



Turkey

Anatolia, Ankara, Aladaglar & Adventure

23 Days

An ancient land of mythology and the cradle of civilisations, Turkey is the bridge between the West and the Orient. This expedition delves deep into the heart of this friendly country to show you a side of Turkey a world away from the tourist resorts. From the classics sites of Istanbul, we head deep into the remarkable landscapes of Cappadocia where we discover ancient churches and underground cities. In the Aladaglar Mountains there is world class trekking and friendly communities where we undertake a community driven project. Later, we head for the Lycian Coast and the thrills and spills of white-water rafting and mountain biking, as well as sea kayaking among the crystal clear azure waters of the Mediterranean.

Your Recommended Expedition Itinerary

Days 1 - 3

Arrive Istanbul, city tour, Ankara

LD

On arrival into Istanbul we will be met at the airport and transferred to our hotel. Heading out into the city we get our first taste of Turkish cuisine at one of Istanbul's many restaurants. The next day we see some of the main sites of Istanbul including the old Sultan Ahmet area, Hagia Sophia and the amazing Blue Mosque. The following day we head to the Turkish capital, Ankara and explore the city before visiting the renowned Anatolian Civilisations museum.

Days 4 - 5

Ihlara Valley, Selime Monastery, Cappadocia, Red and Rose Valley, Avanos Women's Community

BLD

Today we start stretching our legs in the Ihlara Valley, a 14km long canyon with hundreds of rock cut rooms and churches. This valley proved to be an ideal place for monks to worship in seclusion, as well as provide a safe hideaway and place of defence for people during times of invasion. There are numerous dwellings, some of which are connected by tunnels and corridors. The decorations in the churches date from the 6th to the 13th centuries. After having Lunch in Belisirma village we drive to Selime to visit the Selime Monastery. A visit to this complex of buildings on a steep mountain slope is a must in the region. The next day we explore on foot some of the most beautiful valleys in Cappadocia with their many rock-carved houses and churches and amazing, other-worldly, landscapes.

Days 6 - 8

Uchisar Citadel, Zelve Monastery, Monks Valley, Derinkuyu

BLD

Today we explore the Akvadi valley and walk to the top of Uchisar citadel where we are rewarded with magnificent panoramic views. We spend the next couple of days on easy day walks, exploring the many areas of interest including the fairy-tale Monks Valley and the Zelve Monastery.

There will also be the opportunity to visit a traditional Turkish bath, commonly referred to as a Hamam. The Hamam combines the functionality and the structural elements of its predecessors in Anatolia, the Roman thermal and Eastern Roman baths, with the central Asian Turkish tradition of steam bathing, ritual cleansing and respect for water. On day 8 we drive to the Taurus Mountains in the Aladaglar National Park, stopping off at the mysterious underground city of Derinkuyu en-route. We have a traditional lunch and then start our 6 day trek to our first camp at the Black Lake.

Days 9 - 13

Day 9-13: Trekking in Aladaglar National Park, summit Mt Emler (3723m), Hero mothers of Anatolia

BLD

Over the next week we trek into the stunning Aladaglar National Park. Each day the scenery changes from valleys with remote villages to high pastures with semi-nomadic herders. Our gear is carried by mules as we move through some of Europe's most spectacular mountain scenery. We walk for around 5 to 8 hours each day and are rewarded with stunning views of our surroundings. From our goal, the summit of Mt Emler (3723m), it is possible to see Mt. Erciyes (3.917m) to the North, Mt. Hasan (3.268m) to the West, and the Bolkar Range to the South - all major Summits of the Aladaglar Range. Each night we camp in great locations and the trek staff provide amazing meals to keep us fit, healthy and full of energy.

After breakfast on day 12 we leave our campsite and follow a stabilized road, which takes us to the



Arpalik plateau with beautiful panoramic views to Mt. Demirkazik (3.756m). We then descend further to Demirkazik village via a canyon. Here, we meet local women in the village where we will be able to talk to them about their lives and roles as women in rural Turkey. The women in this village are known as the 'Women of Anatolia' or 'The mothers of Anatolia'. These women are known in Turkish history as strong personalities, as both mothers and heroes. Even today, the women of Anatolia are the most important figures of a typical central Anatolian family.

Afterwards we head to our campsite at Sokulupinar via a different route. Continuing trekking we climb up the Sakartas Pass and reach a beautiful look-out point past Eznevit Yaylasi before continuing to our camp at Emli Valley and the end of our trek.

Days 14 - 16

Camardi

BLD

We spend the next three days working on a project in the Camardi District. The nature of the project will be confirmed closer to your arrival, as it will depend on the needs of the local community at the time. Previous groups have established vegetable gardens, cleared areas for children's playgrounds, built furniture for local schools and planted saplings in national parks. Whatever your group ends up doing, this is a very rural part of Turkey with little help from national government, so your time spent among the community will be a valuable contribution. You're sure to receive a great welcome from the local people.

