

# Baltimore Ski Club presents: **Istanbul and Tour of Ancient Turkey** September 28 to October 7, 2012

Discover the best of Turkey with this packed nine-day tour exploring Turkey's famous sites in Selcuk, Pamukkale (Hierapolis), and Istanbul. In Selcuk, tour the famous Ephesus ancient site, the Terrace Houses, Sirince Village, Basilica of St. John, and the House of the Virgin Mary. See the best of the Turkish countryside in Pamukkale, a popular settlement with hot springs believed to have healing powers. There will be plenty of time in Istanbul for excellent shopping or if you care to try a Turkish bath. Sightsee with your licensed tour guide in the Old City visiting the ancient Hippodrome, the Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia, Basilica Cistern, the Grand Bazaar, the Topkapi Palace Complex with its Harem section and treasury, the Spice Bazaar, and conclude by a cruise on the Bosphorus, navigating the strait between Europe and Asia.

## YOUR HOTELS

Four nights at the family-run Kalehan Hotel in Selcuk next to a 6<sup>th</sup> century castle, near Ephesus and the Pamucak beach. Wireless Internet access, air conditioning, and swimming pool. Breakfast and dinner are included daily and one day lunch at a beach front hotel will be included.

Four nights at the Prince Hotel in Istanbul located on the historical peninsula also known as the Old City. Equipped with LCD TV, Satellite, in room service of tea and coffee, direct dial phone & 24 hour room service. Breakfast is included daily.

**Contact: Christopher Pukalski**

410-292-6656 / [christopher.pukalski@hotmail.com](mailto:christopher.pukalski@hotmail.com)

## YOUR ITINERARY

**Day 0-1 – Depart US to Izmir, continue to Selcuk**

**Day 2 – Ephesus ancient site, the Terrace Houses, and Sirince Village**

**Day 3 – Basilica of St. John, the House of the Virgin Mary, lunch and afternoon at the beach**

**Day 4 – Pamukkale:** Visit the springs

**Day 5 –Izmir to Istanbul :** Explore Istanbul

**Day 6 – Istanbul:** The Hippodrome, Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia, Basilica Cistern and the Grand Bazaar

**Day 7 – Istanbul:** Topkapi Palace Complex, The Spice Bazaar, and boat ride on the Bosphorus.

**Day 8 – Istanbul:** Explore Istanbul on your own

**Day 9 – Istanbul/home**

On Friday night September 28 load bus in Baltimore for a drop off at Dulles. Depart Dulles and arrive in Istanbul on Saturday to continue to an afternoon flight to Izmir. 4 nights at the Kalehan Hotel in Selcuk. On October 3 take a one hour flight from Izmir to Istanbul in the morning. 4 nights at the Prince Hotel in Istanbul. On Sunday October 7 depart Istanbul and arrive at Dulles in the afternoon. Load bus to Baltimore.

BSC/BRSC members: \$2,380 (Based on Double)

Non BSC/BRSC members: \$2,395 (Based on Double)

Single Supplement: \$ 595

Prices are subject to change with regard to currency exchange rates. Taxes and fuel surcharges are always subject to change.

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## Features to be Included

- **Round trip charter bus from the Baltimore area to Dulles airport**
- **Round trip airline service from Dulles to Izmir, from Izmir to Istanbul and from Istanbul nonstop back to Dulles**
- **All current taxes and fuel surcharges are included. Taxes and fuel surcharges are subject to change.**
- **Complete escorted guided tour of Turkey as described above. All admissions are included as described in tour.**
- **8 nights lodging with 4 nights in coastal Turkey and 4 nights in Istanbul. Breakfast buffet is included daily.**
- **Four dinners are included as is one lunch in our afternoon beach hotel stop.**
- **Emergency repatriation and medical insurance is included.**
- **Personal Tour Guide to travel with the Baltimore Ski Club**

## Your Itinerary

**Friday, September 28 Friday, September 28** **Depart the USA**

Depart at 10:55pm on an overnight flight to Istanbul.

**DAY 01: Saturday, September 29** **Arrival in Selcuk**

Arrive at Izmir International Airport at 7:05pm. Meet your guide and transfer to Selcuk, about 1 hour 15 minutes away.

### **Kalehan Hotel**

Selcuk 35920 Turkey  
Tel. 011-90-232-892-6154

The hotel is situated in Selcuk below the 6<sup>th</sup> century castle 3 km from Ephesus and 6 km from Pamucak beach.

Explore the town of Selcuk on your own this afternoon. Dinner is included at the hotel tonight.

**Overnight:** at the Kalehan Hotel in Selcuk.

**Included meals:** Dinner



**DAY 02: Sunday, September 30** **Selcuk – Ephesus sites**



After a late breakfast at the hotel, meet your guide and start a tour of the famous Ephesus sites. During the tour, you will visit the **Ephesus ancient site**, the **Terrace Houses**, and **Sirince Village**.

