

# Intercultural Trips to **TURKEY**

TURKISH  
CULTURAL  
CENTER  
NEW JERSEY

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## ***Mission***

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Turkish Cultural Center is a non-profit organization dedicated to promote harmony in diverse cultural setting in the United States. Building, increasing and/or fostering a strong and lasting friendship by promoting a better understanding that is based on mutual respect between the individuals of the United States of America and those of Turkish background and/or origin. Introducing, promoting and informing the people in the United States with the Turkish history and culture by bringing people together in an open dialog.

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## ***Vision***

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In a modern world where even the farthest point is within an arm's reach, it is impossible to live anywhere without experiencing diversity. This diversity, rather than a difference is now appreciated by the people who think that we can live in a world where people do have much more in common than separates them. In order for everyone to live peacefully together it is important for individuals to rise above differences that drive us apart or against each other. Adopting the dialogue and understanding Turkish Cultural Center aims to introduce commonalities and foster friendships between these two nations by setting up platforms where cultures express themselves.

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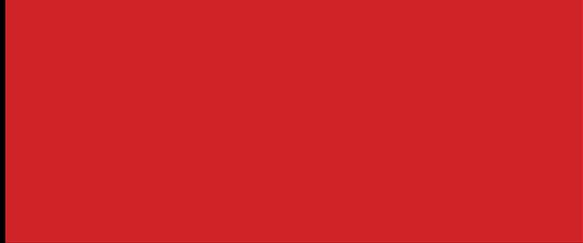
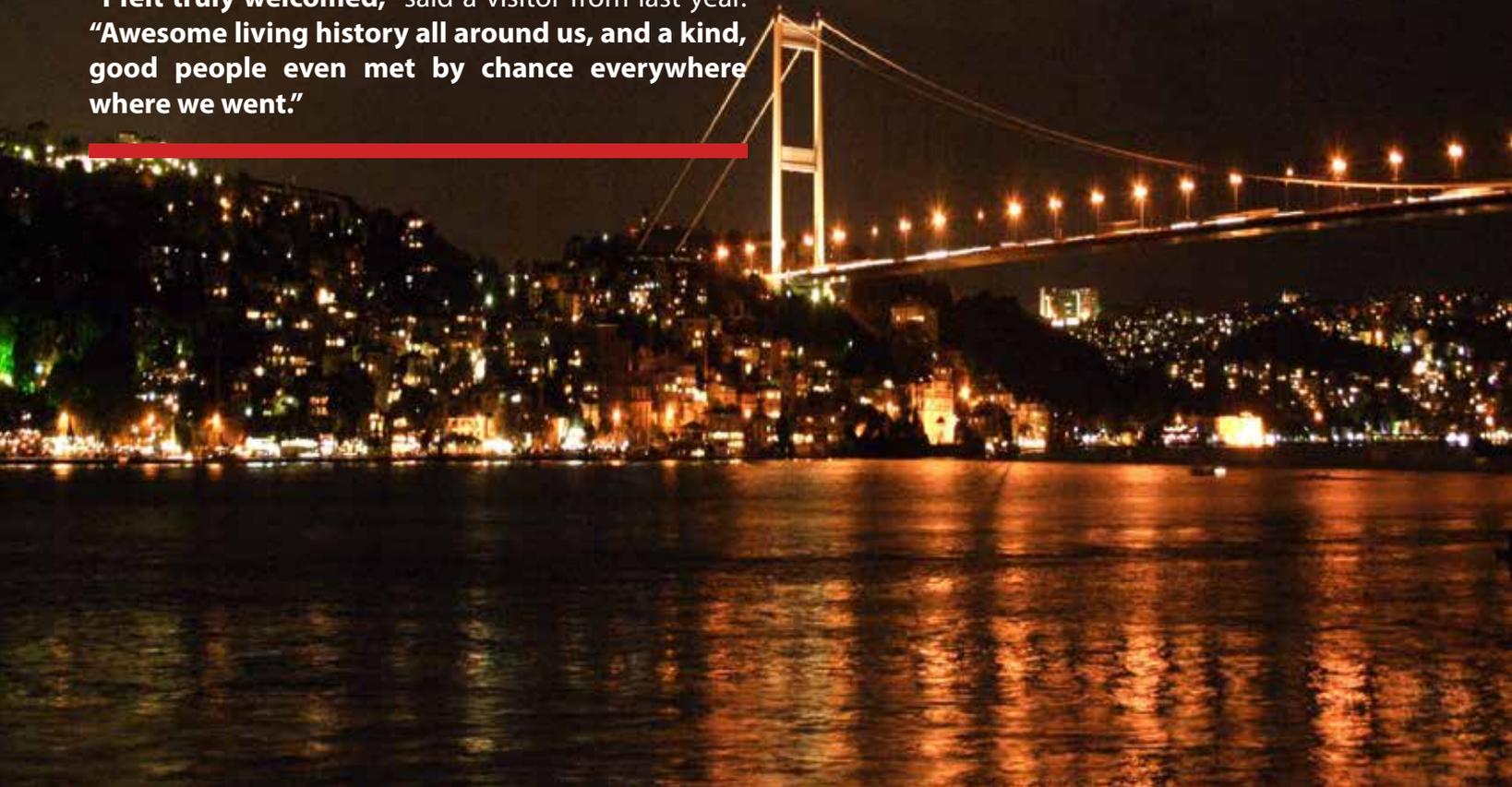
# Intercultural Exchange Trips to Turkey

