

**T1 > THE IMPERIAL TOUR**  
**Daily Morning Tour**

**Jun.22-23-24-25-26, 2014 / Per person : 35.-EURO**



We begin our tour of the Sultanahmet district, the heart of old Istanbul, at **Hagia Sophia\***. Built by the Emperor Justinian in the early 6<sup>th</sup> century AD and designed by Anthemius of Tralles and Isodore of Miletus, the church is one of the marvels of world architecture. Converted into a mosque in 1453, it is now a museum. Its massive dome still dominates the skyline of old Istanbul. It is also famed for its mosaics, including glittering portraits of emperors and empresses and a poignant Virgin and Child. Next we visit the **Blue Mosque** which takes its name from the exquisite tiles adorning its interior. Built by Sultan Ahmet I in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century and designed by a pupil of Sinan, the greatest of Ottoman architects, it is the only imperial mosque with six minarets. Its courtyard is especially grand. The **Hippodrome**, the stadium of ancient Byzantium, held 100,000 spectators and featured objects from all corners of the empire. Of these, an **Egyptian obelisk** and a bronze sculpture of three entwined serpents from Delphi survive. The **Grand Bazaar** was the commercial heart of the old city and its 4,000 shops are full of treasures including carpets and kilims, silks, jewelry, ceramics, icons, and leather goods. Wandering through the Grand Bazaar, indulge in some shopping, Ottoman style.

**(Afternoon tour also available on Tuesdays)**

\*On Mondays, when Saint Sophia is closed, we visit the Chora Church, famed for its mosaics.



**T2 > OTTOMAN SPLENDOURS**  
**Daily Afternoon Tour**

**Jun.22-23-25-26, 2014 / Per person : 35.-EURO**



We begin our tour at **Topkapı Palace\***, which, from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was the principal residence of the Ottoman Sultans. We will visit the fabulous **Imperial Treasury** and the **Baghdad Kiosk**. Topkapı Palace is now a museum and has unrivalled collections of jewelry, including the **Spoonmaker's Diamond**, the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest in the world. It also possesses numerous Ottoman court costumes and ceramics, notably including one of the world's finest collections of **Chinese celadon ceramics**, many of which were gifts from other rulers. Interestingly, some of the ceramics have a special glaze that was said to change color in the presence of poison. We also visit the Imperial Armory, displaying

centuries of Ottoman weaponry. But perhaps the loveliest feature of Topkapı Palace are its courtyards with their ancient trees; it is easy to imagine the sultan strolling here far from the cares of state and empire. Last but by no means least, we visit the **Rüstem Pasha Mosque**, completed in 1563. A masterpiece designed by Sinan the Magnificent, it has the most exquisite and extensive Iznik tile decoration of any mosque in Istanbul. The large quantities of exquisite Iznik tiles, arranged in a wide variety of beautiful floral and geometric designs, as well as the spacious central courtyard, make this mosque a must-see Istanbul attraction.

\*On Tuesdays, when Topkapı Palace is closed, this tour is not offered.

**Special FULL DAY OLD CITY TOUR, Combining tours T1 and T2 Jun.22-23-25-26, 2014 /**

**Per person : 70.-EURO**



**T3 > MORNING BOSPHORUS CRUISE**  
**Daily Morning Tour**

**Jun.22-23-24-25-26, 2014 / Per person : 35.-EURO**



We begin with a brief visit to the 17<sup>th</sup> century [Spice Bazaar\\*](#), one of Istanbul's most colorful, bustling attractions. Next, we travel the [Golden Horn](#) on our way to an unforgettable cruise along the [Bosphorus](#), the majestic strait that runs through Istanbul, linking Europe and Asia. From our cruise boat, we view the dramatic sights lining the Bosphorus' wooded shores: mosques, a bridge that for a time was the world's longest and [Rumeli Hisar](#), a massive fortress built by Mehmet the Conqueror in just three months as he prepared to take Istanbul. Also noteworthy on this tour are the 19<sup>th</sup> century mansions of the Ottoman elite and the Sultans' fanciful gingerbread [palaces and hunting lodges](#).

**Special FULL DAY BOSPHORUS TOUR + OTTOMAN SPLENDOURS, Combining tours T3 and T2**  
**Jun. 22-23-25-26, 2014 / Per person : 70.-EURO**

**T4 > AFTERNOON BOSPHORUS CRUISE**  
**Daily Afternoon Tour**

**Jun.22-23-24-25-26, 2014 / Per person : 35.-EURO**



We cruise the [Bosphorus](#), and from the deck of our cruise boat, take in the sights and sounds of this legendary waterway, lined with [historic villages](#), grandiose waterfront [mansions](#), imposing [fortresses](#), like [Anadolu Hisar](#), and the [Baroque palaces](#) of the late Ottoman sultans. After our cruise we travel along the breathtaking [Golden Horn](#) to the [Spice Bazaar\\*\\*](#), a thrilling riot of colors, sounds and the smells of exotic spices.

\*On the rare Sundays when the Spice Bazaar is closed, we offer an orientation session.

\*\*The Spice Bazaar may be visited prior to the Bosphorus Cruise, depending on the number of tour participants.

