



Dear Friends,

In a world where even the farthest point is within an arm's reach, it is no longer possible to live without experiencing diversity. For the global human family to flourish peacefully, it becomes imperative that individuals rise above the impulse to fear difference - this response drives us apart and fragments our societies. Niagara Foundation envisions an interconnected global community where people from all cultural and religious affiliations cooperate in serving their communities and celebrate the common humanity we all posses.

Niagara Foundation's Center for Interfaith Engagement provides opportunities for individuals from various cultural and faith backgrounds to engage in a process of respectful dialogue through dynamic and innovative programming. From intimate home dinners organized through our Abraham's Tent initiative to critically listening to interfaith experts and generating a dialogue at our annual Abrahamic Traditions Dinner or Chicago Interfaith Gathering, we work to create spaces where individuals of diverse backgrounds can feel safe and freely authentic.

By participating in an intercultural trip, you will be fully immersed in the history, culture and religious traditions of Turkey. Whether a home, popular restaurant, or conference table, you will have the opportunity to build personal and professional friendships with welcoming business, civic, and academic leaders. You will also have the opportunity to visit some inspirational humanitarian organizations with similar missions to that of Niagara.

For travelers from Chicago, it is only required that selected participants become a member of the Niagara Blue Dot Network at the Orion Level.

It is our hope that the information provided in this handbook will help you comprehensively prepare for a trip of a lifetime.

Sincerely,

Sherif Soydan, Ph.D.

President and Chief Executive Officer

Niagara Foundation

THE TRIP

Niagara Intercultural Trips are designed to provide various communities in Midwest with a unique opportunity for cultural immersion abroad. Participants will travel to the beautiful country of Türkiye to learn about its history, peoples, and traditions. Through a series of home visits, opportunities for professional networking, and guided historical and cultural exploration, Niagara will empower participants to make connections, answer questions, and build long-lasting friendships with staff and Turkish citizens.

HIZMET MOVEMENT



The Hizmet (service in Turkish) Movement is a worldwide civic initiative and volunteer service network rooted in the spiritual and humanistic tradition of Islam and inspired by the ideas and activism of Muslim scholar Fethullah Gülen.

Hizmet is a faith-inspired, non-political, non-governmental, cultural and educational movement whose basic principles stem from Islam's values of love for creation, sympathy and compassion for all of humanity, charity, and self-sacrifice. Whether through education, relief aid, or community-building programming, Hizmet has dedicated itself to the project of social development while emphasizing the integrity of individual agency in bringing about positive social change.

Although the movement originated in Turkey, it now enriches more than a hundred and fifty countries around the world. While operating free from religious convictions, the movement has no interest in promoting the practice of Islam nor does it seek to reform the Islamic tradition. It is instead a community of individuals committed to authentically live the mission and values already embedded within the tradition that was given to them.

The movement is noted for its support of democracy, openness to the cross currents of globalization, progressive attitude towards synthesizing tradition with modernity, as well as its holistic approach to community building.

Hizmet's work is most visible through an array of service projects

initiated, funded, and implemented by the movement's millions of committed volunteer participants, women and men, young and old, from diverse segments of civil society (students, academics, business owners, professionals, public officials, and farmers). Projects include tutoring centers, schools, colleges, hospitals, publishing houses and media outlets. In addition, the Hizmet movement operates a major relief organization named Kimse Yok Mu (KYM).

The movement generates its financial support through the revivification of the traditional Islamic concepts of community that stress the importance of individual giving and hospitality. Research suggests that the average financial contribution of participants makes up 5 to 10 percent of the donors annual income.

Known for his simple lifestyle, Fethullah Gülen, affectionately called Hodjaefendi, is a Muslim scholar and contemplative poet. He was born in Erzurum, eastern Turkey, in 1941. Upon graduation from a private divinity school in Erzurum, he obtained his license and began to preach and teach about the importance of understanding and tolerance. His social reform efforts have made him one of Turkey's most well-known and respected public figures. He denounces any attribution of leadership and instead spends most of his time reading, writing, and worshipping.

Fethullah Gülen currently resides in Pennsylvania and continues to write and give talks on various important subjects related to spirituality and humanitarian service and causes. He has served as the Honorary President of the Niagara Foundation since 2004.

HISTORY AND CULTURE

Turkey (Türkiye in Turkish) is often referred to as "The crossroads between Europe and Asia," due to its unique geographic location and rich history that has been molded by both European and Middle Eastern cultural influences. The Anatolia Peninsula (a strip of land surrounded by the Black Sea to the north, the Mediterranean Sea to the south, the Aegean Sea to the west, and the Sea of Marmara to the northwest) settled by several civilizations, including the Hattians, Hittites, Assyrians, Mongols, and Seljuks.

