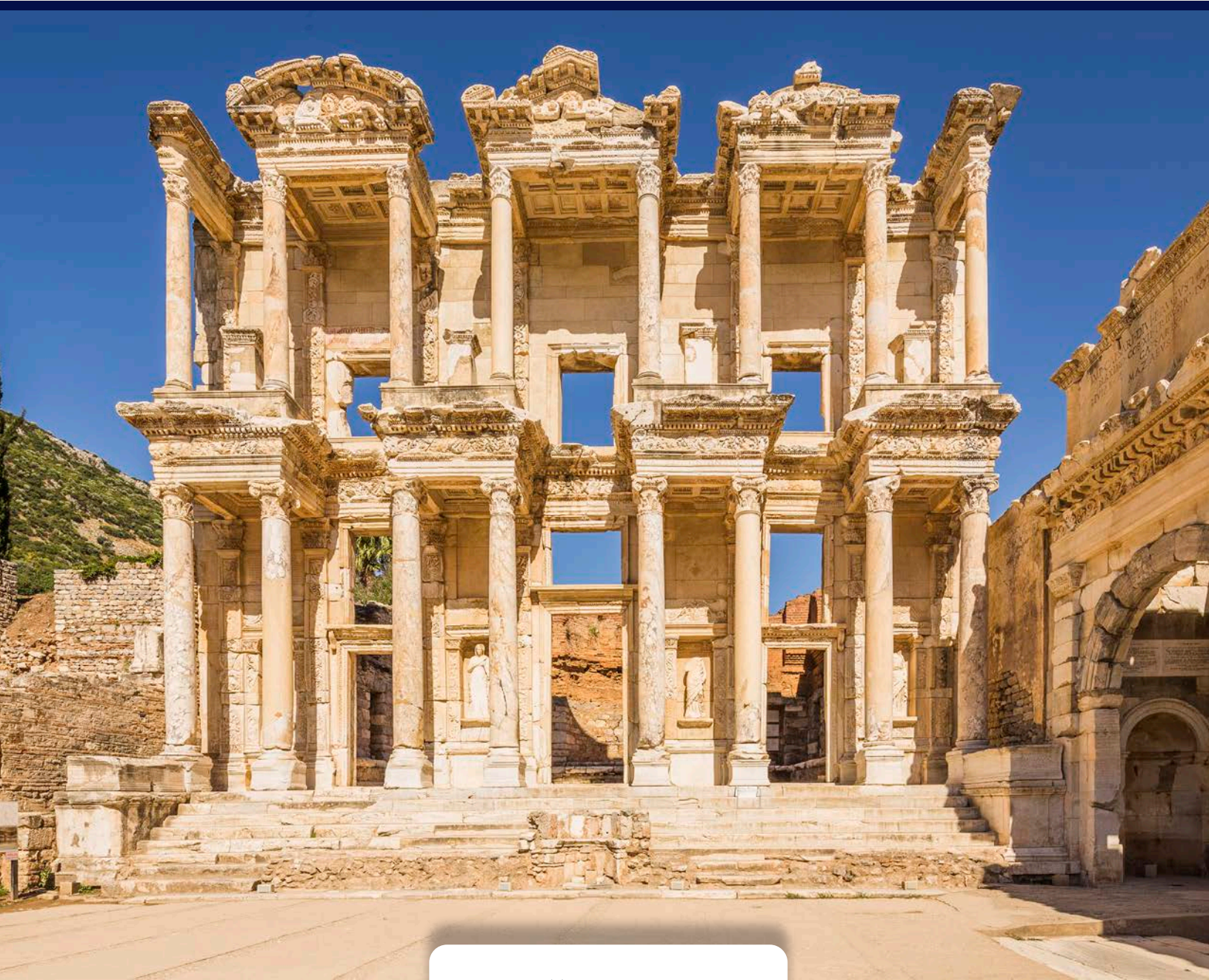


Ancient Treasures of Turkey

with Dr. Steven L. Tuck (May 2027)
or Dr. Hans-Friedrich Muller (November 2027)

