conquered it. We continue our exploration with **Topkapi Palace**, built

after the Ottomans took over the city and announced it as their new Capital. Today we enjoy visiting **Harem**, where Sultans lived with their family members, as well as the **Treasury**, where we see famed jewels such as the Spoonmaker's Diamond and the Topkapi Dagger. Lunch is served at **Green House Restaurant** within its ambience of Garden of Eden with blossoming roses and carnations. We tour the **Blue Mosque** famed for its Turquoise colored Iznik tiles. In the afternoon, we visit the **Grand Bazaar**, built in the 15th century after Ottoman Turks conquered Istanbul. Dinner tonight is on your own. (B-L)

DAY 4: SEPTEMBER 11, FRIDAY: ISTANBUL - VAN

This morning, after breakfast and **CHECKOUT**, we transfer by bus to the Istanbul Airport for our flight to **Van** in Eastern Turkey within a few miles of the Iran border. Van, one of the oldest settlements in the history of civilization, has been an important settlement center throughout history due to its location on the **Silk Road**. Upon arrival in Van, we will visit **Cavustepe Castle** which was constructed by Urartu King Sarduri II, who ruled between 764 and 735 BC. After lunch, we will visit **Van Museum**, notable for its comprehensive assemblage of artefacts pertaining to the Urartu civilization. Dinner tonight is at our hotel. (B-L-D)

Hotel: Double Tree by Hilton, Van www.hilton.com/en/hotels/vandidi-doubletree-van/
Address: Ipekyolu Caddesi 8.km, Van 65300
Tel: +904322270227

- **Nearest Hospital :** Lokman Hekim Hastanesi
Cumhuriyet Mah. Zubeyde Hn. Cd. No:38 Van Tel: +90 4440911 (Toll free)
- **Nearest Chemist:** Nevin Eczanesi
Address: Kurtoglu Petrol Arkası, Yeni, Sokak 21/1, 65170, Edremit, Van
Tel: +904322174949

DAY 5: SEPTEMBER 12, SATURDAY: VAN: AKDAMAR ISLAND

After breakfast, we will cruise to **Akdamar Island** to visit **Akdamar Armenian Church**. The church was commissioned by the Armenian Vaspurakan King Gagik I Ardsruni as a palace church and constructed by the architect Monk Manuel between 915 and 921 AD. We visit Urartu (Kurdish) Rugs & Kilims. Dinner tonight is at our hotel. (B-L-D)

DAY 6: SEPTEMBER 13, SUNDAY: VAN – ANKARA – SANLIURFA

This morning, after breakfast and **CHECKOUT**, we transfer by bus to the Van Airport for our flight to **Ankara**, the capital city of Turkey. We visit the **Mausoleum of Atatürk**, the great leader of the Turkish Nation during the World War I. Atatürk, the first president of the Turkish Republic, was given the titles of head-commander and head-teacher by his nation, as well as transforming Turkish society into a parliamentary one. We transfer back to Ankara Airport for our connecting domestic flight to **Sanliurfa** (formerly called Urfa and known as Edessa from Hellenistic times). We transfer by bus to our hotel. Dinner tonight is at our hotel. (B-L-D)

Hotel: El-Ruha Hotel www.hotelelruha.com

Address: Yeni Mah. Merkez. Haleplibahce Cd. 155/A Sanliurfa 63210

Tel: [+904142154411](tel:+904142154411)

- Nearest Hospital : Balıklıgol Devlet Hastanesi, Akabe Mah. SSK Cd. No:1, 63050 Eyyubiye/Sanliurfa Tel: [+904143189000](tel:+904143189000)
- Nearest Chemist: Balıklıgol Eczanesi
Address: Akabe Mah. SSK Cd. 1497 Sk. No:2A Sanliurfa 63100 Tel: [+90414313839](tel:+90414313839)

DAY 7: SEPTEMBER 14, MONDAY: SANLIURFA: DAY TRIP TO KAHTA & MOUNT NEMRUT

This morning after breakfast, we travel **by bus** through the valley of the headwaters of the Euphrates River to **Mount Nemrut** via **Kahta**. In Kahta we change to minivans to make our climb up the mountain. The peak of Mount Nemrut contains the mausoleum of Antiochus I (69–34 B.C.) and five giant seated limestone statues, identified by their inscriptions as deities, facing outwards. These statues are flanked by a pair of guardian animal statues – a lion and eagle – at each end. The heads of the statues have fallen off to the lower level, which accommodates two rows of sandstone stelae, mounted on pedestals with an altar in front of each stele. We enjoy a lunch **near** the peak with stunning views below. On our return, we stop at **Cendere Bridge**, built in honor of the Roman Emperor Lucius Septimius Severus (193–211), his second wife, and their sons. We return to our hotel in Sanliurfa for dinner at our hotel. (B-L-D)