Days 17 - 18

Konya Mevlana museum, Whirling Dervishes

BLD

Leaving the Aladaglar National Park we drive to Konya and visit the Mevlana museum and find out about the mysterious Whirling Dervishes and the Sufi mystic Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi. We continue to Antalya and explore this fascinating city with its history of Lycian, Pamphylian, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine, Seljuk and Ottoman architecture and cultures.

Days 19 - 20

White Water Rafting, Aspendos, Kas Mountain Bikes

BLD

Koprulu Canyon is the setting for a fun filled 12km of white water rafting through stunning natural canyons. We later drive to Aspendos and explore the ruins of this ancient city. Then it's off to the beautiful coastal town of Kas and some mountain biking (about 20km) in the superb surrounding terrain.

Days 21 - 23

Sea kayaking, Simena Castle, Sunken City, Fly home

BL

Our last few days are spent relaxing on the beautiful but isolated Sebida coast. We explore by sea kayak and have lunch of Limanagzi Beach. Keep an eye out for seals and turtles that often frequent these waters. A boat trip takes us to the sunken city off Kekova island before visiting Simena Castle with its gorgeous views. We later return to Antalya and explore the old city before flying back to the UK.



Look what's included:

- International flights
- All accommodation, transportation and activities
- All food as described above
- Local, bi-lingual, first-aid qualified STC leader
- Parent and student trip launch evening
- Pre-travel training programme
- 1-day offsite safety INSET day for school staff
- ATOL financial protection
- Cancellation, Medical & Repatriation Insurance

- Group first aid kit and prescription meds pack
- BS8848 safety management and risk assessments
- Detailed pre-departure information and kit lists
- Comprehensive teacher travel packs
- Permanent operations team in your destination
- 24-hour UK operational support whilst overseas
- Donations to two carbon & conservation charities
- Free Fairtrade t-shirt for every participant and teacher
- Free travel guide book to your destination

What's not included:

- Transport to airport in UK
- Drinks (advice will be given on purification of water)
- Visas or tourist cards if required
- Any required inoculations or Covid tests

- Personal spending money
- Tips for guides, drivers and porters (ask for guidance)
- Airport departure taxes paid locally
- Personal effects insurance



A word about Responsible Tourism

On our expeditions and educational journeys, we strive to connect teachers and students with the people they meet, nurture the cultures they experience and protect the beautiful environments they are lucky enough to explore.

Many companies talk the talk, few truly walk the walk. We are far from perfect, but we are leading the way in sustainability in the school travel sector. In 2018 we were the first UK travel company to become **Travelife Certified** – a sustainability certificate formally recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.



Trees for Life

This is our passion, and we'd love to tell you more about it in due course. In the meantime, for more information on some of the steps we take as a company to make our operations more sustainable, please visit:

<https://www.thestc.co.uk/travel/what-do-we-do/>

Physical Rating for this trip: Grade 4



Fitness is important at this grade, which compares to extended walking in mountainous terrain such as the Lakes or Snowdonia, for up to three to five days in a row. It is likely that significant sections of a trip will involve walking and trekking with some days up to eight hours. Some of the trip could be at altitudes of up to 4,500m, but the itinerary will be designed with appropriate acclimatisation in mind. Be prepared for significant possible variations in temperatures throughout the tour. There is not usually time to 'get fit' on these treks, so a two to four-month fitness improvement programme would ensure you get the most out of the trip.

Cultural Rating for this trip: Grade 3



Students should expect some culture shock. You'll be exposed to signs of poverty. The food will be quite different to home and English, whilst still spoken, will be less prevalent. Respecting the local culture will make it easier to fit in and get the most out of your trip. We're likely to visit remoter locations on this tour where access to western style services may be sporadic. Often on trips of this grading there are parts of the itinerary which are more remote, interspersed with sections which are more 'comfortable'.



Travel Safety & Other Expedition Training

Preparing students and teachers for their upcoming adventure is an opportunity to teach important life skills and a vital part of safety management. Please ask for your quote for the training schedule specific to your expedition. Topics covered will include:

