Mount Ararat - Turkey's Sacred Summit

Trip Code: TAR

Version:

MOUNTAINEER	GUIDED GROUP	CHALLENGING
		7



HIGHLIGHTS

- Spectacular panoramas from the snow-capped summit of Mt Ararat (5137m)
- Enjoy far-reaching views to the peaks of Elbrus, Kazbek and Demavand
- Acclimatise on Mt Artos (3537m) with summit views across Lake Van
- Visit the Ishak Pasha Palace, Akdamar Island and Van Castle
- Ararat Permit Fees included

AT A GLANCE

- 6 days trekking
- 2 days sightseeing
- Max altitude - 5137 metres
- Join at Van

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

From Lake Van to the resting place of Noah's Ark - this 10-day journey takes you across an unforgettable Anatolian landscape, to the summit of one of the world's most incredible snow-capped volcanoes, Mount Ararat (5137m).

We begin in the city of Van, where a day's acclimatisation walk will take us to the top of nearby Mt Artos (3537m). From the summit, we will enjoy views across the expanse of Lake Van, Turkey's largest lake. We then transfer east to the frontier town of Dogubeyazit. From here, it is a short approach to Mount Ararat, which we climb over a period of 5 days.

Close to Turkey's border with Armenia, and unclimbed until the early 19th Century, Mount Ararat is the final resting place of Noah's Ark - according to the Old Testament. Whatever its place in history, this extinct volcano provides an unusual and achievable trekking challenge. Making a pre-dawn start from our high camp, we fix our crampons and trek across easy-angled snow slopes to reach the summit. The ascent is non-technical and suitable for experienced hill walkers.

This adventure also includes a visit to the Van Castle and Akdamar Island on beautiful Lake Van.

Is this holiday for you?

The ascent of Mount Ararat is not technical, but a high level of fitness is required. Ararat is an impressive 5137m above sea level. The height gain of nearly 3000 metres from the village of Eli to the summit is considerable. Our acclimatisation hike on Mt Artos (3537m) will help prepare us for this. On Ararat, two 5-hour trekking days (separated by a further acclimatisation day) take us to our high camp on the mountain. The summit day will be long, around 10 hours in total. Underfoot conditions will vary from easy trails through upland meadow, to switchbacks on volcanic scree. The uppermost slopes of the mountain are snow-covered and we will have to tackle a short, low-angle snow slope. Crampons and trekking poles will be required. Previous experience of walking in crampons is preferable, but not essential.

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- A professional and qualified tour leader
- A single timed group transfer on arrival and departure
- All accommodation as described
- All meals
- All land transport
- Permit fee for Ararat climb
- A full service on trek including food and all equipment (excluding personal equipment)

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Airport transfers (other than the group transfers)
- Entrance fees to tourist sites and optional activities
- Tips for local staff
- Miscellaneous expenses - drinks and souvenirs etc.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The group will meet at the hotel in Van. A single timed transfer from Van Airport is provided in the early evening of Day 1 of the Land Only Itinerary.

If you are flying into Van airport then you will need to collect your luggage when you connect in Istanbul and check it in again as VAN airport is a domestic only airport.

On the last day of the Land Only itinerary, there will be a single timed transfer back to Van Airport. This transfer will be in the morning.

Anyone may join the group transfers by prior arrangement. If the scheduled group transfer is not convenient, the most cost-effective way to reach the hotel is by taking a local taxi, available at the airport. Alternatively, we can arrange a private transfer for you at an additional cost.

Hotel contact details and an emergency number will be provided with your booking confirmation.

Meal Plan

All meals are included in the holiday price.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your meals with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Food & Water

Drinking Water

It is not recommended to drink untreated water from the taps. If you are on a trekking or cycling holiday, water is supplied to fill up your individual bottles. This will be boiled, filtered or provided in large jerry cans or 5 litre bottles. Additionally you should take purification tablets or a filter bottle (such as a Water-To-Go bottle) to treat your water when in towns or where water is not supplied. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

On trek, breakfast options include cereals, fruits, fresh bread, preserves, eggs, salami, feta, olives, melon, breads, dried fruit and nuts, tea and coffee. After breakfast you will make up your own lunchboxes (provided) using fresh bread sticks and a variety of meats, cheeses, tomatoes, cucumber and olives. There will also be plenty of fruit, biscuits and cake. The evening meal is prepared by our cook and served at the camp table. This meal may be a barbecue or any of a number of excellent Turkish dishes. We can offer a vegetarian meal option on this tour, and we can also accommodate a limited number of vegan guests on each departure. Please inform us of any dietary requirements at the time of booking. We recommend that vegan guests also bring some supplementary snacks.