**Ephesus Ancient Site:** *As the capital of Roman Asia Minor, Ephesus is still richly endowed with marble temples, mosaics and a 25,000-seat Great Theater. The city, whose wealth and patronage supported its splendid architectural program, was dedicated to the goddess Artemis, and her enormous temple was once considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. We can also visit the **Ephesus terrace houses**, many of them built in the first century AD for the important and wealthy people of **Ephesus**. The excavation of the terrace houses started in 1960. The first frescoes, mosaics and other things found were taken to museums, but after that findings have been left in their original places. Today, we can see two houses, whose restorations are complete.*

Next, we drive to a village on the hills near Ephesus. Originally a Greek-Orthodox village, **Sirince** is now a very pretty site of Turkish-Greek culture. From its beautiful hilltop location we enjoy impressive views of the vineyards and olive trees surrounding the village.



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As we wander the narrow streets of the village lined with typical Greek houses, we come across women selling handcrafts of all kinds and other local village products. Here we have a chance to socialize with the locals, enjoy the gorgeous scenery and buy some local snacks. At the end of the tour, we will return to the hotel and have the rest of the day at leisure. Dinner at the hotel.

**Overnight:** at the Kalehan Hotel in Selcuk.

**Included meals:** Breakfast & Dinner

### **DAY 03: Monday, October 1 Selcuk and afternoon at the sea**

Meet your guide again this morning for another interesting day.

First, right in the town of Selcuk, we visit the **Basilica of St. John**. A small church on the Ayasuluk Hill was dedicated to him in the 2C AD. This church was replaced in the 6C by a huge basilica built by the Emperor Justinian, the impressive ruins of which are still visible. Under the central dome was the sacred grave of St. John. Pilgrims have believed that a fine dust from his grave has magical and curative powers.

Next, we drive to the **House of Virgin Mary**, who is reputed to have come to Ephesus near the end of her life in 37 AD. This place was officially declared a shrine of the Roman Catholic Church in 1896, and since then it has become a popular place of pilgrimage. Pope Paul VI visited the shrine in 1967.

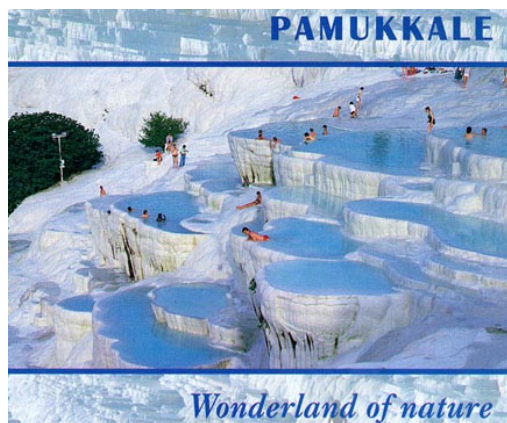


At lunchtime, we will go to a local hotel with a great beach. First, enjoy an included lunch seaside.....then have the afternoon to enjoy swimming at the pool and ocean.

**Overnight:** at the Kalehan Hotel in Selcuk.

**Included meals:** Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

### **DAY 04: Tuesday, October 2 Selcuk/Pamukkale**



After breakfast depart for Pamukkale, about 3 hours away, in the middle of the Turkish countryside. **Pamukkale (Hierapolis):** has always been a very popular settlement where the hot springs were believed to have healing powers, so the city became the center of a pagan cult in antiquity and a spa resort today. The ancient Hierapolis was founded by Pergamum, probably Eumenes II, in the 2C BC. Hierapolis is believed to derive its name from Hieria the wife of Telephus, both being legendary ancestors of kings of Pergamum. Hierapolis is among the cities of the ancient world in which the grid-plan was applied. For countless

millennia a spring located somewhere on the plateau, possibly in the neighborhood of the ancient theatre, has been pouring out streams of hot mineral water. These have plunged down the mountain-side creating in the process enormous circular basins which are fringed with stalactites and surrounded by a huge area of smooth, dazzling, white calcareous rock - hence the Turkish name Pamukkale, Cotton Castle. Upon arrival we will explore the travertine formations as well as the extensive ancient site of Hierapolis. Return to Selcuk for the night.

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**Overnight:** at the Kalehan Hotel in Selcuk.

**Included meals:** Breakfast & Dinner

**DAY 05: Wednesday, October 3**

**Selcuk/Izmir/Istanbul**

This morning we transfer to Izmir Airport for a flight back to Istanbul where you will be met for the transfer to the Prince Hotel. This hotel is located in the old city center, in very close walking distance to many of the sites and bazaars.

**The Prince Hotel**

Address: Nobeithane Caddesi Kargili Sok. No: 5

Sirkeci Istanbul Turkey

Phone: +90 (212) 513 25 50



The Hotel Prince has been located on the historical peninsula also known as “The Old City” since 1999. It was fully redecorated as a quality 4 star hotel in 2008. 124 modernly decorated rooms are equipped with LCD TV, SATELLITE, KETTLE (FREE SERVICE OF TEA AND COFFEE )IN EVERY ROOM, MINIBAR, DIRECT DIAL PHONE & 24 HOUR ROOM SERVICE.

On the way from the airport, your guide will give you some information on the city. Upon arrival at the hotel, your guide will show you nearby restaurants, shops and sites. Free time for shopping and exploring on your own in Istanbul this afternoon and evening.