Responsible Tourism workshop

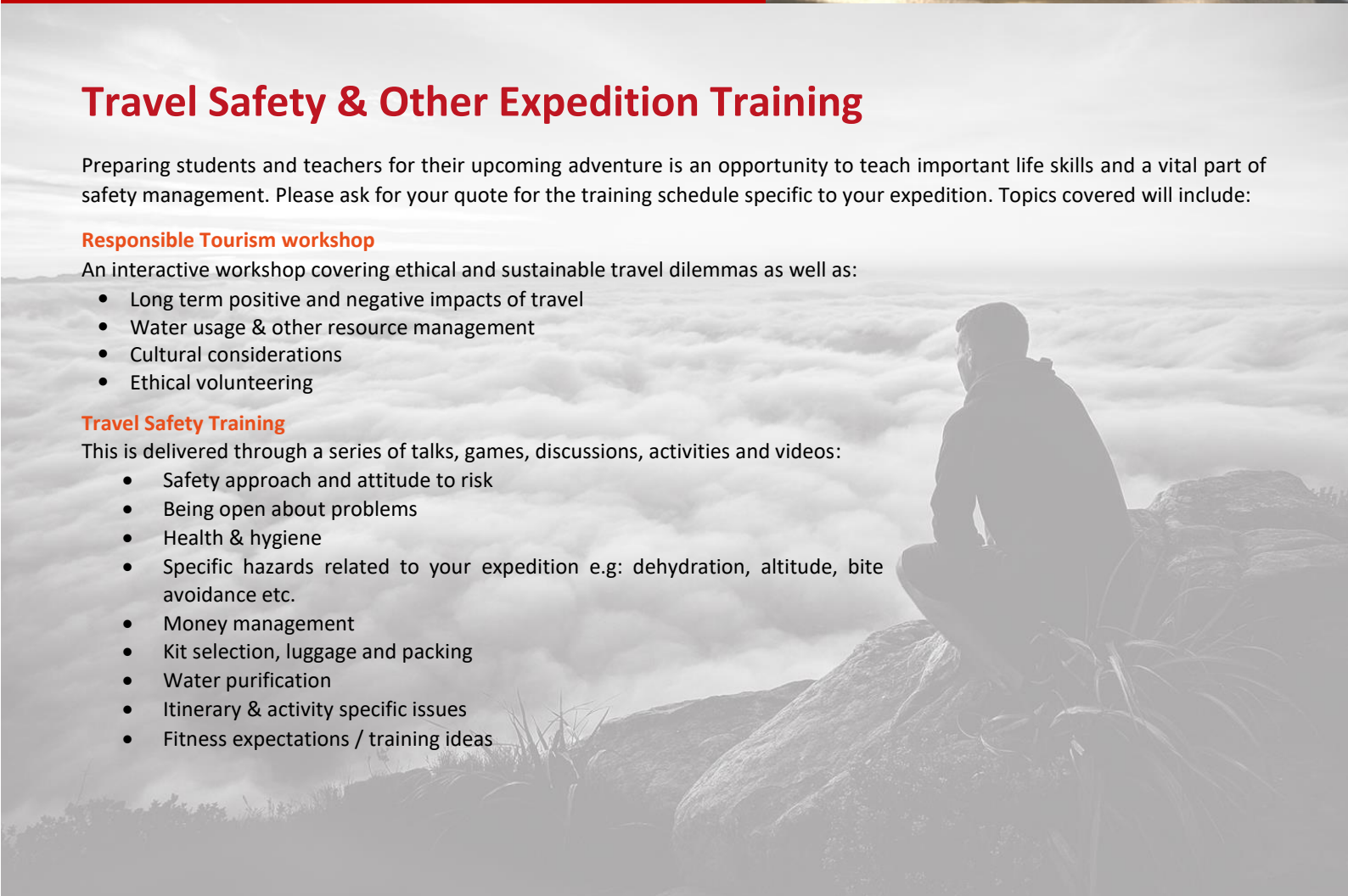
An interactive workshop covering ethical and sustainable travel dilemmas as well as:

- Long term positive and negative impacts of travel
- Water usage & other resource management
- Cultural considerations
- Ethical volunteering

Travel Safety Training

This is delivered through a series of talks, games, discussions, activities and videos:

- Safety approach and attitude to risk
- Being open about problems
- Health & hygiene
- Specific hazards related to your expedition e.g: dehydration, altitude, bite avoidance etc.
- Money management
- Kit selection, luggage and packing
- Water purification
- Itinerary & activity specific issues
- Fitness expectations / training ideas





A journey of 1,000 miles...

Starts with a single step... Contact us now to start your expedition journey

1 Ask for your personalised quote & further information

If this itinerary doesn't quite scratch your expedition itch then let us tailor-make one for you. Our wealth of experience and expert in-country contacts means we can design an adventure that's just right for you and your students. Contact us for more information and a detailed quote.

2 Ask for risk assessments and marketing materials

We can provide initial risk and threat assessments to help you with your expedition approval process. Ask for posters and your Pre-Booking Information Pack too.

3 Arrange an expedition launch evening

This is a chance for students and parents to hear more about the expedition with a comprehensive information evening covering the itinerary, safety management, the build-up to the trip and lots more. There is also plenty of opportunity for questions.



The home of the modern, innovative school expedition, where a sustainable, ethical approach guarantees unique experiences and a life enhancing adventure.



Our school trips and educational tours are all about maximising the learning opportunities of travel. It's all here, the humble school tour has just come of age.



Adventures, holidays and cultural journeys for teachers looking to 'Escape the Classroom' and discover more about our amazing world, its people and places.

"I am being completely serious when I say that I won't ever run a school trip without you guys. I trust you and your team completely - and the in-country staff that you carefully cultivate and train are a cut above the rest."

Teacher feedback, King's High Warwick

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