

BAFA LAKE & DILEK NATIONAL PARK

Group Guided 14 Nights

Summary

This 15 day, 14 night itinerary offers some moderate to challenging walks in one of Turkey's most historically significant regions. Our walks and excursions will take you from pre-historic cave paintings dating back over 7,000 years to cities with Carian, Persian, Hellenic and Roman heritage and to Byzantine and Seljuk settlements. Probably the highlight of the tour is a visit to Ephesus, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The city is believed to have Neolithic origins and in ancient times was famous for the nearby Temple of Artemis (circa 550 BC), one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. It is also home to the magnificent Library of Celsus. The theatre has a capacity of around 25,000 people. Ephesus was one of the seven churches of Asia mentioned in the Book of Revelation. The Gospel of John is said to have been written here.



Library of Celsus

Our tour starts in the Bafa Lake area. Our accommodation here is built of the remains of the ancient city of Herakleia and is at the heart of a region that has seen human occupation since pre-historic times. Bafa is surrounded by mountains which are home to ancient, byzantine and medieval remains.

Our walks combine this stunning scenery with sites of historical and cultural importance. We will also meet and share food with the local nomadic Yorük people. Some of the terrain can be a little rough with some scrambling over rocks and boulders, but the views and surprises that await us around every corner make the effort well worthwhile.

Our second centre is Güzecamli a charming village on the Aegean Coast and surrounded by the mountainous Dilek National Park. As we make our way from Bafa to the Aegean we will visit the sites at Priene, Milas and Didyma. During our coastal stay we will visit Ephesus and also take a day on a local boat to visit a turtle sanctuary and enjoy the crystal clear waters of the sea.

This is a tour into the very heart of Turkish history and to traditional areas where daily life generally continues at a relaxed pace, well away from the modern world and untouched by mass tourism.

These are destinations where nature, beauty and timeless history combine to create a contemplative atmosphere. Take the time to refresh your body, mind and soul.

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Walk Metrics

Day		Km's	Hrs	Up	Down	Comments	Accom.	Nights
1	Arrival Day	0	0	0	0	Bodrum or Izmir A/port and Transfer to Bafa Lake	Kapikiri	8
2	Herakleia City Wall	6.5	4.5	475	510	Visit Watch Tower & Cave Paintings		
3	7 Brothers Monastery (Estimated Up & Down)	18	7	320	530	Byzantine Frescoes & Pre-historic paintings		
4	Visit Milas	0	0	0	0	Ancient City and Local Market		
5	Ioniapolis and boat	10	4	210	185	Marble Quarries & Ancient city by fishing boat		
6	Stylos Monastery	20	8	810	550	Visit Monastery and a nomadic family lunch		
7	Relaxation Day	0	0	0	0	Herekleia UNESCO Ancient Site		
8	Hike to Kiliselik	11½	6	315	295	Summer meadows & Byzantine Chapel		
9	Transfer to Güzelcamli	0	0	0	0	Visiting Priene, Milet & Didyma	Güzel camlı	6
10	Doğanbey & Mykale Mts	17	6	1065	1140	Climb can be tough		
11	Visit to Ephesus	0	0	0	0	Iconic ancient city		
12	Güzelcamli Kanyon	17	6.5	670	580	From Mountains to Coast		
13	Güzelcamli Boat Trip	0	0	0	0	Full Day		
14	Free Day	0	0	0	0	Swimming & Relaxing		
15	Departure Day	0	0	0	0	Bodrum or Izmir A/port		

Itinerary at a Glance

SUMMARY	B&B	HB	P/NIC	Airport Transfers		
Board Basis	0	14	1	OUT & IN		
Rating	Moderate to Challenging		No. of Walks	8		
Totals	88+	km	3,865	Ascent	3,790	Descent

Price

Based on two sharing a twin or double room – Group size 8 - 15

Season	1-30/4 16/10 – 15/11	1-30/5 & 01/09 – 15/10
Per Person	£995	£1,020
Single Supplement	£330	£345

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Detailed Itinerary

Day 1 - Journey to West Turkey

Transfer from the Bodrum Airport (55 Km / 1 hour) or Izmir Airport (140 Km / Just under 2 hours) to our hotel at Bafa-Lake. Our home for the next 8 nights is in the charming village of Kapikiri which was built over the ruins of the antique city of Herakleia.