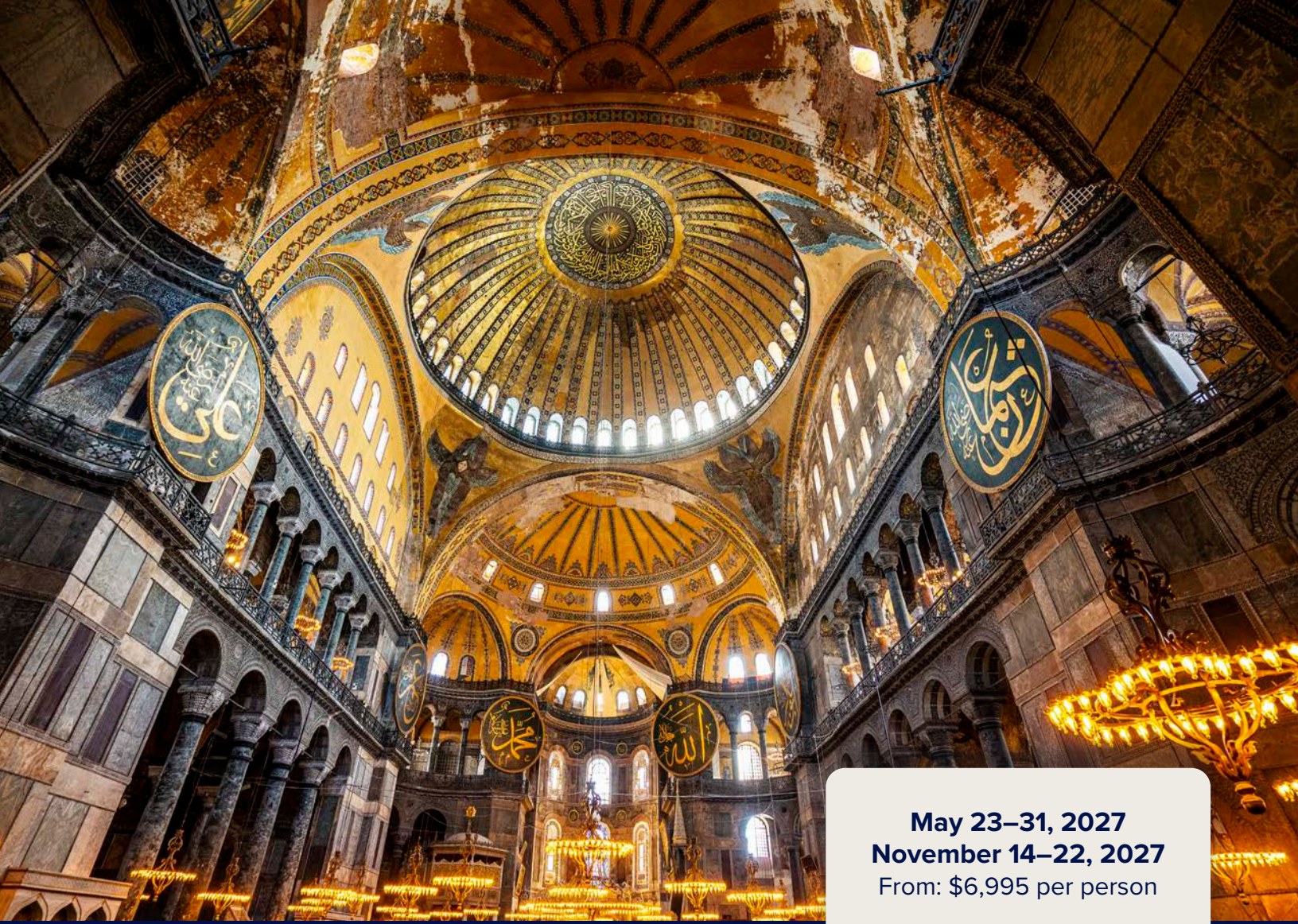
May 23–31, 2027 | November 14–22, 2027



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Ancient Treasures of Turkey

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Embark on a captivating nine-day journey through Turkey, led by your Great Courses professor, specializing in ancient civilizations. With their extensive expertise, your expert will provide unique insights into the fascinating history and architecture of Turkey's most iconic and lesser-known sites.

