

Cappadocia & the St Paul Trail, Turkey

Explore the fairytale valleys of Cappadocia and walk the most scenic sections of the St Paul Trail leading to mountain passes, pretty villages and Roman ruins.



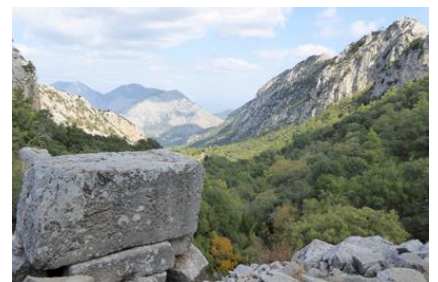
Group departures

See overleaf for departure dates

Holiday overview

Style	Walking
Accommodation	Hotels, Pension
Grade	Moderate
Duration	8 days from London to London
Trekking / Walking days	Walks on: 6 days
Min/Max group size	4 / 12. Guaranteed to run for 4
Trip Leader	Local Leader Turkey
Land only	Joining in Kayseri, Turkey Departing from Anatalya, Turkey
Max altitude	2,012m/6,601ft, Davraz Pass, Day 6

Private Departures & Tailor Made itineraries available



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Departures

Group departures

2025 Dates:

Sat 10 May - Sat 17 May

Sat 13 Sep - Sat 20 Sep

Will the trip run?

This trip is guaranteed to run for 4 people and for a maximum of 12. In the rare event that we cancel a holiday, we will refund you in full and give you at least 6 weeks warning. Many trips do fill up quickly - we advise you to book early if you want to secure a place(s) on the dates of your choice.

Group prices and optional supplements

Please contact us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or visit our website for our land only and flight inclusive prices and single supplement options.

No Surcharge Guarantee

The flight inclusive or land only price will be confirmed to you at the time you make your booking. There will be no surcharges after your booking has been confirmed.

Insurance

We offer a travel insurance scheme - please contact us for details.

Private Departures

We can also offer this trip as a private holiday. A Private Departure follows exactly the same itinerary as the group departure but at dates to suit you (subject to availability) - please contact us with your preferred dates.

Tailor Made service

We pride ourselves on the level of quality and choice we provide for our clients who want a fully tailor made holiday. A holiday will be created especially for you by one of our well-travelled experts. They will be able to advise on the accommodation best suited to your needs, the sights you should visit (and those to avoid!) and the best walks and activities matched to your ability. In short, we will work together with you to create your perfect holiday. If you would like to explore the idea of a Tailor Made holiday with Mountain Kingdoms then please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 or see the Tailor Made pages of our website for further inspiration.

Your trip highlights

- Enjoy a two-centred holiday with a rich diversity of landscapes, history and culture
- Walk through valleys lined with fairytale ‘chimney’s and fantastical rock formations in Cappadocia
- Discover the hidden rock-hewn churches and cliff dwellings of the beautiful Ihlara Valley
- Explore the incredible underground city of Kaymakli
- Cross the Davraz Pass and enjoy rewarding walks along the St Paul’s Trail near scenic Lake Eğirdir
- Follow in the footsteps of the Romans to the ancient city of Adada

At a glance itinerary

Day 1	Fly to Kayseri in Cappadocia. Group transfer to hotel at Mustafapasa (Sinassos). Local walk.
Day 2	Circular walk to Gologli Hill and church ruins.
Day 3	Drive to the Ihlara Valley via the underground city of Kaymakli. Walk along the Melendiz River.
Day 4	Drive to Eğirdir. Visit the <u>Eşrefoğlu Camii</u> Mosque en route.
Day 5	Village walk on the St Paul Trail.
Day 6	Walk from Oak Forest Nature Park to Kulova across the Davraz Pass.
Days 7-8	Walk to the ancient Roman city of Adada. Drive to Antalya. Fly to London.

Trip summary

This holiday combines two of Turkey’s most captivating yet contrasting regions: the fairytale, multi-coloured rock landscapes of Cappadocia and the beautiful Mediterranean region around Lake Eğirdir with its stunning mountain backdrop and enticing walking trails. From start to finish the scenery is delightful, and the walking wonderfully varied and rewarding.