The city of Istanbul was the seat of two great empires; The Byzantine Empire (330 – 1453 c.e.) and the Ottoman Empire (1299–1923 c.e.). After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire following World War One (1918 c.e.) and the subsequent Turkish War of Independence (1919-1923 c.e.), the modern nation-state of Türkiye was created on October 29th 1923.

MODERN TURKEY

Turkey is now a secular and parliamentary representative democratic and constitutional republic. The President of the Republic is head of state with predominantly ceremonial duties. Executive power resides in the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers. Legislative power resides in a unicameral parliament. The judicial branch functions autonomously from both the executive and legislative.

The predominant religion is Islam (99%), though Christianity and Judaism are also freely practiced within the country. The country's official language is Turkish and the official currency the Turkish Lira (TRY). The Current Prime Minister of Turkey is Ahmet Davutoglu and the President is Recep Tayyip Erdogan. The political and official capital of Turkey is Ankara; however, Istanbul, which was the official capital for hundreds of years, still remains the cultural capital.

CULTURE

With a population of over 80 million, Turkey has become a dynamic collage of ethnic and cultural communities. The major ethnic groups include Turkish (70-75%) and Kurdish (18%). However, given its geographic location Turkey has become a cosmopolitan hub for many of its neighbors in the region. The development of Islam over the last few centuries has significantly shaped Turkish culture. Its most notable impact is visible during religious holidays when shops and restaurants may be closed, but transportation services and health clinics remain open at no cost or reduced rates.

Turkey is renowned for its leather goods, killims (rugs), silk, "Turkish delight" (lokum), honey (bal), hazelnuts (findik), meerschaum, Castile Soap, olives, and Kebab. Haggling is common, and often a preferred method of doing business when negotiating prices in the markets. If an individual is invited to a private home, a gift is offered to the host and shoes are removed at the door. It is customary to give up your seat to an elderly person on a train or bus, and it is polite to make a slight bow when meeting someone who is your elder or someone of importance.

TRAVEL GUIDE

The country of **Turkey** is situated in Anatolia (the westernmost protrusion of Asia) and the Balkans, and is bordered by the Black Sea, the Aegean Sea, and Mediterranean Sea. The area of Anatolia is situated between Asia and Europe and accounts for 97% of the country's land. Turkey is bordered by Greece, Bulgaria, Georgia,





CITIES YOU MAY VISIT

The ancient city of Istanbul isTurkey's cultural capital, as well as Turkey's main financial center.

The city is located on both sides of the Bosphorus, a narrow strait between the Black Sea and the Marmara Sea, and as a result, the city borders both Asia and Europe, (geographically as well as culturally). Many a great empire moved through Istanbul.







Istanbul is renowned for its rugs, or Kilims, and tourists often enjoy haggling in bazaars for them. Topkapi Palace was home to all the Ottoman sultans until the reign of Abdulmecid I (1839-1860) a period of nearly four centuries.

Turkish Tea, the national drink of Turkey, is famous in Istanbul. Traditionally, it is brewed samovar style, a method in which a small amount of very strong tea sits in a teapot, and water is poured into the tea to dilute it. Doner is a popular snack in Istanbul, and can be purchased at any hour, although it is recommended to buy Doner in areas that are not densely populated with tourists.

The order for the construction of the Topkapi Palace on the Seraglio Point, overlooking both Marmara and Bosphorus was given by Mehmed II after the conquest of Istanbul in 1453. The final form of the first palace covered an area $700 \, \text{m}^2$, and was enclosed with fortified walls $1400 \, \text{meters}$ in length.

The walls were pierced by a number of gates and many minor angled gates between them. After the reign of Mehmed II the Conqueror, the palace grew steadily to form a city-like complex of buildings and annexes, including a shore palace known as the Topkapi shore palace, as it was situated near the cannon gate -Topkapi- of the ancient walls of Istanbul.



Ankara is the capital of Turkey and the country's second most populous city, after Istanbul. The city is centrally located in the region of Anatolia, about 350 km southeast of Istanbul.

Given its elevation and inland location, Ankara is one of the driest places in Turkey. However, the municipality has ample green space for its citizens. During summer months the city is hot and dry while winters bring cold and snow. If traveling in the spring or autumn you might get caught in the rain.

Known as Ancrya, meaning 'anchor' in Gallic, or Angora, the city has had a long and rich history, stretching back to the Hatti civilization of the Bronze Age (roughly 1200 BC). Later, Ankara served as the an important settlement for the Phrygian, Greek, Galatian, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman civilizations. Ankara replaced Istanbul (Constantinople) as the capital of the Turkish Republic following World War I in 1923. Ankara has since developed into an important social and

economic and educational destination. There is the University of Ankara, Bilkent University, Middle East Technical University, and many more.

Ankara is the center of the Turkish Government and houses all foreign embassies. It is also home to a bustling commercial and industrial economy. Given its central location, Ankara has become a crossroads of trade providing a hub to Turkey's highway and railway networks. Ankara is famous for its longhaired Angora goat and its prized wool, juicy pears, sweet honey, and plump grapes. These industries are still important for the economy today. Ankara is also the center of the state-owned and private Turkish defense and aerospace companies, where numerous industrial plants and headquarters are located.



