

BIBLICAL Turkey

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BIBLICAL ISTANBUL SHORE EXCURSION

Duration: 8 Hours

Standards: Private & Groups

Highlights: Istanbul (Patriarchate at Fener, Hagion, Lousma, Savior in Chora, Miracles of Jesus, Byzantine Church, Agiasma, Pantocrator, Church of St. Mary, Hagia Sophia.

Departure: Everyday

ITINERARY

Pick up from your hotel and depart for Biblical Istanbul City Tour.

First, visit the Patriarchate at Fener which is the seat of Orthodox Christianity since Constantine The Great' s declaration as the religion of Roman Empire. Then visit Church of Panagia of Blachernae, the best known and most celebrated shrine of the Holy Virgin located near Golden Horn. The church is famed with the hagiasma (fountain of holy water), good to cure health problems, and the Hagion Lousma (sacred bath) good to clean the soul where the emperor also came to purify himself. Then see St. Savior in Chora (Kariye Museum) originally a Byzantine monastery with fantastic mosaics and frescoes portraying scenes from a bible, the life and miracles of Jesus. (closed on wednesdays) The church is considered to be one of the most beautiful examples of a Byzantine church.

After Chora Museum, see Pantocrator (Zeyrek) from outside. It represents the most typical example of architecture of the Byzantine middle period in Constantinople and is, after Hagia Sophia, the second largest religious edifice built by the Byzantines still extant in Istanbul.

Then visit Church of St. Mary Pammacaristos, once housed the Patriarchate for a while after the conquest. The Parekklesion, besides being one of the most important examples of Constantinoples Palaiologan architecture, has the largest amount of Byzantine mosaics after the Hagia Sophia and Chora Church in Istanbul. See Zoodochos Pege at Balikli, dedicated to the Mother of God at Pege, with an underground cistern, full of gold fishes related to a well - known miracle, and the fountain of holy water. Visit St. Sergius and Bacchus from outside, a landmark in Byzantine ecclesiastical architecture.

This Byzantine building with a central dome plan was erected in the 6th century and was a model for the Hagia Sophia, the main church of the Byzantine Empire. Then see Hagia Eirene from outside, the old patriarchal church with its impressive size stands next to Hagia Sophia. The building reputedly stands on the site of a pre - Christian temple. It ranks, in fact, as the first church built in Constantinople.

Lastly, visit Hagia Sophia, a former Orthodox patriarchal basilica, later a mosque and now a museum. Famous in particular for its massive dome, Hagia Sophia is considered the epitome of Byzantine architecture and is believed to have "changed the history of architecture". See spectacular mosaics which depict the Virgin Mother, Jesus, saints, Byzantium emperors and empresses and biblical scenes.

Web : www.biblicalturkey.site E-mail : info@biblicalturkey.site

Address: Hülya Kocyigit Bulv. G. Paradise Sit. A blok. D:4 Kusadasi / Aydın – TURKEY

Phone: +90 256 618 33 75 / Fax: +90 256 618 31 20 / Mobile: +90 549 640 11 03