You begin in Cappadocia, in central Anatolia, where the extraordinary landscape of peculiar rock pinnacles, canyons, gorges and valleys was formed by the processes of volcanic activity and natural erosion over millions of years. More recently, in the Roman and Byzantine times, early Christians took refuge here by carving hidden dwellings and places of worship into the rock and cliffs as well as below ground, resulting in an even more intriguing landscape.

Exploring on foot, you will discover countless troglodytes’ dwellings, hidden cities and monasteries as you follow trails through valleys and over peaks. You will often see what appear to be inconspicuous caves and pigeon nests in the rocks above, but upon entering you’ll find exquisite churches still with their original high columns, domed ceilings, and colourful frescoes. Whilst in Kaymakli, an entire multi-layered city of rooms and tunnels is concealed beneath the surface. As well as these remarkable places, there are of course the striking conical rock formations and fairy ‘chimneys’ which scatter the countryside in various shapes and sizes, some standing up to 30 metres tall, and topped with their strange rock ‘hats’. There really is nowhere quite like it.

Leaving Cappadocia you travel west to the picturesque lakeside town of Eğirdir, your base for several days of excellent walks along some of the most picturesque sections of the St Paul Trail - Turkey’s most recently established long-distance path and companion to the more well-known Lycian Way on the country’s Mediterranean south coast. The 500km long St Paul Trail begins in Perge on the coast, crosses the Taurus Mountains and ends in Yalvac, near Lake Eğirdir; loosely tracing the path of St Paul on his first evangelising journey through Asia Minor. Not only does the trail take you into the wilder rural interior of Turkey but also periods of Turkey’s history with Roman roads, ancient ruins, and traditional villages. Your high point will be the crossing of the Davraz Pass, a slight detour off the St Paul Trail, but well worth making for the fabulous scenery and views.

Accommodation in Cappadocia and Eđirdir is in a small family-run hotel and an attractive pension, giving you a taste of the great hospitality of the local people. And your holiday ends in the lively resort of Antalya on the 'Turquoise Coast' where you have the option to extend if you're just not ready to go home!

You also have the option of joining our Western Taurus & the Lycian Way walking holiday if you would like to explore Turkey's other celebrated, long-distance walking trail.

Your guide



Your trip will be led by a local English-speaking guide with guiding qualifications and valuable experience. They will share with you their passion and knowledge to ensure you have a memorable holiday in Turkey. Here are two of our guides:

Alp Sancar (pictured)

Alp is an English-speaking, licensed tour guide. He is passionate about hiking as well as being a cyclist and mountaineer. He has been leading tours in Turkey for 10 years and is an extremely kind and cheerful guide.

Special notes

Walking times

Your walks on this holiday will involve time to explore the many cultural sights that you will encounter en route. The walking times given for each day may therefore vary from that stated and should be used as a guideline only.

Your trip itinerary

Day 1: Fly London to Kayseri

Today you fly to Kayseri in Central Anatolia, only about an hour's drive from the heart of Cappadocia. On arrival at Kayseri Airport there will be a group transfer to your hotel in the picturesque village of Mustafapasa, previously called Sinasos - the 'city of the sun'. The village was traditionally populated by the Greek Orthodox community whose wealth was mainly based on the caviar trade. You will see several examples of typical Greek stone-carved architecture revealing the earlier prosperity of the village.

Time permitting there will be a short orientation walk around Mustafapasa.

Overnight: Rose Mansions Sinasos, Mustafapasa (Meals: D)

Day 2: Circular walk to Golgoli Hill - 18 km, 6-7 hours. Ascent/descent 300m. Visit Göreme Open-Air Museum (optional).

It's an easy start this morning as you only have to step outside your hotel to begin your walk. Today you will be following a trail that embodies classic Cappadocian scenery of weirdly eroded, ochre-coloured, rock formations into which are hewn churches, dwellings and pigeon houses. The Tolkien-like landscape of caves, 'fairy chimneys' and fantastical conical peaks is caused by the weathering of tufa (porous volcanic rock) over millennia. These naturally hollowed-out formations have proved the perfect site for creating hidden places of worship and homes that were undetectable to hostile outside forces - the ideal protection for the early Christians. As you progress through the valley you will be able to enter some of these incredible spaces and marvel at the ingenuity of the people who created them.



