

# TURKEY & TEHRAN DISCOVERER , (ZUI)

Istanbul to Tehran 12 Days, departing 9th April 2020



## TRIP OVERVIEW

**Trip Style:** Overlanding

**Route:** Istanbul to Tehran

**Duration:** 12 Days

**Transport:** Overland Expedition Vehicle

**Accommodation:** Comfortable Hotel 3 nights  
Basic Hotel 6 nights  
Camping without facilities 2 nights

**Meals:** Breakfasts x 7, Lunches x 2, Dinners x 2

**Physical Challenge:** ● ● ○ ○ ○

Your itinerary may include easy-paced day walks, bike rides, and other activities that are not too strenuous.

**Lifestyle Challenge:** ● ● ● ○ ○

This trip has a bit of everything. Some areas that you travel through may be physically challenging; for example you may be at altitude some of the time and you may be camping for several nights. The pace of the trip can be tiring at times and some facilities will be basic. However there will also be plenty of time to relax and some comfortable accommodation.



# DAILY ITINERARY

## Day 1 - Istanbul (9th April 2020)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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Border Information: if joining in Istanbul, you will most likely enter Turkey at Istanbul Atatürk Airport (IATA code: IST).

There will be a pre-departure meeting at 10:00am - on arrival please look out for a note from your leader with more information about this important meeting.

If you are travelling beyond Tehran, your tour leader will need to carefully check your visa situation for your entire trip - if anybody that has arranged to apply for an Iranian visa in Istanbul, we will visit the Iranian embassy immediately after our meeting. The rest of the day will be free to explore the incredible city of Istanbul.

In Istanbul we will stay in dorm accommodation in a fantastic hostel with good facilities, which is a 5 minute walk from the Blue Mosque.

Please note that many of the options listed below will only be possible for those with extra time in Istanbul before the start of your trip with us - please contact the Sales team if you would like to book pre-tour accommodation with us to have extra time exploring Istanbul.

*\*Important note - do not bring any medicines containing tramadol, codeine, temazepam, morphine or opiates to Central Asia. These are illegal in all circumstances in most of Central Asia and you will risk arrest. If in doubt about a particular medicine, please do not bring it. See the notes at the bottom for more details.\**

Accommodation:

## Day 2 - Istanbul (10th April 2020)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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Today we will have a free day to explore the myriad of highlights in the old Byzantine and Ottoman capital. There are many places to visit, such as the spectacular Blue Mosque, the colossal Hagia Sophia, the bewildering Grand Bazaar, the phenomenal Topkapı Palace, and a ferry cruise on the Bosphorus river.

## Day 3 - Goreme (11th April 2020)

Today we start our journey with a full day's drive east to Göreme, a small enchanting town in the heart of the Cappadocia mountains.

## Day 4 - Goreme (12th April 2020)

Today will be a full day to explore Goreme, including a guided tour of the enchanted valley of Cappadocia. There will also be an opportunity for a magical optional balloon ride over the valley during your time here (weather permitting).

## Day 5 - Goreme (13th April 2020)

We will have one final day in Goreme to partake in any optional activities.

## Day 6 - Mount Nemrut (14th April 2020)

**Meals:** Lunch, Dinner

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Today is a drive day as we travel through the stunning landscapes in eastern Turkey towards the Kurdish town of Dogubayazit. We will aim to overnight close to Mount Nemrut this evening.

## Day 7 - Lake Nemrut (15th April 2020)

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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Another full drive day today however we will be rewarded with a beautiful campsite near Lake Nemrut at the end of the day with a bit of time to relax and enjoy the evening.

## Day 8 - Dogubayazit (16th April 2020)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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Today we will complete our drive to the Kurdish town of Dogubayazit. On arrival we will have an included visit to the

Ishak Pasha Palace and enjoy the spectacular views of the surrounding landscapes and the nearby Mount Ararat.

### Day 9 - Tabriz (17th April 2020)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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Border Information: Exit Turkey at Gurbulak, enter Iran at Bazargan.

Today we will drive across the Iranian border to the city of Tabriz, where we will have free time to explore some of the sights of the old town.

### Day 10 - Zanjan (18th April 2020)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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Today we will continue our journey east to the small town of Zanjan, where we have free time to explore and possibly visit the fascinating historical laundry hall of Rakhathshor-Khaneh.