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Turkish Cultural Center Institute organizes intercultural cultural trips to Turkey as just one of their efforts to build bridges and strengthen friendships among Turkish-Americans and their neighbors. Though hailing from different cultural backgrounds, travelers and hosts are provided an opportunity find common ground. New Jerseyans are invited to share meals, meet families, visit exciting and historic sites throughout Turkey, and perhaps to forge lifelong connections. The purpose of the trips is to further the possibility of a future enhanced by dialogue and mutual understanding.

**"I felt truly welcomed,"** said a visitor from last year. **"Awesome living history all around us, and a kind, good people even met by chance everywhere where we went."**

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The programs organized by Turkish Cultural Center are not only tourist stops, but also rich cultural experiences. During their seven-to-ten-day stay in Turkey, guests will visit major historic sites throughout Turkey and be exposed to the bright, welcoming, and treasure-filled, and hospitable environment that is Turkey.

More than anything else, Turkish Cultural Center hopes its guests take away with them an understanding of and a feeling for the profound caring and hospitality that are innate in Turkish culture and at the heart of understanding, tolerance, openness and love.

Turkey has too much to offer to fit it all into one short visit. So that you may experience Turkey's abundance, we at the Turkish Cultural Center are more than pleased to tailor personalized group tours to suit your personal or professional interests. All tours share a common foundation. There are certain aspects of Turkey we especially want to share with you. In particular, we want you to see how dedicated people are making a difference through value-driven ambition and shared enterprise.

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## ***A Brief Introduction to our Tours***

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Our tours are unique. Our guides don't just show you the sites, the museums, and the natural wonders (though, rest assured, they abound). We want you to feel Turkey.

You will see palace-museums housing relics dating back more than a millennium. You will go to the heart of the bustling markets where vendors have haggled with buyers for centuries. Artisans who practice crafts passed down for generations will show you their exquisite work.

We invite you to dine at sidewalk tables overlooking the evening bustle of activity of Anatolian cities. We welcome you to our friends' homes to share meals. We take you to Rumi's museum, where life-sized wax figures pose in states of reverie, meditation or seem in movement. We will go where priceless relics are on display, where a whisper of Rumi's poetry lingers in the halls. We take you to see actual dervishes who play on the reed, chant invocations, and whirl in ecstasy.

We are your guides through Turkey, from Istanbul, city of world's desire, to the shores of mythic Troy. We take you not just to see Turkey but, for a few days, to live Turkey.

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## ***Memories to last a lifetime***

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Turkey has so much to offer her visitors: breathtaking natural beauties, unique historical and archeological sites, increasingly polished hospitality infrastructure and a tradition of warmth towards visitors. It is no surprise that that Turkey is one of the world's most popular tourism destinations. Due to Turkey's diverse geography, one can experience four different climates in any one day. The rectangular shaped country is washed on three sides by three different seas. Its shores are laced with beaches, bays, coves, ports, islands and peninsulas. The summers are long, lasting as long as eight months in some areas. Turkey is also blessed with majestic mountains and valleys, lakes, rivers, waterfalls and grottoes perfect for winter and summer tourism and sports of all kinds.

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# **TURKEY**



Istanbul is truly a world city, a city that everyone should visit at least once in his or her lifetime. It is an enchanting blend of Eastern and Western culture, a vibrant, modern city, with a unique identity. Its rich past coexists alongside its youthful exuberance. Although no longer the capital of Turkey, Istanbul still remains the country's cultural and business centre.