Izmir (Greek: Smyrne) is the third largest city in Turkey and is also one of the oldest cities in the country, believed to be founded around 3000 B.C. by the Trojans.

Located on Anatolia's Mediterranean coast, the "Pearl of the West," is believed to be the birth place of the famous Greek chronicler, Homer. Much of the development of the city's economy into a major port city can be attributed to its networking with European powers in the 16th century. It has since remained a strategic port city.

Aside from its beautiful beach climate, highlights include Konak Square (an area in the historic district where the clock tower and bazaar is located), the Asansör (a famous elevator that takes people up to the top of a nearby hill), and the Kadfiekale castle. Izmir is famous for its melons, shish kebab, seafood, Tulum Peyniri, (a kind of

cheese specially made in Izmir region), Kumru (a Turkish sandwich with sausage) and baklava. Many Christian communities believe a small building on top of nearby Mt. Koressos to be the house where the Virgin Mary spent her last days.

Now a shrine for both Christians and Muslims, the house of the Virgin Mary was discovered in the 19th century through the guidance of a series of visions delivered to the Blessed Anne Catherine Emmerich, a bedbound Austinian nun in Germany said to have never have visited the region.



Ephesus, originally a settlement dating back to 10,000 B.C., made famous recently through the discovery of Roman ruins and a number of active archeological excavation sites, has been active since the Neolithic period.

In the city one can walk along a menagerie of columns, mosaics, and archways, and browse various gift shops and souvenir stands.

Ephesus also holds significance for both the Christians and Muslim communities. In addition to the House of the Virgin Mary, Ephesus is believed to be the site of one of the earliest Christian churches founded by St. Paul of Tarsus. This community was later noted as one of the "seven" churches in Asia in the Christian Bible's Book of

Revelation. It was also in Ephesus where the famous "Seven Sleepers" took refuge. Originating around the 5th century, the story recounts seven Christians who took refuge from persecution in a cave just outside Ephesus where the group fell into a slumber only to wake 180 years later after being discovered by a local farmer. The Qur'an recounts a narrative of believers fleeing demands of worship to gods other than the one God and of their subsequent miracle (Quran 18: 9-26).



Cappadocia which is unique in the world and is a miraculous nature wonder is the common name of the field covered by the province of Nevsehir in the Central Anatolian region.

Although the boundaries are still vague, it appears that Cappadocia has an area of approximately 400 km (250 mi) east-west and 250 km (160 mi) north-south. Kapadokya is a region of Turkey that is as historical as it is beautiful. The landscape is a nature enthusiast's paradise, providing a nice contrast to the urban setting of the other spots on your trip.

The Cappadocians are believed to have occupied the region from Mount Taurus, in what is now southern Turkey, to the Black Sea. Cappadocia means "land of beautiful horses" in Persian. The earliest record of the Cappadocians dates back to the Hatties, Luvies and Hittites around 3000 BC. It was later occupied by the Persian, Byzantine, Seljuk, and Ottoman civilizations. Interestingly, Kapadokya is mentioned in the Christian Bible's New Testament (1 Peter: 1).

The area is a popular tourist destination given its historical richness and natural beauty. Many people are drawn to Kapadokya for its surreal geological scenery, the ancient cave churches and homes, and the many opportunities for outdoor adventure including hikes through the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Göreme National Park. For those itching for extraordinary, consider taking flight on a hot air balloon over the breathaking moonscape.

The region is recognized by its sedimentary rocks formations that formed as a result of ancient volcanic eruptions nearly nine million years ago. Many of the rocks have eroded into spectacular pillars and minaret-like forms. The landscape is filled with these cones, pillars, pinnacles, mushrooms, and chimneys, which can stretch up to 130 feet into the sky.



Bursa is the fourth most populace city in Turkey located in northwestern Anatolia, within the Marmara Region and about 20 km inland of the Sea of Marmara.

Bursa is located south of Istanbul and in an area of about 1,036 km2 (400 sq miles). The city of Bursa dates back to at least 200 BC and was founded by Prusias, the King of Bithynia. It has a vast and expansive history, as the Romans, Byzantines, Seljuks, and others have ruled over it.

The city became the first major capital city of the early Ottoman Empire following its capture from the Byzantines in 1326. During Ottoman rule, Bursa was referred to as Hüdavendigar, meaning "God's gift." During the Byzantine and Ottoman empires, Bursa was recognized as the epicenter for the silk trade. The surrounding area was also known for its fertile soil and agricultural productivity. This notoriety has waned in recent decades due to heavy industrialization. Today, Bursa is one of the most industrialized centers in the country and home to the Turkish

automotive industry, housing motor vehicle factories such as Fiat, Renault, and Karsan. The city has a population of around 1.559 million people. Its residents refer to their city as Yesil Bursa (Green Bursa), in reference to the green iznik tiles on many monuments and also for its fecund green landscape. Despite its urban character, Bursa is home to many parks and gardens and has breathtaking views of the surrounding forests and Mount Uludag.