Leaving Sinasos you first arrive at the church of St Nicholas then follow the footpath that goes through the Damsa Valley. In the valley you will see many examples of 'fairy chimneys' and have the chance to walk through some primitive dwellings carved inside the rock; some with chapels that bear the remnants of their original frescoes and paintings.

Reaching the end of the valley you make the gradual climb to a wide ridge, the site of the village fields, and you can marvel at the variety of fruit trees and vines growing on the ground in the traditional way. In the distance are the 'fairy chimneys' of a remote ancient settlement. These cave dwellings, at the foot of Golgoli, Hill were used both for shelter and as churches and date from the 3rd to 5th centuries. They were used up until the early 20th century. After time to explore the caves and enjoy the views, you will descend to eat lunch at a trout restaurant close to the dam. It is then a gentle walk back through lush, green countryside to reach Mustafapasa.

Later, there is the opportunity to visit the Göreme Open-Air Museum on a guided tour (payable locally). This UNESCO World Heritage Site is only a short drive from your hotel and is one of the most visited sites in Cappadocia. A Byzantine monastic settlement and then a pilgrimage site, it encompasses numerous rock-cut churches, chapels and monasteries, many adorned with their original, hand-painted frescoes. The Karanlık Kilise (Dark Church) is considered to be one of the museum's most beautiful with restored frescoes covering the entire surface of the sanctuary. There is a separate fee to enter this part of the complex.

Overnight: Rose Mansions Sinasos, Mustafapasa (Meals: BLD)

Day 3: Drive to visit Kaymakli underground city. Continue to the Ihlara Valley. Walk following the Melendiz River Valley - 14km, 5-6 hours. Descent 300m.

Your destination today is the Ihlara Valley but there will be a couple of brief stops en route to photograph the amazing landscapes.

Your first visit is to the underground city of Kaymakli. This incredible hidden city has ten levels, dug to a depth of 45m from the soft rock below the surface. You will find stables, chapels, warehouses and living spaces linked by tunnels. The city was believed to date back as far as the 8th century BC but was greatly expanded by Christians during the Byzantine era as protection against Muslim-Arab raids.

Having explored Kaymakli, you continue on to the Ihlara Valley. This beautiful river canyon is one of the scenic jewels of Cappadocia. Carved by the Melendiz River, the canyon walls rise to over 100m high, twisting and turning for over 14km to provide a natural walking trail along the canyon floor. You enter the canyon near the top and descend to the village of Belisirma where you stop for lunch at a riverside restaurant before you continue your walk to the end of the canyon at Selime.

Flanked by olive trees, pistachio trees and poplars, and attracting a wealth of birds and wildlife, the banks of the Melendiz River offer a wonderfully picturesque and shady walking trail. As you progress, first along the eastern bank and then crossing to the opposite side, the river broadens and the valley widens out with the steep canyon walls becoming immense rock cones and weirdly eroded 'fairy chimneys' - you are definitely back in Cappadocia now!



Along with its natural beauty there is much cultural interest as the canyon provided a sanctuary for Christians expelled from Syria, Palestine and Mesopotamia from the 7th century. Subsequently it hides more than 100 churches, caves, dovecots, granaries and houses in its sheer walls. At the end of the valley sits the Selime Monastery, hidden among a row of volcanic rock cones it resembles a fairy-tale castle. The monastery was hewn out of the rock face by monks in the 13th century and comprises numerous rooms and passageways. You should be able to visit if there's time after your walk, before you return to your accommodation.

Overnight: Rose Mansions Sinasos, Mustafapasa (Meals: BLD)

Day 4: Transfer to Lake Eğirdir with cultural stop en route - 5½-6 hours driving.

