

Turkey's Magical Hideaways

**Plus optional extensions in:
*The Silk Route: Tashkent, Bukhara &
Samarkand, Uzbekistan or
Istanbul, Turkey,
and
Nemrut & the Bible Lands, Turkey***

2013

Overseas Adventure Travel

Turkey's Magical Hideaways

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1. Travel Documents

Passport

Your passport should meet these requirements for this itinerary

- It should be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- It should have the recommended number of blank pages (see below for details).
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable.

Recommended number of blank pages

Know that this recommendation is based on a “worst case” scenario. When you are on this adventure, you might use fewer pages, depending on the whims of the Immigration official on duty that day. Since the consequence of having too few pages can be severe—you could be denied entry into a country—we at OAT feel that in this case, safe is better than sorry, and we strongly recommend that you follow these guidelines.

- **Main trip only:** For the main trip only, you will require 2 blank passport pages.
- **Optional extension to Uzbekistan:** You will require 1 more page, for a total of 3.
- **Optional extension to Istanbul, Turkey:** Same as the main trip only.
- **Optional extension to Nemrut & the Bible Lands:** Same as the main trip only.
- **Both a pre- and a post-trip extension:** You will require 2 blank passport pages (if the pre-trip is Istanbul) or 3 blank passport pages (if the pre-trip is Uzbekistan).

Please take moment to check if your passport meets all of these requirements. If not, you could be refused entry into a country. And if that happens, you might be required by that country to return to the U.S. immediately, **which would be at your own expense.**

If you need to renew your passport or get extra pages

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit their website at www.travel.state.gov for information on obtaining a new passport, renewing your existing passport, or for additional pages. You can renew your passport by mail if it is not damaged, you obtained it within the last fifteen years, and it’s in the name you want on your new passport. Many local post offices carry forms for renewing by mail or obtaining extra pages. Allow several weeks for processing your passport. You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

***TIP:** When updating your passport, it is worthwhile to check the prices on all the different services that might apply to you. For example, it might be less expensive to get a new passport than to have pages added, depending on the number of pages you need.*

Visas Required

For a U.S. citizen holding a U.S. passport, the visa requirements below apply. **We will send you the necessary visa application forms, instructions explaining how to fill them out, and the amount of the visa processing fees approximately 100 days prior to your departure.** This information is provided by PVS International, a national passport service that we highly recommend.

- **Turkey—visa required. We recommended you obtain it on arrival in Turkey.** This visa can be obtained in advance or on arrival. We suggest that you obtain your visa on arrival because doing so can save you money. However, for travelers who prefer the security of getting their visas in advance, this option is also available. Having your visa in advance may protect you if the Turkish government makes changes to the entry requirements.
- **Uzbekistan (optional extension)—visa required. Can only be obtained in advance.** An entry visa is required for Uzbekistan. You must obtain your visa before you leave home; you cannot obtain one on arrival.

If you are staying longer in any of these countries, you should check with their embassy for the applicable regulations:

Turkey: (202) 612-6700

Uzbekistan: (202) 530-7291 (open 3-5pm)

Non-U.S. citizens or non-U.S. passport holders: If you are **not** a U.S. citizen or if you possess a passport from a country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate, embassy, or a visa services company about possible visa requirements. For your convenience, we recommend the services of PVS International, whose contact information follows. For embassy phone numbers, see previous.

PVS International Passport & Visa Services
1700 N Moore Street Rosslyn Center, Suite 310
Arlington, VA 22209

Telephone: 1-800-556-9990

Website: www.pvsinternational.org

Emergency Photocopies

The smartest and easiest security precaution you can take is to carry photocopies of the personal information pages of your passport, your air ticket, your traveler's check serial numbers (if you're carrying these checks), and your credit cards. Add phone and fax numbers for reporting lost credit cards, for your travel protection plan company if you have purchased one and for your medical emergency network. Store the copies separate from the originals. This can save you immeasurable time, money, and bother if your documents are lost or stolen during your trip.

If you don't wish to bring additional copies with you, consider scanning or entering the information you might need into your computer and emailing it to yourself. That way as long as you have access to email, you can access the information you need. (Keep in mind that you may not have immediate access to email at all times during your adventure, especially in developing countries). Another option is to give a copy of this information to a trusted friend or relative back at home as a backup that they can email or fax to you if you need it.

TIP for Uzbekistan from the U.S. State Department: Travelers to Uzbekistan are subject to frequent document inspections. Therefore, U.S. citizens are strongly encouraged to carry a certified photocopy of their U.S. passport and their Uzbek visa with them at all times so that, if questioned by local officials, proof of identity and U.S. citizenship are readily available.

Flight Itineraries

Your Flight Itineraries

You will receive a preliminary flight itinerary approximately 100 days prior to your departure. Please examine it carefully to ensure that your first and last names appear exactly as they do on your passport. (We do not need middle names). You will receive your finalized flight itinerary in your final documents package approximately 14 days prior to your departure. If the airlines make a change in your flight times, we'll adjust your reservation accordingly. If time permits, we'll send you an updated flight itinerary. If the change is made close to your departure, you'll be advised by way of the finalized flight itinerary. You may also view your most up-to-date flight arrangements through the My Account feature of our web page, www.oattravel.com.

All flight arrangements are subject to change at any time for reasons beyond OAT's control.

During the course of your trip you may have regional flights within the destination. Due to international ticketing regulations, some of these flights must be ticketed within the country they originate from. If so, these flights may not be listed in your air itinerary, but your Trip Leader will advise you of these flight schedules during the trip. To see if your tour includes regional flights, please refer to your brochure.

Land Only Travelers

Where land only travelers should join and depart from the group will depend on the direction of your itinerary and options you have selected, as listed below. Please note that this information is subject to change for reasons outside of OAT's control, such as changes or delays by regional airlines. To check the direction of your trip, please refer to your invoice.

For travelers taking the Istanbul to Kusadasi/Ephesus itinerary (TMH):

To join the group:

- On either pre-trip extension or the main trip: Please meet the group at the first hotel in Istanbul.

Leaving the group:

- On the main trip: You will leave the group at the last hotel on the itinerary. You are responsible for your own transfers to the airport or to your next destination. The nearest/most convenient airport is in Izmir.
- On the extension to *Nemrut & the Bible Lands*: On the last day of your extension, you will fly with the group from Eastern Turkey to Istanbul airport. The regional flight to the Istanbul airport is included in your program price; once you land in Istanbul that is the end of your tour. Due to the scheduling of the regional flight, any flights you book out of Istanbul should be after 11 am.

For travelers on the Istanbul to Cappadocia itinerary (TMR):

To join the group:

- On either pre-trip extension or the main trip: Please meet the group at the first hotel in Istanbul.

Leaving the group:

- On the last day of your main trip, you will fly with the group from Cappadocia (either Nevsehir or Kayseri) to Istanbul airport. The regional flight to the Istanbul airport is included in your program price; once you land in Istanbul that is the end of your tour. Due to the scheduling of the regional flight, any flights you book out of Istanbul should be after 11 am.
- *Note: The Nemrut & the Bible Lands post-trip is not available on the Istanbul to Cappadocia itinerary.*

2. Health

Is This Adventure Right For You?

We've worked closely with our local Trip Leaders and regional associates to identify the aspects of this adventure that you should be aware of, from physical requirements to cultural factors. **Please carefully review the information below prior to departing on this adventure. Many former travelers have commented on the fact that this adventure is more rigorous than they expected.** In particular, the long walks and hikes (as many as 3 miles at a time, often uphill), flights of stairs with no elevator available, and the lack of handrails caught them off-guard.

We reserve the right for our Trip Leaders to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their condition would adversely affect the health, safety, or enjoyment of themselves or of other travelers.

Physical requirements This trip is only for physically fit and healthy travelers and is not appropriate for travelers using wheelchairs, walkers, or other mobility aids. You must be able to walk approximately 3 miles unassisted and be comfortable participating in 6-8 hours of physical activities each day. (The 3 miles may be broken up across the day or may be during one activity, such as a hike.) Agility and balance are required for boarding, disembarking, and walking on deck during our *gulet* cruise.

Pacing *5 locations in 17 days with one 1-night stay; 4 nights aboard our private gulet.* We'll spend 4 nights onboard our ship, cruising for about 3-4 hours per day. We'll rise early some mornings, and have one pre-dawn flight on certain departures. There are 4 drives of up to 8 hours each, and either one or two 1- to 2-hour internal flights. We also go for six hikes of 1-3 hours each.

Climate & terrain Due to the varied geography of the destinations on this adventure, you will experience a wide range of temperatures and weather conditions. Both Cappadocia and Istanbul are cooler than most places you'll visit, but in Istanbul winters are mild and snow is rare (it does snow in Cappadocia). The area around the Taurus Mountains is hotter and drier but with low humidity. The hottest months in Turkey are July to August. Sunscreen is recommended.

As for terrain, we'll travel on city streets, uneven paths and trails, and unpaved roads. Good walking shoes with traction or hiking boots are recommended. A portable hiking pole may be useful for balance. Several hikes in the Cappadocia region are at steep inclines, requiring hiking up hill for approximately 1 hour at a time.

Transportation We drive overland in an air-conditioned minibus, we cruise on a 14-passenger *gulet*-style yacht, and we board small boats for shore excursions. On an optional tour, you can choose to take a hot-air balloon ride over Cappadocia.

Accommodations For one night we stay in a private village home, sleeping on futon-like floor mats with quilts and clean linens. Bath facilities are shared here, and we may not be able to take a shower at the house. We spend 4 nights on a *gulet*-style yacht that has small cabins with private bath, limited public space, no air-conditioning, and no overnight electricity in cabins. All other accommodations are hotel-standard, with a variety of amenities and personal service, as well as private baths. Many of the hotels in Turkey do not have elevators; be prepared for stairs.

Group size & leadership 14 travelers and 1 resident Trip Leader.

Pre-trip extension to Uzbekistan: Roads in Uzbekistan are especially underdeveloped, with few facilities available. Be prepared for drives over bumpy terrain and poorly maintained roads with extremely basic roadside facilities. Like parts of Turkey, some accommodations feature more basic amenities and simpler comforts. Many of the hotels in Uzbekistan do not have elevators or air conditioning. All of our hotels feature private bathrooms with western-style toilets. (However, squat toilets are common in some public restrooms.)

Visit Your Doctor

Before you leave on your adventure, there are at least four health-related things you should do. We'll outline each one in more detail later in this handbook, but for now, here's the short list:

- **Step 1:** Check with the CDC for their recommendations for the countries you'll be visiting.
- **Step 2:** Have a medical checkup with your doctor.
- **Step 3:** Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- **Step 4:** Have a dental and/or eye checkup. (Recommended, but less important than steps 1-3.)

Check with the CDC (Vaccinations)

To ensure you receive any needed vaccinations, or know about suggested medications, you should check the current recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the countries that you'll be visiting. You can contact them:

- **Online:** the CDC's website at wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel has detailed recommendations for each country and comprehensive information about preventing illness while traveling.
- **By phone:** toll-free at **1-800-232-4636** 24 hours a day. Automated information may be arranged topically by disease, rather than by country or region.

Medical Checkup

After checking the CDC's recommendations, we strongly recommend that you have a medical checkup with your doctor at least six weeks before your trip. (We suggest you check with the CDC first so that you can have an informed conversation with your doctor about vaccines and such.)

Topics to discuss during your checkup are:

- **The CDC recommendations.** The CDC makes suggestions based on the destination, but that doesn't mean the suggestions are right for you. Your doctor will be able to advise you on what is best considering your unique medical history.
- **Advice on what medicines (if any) to bring.** For our suggestions of what types of medications to ask your doctor about, see the section titled "Medications" that follows. Remember to get a copy of any prescriptions—written as a generic drug name—so you can replace your medications if they are lost during the trip.

- **Your fitness for this adventure. This is a must if you have any medical conditions or physical limitations.** Use the “Is This Adventure Right For You?” section on previous pages as a guideline. Make certain to review any medical condition you have, particularly cardiac or respiratory disease or diabetes, and discuss the details of the trip itinerary as it pertains to your health. Remember, your trip may take you into remote areas, with no nearby medical facilities.

Please notify us in writing about any medical condition that may require special attention. If your report is normal, you don't need to send it to us. If you send us a medical report, we don't use it to determine if you should take this trip, or if you are likely to enjoy it. Those decisions are up to you and your doctor.

Medications

Prescription medication suggestions

Of course, you'll need to bring an ample supply of any prescription medications you happen to be taking. You'll also want to talk to your doctor about any medications suggested by the CDC. In addition, we suggest you ask about prescriptions for:

- An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- A pain medication. You might need this in the unlikely event of an injury in a location where medical attention would be delayed.
- Travelers on the post-trip extension: At time of writing, the CDC did recommend discussing anti-malaria medication with your doctor for the *Nemrut & the Bible Lands, Turkey* post-trip.

TIP: At time of writing, the CDC stated that malaria was not present in any of the places on the main trip. The only area of Turkey that had malaria—in low amounts—was near Gaziantep, which we visit during the optional post-trip extension. But because the malaria risk near Gaziantep has been characterized as low, and because anti-malarial medication can have strong side effects, your doctor may not recommend anti-malarial medication at all.

Over-the-counter medication suggestions

Whenever you travel, there are a few basic items you should take with you as a “travel health kit”. The list is fairly standard: something for upset stomach, something for diarrhea/constipation, something for headache or general pain, bandages, and any medicines you take regularly. You'll find a helpful checklist in the “Packing” chapter of this handbook.