DAY 8: SEPTEMBER 15, TUESDAY: SANLIURFA ARCHEOLOGICAL MUSEUM / GOBEKLITEPE / HARRAN

After breakfast, we drive to **Gobeklitepe**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most significant archaeological discoveries of the 20th century, dating back some 12,000 years. Gobeklitepe reveals in a prehistorical time the division of society into social classes that took place and for agricultural activity that may have been conducted in the region. The site is also remarkable for its patriarchal thought, terrazzo flooring, and statues and reliefs of the Neolithic Age. Next, we visit **Harran**, known for its unique "beehive" dwellings with cone-shaped roofs on square bases made of clay without wood. According to the Old Testament, Harran was also the place where Terah and his son Abraham, his grandson Lot, and Abraham's wife Sarah went after leaving Ur, when God had told Abraham to move on: "So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him, and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Harran. And Abram took Sarai his wife and Lot his brother's son and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Harran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan (Genesis 12:4-5)." We enjoy lunch at the one of historical houses owned by the former mayor of Harran. After lunch we make our way to the city center of Sanliurfa to visit the **archaeological museum** and see artifacts unearthed from Gobeklitepe and other surrounding sites. Our day concludes with a stroll through the Old City overlooking the pond of Abraham and nearby cafes and Bazaar. Legend says King Nimrud threw Abraham with a

catacomb from the very peak of Edessa onto a blazing fire. But the miracle of God, showing mercy to His beloved prophet, turned the burning woods into carps and the fire into a pond. To this day, some people of the Islamic faith believe in this legend of faith and show their respect by visiting Halil İbrahim Mosque built on top of a cave where it is believed Abraham was born. Dinner this evening is on your own. (B-L)

DAY 9: SEPTEMBER 16, WEDNESDAY: SANLIURFA – ANTIOCH: CAVE CHURCH OF ST. PETER

Today, after breakfast and **CHECKOUT**, we travel by bus to **Antakya** (Ancient Antioch) where we visit the cave **Church of St Peter**. This cave, which some believe was used by the very first Christians, is one of Christianity's oldest churches. St. Peter and St. Paul did preach in Antioch and a church was established by 40 AD. According to Acts 11:26, the citizens of Antioch first called the followers of Jesus "Christians". We enjoy lunch at a local restaurant. After lunch, we visit the **Mosaic Museum of Antioch**. We then check into our hotel overnight, including for dinner. (B-L-D)

Name of Hotel: Antakya Museum Hotel <https://themuseumhotelantakya.com/>
Address: St.Pierre Mevkii, Haraparasi, Hacilar Sk. No:26/1 Antakya 31060
Tel: [+903262900000](tel:+903262900000)

- Nearest Hospital: Antakya State Hospital
Address: Ekinçi, No:4, Antakya 31027
Tel: [+90 326 2294400](tel:+903262294400)
- Nearest Chemist: Belgin Eczanesi
Address: Levent Sok. Kucukdalyan, Antakya 31120
Tel: [+90 326 652 2764](tel:+903266522764)

DAY 10: SEPTEMBER 17, THURSDAY: ANTIOCH / TARSUS / CAPPADOCIA

After breakfast and **CHECKOUT**, we journey by bus through the Gulek Pass, including the **Cilician Gates**, and pass through the Tarsus mountains and the low plains of the Anatolian plateau. Along the way, we pass through a narrow gorge carved by the Gokoluk River, reaching elevations of up to 1000 meters.

We stop in **Tarsus** and visit the remains of what once was this ancient Roman town, including what is considered the **House of St. Paul**.