Today you leave Cappadocia behind and make the long but scenic drive west to Eğirdir. To break the journey there will be a lunch stop and cultural visit to the Eşrefoğlu Camii Mosque in Beyşehir. This 13th century mosque is the finest example of the Seljuk Turkish 'flat-wooden-ceiling and wooden column style' of mosque in Anatolia. In fact, the roof is supported by 42 columns carved from cedar wood. In the centre of the mosque is a snow pit which used to be filled with snow from the mountains during the hot summer months to cool the building. The mosque is still used for services.

Your journey continues across the huge, fertile plateau until you drive into the hills and arrive at your accommodation for the next three nights; a charming, cosy pension situated by the shores of beautiful Lake Eğirdir. Framed by the peaks of the Taurus Mountains, the lake is the fourth largest inland lake in Turkey and is fed not by rivers but by water running off the surrounding land. The waters vary in colour according to the weather conditions, changing from light green, through turquoise blue to a stormy grey.

Overnight: Fulya Pension or Similar, Eğirdir (Meals: BLD)

Day 5: Walk on the St Paul Trail from the village of Bedre to Barla - 13km, 6-7 hours. Ascent 661m/descent 623m.

A 15 minute drive takes you to the tiny village of Bedre, dominated by the huge rocks of Meryemlash Kayalikari, and the start of this delightful walk. You ascend from the village up a wide, rocky hillside, passing small juniper bushes and spikey oaks. Great views start to appear on all sides as you reach the first pass, including the lake far below. After the final pass, you start descending. This part of the walk is magical, as you descend through meadows, full of flowers in the spring, and dotted with large, old juniper trees. After two springs, huge oak and willow trees appear. You may well meet shepherds here, grazing their flocks of goats and sheep. After a short ascent on an ancient track the stunning village of Bagoren appears ahead. This village appears to have changed little in hundreds of years. After exploring the village, you climb to join a dirt track to pass a quarry and reach the upper meadows of Barla. Here you can again follow the ancient trail, or walk through the meadows that slope gently downhill. The more prosperous village of Barla is visible ahead, and you descend a steep rocky slope and climb the other side to join your vehicle for the return journey to Eğirdir.

Overnight: Fulya Pension or Similar, Eğirdir (Meals: BLD)

Day 6: Drive to Kasnak Oak Forest National Park - 1 hour. Walk to Kulova across the Davraz Pass, 2,012m/6,601m - 15km, 7 hours. Return to Eğirdir. Ascent 450m/Descent 450m.

Today is the most challenging day of your holiday but also one of the real highlights as you walk in the Taurus Mountains and cross the Davraz Pass at 2,012m.

You begin the day by driving to the Oak Forest National Park, about an hour's drive southeast of Eğırdir. This large nature conservation area is rich in flora and fauna and takes its name from a variety of oak - the Kasnak or Pulley oak - which is widely dispersed in the park. The park is also home to many birds and mammals including eagles, falcons, wild boar and even wolves and jackals - although it is highly unlikely you will see these on the trail!

Your walk begins at about 1,600m, in the vast oak forest high above the village of Yukari Gokdere. You initially walk on a small track through the ancient trees, occasionally crossing small meadows. You leave the forest behind at around 1,900m and from then on the landscape is mountainous, dominated by the peaks of the Taurus. Your objective is the Davraz Pass, not too far ahead now, which will reward your efforts with superb, far reaching views. You may well pass small nomadic settlements here - the local villagers spend the months of May to September in these high pastures, grazing their flocks and making cheese and yoghurt. Having taken your photos and admired the vistas, you descend on a small track initially through bare, rocky hills and passing an ancient and lonely nomads' graveyard, to the Kulova Plateau where your transport awaits to take you back to Eğırdir.

Overnight: Fulya Pension or Similar, Eğırdir (Meals: BLD)

Day 7: Transfer to the town of Sütçüler - 1 hour. Walk to the Roman city of Adada and explore the ruins - 14km, 5-6 hours. Drive to Antalya. Ascent 450m/descent 480m.

The drive from Eğırdir this morning takes about an hour and leads you deeper and deeper into a dramatic landscape of mountains and gorges. Just before the small town of Sütçüler you set off on foot along a forest trail for a couple of kilometres, before joining an ancient trail to descend to a small village. Here you start uphill, to reach the lush countryside of the foothills of the Karaburun Mountains. The trail is one of scenic delights that takes you over passes, across flower-filled meadows, and through broad, verdant valleys.