Bursa is also at the center of an important fruitgrowing industry (specifically peaches). The city also produces a substantial amount of dairy products, processed food, and beverages. For those interested in hitting the slopes, consider a stop at Uludag Ski Resorts. For those more interested in relaxing, there's no need to stay in the chalet.

FUN FACTS

- Istanbul is the only city to span two continents Europe and Asia
- Istanbul is home to about 13 million people, New York city is home to about 8 million
- Istanbul's grand bazaar alone has 64 streets, 25,000 workers and 4,000 shops
- Turkey has a Population of about 73 million, 70-75% Turkish, 18% Kurdish, 7-12% other minorities
- Turkey Joined the U.N in 1945 and NATO in 1952
- In 2012 Turkey's GDP hit USD 786 billion, and holds a steady growth rate of about 5.1% making it the 16th largest economy in the world
- In 2013 there were almost 40,000 Turkish companies investing internationally
- According to the 2014 index of economic freedom, Turkey ranks higher than the world average in regards to its rule of law and open markets
- In July of 2012, Turkey had a 34.78 return on the Russell Global Index, out performing Eurozone countries
- While commonly thought to be of Dutch origin, tulips were actually introduced to Europe in the 16th century
- The world's oldest known settlement is in Catalhoyuk in central Anatolia, Turkey, and dates back to 6,500 BC.
- The Turks introduced coffee to Europe when the retreating Ottoman Army abandoned its sacks at the gates of Vienna
- The word "turquoise" comes from "Turk" meaning Turkish, and was derived from the beautiful colour of the Mediterranean Sea on the southern Turkish coast

HOW DID I GET HERE?

The hosts for your trip to Turkey are both the Niagara Foundation and the Bosphorus-Atlantic Association of Cultural Cooperation & Friendship. BAKIAD was established in 2006 by a collective of business professionals, members of the media, and academics in and across Turkey.

BAKIAD seeks to promote intercultural dialogue, consolidate common values, and organize cultural, social, and business trips between Turkey and North America in order to understand diverse cultures and perspectives.

BAKIAD's main goal is promoting intercultural dialogue and tolerance between the peoples of Turkey and North America, sharing the beauty of Turkey with its unique culture and history, and exemplifying the state of peace and harmony among people of diverse cultures regardless of race, religion, or ethnicity.

WHAT YOU WON'T FIND IN THE GUIDEBOOKS

In addition to exploring the culture and cuisine of Turkey, Niagara Foundation will also provide you with opportunities to meet some of the country's preeminent academics, politicians, journalists, and artists. These meetings, both formal and informal, will complement your sight visits by introducing the stories and narratives that stone and script cannot eloquently explain.

Potential Programs

- The Ottoman Empire
- The Byzantine Empire
- Modern Turkish History
- The Turkish Economy

- Turkish Business Culture
- The Turkish Media and Press
- The Turkish Judicial System
- Turkish Art

FRIENDS AND INSTITUTIONS



www.gyv.org.tr

The Journalists and Writers Foundation (JWF) was founded in 1994 with an aim of organizing events promoting love, tolerance and dialogue. There are six platforms, or centers, that works under the Journalists and Writers Foundation umbrella; Abant Platform, Intercultural Dialogue Platform (IDP), Dialogue Eurasia Platform (DA Platform), Medialog Platform, and Women's Platform. Each platform generates program and research specific to its theme.



www.zaman.com

Zaman is a major Turkish daily newspaper that was the first daily in the country to go online in 1995. Zaman has the largest readership and distribution in Turkey with a circulation near 800,000. Zaman is an Istanbul-based daily paper that also prints special international editions for some other countries. In addition to four locations in Turkey, regional editions are printed and distributed in Australia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Germany, Romania, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Turkmenistan, and the US. Zaman bureaus and correspondents are located in major world capitals and cities like Washington DC, New York, Brussels, Moscow, Cairo, Baku, Frankfurt, Ashgabat, Tashkent, and Bucharest.



www.tuskonus.org

The Confederation of Businessmen and Industrialists of Turkiye (TUSKON) is a non-governmental and non-profit umbrella organization representing 7 business federations, 211 business associations and over 55,000 entrepreneurs from all over Turkey. Since 2005, TUSKON has focused its efforts on the economic and social development of Turkiye and on the success of our members. With our 4 foreign representations offices in Brussels, Washington, Moscow and Beijing and partner organizations in 140 different countries, TUSKON has created the strongest domestic and international business network of Turkiye.



www.global.kimseyokmu.org.tr

"Kimse Yok Mu?" (It means "Is Anybody There?" in Turkish) That scream was coming out of stones and wreckages after the Earthquake of August 17, 1999 in Turkey. And those who were under the wreckages and those wanting to rescue them were shouting to each other: "Is anybody there?" A team of Samanyolu Channel volunteers began a television campaign to raise funds for victims. Gradually increasing demand led Kimse Yok Mu Association to grow and organize international activities.