This tour takes you from the bustling streets of Istanbul, home to the architectural wonders of Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque, to the scenic Bosphorus waters that separate Europe and Asia, before venturing to the ancient ruins of Ephesus, Aphrodisias, and beyond. Explore the remarkable cities of Bergama, Bodrum, and the Aegean coast, where you'll uncover the hidden gems of ancient Greek and Roman life, from the Acropolis of Bergama to the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Along the way, you'll immerse yourself in Turkey's rich culture, visit grand monuments, and experience local traditions, with your expert's guidance illuminating the fascinating past that shaped the region. Whether it's learning about ancient urban planning, exploring royal Ottoman treasures, or uncovering the ruins of forgotten cities, this journey will leave you with a deep understanding and appreciation for Turkey's ancient heritage.

Your Journey Expert



Dr. Steven L. Tuck (May 2027) is a distinguished Professor of Classics and History at Miami University, specializing in Roman history, art, and archaeology. He earned his B.A. in History and Classics from Indiana University and his Ph.D. in Classical Art and Archaeology from the University of Michigan. A celebrated educator, Dr. Tuck has received numerous teaching accolades, including the E. Phillips Knox Teaching Award and the Archaeological Institute of America's Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award. His expertise extends beyond the classroom, with extensive archaeological fieldwork in Italy, Greece, England, and Egypt. He has led over twenty study tours focused on Rome and the Bay of Naples, bringing the ancient world to life for students and travelers alike. A prolific scholar and engaging lecturer, Dr. Tuck is also the creator of five acclaimed Great Courses series, making him the perfect expert guide for this immersive journey through ancient Campania.



Dr. Hans-Friedrich Muller (November 2027) is the Chair of Classics and the Thomas B. Lamont Professor of Ancient and Modern Literature at Union College. Known for his broad expertise and enthusiastic teaching style, Professor Mueller has decades of experience teaching and leading tours. Professor Mueller won the American Philological Association's Award for Excellence in the Teaching of Classics at the College Level, as well as two awards for excellence in teaching at The Florida State University. At the University of Florida, he developed a graduate distance-learning program in classics for high school teachers. He earned his PhD in Classical Philology from The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In addition to writing numerous articles, Professor Mueller is the author of *Roman Religion in Valerius Maximus*, the editor of an abridged edition of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, and the translator of Andreas Mehl's *Roman Historiography: An Introduction to Its Basic Aspects and Development*. He has created three Great Courses: *Latin 101: Learning a Classical Language*, *Greek 101: Learning an Ancient Language*, and *The Pagan World: Ancient Religions Before Christianity*.

Highlights

- Marvel at the stunning fusion of Christian and Islamic influences at the Hagia Sophia with its grand dome, breathtaking mosaics, and centuries of historical significance.
- Wander through well-preserved ruins, including the Library of Celsus and the Great Theater, experiencing the grandeur of one of the ancient world's most vibrant cities.
- Discover Aphrodisias, the UNESCO World Heritage Site dedicated to Aphrodite, where remarkable ruins like the Temple of Aphrodite and the Stadium showcase exquisite sculptures and monumental architecture.
- Step back in time at Ephesus, where ancient wonders come to life as you explore grand ruins and uncover the stories of a lost civilization.
- Stroll through the grid-planned streets of Priene, taking in panoramic views and visiting the Temple of Athena and the impressive theater.
- Witness the architectural brilliance of the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, one of the Seven Wonders, with its intricate sculptures and immense historical significance.

