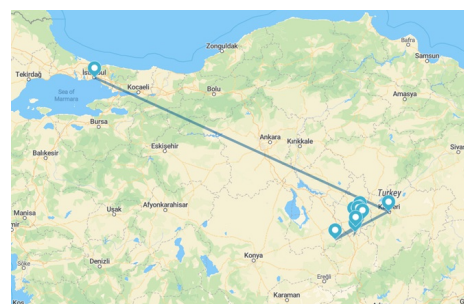




Turkey, 7 Days · Tailor-made by car

## Route around the spectacular Cappadocia and the magical Istanbul

People say that anyone who visits Istanbul will always end up going back. What's for sure is that this city, the best known of Turkey, boasts a truly special aura, an atmosphere that triggers unprecedented sensations. Perhaps it's because the former Byzantium, later known as Constantinople, is home to vestiges of when it was the capital of the great empires of bygone eras: Roman, Byzantine, Latin, Ottoman... Or maybe because two continents converge here, Europe and Asia, two such different cultures separated by the Bosphorus Strait, which is a great place for a boat trip. We've prepared a tour for you that fuses cosmopolitan and traditional life. A fascinating experience awaits you in this city, with its palaces, mosques and other historical legacies declared World Heritage Sites, and its bazaars, festivals of colours and aromas. And you'll also get to discover the incredible Cappadocia, an area that seems to have been plucked out of a fairy tale, with its ancient dwellings embedded in the rocks, dotted with pigeon windows and magical chimneys. A place where time appears to have stood still and where nothing matters more than marvelling at a one-of-a-kind landscape. Where nature has sculpted works of art that will make you question whether this is real life or just a dream.



ARCHAEOLOGICAL

URBAN

**Departure date:** Departures from June 2026 till June 2027

**From:** Dublin, Shannon, Cork

### Travel details

#### DAY 1 · CITY OF ORIGIN - CAPPADOCIA

Flight departure from the city of origin to the region of Cappadocia. Arrival at the airport and rental car pick-up. Head to Kayseri, fifteen minutes away by car. In this city, there are some interesting sights to give you an initial insight into Turkish culture and traditions. Make sure you pop into its indoor market, where you'll see the wonderful locally-woven wool rugs, and pay a visit to the town mosque. It's a magnificent thirteenth-century building with imposing arches and crowned by two domes with stunning tile designs on the ceiling. You could also head over to the stadium, which has a spectacular cutting-edge design. Try the local yoghurt drink (ayran) and a kunefe, a dessert made with cheese and shredded Kadayif dough steeped in sweet syrup. Overnight stay in the Cappadocia region.

## ● DAY 2 · CAPPADOCIA (OPTIONAL VISIT TO KAYSERI - AVANOS - ZELVE - GÖREME - UCHISAR)

Full day to visit Cappadocia, a fabulous region of lunar landscapes, which are the result of volcanic activity from millions of years ago. This area of Central Anatolia boasts a geological formation like no other in the world and is the cradle of valuable historical, cultural and natural heritage, so much so that it was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1985. Rain, wind, rivers and temperature variations have contributed to an erosion that has sculpted out fascinating scenarios. (Note: the first days will be spent exploring this area in depth. We've prepared a couple of itineraries so you can tailor them to wherever you choose to stay). A good starting point could be in Avanos, on the banks of the Red River, famous for its pottery. Just ten minutes away is the Zelve Valley, an open-air museum. There are three valleys with impressive cave dwellings. The absence of vegetation in the first valley gives off an image that evokes another planet, perhaps Mars, due to its reddish tones. That's why it's called the Red Valley. Here there are several churches, but they don't have frescoes as you can see in Göreme, because its inhabitants are said to be against the images. Zelve was inhabited until the mid-twentieth century, when the government ordered its evacuation due to the risk of the caves collapsing. Onward journey to the Göreme Valley, an open-air museum with the well-known rock churches decorated with frescoes. It's located just twelve minutes away, in the National Park of the same name, the most famous in Cappadocia. This site was the settlement of Christians in the 3rd and 4th centuries, who founded several monasteries excavated in the rock as artificial caves which later, in the 11th and 12th centuries, were decorated with surprising frescoes. Some of these caves are still inhabited and have even been converted into boutique hotels. You can visit the Church of the Sandal, with hollows in the ground that resemble footprints; the Dark Church, with very well-preserved frescoes thanks to the absence of light, and the churches of the Serpent and the Apple, with all their wonderful paintings. Also the so-called Monastery of the Nuns, with remains of four churches in its interior, and the chapels of Saint Basil and Saint Barbara. However, one of its most spectacular corners is Love Valley, where the 'fairy chimneys' stand, a true marvel of nature. Ten minutes away by car is another place of interest, Uchisar, a citadel with cave dwellings but especially famous for its Kale, a structure known as Uchisar Castle, which crowns a rock outcrop shaped like two triangular peaks. Then, back to the hotel after an intense day full of emotions. Overnight stay in the Cappadocia region.