### Day 11 - Tehran (19th April 2020)

**Meals:** Breakfast

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Today we will have an included visit to the impressive Dome of Soltaniyeh, just outside of Zanjan. The 14th-century mausoleum is the 3rd largest dome in the world.

After our visit we will continue our drive to the buzzing and chaotic Iranian capital of Tehran.

### Day 12 - Tehran - End Date (20th April 2020)

Border Information: If leaving in Tehran, you will most likely exit Iran at Tehran Imam Khomeini International Airport (IATA code: IKA).

This morning we will have an included tour of the stunning Golestan Palace and the fascinating National Museum of Iran.

Today is the end day for passengers finishing their trip in Tehran. Please note there is no accommodation included on the trip tonight.

*Please note that due to restrictions on citizens of the UK, USA and Canada being permitted to remain unaccompanied in Iran, we will only be able to book one extra night of accommodation in Tehran for these nationalities at the end of this trip. You will also be required to book an airport transfer in advance via your sales agent. Please ensure the correct dates for your plans are clearly stated on all your visa applications.*

Accommodation:

## ITINERARY DISCLAIMER

The routes, activities and places visited described in these notes are intentions and are meant as a rough guide only. By their very nature, overland itineraries need to be flexible and the regions that we are travelling through are often unpredictable. We intend to follow the planned route but exact night stops and inclusions cannot be guaranteed and it sometimes happens that we decide to make a change to our planned itinerary. This may be for a variety of reasons; climatic, road or bureaucratic conditions may demand it. Changes to the itinerary may occur with little notice so please be prepared for modifications to your trip.

#### Drive Times

Drive times are listed in the day-to-day itinerary. These are the approximate number of hours that the vehicle will be in motion, and does not include any time taken for coffee or lunch stops, border crossings, photo stops, activities en route, comfort breaks, shopping stops, toilet stops, etc. The times given are approximate estimates only and whilst given with the best of intentions, the drive times are heavily dependent on traffic, road conditions, weather, police roadblocks, and many other factors.

#### Accommodation and Meals Included

The type of accommodation and included meals are listed for each day of the itinerary. These listings show our intention and on most departures the listings will be accurate. However due to the flexible nature of overland itineraries, climatic, bureaucratic or road conditions may demand changes to our listed intentions or groups may simply decide to amend the plans from time to time.

#### Optional Activities

A selection of optional activities is listed in the day-to-day itinerary. This list is designed to be a helpful guide as to what is commonly available in each location, and is neither an exhaustive list, a guarantee that the activity is available, or an endorsement or recommendation. Certain activities may not be available on your particular visit and it may not be possible to do all the activities listed in the time available at each destination. It is recommended to give yourself extra time in your joining or ending city if you would like to participate in some optional activities there. Prices listed are for entrance only and do not include transport costs to and from the sites or local guides unless indicated. The prices are displayed according to our latest information and in the best faith, but prices do fluctuate due to exchange rates, season, numbers of participants, and simple increases from the operator, and therefore any prices listed are a guide only and cannot be guaranteed. If you partake in any optional activities,

you do so at your own risk and it must be clearly understood that your participation is your own decision and does not form part of your contract with Dragoman. You may be required to sign/complete a waiver form or optional activity form for some optional activities. For more information around activity safety and insurance, please see the Essential Information document.

## EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

In the event of a real emergency once you have left your home country, please contact us on our out of office hours number. If you cannot get through on the phone, please leave a message with your name, reference number, contact details and a message with the help that you need and we will get back to you. Please bear in mind that real progress or action may not be possible until normal office hours, depending on the issue.

If your flight is delayed, please inform us as soon as you can and then make your way to the joining hotel as instructed in the Joining Point section of these notes.

**Out of hours Number: +44 (0) 7985 106564**

## A FEW RULES

We expect all group members to act respectfully towards our staff and other group members. Bullying will not be tolerated.

Engaging in commercial or exploitative sexual activities, committing acts of violence or threatening violence towards local people, other group members or any member of our staff is not allowed. Any customer engaging in such activities will be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

You must at all times comply with the laws, customs, foreign exchange and drug regulations of all countries visited and conduct yourself in accordance with our responsible travel policy. Any customer found contravening such laws or regulations will be required to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price.

Although we are aware that in some parts of the world taking, carrying or selling drugs, or carrying weapons may be legal, it is not acceptable for Dragoman customers and our tour leaders have the right to ask you to leave the trip immediately with no refund of the trip price if you are found to be engaging in such activities.

