

WORLD PILGRIMAGE

Turkey

OCTOBER 19 - 29, 2014



WORLD PILGRIMAGE to TURKEY
Cappadocia, Ephesus, Izmir, Istanbul
October 19-29, 2014

“*This Year in TURKEY*” is a refrain that will have special significance for 30 Leaders from business, community organizations, foundations and religious communities experiencing a unique spiritual journey to Turkey. Three Abrahamic faiths—Jews, Christians and Muslims, men and women, diverse races and gender— will travel together on a quest for personal enrichment and to deepen their understanding of each other.

And yes, we will see exquisite sites in the changing beautiful, historical, blend of Europe and Asia. You have been chosen to join this leadership group because of whom you are and your commitment to Atlanta’s future.

A. The goals of the pilgrimage are for the participants to:

1. Deepen their personal faith by visiting some of the most sacred sites of their religious tradition.
2. Gain an appreciation of the shared elements of the three religious traditions, as well as an understanding and respect for the differences.
3. Establish personal friendships with pilgrims from all three faith traditions, even in the midst of the complexities of the contemporary world scene.

B. Guiding Principles

The Pilgrimage to TURKEY is designed to reflect the following guiding principles of World Pilgrims.

1. A pilgrimage is a sacred journey—not a travel seminar or a tourist venture. This means *taking time* for personal and group reflection, meditation and sharing. Participants are asked to see these times as essential elements of the pilgrimage.
2. The journey will have a formal and very intentional structure. The purpose of this design is to ensure that all the participants achieve the goals of the pilgrimage. Each participant will be asked to make a commitment to follow the structure so that the shared goals of the journey can be obtained. This means exercising *discipline* and a willingness to place the interest of the group above that of the individual.
3. The focus is on understanding and accepting the other pilgrims and their traditions. This means *discussing* rather than debating; respecting rather than judging; empathizing rather than criticizing. The ultimate goal is to understand the other, not to change the other.
4. As pilgrims traveling on a common sacred journey, the participants are expected to *share* their personal experiences and personal journeys with one another, trusting the others will respect and appreciate their life stories.
5. The participants are expected to make a commitment to *continue* their common experience after returning home

C. Program Design

1. **Pre-departure preparation:** Participants will be expected to participate in pre-departure sessions that include the following elements:

- a) Consideration of what it means to travel on an interfaith pilgrimage
 - b) An overview of the importance of Turkey and surrounding areas for each of the three faith traditions
 - c) Travel logistics and administration
2. **Daily itinerary:** The group will be together in TURKEY for eleven days. Group programs will be scheduled each day. Each day's program will include visits to sites that have been requested by one or more of the group leaders for their religious significance. When visits are made to a religious site, a member of that faith will interpret its significance. The overall itinerary will be designed so that relatively equal attention will be afforded each of the three religious traditions.
3. **Daily meditation:** Time will be set aside each day for group and personal meditation. The leadership for this time will rotate among the three religious faiths.
4. **Worship Services:** Each of the three religious leaders will identify a time and place for the entire group to participate (and/or observe) a formal worship service.
5. **Making Friends:** The concept of building friendships across faith traditions is central to the pilgrimage and cannot be left to chance. Therefore, there will be a formal structure to achieve this goal. This will include rotating seating assignments on the bus and for meals as well as roommate assignments. It may seem to be an artificial way to get people together, but it works!

DAILY ITINERARY

- SUNDAY, October 19, DAY 1. ATLANTA: Group assembles at the Atlanta Hartsfield Airport for an overnight flight to Frankfurt Germany and on to Istanbul, Turkey.
- MONDAY, October 20, DAY 2. ISTANBUL: Upon our arrival to the Istanbul Airport, we have a change of plane for our flight to Kayseri. We are met at the airport, assisted with luggage and taken by private, deluxe motor coach to our first class hotel for dinner and overnight in Cappadocia /Avonos.
- TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21, DAY 3. CAPPADOCIA /AVANOS: After our breakfast, we have a full day of sightseeing in this incredible city, famous for its "moon-like" landscape and underground cities. Lunch at a local restaurant. We have a visit to Goreme Valley, an open air museum with its churches hewn out of rocks and their colorful frescoes, the natural citadel of Uchisar, and Kaymakh, the eight story underground city. Dinner and overnight, Cappadocia/Avanos.
- WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22, DAY 4, KONYA: Breakfast at the hotel. Upon our arrival in Konya, we visit the Mevlanna's Mausoleum, founder of the Whirling Dervishes and the Karatay Quran School with its colorful tiles. Dinner with Turkish families. Overnight Konya.
- THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, DAY 5, KONYA/ IZMIR: Breakfast at the hotel. Board our bus for the ride to Izmir. We travel on from Konya through mountain views, lake country. stopping a picturesque place for walking around and having lunch. We arrive mid afternoon in the coastal city of Izmir. Dinner and overnight Izmir.
- FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24 DAY 6. IZMIR /EPHESUS: Early breakfast at the hotel.