Just know that not every country has approved every medication—most major brands are OK, but some medications we take for granted are not allowed in other countries. Fortunately, the U.S. State Department offers advice on restricted medications on their website at <http://travel.state.gov/travel> (look under the “Criminal Penalties” and “Special Circumstances” sections of each country you'll be visiting. If you don't see anything mentioned, then major U.S. brands should be fine.)

TIP: At time of writing, the State Department did not have any special warnings about American over-the-counter medications for Turkey or Uzbekistan.

Traveling with medications

To avoid loss and to have them handy, pack medications in your carry-on bag. For quicker security screening at the airport—and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas—keep medicines in their original, labeled containers. To be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications, you should also bring copies of the prescriptions, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name.

Dental and/or Eye Exam

A loose filling or developing cavity would be difficult to remedy while you are traveling in a remote area. For this reason, it is a good idea to have a dental exam before your trip. For those travelers who wear glasses, an eye exam may be a good idea as well.

***TIP:** If you wear glasses, it's a good idea to bring a "backup" pair just in case. If you wear contact lenses, bring extra solution—it can be expensive or difficult to find in other countries.*

Jet Lag Precautions

You will feel better on the first days of your trip if, shortly before you leave home, you start to adjust to the different time zone of your destination. Since you will cross several time zones to reach your destination, you may lose many hours of regular sleep. On arrival, your body then will have to suddenly adjust to new sleeping and eating patterns. The result is jet lag. Its symptoms are fatigue—often compounded by insomnia and general restlessness—irritability, and vague disorientation. You cannot totally avoid jet lag; but you can minimize it. Here's how:

- Start your trip well-rested.
- Begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave or switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane. Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight. Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying.
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane, and make an effort to get up and walk about the cabin a few times to keep your blood circulation normal.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don't push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

Staying Healthy on Your Trip

Safe Water

Tap water in Turkey is safe to drink, but is processed differently than in the U.S. so it can still upset your stomach or feel “heavy”. Therefore, we suggest drinking bottle water instead. Bottled water is readily available and inexpensive. (Bottled water is not included in the price of your tour.) Inspect each bottle before you buy it to make sure the cap is sealed properly. Many hotels and high-end restaurants in Turkey will use bottled water to wash salads or make ice cubes, but water served in a carafe is usually tap water. When in doubt about the water, salads, or ice, just ask the restaurant or your Trip Leader. It is OK to brush your teeth with tap water in Turkey.

In Uzbekistan, tap water is not safe to drink, but bottled water and hot drinks that have been boiled are safe. Avoid salads that may have been washed in tap water and ice.

Safe Food

We’ve carefully chosen the restaurants for your group meals. Your Trip Leader can suggest restaurants for the meal you take on your own. Be very careful with food sold from vendors on the street, and with uncooked foods.

Electricity Supply

A constant electricity supply cannot be guaranteed during overnight stays. This is particularly true onboard the gulet ship, where electricity is supplied by a generator and there is no power in the cabins overnight. Travelers dependent on electricity supply (as in the case of those with sleep apnea) should consider a different adventure or ensure their apparatus has back-up battery power.

General Health Tips

Wash your hands frequently: before meals, before snacks, when brushing your teeth, after visiting the bathroom. Carry your own handkerchief to dry your hands thoroughly each time. You won’t always find running water, so bring moist towelettes (in a box, not individually wrapped) or anti-bacterial “water-free” hand cleanser. Don’t share your water bottle.

The one place water will be in short supply is on the boat, where the water supply the boat can carry is limited. This means showers taken on the boat must be quick ones.

Basic Illness Prevention

It’s common for people traveling in contained spaces to be more susceptible to easily transmitted viral and bacterial illnesses such as flu, stomach and respiratory bugs, and colds. The single most effective way to prevent this is frequent hand-washing. We ask all travelers to be extra diligent in their normal hand-washing hygiene, and to drink plenty of fluids for proper hydration. Simple steps like these will help ensure that everyone enjoys the comfortable, carefree vacation they looked forward to.

Don't Push Too Hard

One of the most important parts of staying healthy on an active trip is to not push yourself too hard if you feel tired. Respect your own limits. Your trip schedule offers some degree of flexibility. If your energy level is low on a certain day, you can sit out a walking tour or a road excursion. Be particularly conservative when you first arrive because of jet lag. Your Trip Leader can tell you about the distance, time, and terrain of our walking excursions in advance, and can usually suggest rewarding alternative activities.

Drink Plenty of Liquids

When you travel, you can easily become dehydrated without knowing it. If your fluid balance is low, you are more susceptible to fatigue and illness. Air travel will dry you out, so drink liquids and avoid alcohol on your flight. During the trip, don't wait until you feel thirsty to drink. Instead, drink by the clock: drink one to two quarts of water or juice each day, in addition to drinks at meals. If you find yourself tired or unwell, and don't know why, it may be that you simply need to drink more. Note that tea, coffee, and alcoholic beverages are diuretics, and do not help maintain hydration.

Sun and Heat Exposure

Be sure to wear your hat, and use plenty of sunscreen. Be aware of the signs of heat exposure. Be especially concerned if you feel hot, but are not perspiring. Let your Trip Leader know if you are not feeling well. Most importantly (and this is at the risk of tedious repetition), you must drink plenty of liquids when temperatures are high.

If You Have Stomach Trouble

Despite your best efforts, you may get diarrhea at some point. It is usually limited in duration, and will often go away without medication. Immediately and consistently, drink more liquids to make up for the fluids you are losing. The best initial treatment is to use an over-the-counter remedy. This may be all you need to do. You can, and probably should, eat when you get hungry, but avoid dairy products and fried foods for a while.

If your symptoms persist for more than 12 to 24 hours, you may decide to take a course of a prescription antibiotic. Most antibiotics are taken twice a day, for about three days. Once you start the course, it's important to continue for the full duration of treatment. Don't stop if your symptoms subside sooner.

Anti-motility agents, like Imodium and Lomotil, treat the symptom rather than the cause. You may want to take Imodium before a long bus ride or a city tour. You can take it along with an antibiotic. But because these medications interfere with your body's natural attempts to rid itself of the infection, many specialists recommend that you not take them when you are in a place with convenient access to a bathroom. Specifically, don't take Imodium, Lomotil, or a similar medication if you have a fever, or if you have bloody diarrhea.

***TIP for Uzbekistan:** Our regional staff advises that since some travelers will find the food of Central Asia heavier than what they are used to, it's worthwhile to bring a remedy for upset stomach with you—just in case.*

Health & Safety for Optional Balloon Tour

During our main trip we have an opportunity to enjoy an optional balloon tour over Cappadocia. This tour is booked onsite with your Trip Leader, but before you depart, we'd like you to be prepared with the following information.

In order to join the tour, you must be physically able to climb in and out of the balloon basket (the sides are 42" high), stand unassisted for an hour, and be able to adopt a bended knee/seated position for landing. You should not fly if: you've had recent surgery, have severe back or hip problems, have mobility problems, or have certain pre-existing conditions (epilepsy, osteoporosis, etc). There may be other restrictions as well (for example, a supplemental fee for travelers weighing more than 252 lbs).

The balloon pilot is the final arbiter of whether to fly or not. Common reasons for not flying are weather/wind conditions that may not be obviously bad. A poor forecast can cancel a flight on a seemingly perfect morning; wind speeds at higher altitude may be outside the balloons capabilities, or in wrong directions—but invisible from the ground. Rain and poor visibility are also deterrents. Disappointing as a cancellation may be, the decision always considers safety first.

3. Money Matters

How to Carry Your Money

Generally speaking, you'll want to bring a mixture of different payment methods—some cash to exchange, an ATM card, and a couple different credit cards—so that you'll be prepared for any situation. In this section, we offer some tips on each type of payment method.

However, for travelers on the extension to Uzbekistan, we suggest bringing a cash reserve to cover your expenses during the extension, as you will not be able to rely on your ATM and credit cards alone.

Cash or Traveler's Checks?

Cash has an advantage over traveler's checks. Cash is more readily exchanged and accepted than traveler's checks, and sometimes commands a better exchange rate. Cash is also a better choice for rural or undeveloped areas where ATMs and credit card machines are scarce. **Traveler's checks are not recommended.** We urge you not to rely on traveler's checks for your personal expenses. They can be difficult to exchange and are rarely accepted in shops and restaurants.

So we know that bringing cash is a good idea—does that mean U.S. dollars or local currency?

There is no need to obtain local currency before your trip. In fact, your U.S. bank may not carry it. You can change money when you arrive at the airport, or at banks, most hotels, and money exchange offices. In some countries you do not even need to exchange money at all—you can use U.S. dollars. For more information on what type of currency can be used on this trip, see the "Currency" section. **Torn, dirty, or taped U.S. bills may not be accepted; bring bills in very good condition.**

TIP: In Turkey, money can be exchanged at banks, exchange offices, some post offices, and some hotels. In Uzbekistan, money can be exchanged at hotels, banks, and some businesses.

ATMs

In Turkey, PLUS, Cirrus, and other international ATM networks are widely available in cities and towns, but can be scarce in rural villages. In Uzbekistan, ATMs are scarce—even in large cities—and rare in towns or villages. For this reason, we suggest that travelers on the optional extension to Uzbekistan bring a cash reserve for their expenses during the extension, instead of relying on their ATM card alone.

Always notify your bank before you leave home that you are going abroad so that they may remove any blocks on your account and also ask them about the number of withdrawals you may make abroad. For cash withdrawals, **don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's PIN** (many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their keys—they only display numbers.)

TIP: Many banks charge a fee ranging from \$1 to \$5 for every time you use an ATM in a foreign city. Others will charge you a percentage of what you withdraw. Check with your bank on what fees they charge before you leave the country. That way you can decide if it is better for you to take out one or two large sums, or make smaller but more frequent withdrawals. Your Trip Leader can advise you on ATM locations, but when to exchange money is left to your discretion.

Credit Cards (and Debit Cards)

In Uzbekistan, businesses are starting to accept credit cards, but many more businesses are still “cash only”. (For example, very few restaurants will take cards.) The businesses that do accept cards will almost always charge a 5% fee for this service. So although a credit card or two will be useful in some situations, you won’t be able to rely on credit card alone, and you won’t get the best price if you pay by card. For this reason, we suggest that travelers on the optional extension to Uzbekistan bring a cash reserve for their expenses during the extension.

Credit and debit card use is more common in Turkey than in Uzbekistan—but not as common as in the U.S.—and not all of Turkey uses the same type of cards as the U.S. (See the following paragraphs for details.)

IMPORTANT NOTE: Turkey has been phasing in a new type of credit card technology, called a “smartcard” or a “chip-and-PIN” card. These cards have an embedded computer chip instead of a magnetized strip, and the card owner authorizes a purchase by entering a PIN (personal identification number) instead of signing a slip. Some businesses in Turkey have already switched to the new system completely; some can process both smartcards and regular cards; and some haven’t switched at all.

This new technology is not common in the U.S., so occasionally there are machines in Turkey that can’t read U.S. cards. Or the machine can read the card, but asks for a PIN. While you can ask your credit card company if your cards have a PIN on file, this is not common for U.S. cards, so mostly likely the answer will be “no”. But even so, there’s no need to worry. In many shops in Turkey you will still be able to sign a slip as usual. And if the shop in question requires a smartcard, you can always try a different form of payment, like a debit card or cash. (U.S. debit cards usually have a PIN, so sometimes they work when credit cards don’t.)

Since there is no way to predict in advance what each shop will do, we recommend that you bring more than one type of payment when you go shopping. For example, a mix of a couple different credit cards, a debit or ATM card, and some cash is ideal—you’ll be prepared for anything. And remember to memorize your PINs as numbers because the keypads in Turkey rarely have alphabetic characters.

Credit card use in general: Even if you do not plan on using it, having a credit or debit card as a “backup” is helpful in an emergency. Though major American credit cards (Visa, MasterCard, American Express) and debit cards with a credit card logo are accepted abroad, not every shop will take every card. So it is best to ask if your type of card is accepted before deciding on your purchase, and having a couple different cards can be useful. The Discover card is now accepted in some countries outside the U.S. However, it is not widely adopted, and other cards will work at a much larger range of stores, restaurants, etc.

TIP: *Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges—such as charges from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company or bank that you will be using your cards abroad. You can do this by calling their customer service number a week or two before your departure. You should also double-check what phone number you could call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don’t assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1-800 numbers don’t work outside of the U.S.!*

Optional Tour Payments & Shipboard Expenses

Optional Tours: During your trip you will be able to book optional tours directly with your Trip Leader. He or she will ask you to confirm the payment for these tours by filling out a payment form. Optional tours can only be purchased with a credit or debit card. We accept Visa, MasterCard, Discover Card, or American Express credit cards only. (We also accept debit cards with the logo of one of these credit card companies, but it must be a card that allows you to sign for purchases.)

In order to correctly process these charges, there can be a delay of 2-3 months from the date of your return for the charges to be posted to your account. Therefore we ask that you use a card that will not expire in the 2-3 months following your return. Because our headquarters are in Boston, charges may appear to be from Boston or might be labeled as "OPT Boston" (depending on your credit card company).

***TIP:** Charges for optional tours will be processed through our Boston office, so you will be able to sign for them instead of using a PIN.*

Shipboard Expenses: Credit card payments are not accepted for shipboard expenses (tipping, drinks) on board ship.