PREPARING FOR THE TRIP

DOCUMENTATION AND FINANCES

- Photocopy your important documents:

 Passport: Two photocopies: one for the Niagara Foundation and one for you.
- Notify your bank that you will be traveling
 This will prevent unnecessary inconveniences. Traveler's checks usually do not work.
 Debit and credit cards work fine, as well as the American Express traveler's check card.
- Visa
 You will either obtain your visa at the gate when you arrive to Turkey or through the easy E-Visa process (see pg. 18). The visa will cost \$20 USD and should be acquired before embarking for Turkey.
- Money
 Exchange offices are located in the airports as well as the bank offices
 - ATMs can also be used to withdraw Turkish Liras
 - Please remember to have enough Turkish Liras (TL) for souvenirs and personal needs
 - Exchange rates: USD 1 ~ 2.2 TL (Fall 2014)
 - Purchase Travel Insurance
 - When you bring cash, make sure that none of the bills have any rips and/or writing on them. Consider carrying your excess cash in a small neck pouch.
- Accommodation, transportation, and meals will be arranged by Niagara Foundation.

 However, the extras (i.e. minibar, ironing service, room service, souvenirs, telephone calls, internet, batteries for camera, memory cards) are at your own expense.

MEDICAL PREPARATIONS

- Vaccinations are not necessary for travel to Turkey.
- If you plan on carrying prescription medication abroad, you must have authorization from your physician. Keep your prescriptions in the original containers with both your name and the generic name of the medication on the label. To avoid any potential problems, carry a legible prescription or a letter from your doctor while traveling. This proves that you use the medication legally, and ensures that you will have enough medication for the duration of your trip, as some prescriptions may be difficult to fill while abroad.
- If you have a pre-existing medical condition you may want to consider wearing a bracelet or carrying an identification card that indicates your condition, in case you are injured while abroad.
- Increase your physical activity two to four weeks prior to the trip. There will be days that the combination of the heat and the walking will tax you.
- If you're not a frequent traveler please consult with your doctor to learn more about jetlag and tourist sickness due to the change in time zone, weather, food and climate. It is helpful to maintain hydration with water both on the airplane and during the first few days to get your body adjusted.

Please fill out the medical information page at the end of the packet. Make sure to return the forms to your trip coordinator.

WHAT TO BRING

CLOTHING: We recommend comfortable walking shoes that you are able to take on and off at mosques, private homes, etc. Please also pack clothing that is appropriate for visits to religious buildings. Women should carry with them a scarf that they can wear inside mosques. Also, please bring business casual attire for any possible professional meetings during your stay in Turkey. See the Itinerary for more information.

SUN PROTECTION: On sunny days, sunglasses and sunscreen will be a necessity.

ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES: Laptop chargers and other small appliances aren't compatible with Turkish electrical outlets (due to different wattage systems), and it is therefore necessary to buy a power converter (220-240 Volts) if you plan on using electronics. Most hotel rooms will have a hair dryer but not an iron.

CAMERA: You will want to have pictures of your exciting trip, and so bringing a camera and extra batteries for the camera is encouraged. Remember, all electronics need to be compatible to European Standard, 220 V, round plug heads.

GIFTS: Please be advised to bring gifts in case you visit families during your stay. It is customary in Turkish culture and tradition to give gifts when visiting families. These gifts can be small and representative of local American culture. Gifts can range from local Basketball team memorabilia to prints from the Art Museum. We recommend your group collaborate with each other to find an arrangement that most creatively and uniquely represents your group. Your trip coordinator can help guide you through this process.

EMPTY BAG: New visitors to Turkey often like to purchase souvenirs for themselves, as well as friends and families. Many of our trip participants end up purchasing an additional suitcase for gifts and small purchases.

PACK LIGHTLY: Pack clothing that can be used for a variety of activities and places. Your trip itinerary will provide you with a guide to use when making preparations and packing. There will be extensive travel between cities in Turkey and extra luggage will make that experience more difficult.

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHILF IN TURKEY

- Your group guide will have a cell phone with them. You may give her/his number to your family for emergencies.
- our travel guides to help...
 Watch for pickpockets in most-heavily touristy places. Watch your handbag, manbag, or shoulder bag.
- Remember, this trip is slightly different than other vacations. You have made a commitment to step out and meet local Turks, engage in friendly conversations, and experience the sights and sounds of a different culture, religion, and tradition.
- Hand shaking and embracing is a normal form of greeting, especially among the same genders. It is not that common for men and women to embrace due to religious and cultural sensitivities. To play it safe, if you are a man, shake a woman's hand only if she offers first.
- Please do your best to mix with our friends on the ground whenever you have the chance.
- When visiting places of worship remember to walk respectfully in accordance with the customs. When visiting a mosque, men should wear a pants and women anything that falls below the knees. Your trip coordinator will remind you when

proper attire is necessary.

