



# Istanbul Highlights Weekend Escape: Hagia Sophia & Bosphorus Cruise

Prepared by TourGrids



Destination  
**Turkey**



Duration  
**3 Nights 4 Days**



Starting from  
**Rs. 42,500 / person**

## ITINERARY ROUTE

↩ **Istanbul · 3N**

<https://tourgrids.com/packages/turkey/turkey-3-nights-4-days-package-966>

## Overview

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A compact, family-friendly Turkey Family package designed for a memorable 3-night, 4-day stay in Istanbul. Perfect for families and first-time visitors who want a curated mix of iconic landmarks, a relaxing Bosphorus experience, local flavors, and comfortable downtime.

Highlights:

- Hagia Sophia (Ayasofya)
- Bosphorus Cruise (shared)
- Topkapi Palace and Imperial Harem
- Grand Bazaar & Spice Bazaar shopping
- Sultanahmet historic core and Blue Mosque

This itinerary balances sightseeing with family-friendly pacing and free time for rest or optional activities.

### ✓ **What's Included**

- ✓ 3 nights accommodation in a family-friendly Istanbul hotel (selected category)
- ✓ Daily breakfast
- ✓ Arrival and departure airport transfers (Istanbul Airport or Sabiha Gökçen)
- ✓ Guided half-day tour of Hagia Sophia, Topkapi Palace, and the Historic Peninsula with entrance fees
- ✓ Shared Bosphorus Cruise ticket
- ✓ Local English-speaking guide for guided days
- ✓ All local taxes and service charges
- ✓ Porterage at hotel (where available)
- ✓ Family-friendly amenities and child rates available on request.

### ✗ **Not Included**

- ✗ International flights to/from Turkey
- ✗ Turkish entry visa and travel insurance
- ✗ Optional private Bosphorus cruise, Dolmabahçe Palace interior fee (if not included), Turkish bath (hamam), and personal activities
- ✗ Meals not specified (lunches/dinners unless listed)
- ✗ Gratuities for guides and drivers
- ✗ Personal expenses (souvenirs, tips, extras)
- ✗ Please advise special dietary requirements or mobility needs at booking so we can tailor arrangements.

## Day-by-Day Itinerary

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Day

1

### **Arrival & Sultanahmet Evening Stroll**

Arrive in Istanbul and transfer to your hotel in the historic Sultanahmet area. After check-in, enjoy a relaxed evening stroll around Sultanahmet Square to view the illuminated Blue Mosque and the ancient Hippodrome. Dinner at a local family-friendly restaurant featuring Turkish cuisine.

Tip: Early evening is a great time for photos with fewer crowds.

Day

2

### **Historic Peninsula: Hagia Sophia, Topkapi & Grand Bazaar**

Full day exploring the heart of Byzantine and Ottoman Istanbul. Start with a guided visit to the magnificent Hagia Sophia, followed by the nearby Blue Mosque (interior visit respecting prayer times), and the atmospheric Basilica Cistern. After lunch, tour Topkapi Palace including imperial courtyards and treasury highlights. End the afternoon with shopping at the bustling Grand Bazaar.

Important: Modest dress required for mosque interiors – shoulders and knees should be covered; scarves provided if needed.

Day

3

### **Bosphorus Cruise, Spice Bazaar & Modern Istiklal**

Morning shared Bosphorus Cruise offering scenic views of Ottoman palaces, waterfront mansions (yali), and the Asian-European skyline. After disembarking, visit the aromatic Spice Bazaar, then transfer to the European side to explore Dolmabahçe Palace (optional) or the vibrant Ortaköy neighborhood. In the evening wander through Istiklal Avenue and Taksim Square with plenty of dining options.

Optional: Extend your cruise to a private boat for a more intimate family experience (extra cost).

Day

4

### **Leisure Morning & Departure**

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast and free morning for last-minute shopping, a traditional Turkish bath (hamam) experience, or a short museum visit. Check out of the hotel and transfer to the airport for your onward flight.

Note: Check-out times and transfer schedules will be confirmed with your booking. Please allow extra time for Istanbul traffic when scheduling flights.

## Frequently Asked Questions

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## ❓ **What is the best time to visit Turkey and what weather can I expect?**

The best time to visit Turkey is during the shoulder seasons: April–June and September–October, when temperatures range from 18–28°C with pleasant weather ideal for sightseeing. Summer (June–August) is perfect for coastal areas but can be hot inland, with temperatures reaching 30–38°C. Winter (December–March) is excellent for skiing and fewer crowds, but central regions like Cappadocia can be very cold (–5 to 5°C) with snow. Istanbul experiences a temperate climate year-round. Spring offers blooming tulips and mild weather, while autumn provides clear skies perfect for photography and hot-air ballooning. Coastal areas remain warm through October, making it ideal for extended beach time.

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## ❓ **How can I reach Turkey from India and what are the main airports?**

Most Indian travelers reach Turkey by air, with frequent direct and one-stop flights from major Indian cities. The main gateway is Istanbul Airport (IST) on the European side, with Sabiha Gökçen (SAW) on the Asian side as an alternative. Other key airports include Antalya (AYT) for beach destinations, Izmir (ADB) for Ephesus, and Kayseri (ASR) or Nevşehir (NAV) for Cappadocia. Airlines like Turkish Airlines, Air India, and Gulf carriers offer good connections via Dubai, Doha, or direct routes. Flight time is typically 6–8 hours direct or 8–12 hours with one stop. Book in advance for better deals, especially during peak seasons (summer and festivals).