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“ *If the earth was a single state,  
Istanbul would be its capital.*

*Napoleon Bonaparte*

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# ISTANBUL



## ***Bosphorus tour***

The layout of Istanbul can seem confusing at first. The Bosphorus divides the city into the European and Asian sides, linked by two magnificent bridges, spanning the continents, the first of which was opened in 1973 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Republic. Most visitors to the city, staying for a few days, will have little reason to visit the Asian side, except for as part of a Bosphorus tour, on a boat that zigzags from side to side, to take in the best of each.



## ***Topkapi Palace***

The area where Topkapi Palace is built was the ancient acropolis with its monumental temple. Construction of Topkapi Palace began in 1472 and was completed in, 1478, although successive sultans added new buildings to the complex over the centuries.

Topkapi Palace was both home to the Ottoman sultans and centre of government for four hundred years, and over this time the palace was in a constant state of fluctuation, with additions and alterations carried out by various sultans.

Topkapi Palace gradually lost its importance at the end of the 17th century, as the Sultans preferred to spend more time in their new palaces along the Bosphorus. In 1856, Sultan Abdül Mecid decided to move the court to the newly built Dolmabahçe Palace, the first European-style palace in the city.



## ***Archeological Museum***

Istanbul Archeology Museums, which were established as Empire Museum at the end of the 19th century.

It has an importance and specialty being one of the museum buildings that are constructed as a Museum in the World. Today, it still protects its outstanding place in the World's biggest museums with its works more than a million belonging to various cultures.

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## Hagia Sophia

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Hagia Sophia is considered a unique monument in world architecture, and its magnificence and functionality has been a good example in construction of countless Ottoman mosques.

Hagia Sophia with its exceptional history constitutes a synthesis between east and west. This monument is one of the wonders of the world that has remained intact until the present day. One can find many attractions in Hagia Sophia interesting forms of Byzantine architecture, mosaics of the Christian period as well as structures added during the Ottoman era.

It has been a Christian place of worship for 916 years. Hagia Sophia Museum was opened in 1935 and ever since it has been attracting thousands of visitors every year.

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## Jewish Museum

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Jewish Museum of Turkey (officially Quincennial Foundation) to inform the society of the traditions and history of Turkish Jewry. Jewish Museum of Turkey includes sections on the intermingling. Cultures of Jewish and Muslim Turk and ethnographic articles that depict the traditions of Turkish Jews, as well as the historical accounts of the Jewish odyssey from Spain to Turkey.

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## Hippodrome & Blue Mosque

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The Hippodrome of Constantinople was a circus that was the sporting and social centre of Constantinople, capital of the Byzantine Empire.

Today it is a square named Sultanahmet Meydani (Sultan Ahmet Square) in the Turkish city of Istanbul, with only a few fragments of the original structure surviving.

The mosque is popularly known as the Blue tiles adorning the walls of its interior. It was built between 1609 and 1616, during the rule of Ahmed I.

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# TRAVEL

## ***Basilica Cistern***

The Basilica Cistern is the largest of several hundred ancient cisterns that lie beneath the city of Istanbul.

The cistern, located 500 feet southwest of the Hagia Sophia on the historical peninsula of Sarayburnu was built in the 6th century during the reign of Byzantine Emperor Justinian I.

Before being converted to a cistern, a great Basilica stood in its place, built between the 3rd and 4th centuries during the Early Roman Age as a commercial, legal and artistic center.

Ancient texts indicated that the basilica contained gardens, surrounded by a colonnade and facing Hagia Sophia.



## ***Taksim & St. Anthony Church***



St. Anthony of Padua Church is the largest church of the Roman Catholic Church in Istanbul, Turkey. It is located on Istiklal Avenue in the Beyoglu district.

St. Anthony of Padua, along with its adjacent building on Istiklal Avenue, was built between 1906 and 1912 in the Venetian Neo-Gothic style, and was likewise edified by the local Italian community of the city, mostly of Genoese and Venetian descent.

## ***Grand Bazaar & Egyptian Spice Bazaar***

The Grand Bazaar has over 4,000 shops containing all kinds of everything, in particular silver and gold, ceramics, glassware, leather, metal wares and Turkish carpets.

Next to the Yeni Mosque, the Spice Bazaar, or Misir Carsisi, is a mystical eastern fantasy. For centuries, the Turkish have been coming to the Spice Bazaars instead of the doctors for centuries old remedies, and even for modern day illnesses. Herbal remedies can often alleviate symptoms for diseases like cancer and remedies for infertility, weight loss.



