

# TURKEY

Lecture by Rick Steves

## INTRODUCTION

### Turkey At-a-Glance

**Population:** 73 million

**Size:** about the same as Texas

**Biggest city:** Istanbul (13 million people)

**Religion:** 99% Muslim

**National hero:** Ataturk, founder of modern Turkish Republic in 1923; died in 1938

### Food

**Breakfast:** bread, olives, sliced tomatoes, cucumbers, cheese, yogurt, tea

**Meze:** appetizers

**Dolma:** stuffed vegetables

**Eggplant:** stuffed, pureed, fixed 1,000 ways

## ISTANBUL

**Hagia Sophia:** Justinian church-mosque-museum; huge unsupported dome, 9th century mosaics

**Blue Mosque:** classic Ottoman design

**Hippodrome:** Ancient cistern

**Topkapı Palace:** residence for sultans for four centuries; incredible gems; harem with tiles and stained glass

**Chora Church:** 14th century Byzantine mosaics

**Galata Bridge** (bridges the Golden Horn) and **Galata Tower** (good views)

**Grand Bazaar:** maze of 4,000 shops

**Spice Market:** spices plus tourist trinkets

**Taksim and Istikal Street:** modern Istanbul with smart shops on pedestrian street with restored turn-of-the-century tram  
**Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum:** former palace housing displays of carpets, calligraphy, ceramics, and other traditional arts

**Bosphorus:** connects Black Sea and Sea of Marmara; maritime highway lined with Ottoman homes.

**Golden Horn:** divides new and old Istanbul

## CENTRAL TURKEY

### Ankara

Modern Turkey capital

**Ataturk's Mausoleum/museum**

**Museum of Anatolian Civilizations:** located in restored caravanserai; exhibits on Hittites and other early civilizations

### Cappadocia

Wind, water, sand erosion created unearthly shapes; tufa easily carved into rooms/ dwellings; with arrival of Christianity, churches carved/decorated

Volcanic rock outcrops riddled with tunnels and windows

Open air museums with churches and chapels, rock dwellings in valleys, fairy chimneys



**Goreme Open Air Museum:** cluster of rock churches/chapels/monasteries with 11th and 12th century frescoes

**Valley of Fairy Chimneys:** rock cones topped by flat stones

**Kaymaklı Underground City**

**Balloon Rides** – expensive

**Guzelyurt, circumcision festival**

### Konya

Conservative and very religious city

**Mevlana Museum:** Mevlana was one of world's great mystic philosophers; museum is in former lodge of whirling dervishes; holy place for Turkish Muslims; resting place of Mevlana and others

### More Central Turkey

**Antalya:** gateway to Turkish Riviera

**Aphrodisias:** home for famous school of sculptors in Roman times; well-preserved stadium for 30,000; theatre; rebuilt temple of Aphrodite

**Pamukkale:** calcium-laden mineral water; white travertine terraces/pools; thermal pool for swimming among submerged marble columns

**Hierapolis:** Roman-built spa city; theatre for 12,000 extraordinary cemetery; colonnaded street. Adjacent to Pamukkale.

**Kusadası:** cruise port

**Ephesus:** well-preserved Roman classical city; marble ruins; theatre; library; recently restored slope houses with wonderful mosaics/frescos (Efes in Turkish)

## LEARN MORE

**Read:** *Rick Steves Istanbul*, *Rick Steves Mediterranean Cruise Ports (for Istanbul and Ephesus)*, *Lonely Planet Turkey*, *Lonely Planet Turkish Phrase Book*

**Watch:** *Rick Steves Greece, Turkey & Portugal Blu-ray/DVD*

**Listen:** *Travel with Rick Steves radio podcast archives at ricksteves.com*

**Tour:** *Best of Turkey in 13 Days*, *Best of Istanbul in 7 Days*

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