Accommodation

During this trip the group will spend 4 nights in comfortable hotel in the centre of Van and 1 night in a simple hotel in Dogubeyazit.

There will be 4 nights camping during the climb on Mount Ararat. This camping is fully supported with all baggage and equipment being carried by mules or horses. There will be a small team of staff to look after you including a cook. A mattress is provided, although some people like to bring their own thermarest as well.

All accommodation is twin-share. If you are travelling by yourself, you will be paired up with another single client of the same sex. Single rooms and tents are available for a supplementary cost. If you are planning on extending your holiday additional nights at the group hotel are available on request.

If you would like to break your journey home with a stopover in Istanbul, additional hotel nights and transfers can be booked through KE. Contact our Customer Sales and Support Team for more information.

Group Leader & Support Staff

The group will be accompanied by a professional English-speaking mountain guide and on trek will have the services of a trek crew including a cook and baggage animals and their handlers.

Altitude

This holiday involves going to high altitude. During the course of your trip you will reach altitudes in excess of 3500 metres. This is not something that you should worry about; the human body is quite capable of adapting to a very wide range of altitudes, but it is important that we follow some simple rules in order to acclimatise successfully. Before coming on this holiday you should read the advice on trekking at high altitude. You can also talk to one of our trekking experts if you have any concerns about altitude.

Park Fees & Permits

The cost of the permit for climbing Mount Ararat is included in the holiday price. Arranging this permit is a reasonably complicated process and to do this we will need a copy of your passport a minimum of 5 weeks prior to departure.

Spending Money

Approximately £150 (or equivalent in US dollars, Euros etc.) should be allowed for miscellaneous expenses including tips to local staff. This is best carried in the form of cash. There are ATMs at the airport and a currency exchange in the centre of Van. Currency can also be purchased in advance. If you are intending to buy expensive souvenirs you should budget accordingly (credit cards can be useful in this respect).

Optional extras:

All prices are subject to change.

- Akdamar Island Church €12 per person
- Ishak Pasha Palace €3 per person

Guidance on Tipping

Tips do not form part of the wages of local staff but they are very much appreciated. It is important to remember that tipping is voluntary and should be dependent on good service. It is best if tips are given at the end of the trek by the group as a whole. We recommend that each group member contributes around £30 - 40 to this pool, which can be distributed between the Tour Leader, drivers and support crew as the group feels is appropriate.

Baggage Allowance

For this holiday you should take one piece of luggage, which should be a soft duffle bag, and a daypack. During the trek your bags will be carried by pack animals. The maximum weight of your kit bag during this part of the trip is 15kg. It is possible to leave items that you do not require on the climb at the group hotel in Dogubeyazit. For international flights please check your baggage allowance with your airline.

Group Size & Holiday Status

For each holiday there is a minimum number of participants required to enable it to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to run'. You can check the trip status for each departure in the ‘Dates and Prices’ table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status so you are free to proceed with your international flight booking and other travel arrangements.

General Information

Passport & Visas

Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required**,** and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates *(see Health & Vaccinations below),* **and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check the FCDO for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations:

You should be up to date with the routine vaccinations recommended in the UK for overseas travel.

You must also contact your doctor or travel clinic to check if there are specific vaccinations or other preventive measures that you need for the area you are visiting, in good time before you are due to depart.

Please ensure you are looking at the recommendations for all countries visited on your holiday plus recommendations for any borders you cross.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dental check-up.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates.

Please check the FCDO and Travel Health Pro. For all of your intended destinations for up-to-date advice.

Severe Allergies:

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips.

Preparing for your Holiday

Getting some additional exercise before coming on an active holiday makes a lot of sense. The fitter you are, after all, the more enjoyable you will find the experience.