**Overnight:** The Prince Hotel in Istanbul

**Included meals:** Breakfast

**DAY 06: Thursday, October 4**

**Istanbul**

After breakfast at the hotel, meet your private licensed tour guide for sightseeing in the Old City. Today visit: the ancient **Hippodrome**, **Blue Mosque**, **Hagia Sophia**, **Basilica Cistern** and the **Grand Bazaar**.



**Hippodrome:** The ancient Hippodrome, an enormous public entertainment arena that once seated as many as 100,000



zealous fans witnessing chariot races, executions, and mock battles. Once the center of Byzantine civic life, it is still decorated by the Egyptian Obelisk, the Bronze Serpentine Column, and the Column of Constantine.

**Blue Mosque:** With its massive central dome flanked by six slender minarets, the Blue Mosque stands as the single most recognizable monument on the Istanbul skyline. Built between 1609 and 1616, during the reign of Ottoman Sultan Ahmet I, the enormous complex also included a hospital, caravansary, public kitchen, marketplace, schools and the Mausoleum of Sultan Ahmet I. The mosque’s immense

interior, flooded with sunlight streaming through 260 windows, is decorated with more than 20,000 precious Iznik tiles detailing traditional flowers of Ottoman design. In fact, it is the deep blue glow of the tiles in sunlight that gives the building its name.

**The Basilica Cistern or Underground Palace:** Istanbul was one of the most often besieged cities in the world and has always needed permanent water supplies. As a result, many underground cisterns were built during the Byzantine Empire. Water was brought to these big reservoirs from far away sources through aqueducts. The largest and most ornate of these cisterns is Yerebatan Sarayı. In its construction, columns and capitals of earlier temples were used and this provides a very decorative appearance.



Have lunch on your own, then visit **Hagia Sophia:** This famous basilica was constructed in the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. It is often described as the greatest work of Byzantine architecture. Once the Church of Holy Wisdom, Christendom's crowning glory, and now a museum, the church once glittered with mosaics, and art treasures filled every corner. Today, Hagia Sophia is the fourth largest building constructed as a church in the world. It was dedicated to Hagia Sophia which means Divine Wisdom, an attribute of Christ.

Next we can visit the **Grand Bazaar:** The area of the Grand Bazaar was a trade center during the Byzantine period. Two bedestens (domed masonry structures) were built by Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror to enrich the economic life in the city. Later on as people needed more places for trade, they added other buildings outside these structures. Today, the atmosphere of the Grand Bazaar is very interesting and has consequently become a very popular place for visitors to explore a labyrinth of streets and passages housing eighteen entrances and more than 4,000 shops.

In late afternoon, return back to the hotel. Dinner on your own tonight.

**Overnight:** at the Prince Hotel in Istanbul

**Included meals:** Breakfast

## **DAY 07: Friday, October 5 Istanbul**

After breakfast at the hotel, meet with your guide and depart for another full day of sightseeing featuring **Topkapi Palace Complex, The Spice Bazaar & a boat ride on the Bosphorus.**

**Topkapi Palace Museum:** Topkapi was the second palace built in Istanbul after the conquest. It was a residence for the Ottoman Sultans and includes a maze of opulent buildings which were at the center of the Ottoman Empire between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. This palace, where the sultans and their courts and harem lived and governed, is now one of the world's richest museums. We will also visit the **Harem section** as well as the **Treasury (sultans treasure)**. It will take several hours to explore the extensive grounds.





Next, we will visit the **Spice Market** which was built as part of the Yeni Cami complex and has since been an exciting covered market filled with the fragrant scent of spices from the Orient. Have lunch on your own in this area.

Finally, embark on a local boat and start our cruise of the **Bosporus Strait**. The

Bosporus is a narrow, navigable strait between Europe and Asia connecting the Black Sea to the Marmara Sea. It is about 20 miles long and varies between one-half and one and one half miles wide. This boat ride takes you past the late Ottoman Palaces, Dolmabahce and Beylerbeyi, as well as beautiful wooden mansions and modern villas of the 19th & 20th centuries which form this elegant section of the city.



**Overnight:** at The Prince Hotel in Istanbul

**Included meals:** Breakfast

**DAY 08: Saturday, October 6 Istanbul**

A full day at leisure to shop, visit the Turkish baths for an extreme body scrub and rest up.

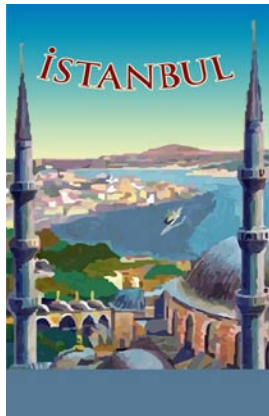
**Overnight:** at the Prince Hotel in Istanbul

**Included meals:** Breakfast

**DAY 09: Sunday, October 7 Istanbul/home**

After breakfast at the hotel, transfer to Istanbul Airport for your flight home.

**Included meals:** Breakfast



**Contact: Christopher Pukalski**

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