## ***Miniaturk***

Miniaturk covers a total area of 60,000 square meters. Its model area is 15,000 sqm, making Miniaturk the world's largest miniature park in respect to its model area. Miniaturk also boasts 40,000 sqm of open space, 3,500 sqm of covered area, 2,000 sqm of pools and waterways, and a parking lot with a capacity of 500 vehicles.

The park contains 120 models done in 1/25th scale. 57 of the structures are from Istanbul, 51 are from Anatolia, and 12 are from the Ottoman territories that today lie outside of Turkey. Additional space was reserved for potential future models. The infrastructure was built taking into consideration the needs of potential additions. Therefore, Miniaturk will continue growing, modeling, in a sense, planned urbanization.

“ *İzmir is a princess with her most beautiful hat.*

*Victor Hugo*

The “Pearl of the Aegean”, İzmir is Turkey’s third largest city and second most important port. A city of palm – lined promenades, avenues and green parks set in sweeping curves along a circular bay. İzmir has an exceptionally mild climate and many fine hotels. The city is a busy commercial and industrial centre as well the gateway to the Aegean Region.



İZMİR

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## **Ephesus**

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The first establishment of the antique City of Ephesus within the boundaries of Selcuk district of Izmir province dates back to 6000 BC, to the Neolithic age.

The harbor city Ephesus where also immigrants from Greece settled moved to the neighborhood of the Artemis Temple in 560 BC. Ephesus that is being visited by many tourists today was founded by Lysimakhos, one of the generals of Alexander the Great in the year 300 BC.

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## **House Of Virgin Mary**

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The House of the Virgin Mary is a Christian and Muslim Shrine located on Mount Koressos in the vicinity of Ephesus, in modern day Selcuk, Izmir.

In 1881, French priest, the Abbe Julien Gouyet of Paris, discovered a small stone building on a mountain overlooking the Aegean Sea and the ruins of ancient Ephesus.

The remnants of the structure have been dated to 6th- 7th centuries, with parts of the foundation and coal found on the site dated to the 1st century.

Pope Paul VI visited the shrine on July 26, 1967, and 'unofficially' confirmed its authenticity. Pope John Paul II also visited the shrine on November 30, 1979. Pope Benedict XVI visited this shrine on November 29, 2006 during his four-day pastoral trip to Turkey.



***You may have seen amphitheatres in Italy, France, Dalmatia and Africa; temples in Egypt and Greece; palaces in Crete; you may be sated with antiquity or scornful of it. But you have not seen the theater of Aspendos.***

***DG Howarth***

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ANTATIYA

Antalya: with a history dating back to 133 BC and a name meaning "Home of Attalos" referring to the founder of the city Attalos, is a peaceful city situated at the slopes of the Taurus Mountains rich in scenic beauties and historical monuments. Antalya which can be visited any season, can be visited any season, is an indispensable touristic destination particularly during the summer. This "blue" city enchants its guests with its beautiful beaches and has the longest coastline in Turkey.



## ***Kaleici Tour***

Kaleici (Citadel), the old city centre of Antalya, combines the aesthetics of old and new, its charms surrounded inside and out by fortified walls. These walls, some of which have survived to this day, were built by the various civilizations that inhabited the city over a 2000-year period and there are 80 towers rising on them. Within the walls, the narrow streets that lead to the port are lined with traditional dwellings. The two or three-storey houses that face the street on one side and gardens on the other, perfectly reflect the atmosphere of old Antalya.



## ***Aspendos***

Aspendos was an ancient city in Pamphylia, Asia Minor, located about 40 km east of the modern city of Antalya, Turkey. It was situated on the Eurymedon River about 16 km inland from the Mediterranean Sea; it shared a border with, and was hostile to, Side. According to later tradition, the (originally non-Greek) city was founded around 1000 BC by Greeks who may have come from Argos. The wide range of its coinage throughout the ancient world indicates that, in the 5th century BC, Aspendos had become the most important city in Pamphylia. At that time the Eurymedon River was navigable as far as Aspendos, and the city derived great wealth from a trade in salt, oil, and wool.



