

Turkey

Turkey, at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, has been for many years a haven for cruising. The natural beauty and local culture make Turkey an ideal location for an Eastern Mediterranean yacht charter vacations. Turkey's dramatic coastline curls out from Istanbul's Bosphorous and Black Seas, through the legendary Sea of Marmara and along its Turquoise Coast to Antalya. Her rocky coastline offers countless bays, protected harbors and spectacular scenery. Cruise along the ports of Marmaris, Gocek, Bodrum and Antalya and visit the medieval castles, fishing villages, archaeological sites and lively festivals. Take the opportunity to bask in the "Turkish Delight": immerse yourself in clamour and bustle of the exotic bazaars of Fethiye and make fantastic bargains or explore the nearby canyon of Saklikent. In Turkey you can enjoy the best of both modern and ancient worlds: the harmony of this spiritual country will capture your heart..

SUGGESTED ITINERARY

Turkey: 7 days

The delights begin in Marmaris, a haven for summer tourists who flock to this pretty town with its many restaurants, bars and hotels along beaches lined with palm trees. Marmaris is also the yachting center of Turkey. The huge Netsel Marina complex nestles inside its almost landlocked bay lined with pine forests that reach down to the sea.

DAY 1: {MARMARIS}

Explore the hustle and bustle that is Marmaris. We recommend a tour of the Ottoman Castle, built by Suleyman the Magnificent in 1522, which dominates the town. Stay alongside in the marina overnight.

DAY 2: {EKITNICK LIMANI}

Leave Marmaris for a "voyage" of just 18 miles heading south to Ekitnick Limani – a bay studded with five or so delightful anchorages. One of these, Marina Bay, features a small dock built of local rock.

Towering on the cliff above sits the Marina Bay Yacht Club, which boasts a splendid bar/restaurant. Nearby, another bay boasts the tiny hamlet of Ekitnick with its beautiful sandy beach. Each of these tiny, secluded coves provides a wonderful opportunity to swim or snorkel in the clear, deep water. Anchor overnight in Marina Bay.

DAY 3: {EKITNICK LIMANI}

Stay a day to organize a must-do tour in the Dalyan River and surrounding nature reserve with its reed-filled deltas populated by turtles, hawks, herons and kingfishers.

The river was once the entrance to the ancient port of Canus. Amongst the many attractions of this ancient city are the astonishing tombs that are literally hewn out of the cliff face opposite Dalyan. After walking the streets of ancient Canus, visit Ilica, famous for thermal springs, sulphur baths and bubbling hot mud. It's fun to get in and wallow in the warm, therapeutic goo. Remain overnight in Marina Bay or anchor off the beach at Ekitnick.

DAY 4: {GOCEK}

Head south towards the Gulf of Fethiye, a sort of T-shaped gulf with the ports of Göcek and Fethiye. Göcek is at heart a fishing village, but now the town boasts four marinas, the newest of which opened in July 2000 at Port Göcek . Local legend has it that Göcek was the home of Daedalus and his son Icarus. Spend the night at the marina in Göcek.

DAY 5: {GOCEK / RUIN BAY}

Using Göcek as a base, cruise around the many islands within the almost enclosed waters of Skopia Liman. Deep water abounds here. The islands are all very close to each other, rising steeply from the seabed, their cliffs covered in pine and oleander, but the real plus lies in the variety of anchorages. There are 30 different creeks or bays to choose from; it is easy to take a different location every night. Many of these bays have simple restaurants serving local fare. Some are more glamorous than others, but most offer very good value for money. In one site, aptly named Ruin Bay, in the extreme southwest of Skopia Liman, we found the ruins of an old building reputed to be a Turkish Hamman or bathhouse used by Cleopatra, who is said to have visited here on two occasions: once with Julius Caesar and then again with Mark Anthony. You can spend the night at anchor or for more nightlife, return the very short distance to Göcek.

DAY 6: {OLU DENIZ}

Before leaving, check out Tomb Bay with its spectacular rock tombs, each with its own imposing façade carved into the rocks high on the cliff face. Then head south 20 or so miles to Olu Deniz with its cluster of little islands set around a bay that has been closed off to water traffic for environmental reasons. There are many anchorages here, but the most popular is between the island of Gemel and the mainland. Nearby bays offer restaurants ashore but in these waters, it is not uncommon for food to come find you. Throughout the day, small boats will approach but never hassle, each with its own different offerings to tempt you. Later in the day, local fishermen call as they pass and display their catch. Stay at anchor here overnight.



DAY 7: {KALKAN}

Head southeast for 30 miles to discover Kalkan. This ancient port has been revitalized with pretty painted homes and shops dotted around the picturesque harbor. The quayside bars and restaurants are full of visitors watching the yachts and local gulets. Kalkan is one of the many towns that still boasts a Turkish Hamman, and it has to be said that after a long tiring day sailing or playing tourist, there is nothing quite like pampering oneself in a Turkish bath. Truly, this the ultimate Turkish Delight.