

CAPIST — Stone and Strait

Seven days between the carved valleys and the Bosphorus

REFERENCE	DURATION	GROUP SIZE	BASE	GUIDE
TG-CAPIST-ITIN-2027-01	7 days · 6 nights	4 – 12 travellers	Cappadocia · Istanbul	Licensed, English-speaking

Two landscapes, in the order that makes sense. Three nights in Cappadocia, where the rock was soft enough to carve and people carved downwards for a thousand years; then a short domestic flight and three nights in Istanbul. The route is driven in a private vehicle with a driver, the guide travels with the group throughout, and the days are built so that nothing is closed when you arrive at it.

Day by day

DAY ONE

Arrival in Cappadocia

Met at Kayseri or Nevşehir airport and driven to the hotel — a cave hotel, rooms cut into the rock, in one of the valley villages. You land in Cappadocia directly; there is no connection to sit out in Istanbul first. The rest of the day is free; the altitude is around 1,100 metres and the first evening is better spent slowly. Dinner at the hotel.

Overnight Cappadocia · dinner

DAY TWO

Göreme, Uçhisar, Avanos

The Göreme Open Air Museum first, early, before the coaches — rock-cut chapels with their frescoes still on the walls, and the Dark Church, which kept its colour because almost no light ever reached it. Then the fairy chimneys of Paşabağ and the rock-cut hollows of Zelve, and Avanos on the Kızılırmak, where the red clay is still thrown on kick wheels. Uçhisar Castle in the late afternoon, for the view over the whole valley system. Those who want the balloon take off before dawn; it is booked separately and the weather decides.

Overnight Cappadocia · breakfast, lunch

DAY THREE

Underground, and the valley floor

An underground city — Derinkuyu or Kaymaklı, whichever is quieter that morning — eight levels of it, ventilation shafts, stables, a church, and millstone doors that could only be rolled shut from the inside. Afterwards the Ihlara valley, walked along the stream between its walls, with lunch at Belisırma where the tables stand in the water, and Selime Monastery at the valley's end. Pigeon Valley on the way back.

Overnight Cappadocia · breakfast, lunch

DAY FOUR

Cappadocia to Istanbul

An early morning flight from Kayseri to Istanbul, around ninety minutes, with the vehicle waiting at the other end. The afternoon is kept light: İstiklal Caddesi on foot, then the walk down from Galata to Karaköy, which is all slope and nineteenth-century doorways, ending at the water.

Overnight Istanbul · breakfast

DAY FIVE

One hill, two empires

Hagia Sophia, which was a church for nine hundred years and a mosque for five hundred; the Blue Mosque across the square; the Hippodrome, where the obelisks are all that is left above ground of the chariot course. Then the Basilica Cistern — three hundred and thirty-six columns holding up a roof over standing water — and Topkapı Palace with the Harem. The Grand Bazaar at the end of the day, when the group is free to stay as long as it likes.

Overnight Istanbul · breakfast

DAY SIX

The strait

Dolmabahçe Palace in the morning, where the Ottoman court moved when it gave up the old palace for European rooms and a crystal staircase. Then onto the water for the Bosphorus, as far up as Rumeli Hisarı, the fortress Mehmed II built in four months to close the strait. Back down for the Spice Bazaar and Eminönü, and Galata Tower before the light goes. Dinner together on the last evening.

Overnight Istanbul · breakfast, dinner

DAY SEVEN

Departure

Transfer to Istanbul Airport, timed to the flight. Late departures can leave luggage at the hotel and use the morning.

Breakfast

What the price covers

INCLUDED

- Six nights' accommodation — three in a cave hotel in Cappadocia, three in Istanbul
- Breakfast every morning; two lunches and two dinners, as marked on the day
- Domestic flight Kayseri – Istanbul, with baggage allowance
- Private vehicle with driver throughout, including both airport transfers
- Licensed English-speaking guide for the full seven days
- All entrance fees to the museums, palaces and sites in the programme, including the Dark Church at Göreme, which is ticketed separately from the museum — nothing is paid at a gate
- Bosphorus cruise on day six, weather permitting; if the sailing is cancelled the fare is refunded in full
- All road tolls, parking and vehicle costs
- TÜRSAB compulsory travel insurance, and all local taxes

NOT INCLUDED

- International flights to and from Türkiye
- Visa or e-Visa fees, where these apply
- Meals not listed on the day concerned, and drinks with meals
- Single room supplement — from \$150, depending on the departure
- Personal spending, laundry, telephone
- Tips for the driver and guide
- Anything shown as optional

OPTIONAL

- Hot-air balloon flight over the Cappadocia valleys, before dawn — booked locally, subject to the weather and to cancellation by the civil aviation authority
- Turkish bath
- Additional nights at either end

Departures in 2027

SEASON	DATES — MONDAY TO SUNDAY	PER PERSON
Winter	11 – 17 January · 1 – 7 February · 22 – 28 February	\$2,250
Spring	22 – 28 March · 29 March – 4 April · 5 – 11 April	\$2,550
Autumn	4 – 10 October · 11 – 17 October · 18 – 24 October	\$2,950

On the order of the days. Several of Istanbul's palaces and museums close one day a week, and they do not all close on the same day. The programme above is written for a Monday-to-Sunday departure; on other start dates the sequence of days five and six is adjusted so that nothing is shut when the group arrives at it. The content of the week does not change.

On the balloon flight. Flights are cleared by the civil aviation authority each morning and are cancelled in wind. Payment is taken only once a flight is confirmed, and a cancelled flight is refunded in full.

On group size. The price is built on a minimum of four travellers and the group never exceeds twelve. Below four the vehicle and the guide cost no less, so a smaller party is quoted separately rather than carried at the published rate.

Travione Global is the ground operator for this programme. We hold TÜRSAB Category A Licence No. 18673 and we are based in Denizli, not in Istanbul — which means the vehicle, the driver and the guide are ours, and the programme is run by the company that sold it. Net rates are available to agents and tour operators on request.