A small, remote settlement is reached at the Zengi Plateau, and here you will drive a mile or two to reach the ancient city of Adada. It was founded in the second century BC before it was eventually abandoned somewhere between the 9th and 13th centuries. The city ruins weren't discovered until the middle of the 19th century but little was done to excavate or study them and its history remains relatively obscure. It is very likely that St Paul would have passed through the city on his journey as it would have been a major centre between the important Roman cities of Perge and Antioch.

There will be time to explore the atmospheric Roman ruins that include three temples, a forum, theatre and a basilica: emerging from the vegetation they remain in their evocative, tumble-down state.

The highpoint of the walk now starts, as you descend a dramatic canyon walking on the large, original paving stones of the Roman road. It is astonishing how much of this remains intact, a fitting legacy to the thoroughness of Roman building techniques. The ancient road eventually peters out on the valley floor and you cross meadows to meet your transport to take you to the coastal city of Antalya for the final night of your holiday.

Overnight: Kosa Boutique Hotel or Similar, Antalya (Meals: BL)

Day 8: Group transfer to Antalya Airport. Fly to London.

After breakfast this morning there will be a group transfer to Antalya Airport for your flight back to London.

(Meals: B)

Our grading system

Cappadocia & the St Paul Trail is graded as a Moderate walking holiday, as described below.

Moderate

Holidays in this grade typically involve 5 to 10 days of walking or trekking. They will often venture into more remote country and can cross mountain passes. Altitudes though are still relatively low, going no higher than around 4,300m/14,000ft. Accommodation can include simple hotels, tea houses, lodges and camping.

What the price includes

Mountain Kingdoms aims to offer the best value for money. We do not charge extra for meal packages or apply local charges and try to ensure that all the key elements of your holiday are included.

What's included:

- ✓ An English-speaking local guide
- ✓ Economy class return air fares from the UK (flight inclusive option)
- ✓ Single, timed group transfer on arrival and departure
- ✓ 7 nights hotel and pension accommodation on a twin share basis
- ✓ 7 Breakfasts, 6 Lunches, 6 Dinners
- ✓ Group airport transfers on arrival and departure
- ✓ All road transport described in the itinerary
- ✓ All excursions and applicable entry fees as described in the itinerary
- ✓ Luggage transfers
- ✓ Carbon offsetting with the Ecoan Tree Planting Project (for clients taking our flight inclusive option)
- ✓ A free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle

Airport transfers

The cost of a transfer to/from the airport is included in the price of your holiday. This is a single group transfer which is arranged to coincide with the timings of the group flights. If you book your own flights which arrive/depart at different times to this, or we book flights at your request that have different timings, we will be happy to provide a quote for a separate transfer. Please contact us should you require any further information.

What's not included:

- ✗ Travel insurance
- ✗ Visa fees
- ✗ Tips
- ✗ Entrance to Göreme Open-Air Museum (Day 2)

Water-to-Go Reusable Bottle Campaign

We have joined the campaign to help cut down on the use of plastics and, in particular, single-use water bottles. To do this we have teamed up with the revolutionary company, Water-to-Go who have developed a multi-use drinking bottle with a reusable filter that eliminates over 99.9% of all microbiological contaminants. This makes water from virtually any source safe to drink and significantly reduces the need for travellers to buy bottles of water wherever they are in the world.

Our clients who are not given a free Mountain Kingdoms kit bag for their holiday (these are required for certain treks), will instead receive a free Mountain Kingdoms Water-to-Go bottle. These unique Water-to-Go bottles can also be purchased from us at a discounted rate.

For further information about our campaign visit [For further information about our campaign visit <https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign>](https://www.mountainkingdoms.com/water-to-go-reusable-bottle-campaign).

Your accommodation

We will endeavour to secure the hotels named in the itinerary but if our first choice of hotel is not available we will book a suitable alternative of a similar standard.