Currency

For current exchange rates, please refer to our website, your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

In Turkey

The currency in Turkey is the Turkish lira (TL). The Turkish lira is divided into 100 *kurus* (pronounced "koo-ROOSH"). U.S. dollars can *sometimes* be used in Turkey.

- Bills come in denominations of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100 and 200 TL
- Coins come in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 25, and 50 *kurus* and 1 TL

Some businesses in Turkey will accept U.S. dollars (or euros). This is more common in places/business that cater to tourists. Accepting U.S. dollars is legal, but since it is not the official currency of Turkey, the businesses that accept dollars can do so on their own terms. This means that they may set their own exchange rate and might not be able to make change for large U.S. bills. Local currency will be useful at small restaurants, pharmacies, grocery stores, and for the restroom (there is usually a small fee).

In Uzbekistan

The official currency of Uzbekistan is the sum. One sum can be subdivided into 100 tiyn. Banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

- Bills come in denominations of 1, 3, 5, 10, 25, 50, 100, 200, 500 and 1,000 sum
- Coins come in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 25, 50 and 100 sum, plus small-value tiyn coins

The U.S. dollar is widely accepted in Uzbekistan, especially at tourist-related businesses, but local currency is useful in "sum" situations. Places that accept dollars will want newer bills (dated after 1990) in very good condition; bills that don't meet the clerk's scrutiny will be rejected. A mix of different denominations—ones, fives, tens, and twenties—is useful. Because of inflation, even the largest sum bills are not worth a lot in U.S. dollars, so when you exchange money, be prepared to get a large wad of Uzbek bills back.

Tipping

Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. But for those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines. All tips below are quoted in U.S. dollars; tips can be converted and paid in local currency (this is usually preferred) or in U.S. dollars. Please do not use personal or traveler's check for tips.

- **OAT Trip Leader:** It is customary to express a personal "thank you" to your OAT Trip Leader at the end of your trip, especially if he or she has provided you with individual service. As a guideline, many travelers give \$7-\$10 per person per day.
- **Shipboard:** Shipboard gratuities to the cruise personnel are not included in the cost of your cruise. The ships' tipping guidelines recommend a flat tip of \$8-\$10 U.S. per person, per day, which will be pooled among all cruise staff. For your convenience tips for the crew can be paid in U.S. cash, local currency (no credit card payments are accepted for tipping or drinks onboard).
- **Drivers:** \$3-\$4 per person, per day
- **Local guides:** \$3-\$4 per person, per day
- **Housekeeping staff at hotels:** \$1-2 per room, per night
- **Waiters:** It is common practice in Turkey and Uzbekistan to tip wait staff about 10% of the bill. Tips are in cash only; you cannot tip on a credit card. Your Trip Leader will tip waiters for included meals.
- **Taxi Drivers:** If you are taking a taxi on your own, tipping is not common practice, but often people will round up the fare and let the driver keep the change. In Turkey, there is a small pick-up charge and the meter will rise while waiting in traffic; but there is no additional charge for a late-night pick-up.

We recommend you carry small-denomination banknotes, totaling about \$75-\$100 U.S., per person, to facilitate tipping to those people who perform small services for you during your trip. You may carry this money in local currency or in U.S. dollars. Tips are in cash only in this region.

Shopping

It is Overseas Adventure Travel's goal to identify and provide you with shopping opportunities that highlight unique, locally-produced products with good value from reliable vendors. For this reason there may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is no requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. **Overseas Adventure Travel cannot be responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.**

Souvenirs

Turkey offers many fine craft items at good prices. Traditional souvenirs include beautiful rugs, tiles, pottery, gold jewelry, and products made of copper, silk, and leather. "Blue eye" charms, which ward against bad luck and accidents, are also popular. Uzbekistan is famous with for ceramics, felt caps, clothes, rugs, tent decorations, and woodwork.

Your purchase decisions are very personal. If you plan a major purchase, we strongly recommend that you research the prices and quality available at home before your trip. Just one visit to an import shop or dealer will put you way ahead when you go shopping abroad. This is the only way to know if you are getting a good price, and ultimately, you must use your best judgment when deciding whether an item is worth the price being asked.

Bargaining

Some shops have fixed prices. In other places, merchants enjoy negotiating prices. If this is your first experience at bargaining, don't worry—you'll quickly find your own style. Your opening offer should be well under the asking price. The only rule is that, if you make an offer, you should be prepared to buy at that price. And remember, whatever price you pay is OK, as long as the item is worth that price to you.

***TIP:** Bargaining is especially common with street vendors. But once you agree on a price, it is expected that you will buy the item in question. Street vendors have been known to be persistent, so if you really aren't interested, it is best not to start the bargaining process, or even make eye contact.*

Antiques

Items that are 100 years old or older are not allowed to leave Turkey. If someone offers you an antique item for sale, keep in mind that if it is truly more than 100 years old, they should not be selling it to you. They are either ignorant of the customs laws or the item is really not as old as they say it is.

Uzbek Customs

In Uzbekistan, customs declarations are required on entry and exit. You'll receive a customs form on the flight to Uzbekistan, or when you first arrive at the airport. You fill out the form in duplicate and present both copies when you enter Uzbekistan; a customs official will review and stamp both copies. They keep one copy and give the other back to you—hold on to it. **Travelers must keep their original customs form and surrender it on departure.** This process is to control the import and export of currency. Therefore, if you leave Uzbekistan with a lot less cash than you came in with (\$2,000 or more), the Uzbek officials will usually ask for receipts to show what the money was spent on. In order to leave Uzbekistan with more cash than you entered with, you need special permission from the National Bank.

U.S. Customs Regulations and Shipping Charges

Exemption Amounts

Articles totaling \$800, at fair retail value where they were acquired, may be imported free of charge if you bring them with you. A flat rate of duty—usually a percentage—will be applied to the next \$1,000 worth (fair retail value) of merchandise. The U.S. Customs Inspector determines the value of your items when you enter, and is not bound by your bill of sale. In almost every case, however, a genuine bill of sale will be honored.

Fees on Items Shipped Home

Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S. There will also be charges for shipping. Although some shops abroad may offer to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the customs facility closest to you and payment of the *export* duties (the fee to remove an item from its country of origin) **not door-to-door shipping or import duties** (the fee the U.S. government charges to bring an item into the U.S.). All additional duties or shipping charges would be the responsibility of the purchaser—you.

Therefore unless the item is small enough to mail or to be sent by a global parcel service (like FedEx) please be prepared to pay for shipping or pick-up from the nearest customs facility and to pay for the customs duties. This is why the U.S. Customs & Border Protection service states: “The most cost-effective thing to do is to take your purchases with you if at all possible.”

Illegal Items

It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins. For more information on what you may or may not bring back into the United States, you can obtain the publication “Know Before You Go” from the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection at **1-877-227-5511** or from their website www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel.

If You Have a Problem with a Purchase

The best way to address a problem with a purchase is to not have one in the first place! So don’t forget to examine merchandise before paying for it, check contracts or agreements before signing, and review your receipt before leaving the shop. For major purchases, don’t hesitate to ask in advance about the return policy—local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don’t assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up.

But what if you do discover an issue with an item later on? In that case, your best recourse is to contact the vendor directly. For this reason we recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop’s contact information. Expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. due to delays in communication, the complexities of international shipping/customs duties, and even cultural differences in how business is conducted.

4. Climate: A Word about the Weather

Geographically, western Turkey, including Istanbul, is in Europe, while the rest of the country is in Anatolia and Asia Minor. As you move from the west to the east, the altitude goes up, first in the hills of Cappadocia and then again at Mt Nemrut. Due to the varied geography, you will experience a wide range of temperatures and weather conditions on this adventure. Istanbul is cooler than most of the places you'll visit, but winters are mild and snow is rare. In Cappadocia, the hilly terrain means that although the days may be warm, there can be a significant drop in temperature at night, and snow is possible in winter. The area around the Taurus Mountains is hotter and drier; this area is more typical of the Middle East. Even here, however, the heat is tempered by low humidity. Antalya, which is the main gateway for the Turquoise Coast, is generally hot and humid, especially in the summer months.

Uzbekistan (optional extension): Uzbekistan is mostly flat, and only gives way to mountains at the eastern border with Kyrgyzstan. This results in a continental climate with a strong difference between summer and winter. It is not unheard of for summer temperatures to spike up to 90 degrees F—or even higher during a heat wave—or for winter lows to drop to freezing. Uzbekistan's climate is sometimes compared with the U.S. plains states, like Kansas, Nebraska, and Oklahoma.

Climate Charts

The following charts reflect the average *climate* as opposed to *weather* conditions. This means they serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. As your departure approaches you may wish to monitor current weather conditions online. Here is the official data from the weather observation stations closest to our destinations:

Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F), Humidity & Monthly Rainfall

MONTH	ISTANBUL, Turkey (main trip and optional extension)			TURQUOISE COAST		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp High-Low	%Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Avg Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	46-37	82-71	3.7	58-41	74-55	9.8
FEB	47-37	81-68	2.8	58-42	76-55	6.7
MAR	51-40	83-65	2.3	63-45	78-54	3.8
APR	60-47	81-61	1.7	70-51	79-56	1.7
MAY	69-54	84-59	1.2	77-58	79-55	1.2
JUN	78-62	83-55	0.9	86-66	71-50	0.4
JUL	82-66	83-51	0.7	92-71	65-46	0.1
AUG	82-67	84-52	0.6	92-71	68-47	0.1
SEP	76-61	82-53	1.1	88-65	68-45	0.5
OCT	67-55	83-61	2.1	79-57	70-46	2.6
NOV	57-47	81-66	3.5	68-50	75-53	4.6
DEC	50-42	81-71	4.0	60-44	77-57	10

Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F) & Monthly Rainfall

MONTH	GAZIANTEP, Turkey (optional extension)			TASHKENT, Uzbekistan (optional extension)		
	Temp High-Low	%Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)*	Temp High-Low	%Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)
JAN	44-31	77-67	--	44-29	79-61	2.1
FEB	47-32	74-61	--	49-32	77-56	2.5
MAR	55-38	70-55	--	59-41	74-52	2.7
APR	67-46	70-51	--	72-50	74-43	2.4
MAY	76-54	63-44	--	82-57	72-35	1.6
JUN	86-64	55-35	--	92-64	59-25	0.6
JUL	94-71	47-27	--	96-68	58-25	0.2
AUG	94-71	48-27	--	95-64	63-26	--
SEP	87-63	57-33	--	85-55	65-27	0.2
OCT	74-52	67-45	--	71-46	74-39	0.9
NOV	58-42	76-60	--	59-39	76-51	1.7
DEC	48-34	77-64	--	48-32	77-62	2.3

* data not available

Online Forecast

Monthly temperature averages for the countries you will be visiting, plus a current 10-day forecast, are available online through the My Account feature of our website www.oattravel.com.

5. Packing Just What You Need

Your Luggage & Locks

Luggage Suggestions

Checked luggage: One duffle bag or suitcase. Due to space limitations on our motor coaches, you are allowed one piece of checked luggage per person. Look for one with heavy nylon fabric, wrap-around handles, built-in wheels, and a heavy-duty lockable zipper. Please do not bring a rigid (plastic shell) suitcase.

Carry-on bag: You are allowed one carry-on bag per person. We suggest a tote or small backpack that can be used as both a carry-on bag for your flight and to carry your daily necessities—water bottle, camera, etc—during driving excursions and walking trips. Consider a backpack or waistpack that keeps both hands free and distributes the pack’s weight onto your back or hips.

Inner bags: Use plastic shopping bags, nylon stuff sacks, small zipper duffels, or special mesh bags to separate clothing and gear inside your suitcase, and for dirty laundry. Isolate liquid toiletries in heavy-duty Ziploc bags. Store camera gear and important papers in plastic bags to protect them from dirt and moisture.

***TIP:** Consider bringing a second, empty, lockable bag folded into your main suitcase, with a luggage tag and small lock. Use this to carry souvenirs home. Also, when traveling with a companion we recommend “cross-packing,” i.e., pack 2 outfits of your clothing in your companion’s luggage and vice-versa, in case one bag is delayed.*

Locks

For flights that originate in the U.S.: To reduce the risk of damage to your luggage, *either* do not lock your bags when checking in for flights that originate in the U.S. *or* use TSA-approved locks. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has the responsibility for screening every piece of checked luggage at commercial airports throughout the U.S. According to the TSA, baggage-handling agents may require access to the contents of your luggage and will break locks as required. There are some locks available from retailers that are “accepted and recognized” by TSA. TSA screeners have tools for opening and re-locking bags using those locks, thus avoiding damage to the lock or bag if a physical inspection is required.

For flights originating outside the U.S.: Outside of the U.S., we strongly recommend you lock your luggage as a preventative measure against theft. In some countries, you are required to lock your luggage for flights; in others, the screening process may entail opening or breaking the lock. Your Trip Leader will advise you during the trip as to what is correct for that country.

LUGGAGE LIMITATIONS

We understand that it might seem early to discuss packing. But by knowing the luggage limits for your adventure, you can start to plan for your trip—what type of luggage to get, how much clothing to bring, etc. Therefore, we offer the following information now to help you prepare. We will remind you of your luggage limits again with an update in your final documents booklet (which you will receive about two weeks before your trip’s departure).

