

Drop all plans and visit Turkey for your next vacation; here's why

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So you've already browsed through those gorgeous pictures of Turkey online and have been contemplating a trip for ages now. Of course, those hot-air balloons are giving you insane travel goals, but you're also thinking safety, food and expense, given that multiple websites have promised you a cheaper vacation in Eastern Europe. But here's another promise: for a more wholesome and culturally enriching experience, there's no place better than Turkey right now. Turkey is hot, hip, and outright Instagrammable from every corner possible. So, if there's a winter vacation on the cards, stop thinking any further and just tell your partner you're in for Turkey this time. And if you're still not convinced, here are some major reasons that may help you arrive at your decision.



Credit: Getty Images

Beaches



Credit: Getty Images

Golden beaches, crystal clear waters, and sapphire blue oceans straight out of a dream are some of the features that make Turkey so attractive. Antalya, Izmir, Fethiye and Bodrum have some of the most beautiful beaches in Turkey, and that includes some secluded gems as well. A Blue Cruise ride through the Mediterranean or the Aegean Coast will be worthy of your single penny spent.

Natural wonders

Turkey's unique and extraordinary natural wonders are famously breathtaking that offer an experience unlike anything else. The Cappadocian landscapes with fairy chimneys and colourful hot-air balloons attract thousands of tourists every season. Similarly, the white-terrace pools of Pamukkale are strikingly beautiful – where you take one small dip and feel the therapeutic waters cleanse your soul. Just as impressive are the Caves of Heaven and Hell, sinkholes carved out by a river that is also a place of great mythological significance. And who can forget Chimaera, a cluster of small flames that naturally blaze on the rocky slopes of Mt Olympos. Even today, gas still seeps from the earth and bursts into flame upon contact with the air here.



Credit: Getty Images

History



Aphrodisias (the city of Aphrodite, goddess of love), temple of Apollo, the Aspendos, the Roman ruins, and Ephesus.

Culture

Turkey will surprise you every turn of topography. There are these fantastic beaches and then tall mountains, idyllic villages and ruins of ancient empires, natural wonders and huge cosmopolitan cities. There is no single location in Turkey that one can highlight as the main attraction. Therefore, the culture is varied and heterogeneous that combines the mix of Eastern Mediterranean, Central Asian, Eastern European, and Caucasian traditions. Supremely hospitable, the Turkish locals believe that the guest is god. The local customs and traditions keep changing with the change in topography in Turkey and every time, it is a pleasant surprise.



Turkish baths



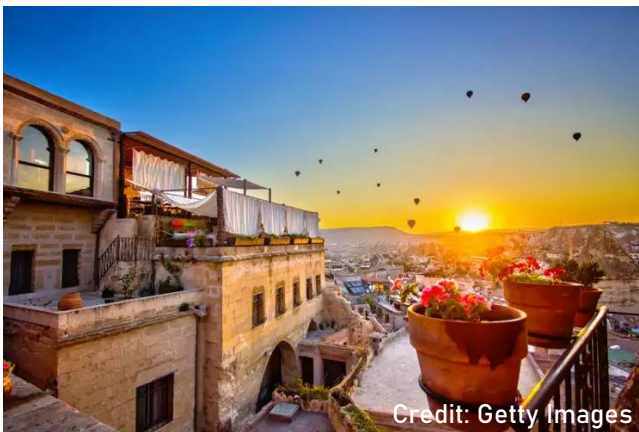
The Turkish Hamam, or bath, is an unmatched experience. A sort of public bathing associated with ancient Islamic and Ottoman culture, the historical hamams in Turkey will give you the ultimate authentic Turkish bath experience. A traditional hamam will entrust you with an attendant who'll scrub, wash and message you, which is a spectacular way to unwind. Some of the most famous baths/hamams like Kılıç Ali Paşa, Ayasofya Hürrem Sultan Hamam will give you an experience of a lifetime.

Food

There is no need to explain much about Turkish food! The Turkish Delight is a sweet sensation we can never have enough of. Turkish cuisine has the added privilege of being at the crossroads of the Near East and Mediterranean, resulting in a long and complex history of Turkish migration from the steppes of Central Asia where they mingled with the Chinese and to Europe where their influence was felt all the way to Vienna. One can find variety of food in Turkey from vegetarian to sea food. Residents of the coastal cities of Turkey are experts in preparing fish. Winter is the premium season for eating fish. Hamsi, bonito, mussel and some fish mezes are the main fish dishes for Turkey. Kebab is also another category of food, which, like the borek, is typically Turkish dating back to the time when nomadic Turks learned to grill and roast meat over campfires. Some of the most appetizing dishes are Manti, Kofte, Menemen, Kuzu Tandir, Pide and Su Boregi and Baklava to satisfy your sweet tooth.



Expense



Turkey is a pocket-friendly destination that provides a range of choice for every tourist. Street food is delectable and not pricey at all, and even some of the highly rated restaurants are not too expensive. Communication is also reasonably priced but once must look out for scamming taxis, as in every country in the world. Having more than a thousand 5-star hotels and uncountable budget hotels and BnBs, one can easily find a destination to suit themselves. While Istanbul, Cappadocia and Canakkale emerges as cultural destinations, Antalya, Bodrum, Kusadası and İzmir offers

tourists leisure tourism in addition to culture. So, a wide-spread vacation is possible if planned wisely.

Nightlife

If you are really looking for zesty nightlife vibe in Turkey, take a cruise ride and enjoy the Bosphorus. The beautiful lightings will enrich you with a magical experience and you can enjoy the traditional Turkish folk dance and music. The night time cruise gives some sensational views of Şehir Hatları Bosphorus, Ortaköy Mosque and Blue Bosphorus. For a nighttime shopping experience, discover Istiklal street, Nisantasi and Kadikoy in Istanbul. You could also head to Izmir, Alacati and Kusadası for enjoying different dining and entertainment activities.



Shopping



Since the ancient and medieval times, Istanbul has long been an important trading hub, as at the convergence of different rich cultures, Turkey witnessed a steady growth of world-renowned handicraft tradition, mostly due to the Ottoman patronage, Islamic aesthetics and an eye for luxurious handicraft items that drew on influences from across the globe. The two most famous and must-visit bazaars of Istanbul are the Grand Bazaar and the Spice Bazaar. If you are looking to buy some exquisite spices, head to Spice Bazaar, which is open 7 days. You can even get some essential oils, perfumes and

ittars of the finest order. Bronze curios glint in the sun, torpedo-sized dates are stacked to the rafters, and the decadent scent of freshly ground Mehmet Efendi coffee merges with the aroma of fresh fish, with surprisingly non-toxic consequences. Don't forget to pack some Turkish Delights while you're at it.

Safety

Now, this is the issue you've been dabbling with since Turkey did face some terrorist attacks in 2015 and 2016. But worry not. For the last three years, the situation is very stable, and Turkey has seen a gigantic spike in the number of tourists visiting every season! Turkey received more than 46 million international visitors in 2018. This made Turkey the sixth country all over the world in terms of the international arrivals. Turkey hosted 1.5 lakh Indian visitors in 2018 with a seventy percent increase in comparison to 2017.



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