



Turkey

Magnificent Mosques & Whirling Dervishes

8 Days

A richly historical land with some of the best cuisine you will ever taste, scenery from beaches to mountains and the great city of İstanbul Turkey is a real surprise! On the beaten track as we visit Cappadocia's otherworldly 'fairy chimney' rock formations and wavy valleys. Off the beaten track we visit one of Turkey's most compelling cities, the home of the whirling dervish orders and a bastion of Seljuk culture. This itinerary has more than its fair share of world-famous ruins and monuments. A succession of historical figures and empires – including the Romans, Byzantines and Ottomans – have all left their mark on this amazing country



[Learn more about our Carbon Labels](#)

Your Recommended Educational Journey

- Day 1** **Depart UK, arrive Kayseri – Transfer to Ihlara** D
After a short flight from UK and after changing planes in Istanbul, we meet our leader in Kayseri airport and transfer to Ihlara. (2 hrs transfer). Overnight at hotel in Ihlara.
- Day 2** **Ihlara canyon – Goreme- Visit Kaymakli underground city- watch sunset on Red Valley** BLD
The narrow, steep-sided Ihlara valley, dotted with rock cut churches, was once the favorite retreat of Byzantine monks. This valley was formed by primeval earthquakes and the once rushing river is now a quiet stream. As we walk along the winding valley, with cliffs reaching up to 170m in some places, we see small garden cultures that originally would have provided for the colonies and made them self-supporting. There are many rock-cut churches in this valley with well-preserved frescos dating from the 9th century. The walk totals about 5 hours. Later we drive via the Underground City at Kaymakli to Goreme. Late afternoon we go to Kizilcukur valley to watch sunset, sometimes known as the 'red hole', Kizilcukur is probably the hottest valley in the region. Hidden in its array of fairy chimneys is the Church with Grapes where there are frescoes depicting viticulture and fruit growing. Overnight hotel in Goreme.
- Day 3** **Akvadi walk – Uchisar castle visit - afternoon visit Goreme open air Museum** BLD
We trek through the Akvadi (white valley) eroded so perfectly by time, rain and wind during centuries. On our way following a seasonal river, many strange curious rock formations and fairy chimneys surround us. If we are lucky we can also see some wild birds. (like Hoopoe) and some wild animals (like fox). In approximately 3 hours walk, we get up to Uchisar village where we have a lunch break in a restaurant.

Uchisar village is settled around a high promontory, which is called the citadel. We visit it walking to the top where we have rewarding panoramic view on all the surreal Cappadocia area. We will also visit Goreme Open air Museum, a monastic complex of rock churches and chapels covered with frescoes, is one of the best-known sites in the region. Most of the chapels date from the 10th to 13th centuries and many of them are built on an inscribed cross-plan with a central cupola supported by four columns. Overnight at hotel.
- Day 4** **Cappadocia – Konya** BLD
After breakfast, we drive to Konya, which was capital of the Seljuk empire from 12th to 13th centuries. Konya is a city famous for its works of Seljuk art and architecture, and for its tomb of 13th century poet and philosopher Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi, who founded a Sufi order known in the west as the Whirling Dervishes.

After visiting the tomb of Mevlana, we can visit Alaeddin Mosque which was built by the great Seljuk sultan Alaeddin Keykubat. Overnight in Hotel Konya.
- Day 5** **Konya – Istanbul** BLD
This morning we transfer to the local airport and fly from Konya to Istanbul where, on arrival, we are transferred into one of the great cities of the world. There is so much to see and experience in Istanbul, we spend the rest of the day and two more days exploring the history, religion and architecture of this most famous of cities. Overnight in hotel.



Days 6 - 7

Istanbul

BLD

Our first stop is Sultanahmet Mosque known as Blue Mosque because its interior gleams with a magnificent paneling of blue. After visiting we stroll around the Ancient Hippodrome, the scene of chariot races and the centre of Byzantine civil life, stood in the open space in front of the Blue Mosque.