Day 2 - Hiking the walls of Herakleia

We hike along the antique city wall which extends 6,5 kilometres, to the hilltop watch tower with views over Bafa Lake on the way. We will also find some pre-historic cave paintings which show that the area has been settled 7,000 years ago. (6,5 km, 4-5 hrs hiking).

Day 3 - Hiking to Yediler Monastery and Pre-historic Paintings

We hike to "Seven Brothers Monastery" a fine example of the Byzantine age with some nice frescos. We will also find two caves where there are more examples of pre-historic paintings (18 km, 7 hrs hiking)

Day 4 - Milas

We visit the traditional market in Milas and the museum of Milas. Milas is an ancient city. The city commands a region with an active economy and very rich in history and ancient remains, the territory of Milas contains a remarkable twenty-seven archaeological sites. The city was the first capital of ancient Caria and of Menteşe in medieval times. The nearby Mausoleum of Hecatomnus is classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Day 5 - Antique city of Ioniapolis and Fishing Boat Trip

In the morning, we hike to the marble quarries and ancient ruins of Ioniapolis. In the afternoon, we take a fishing boat to cross the lake, swim and visit an island where we will find the remains of a castle ruin (10km, 4 hrs hiking).

Day 6 - Stylos Monastery and Mountain Pastures in the Latmos Mountains

The ruins of the Stylos Monastery with its colorful frescos are a sight not to be missed. They can however only be reached by a challenging climb. However over lunch with a nomadic family we recover from the strains of the climb. The route is through a tangle of rocks wherein we find the hidden monastery. A tough but satisfying day! (20 km, 8 hrs hike).

Day 7 – Relaxation Day (after yesterday's exertions).

Discover the ruins of the ancient Herakleia, the temple of Athena, amphitheater, Agora and enjoy the traditional village life of Kapikiri! On the terrace of your pension you may relax with a panoramic views of Bafa-Lake!

Day 8 - Hike to Kiliselik Basilica

Narrow paths take us through the summer meadows of the village and lead us to a isolated cave with byzantine paintings and a romantic clearing with ruins of a byzantine church. Our return route takes us alongside the lake. (11,5 km, 6 hrs. hike)

Day 9 – Travel to Güzelcamli - Visiting Ancient Sites

Today we will travel to the Aegean Coast and our accommodation for the next 6 nights. As we head for the coast we will be crossing an area of significant historical importance. A turbulent past has seen cities come and go as the coastline underwent geological changes with rivers silting up leaving ports kilometers inland. We will break up our journey with visits the ancient ionic cities of [Priene](#), [Miletus](#) and [Didyma](#).

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Day 10 - Crossing the Dilek National Park

From the picturesque village of Eski Doganbey we hike over the mountain crest of the Mykale Mountains to the far side of the National Park. The strenuous climb (900 meters) will be rewarded with views of the sandbanks in the estuary delta of the Meander River. On the far side we descend through shaded forests (17km 6½ hrs. hike).

Day 11 - Visiting Ephesus and the Village Sirince

Ephesus is a place that truly astounds you, a place that belongs on everybody's bucket list. It is a site of immense proportions, where you can imagine the paved streets and mosaic floors full of people and the ancient world coming to life. This is a city where the glorious wealth, might and magnificence of the Roman Empire is celebrated at every turn. Afterwards we stroll through the lively town of Selcuk and continue to the former Greek village of Sirince. Undoubtedly this will be a highlight of your holiday and a lifelong memory.

Day 12 - Hike through the Canyon of the Dilek National Park

Today our route takes us from Güzelcamli high into the mountains of the Dilek National Park which is an area stunning scenery. We continue through a dramatic canyon and return to the coast (17km 6 hrs. hike).

Day 13 - Boat trip on the Aegean Coast

After a leisurely breakfast we make our way to the small harbor in Güzelcamli. Here we can board our boat for the day. We spend the day in bays with crystal clear water, snorkeling, looking for turtles and enjoying a great lunch on board.

Day 14 – Free Day

Lots of time for swimming and relaxing on the Aegean coast.

15. Day: Return journey

Transfer from your hotel in Güzelcamli to the airport (Bodrum about 2 hrs. drive, Izmir about 1,5 hrs. drive).