- You can access internet/wifi at the hotels and many other public places.
- Some sites may require special permission for photographing or videotaping.
- Always carry one Turkish-lira coin and travel-size paper tissue for the occasional public toilet visits.
- When shopping, always (with the exception to large department stores) discuss the price before the purchase and make sure to barter! You may ask

U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

STEP PROGRAM

The State Department suggests that individuals traveling abroad should register their trip with the state before departure; this is not compulsory, but is strongly recommended. The State Department also has "The Smart Traveler Enrollment Program" (STEP), which it describes as "a free service provided by the U.S. Government to U.S. citizens who are traveling to, or living in, a foreign country." STEP allows you to enter information about your upcoming trip abroad so that the Department of State can better assist you in an emergency. STEP also allows Americans residing abroad to get routine information from the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate."

Further information can be found at: https://step.state.gov/step/ List of US Embassies and Consulates in Turkey

U.S. CONSULATE GENERAL IN ISTANBUL:

U.S. CONSULAR AGENT IN IZMIR:

Kaplıcalar Mevki, No:2, İstinye/Istanbul Tel: (90-212) 335-9000 Tel: (90-232) 464-8755 Fax: (90-232) 464-8916

TSA RULES AND REGULATIONS

TSA prohibits anything that can be considered a weapon to be in carry-on luggage. Items such as guns, box cutters, scissors over 4 inches in length, tools over seven inches in length, aerosol, and razors are not allowed. However, some of these items can be checked in luggage. The TSA also has the 3-1-1 rule for liquids: 3.4 oz or smaller of liquids, 1 qt size bag to hold these liquids, and 1 bag per traveler. Safe Skies and Travel Sentry luggage locks are TSA approved for securing luggage. For more information on the TSA's rules and regulations visit their website at: http://www.tsa.gov/index.shtm.

UNITED STATES CUSTOMS

United States Customs prohibits certain items from entering the United States at a port of entry. Items such as meat, dairy, soil, plants, illegal substances, endangered animals and ivory are not allowed (unless you possess the proper permits). Also, upon re-entry to the United States you will be asked to declare any goods you might have brought back with you (however, many people don't usually claim small souvenirs). Upon re-entry, you will have to show your passport, as well as state your duration of stay and what your business was in Turkey. It is recommended that you have all your paperwork in order before getting in the queue for customs. Further information can be found at: http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/home.xml

E - VISA

An e-Visa is a new alternative to traditional visa methods, and is quicker and easier to obtain than "sticker" and "stamp-type" visas. Citizens of many countries, including the U.S.A., are eligible for e-Visas, which can be acquired electronically in 3 simple steps. First, complete your application form at **www.evisa.gov.tr** next, make the payment with a credit or debit card; finally, download and print your e-Visa (which will be emailed to you within 24 hours of your completion of the application) and keep it with you at the airport and throughout your trip.

Any questions about the process can be answered at www.evisa.gov.tr



9 O O e-Visa - Personal Info

Simply add your personal information, provide credit or debit card information, and print of a copy of your new visa.

We recommend storing it in your passport until checking into your hotel.

Simply add your personal information (Personal Information System

New Application

New Application System

Information Note

Please note that the information that you provide must make the information that you passion. Otherwise, you provide must make the information that you passion. Otherwise, you provide must make the information that you passion. Otherwise, you passion. Otherwise

TURKISH ALPHABET

I - (euh)R - (reh)A - (ah)B - (beh)i - (iy)S - (she)C - (dj)J - (jeh)Ş - (sheh) K – (keh) C - (che)T- (the) D - (de)L - (leh) U - (uuh)Ü – (eeuuh) E - (eh)M - (meh)V – (veh) F - (feh) N - (neh)G - (gheh) O - (oh)Y - (yeh)Ğ - (soft gheh) Ö – (eauw) Z - (zeh)P - (peh) H - (heh)

SOME KEY PHRASES

Hello Merhaba (MEHR-HAH-BAH)

Goodbye If leaving: Hosçakalın (HOSH-CHA-KALUHN)

Goodbye If staying: Güle güle (GUELE GUELE)

Good Morning Gunaydin (GUEN-EYE-DUHN)

Good night i lyi geceler (E-YEE GE-JAY-ER)

My name is... Benim adim (BENN-IM AD-UHM)

Yes Evet (EV-ET)
No Hayir (HI-EAR)

Please Lütfen (LUET-FEN)

Thank you Tesekkur ederim (TEH-SHEK-UER EH-DER-EEM)

You're welcome

Birsey degil (BIR SHEY DE-YEEL)

How are you?