## ***Duden Waterfalls***

The magnificent place at Duden Waterfall is about 10 kilometers distance to the beaches South East of Antalya and can easily be reached by public transportations or with a rented car on well prepared asphalt roads. Over here the river Duden is leaving a higher plateau of the Taurus mountains by falling about 15 m deep and 20 m wide onto a lower plateau next to Antalya. Because of the raw ingredients in the water, huge amounts of Tuff stone ( volcanic ) materials have formed the river bed as well as a cave below the waterfall.



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## *Underground City*

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Kaymaklı Underground City is contained within the citadel of Kaymaklı in the Central Anatolia Region of Turkey. First opened to tourists in 1964, the village is about 19 km from Nevşehir, on the Nevşehir-Niğde road. The ancient name was Eneğüp. The houses in the village are constructed around the nearly one hundred tunnels of the underground city. The tunnels are still used today as storage areas, stables, and cellars. The underground city at Kaymaklı differs from Derinkuyu in terms of its structure and layout. The tunnels are lower, narrower, and more steeply inclined. Of the four floors open to tourists, each space is organized around ventilation shafts. This makes the design of each room or open space dependent on the availability of ventilation.

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## *Churches of Goreme*

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Göreme is a district of the Nevşehir Province in Turkey. After the eruption of Mount Erciyes about 2,000 years ago, ash and lava formed soft rocks in the Cappadocia Region, covering a region of about 20,000 km<sup>2</sup>. The softer rock was eroded by wind and water, leaving the hard cap rock on top of pillars, forming the present-day fairy chimneys. People of Göreme, at the heart of the Cappadocia Region, realized that these soft rocks could be easily carved out to form houses, churches, monasteries. These Christian sanctuaries contain many examples of Byzantine art from the post-iconoclastic period. These frescoes are a unique artistic achievement from this period.

“ *A Different World* ”

# CAPPADOCIA

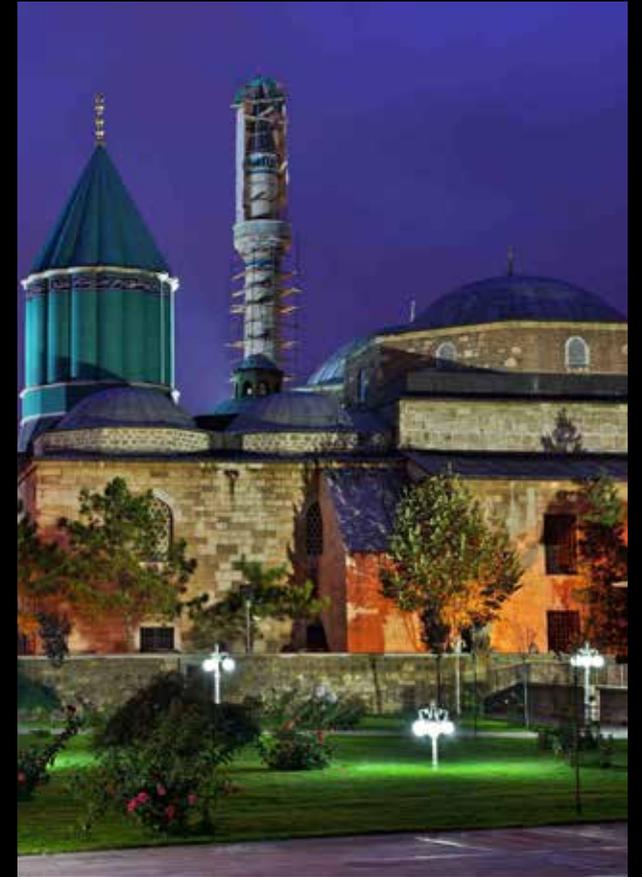
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***Come, come, whoever you are. Wanderer, worshiper, lover of leaving. It doesn't matter. Ours is not a caravan of despair. come, even if you have broken your vows a thousand times. Come, yet again , come , come.***

***Rumi***

# KONYA



## ***Celaleddin Rumi***

Konya is one the first inhabited cities in the history, and contains traces of ancient civilizations, which gives it the atmosphere of a museum city.

The city is best known as the adopted home of Celaleddin Rumi, the Sufic mystic who founded the whirling Dervish sect. Today it is still a center of Sufic practice and teaching.

“ **A Green World**

**BURSA**



## ***Ulu Cami***

Ulu Cami is the largest mosque in Bursa and a landmark of early Ottoman architecture which used many elements from the Seljuk architecture. Ordered by Sultan Bayezid I, the mosque was designed and built by architect Ali Neccar in 1396–1399. It is a large rectangular building, with twenty domes arranged in four rows of five that are supported by twelve columns. Supposedly the twenty domes were built instead of the twenty separate mosques which Sultan Bayezid I had promised for winning the Battle of Nicopolis in 1396. The mosque has two minarets.