Rose Mansions Sinasos, Mustafapasa

Set in one of the oldest villages in the region, Rose Mansions comprises two old, Greek mansion houses that were renovated in 2002. Retaining their traditional Ottoman style and authentic architectural features, the mansions are a peaceful haven with a beautiful courtyard and rose garden. The hotel has its own restaurant and the individually styled rooms offer an en suite bath or shower, plus minibar.



Fulya Pension or Similar, Eğirdir

This delightful pension is situated in the town of Eğirdir, by the shores of the lake and offers a winning blend of homely comfort and good amenities. A generous buffet breakfast is served daily on the terrace overlooking the lake, and stylish bedrooms offer tea/coffee making facilities, air-conditioning, free Wi-Fi and lovely views.



Kosa Boutique Hotel or Similar, Antalya

The Kosa Boutique Hotel is situated in the heart of the historical old city of Antalya called Kaleiçi. The stylish and well-equipped rooms have air-conditioning, mini-bars, tea/coffee making facilities and free Wi-Fi. The hotel has a pool, bar, restaurants and pretty garden.

Meal arrangements

7 Breakfasts, 6 Lunches and 6 Dinners are included. Lunches on days 2, 5, 6, and 7 will be provided as picnic boxes whilst out walking. On days 3 and 4 lunch will be at a local restaurant. Evening meals will be taken in your hotel.

Flight arrangements

Flight inclusive from price

Our 'Flight inclusive from' price is based on the best fare available at the time of printing. As airfares change on a constant basis, this should be used only as a guide price. Rest assured that, at the time of booking, we will endeavour to get the best possible price for the flights you need. Remember, the earlier you book the greater your chances of securing the best fare.

Flight inclusive packages booked through Mountain Kingdoms are protected through our ATOL bonding scheme.

Flight upgrades and regional Airports

Please call us on +44 (0)1453 844400 for flight options from regional UK airports, Business Class upgrades, alternative airlines and stopovers. Please also check our website for the most up to date flight inclusive 'from' prices.

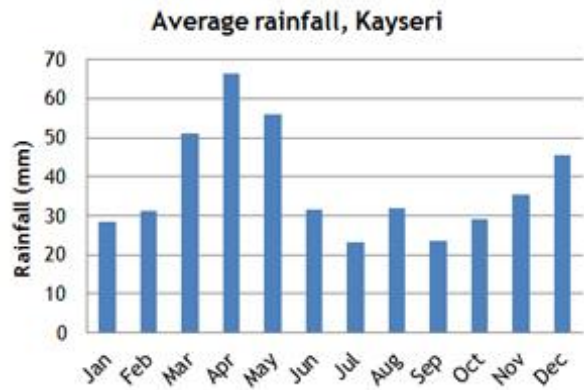
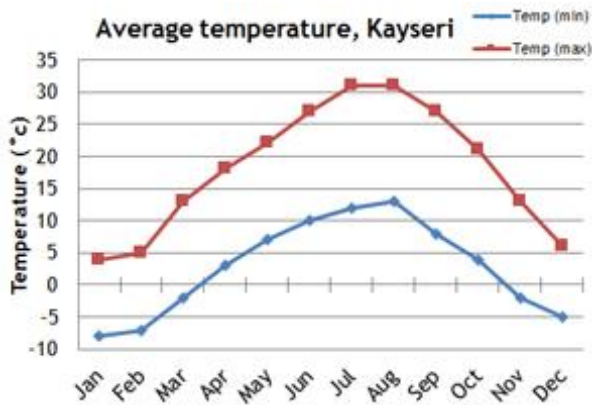
Further information

When we receive your booking, we send you a full Trip Dossier which contains details of any visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. If you do have queries at this initial stage do call us on 01453 844400 and we will be pleased to offer advice.

The nature of adventure travel

Every effort will be made to keep to this itinerary but we cannot guarantee that things may not change, either before you travel or while you are away. By its very nature, adventure travel involves an element of the unexpected, particularly in more remote areas. A variety of factors such as adverse weather conditions, changes to local schedules and difficulties with transportation can all contribute to the need to make changes to the itinerary, often at the very last minute. Our Operations Manager and your Trip Leader will make every effort to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary and minimise the impact of any changes, but an easy-going and flexible nature is a real asset! Please note that all timings and distances given are approximate.