We enjoy lunch at a nearby restaurant on the banks of Seyhan River in a relaxing setting, that includes the sound of the water going down river. After lunch we journey toward **Cappadocia**, stopping to visit the **Eski Gumus Monastery**, carved from the rock in Gumusler. This 10th-century monastery, which is entered via a vaulted door, contains scenes from the Infancy of

Jesus, along with several portraits of Mary, saints, and angels. We check into our hotel and dinner is served at our hotel. (B-L-D)

Name of Hotel: Alden Hotel <https://alden.com.tr/>

Address: 12.Cadde No:3/1 Urgup 50400

Tel: [+90 384 228 2850](tel:+903842282850)

- **Nearest Hospital:** Urgup Devlet Hastanesi
Address: Otogar Caddesi No:3, Urgup 50400
Tel: [+90 384 341 4031](tel:+903843414031)
- **Nearest Chemist:** Cumhuriyet Mh. Ataturk Blv. No:24, Urgup/Nevsehir 50400
Tel: [+903843417006](tel:+903843417006)

DAY 11: SEPTEMBER 18, FRIDAY: CAPPADOCIA

After breakfast, we enjoy a leisurely hike on a path from **Kizilcukur** to **Cavusin**, taking in the nature views and listening to the songs of Cappadocian birds. Boarding our bus, we visit **Goreme Monastic Center**, one of the earliest monastic centers of Christianity, founded by St. Basil of Constantinople. Here we see the cave churches that served as classrooms for pupils of monasticism. We are offered a taste of local dishes during our lunch at a local tavern. After lunch, we visit **Pasabag Valley**, where hermits lived in the rock-hewn pillars. Next, we visit **Avanos**, which has been a home of potters' wheels and pottery craftsmanship since the Hittite civilization of the Old Testament. We then return into our hotel. (B-L-D)

DAY 12: SEPTEMBER 19, SATURDAY: CAPPADOCIA / KONYA/ RUMI

This morning, after breakfast and **CHECKOUT**, we drive through the open fields of Anatolia to **Konya**. En route, we enjoy a break at **Sultanhan**, a 13th century caravansary for Silk Road merchants. Lunch is served in Konya, Biblical Iconium, at a local restaurant. In New Testament times, Konya was one of the major cities of the Roman province of Galatia and was visited by Paul during all three of his missionary journeys. We also visit **Mevlâna Museum**, the center of the Sufi Mevlana culture, and the mausoleum of **Traveler Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi**, the Sufi mystic also known as Mevlâna or Rumi. The Museum formerly served as the dervish lodge of the Mevlevi Order, also known as the Whirling Dervishes and the Tomb Chamber of **Traveler Shems Tebrizi** and the Mesjid, which was built in the 16th century. We check into our hotel for dinner. This evening we attend a traditional performance of the Whirling Dervishes. (B-L-D)

Name of hotel: Novotel Konya

Address of property: Cevre Yolu Caddesi No:38, Şeker, Selcuklu, Konya 42080

Tel: [+90 332 223 4200](tel:+903322234200)

- **Closest Hospital:** Baskent University Hospital

Address: Hocacihan Saray Mah, Saray Caddesi No:1, Selcuklu, Konya 42080
Tel: [+90 332 257 0606](tel:+903322570606)

- Closest Chemist: Palmiye Eczanesi
Address: Harzami Sk, No:7D, Selcuk, Konya 42080
Tel: [+90 332 503 4299](tel:+903325034299)

DAY 13: SEPTEMBER 20, SUNDAY: KONYA / PERGE / ASPENDOS / ANTALYA

Today, after breakfast and **CHECKOUT**, we depart Konya for **Antalya**. On our way, we visit the ancient city of **Perge**, taking in its colossal stadium, Roman Gates, Agora, and public baths. Perge, founded by Attalos II, King of Pergamon, was known as Attalia and was an important port city on the Mediterranean shores of the kingdom. Legend tells us that during Roman times, Perge was visited by the famous Mark Anthony and Cleopatra, and by St. Paul. We enjoy lunch at a local restaurant in **Aspendos** and then continue on to our hotel in Antalya for check-in and a relaxing afternoon enjoying the views of the Mediterranean. Dinner is served at our hotel.
(B-L-D)

Name of hotel: The Marmara Hotel www.themarmarahotels.com/antalya
Address of hotel: Sirinyali, Lara Cd, No:136, Muratpasa, Antalya 07160
Tel: [+90 242 249 3600](tel:+902422493600)

- Closest Hospital: Medical Park Antalya Hospital
Address: Fener, Tekelioglu Caddesi, No:7, 07160 Muratpasa, Antalya
Tel: [+90 242 314 3434](tel:+902423143434)
- Closest Chemist: Pharma Lara Eczane
Address: Sirinyali, Ismet Goksen Cd, 130B, Muratpasa, Antalya
Tel: [+90 242 323 0161](tel:+902423230161)

DAY 14: SEPTEMBER 21, MONDAY: ANTALYA: ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM & LEISURE

