

Istanbul, a city that seamlessly intertwines its rich history with vibrant modernity welcomes you on this incredible 7-night experience! Begin your journey by immersing yourself in the grandeur of architectural marvels such as the Hagia Sophia, Blue Mosque, Hippodrome, and Topkapi Palace. Stroll through the labyrinthine streets of the Grand Bazaar, where the scent of exotic spices and the allure of traditional crafts beckon. Delve into the cultural heart of Istanbul experiencing the local flavors and lively atmosphere. You'll have the opportunity to savor its diverse culinary delights, absorb the warmth of Turkish hospitality, and create memories against the backdrop of Istanbul's timeless beauty.

#### Day 1: October 05, 2024 DEPART USA/CANADA DAY

Today you depart on a transatlantic flight to Istanbul, Turkey. (International flights not included)

# Day 2: October 06, 2024 ISTANBUL ARRIVAL DAY

Arrival into Istanbul, Turkey. Upon arrival and after collecting luggage, you will be greeted by our local representatives outside of the Terminal Building- Exit Gate 14 and escorted to your comfortable motorcoach transfer to your respective hotel. During the transfer, the guide will point out landmarks in the area, providing the group with an introduction to their new surroundings!

Upon arrival at the hotel, the remainder of the day will be at leisure. This evening, enjoy a Welcome Dinner at your hotel\*.

\*For late arrivals after the hotel restaurant closure, welcome dinner will be a cold plated served in room\*

# Day 3: October 07, 2024 FULL DAY TOUR 1 ISTANBUL

After breakfast at your hotel, we invite you to enjoy a Full Day Tour of Istanbul's "Old City." Order of sites may differ between groups, but all passengers will get the chance to experience/visit marvelous sites of Istanbul's Old City such as the Blue Mosque, Hippodrome, Topkapi Palace Museum, and Grand Bazaar.

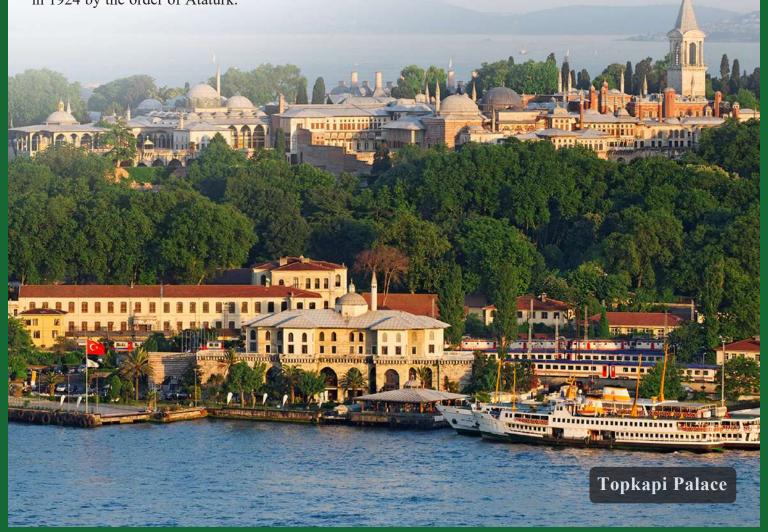
Blue Mosque: Also known as "The Mosque of Sultan Ahmed." The mosque is popularly known as the Blue Mosque having been named for the blue tiles adorning the walls of its interior. It was built during the rule of Ahmed I. from 1609 to 1616. Istanbul boasts its monumental shrines of different faiths and Blue Mosque is probably one of the most famed masterpieces of Ottoman religious architecture. Standing in great prestige with its six minarets and perfectly proportioned dome, it is named after its Turquoise colored tiles made of quartz minerals. Ottoman Sultans preferred to pray in this timeless shrine due to its incomparable beauty until when the empire collapsed after the World War.