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## ❓ **What are the visa requirements for Indian citizens visiting Turkey?**

Indian passport holders generally need a visa to enter Turkey. Many Indians apply through VFS Global centers in major Indian cities for a tourist visa. Some may be eligible for an e-Visa if they hold valid US, UK, or Schengen visas, but eligibility criteria change frequently. The process typically takes 5–10 working days and requires documents like passport photos, bank statements, hotel bookings, and return flight tickets. Visa fees vary based on duration and type. It's crucial to check the official Turkish Embassy website or consulate for current requirements, as policies update regularly. Apply well in advance of your travel dates to avoid any delays.

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## ❓ **What are the best local transportation options within Turkey?**

Turkey offers excellent transportation networks. In Istanbul, use the rechargeable Istanbulkart for metro, tram, buses, and ferries, including the cross-continental Marmaray train. Dolmuş (shared minibuses) are economical for short distances. For intercity travel, comfortable buses with reclining seats connect all major destinations. High-speed trains (YHT) link Istanbul–Ankara–Konya efficiently. Domestic flights are affordable for longer distances, especially to Cappadocia. Taxis are metered in cities; use official stands and ensure the meter runs. Car rental is popular for coastal drives, but requires an International Driving Permit. Ride-hailing apps operate in major cities. For scenic routes like the Turquoise Coast, consider renting a car for maximum flexibility.

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## ❓ **What are the best accommodation options and areas to stay in Turkey?**

Turkey offers diverse accommodation from luxury resorts to boutique cave hotels. In Istanbul, stay in Sultanahmet for historic sites, Beyoğlu/Galata for nightlife, or Kadıköy for local culture. Luxury options include Çırağan Palace Kempinski and Four Seasons Sultanahmet. Cappadocia is famous for unique cave hotels like Museum Hotel and Argos in Cappadocia, offering authentic experiences in Göreme or Uçhisar. Antalya's Belek area features all-inclusive beach resorts like Maxx Royal and Regnum Carya. For coastal charm, Bodrum offers boutique hotels and beach clubs. Budget travelers can find quality pensions and hostels throughout. Book cave hotels in Cappadocia well in advance, especially for balloon season (April–October).

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## ❓ **What are the must-visit attractions and places in Turkey?**

Turkey's top attractions span ancient history and natural wonders. Istanbul's highlights include Hagia Sophia, Blue Mosque, Topkapı Palace, Grand Bazaar, and a Bosphorus cruise. Cappadocia offers surreal landscapes, cave churches at Göreme Open–Air Museum, and hot–air balloon rides. Pamukkale's white travertine terraces and ancient Hierapolis are UNESCO–listed. Ephesus near Izmir showcases magnificent Roman ruins including the Library of Celsus. Antalya combines beach relaxation with historic Kaleiçi old town. The Turquoise Coast features Ölüdeniz's blue lagoon and Butterfly Valley. Don't miss Göbekli Tepe near Şanlıurfa, the world's oldest temple complex. Each region offers distinct experiences, from Byzantine churches to Roman theaters and Ottoman palaces.

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## ❓ **What Turkish food and cuisine should I try during my visit?**

Turkish cuisine offers incredible variety, especially for vegetarians. Must-try dishes include various kebabs (Adana, İskender), pide and lahmacun flatbreads, and extensive meze platters with hummus, ezme, and stuffed vine leaves. Vegetarian favorites include gözleme (stuffed flatbread), menemen (tomato–egg scramble), mercimek çorbası (lentil soup), and imam bayıldı (stuffed eggplant). Coastal areas excel in fresh seafood like grilled sea bass. Don't miss Turkish breakfast with cheese, olives, honey, and fresh bread. Sweet treats include baklava (especially from Gaziantep), künefe, and Turkish delight. Drink strong Turkish coffee, endless çay (tea), and refreshing ayran (yogurt drink). Many dishes are naturally vegetarian, and Turkish hospitality ensures dietary needs are accommodated.

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## ★ **Traveller Reviews**

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**Nishant Narayan**

★★★★★ 5/5

### **A Wonderful Culinary Exploration**

The culinary exploration was fantastic! I fell in love with Turkish delights!



**Yashwant Jain**

★★★★☆ 4/5

### **Art & Culture Snapshot**

Great for those who want a snapshot of Turkey's arts and culture! Definitely worthwhile.



**Sakshi Verma**

★★★★★ 5/5

### **Lovely Weather and Scenery**

The weather during my trip was perfect. The scenery just made everything better!



**Bhupendra Singh**

★★★★★ 5/5

### **Unmatched Architectural Wonders**

The architectural wonders of Istanbul are simply unmatched. Each mosque tells a different story.



**Tanvi Soni**

★★★★★ 5/5

### **Aleppo Pepper and Spices Tour**

The spice bazaar was delightful! Came back with an assortment of spices. Can't wait to cook!

## **⚡ Why Choose TourGrids?**

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