Ancient Treasures of Turkey

Itinerary

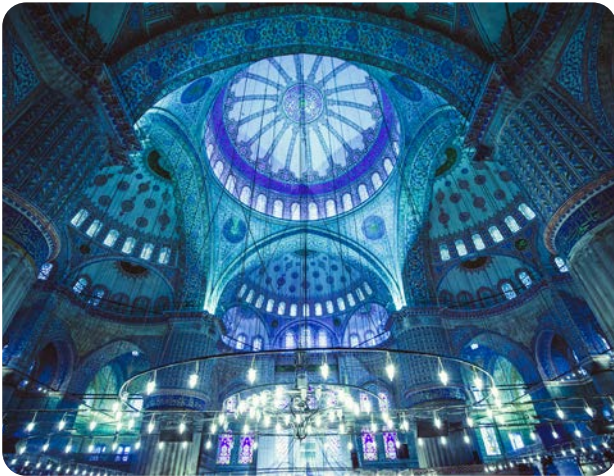


Day 1: Welcome to Istanbul

Arrive on overnight flights into Istanbul. Transfer to your hotel in the heart of the modern city. Early this afternoon, tour the Basilica Cistern, an ancient underground water reservoir, renowned for its striking columns and atmospheric lighting, which offers a glimpse into the city's rich Byzantine history. After time back at the hotel to freshen up, gather with fellow travelers and your expert for a welcome dinner at a local restaurant where you will be introduced to the rich flavors of Turkish cuisine such as hummus, baba ghanoush, dolma (stuffed grape leaves), and savory dumplings.

Included Meal: Dinner

Accommodations: Occidental Taksim, Istanbul



Day 2: Museums, Palaces, and Treasures

Continue exploring Istanbul's rich history with a visit to some of its most iconic landmarks. Wander through the ancient Hippodrome, once the heart of Byzantine life, and see remnants of its vibrant past. Marvel at the majestic Hagia Sophia, a stunning fusion of Christian and Islamic influences. Explore the Blue Mosque, a masterpiece of Ottoman architecture, famous for its blue-tiled interior, and Topkapi Palace, a magnificent former Ottoman imperial residence, showcasing brilliant architecture, rich history, and priceless artifacts from the empire's golden age. Throughout your journey, expert will provide invaluable insights, enriching your experience with their deep knowledge of history and culture. After lunch on your own (perhaps trying Istanbul's famous kebabs), stroll through the Grand Bazaar's maze of over 4,000 shops, offering everything from handmade carpets to leather goods. Finish your evening with free time to explore Istanbul's food scene, blending rich Ottoman traditions with diverse regional influences, offering everything from bustling food stalls to elegant fine dining.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodations: Occidental Taksim, Istanbul



Day 3: Bergama's Hidden Gems

The scenic four-hour drive from Istanbul to Bergama offers stunning views of rolling hills, vast farmlands, picturesque villages, and olive groves. After arriving in this ancient city rich in archaeological



wonders, enjoy lunch as a group. Explore the Acropolis and Asclepion, with ruins that showcase Hellenistic architecture and ancient medical practices. Continue to Izmir, Turkey's third-largest city known as the "pearl of the Aegean" is a vibrant coastal metropolis known for its rich history, waterfront promenade, and a blend of modern and ancient architecture. After hotel check-in, dine as a group.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
Accommodations: La Bella, Bergama

Day 4: Coastal Charm and Ancient Wonders



Depart for Sardis, the ancient capital of Lydia, to immerse yourself in its influential history as a major center of commerce and culture, renowned for its wealth. Begin with a visit to the Temple of Artemis, the Roman gymnasium, and the Sardis Synagogue, and explore the city's multicultural heritage. After lunch on your own, head to Akhisar (ancient Thyatira), one of the Seven Churches of Revelation, to learn more about its biblical significance. Finish the day with a visit to a traditional leather tannery or textile workshop where you can observe the craftsmanship of these ancient trades. Continue to Kuşadası, a picturesque coastal town on Turkey's Aegean coast, known for its beautiful beaches, vibrant nightlife, and as a gateway to the ancient city of Ephesus.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
Accommodations: Grand Belish Resort Hotel and Spa

Day 5: Ephesus: Time Travel to Rome



Today is devoted to the ancient city of Ephesus. Explore this remarkable archaeological site, marveling at grand monuments like the Library of Celsus and the Great Theater. Visit the beautifully restored Slope Houses, revealing the luxurious lifestyle of the Roman elite, and then the House of the Virgin Mary, a revered pilgrimage site that is believed to be her final residence. Return to your hotel for an afternoon at your leisure enjoying the tranquility of your surroundings or perhaps the thermal waters before dining as a group this evening.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
Accommodations: Grand Belish Resort Hotel and Spa



Day 6: Aphrodisias: Sculptures & Secrets

Sojourn east to Aphrodisias, a lesser-known yet must-see UNESCO site dedicated to Aphrodite. Explore its well-preserved ruins, including the Temple of Aphrodite, the Stadium, the Theater, and the Tetraylon. Aphrodisias is renowned for its exceptional sculptures, many of which are among the finest examples of ancient Roman art. Return to Kuşadası to enjoy a final night in this seaside town.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodations: Grand Belish Resort Hotel and Spa