Nasilsiniz? (NA-SUHL-SUHN-UHZ)

Nice to meet you Memnun oldum (MEM-NOON OLL-DOOM)

Water Su (SOO)

Tea Cay (CHAAY)

Coffee Kahve (KAAHH-VEH)



HOW MUCH FREE TIME WILL I HAVE? WILL THERE BE TIME TO SHOP?

In addition to evenings, you will most likely have an entire last day in Istanbul blocked off for unrestricted free time and shopping. Consider exploring the thousands of shops at the Grand Bazaar, visiting a traditional bath house, or taking a stroll through many of the cities historic neighborhoods. Your Niagara staff will provide you with suggestions and help you coordinate a time and place for the group to regather.

IS TURKEY SAFE TO TRAVEL SOLO AS A WOMEN?

If you are traveling with Niagara, you will not be alone for any significant amount of time. However, if you are extending your trip, it is good to know some tips if traveling solo. Turkey is a perfect place for women to visit, but traveling alone brings challenges not unlike traveling in many other countries (North America and Europe included). The larger metropilitan hubs like Istanbul and Izmir are more accustomed to single female travelers. But should you be located in a more remote part of the country be mindful that you may stick out a bit. So whether you're traveling through streets of Cihangir or the beaches of Antalya, simply make sure to plan your agenda ahead of time, remain cautious but not suspicious, and be mindful of your clothing and interactions with locals.

WHAT IF THERE IS SOMETHING I WOULD LIKE TO DO/SEE BUT IS NOT ON THE AGENDA?

If there is a site you think the group would benefit from seeing but is not on the agenda simply reach out to your trip coordinator to see if it is possible to include. Otherwise, if time or other transportation logistics make it impossible, please consider visiting the spot during your freetime. We also like to encourage our trip participants to add a day on either end of their trip to allow for these additional excursions.

IS IT POSSIBLE FOR ME TO FIND A PLACE OF WORSHIP DURING MY TRAVEL?

Of course! Please inform your trip coordinator before departing with your need. We are more than happy to make accommodations and so want to ensure that any previously scheduled travel arranments do not conflict with your observance.

THIS TRIP SOUNDS AMAZING! OTHER THAN PAYMENT, WHAT ELSE IS REQUIRED OF ME?

Other than the fees addressed earlier in this guide, we ask that you provide us with feedback upon return to the states and share your experience with others. We suggest either keeping a journal or simply jotting down a few points of reflection each day. Your feedback is priceless and ensures that we continue to provide enriching trips.

IS THERE ANYWAY I CAN PARTICIPATE IN INTERFAITH ACTIVITIES BEFORE MY TRAVELS TO TURKEY?

Niagara has many ongoing interfaith programs scheduled throughout the year. Abraham's Tent, in particular, would provide you with an opportunity to learn about another faith tradition over a meal in the cozy atmosphere of a community member's kitchen or living room. For those interested in learning about Islam before heading over seas attending a Tent dinner would be a great start. If you're interested please send a email to your local Niagara Foundation branch and they will help make proper arrangements.

DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER TRAVEL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ME TO ADD TO MY EXTENDED STAY?

If you have a few days either before or after your Niagara trip in Istanbul consider adding the following points of interest to your itinerary:

Stop by to Sur Ocakbasi --- it's a cozy place to eat delicious kebabs on the street! surocakbasi.com | +90 212 533 8088

Check out the street vendors selling rice pilaf and chick peas on their push charts. Visit outside: Imç Çarsısı 1. Blok Hacı Kadın Mh. | 34134 Fatih/İlstanbul Turkey

Grab some Kumpir (a form of potato) at Ortakoy http://istanbuleats.com/2009/12/istanbuls-top-5-street-foods-4-maya-kumpir/

Board a ferry from Eminonu to Uskudar with a return to Besiktas. http://www.istanbultrails.com/2009/08/getting-around-in-istanbul-by-ferry-or-sea-bus/

Take a selfie in front of the "Welcome to Asia" sign at the end of the Boshphorus bridge.

SUGGESTED READINGS

- Essays, Perspectives, Opinions M. Fethullah Gulen
- Birds Without Wings Louis de Bernières
- Osman's Dream: The History of The Ottoman Empire Caroline Finkel
- The Ottoman Empire, A Short History Suraiya Faroqhi
- Crescent & Star, Turkey Between Two World Stephen Kinzer
- Turkey and the Arab Spring Graham E. Fuller
- The Gulen Movement Helen Rose Ebaugh
- New Turkish Republic:Turkey As a Pivotal State in the MuslimWorld
 Graham Fuller
- Turkey: What Everyone Needs to Know Andrew Finkel
- Turkey Unveiled, A History of Modern Turkey Nicole Pope & Hugh Pope
- Istanbul and The Civilization of The Ottoman Empire Bernard Lewis
- Lords of The Horizons, A History of The Ottoman Empire Jason Goodwin
- Toward an Islamic Enlightment: The Gulen Movement Hakan Yavuz
- Istanbul: Memories and the City Orhan Pamuk