After breakfast we visit the **Antalya Archaeological Museum** to view works of art unearthed from Perge and other ancient sites of the region, as well as the remains of bones of St. Nicholas (Santa Claus), who lived and died in ancient Myra, today's Demre. During Roman times, due to earthquakes and silting of ports, the ancient city of Perge became the center of trade in the region that was visited by St. Paul during his journeys through Asia Minor. The balance of the day is at leisure to enjoy and relax at our beautiful our hotel. Lunch and dinner are on your own.
(B)

DAY 15: SEPTEMBER 22, TUESDAY: ANTALYA / IZMIR: EPHESUS / BASILICA OF ST. JOHN / HOUSE OF MARY / BODRUM

This morning, after breakfast and **CHECKOUT**, we transfer by bus to the **Antalya Airport** for our flight to **Izmir**. Upon arrival in Izmir, we journey by bus to **Ephesus**. In ancient times it was the largest city and major harbor on this part of the Mediterranean Sea. Silt in the harbor has today placed the shoreline more than four miles west of the harbor in Roman times. St. Paul established the Church of Ephesus from 53-56 AD when he was also preaching his version of Christianity. While here, he wrote letters to Galatia, Philippi, and Corinth. We walk the Marble Road that runs through the city, with various structures and ruins resting along the way including the Temple of Hadrian and [the Library of Celsus built by the Roman Empire. We also tour the Terrace Houses, the impressive ancient residential section of Ephesus. Among all the archaeological remains, the Great Theater of Ephesus is of major Biblical (Acts: 19) significance as the scene of an uprising led by a merchant named Demetrius against St. Paul. We also visit the nearby **Basilica of St. John**, built by Justinian in the 6th century, which stands over the traditional burial site of John the Apostle of Jesus. It was modeled after the former Church of the Holy Apostles in Constantinople. We visit the ruins of the **House of Mary** (or Council Church), an early 4th-century church with a baptistery and bishop's residence. The Third Ecumenical Council, which affirmed Mary as Theotokos ("God-bearer"), met here in AD 431. Some early Christian traditions maintain that John the Apostle wrote his Gospel here in Ephesus. We continue onto **Bodrum** and check into our hotel and have dinner.
(B-L-D)

Name of hotel: Kempinski Barbaros Bay Bodrum www.kempinski.com/en/hotel-barbaros-bay
Address of property: Kizilagac, Hacigiden Caddesi, No:33/1, 48401 Bodrum, Mugla
Tel: +90 252 311 0303

- Closest Hospital: Bodrum American Hospital
Address: Mars Mabedi Cd No:33, Turkkuyusu, Bodrum,
Tel: +90 252 444 4 478
- Closest Chemist: Kivilcim Eczanesi
Address: Mars Mabedi Cd, Turkkuyusu, Bodrum
Tel: +90 252 313 7848

DAY 16: SEPTEMBER 23, WEDNESDAY: BODRUM: VISIT OF ST. PETER'S CASTLE, THE MAUSOLEUM OF HALICARNASSUS

After breakfast, our day begins with our visit of **Bodrum** (ancient Halicarnassus). We visit the one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the **Mausoleum of Halicarnassus** (also called the Tomb of Mausolus), built between 353 and 350 BC. It was erected and named for him by order of his widow (also sister) Artemisia. We then stroll along the yacht harbor on our way for a tour of **St. Peter's Castle** which includes a museum of underwater archaeology. The castle was one of the most important posts for the **Knights of St. John** during the Crusades and Middle Ages. We return to our hotel to enjoy an afternoon at leisure followed by a group meeting followed by dinner at the hotel. (B-D) Lunch is on your own.

DAY 17: SEPTEMBER 24, THURSDAY: BODRUM AT LEISURE & FAREWELL DINNER

After a day of leisure on your own, we enjoy an early evening cruise on our way to celebrate **John-Roger's birthday** with a **farewell dinner** at St. Peter's Castle. (B-D)

Here is an optional cameo shopping tour offered by Trinity World Tours, the PTS tour operator. It is not part of the group PTS tour.

9:00 am Depart hotel for Yaliciftlik Village

9:20 am Arrive at village olive oil factory

9:20-10:10 am Tour of olive oil factory

10:10-10:30 am Drive to Etrim Village

10:30-13:00 am Visit centuries old Etrim Village founded by early Turkish nomads, visiting its historic stone built houses, village mosque, coffee house and the village coop to see women weave nomadic rugs

13:00-13:30 am Transfer back to your property

DAY 18: SEPTEMBER 25, FRIDAY: BODRUM: COMPLETION OF OUR PTS TRAVELERS TOUR

After breakfast and **CHECKOUT**, our PTS Travelers tour completes. (B)