In addition to the international flights, you will also take domestic flights within the region on your main trip. The luggage limits on these flights are less than the average allowance for international flights. **This means that even if your international airline offers a larger weight limit, you will need to pack according to the lower restrictions, as indicated in the following chart.**

	Number of Pieces	Type of Luggage	Weight Restrictions	Special Size Restrictions?
Main trip only	One checked bag and one carry-on per person	Duffle bag or soft-sided suitcase. Please do not bring a hard-sided (clamshell) suitcase.	Checked luggage: 44 lbs total Carry-on: 17 lbs total	Standard airline size: checked luggage should not exceed 62 linear inches (length+ width + depth) and carry-on should not exceed 45 linear inches
Pre- and post-trip extensions in Turkey	Same	Same	Same	Same
Pre-trip extension in Uzbekistan	Same	Same	Checked luggage: 44 lbs total Carry-on: 11 lbs total	Same
Remarks and Suggestions				
<p>The “Dirty Harry” luggage rule: The limits in the chart above are based on the airlines’ published restrictions. The enforcement of luggage limits is a matter of airline corporate policy. It may not be consistent in all situations and may include random spot checks, especially for carry-on luggage. Airline penalties and fines, however, will probably be immediate when and if enforcement occurs. Before you choose to go above the airline’s published restrictions, you should first ask: <i>Do I feel lucky?</i> (And if the answer is yes, then you should accept that you might be charged a fee by the airlines.)</p> <p>Overweight luggage/Packing Light: In Turkey the fees for a checked piece over 44 lbs can be fairly steep, so we recommend that you do not exceed 44 lbs for your checked luggage. Remember that laundry service is available at most of our hotels; you may be better off bringing fewer clothes and just planning on having a few pieces laundered halfway through the trip.</p>				

Should I confirm luggage restrictions with my U.S./international airline(s) before departure?

Yes, you should still confirm them directly with the U.S. domestic/international airline(s) a week or so before your departure. You should take this step no matter if your adventure has a lower limit than the average international flight or not. Why? Because there may be recent changes, such as new security regulations, or an update to the standard weight/size allowance that impacts the international flight.

You should also check with the airlines on luggage fees—many airlines charge to check luggage, sometimes even on international flights. Others will charge a fee if you bring a second carry-on item, like a purse or a laptop. These fees are not included in your trip price; they are payable directly to the airlines. If you are making a connecting flight, you should also confirm if your luggage can be checked through to your final destination. For more information about air travel, see the “Air Travel” section of your Important Information booklet.

We will remind you to confirm your U.S./international luggage limits (and provide an update on regional limits, if applicable) in your final documents. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our webpage under the FAQ section.

Packing Your Carry-On Bag

Use your daypack or small backpack as your carry-on bag for your flights. We **strongly urge** you to pack in your carry-on case at least one full change of clothes, your camera gear, all medications, changes of socks and underwear, your important travel documents, and other irreplaceable items, in case your checked bags are delayed. Store camera gear and important papers in plastic bags to protect them from dirt and moisture.

Restrictions on what can be included in your carry-on luggage change frequently. To avoid inadvertently packing any restricted items in your carry-on luggage, we strongly suggest that you consult the Transportation Security Administration website, at www.tsa.gov, which keeps a current list of restricted items and helpful tips. From the main website click on *For Travelers* (top of page).

Carry-on restrictions in Turkey: Just like the U.S., Turkey has restrictions on liquids in carry-on luggage. If you follow the same rules as in the U.S., you’ll be fine in Turkey.

***TIP:** You can remember the rules for liquids in carry-on luggage by using the numbers “311”: Liquids or gels need to be in 3 ounce (or smaller) containers, the containers need to be in a 1-quart sized bag, and each traveler is allowed 1 bag. The bag should be a transparent re-sealable plastic one, like a Ziploc bag. Exemptions might be made for medications, baby milk or food, and special dietary requirements, subject to verification.*

Laundry Services in Turkey

In Turkey, most, if not all, of the hotels that we will be staying at offer laundry services—self-service laundromats are **not widely available** here. At the hotels, laundry is priced by the piece. Prices will vary considerably from one property to the next. They will also vary according to fabric and a number of other variable factors. We would like to stress that you are in no way required to use the laundry services offered at your hotels; we would merely like to inform you of this option in advance should this information impact your packing decisions.

Clothing Suggestions

Functional Tips

As you will experience a wide range of temperatures and weather conditions, our list suggests several layers of clothing. You can buy clothing designed especially for travel.

Outerwear: Rainfall can occur anytime of year, so don't forget a waterproof jacket, poncho, or folding umbrella. In early spring and winter, temperatures can be chilly, and in Cappadocia, snowfall can begin as early as the end of October. Bring some warm gear such as a fleece, sweater, or jacket for these times of year.

Footwear: You'll be on your feet a lot during the trip, and walking over some rough and slippery surfaces. Shoes should be comfortable with good arch support and good traction. You'll want at least one pair of closed shoes for hiking (sandals are OK for in town or on the ship).

Some travelers and many Trip Leaders have strongly recommended light hiking boots for this adventure. Other types of shoes that would work in place of hiking boots are sturdy walking shoes, running shoes, or trekking shoes. In short, you'll need something that can protect your feet and be comfortable during athletic hikes and long walks in city centers. Tennis shoes are not recommended for hiking.

You'll also want a second pair of shoes for when you're on the gulet ship because "street shoes" are not allowed—they can damage the wooden deck. Boat shoes, sandals, sneakers, or any other type of non-skid shoe is fine; the ship just requests that it be a clean, new pair (a pair that hasn't be worn outside yet). Or you can go barefoot on ship—it's up to you. Tennis shoes would be OK on the ship only.

One cultural note—it is common practice to remove your shoes in mosques and local homes, so consider a pair you can get on/off without a struggle. (And perhaps some extra socks.)

Style Hints and Dress Codes

Dress on our trip is functional and casual. You may want to consider one "dressier" outfit for dining out, but you won't need anything formal. Throughout Turkey and Uzbekistan, locals tend to be modest in dress, typically covering their shoulders and knees. How modestly you should dress is mainly a question of location—in the big cities like Istanbul, and on board the ship, westernized dress is more acceptable—shorts and sleeveless tops should be OK. (Although we do recommend keeping shorts to about knee-length, even in the cities.)

In a small rural village or in a mosque, a more conservative look is best; you'll blend in better if you opt for long trousers or an ankle-length skirt instead of shorts or a short skirt. (Women do wear trousers throughout the region, so female travelers are not required to wear skirts.) For a more conservative location, a short-sleeve top with a modest neckline is considered a more appropriate choice than sleeveless tops. Generally speaking, Uzbekistan is usually more conservative than Turkey.

In both countries the most conservative dress code is at the religious sites, like a mosque. When visiting a mosque you may be handed a wrap and asked to drape it over you so that you are properly covered; this is common throughout the Muslim world. It is also common to remove your shoes in a mosque or in a home; you may wish to bring a couple extra pairs of socks for these occasions.

What about a headscarf for women travelers? The short answer is: it's up to you. The secular governments of the region do not require women to cover their hair, and many local women chose to go bareheaded. Again, it is largely a question of location—the farther out in the countryside, the more likely it is that you'll see women in headscarves. As a visitor, you will not be required—or even expected—to cover your hair. The only exception is perhaps in certain mosques, where it is considered a sign of respect. If a mosque requires specific dress, there will generally be a private “women only” entrance where you can rent what you need, so it is not necessary to bring a scarf. But if you do choose to bring one, consider one large enough that it can double as an accessory or a wrap for chilly evenings. (That way you'll get more use out of it.)

Traveler's Checklists

Did you know that the top two comments travelers have about packing are “I wish I had brought less” and “I wish I had thought to double-check the weather”? In an effort to help you bring less, we offer these lists, which have been compiled from suggestions by Trip Leaders and former travelers. The lists are only jumping-off points—they offer recommendations based on experience, but not requirements. You might also want to refer to the climate charts in this handbook or online weather forecasts before you pack. And finally, remember the Golden Rule of Packing Light—whatever you think you need at first—take half the clothes and twice the money.

Recommended Clothing Checklist

- Shirts: A mixture of short and long-sleeved shirts in a breathable fabric, like cotton or cotton-blend. Polo shirts are more versatile than T-shirts. Sleeveless tops are OK in some places in Istanbul, but in the countryside a short-sleeved top is considered more appropriate.
- Trousers and/or jeans: Comfortable and loose fitting is best. Avoid tight-fitting jeans; they can be uncomfortable, restrict movement, and are not considered appropriate.
- Travel skirt: It is perfectly acceptable for women travelers to wear trousers or jeans on this trip. But for women travelers who like to wear skirts, please know that knee-length or longer is best.
- Shoes and socks: Shoes should be comfortable with good arch support and good traction. You'll want at least one pair of closed shoes for hiking. Some types of shoes that would be good choices are light hiking boots, sturdy walking shoes, running shoes, or trekking shoes. It is common practice to remove your shoes in mosques and in local homes, so consider a pair that you can get on and off without struggle, and perhaps bring a couple extra pairs of socks. Tennis shoes are not recommended for hiking.
- You'll also want a second pair of shoes for when you're on the gulet ship because “street shoes” are not allowed—they can damage the wooden deck. Boat shoes, sandals, sneakers, or any other type of non-skid shoe is fine; the ship just requests that it be a clean, new pair (a pair that hasn't be worn outside yet). Or you can go barefoot on ship—it's up to you.
- Underwear and sleepwear.
- Wide-brim sun hat or visor for sun protection
- Light rain jacket/windbreaker with hood
- Light cotton or wool sweater for cooler days. Even in summer, this can be useful as motor coach air conditioning can be cold.
- Swimsuit, for stay on ship, hotel pools, or Turkish baths

Seasonal Clothing Checklist

In summer:

- Walking shorts: knee-length shorts are OK for big cities and on board the ship. In more conservative areas of Turkey, and in Uzbekistan, trousers or a long skirt are preferable.
- Light materials that breathe—cotton, linen, etc. Summer can bring extreme heat waves to the region.

For departures from October-April

- Warm clothing: A warm jacket, hat and gloves are in order because temperatures can dip into the 40s and 30s, even on the coast. See the climate charts on the previous pages and pack accordingly.
- Swimsuit: it might be too cold to swim in the Mediterranean, but a swimsuit could still be useful for an indoor hotel pool or for visiting one of the famous Turkish baths.

Other Essential Items

- Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, etc. Our hotels/ship will provide the basics like soap and shampoo, but if you are sensitive to fragrances or new products, you may wish to bring your preferred brands. Most hotels do not provide a washcloth, so you may wish to pack one.
- Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen, SPF 15 or stronger
- Insect repellent with DEET (30%-35% strength)
- Travel money bag or money belt
- Light folding umbrella
- Folding hiking pole, sold in most camping stores
- Moisturizer and sun-blocking lip balm
- Pocket-size tissues
- Moist towelettes (not individual packets) and/or anti-bacterial "water-free" hand cleanser
- Electrical transformer & plug adapters: see "A Word About Electricity" for details.

Medicines

- Your own prescription medicines
- Medication for sea sickness
- Cold remedies: Sudafed, Dristan, etc.
- Ibuprofen or aspirin.
- Laxatives, such as Senokot or Ex-Lax
- Pepto-Bismol or Mylanta
- Benadryl or other antihistamine
- Anti-diarrhea tablets: like Imodium
- Band-Aids, several sizes
- Moleskin foot pads

- Neosporin or bacitracin
- An antibiotic medication for gastrointestinal illness
- Optional: A strong prescription pain medication for rare emergency purposes
- Optional for the Nemrut extension: Anti-malarial medication—discuss with your doctor first

Optional Gear

(These are items that other travelers have suggested *might* be useful—not requirements. The extra spaces at the end are for you to add whatever you don't want to forget.)

- Travel alarm or travel watch with alarm
- Hanging toiletry bag (with hook to hang on doorknob and pockets to organize items)
- Mask and snorkel. If you own a well-fitting mask, you may want to bring it along. Otherwise, there is often extra gear on board. The amount of snorkeling available on the trip does not merit buying a mask.
- Basic sewing kit
- Hand-wash laundry soap such as Woolite and plastic hang-up clothespins
- Travel journal/note pad and pens
- Reading materials
- Home address book
- Photos or post cards from home, small gift for home-hosted visit
- Phrase book
- Pocket-size calculator for exchange rates
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

And Don't Forget

- Passport with visa (if applicable)
- Emergency photocopies of your passport, air itinerary, and prescriptions. Also a list of your credit card numbers and phone number to reach the credit card company or bank, so that you can report a missing card in case of loss or theft
- Camera gear with extra batteries or battery charger
- Travel money belt or neck wallet

What not to pack

Do not pack aerosol cans, as they tend to leak during air travel. Also avoid packing glass bottles; use plastic containers instead. Leave at home checkbooks and any credit cards not essential for your trip, valuable jewelry, and anything that you would hate to lose.

Tips on Photo Gear

For many people capturing the highlights of their travel experiences in photographs or movies and sharing them with friends later is one of the most enjoyable aspects of the journey. You can remember and savor your memories for years to come. Digital cameras and camcorders are excellent travel companions—and many do dual duty by recording movies *and* still images. Fist sized camcorders will capture HD movies and high quality still photos; cameras smaller than a deck of cards are great for snapshots and will capture casual movie clips. With an ample supply of high-capacity memory cards you can capture your whole trip with a small, lightweight package.