BEFORE YOU GO

Here are a few housekeeping tasks that all trip participants must complete before participating in Niagara's Intercultural Trip to Turkey:

- Pay the participation fee of \$750*. The fee must be made payable to Niagara Foundation.
- Purchase your round trip ticket to Istanbul. We recommend booking your flight with Turkish Airlines and arrange an arrival in Istanbul on the scheduled start date of your trip. Your trip coordinator will provide you with additional "group flight" details. If you prefer to make arrangements on your own please let your trip coordinator know.
- Additional guest policy: If there is available spots on the trip, your guest may travel with the group if they pay a \$1,500 participation fee.

^{*} Rates as of Fall 2014.

AFTER THE TRIP

Please send us the pictures you take during the trip. We will make a DVD and a movie inclusive of all pictures to watch at a reunion.

Also, please send a minimum one-page reflection to your trip coordinator addressing the following questions:

- 1 What were your expectations regarding Turkey before you left?
- Were these expectations challenged? How so?
- 3 Do you have any suggestions for improving the trip?
- 4 What did you learn?

TESTIMONIES

"Turkey was the paramount experience of my life."

- Dennis Black, Iowa State Senator

"If only the Niagara Foundation could offer cultural exchange to everyone...

the world would be a more accepting,

kind, and peaceful place."

- Cary Wecht, Ph.D., Youngstown State University, Cleveland, OH

"There aren't many other cities in the world where the three great
Abrahamic faiths are more comfortably
at home than Istanbul."

- Mark Baldwin, The Rockford Register Star

"I fell in love with Turkey and I will return again as soon as possible.

Turkey embodies diversity in every respect. It is extraordinary - from sparsely populated villages to densely populated, sprawling cities; from the magnificent seaside to the beautifully adorned desert; from the smell of the wild flowers to the fragrance of spices at the grand bazaar; from the taste of a freshly picked apricot to the most delicious multi-course meal."

- Gloria Gibson, Ph.D., University of Northern Iowa

NOTES

RELEASE OF LIABILITY

In consideration of the risk of injury while participating in Study Türkiye Trip, and as consideration for the right to participate in the
activity, I hereby, for myself, my heirs, executors, administrators, assigns, or personal representatives,
knowingly and voluntarily enter into this waiver and release of liability and hereby waive any and all rights, claims or causes of
action of any kind whatsoever arising out of my participation in the Trip, and do hereby release and forever discharge the Niagara
Foundation, their affiliates, managers, members, agents, attorneys, staff, volunteers, and representatives for any physical or
psychological injury, including but not limited to illness, paralysis, death, damages, economical or emotional loss, that I may suffer
as a direct result of my participation to the aforementioned activity, including traveling to and from an event related to this trip.
I am voluntarily participating in the aforementioned activity and I am aware of the risks associated with traveling to and from as
well as participating in this activity, which may include, but are not limited to, physical or psychological injury, pain, suffering,
illness, disfigurement, temporary or permanent disability, economic or emotional loss, and death. I understand that these injuries
or outcomes may arise from my own or others' negligence, conditions related to travel, or the condition of the activity location(s).
Nonetheless, I assume all related risks, both known and unknown to me, of my participation in this activity, including travel to, from
and during this activity.
I agree to indemnify and hold harmless Niagara Foundation against any and all claims, suits or actions of any kind whatsoever for
liability, damages, compensations or otherwise brought by me or anyone on my behalf, including attorney's fees and any related
costs. I acknowledge that the Niagara Foundation and their directors, volunteers, representatives and agents are not responsible
for errors, omissions, acts or failures of any party or entity conducting a specific event or activity on behalf of Study Türkiye
participants.In the event that I should require medical care or treatment, I agree to be financially responsible for any costs incurred
as a result of such treatment. I am aware and understand that I should carry my own health insurance.
This agreement was entered into at arm's-length, without duress or coercion, and is to be interpreted as an agreement between
two parties of equal bargaining strength. Both the Participant,, and the Niagara Foundation agree that
this Agreement is clear and unambiguous as to its terms, and that no other evidence will be used or admitted to alter or explain
the terms of this Agreement, but that it will be interpreted based on the language in accordance with the purposes for which it is
entered into.
I, the undersigned participant, affirm that I am of the age of 18 years or older, and that I am freely signing this agreement. I certify
that I have read this agreement, and that I fully understand its content. I am aware that this a release of liability and a contract and
that I am signing it of my own free will.
Participant's Name: Signature: Date:
Participant's Address:

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

YOUR NAME:					
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Phone: ———			- HOME	MOBILE	WORK
Email Address:					
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ENJOY YOUR TRIP