## ● DAY 3 · CAPPADOCIA (OPTIONAL VISIT TO MUSTAFAPASA - SOGANLI - DERINKUYU - KAYMAKLI - IHLARA)

Today can also be spent discovering the many attractions of Cappadocia. Head southwards to Mustafapasa, twenty-five minutes away, a stunning village with typical houses in the purest Greek style. After this stop, continue further south and fifty minutes later you'll get to the Soganli Valley, famous for its rock churches containing frescoes from the 9th to 13th centuries. Next on the route are the fabulous underground cities of Derinkuyu and Kaymakli, about forty minutes away, which at the peak of their splendour could house more than 30,000 people at a time. The city of Kaymakli has nine underground levels, of which four can be visited. Stables, bakeries, water wells and even temples can be seen inside. Fifty minutes away is Ihlara Valley, a surprising gorge fourteen kilometres long and a hundred metres deep where you'll find ancient cave churches. There are more than 60 churches here carved into the stone. Return to hotel. Overnight stay in the Cappadocia region.

## ● DAY 4 · CAPPADOCIA (KAYSERI) - ISTANBUL

In the morning, flight time allowing, you'll still have time to enjoy Cappadocia and its landscapes or have a go at the many activities available in the area, such as a hot air balloon flight or a spot of hiking. The views of this region from above are truly spectacular. Before planning your day, take into account the distance from your hotel to the airport. Arrival at the airport with enough time to drop off your rental car and flight to Istanbul. Arrival at Istanbul Airport and transfer to hotel. You can take advantage of today to get an initial insight into incredible city with a vibrant nightlife, where you can feel an atmosphere of tradition mixed with the different cultures that tourism brings. You'll find countless restaurants where you can savour typical food. Turkish cuisine is very diverse. End the day cross-legged on a rug sipping a Turkish coffee or tea with a hookah pipe inhaling herbs of multiple flavours and aromas. Overnight stay in Istanbul.

## ● DAY 5 · ISTANBUL

Day spent exploring this fabulous city. Its Old Town cherishes some extraordinary religious buildings, such as Hagia Sophia, a former Greek Orthodox basilica, later an imperial mosque, and now a museum. Hagia Sophia was a church for 916 years and a mosque for 477 years, until being converted into a museum in 1936. And don't miss the city's two wonderful mosques. Süleymaniye is the largest, with its magnificent blue domes, and stands in a complex of 70,000 square metres. It was built in the 16th century and the original mosque was destroyed by fire in the year 1660. It was rebuilt, but misfortune in the form of fire hit it again in the First World War. In 1956, it was fully rebuilt again. The Blue Mosque (aka the Sultan Ahmed Mosque), built on the site of the Great Palace of Constantinople, features six minarets the same number as at the Kaaba Mosque in Mecca. The sultan was criticised for this, so a seventh minaret was built at Kaaba to make it different. The interior of this imposing building is a partly covered with more than 20,000 handmade ceramic tiles. The Topkapi Palace retains all the splendour of the sultans' lavish lifestyle. Make sure you visit Istanbul's bazaars, especially the Grand Bazaar, where you can buy all the souvenirs you'd ever want, because there are wonderful handmade products and imitations of international labels at really low prices. Also stop by the Spice Bazaar, a kaleidoscope of colours and scents that you'll always remember. As well as spices to season delicious culinary creations, you can find teas of all flavours under the sun. Afterwards, stroll through the elegant neighbourhood of Pera, unwind with a classic Turkish bath at one of the city's hammams, or visit the churches and the legendary walls of Byzantium... For dinner, you'll find an array of options in the city centre, all with mouthwatering menus. The most typical dishes are soup, pita bread, salad and kebab. Overnight stay in Istanbul.