Be sure to bring enough batteries. Recharging batteries is sometimes impossible, due to a lack of outlets, electrical shortages or outages—and some cameras drain batteries *very* quickly. Whether you need standard (2A or 3A) or proprietary batteries, it's handy to have spares. Be sure your charger will work with the local electrical system, and bring enough memory cards—they may be hard to find and will be often pricier than in the U.S. Whatever the storage format (often Secure Digital) memory cards are small and thin and you probably can't have too much storage.

Compact cameras are impractical for distant subjects (such as African wildlife or architectural details on Europe's taller buildings). Some models have a zoom lens of up to 120mm, which is good for middle distances. For distant subjects a *megazoom* (with a zoom lens of at least 300mm) or a single lens reflex (DSLR) camera with up to a 300mm telephoto lens are good choices. With a DSLR you can carry multiple lenses, though as your gear gets more complex you may reach luggage weight and size constraints. Large lenses that need a tripod, or double reflex cameras are impractical for casual travel photography. A single mid-range telephoto lens coupled with a small, fast prime lens (for low light/no flash situations) may be the best system for an effective but compact kit. Or, consider mirrorless interchangeable lens cameras (MILC) that combine small bodies and lenses and offer high quality for both still and HD movie images.

If you use a SLR or MILC camera, protect the lenses with a UV filter and remember to bring lens caps, covers, paper and a waterproof bag (a heavy duty Ziploc-style bag is good) to protect your camera. Remember to pack the flash if it's detachable. Be sure your camera has a flash that **can** be turned off, and learn how to turn it off. (At some sites and in many museums, flashes are **not** permitted; flashes can also frighten wary wildlife.) In some countries you may be charged for photography at specific sites; and in some cultures and individuals are less receptive to photography than others. It's always best to respect local customs.

Disposable cameras are also an option. They are inexpensive and capable of perfectly acceptable photos in light that is not too dim *or* bright. A panoramic disposable can add a particularly interesting perspective when compared to standard photo formats—and may suggest inventive ways of seeing your subjects. X-rays do not damage the data of digital cameras (in any media format), and so poses no problems for travelers using digital cameras.

TIP: *Many travelers, excited about their trip, buy a brand new camera...only to forget that it takes a couple of attempts to get used to a new piece of equipment. Take a few photos around the neighborhood, practice turning the flash on and off, and so forth before you leave—it can save you a lot of hassle on the trip and it will make your photos look better.*

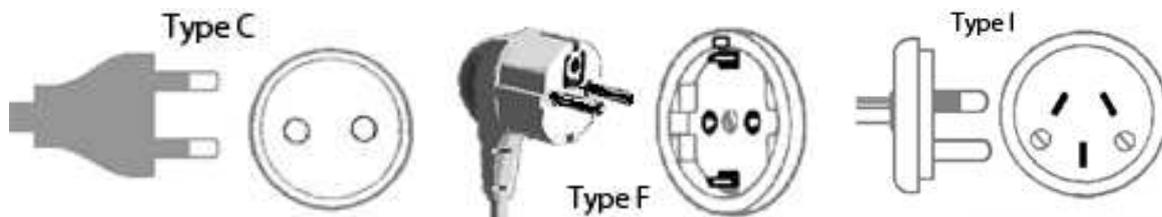
A Word about Electricity

When traveling overseas, there are a few differences to keep in mind about electricity. First, the voltage is usually different. Second, the plugs might not be the same shape. Lastly, the availability of power can vary.

Voltage: Electricity in Turkey and Uzbekistan is 220 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. Most of the things a traveler will want to plug in—battery chargers, MP3 players, tablets or computers—can run off both 110 and 220. But you should check the item or the owner’s guide first to confirm this before you plug it in. If you have something that needs 110 volts—like a shaver or a hairdryer—you can bring a transformer to change the current. (But transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave whatever it is at home.)

Plugs: The shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet—Type A, Type B, and so on. Standard U.S. plugs are Type A and Type B. Here is the list of plugs for the countries on this trip:

- Turkey: C or F
- Uzbekistan: C, F or I. C and F are more common; I is rarer.



To plug something from the U.S. into a C, F, or I socket you’ll need an adaptor that fits between the plug and the socket. Because there are many different types of plugs in this region, it may be easier to purchase a travel kit with multiple plug adaptors. Adaptors and travel kits can usually be found at your local electronics goods or hardware store. Sometimes you can buy them at large retailers too, like Target or Walmart. If you forget to bring an adaptor, you *might* also find them for sale at the airport when you arrive at your destination.

Availability: A constant electricity supply cannot be guaranteed during overnight stays. This is particularly true onboard the gulet ship, where electricity is supplied by a generator and there is no power in the cabins overnight. Travelers dependent on electricity supply (as in the case of those with sleep apnea) should consider a different adventure or ensure their apparatus has back-up battery power.

6. Learn About Your Destinations

Before your trip, we encourage you to start learning about the regions of the world you will soon be exploring. The ancient and contemporary cultures of these areas are rich and complex. Even a small amount of background reading can help you make sense of the kaleidoscope of facts and impressions that will come your way. Having some knowledge in advance can complement and enrich what you can learn from your expert Trip Leader.

Turkey at a Glance

Facts & Figures

Area: 302,535 square miles

Capital: Ankara

Languages: Turkish is the official language; Kurdish is also spoken.

Geography: Turkey's interior is a high, arid plateau bordered in the north and south by rugged mountains. The country has a Mediterranean climate of dry, hot summers and mild, pleasant winters.

Population: 76,805,524

Ethnic Groups: Turkish 70-75%, Kurdish 18%, other minorities 7-12% (2008 est.)

Religions: Muslim 99.8% (mostly Sunni), other 0.2% (mostly Christians and Jews)

Time Zone: Turkey is on Eastern European Time, seven hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 1pm in Ankara. Daylight Saving Time begins the last Monday in March and ends the last Sunday in October.

Historical Overview

Early History

The earliest known empire in the area now known as Turkey was the Hittite Empire. Early Hittite civilization rivaled that of the Egyptians and Babylonians in terms of culture, arts and mathematical achievements. The Hittites kingdom was conquered, however—first by the Assyrians and then by the Greeks. Later, Asia Minor (as Turkey was then known) became a Roman colony around 100 BC. In 330 AD, the city of Byzantium became Constantinople, when the Roman Emperor Constantine made it his capital and converted to Christianity.

From the fourth through most of the eleventh centuries, the area was the heart of the Byzantine, or Eastern Roman, Empire. Under Byzantine rule, Asia Minor flourished as a hub of the Christian faith as well as one of the world's most important trade centers. However, by the 11th century AD, Byzantine power had declined, and an army of Seljuk Turks invaded Asia Minor from Central Asia, bringing the new faith of Islam with them.

The Reign of the Seljuks

The Seljuks established a power base in Anatolia, with Konya as their capital and control center for their military conquests in Syria, Palestine and portions of the waning Byzantine Empire, (which was, at the time, the political center of the Christian faith). The Pope responded by waging a holy war against the Seljuks, who endured seven brutal crusades over the next two centuries.

Despite being under constant attack from European Christians, the Seljuks were able to keep their land holdings until the late 13th century – but their reign would soon come to an end. Interestingly, the Seljuk Empire would not be replaced by its European enemies but by warriors from their ancestral homeland of Turkistan. Forced by the Mongols to leave central Asia, the Ottoman Turks first entered the service of the Seljuks.

The Ottomans Seize Control

At the end of the 13th century, however, Turkish leader Othman I founded the Ottoman Dynasty in the Bursa region. Through a series of carefully crafted treaties, the Ottomans began building a small empire that eventually stretched into Eastern Europe. To build their army for conquest, Ottoman rulers conscripted the smartest and strongest boys among their Christian subjects and schooled them in the Muslim faith, as well as the ways of war. During the next 300 years, this army would become the most feared force in both Europe and Central Asia.

The Ottoman Empire reached its peak in the mid-16th century under the Emperor Suleyman the Magnificent. After its capture in 1453, Constantinople became Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire. By then the empire had grown to include Egypt, Syria, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Tripoli, Greece, the Balkans, and most of Hungary. At that point, however, Ottoman expansion essentially stopped, except for the acquisition of Cyprus in 1571 and Crete in 1669.

By late in the 17th century, successful opposition by Christian countries began. Through wars and revolts over the next two centuries, the Turks lost Hungary, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Tripoli, Albania and Macedonia. As an ally of Germany in World War I, they also lost Syria, Arabia, Mesopotamia and authority over Egypt.

The Birth of a Nation

In response to the Greek occupation of Izmir in 1919, the Turks established a nationalist congress with Mustafa Kemal, later known as Kemal Ataturk, as its president. Kemal established a provisional government in opposition to the Allied-controlled government in Istanbul. He led his Turkish armies to victory against the Italians, French and Greeks, who were finally expelled from Turkey in 1922. The Treaty of Lausanne ended the conflict in 1923 and Turkey was recognized as an independent republic. Mustafa Kemal was recognized as republic's first president. He ruled the country until his death in 1938 and reshaped Turkey. His title Ataturk translates as "Father of the Turks."

It is said his political policy was "consistent and radical westernization. He introduced a new legal code. He reduced the influence of Islam in Turkey by abolishing Islamic law, stripping religious leaders of their power and giving equal rights to women. Under Ataturk, the alphabet changed the alphabet from Arabic to Latin, and the Gregorian calendar was accepted. He then set out to industrialize the economy under a system of state socialism. After his death, his party remained in power until Turkey's first free elections were held in 1950.

After World War II, Turkey furthered relations with Western Europe by joining the United Nations, moving toward open, democratic political institutions and increasing individual liberties. However, economic difficulties led to a military coup in 1960, followed by the adoption of a new constitution in 1961. This led to a series of civilian governments until 1971 when Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel was forced to resign in the face of strikes, student unrest, and opposition from extremists on both the left and the right. The nation struggled to find its political identity for the next decade, alternating between civilian and military rule.

In 1982, partly due to international pressure, a new constitution was adopted and, in 1983, political parties were restored. After that, Turkey began strengthening its western ties and, during the Gulf War, supported U.N. forces. During the 1990s, economic and political stability led to a lack of foreign investment in Turkey, but recent government policies promise a brighter economic future.

Uzbekistan at a Glance

Facts & Figures

Area: 172,742 square miles

Capital: Tashkent

Languages: Uzbek is the official language; Russian and Tajik are also spoken.

Ethnicity: Uzbek 80%, Russian 5.5%, Tajik 5%, Kazakh 3%, Karakalpak 2.5%, Tatar 1.5%, other 2.5%

Location: Uzbekistan is bordered by Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan.

Geography: Uzbekistan is a doubly landlocked country—one of only two in the world—with no maritime claims. It does, however, have 260 miles of coastline along the Aral Sea. The Amu Darya, Syr Darya (Sirdaryo), and Zarafshon Rivers all flow through Uzbekistan. Most of Uzbekistan has a desert climate marked by long, hot summers and short, mild winters. There is, however, a small area of semiarid grassland in the eastern part of the country known as the Fergana Valley. The Fergana Valley is surrounded by Uzbekistan's mountainous border with Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan.

Population: 28,128,600

Religion: Muslim 88% (mostly Sunni), Eastern Orthodox 9%, other 3%

Time Zone: Uzbekistan is on Uzbekistan Time, nine hours ahead of U.S. EST. When it is 6am in Washington D.C., it is 3pm in Tashkent.

Historical Overview

Early History and the Silk Road

The first known inhabitants of Central Asia were Iranian nomads who arrived sometime in the first millennium BC. Shortly after their arrival, these early settlers began to develop an impressive irrigation system along Uzbekistan's major rivers. This innovation improved agricultural output and increased trade in the region. Over time, cities began to appear and some, such as Bukhara and Samarkand, became prosperous centers of government and culture.

By the third century BC, China was engaged in an extensive trade relationship with the greater Mediterranean world. Its trade empire included Central Asia, Afghanistan, Iran, Northern Africa, and parts of Europe. In order to facilitate trade across such a vast area, a complex network of trade routes developed between China and the West. Collectively, these trade routes are referred to as the Silk Road, so named for the lucrative silk trade that emerged during the Han Dynasty in the second century BC. Although silk was by far the most profitable, it was by no means the only commodity traded along the Silk Road; satin, hemp, ceramics, perfumes, spices, medicines, jewels, and slaves were all traded as well. Along with material goods, the Silk Road also helped to transport knowledge and culture. The trade routes of the Silk Road spread new ideas and technologies. They also helped to spread religion and philosophy.

Uzbekistan, strategically located at the heart of the Silk Road, benefited immensely from this constant stream of wealth and knowledge. Cities such as Bukhara, Samarkand, and Khiva quickly became centers of trade. At times, the Mawarannahr region in which these prosperous cities were located was one of the most powerful and influential of the Ancient World. Travel along the Silk Road reached its peak in the eighth century AD during the Tang Dynasty; however, trade along its routes continued to a certain extent for centuries to come.

The Persian Empire

The Persian Empire came into existence in 539 BC after Cyrus the Great's defeat of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. This powerful empire of antiquity originated in modern-day Iran, but eventually spread to include a substantial part of the known world. Though the empire grew most noticeably under the rule of Cyrus the Great, it continued to expand under such influential leaders as Darius I and Xerxes the Great. At its height around 500 BC, the Persian Empire stretched as far west as Libya and as far east as India. This time period during which the empire was ruled by Cyrus the Great and his successors is referred to as the Achaemenid Dynasty. Uzbekistan, then divided into the Persian provinces of Sogdiana and Bactria, formed a considerable part of the Achaemenid Empire. The Achaemenids governed the area now known as Uzbekistan until 327 BC, when Alexander the Great conquered Central Asia.