Day 7: Ancient Wonders of the Meander

Journey south through the Meander River Delta, rich in ancient history and memorable landscapes. First, visit Priene, an ancient Greek city known for its grid-planned streets and the Temple of Athena. Next, explore Miletus, a center of philosophy and trade, and Didyma, home to the impressive Temple of Apollo. After lunch, continue to Bodrum, a coastal town with a historic castle, lively marina, and charming whitewashed houses. Take some time to relax and enjoy the scenery before dining as a group at your hotel this evening.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: Azka Otel, Bodrum

Day 8: Bodrum's Legends

Begin your day by exploring Bodrum (the ancient city of Halicarnassus), home to the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Visit the ruins of the mausoleum, then continue to Bodrum Castle, a medieval fortress with panoramic views and a fascinating Museum of Underwater Archaeology. Walk along the Hellenistic city walls and see the Myndos Gate, where Alexander the Great once battled to breach the city's defenses. Enjoy an afternoon at leisure to further explore Bodrum or relax at your hotel's pool with stunning views of the Aegean Sea. Gather this evening for a farewell dinner as you toast the ancient treasures of Turkey.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodations: Azka Otel, Bodrum

Day 9: A Fond Farewell

Depart your hotel and transfer as a group to Bodrum Airport for individual flights home or onward.

Included Meal: Breakfast



Accommodations



Taksim Occidental Istanbul

Istanbul

Located in the heart of Istanbul, Taksim Occidental offers a sophisticated stay with modern amenities in its superior rooms. Enjoy easy access to the bustling Taksim Square, cultural landmarks, and vibrant nightlife. Each room is designed with comfort and style in mind, ensuring a relaxing atmosphere with contemporary decor, free Wi-Fi, and excellent service. **(2 nights)**



La Bella, Bergama

Bergama

La Bella in Bergama offers a charming retreat with cozy rooms. Featuring traditional Turkish decor, the rooms provide a peaceful ambiance, perfect for relaxation after exploring the nearby ancient ruins of Pergamon. Guests can enjoy personalized service, a comfortable stay, and access to the town's rich historical heritage. A great choice for those seeking a blend of history and comfort. **(1 night)**



Grand Belish Resort Hotel and Spa

Kuşadası

The Grand Belish Resort Hotel and Spa offers a luxurious escape with stunning beachfront views and world-class amenities. Located in a serene setting, it features spacious rooms, a rejuvenating spa, and diverse dining options. Guests can enjoy a range of activities, from relaxing by the pool to indulging in wellness treatments. Perfect for both relaxation and adventure, the resort promises a memorable and rejuvenating experience. **(3 nights)**



Azka Otel

Bodrum

Azka Otel in Bodrum is a five star luxurious seaside retreat offering a perfect blend of relaxation and adventure. With stunning views of the Aegean Sea, the resort boasts spacious rooms, multiple dining options, and an array of leisure facilities, including a private beach and outdoor pool. Guests can indulge in spa treatments, enjoy water sports, or explore the vibrant local culture, making it an ideal destination for a memorable getaway. **(2 nights)**



Pricing:

Departure	Double Occupancy	Single Occupancy	Deposit	
May 23–31, 2027	\$7,595	\$8,345	\$650	BOOK NOW
November 14–22, 2027	\$7,850	\$8,650	\$650	BOOK NOW

What's Included:

- All accommodations for the duration of the tour
- Meals, as noted in the itinerary
- All sightseeing and visits as noted in each itinerary
- Expertise of The Great Courses Expert, travel director and local guides throughout the tour
- All gratuities for on-tour guides, drivers, hotel and restaurant staff as part of the group program
- All on-tour transportation, unless otherwise noted
- One group airport transfer upon departure
- Quietvox listening devices to facilitate audibility and social distancing on tour
- The assistance of an ATA professional travel team to assist with pre-trip questions, travel arrangements, including flights, extra hotel nights and other services
- Comprehensive pre-departure mailings and materials with information about the destination and what to expect on tour, including a suggested reading list
- Emergency evacuation insurance