## ● DAY 6 · ISTANBUL (OPTIONAL FERRY TRIP ALONG THE BOSPHORUS STRAIT AND THE GOLDEN HORN)

Day at your leisure to continue exploring the city and its surroundings. Taking the ferry across the Bosphorus is an unforgettable experience. We wholeheartedly recommend crossing the waters of the 30-kilometre strait that divides the city into two parts, joining the Sea of Marmara to the Black Sea and physically separating Asia from Europe. Some of the boats have become floating restaurants, where you can enjoy a fantastic dinner. You can also sail around the Golden Horn, a historic estuary located at the entrance to the strait and where the construction is planned for a bridge that was designed by Leonardo Da Vinci way back in 1502. (Note: Boat trips not included). There are many tours available, all at very affordable prices. You usually get picked up at your hotel and there are options with or without food for just over 10 euros. On the tour, you'll get the chance to see several palaces, such as Beylerbeyi, Ciragan, Dolmabahçe and the Rumeli Hisar fortress. Two bridges span the strait: the Bosphorus, to the south, and the Fatih Sultan Mehmet, to the north. Short cruises last an hour and a half, but you can also opt for a three-hour trip out to the town of Bogaz Iskelesi and have lunch at one of its restaurants. There's also the option of night cruises, when a magical aura eclipses a lit-up Istanbul showing off her majestic culture-rich buildings. Overnight stay in Istanbul.

## ● DAY 7 · ISTANBUL - CITY OF ORIGIN

Arrival at the airport with enough time to drop off your rental car and flight back to the city of origin.

Arrival. End of the trip and our services.

Note: depending on flight times, there's a possibility to go home a day later.

## Your trip includes

### Your trip includes

- ✓ Return flight.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Cappadocia.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Cappadocia.
- ✓ Flight from Cappadocia to Istanbul.
- ✓ Transfer from the airport to the hotel in Istanbul.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Istanbul.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Istanbul.
- ✓ Transfer from the hotel in Istanbul to the airport.
- ✓ Rent-a-car.

## Your trip doesn't include

✗ Electronic Visa to enter in Turkey.

✗ Hot air balloon flight over Cappadocia.

✗ Possible toll charges.

✗ Insolvency protection.

✗ Ferry trip along the Bosphorus Strait and/or the Golden Horn.

## Destinations Visited

Nevşehir/Nevşehir Province



Avanos/Nevşehir Province



Göreme/Nevşehir Province



Uçhisar/Nevşehir Province



Mustafapaşa/Nevşehir



Derinkuyu/Nevşehir



Kaymaklı/Nevşehir Province



Ihlara/Aksaray Province



Kayseri/Kayseri Province



Istanbul



## Important remarks

- Driving through Turkey: 1. In Turkey, the roads are in a good condition and you won't come across too much traffic, so driving is pretty straightforward. 2. Pay attention in rural areas, as you might be sharing the road with horse-drawn carts and animals on the loose. 3. The minimum age to rent a car is 21. 4. The police usually control street parking and charge directly for it.

- Triple rooms in Europe are generally rooms with twin beds or a double, in which a folding bed is installed to

accommodate the third person. Due to the inconvenience this causes, we advise against using this option as far the possible.

- Check-in time at the hotel on the day of arrival depends on each establishment, but in no case will it be before 3:00 p.m., unless otherwise indicated.

- Istanbul has an excellent multimodal transport network, with buses, minibuses, metrobus, underground trains, trams, funiculars, cable cars, ferries and taxis. Most means of transport are interconnected, which is great for hopping on and off. The best idea is to buy the rechargeable Istanbulkart card for public transport, with a range of multi-trip options. It's valid for up to five people and includes interesting discounts. There are numerous recharging points and the cost per trip is very low.

- The Grand Bazaar and the Egyptian Bazaar will remain closed on religious holidays, Sundays and national holidays. Please consult.

- The proposed excursions and tours for each day are purely suggestions, as you can tailor the trip to suit your times, tastes and needs.

- A credit card is considered a guarantee, so sometimes you will need one for check-in at hotels.

- Hotels usually have cots available. Otherwise, babies will have to share a bed with an adult.

- To pick up your rental car, you'll need a credit (not debit) card in the name of the person who made the booking, who must also be the named driver of the vehicle.

- Consult the necessary documentation to enter the destinations visited and for transit in the countries where air stopovers are made.