Alexander the Great's Conquest

The province of Sogdiana, centered around the present-day city of Samarkand, was one of the Achaemenid Empire's most prosperous and influential provinces. As such, it was an obvious target for Alexander the Great's conquest. Although he encountered tremendous popular resistance when he first invaded Sogdiana, Alexander effectively took control in 327 BC when he married Roxana, the daughter of a local Bactrian chieftain. Bactria, the province immediately to the south of Sogdiana, was the last Persian province to fall to Alexander the Great. In order to maintain control of the region, Alexander set up a number of military outposts, which he manned with veteran Macedonian soldiers.

After Alexander's death in 323 BC, his massive empire was split into much smaller regions known as "satrapies;" these satrapies were then divided among his generals. Seleucus, one of Alexander's top generals, received the huge area formerly controlled by the Achaemenid Empire. The Seleucid Empire, as Seleucus' lands were collectively referred to as, was centered in Syria. It incorporated much of the Middle East and Central Asia, including the combined satrapy of Sogdiana and Bactria. The Seleucid Empire became a center of the Hellenistic World, and as such, was largely influenced by Greek art and culture.

The Seleucid Empire gradually declined due to a combination of factors. Overexpansion and a number of decisive military defeats resulted in the near-complete collapse of the empire by the mid-second century BC. The last remnants of the Seleucid Empire were brought to an end in 64 BC, when the Roman general Pompey established Syria as a Roman province. After the fall of the Seleucid Empire, Uzbekistan was ruled by a number of different Persian empires, including the Parthian and Sassanid empires. The next group to take an interest in Uzbekistan were the Arabs, who conquered Central Asia in the eighth century AD.

Islam Spreads to Central Asia

After experiencing centuries of Persian rule, Uzbekistan fell to Islamic Arabs in the eighth century AD. The Arabs first invaded Mawarannahr in the middle of the seventh century on a series of sporadic raids. Because the Iranian peoples of Central Asia lacked leadership and solidarity, they were easily defeated.

One of the Arabs' foremost goals in conquering Mawarannahr was to spread their newfound faith. By this point, Islam—which officially began in AD 622—was already on its way to becoming a major world religion. After the Arab conquest of Mawarannahr, Islam spread steadily throughout Central Asia, where it continues to be the primary religion today.

Although Uzbekistan maintained much of its Persian character under Arab rule, certain aspects of the region's culture changed significantly during this period. For example, the primary language of literature, government, and commerce switched from Persian to Arabic until the tenth century. Also, Islam became the region's primary religion, whereas, in the past, it had been Zoroastrianism. The Arab presence in Mawarannahr furthered its development as a center of art and learning. Under the Abbasid Caliphate—the ruling dynasty of the Islamic world from roughly AD 750 to sometime in the 13th century—Bukhara was transformed into a cultural center that rivaled contemporary world capitals such as Baghdad and Cairo.

Mongols, Timurids, and Uzbeks

The Mongol invasion of Mawarannahr was a turning point in the region's history. It began in 1219 and ended in 1225. Led by the infamous Genghis Khan, the Mongol campaign in Central Asia was particularly brutal. In conquering Uzbekistan, the Mongols executed a widespread genocide of the indigenous Indo-Persian people; their culture and heritage were quickly replaced by that of the Mongolian-Turkic peoples who migrated from the north. Invading Mongol warriors also destroyed the region's cities and its irrigation system.

After Genghis Khan's death in 1227, the Mongol Empire was divided among his family. By the early 14th century, the empire had begun to crumble. Recognizing the empire's weakness as an opportunity to seize control, a tribal chieftain by the name of Timur gained power in the 1380s. Timur, who is also known as Tamerlane, eventually succeeded in uniting all of western Central Asia, Iran, and Asia Minor under one state. Under Timurid rule, Mawarannahr experienced its final golden age: Scholars and artisans from all over the empire gathered in Samarkand, transforming the city once more into a cultural and intellectual center. Timur (Tamerlane) also initiated a series of religious and palatial construction projects throughout the region during this rule.

In 1501, the Uzbek tribes invaded Mawarannahr from the north. By 1510, they had successfully completed their invasion of present-day Uzbekistan. In order to maintain control of the region, they established two states: the Khanate of Bukhoro (Bukhara) and the Khanate of Khiva. Although the Uzbek khanates were quite powerful for some time, they had lost considerable power by the end of the sixteenth century due to internal conflicts and a regional decline in trade—travelers no longer used the Silk Road as frequently now that ocean routes were available. By the 19th century, the khanates had

more or less been overrun by Russians; eventually they disappeared altogether. The Uzbek khanates are crucial to Uzbekistan's history in the sense that they provided the influx of ethnic Uzbeks that constitute the country's ethnic majority today.

Russian Imperialism

Russia first took an interest in Central Asia in the early 19th century. Its reasons for finally getting involved in the region included: 1) the desire to become self-sufficient in its cotton production, 2) the need to end the Central Asian practice of selling captured Russians as slaves, and 3) a growing concern with regards to British expansion into Afghanistan.

At first, Russia's conquest of Uzbekistan wasn't martial as much as it was cultural. Throughout the 1800s, thousands of Russian settlers migrated to Uzbekistan. Their presence quickly became overwhelming. By 1912, an estimated 210,000 Russians were living in Uzbekistan. Russia eventually became militarily involved in Central Asia in the late 1850s. By 1868, the cities of Tashkent, Samarkand, and Bukhara had all been captured. By 1876, the Uzbek khanates had all become Russian protectorates.

The Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic

In 1917, the Russian Revolution brought an end to the age-old Russian Empire. The Bolsheviks seized power in the ensuing Russian Civil War, and in 1922, they established the Soviet Union. Although Uzbekistan initially resisted Bolshevik control, it eventually succumbed to communism. On October 27, 1924, Uzbekistan was incorporated into the Soviet Union as the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic.

Under Soviet rule, religion of any kind was considered subversive. As a result, Islam was targeted throughout the Soviet Union. Almost all mosques in Uzbekistan were closed and religious schools were transformed into antireligious museums. Under Soviet rule, Uzbekistan was expected to be the USSR's primary cotton producer. In an attempt to further increase output, the USSR instituted a series of irrigation projects throughout the country. Little did they know, these irrigation projects would later have disastrous effects on the local environment.

While part of the Soviet Union, the Communist Party was the only legal party recognized in the Uzbek SSR. On September 1, 1991, the Uzbek SSR was renamed the Republic of Uzbekistan. On December 26, 1991, it officially broke all ties with the Soviet Union and became the independent nation of Uzbekistan.

The Aral Sea Crisis

The Aral Sea Crisis is currently one of the worst man-made natural disasters in the world. Over the past several decades, the Aral Sea has shrunk to roughly one-tenth its original size. What used to be the fourth-largest inland body of water in the world is now only the eighth-largest. The shores of the Aral Sea gradually began to recede starting in the 1960s when the USSR first began to divert large amounts of water away from the Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers for the purpose of crop irrigation. Today, the Aral Sea has retreated more than 60 miles from its original boundaries in certain spots. Although the UN and the World Bank have begun several projects in an attempt to improve the situation, the future of the Aral Sea continues to be in doubt.

Cultural Insight & What This Trip is Like

Cuisine

Turkish cuisine takes many of its cues from the Mediterranean region—think lots of lamb, fresh fish, olives, natural yogurt, dried fruits, flat breads—and you won't be far off. In Turkey the focus of most meals is the meat dish, with vegetables taking a side role.

Generally, restaurants will specialize in one kind of meat dish or one cooking technique. For example, kebab houses serve all sorts of grilled or roasted meat dishes. Pideci restaurants serve freshly baked flat bread piled high with toppings such as cheese, eggs, *sucuk* (a spicy salami), or other daily specials. Another favorite, good for an afternoon snack, is *lahmacun*, which is sometimes called “Turkish pizza”. Thin, crisp dough is topped with ground lamb, onions, and spices and is often served with a cold frothy *ayran*, a fortifying drink of yogurt, spring water, and a dash of salt.

You might be thinking, “but how will I order if I don't speak Turkish?” As it happens, many Turkish restaurants, especially the smaller “mom and pop” places, don't have printed menus. The traditional Turkish method of ordering is much more appetizing—follow the waiter into the kitchen, see what's on offer, and make your selection by pointing. Or there may be a display of sample dishes at the ordering counter; all you need to do is point.

Uzbek cuisine also features lots of lamb and mutton, as well as noodles, rice, and vegetables. (Carrots, potatoes, and onions are especially popular.) Typical dishes include *plov* (rice with chunks of meat, carrots, and onions; also called *osh*), noodle soups, and kebabs. Also on offer are various types of dumpling dishes: *manti* (boiled or steamed with beef or lamb filling), *somsa* (similar to Indian samosa), and *chuchvara* (small dumplings cooked in broth or water, sometimes served in soup and sometimes with different toppings like pierogi). Tea is the national drink—black tea is more popular in Tashkent and green tea is king in other parts of the country.

Gulet

During the course of our adventure, we'll spend several nights aboard a traditional wooden ship known as a gulet. Many of the ships are still built the old fashioned way—by hand, and without the aid of modern blueprints. As a result, each ship varies slightly from the next, but some generalizations can be made. Typically, the cabins are small, but do have a private bath. The public spaces are limited to a small indoor lounge for 4-6 people, and an open-air top deck with seating, a table for dining, and an area to sunbathe. The ships do not have air-conditioning, and there's no electric power at night in the cabins.

Language Barrier

You can have some great “conversations” with local people who do not speak English, even if you don't speak a word of the local language. Indeed, this non-verbal communication can be a highly rewarding part of travel. To break the ice, bring along some family photographs, or a few postcards of your hometown. If you want to meet kids, bring a puppet or other interactive toy. Your Trip Leader can help get the ball rolling. Keep in mind, however, that it is always good form to know at least a few words in the local language.

Your attire is a key part of your non-verbal presentation. Your clothing should show a respect for local tradition. This means you should dress in a relatively modest style; see the “Style Hints and Dress Codes” section for more details on attire.

Religion

Islam is the predominant religion in Turkey and Uzbekistan, so an understanding of the religion will assist your discoveries. Practicing Muslims are expected to pray five times daily: at dawn, noon, afternoon, sunset, and evening. The exact time is listed in the local newspaper each day. The call to prayer, called the *ezan*, is sung or broadcast from minaret towers to remind the faithful that it is time to pray. Friday is the Muslim Sabbath day, but businesses in Turkey usually remain open.

When visiting a mosque, it is polite to be modestly dressed (no bare shoulders, no short skirts or shorts). You will be asked to remove your shoes before entering. In some mosques, women visitors are not required to cover their hair, in others you may be asked to do so. Typically a mosque that requires special dress for female visitors will have pieces to lend or rent.

The biggest religious holiday is Ramadan, a month-long celebration that is meant to teach the values of restraint and charity. During Ramadan, Muslims fast from dawn to dusk. Fasting includes no eating, drinking alcohol, cigarette-smoking, or gum-chewing. Visitors are not required to fast; however, alcohol may not be served in some establishments and some restaurants are closed. The museums and archaeological sites remain open.

Each night at sunset, families and friends gather together to celebrate *iftar*—the breaking of the fast. The festivities often continue well into the night. The mosques and some streets are decorated with lanterns, special meals are prepared for the evening breaking of the fast, and nighttime social events and festivals are planned. Ramadan follows a lunar calendar, so its dates change significantly from year to year (and can differ from place to place)—in 2013 Ramadan will begin in Turkey and Uzbekistan at sunset on July 9th and continue until August 7th.

TIP: Although alcohol is forbidden by Islam, attitudes towards alcohol are more relaxed in Turkey and Central Asia than in the Middle East. You may want to try one of the local specialties—raki in Turkey or vodka in Uzbekistan (a holdover from the Soviet days). Just don't bring alcohol as a gift for the locals—if someone is personally strict in adhering to Islam, they won't be able to enjoy it.

Uzbekistan is also home to large population of Eastern Orthodox Christians and Bukharan Jews. Practicing Orthodox Christians are expected to be baptized in the faith, to attend church regularly, and study the Orthodox bible (which contains books not included in the Protestant or Catholic bibles). Bukharan Jews, so-named because they came from the Emirate of Bukhara and speak Bukhori, are part of the Sephardic community. They are expected to follow Jewish law, attend synagogue, and keep Shabbat (Sabbath) from sundown Friday to sundown on Saturday.

When visiting an Orthodox or Bukharan religious building such as a church or synagogue, it is considered polite to be covered from shoulders to below the knees—no shorts, no sleeveless shirts, and no low or revealing necklines.

Taking Photographs

The etiquette of photographing most people in the countries on your itinerary is about the same as it would be on the streets of your hometown. You need permission to take a close-up, but not for a crowd scene. Be especially polite if you want to photograph a Muslim man or woman—to take a photograph without their permission can be considered disrespectful due to cultural beliefs about modesty. If you want to shoot a great portrait, show interest in your subject, try to have a bit of social interaction first. Then use sign language to inquire if a picture is OK. Your Trip Leader can help.

Please do not take photographs of military personnel, military compounds, or other official institutions/personnel (such as police). This may result in the confiscation of your camera. In Uzbekistan, add the Tashkent Metro Stations to the “no photos” list.