You should be aerobically fit and comfortable with walking 6 hours for consecutive days, and possibly for 12 hrs on the summit day. Hill walking, with a good amount of ascent and descent, is the best training, and we would suggest that you try to fit in a number of long weekend walks before you depart. Running, cycling and swimming are also good for developing cardio vascular fitness and stamina. For this holiday it is a good idea to practice at walking using crampons. Even if it is not possible to access an area of snow, it is worth getting used to walking with crampons on slopes of turf.

Climate

The temperatures that we can expect to encounter during the day will vary considerably. In the mountainous areas to the east of the country, the air is drier and the temperature range much greater. Although situated some 1700 metres (5600 feet) higher than Istanbul, temperatures in Dogubeyazit can be quite similar, so quite hot and humid. On Ararat itself temperatures will, of course, decrease as we climb. Typically, we will be trekking at temperatures around 15°C. At night at our highest camp, we can expect the temperature to fall to freezing point. In common with many mountain areas, cloud can build during the day resulting in late afternoon rain.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's **'Travel Aware'** campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. All other nationalities should check their government websites for relevant information.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

- Turkey. Lonely Planet Travel Survival Kit.
- The Rough Guide to Turkey.
- The Explorers of Ararat and the search for Noah's Ark. BJ Corbin.

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our Travel Insurance page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

Equipment List

The following checklist should help you with your packing. As a general rule, you should always try to

keep the weight of your equipment to a minimum.

You should bring the following items:

- Approach shoes or trekking boots
- B1/4 Season/winter boots rigid enough to fit crampons
- Crampons (C1 10-point flexible crampons are sufficient)
- Trekking poles
- Helmet (Free rental available) *
- Gaiters
- Socks
- Underwear
- Trainers or sandals for camp
- Trekking trousers
- Waterproof overtrousers
- Waterproof jacket
- Thermal baselayer - leggings
- Thermal baselayer- shirts
- T-shirts and/or casual shirts
- Fleece jacket or warm jumper
- Warm jacket (down)

- Sunhat
- Warm hat
- Sunglasses / ski goggles
- Thermal gloves
- Warm and waterproof gloves or mittens
- Daypack 40 litres
- Headtorch and spare battery
- Basic First Aid Kit including - Antiseptic cream, throat lozenges, diarrhoea treatment (Imodium), painkillers, plasters and blister treatment.
- Sun protection (including for lips)
- Water bottles 1 litre (x2)
- Washbag and toiletries
- Antibacterial hand wash
- Small towel
- Sleeping bag (comfort rated -10°C)

* Please inform the KE office you wish to hire these items free of charge. If you have your own you may wish to take them instead.

The following items are optional:

- Swimwear & lightweight towel - There may be opportunities to swim (Days 2 & 9)
- Spare laces

- Camera
- Thermos flask
- Insect repellent
- Pen-knife (remember to pack sharp objects in hold luggage)
- Sleeping bag liner
- Thermarest (Foam sleeping mats are provided)

Notes

With the exception of helmets - We regret that it is not possible to hire equipment through KE for this trip.

Land Only Information

Please refer to the 'Joining Arrangements & Transfers' within Holiday Information for further details.

Flights and other transport to your destination should not be booked until you have received your booking confirmation and the departure is showing 'Guaranteed to Run' or 'Limited'.

Land Only Information

The LAND ONLY dates and prices are for joining at the hotel in Van. A single transfer is included from/to Van Airport.

Flight Inclusive Information

Limited seats are available at the advertised flight price, please book as early as you can. If we are unable to secure seats at the price shown, or you have requested regional departures and/or upgrades, we will provide you with an alternative quote. It is likely that flight payment will be in advance of your final holiday balance. Booking a flight inclusive package means you will benefit from full financial protection, eases your holiday planning, and leaves us to deal with airlines and schedule changes. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

Regional departures and/or alternative carriers are available on request.

Flight Inclusive Information

The FLIGHT INCLUSIVE dates and prices are based on UK flights from London to Van with Turkish Airlines. Outbound flights will usually depart from the UK in the early morning, arriving early evening on the same day. Return flights will depart Van usually in the morning of the last day of the itinerary, arriving in the UK later the same day.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

With all meals and permits fees included, this is a great value adventure. Please note that permits must be applied for 30 days in advance - early booking is essential!

Please Note This document was downloaded on 11/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change