**T5 > ASIA AND BEYLERBEYI PALACE**  
**Daily Afternoon Tour**

**Jun.22-24-25, 2014 / Per person : 35.-EURO**



We begin by driving across the first [Bosphorus Bridge](#), which for a time was the world's longest suspension bridge, and head for the summit of [Çambıca Hill](#), which affords panoramic [views of Istanbul](#), the [Sea of Marmara](#) and the [Princes' Islands](#). From here a short drive brings us to the [Palace of Beylerbeyi](#) on the shore of the Bosphorus. Perhaps the most elegant of the late Ottoman palaces, Beylerbeyi boasts six sumptuously furnished reception halls with Bohemian crystal chandeliers and Sèvres and Chinese vases, including a main salon with an indoor fountain. The sultans' guests at the palace included Empress Eugénie of France, Shah Nasruddin of Persia and Grand Duke Nicholas of Russia. (Every day except Mondays and Thursdays.)

**Special FULL DAY BOSPHORUS TOUR + ASIA TOUR, Combining tours T3 and T5**  
**Jun.22-24-25, 2014 / Per person : 70.-EURO**

## T7 > PRINCESS ISLANDS

### Full-Day Tour

Jun.22-23-24-25-26, 2014 / Per person : 65.-EURO



There is no better way to escape the bustle of Istanbul for a day than with a visit to the idyllic **Princes' Islands**. Enjoy cool breezes and charming sights along the way to **Büyükdada**, the largest Island in the chain. Famous for their mild climates, lush vegetation, and ornate Ottoman houses, all the islands are unspoiled by traffic. Instead of cars there are carriages, called phaetons, which we will use to tour the island and its beautiful scenery studded with elegant mansions draped with purple bougainvillea, reminiscent of a more leisured and graceful era. We will enjoy our lunch at the best of one of the many excellent fresh fish restaurants that line the waterfront, gazing across the Asian shore of Istanbul, so close - though it feels worlds away.



## T8 > BURSA

### Full-Day Tour

Jun. 23-26, 2014 / Per person : 90.-EURO



We travel by ferry to **Yalova**, then by luxury coach to the city of **Bursa\***, which dates back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C. The first capital of the Ottoman Empire, Bursa is one of the greatest treasure houses of Islamic architecture. We will first visit the **Green Mosque** and the neighbouring **Green Mausoleum**, both world-renowned for their superb tile decorations, as well as the late 14<sup>th</sup> century **Great Mosque** and the **Koza Han**, which for centuries was the center of Bursa's flourishing silk trade. As the capital of Turkey's silk production and importation, Bursa was also the home of the skilled artisans who produced kaftans, pillows, embroidery and other silk products for the Ottoman palaces until the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Afterwards, enjoy a leisurely cable car ride up the slopes of Mount Olympus, in Turkish, **Uludağ**, or if the cable car is not running, take in the panoramic views from beneath the more than 1,000 year-old plane tree that gives **Çınaraltı** its name. **Lunch** is at one of Bursa's most highly-regarded traditional Turkish restaurants, the **Darüzziyafe**, where we will enjoy the finest authentic Ottoman cuisine in a historic setting, where Sultan Murat the Second once dined. (This tour is available on Mondays, Thursdays & Saturdays. In the event the cable car is closed due to weather conditions, **Çınaraltı** is substituted for **Uludağ**.)

**\*A minimum of eight (8) participants are required for this tour.**



## T9 > CAPPADOCIA

Two (2)-Day Tour (min. 2 person)

Jun. 20-21 /or 27-28, 2014 / Per person : 450.-EURO



On our way to Cappadocia, we fly to Ankara or Kayseri and drive to Üçhisar in the midst of the Cappadocian heartland, where we will be staying at one of Cappadocia's unique boutique Cave Hotels. Cappadocia is a region unlike any other. Its extraordinary landscape is composed of soft volcanic stone that wind and rain have sculpted into fantastic clusters of multicolored spires and pinnacles. What is more, the softness of the stone encouraged the medieval Christian inhabitants of the region to carve out of the living rock literally hundreds of churches, monasteries, towns and villages. A trip to Cappadocia is a magical experience you will never forget. On our way to Üçhisar we will stop off at the magnificent 13<sup>th</sup> century Selçuk caravanserai known as Ağzıkarahan, and at one of the region's famous 'underground cities'. These go down many storeys into the earth and are among the marvels of medieval engineering. Once in Üçhisar, we will visit the great rock-hewn citadel that looms over the town. On our second day we will visit the open-air museum of the Göreme Valley, which contains the region's highest concentration of painted churches. The frescoes are among the masterpieces of Byzantine art. A short distance beyond Göreme lie the villages of Avclar and Çavuşin, both of which have many cave-dwellings, and the dramatic Zelve Valley.



## T10 > EPHESUS

Full-Day Tour (min. 2 person)

Jun. 21-22-23-24-25-26,, 2014 / Per person : 350.-EURO



We catch an early flight to the city of Izmir on the Aegean coast, then drive south to the antique city of Ephesus. This is one of the world's richest and most rewarding archaeological sites with impressive ruins dating from the Classical Greek, Hellenistic, Roman and early Byzantine periods. It is also closely associated with the beginnings of the Christian faith. In addition to being the city to which the Letters to the Ephesians were written, St. John and St. Paul both visited the city, and the Virgin Mary herself is said to have spent her last days nearby. Among the highlights of our tour of Ephesus will be the antique theatre, the famed Library of Celsus, the brothel, the vast Basilica of St. John, the Mosque of Isabey, the Temple of Artemis (one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World) and a group of recently excavated early Byzantine mansions that feature incredibly well-preserved floor mosaics and frescoes. At Ephesus, the past comes to life in a pageantry of architectural and artistic marvels the like of which can be found almost nowhere else in the world. Finally we will make a short pilgrimage to the House of the Virgin Mary, which stands high on a mountainside overlooking the Aegean Sea and the Greek island of Samos.