In museums or at archeological sites, there may be restrictions on using your flash. Please obey any signs or directions by staff; the no-flash rule protects the fragile artifacts and artwork from damage by repeated exposure to light. Occasionally, there may also be a small fee levied by the museum or site for the privilege of taking photos. Your Trip Leader will advise you beforehand.

The Finer Points

Don't let the fine points of Turkish customs worry you; Turks know that visitors can't be expected to know every detail. Much of what is considered polite in Turkey is similar to what's polite in the U.S. But as a matter of interest, our regional office has put together a list of “finer points” that might surprise you:

- Body posture is important. Sprawling, pointing the soles of your feet at someone, or keeping your legs crossed when someone speaks to you are seen as impolite.
- Even after eating, your host might press you to take more. Perversely, while it is polite to accept a first helping, it is polite to *decline* a second helping...at least at first. (Eventually giving in and accepting more because the food is just too good to miss is perfectly acceptable.)
- Blowing your nose loudly and in public is frowned on.
- If a piece of bread is dropped, you may see a Turk pick it up, kiss it, and touch it to their forehead. This gesture is in remembrance that bread is the stuff of life and a gift from God.

Toilets

Although all our accommodations feature western-style toilets, some rest stops on the road and some public restrooms will have eastern-style squat toilets. For women travelers who are novices at using a squat toilet, a skirt might be easier to maneuver than trousers. (This does not mean you need to wear a skirt every day, just that it might be worthwhile to bring a skirt for days with long transfers through small villages. The other “trick” is to wear trousers, but roll up the legs.)

Public toilets will be hard to find on this adventure, especially in Uzbekistan; it is just not a common facility in this part of the world. And inevitably, when one *is* found it is out of toilet paper, or soap, or both. Carry a travel-sized roll of toilet paper or packets of tissues along something to clean your hands—like anti-bacterial gel or moist wipes—and you'll be prepared no matter what. Rest stops on the road will be widely spaced, and may be extremely basic. (There's a reason we call this “an adventure”...) Despite their basic nature, there is often a small fee to use the restroom.

Because many buildings have older plumbing, with narrow pipes that easily clog, it is also common for public restrooms to offer a special trashcan inside the stall. Waste paper is put into the can instead of flushed. You may also see this arrangement when visiting a home.

Village Homestay

One of the unique and special advantages of this itinerary is an opportunity to stay overnight in a village home. For a brief time, you'll get an insider's look into a way of life that is completely unlike what you are accustomed to here at home. It is also a way of life that is slowly disappearing in Turkey itself, due to development and modernization. In order for you to be better prepared for this experience, we offer the following information.

Our homestay experience begins with our arrival in the village itself. Set in picturesque countryside, the village is primarily an agricultural community. Many of the families who live here are farmers growing crops like wheat, barley, or legumes. Others are herders raising goats, sheep, or other livestock. The village is small and quiet, with a compact center. Social life tends to focus on visits with neighbors and the café.

The agricultural nature of the place means that most families will live simply, have daily chores on their own property or fields, and will follow the old adage of "early to bed, early to rise". While in the village, you'll experience this simpler life yourself—perhaps touring the fields, or helping with morning chores, or stopping by the café for tea. Exactly what you do and see will depend on the time of year, the crops, the animals, and what's going on in the village. However, no matter when you visit, a special part of the experience will be the chance to spend the night in a family home.

Because of Turkey's unique position in the world—not quite European, not quite Middle Eastern, developed in some ways and underdeveloped in others—Turkish homes can be an interesting and surprising blend. Be prepared for simple but clean accommodations, with running water but with basic plumbing. As this is a home, not a hotel, the bathroom facilities are shared. Rooms transform from one use to another as furniture is cleared away or set up. For example, it is very common for the family to sleep on futon-like floor mats, that once cleared away, switch a bedroom into a parlor. We will sleep as the locals do, on the same type of mats, laid out on the floor. Depending on the family's size and the layout of their home, we may sleep three or four to a room or we may have a room to ourselves. (But no matter the rooming arrangements, each single traveler or couple will have their own bedding.) Think of it as camping out in a home. And if this sounds daunting, remember it is only for one night!

Your hosts have been selected because of their genuine interest and enthusiasm for their American visitors. You may find them very curious about you and your life abroad, but you may also find them shy or quiet. It can be intimidating to have a group of strangers in your home, so to break the ice we suggest that you take the initiative in conversation. Ask lots of questions, volunteer observations, or offer compliments, and soon you'll be at ease.

Your Trip Leader will brief you beforehand on what is considered polite so you can avoid social gaffs. A small gift for your host or hostess is considered polite, but is not required. If you do bring a gift, we recommend that you bring something the whole family can enjoy, or something that represents your region, state, or hometown. Get creative and keep it small—peach jelly from Georgia, maple sugar candy from New England, a t-shirt or cap from a local sports team—something that can be used or used up. (But please, no more magnets! Also, we do not recommend alcohol because it is forbidden in Islam, and your hosts may be religious.) Pack everything into an extra overnight bag, or use your carry-on, and you won't need to tote your main luggage.

Staying overnight in a family home is an experience that most travelers to Turkey can never know. If you come with an open mind, a sense of adventure, and the willingness to give up the amenities of a hotel for one night, you will be repaid with a truly unique opportunity.

Safety & Security

Common Sense and Awareness

As you travel, exercise the same caution and awareness that you would in a large American city. Don't be overly nervous or suspicious, but keep your eyes open. If you are venturing out after dark, go with one or two other people.

Carry a one-day supply of cash in your pocket. Carry most of your money, and your passport, in a travel pouch or money belt under your shirt. Replenish your pocket supply when you are in a safe and quiet place, or in our vehicle. Don't leave valuables unattended in your hotel room. Most hotels will offer use of a hotel safe at the front desk or an electronic in-room safe (for which you can set your own personal number). Please utilize them.

Pickpockets and Scammers

Pickpockets may create a sudden distraction. In Istanbul in particular, our regional office has seen the rise of a specific type of pickpocket. It is usually a group of young boys about 13-15 years old working together. Some will start a fight as a distraction, while others will pick your pocket or take your purse. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your wallet or purse. Even better, wear a money belt instead—it will usually protect you in such a situation. If you do sense that someone is taking your wallet or purse, it is best not to confront them.

Some con artists will approach travelers in the guise of “helping” them. Although some people will be genuinely helpful, if someone approaches you to offer assistance, listen to your instincts. If the offer seems “off”, or if it involves you handing money to someone, or following someone, it is best to say no. In Turkey, a variation of this scam is that someone will approach you and offer to take you to a shop, restaurant, or nightclub. They may represent themselves as working for the hotel you are staying at, but usually they are in the employ of the shop/restaurant/nightclub, where you will be grossly overcharged. A firm “no” is usually all it takes to dissuade them, but if they try to pressure you, simply let the front desk of the hotel or your Trip Leader know.

Remember, Turkey is generally quite safe. Most people you will meet there are as honest as anywhere else; the scammers and pickpockets are the minority.

Pedestrian Safety

Pedestrians do not always have the right of way, so please be very careful when crossing the street. Always wait for a light, cross at a crosswalk, and look both ways beforehand. Even then, you'll need to be cautious.

Communications

Even picking up the phone or getting a paper can be a new experience in a foreign country. To ensure you are available during your trip to friends and relatives at home, you will receive two copies of your hotel list, including phone numbers, with your final documents package. One copy is for you to bring, and one to leave behind with friends or relatives in case they need to contact you during the trip.

When calling overseas from the US, dial 011 for international exchange, then the country's code, then and the number. The country code, which is indicated by a plus sign (+), is +90 for Turkey and +998 for Uzbekistan. Phone numbers abroad may not have the same number of digits as US numbers; even numbers within a country can vary depending on the city and if the phone is a land line or cell phone. When calling from the US, you may need to drop the first digit of the area code.

When calling the US from abroad, generally you dial 00 for international exchange, then the US country code +1, and then the number with area code.

Cell Phones

If you want to use a cell phone while traveling overseas, be sure to check whether your own phone will work outside the U.S. or if you're better off renting an international phone. The websites www.travelcell.com and www.globalcellularrental.com have good information on rentals. You may also want to consider buying an inexpensive local phone for your stay.

To use your own phone, it's best to investigate the options and fees your plan offers for international use. Consult your service provider (www.verizon.com, www.t-mobile.com, etc.) for details. U.S. service is dominated by the CDMA technology standard, while most of the world uses the incompatible GSM standard. Some U.S. providers do offer GSM, but in either case you may incur high international roaming fees. With GSM, however, you can often choose to have your phone "unlocked" and then add a local SIM card for lower fees. If you can access the Internet as you travel, you can take advantage of email or a Skype Internet telephone (VOIP) account for the best value.

Phone Calling Cards

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, consider using a prepaid calling card, because the only additional charge you'll normally incur (besides the prepaid long distance charges) is a local fee of a few cents and possibly a connection fee if you are using your card at your hotel. It is best to check with the hotel's reception desk prior to making phone calls to avoid unexpected charges.

Calling cards purchased locally are typically less expensive than those purchased in the U.S. and are more likely to work with the local phone system. Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.

Internet and Email

Most hotels in Turkey have Internet services available, some for free, some for an hourly charge. Many hotels will provide complimentary WiFi service in a common area, like the lobby or reception, but not in the guest rooms. Internet cafes are also available at different points throughout our adventure. So you can either bring your own device during the trip and use WiFi where it is available, or leave it at home and rely on places that provide computers, like hotels with a business center or Internet cafes. One place that Internet access is not available is on board the *gulet* ship.

Responsible Travel

We do our best to have a minimum negative impact on local cultures and the natural environment in every country where we operate trips. In our many years of travel, our travelers and staff have learned techniques that encourage rewarding cultural exchange. Our goal is to leave no trace on the natural environment, or to leave places better than we find them. Here's what we ask of you as part of this effort:

Conserving the Natural Environment

- Minimize the disposable items you bring on the trip. Leave boxes, wrappings from new clothes, and other unneeded items at home.
- Dispose of your trash properly. Instead of disposing of trash at roadside rest areas or restaurants, keep a small trash bag in your day bag and empty it in your hotel each night.
- Ask whether plastic drinking water bottles can be recycled. Most days, it's better to keep your empty bottles with you until you reach your hotel.
- Stay on established trails to avoid damaging plants.
- Don't pick any vegetation, or remove any item of biological interest.
- Don't take flash pictures inside temples, mosques, or museums.
- Try not to brush your shoulder or bag against ancient walls or columns.
- Where other foreign visitors have littered film boxes or candy wrappers, consider picking them up. Local people will appreciate your thoughtfulness.

7. Additional Resources

Suggested Readings

We've listed a few of our favorite books about the region you'll be traveling. Most of these are available in large bookshops, by mail order, and from the Internet.

Turkey:

A Traveller's History of Turkey by Richard Stoneman (History) A history that concentrates on the pre-Ottoman period, with smaller coverage allotted to the Ottoman and Ataturk eras. Useful for someone who wants an overview of early Turkish history. (And yes, there are two Ls in the title – the series is British).

Birds Without Wings by Louis De Bernieres (Literature) A sweeping historical drama that weaves together the lives of an Anatolian family, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, and the rise of Ataturk. Highly recommended.

Complete Mediterranean Wildlife by Paul Sterry (Field Guide) An illustrated survey of the plants, animals, birds, insects, marine mammals, and other wildlife of the Mediterranean region. May only be available through special order or online, but useful for a nature enthusiast.

Crescent and Star: Turkey Between Two Worlds by Stephen Kinzer (History) Contemporary life, culture, and politics in Turkey, from a former *New York Times* Istanbul bureau chief.

Harem: The World Behind the Veil by Alev Lytle Croutier (History/Culture) A fascinating glimpse of harem culture, especially at Istanbul's Topkapi Palace. This book was originally published in 1991, so it may not be in stock at your local bookstore, but it can still be found online.

Innocents Abroad by Mark Twain (Vintage Memoir) Only part of this humorous book deals with Turkey, but that part is a must. Turkey has changed, but you'll recognize vestiges of the old country as described by Twain.

Noah's Flood: The New Scientific Discoveries about the Event That Changed History by William Ryan and Walter Pitman (Science) Many societies have stories of a great flood—could they be based on a true event? In this riveting book, the authors—who are scientists at Columbia University—try to answer that very question using scientific techniques from geology and archeology.

Pawn in Frankincense by Dorothy Dunnett (Novel) An acclaimed historical novel set during the time of the Ottoman Empire, featuring such characters as Suleyman the Magnificent and Roxelana.

River of the Dead by Barbara Nadel (Mystery) Inspector Ikmen heads to Mardin in Turkey's southeast in this 10th book in the series.

The Ancient Mariners: Seafarers and Sea Fighters of the Mediterranean in Ancient Times by Lionel Casson (History) The classic review of the Mediterranean's seafaring history, with a focus on the Greek and Roman empires. Originally written in 1959, but revised in the 1980's and 1990's.

Additional Resources

The Emergence of Modern Turkey by Bernard Lewis (History) A scholarly work covering Turkey's history from 1850 to 1950, with a few chapters on the earlier history of the Turks. It offers insight into the cultural and historical origins of modern Turkey.

The Fall of Constantinople, 1453 by Steven Runciman (History) Regarded as one of the best accounts of the conquest of Constantinople and final days of the Byzantine Empire. Originally published in 1965, but subsequently republished.