**Hippodrome:** Once the vast arena that functioned as the heart of sporting (chariots races and athletics) events and political activities. The Roman Hippodrome of the glorious past displays today the famous Obelisk of Theodosius and the Serpentine Column dating back to 5th century BC. Here you can see the Egyptian Obelisk brought from Egypt by Emperor Theodosius; the Serpentine Column (Tripod of Plataea) from Temple of Apollo at Delphi and the Tiled (Walled) Column erected by Constantine Porphyrogenitus at 10th century AD. Topkapi Palace Museum: The biggest and one of the most popular sites to visit in Istanbul. It was built in between 1466 and 1478 by the Sultan Mehmet II on top of a hill in a small peninsula, dominating the Golden Horn to the north, the Sea of Marmara to the south, and the Bosphorus strait to the northeast, with great views of the Asian side as well. After the Conquest of Constantinople in 1453, Mehmet II ordered to build his palace in its present location on top of the ancient Byzantine ruins, meanwhile he spent some time during its construction. Once they moved to Topkapi Palace, the old one was called as "Old Palace" and Topkapi as the "New Palace". The palace was opened to the public as a museum in 1924 by the order of Ataturk.

Grand Bazaar: The Grand Bazaar (Kapalicarsi in Turkish) is one of the oldest and largest covered markets in the world. It was built of wood after the Conquest of Istanbul around an old Byzantine building which became the part of the Old Bedesten (Old Bazaar) today and has gotten larger throughout the centuries with the addition of new sections and inns. The Bazaar initially consisted of two warehouses, known as Inner Bedesten and Sandal Bedesten. Then open streets were covered with domed roofs connecting separate buildings to each other. Today the bazaar has over 3000 shops (some even say 4000), 17 inns (Han), 61 streets, over 4 fountains, 10 wells, 2 mosques, several cafes, and restaurants, change offices and 22 gates.

Tonight, enjoy an evening at leisure in Istanbul with your WSB Family!



## Day 4: October 08, 2024 ISTANBUL DAY AT LEISURE (OPTIONAL TOURS)

Start your day with a traditional Turkish breakfast at your hotel. Today, you may choose from our selection of carefully curated Optional Tours.

Tonight, enjoy an evening at leisure in Istanbul with your WSB Family!

#### Day 5: October 09, 2024 ISTANBUL DAY AT LEISURE (OPTIONAL

# TOURS)/ GALA DINNER

Start your day with a traditional Turkish breakfast at your hotel. Today, you may choose from our selection of carefully curated Optional Tour in Istanbul.

This Evening, enjoy a Splendid Gala Dinner in Istanbul.

#### Day 6: October 10, 2024 FULL DAY TOUR 2 ISTANBUL GROUP

Start your day with a traditional Turkish breakfast at your hotel. After breakfast, we invite you to enjoy a Full Day Tour of Istanbul's "Old City." Order of sites may differ between groups, but all passengers will get the chance to experience/visit marvelous sites of Istanbul's Old City such as the Spice Market, and St. Sophia.

**Spice Market:** Built in 1664, this large, old stone building includes a large number of shops (and a restaurant on the second floor that has long held a venerable place in the life of the city). This collection of shops was actually part of the complex of the adjacent Yeni Camii (the "New Mosque," whose construction started in 1597 and finished decades later). Since its construction, the Egyptian Spice Market has specialized in the sale of exotic spices. Today, these lovely small shops continue to sell spices and now also sell dried fruits, nuts, seeds, and other edibles. Some of the shops are gradually being transformed into shops featuring jewelry and other high margin items.

**St. Sophia:** The Church of Divine wisdom and a testament to the sophistication of the 6th Century. The vast edifice was built over two earlier churches and inaugurated by Emperor Justinian in 537. The immense dome is an architectural marvel, as it seems to hover overhead. In addition to admiring the architecture you will also view the wonderful mosaics in the upper galleries.



# Day 7: October 11, 2024 ISTANBUL DAY AT LEISURE (OPTIONAL

# TOURS)

Start your day with a traditional Turkish breakfast at your hotel. Today, you may choose from our selection of carefully curated Optional Tours in Istanbul.

Tonight, enjoy an evening at leisure in Istanbul with your WSB Family!

# Day 8: October 12, 2024 ISTANBUL DAY AT LEISURE (OPTIONAL TOURS)

Start your day with a traditional Turkish breakfast at your hotel. Today, you may choose from our selection of carefully curated Optional Tours in Istanbul.

# Day 9: October 13, 2024 ISTANBUL DEPARTURE DAY

# **Optional Tours**

#### **Full Day**

- Bursa
- Ephesus

#### Half Day (Morning)

- The Underground Cistern & Galata Port
- Dolmabahce palace museum & istanbul modern art museum

#### Half Day (Night)

- Fener Balat Neigborhoods & Bosphorus Cruise Experience
- The museum of turkish and islamic arts & istanbul archeology museum
- Beylerbeyi summer palace & camlica hill