Climate information



Extensions

Extending your holiday

If you would like additional inspiration on how or where to extend your holiday please call us on 01453 844400. Alternatively, you can download a range of extension information sheets on our website, at www.mountainkingdoms.com.



There are many ways you can extend your holiday with Mountain Kingdoms: you could book extra hotel nights at the start or end of your holiday, arrange a personal sightseeing tour or enjoy some other exciting activities. In fact, whatever's available we can help make it happen. We're happy to suggest ideas, provide quotes and make all the arrangements. We can also assist with flight and hotel upgrades.



You can also combine this trip with our Western Taurus & Lycian Way walking holiday. Contact us for further information.

Why book this holiday with Mountain Kingdoms?

- The itinerary has been designed to introduce you to the best of Cappadocia and the St Paul Trail.
- Your trip will be led by a local English-speaking guide with excellent knowledge and experience of the varied walks and sightseeing you will undertake.
- Dates have been carefully chosen to offer comfortable walking conditions.
- Accommodation has been chosen for location, comfort and character.
- All meals where stated are included. Food provided gives you a taste of the local Turkish cuisine.
- You only need to carry a day sack. This trip is supported by a vehicle which takes your main baggage daily. All transfers are by private vehicles and included in the price.
- A fixed group transfer to/from airport the airport is included at the start and end of the trip.
- We have arranged the departure dates of this holiday so that you can easily combine it with our other walking holiday along the Lycian Way. If you are interested in this option, just contact our friendly travel team.
- We have a maximum group size of 12 so that you can enjoy a genuine small group experience.
- As part of our commitment to 'Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency', we will be carbon-offsetting all international flights booked through us by donating funds to the Ecoan Tree Planting Project in Peru.
- If you wish to fly with a specific airline, from a regional UK airport or on alternative dates to the main group we would be happy to arrange this for you. Please contact our Flights Manager, April, for flight options, quotes and further information.

If we've tempted you to take your next holiday with us, we advise you to check availability and you can do this via our website: www.mountainkingdoms.com or by calling the team on +44 (0)1453 844400. Bookings can be made online, by phone or by completing a booking form and returning it to us. We can also provisionally hold places if you need time to consider your options.

What our clients say



The combination of walking in Cappadocia together with hiking sections of the St Paul Trail is a perfect blend of exploring some of Turkey's most dramatic landscapes, whilst being largely off the beaten track. We loved the sense of being part of history, and meeting local villagers and nomads following a way of life which in many ways has remained unchanged. Excellent informative guiding, welcoming hosts, delicious food, and time to relax in the Old City of Antalya at the end - just GO!
-J and B (Private Itinerary)



This was the first time I took trip with Mountain Kingdoms, I did not have high expectation for this trip as the trip cost was very low (comparing to providers in US). However, to my surprise, the trip turned out to be WONDERFUL! We had great transportation, great and knowledgeable guides, charming hotels, and, good and plentiful food. The hiking was great and as described in the brochure and pre-trip document. I am sure that I will consider Mountain Kingdoms' trip in the future.
-Nancy S, USA

Mountain Kingdoms - distinctly different

Truly independent

In an age where many so-called 'independent' travel companies have in fact been bought out by multi-national giants, we remain fiercely independent with all the benefits this offers our clients.

Value for money prices with an emphasis on quality

We are not in the business of cutting our itineraries and services to the bone to offer eye-catching cheap prices. We use some of the best airlines, and typically 3 or 4 star hotels in cities. We include the majority of meals and private transport for road travel. We use excellent equipment and appoint well-trained staff and leaders. Last year, over 98% of our clients rated their Mountain Kingdoms holiday as 'excellent' or 'good'. We are members of AITO and bound by their quality charter.

Complete financial security

You can book with us confident that your holiday has full financial protection. Flight inclusive holidays are financially protected by the Civil Aviation Authority under ATOL licence number 2973 and 'Land Only' holidays are covered by a bond secured with ABTOT.