The White Castle and ***My Name is Red*** by Orhan Pamuk (Literature) Two moving historical novels by the winner of the 2006 Nobel Prize in Literature. *The White Castle* tells the tale of a seventeenth-century Italian scholar who becomes enslaved in the service of an astronomer, while *My Name is Red* describes the events surrounding the murder of a miniaturist during the height of the Ottoman Empire.

Travelers' Tales Turkey by James Villers (Travel Narrative) An entertaining selection of short stories and essays about Turkey.

Turquoise, A Chef's Travels in Turkey by Greg and Lucy Malouf (Food) A combination cookbook and photo journal—recipes and hundreds of stunning color photographs of the landscapes, people, and food of Turkey.

Uzbekistan:

A Carpet Ride to Khiva, Seven Years on the Silk Road by Christopher Aslan Alexander (Memoir) Recalling his efforts to open a traditional carpet-weaving workshop in Khiva, Alexander writes with a fondness for, and an understanding of, Uzbek culture that permeates this charming memoir.

Inside Central Asia by Dilip Hiro (History) The book's subtitle—*A Political and Cultural History of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Kergtstan, Tajikistan, Turkey and Iran*—pretty much says it all about this comprehensive and useful book.

Life Along the Silk Road by Susan Whitfield (History/Biography) In a move inspired by the Canterbury Tales, Whitfield uses the voice of ordinary people—merchants, soldiers, government officials—to capture a sense of what life on the Silk Road was like during the eighth to tenth centuries.

Tales Told in Tents, Stories from Central Asia by Sally Clayton and Sophie Herxheimer (Children's/Folktales) A collection of 12 traditional stories from Central Asia with colorful illustrations. A good choice for a bedtime story with a travel flair, the book offers notes on each story and a map.

Tamerlane: Sword of Islam, Conqueror of the World by Justin Marozzi (Biography/History) Part biography, part history, and part travel narrative, this fairly recent account of the life of Tamerlane focuses on his conquests and fearsome reputation.

The Great Game: The Struggle for Empire in Central Asia by Peter Hopkirk (History) A definitive yet easy-to-read account of the race between Great Britain and Russia to secure Central Asia during the Victorian Era. Full of spies, adventurers, soldiers, and royals.

The Opportunists by Yohann de Silva (Fiction) Crime lords, old debts, and intrigue fill the pages of this suspense thriller set in the black markets of Uzbekistan.

Guidebooks:

Your Trip Leader will be happy to provide recommendations and suggestions during the trip, so a guidebook is not a necessity. But a good one can be invaluable as a one-stop reference, so for those travelers who have asked for suggestions, we offer these guidelines. Since different guidebook series each have their own target audience and structure, it is well worth your time to browse your local library or bookstore to find the one(s) you like best. To get you started, here is some general information on the most popular series:

Culture Smart! – Focuses on local customs and etiquette instead of sights, dining, etc.

DK Eyewitness – Innovative visuals make these books easy to use and a nice souvenir once the trip is over. The focus is primarily on the sights and activities.

Fodor's – A classic guidebook with strong information on activities, shopping, and dining. Good mix of upscale recommendations and budget suggestions.

Frommer's – A comprehensive guide series that is known for its restaurant recommendations.

Insight – Offers more information on history and culture than usual, nice visuals, good maps.

Lonely Planet – Practical guides geared towards a more adventurous traveler on a budget.

National Geographic – From the same company that publishes the magazine. Excellent photographs, good information on history, nature, and culture.

Rough Guides – For the independent traveler on a budget. Particularly known for their maps.

***TIP:** If you are looking for something on Uzbekistan, consider **Uzbekistan: The Golden Road to Samarakand**, which is part of the *Silk Road Series*. Our Trip Leaders also suggest **Odyssey Books & Guides** as a good line of guidebooks that offer more than one title on Central Asia.*

Maps:

Most hotels will provide maps free of charge at the reception desk or in your room. These maps are usually sufficient for our travelers, but if you plan on any independent exploration, you may wish to consider purchasing a map before your departure. This can be especially useful in a country that doesn't use the Roman alphabet as the hotel maps may only be printed in the local language.

Some recommended map series include: Rand McNally international maps (especially the StreetWise series), Insight's FlexiMaps, and Rough Guide's destination maps. We suggest that you visit your local bookstore or library to get a better sense of which type of map is best for your needs before making a purchase.

Suggested Movies

Here are few of our favorite movies that are about, or set in, or from the region you'll be traveling. Most are available at movie rental stores and websites—or even your public library. Sometimes films produced outside of the US may be harder to find, but they are usually available online.

Bliss starring Ozgu Namal, Murat Han, and Talat Bulut (2007, color) A gorgeous and surprising look at a difficult and controversial subject. When a young woman in an extremely traditional village is suspected of sexual relations outside of marriage, one of her distant cousins is recruited to commit an “honor killing”, but ends up trying to protect his potential victim instead. In Turkish with subtitles.

Crossing the Bridge: The Sound of Istanbul directed by Fatih Akin (2005, color) A Turkish documentary about the music scene in Istanbul that was screened at the Cannes Film Festival.

Istanbul starring Errol Flynn and Cornell Borchers (1957, color) A suspected jewel thief returns to Istanbul and finds the woman he loved might still be alive.

Midnight Express starring Brad Davis and Irene Miracle (1978, color) Based on the real experiences of an American tourist who was caught smuggling hashish out of Turkey in the 1970s. This is a famous film that has been referenced and parodied many times, but the harsh prison scenes can be hard to take.

Topkapi starring Melina Mercouri, Maximilian Schell, and Peter Ustinov (1964, color) A heist film about the theft of a jeweled dagger from the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul.

Walking the Bible hosted by David Feiler (2006, color) Originally aired as a series on PBS, the engaging host sets out in search of the places mentioned in the first five books of the Bible. His journey includes Egypt, Syria, and Eastern Turkey. Recommend even for the non-religious.

Skyfall starring Daniel Craig and Javier Bardem (2012, color) The 23rd installment of the James Bond franchise has 007 chasing down the villain that attacked his headquarters in London. Much of the action takes place in Great Britain, China, and Macau but the opening sequences were filmed in Istanbul and Adana, Turkey.

Argo starring Ben Affleck, Bryan Cranston, Alan Arkin, and John Goodman (2012, color) A tense drama about a daring plan to rescue 6 staff members from the American embassy in Tehran, Iran that have been hiding out in the Canadian ambassador's home, using a film crew as a cover. Although the plot of this story is largely set in Iran, key filming was done in Turkey.

Turkish Phrase Guide

Basic words and phrases

Yes	Evet
No.....	Hayir
Thank you	Tesekkür ederim
You're welcome.....	Bir sey de-gil
Please	Lütfen
Excuse me.....	Özur dilerim, pardon
Hello	Merhaba
Goodbye	Güle güle, alahsmaladik
So long	Görüsürüz
Good morning	Günaydin
Good afternoon	Iyi gunler
Good evening	Iyi aksamlar
Good night	Iyi geceler
What is your name?.....	Isminiz nedir?
Nice to meet you	Tanisti-gimiza memnun oldum
How are you?	Nasilsiniz?
Good	Iyi
Where is the bathroom?	Tuvalet nerede?
I do not understand	Anlamıyorum
Do you speak English?	Ingilizce Biliyormusunuz?
Room	Oda
Passport.....	Pasaport
Father	Baba
Mother	Anne
Son.....	Ogul
Daughter	Kiz

Getting around

Where is the ...?	... nerede?
... Airport?	havaalani ...?
... Train station ?	tren istasyonu ... ?
... Bus station ?.....	otobüs istasyonu ...?
... Subway station?	metro istasyonu ...?
... Post office?	postahane ...?
... Bank ?	banka ...?
... Police station?	polis karakolu ...?
... Hospital ?	hastane ...?
... Pharmacy?	Eczane ...?
... Hotel ?	hotel; otel ...?
How much is the fare?	ücret ne kadar
One ticket to ..., please.	... e bir bilet lütfen.

Shopping

Store, Shop	dükkan
How much does this cost?	Bu ne kadar?
I'll buy it	Alıyorum
Do you have ... ?.....	Var mi ...
... Stamps ?	... Pul?
... postcards ?.....	... posta kart?
Do you accept credit cards?	Kredi karti kabul ediyormusunuz?

Dining out

Reservation	Rezervasyon
Restaurant.....	lokanta
Breakfast	Kahvalti
Lunch	Ö-gle yeme-gi
Dinner	Aksam yeme-gi
Vegetarian	Vejeteryan
Kosher	Yahudi diyetihelal
Please bring the bill	Lütfen hesabi getirin
Bread	Ekmek
Coffee	Kahve
Tea	Çay
Juice	Meyva suyu
Water	Su
Beer	Bira
Wine	Sarap
Salt	Tuz
Pepper	Biber

Numbers

Zero	Sifir
One.....	Bir
Two	İki
Three	Üç
Four	Dört
Five	Bes
Six	Alti
Seven	Yedi
Eight	Sekiz
Nine	Dokuz
Ten	On
Twenty.....	Yirmi
Fifty	Elli
One hundred	Yüz
One thousand	Bin

Uzbek Phrase Guide

Basic words and phrases

Yes	ha
No	yok
Thank you	rakhmat
You're welcome	arzimaydi
Please	markhamat
Sir	janob
Madame	xonim
I'm sorry	kechirasiz
Excuse me	kechirasiz
Goodbye	hayeer
Hello	as-salomu alaykum
Hello (informal)	salom
Good morning	as-salomu alaykum
Good morning (answer)	va alaykum as-salom!
Who are you?	kimsiz?
What is your name?	sizning ismingiz nima?
My name is...	mening ismim...
How are you?	qalay siz?
Fine, thank you	yakshi, rakhmat
I do not understand	tushunmadim
I don't speak Uzbek well	men Uzbekcha (yakshi) gaplashmayman
Do you speak English?	siz inglizcha gaplashasizmi?
I don't understand	tushunmadim
Speak slower please	sekinroq gapiring
Where is the bathroom?	hojat'hona qayerda?

Getting around

Where is ...?	qayerda joilashgan...?
How can I find...?	qanday topsam boladi...?
What direction should I go?	qaysi tarafga borishim kerak?
On the right	o'ngga
On the left	chapga
Drug store	dorikhona
Hospital	kasalhona
Restaurant	restorant
Airport	aeroport
Hotel	mekhmonkhona

Additional Resources

Days of the week

Monday	dushanba
Tuesday	seshanba
Wednesday	chorshanba
Thursday	payshanba
Friday	juma
Saturday	shanba
Sunday	yakshanba

Numbers

One	bir
Two	ikki
Three	uch
Four	to'rt
Five	besh
Six	olti
Seven	yetti
Eight	sakkiz
Nine	to'qqiz
Ten	o'n
Twenty	yigirma
Fifty	ellik
One hundred	yuz
One thousand	ming

Useful Websites

Tourist information

<http://www.goturkey.com/> **Turkey**

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/uzbekistan> **Uzbekistan**

Overseas Adventure Travel Store

<http://www.oatshop.com>

International health information: CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/>

Electric current and plug types

<http://www.kropla.com/electric2.htm>

Foreign exchange rates

<http://www.oanda.com/converter/classic>

ATM locators

<http://www.mastercard.com/atm> **for Cirrus ATMs**

<http://www.visa.com/atmlocator> **for PLUS ATMs**

World weather

<http://www.intellicast.com>

<http://www.weather.com>

<http://www.wunderground.com>

Foreign languages for travelers: basic terms in more than 80 languages

<http://www.travlang.com/languages>

Travel tips: packing light, choosing luggage, etc.

<http://www.travelite.org>

Net café guide: 100s of locations around the globe

<http://www.cybercafes.com>

U.S. Customs & Border Protection: traveler information

<http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel>

Transportation Security Administration (TSA): agency that screens luggage in U.S.

<http://www.tsa.gov>

National Passport Information Center (NPIC): for passport information

<http://www.travel.state.gov>

8. Some Final Thoughts

A Real Adventure

Traveling in Turkey and Uzbekistan is quite different from a vacation in North America or Europe—indeed, that’s why we go! This is an adventurous trip in a developing country. Most days are great fun. But some aspects of the countries or the experience can be disagreeable, and it may be useful to know about them in advance. Bear in mind that part of the adventure of this travel is to experience life as the region’s residents do, and to immerse yourself in their culture.

Our hotels are comfortable, but in many, each room is different, and you may feel that some are better than others. Many of our hotels do not have elevators. The cabins in our traditional *gulet* or *ketch* small ships are snug, even a bit cramped. Most people spend very little time in their cabin. In restaurants, hotels, and at cultural sites, everything works according to a slower sense of time than what you are used to. It’s best to wind down and adjust to the local pace and philosophy.

You’ll be traveling each day with people you don’t know. By the end of the trip, you’ll know them fairly well! Many OAT travelers form lasting friendships, and return to travel together again. But you probably won’t enjoy every person every day. The evergreen qualities of patience, flexibility, humor, and mutual consideration will help everyone have a good time.

We work hard to ensure that your trip runs smoothly, but things don’t always go according to plan. And we’ve deliberately sought out non-traditional travel settings and unusually adventurous experiences.

Your Trip Leaders are experienced in dealing with unexpected hitches, and will often work discreetly, behind the scenes, for the good of the group. But we’ve also developed a calm acceptance that some things are simply beyond our control. Weather and local road conditions might affect your trip. Your activities could be different from those described in your itinerary, and there could be a last-minute change or delay for reasons that are not immediately obvious. At such times, you’ll have a better trip if you can draw on your sense of humor and your most adventurous travel spirit.