After a short ride to Ephesus, we have a guided walking tour of the best preserved city ruins in Asia Minor, ending in the 20,000 seat Coliseum with a Christian reflection. Just outside the ruins is Seljuk, a city with a 1200-year-old mosque, where we will experience Muslim's Jumah. A late lunch will follow in an outdoor garden. After our ride back to Izmir, we observe the Jewish Shabbat dinner and service. Overnight Ismir.

- **SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25, DAY 7. ISMIR / ISTANBUL:** Breakfast at our hotel. Our coach takes us to the airport for an 8 am short flight to Istanbul. We are met at the airport and taken to Morning Shabbat services at Neve Shalom Synagogue. Enjoy the world famous Spice Market before meeting with the Journalist and Writer's Foundation at the Interfaith Dialogue Center, nearby. Check into our hotel. Dinner and overnight Istanbul.
- **SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26, DAY 8. ISTANBUL:** Breakfast at the hotel. We will visit a Christian Church. Afterwards a walking tour of the Blue Mosque, the Hagia Sofia, and the Topkapi Palace. Lunch on the grounds of the Topkapi Palace, with its panoramic view of the water. See the Blue Mosque in the twilight before returning to our hotel for dinner and overnight.
- **MONDAY, OCTOBER 27, DAY 9. ISTANBUL:** Breakfast at the hotel. We have a meeting with the chief Rabbi of Turkey, Rabbi Isak Haleva, a passionate Interfaith leader. Afternoon exploring the ancient Grand Bazar, Leave for the pier for a sightseeing boat ride between the two continents of Europe and Asia on the Bosphorus. Dinner and overnight, Istanbul
- **TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, DAY 10. ISTANBUL:** Breakfast at the hotel. A visit to the underground cistern of Istanbul. Visit to the Suleyman Mosque built by the architect Sinen for Suleyman the Magnificent and his sons. Free time until our Gala departure dinner. Overnight Istanbul.
- **WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 29, DAY 11. ISTANBUL /ATLANTA:** Breakfast at our hotel. Early transfer to the Istanbul Airport for flight back to Frankfurt and on to Atlanta.

TOUR TERMS AND CONDITIONS: AIR TRANSPORTATION: Round-trip economy class out of Atlanta via any IATA/ARC carrier is included based on applicable low season APEX fares. Current airfares used and subject to change as well as increases for fuel surcharges. Once airline tickets are issued they are non-refundable.

MEALS: Breakfast and dinner daily. Lunches not included.

SIGHTSEEING: As per attached program with fully licensed, English-speaking guides. The right is reserved to vary the sequence of the Pilgrimage or to make substitutions, if necessary. All **transfers and sightseeing by private, deluxe motor coach.**

TRANSFERS/BAGGAGE: Included is the transfer of passenger baggage allowance limited by the airlines and World Pilgrims. Delivery of the baggage by the passenger to the airline or motor coach shall be deemed a release of the tour operator from any liability whatsoever, resulting in loss, damage, theft, weather, delay in transit to any baggage, luggage, hand piece, etc., of the tour participant during any and all portions of this tour.

TIPS/TAXES: All services charges are included.

NOT INCLUDED: Items of a personal nature such as in-room service, laundry, telephone, special food or drink (after-dinner coffee, Coke)

PASSPORT: It is the responsibility of the tour participant to have a current passport that is still valid 6 months after the end of the Pilgrimage. Visas shall be secured before we leave for Turkey here in Atlanta.

TRAVEL INSURANCE IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.