There is also a fountain (şadırvan) inside the mosque where worshipers can perform ritual ablutions before prayer; the dome over the şadırvan is capped by a skylight which creates a soft light below, playing an important role in the illumination of the large building.

The horizontally spacious and dimly lit interior is designed to feel peaceful and contemplative. The subdivisions of space formed by multiple domes and pillars create a sense of privacy and even intimacy.

## Koza Han (Silk Bazaar)

In the heart of Bursa-the first Ottoman capital-stands Koza (Cocoon) Han, the largest, most colourful of Bursa's many hans, or inns. Commissioned by Sultan Bayezid II in 1492 as a caravanserai that would provide income for his mosque in Istanbul, the han was built by Abdülula Bin Pula Shah and is a stunning example of stone and brick architecture. The han has had many names and functions over the years; its current appellation refers to the fact that it was once an important centre in the silk trade. Although its courtyard is no longer filled with snow-white silkworm cocoons, both Koza Han and Bursa remain synonymous with silk.



## Turkey Trip Reflections

**Mayor Sophie Heymann**  
*Borough of Closter*

What can you say about an unforgettable experience? Is it the plethora of fabulous sights, from the ships threading their way on the Bosphorus to the surrounding verdant hills and magical estates? Is it the journey into antiquity – fifth century churches, two thousand year old stadiums, and the well-preserved ruins of marble cities, as well as caves inhabited by the followers of Jesus Christ? Is it the marketplaces: the lively bazaars and the remnants of the famous Silk Road? Is it the thrust of Turkey's evolvement into a twenty-first century power, with marble-walled schools and newspaper headquarters designed as elegantly as museums, not to forget the solar collectors atop almost every roof?

Much more than that, is the recollection of the hospitality of our hosts: Down-to-earth and very gracious sharing of their best home-cooked meals, genuine friendliness and eagerness to teach about their world and learn about ours or the opportunity to visit many types of homes, and meet so many Turks, from local businessmen to the mayor of an Istanbul district? Is it the gifts with which we were plied, which bring a fond smile to my face every time I look at the plates and medals I brought back?

Most of all, I think it is Levent's tour-de-force shepherding of our group – the opportunities he provided, the questions he answered so ably, the tight schedule that he managed flawlessly, the gentle sense of humor with which he kept us alert, the photos he took endlessly, the very visible pride he took in his homeland and the pleasure with which he shared it with us.

**Leo P. McGuire**  
*Bergen County Sheriff*

I consider myself blessed that I was invited to tour Turkey this past July with some of my law enforcement partners. I expected that the Turkish people were going to be warm and inviting from my years of interaction with HUTACA and IDC but I was not prepared for the overwhelming reception we received. From the young to the not-so-young, my family was treated like royalty. Our many meetings with government officials as well as our immersion into the Turkish history and culture were very rewarding experiences. I now have many, many more Turkish friends. It is clear that those who have read the books of Fetullah Gulen have taken his message throughout Turkey and the world to promote interfaith dialogue and understanding. Ignorance is our enemy, not each other.

The most poignant part of our experience was not just witnessing the very hills where the Blessed Virgin Mary walked with St. John the Apostle which was almost too much to bear as a Christian and Catholic but it was in the hearts of the families we dined with. From Izmir to Antalya to Istanbul we had the opportunity to be invited into the homes of the most wonderful Turkish people. And the feasts we had were not to be imagined! All of us, including my two daughters and my wife Trish were welcomed as family into these Turkish homes. A special memory was in Antalya where Necati Okman and his lovely wife Ayfer invited us into their home with their two beautiful daughters. After some getting to know each other conversation where Osman Oztoprak was pressed into translation service among the eight family members the four young girls went to another room- without a translator. In moments all we could hear was giggling and laughter among the girls. They were not speaking of the world's problems or the minor differences between Muslims and Christians, they were children discussing (without speaking the same language) what girls their age care about- music, school, boys!! It was one of the most amazing moments of an amazing ten day journey across a beautiful country, rich with tradition, history, and culture. But the true riches of Turkiye lie in its people, they are truly special and I will treasure my experience and friendships forever.

# Turkey Trip Photos



**TURKEY**

# EXPERIENCE THE TURKISH HOSPITALITY



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