

BIBLICAL Turkey

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Seven Churches of Revelation with Istanbul

Duration: 8 days - 7 nights

Standards: Private & Small Group Tours (Max. 10 Pax)

Highlights: Istanbul - Smyrna - Pergamum - Thyatira - Sardis - Philadelphia - Laodicea - Hierapolis - Ephesus - Izmir

Departure: Every Wednesday & Saturday for Small Group Tour / Every day for Private

ITINERARY

Day 1: ARRIVAL TO ISTANBUL

Welcome to Turkey. Arrive in Istanbul Ataturk Airport, Our representative will meet you at the airport with your name sign and private transfer to the hotel for overnight stay in Istanbul.

Day 2: FULL DAY ISTANBUL TOUR (Breakfast)

09.00 a.m. After breakfast, pick up from hotel and our journey begins in Istanbul, the only city in the world situated on two continents. Byzantium, Constantinople, Istanbul - its three names span more than 2600 years, nearly 1600 of them as the capital of two of the greatest empires the world has known, Byzantine and Ottoman. We visit the **Topkapi Palace, Hagia Sophia, The Blue Mosque and Hippodrome**, where chariot races and the Byzantine riots took place. Visit **Spice Bazaar (Egyptian Bazaar)**: The air here is filled with the enticing aromas of cinnamon, caraway, saffron, mint, thyme and every other conceivable herb and spice. Overnight in Istanbul.

Day 3: FULL DAY ISTANBUL TOUR (Breakfast - Dinner)

08.30 a.m. After breakfast, pick up from hotel. First visit **Grand Bazaar** and then transfer to port for **Boat trip on the Bosphorus** A traditional excursion by boat along the waterway separating Europe and Asia. The shore is lined with old wooden villas, palaces of marble, fortresses, and small fishing villages. Afternoon visit **Underground cistern** and transfer to airport for flight to Izmir. Arrival and transfer to your hotel. Overnight in Izmir.

Day 4: PERGAMON – THYATIRA - IZMIR (Breakfast, Dinner)

After breakfast we drive to Pergamum, actually called Bergama. It is one of the sites of the Seven Churches of Asia [Rev. 1:11; 2:12]. Here we explore the impressive Acropolis, the steepest theatre in the world, the Asklepion, famous medical Centre of classical times, see the Altar of Zeus which is mentioned as the «Throne of Satan» in the book of Revelation, the marble columns of the Temple of Trajan and the Library which was foremost in the world and was long a rival of the equally famous Library of Alexandria in Egypt. Its wealth of volumes was estimated at over 200,000. It inspired the invention of parchment.

We also visit the Red Basilica (St. John's Church). Then we continue our visit to Thyatira, now called Akhisar, another one of the Seven Churches of Asia [Rev. 1:11; 2:18-24; Acts 16:14]. It was a city famous for purple dyes. We visit the remains of a basilica and some architectural fragments from the Roman period. Lydia, the seller of purple in Philippi, was from Thyatira.

Before we check in at the hotel in Izmir, we enjoy a panoramic ride of Smyrna, the third largest city in Turkey and one of the sites of the Seven Churches of Asia [Rev. 2:12-17]. Smyrna is a city scarred with a bloody history of trade and warfare. We ascend to Mount Pagus where we visit the Citadel of Lysimachus, commander of Alexander the Great, erected in the 4th century BC. We will also see the Clock Tower. Check in at the hotel for dinner and overnight.

Day 5: IZMIR – SARDIS – PHILADELPHIA - LAODICEA – HIERAPOLIS (Breakfast, Dinner)

Today we depart early in the morning to one of the most picturesque areas of any of the Seven Churches of Asia [Rev. 1:11; 3:1-4], Sardis, presently Sart. This was the capital of the ancient Lydian kingdom of the 6th century BC, portrayed as a dying church. We visit the great Temple of Artemis and the Temple of Cybele, which became a Byzantine Church. We will also visit the restored gymnasium and reconstructed Synagogue. We also see the

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last several meters of the royal Persian Road from Susa to Sardis built by Cyrus the Great and the «golden» river Pactolus. Lunch en route.

Then we continue our journey to Philadelphia, nowadays called Alasehir, another church of the Seven Churches of Asia [Rev. 1:11; 3:7], and the only church not censured. There we see the remains of a Byzantine basilica built of brick, with a bit of high arch and some 11th century frescoes. We drive to the healing city of Hierapolis, actually Pamukkale, the white «cotton fortress» where hot mineral water bursts from the earth and cascades over steep cliffs forming pools, channels and stalactites. The therapeutic waters were known to the founders of Hierapolis and of Laodicea in 190 BC. In Hierapolis [Col. 4:13] we visit the Martyrium of the Apostle Philip where he was martyred during the persecutions ordered by Domitian. Proceed to Laodicea (present name Denizli) yet another of the Seven Churches of Asia Minor [Rev. 1:11; 3:14; Col. 2:1; 4:13-16]. We see the ancient theatre, the remains of basilica and ancient stone water pipes.

We visit the Gate of Domitian, the Arcadian Way, the 2nd century AD Theatre, the Nymphaeum, the Temple of Apollo, the Plutonium and the Necropolis. Check in at hotel for dinner and overnight in a Thermal Hotel.

Day 6: EPHESUS - KUSADASI (Breakfast, Dinner)

Drive to Ephesus visit to the ancient city of Ephesus including the Basilica of St. John. The Apostle Paul preached to the Ephesians and lived here for three years. This church also received an epistle from him. We tour the spectacular ruins where excavations still continue in this once great and important city, which was founded in the 10th century BC.

Walk through history along marble streets lined with wonderful public buildings, among them the Baths of Scholastica, the Library of Celsus, the Temple of Hadrian and the Theatre. The Temple of Diana of the Ephesians, another of the seven wonders of the ancient world, was built in this city. We visit the Basilica of St. John. Visit The House of Virgin Mary before drive to Kusadasi Overnight in Kusadasi

Day 7: IZMIR - ISTANBUL (Breakfast)

After breakfast and transfer to Izmir airport for noon flight to Istanbul. Arrival and our representative will transfer to your hotel. Afternoon Free in Istanbul to explore the city on your own. Overnight in Istanbul.

Day 8: HOME (Breakfast)

Transfer to Airport to connect to your international flight and leave Turkey
The end of our services

INCLUDES & EXCLUDES

 7 nights accommodations at 4 Star Hotel including breakfast.	YES
 Arrival & Departure Transfers	YES
 7 breakfast and 4 dinner	YES
 Entrance fees to the sites and museums written on itinerary	YES
 English Speaking - Bible Oriented Tour Guide	YES
 Istanbul - Izmir - Istanbul flight ticket	YES
 Local Taxes	YES
 Tips to Guide & Driver	NOT
 Meals not mentioned in the itinerary.	NOT
 International Flight tickets.	NOT

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