No Surcharge Guarantee

Your peace of mind is important to us so we have a No Surcharge Guarantee on all Land Only and Flight Inclusive bookings. This means that there will be no change to the price of your holiday once we have confirmed your booking, regardless of fluctuations in exchange rates or fuel prices.

Award winning Responsible Tourism

We feel strongly that all our holidays should benefit local communities, protect the environment and respect local traditions, religion and heritage. You can read more about the charities we support and our Responsible Tourism commitments and initiatives on the following page or at www.mountainkingdoms.com.

Genuine small group travel

Almost all of our holidays have a maximum group size of just 12, plus leader. This provides more contact with your leader, readier access to off-the-beaten-path areas, greater interaction with local communities and a reduced environmental impact.

Loyalty Discount

If you have previously travelled with us we recognise your loyalty with a discount on future trips.

Booking your holiday - it couldn't be easier

Once you've chosen your Mountain Kingdoms holiday you can book online, call the office or complete and post a booking form which can be found in our brochure or downloaded from our website. If you would like to hold a place on one of our trips, whilst you make up your mind, please give us a call to make a provisional booking. This is a no-obligation, no-cost booking and we will hold your place until space comes under pressure or we need your decision.

Comprehensive information

When we receive your booking we send you a full trip dossier which contains details of visas and vaccinations required, a suggested gear and clothing list and lots of useful information. In fact, everything you need to know to give you peace of mind and allow you to prepare for your trip of a lifetime.



RESPONSIBLE TOURISM STATEMENT CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLAN



For over 33 years, Mountain Kingdoms has been offering people the chance to visit amazing places on this extraordinary planet. We now offer trips to all corners of the world, but we are conscious that inevitably our holidays have a detrimental impact on the world around us, and we want to do all we can to reduce our carbon emissions. We are a signatory to Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency, along with a growing number of like-minded, reputable tour operators. For more information, please visit www.tourismdeclares.com

From 2020 onwards, we will be focusing on how we can reduce the carbon emissions that our holidays produce, and how to counterbalance this carbon by supporting carbon offset measures. Here are some of our current and future plans to minimise the impact of our business as a whole:

Carbon Offsetting

Already doing:

- ✓ We have been offsetting carbon since 2007, but will be increasing our donations to the [Ecoan tree planting project](#) in Peru this year. This is with a trusted partner where the funds go directly to a project where the community plants trees on its own land.

Will do:

- ✓ We are working on making our carbon offsetting more accurate and targeted.
- ✓ In future, we will add to that a further estimate for carbon produced by hotels, local road travel, trains and internal flights to arrive at a carbon offset sum for each trip we operate.
- ✓ Carbon offsetting will be included in our holiday prices. For our Flight Inclusive holidays it will include the international flight and any emissions produced by inland travel and accommodation. Our Land Only prices will include the cost of offsetting emissions caused by inland travel and accommodation.

Reducing Carbon Emissions

Already doing:

- ✓ We already offer the majority of our customers a free filtered water bottle which means they can instantly cut down on their single-use plastic consumption. This will be an ongoing project.
- ✓ We already predominantly use locally owned hotels, but will continue to ensure that, where possible, we use these rather than multinational chains.
- ✓ We have joined the Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency initiative to stand alongside like-minded travel companies, to work together to initiate best practices to make tourism as sustainable as possible.

Will do:

- ✓ We will re-evaluate our flights to make sure we are using the most fuel efficient airlines with the youngest fleets and, where possible, direct flights for each trip.
- ✓ We will stop offering unnecessary optional flights – for example our Everest sightseeing trip.
- ✓ We will eliminate unnecessary staff flights wherever possible.
- ✓ We will look at minimising internal flights.
- ✓ We will be asking all our worldwide agents and suppliers to look at their own carbon footprint and encourage them to reduce it.
- ✓ We will promote our more low impact trips to give customers an informed choice.

As part of our wider commitment to Responsible Tourism, we will continue to support a number of charities with whom we have had a long standing relationship over many years. These include: Shiva Charity in Nepal (Ginette Harrison School), Simien Mountains Mobile Medical Service and Porter Welfare, as well as setting aside a sum for emergency disaster relief should the need arise.

