



Turkey Convention Tour: New Year's Eve in Istanbul

7 days

Whether for culture, cuisine, or unforgettable views, Istanbul is a city that dazzles at every turn. Wander through centuries-old bazaars, marvel at the skyline of domes and minarets, and soak in the energy where East meets West. Then, ring in the new year alongside your fellow Group Coordinators in one of the world's most vibrant and historic destinations.



Your tour package includes

- 5 nights in handpicked hotels
- 5 breakfasts
- 3 lunches
- 3 dinners
- 1 cooking class
- 4 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach

Included highlights

- Convention Tour meeting
- New Year's Eve in Istanbul
- Hagia Sophia
- Blue Mosque
- The Grand Bazaar
- Bosphorus cruise
- Kadıkoy Market
- Hammam spa visit
- Turkish cooking class

Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for about 2.5 hours daily across moderately uneven terrain, including cobblestone streets, dirt paths, and wooden platforms, with some hills and steps.

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Overnight Flight → 1 night

Day 1: Overnight flight

Board your overnight flight to Istanbul today.

Istanbul → 5 nights

Day 2: Arrival in Istanbul

Welcome to Turkey—or, as they say in Istanbul, merhaba! After touching down, transfer to your hotel and take some time to settle in. Then, gather with your Tour Director and Group Coordinators at an evening mixer, and get to know one another over a drink.

Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Istanbul

Included meals: breakfast, welcome lunch

Istanbul's roots extend to 660 B.C., encompassing three name changes, stretching across two continents, and blossoming into one massive metropolis. Today, set off on a tour of the city's vibrant streets with your Tour Director in the lead (and get to know some of its 15.5 million inhabitants along the way).

- Make your way to the city's crown jewel: the Hagia Sophia. Originally built as an Eastern Orthodox cathedral in 360 A.D., this UNESCO World Heritage Site has also functioned as a mosque, Catholic church, and secular museum over the years—and held the title of world's largest building for close to a millennium. Step inside this beautifully ornamented structure and get lost in the moment.
- Take a short walk to Sultanahmet Square—better known as the Hippodrome of Constantinople. Considered the athletic and social center of the Byzantine Empire's capital city, it now houses an array of historic artifacts, including a Greek sacrificial tripod and an Egyptian obelisk.
- Sit down to an included welcome lunch at a local restaurant, served with beer or wine.

Once you've finished dining, take off on another guided tour. Next up on the itinerary: a pair of Istanbul icons that illustrate Ottoman history and religious traditions.

- Head to the edge of Sultanahmet Square to the imposing Blue Mosque—instantly

recognizable by its six javelin-like minarets, cascading domes, and the colorful tiles that adorn its interior. Enter and admire this holy place, then sit down to learn more about Ottoman Islamic practices.

- From one UNESCO World Heritage Site, set out for another in the form of Topkapi Palace. Now a museum, this 15th-century palace served as the cradle of the Ottoman Empire, housing its sultans for almost 400 years. Tour its expansive grounds, picturing them as they were in their heyday.

Please note: When entering the Hagia Sophia, women must wear a headscarf. Travelers must also remove or cover their shoes when entering both the Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque.

Day 4: Convention Tour meeting, Grand Bazaar & Bosphorus cruise

Included meals: breakfast, lunch, dinner

Join your group for a Convention Tour meeting, a series of presentations and discussions designed with Group Coordinators' questions, experiences, and interests in mind.

- Begin with a keynote address by senior members of Go Ahead Tours staff, followed by an insider's view of the company and tours.
- Discuss tour planning and recruiting best practices with Go Ahead Tours staff and your fellow Group Coordinators.
- Get an overview of the many benefits available to you as a Go Ahead Tours Group Coordinator and learn about program updates, from new app features to added perks.
- Enjoy coffee, tea, mineral water, and an included lunch.

This afternoon, take a scenic ferry ride up the Golden Horn, gliding past Istanbul's historic skyline before arriving at one of the city's most iconic destinations: the Grand Bazaar.

- Step inside the Grand Bazaar, one of the oldest and largest covered markets in the world, where vaulted ceilings and winding passageways house thousands of shops selling everything from handwoven carpets to glittering lanterns and fragrant spices.

- Follow along as your Tour Director points you toward some of the best local vendors, then enjoy free time to browse, bargain, and soak in the vibrant energy of this centuries-old marketplace.

This evening, embark on a private cruise through the Bosphorus Strait, looking out on decadent Ottoman palaces and imposing medieval castles as you journey through the narrow waterway that separates Europe from Asia.

Rehash your favorite parts of the day with fellow Group Coordinators over an included dinner at a local restaurant—complete with a glass of beer or wine.

Day 5: Sightseeing tour of Kadikoy Market & New Year's Eve celebration

Included meals: breakfast, lunch

Today, see Istanbul from a different perspective as you take a ferry across the Bosphorus Strait to Kadikoy and explore Kadikoy Market with a local guide.

- Walk through this open-air market, which sits on the Asian side of Istanbul, to see where locals go to shop for everything from fresh-caught fish to locally grown produce.
- Stop by specialty shops to see what the vendors are selling and learn more about the foods used to create some of the country's culinary staples.
- Shop for snacks and pick up some sweets to bring back home before sitting down for this afternoon's included lunch of Anatolian dishes, which are influenced by Turkish, Middle Eastern, and European spices and traditions. Expect anything from savory boreks (meat-stuffed pastries) and herbal dolmas (grain-stuffed vine leaves), to hearty stews and dumplings full of local meat and seasonal vegetables.

Tonight, raise a Champagne toast with your fellow Group Coordinators during a special dinner. Then, join the crowds of merrymakers and continue your New Year's Eve celebration in the city.

Day 6: Hammam spa visit & cooking class farewell dinner

Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner

Do as the Turks do and pay a visit to a hammam, or Turkish bath house. Going to a hammam has been a mainstay in Turkish culture since the

times of the Ottoman Empire, and visiting one is seen as a time to socialize with friends and relax. Today, you'll visit a public bathhouse and admire the traditional architecture as you learn more about the roots of this cultural mainstay.

This evening, dive into Turkey's culinary traditions during an interactive cooking class led by a local chef, where you'll learn to craft traditional Turkish dishes that are still lovingly made and enjoyed across the country. Discover the rich history and cultural significance behind each dish as you prepare them. After the class, savor your culinary creations during an included farewell dinner, perfectly paired with local wine as you celebrate your trip together.

Flight Home

Day 7: Departure

Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to the airport for your flight home.