Next we pass to St. Sophia now called Ayasofya Museum, built by Constantine the Great and reconstructed by Justinian in 6th century. We will absorb the building's majestic serenity and admire the fine Byzantine mosaics.

We will visit Topkapı Palace, amaze of buildings at the centre of the Ottoman Empire between the 15th and 19th centuries. In these opulent surroundings, the sultans and their court lived and governed. After visiting we will have time to enjoy in the city's markets and further sites. Overnight at hotel

Day 8

Tour ends Istanbul, fly home.

B

Transfer to airport and fly home.



Look what's included:

- International flights
- All accommodation, transportation and activities
- All food as described above
- Local, bi-lingual, first-aid qualified STC tour leader
- Parent and student trip launch presentation
- Pre-travel training programme
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for school staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Emergency Medical & Repatriation Insurance
- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Donations to two carbon & conservation charities
- Free Fairtrade t-shirt for every participant and teacher
- Free travel guide book to your destination

What's not included:

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations or Covid tests
- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters (ask for guidance)
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Personal effects and cancellation insurance



A word about Responsible Tourism

On our expeditions and educational journeys, we strive to connect teachers and students with the people they meet, nurture the cultures they experience and protect the beautiful environments they are lucky enough to explore.

Many companies talk the talk, few truly walk the walk. While we are far from perfect, we are leading the way in sustainability in the school travel sector. In 2018 we were the first UK travel company to become **Travelife Certified** – a verified sustainability certificate formally recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.



This is our passion, and we'd love to tell you more about it in due course. In the meantime, for more information on some of the steps we take as a company to make our operations more sustainable, please visit:

<https://www.thestc.co.uk/travel/what-do-we-do/>

Trees for Life

Physical Rating for this trip: Grade 2



Some low level physical activities included in your trip, including walking on uneven terrain, maybe a morning/afternoon trek of two to four hours. That said, no physical preparation is required to make the most of the tour. High humidity and temperatures can occur at certain times of the year.

Cultural Rating for this trip: Grade 3



Students should expect some culture shock. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty. The food will be quite different to home and English, whilst still spoken, will be less prevalent. Respecting the local culture will make it easier to fit in and get the most out of your trip. We're likely to visit remoter locations on this tour where access to western style services may be sporadic. Often on trips of this grading there are parts of the itinerary which are more remote, interspersed with sections which are more 'comfortable'.



Travel Safety & Other Pre-Travel Training

Preparing students and teachers for their upcoming adventure is an opportunity to teach important life skills and a vital part of our overall approach to safety management. Please ask for your quote for the training schedule specific to this educational journey. Topics covered will include:

Responsible Tourism workshop

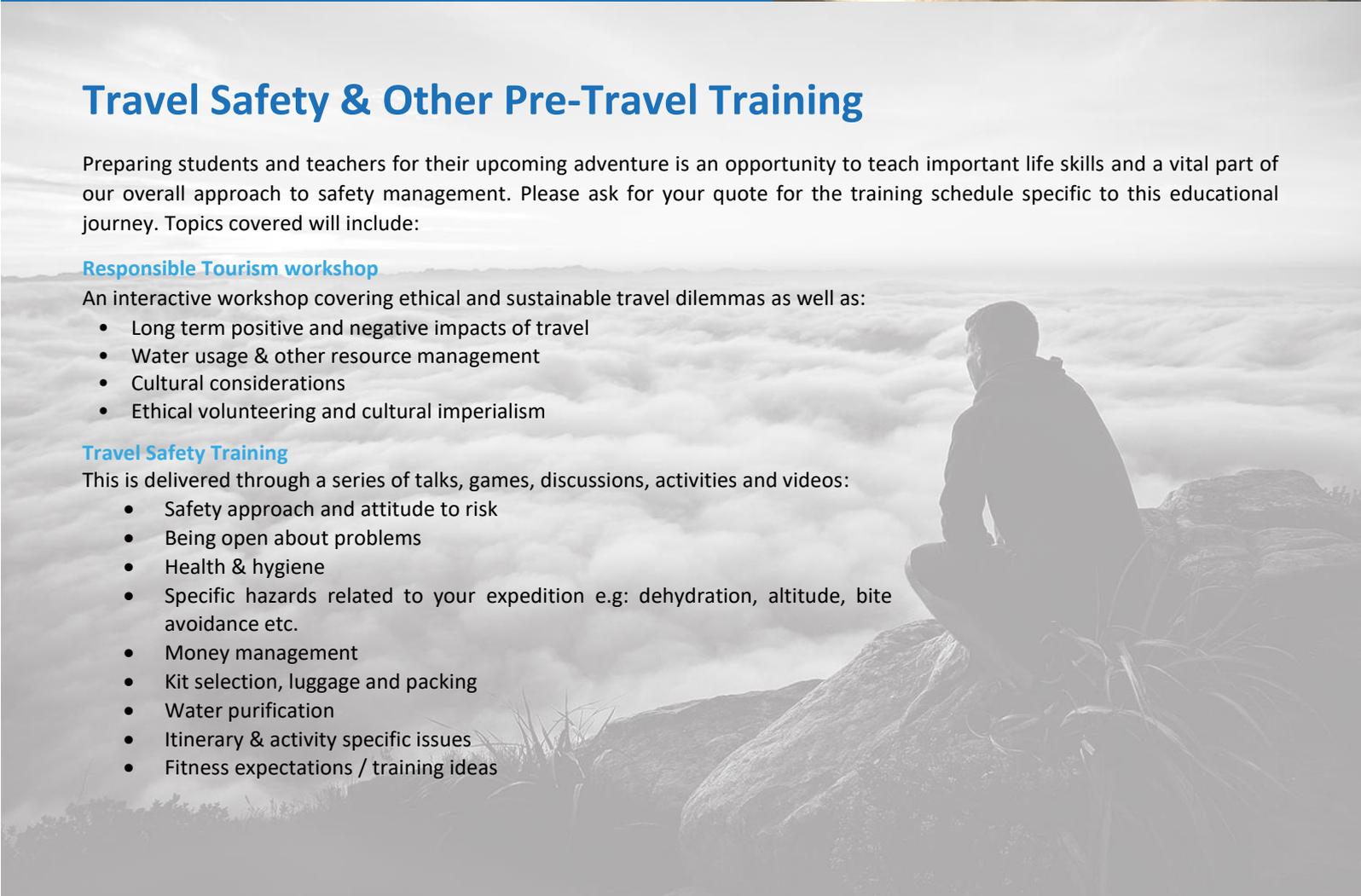
An interactive workshop covering ethical and sustainable travel dilemmas as well as:

- Long term positive and negative impacts of travel
- Water usage & other resource management
- Cultural considerations
- Ethical volunteering and cultural imperialism

Travel Safety Training

This is delivered through a series of talks, games, discussions, activities and videos:

- Safety approach and attitude to risk
- Being open about problems
- Health & hygiene
- Specific hazards related to your expedition e.g: dehydration, altitude, bite avoidance etc.
- Money management
- Kit selection, luggage and packing
- Water purification
- Itinerary & activity specific issues
- Fitness expectations / training ideas





A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your educational journey

1 Ask for your personalised quote & further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your adventure itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an adventure that's just right for you and your students. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk and threat assessments to help you with your trip approval process. Ask for posters and your Pre-Booking Information Pack too.

3 Arrange a trip launch evening

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the planned adventure with comprehensive information covering the itinerary, safety management, the build-up to the trip and lots more. There is also plenty of opportunity for questions.



The home of the modern, innovative school expedition, where a sustainable, ethical approach guarantees unique experiences and a life enhancing adventure.



Our school trips and educational tours are all about maximising the learning opportunities of travel. It's all here, the humble school tour has just come of age.



Adventures, holidays and cultural journeys for teachers looking to 'Escape the Classroom' and discover more about our amazing world, its people and places.



"I am being completely serious when I say that I won't ever run a school trip without you guys. I trust you and your team completely - and the in-country staff that you carefully cultivate and train are a cut above the rest."

Teacher feedback, King's High Warwick

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