## ISSUES ON THE TRIP

While we always endeavour to provide the best possible holiday experience, due to the nature of travel and the areas we visit sometimes things can and do go wrong. Should any issue occur while you are on your trip, it is imperative that you discuss this with your group leader or our local partner straight away so that they can do their best to rectify the problem and save any potential negative impact on the rest of your trip.

We recognise that there may be times when your group leader may not be able to resolve a situation to your satisfaction. If this is the case please contact our customer relations department on [customer-relations@dragoman.co.uk](mailto:customer-relations@dragoman.co.uk).

You may also choose to provide details in your feedback questionnaire which we ask you to complete at the end of your trip, but we do ask you to be aware that it is very difficult for us to provide any practical help after the trip is complete.

## IMPORTANT NOTES

### OVERLANDING LIFESTYLE

Dragoman was founded in 1981, and has had many years of experience of leading overland trips across 4 continents. Overlanding is all about sharing a great travelling experience with like-minded people. On your trip you'll travel in one of Dragoman's purpose-built iconic expedition vehicles on an off-the-beaten-track adventure along rugged roads, experiencing the sights, sounds and smells of the world up-close. Your journey will be overland, sometimes across vast distances, so some long days spent driving are inevitable - but these will be interspersed with breaks of a day or two at a destination or activity.

On an overland journey, you are more than just a passenger and everyone gets involved setting up camp - we supply the tent but it's up to you to pitch it! As part of your trip, you will be assigned a truck job which could be collecting firewood or water, luggage loading, organising food, stores, etc. Like all great adventures, the more you put in the more you'll get out! For more details of how an overlanding trip works, please see the Essential Information document.

### SAFETY STANDARDS

We run adventure journeys in off the beaten track areas, which often have poor infrastructure. You should expect that some of these areas do not adhere to 'Western' safety standards. For more information, please see the Essential Information document

## MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IN REMOTE AREAS

We will be travelling to areas in remote locations where medical assistance will not be available, and communications may be sparse. We do not carry satellite phones on our regular trips. Therefore, if you have a medical condition such as a heart condition that would put you at risk, we would suggest that this is not the trip for you. Also, please be aware that should an emergency occur, there is likely to be a considerable delay in accessing medical care, and by joining our trip you accept this risk.

## VISAS, HEALTH, INSURANCE & MONEY

Before you travel there are vital things to consider such as:

- Any visas needed for your trip
- Any vaccinations needed (please consult your GP or travel clinic)
- Organising your local payment (the kitty)
- Buying travel insurance (insurance is compulsory to be allowed to join our trips)

For more information on these topics, please see the Essential Information Document.

## TURKEY NOTES

## IRAN NOTES

### IRAN NOTE

Alcohol and pork products are strictly forbidden in Iran and will be confiscated at customs by anyone attempting to bring it into the country. Please do not try to bring alcohol into the country under any circumstances - your leader will ask you to dispose of it before heading to the border.

Iran is a conservative Islamic nation and a strict dress code is enforced throughout the country. Any deviation from the dress code may have you refused entry at the border, or in trouble with the police or locals once inside the country.

Men must wear long trousers at all times - ankles must be covered, but short sleeved shirts are acceptable. Open-toe sandals are fine to wear for both men and women.

Women are required by law to wear long, loose-fitting clothing in public. You must also wear a headscarf (any colour you like, though you will find that local women usually prefer black) in public. There is no rule of the colour of your outfit as long as it is modest and includes a headscarf. Generally female travellers can wear the loose fitting long-sleeved shirts available in many Asian shops that reach down to the thighs - any type of trousers underneath is allowed as long as they cover your ankles. Women are able to wear open-toed shoes and sandals as long as their ankles are not showing.

Please note that any British, US or Canadian citizens that are flying into Tehran to start the trip will need to book an arrival transfer in advance, and this must be done through us according to Iranian law. We strongly recommend that people of these nationalities aim to arrive on the start date of the trip, but if you require pre-tour accommodation in Tehran this must be booked through us and only a maximum of one night can be applied for. All the above also applies to all British, US or Canadian citizens who are leaving in Tehran - you will need to book an airport transfer through us and only a maximum of one night of post-trip accommodation can be applied for if needed.

Please ensure you have an up to date version of these notes. **These notes were printed on the 27th May 2020**