

# Turkey Frequently Asked Questions

## **PASSPORTS & VISAS**

The visa fee for USA passport holders is \$20/€15 (The visa for UK passport holders currently costs £10 and must be paid for with a Sterling note.) It can be purchased at the airport upon arrival and your passport must be valid for 90 days beyond our stay in Turkey.

## **HEALTH**

World Affairs Council of Houston does not offer medical advice for travel vaccinations. Please consult your doctor for prevent measures which might be advisable for our travels.

## **TELEPHONES AND EMAIL**

The major GSM operators in Turkey are Turkcell, Vodafone and Avea. You can use your mobile phone in Turkey if your provider has enabled international roaming. Pre-paid mobile phone SIM cards can be purchased for approximately 120 TL. These can be purchased at the airport on arrival or from the many outlets in Istanbul and other large cities. Public pay phones can still be found at the sides of central squares and major streets in towns and cities and around postoffices (PTT), especially around their outer walls. Internet cafes or net cafes are available in reasonable numbers in cities and towns. All of them have good DSL connections, and price for connection is about more or less 1.50 TL/hour. Free wireless connections are available at some airports, hotels and restaurants/cafés (especially in big cities).

## **ELECTRICITY**

The main voltage for electricity is 220V and 50Hz. Central European type wall socket (two-pin plugs) is standard in Turkey.

## **CURRENCY**

The local currency in Turkey is the Turkish Lira (TL). Cash can usually be exchanged without commission at bureau de changes (döviz), banks and hotels. Cash machines (ATMs) are available throughout Turkey, accepting major credit and bank cards and instructions are often available in English. It is advisable to inform your bank or credit card company in advance that

you are travelling to Turkey. International credit and debit cards are widely accepted in shops and restaurants throughout Turkey. However it is advisable also to carry cash for the smaller shops and cafes, particularly in more rural areas.

## **LANGUAGE**

The official language is Turkish. English and German are widely spoken in major cities and tourist resorts; English is Turkey's second widest spoken language, and you will easily find English speakers in the major cities and holiday resorts. Restaurant menus and other information for foreigners are often printed in English. You will find that most Turks welcome the opportunity to practice their language skills and will go out of their way to be helpful. Foreign visitors who attempt to speak even a few words of Turkish, however, will definitely be rewarded with even warmer smiles.

## **WHAT TO WEAR**

There are no hard and fast rules but it is best to use common sense when deciding what to wear. If staying on a beach resort it is fine to dress as you feel comfortable. For city breaks relaxed clothing is the most suitable with comfortable shoes and casual trousers and/or a dress if you intend to do lots of walking. When visiting mosques you should take off your shoes at the entrance and ladies should cover their hair; often scarves are provided on the way in. Both sexes should dress modestly with no shorts and arms and shoulders covered during visits to mosques.

## **IDENTIFICATION**

You are required at all times to carry an official ID with photograph whilst in Turkey. It is a good practice to have a photocopy of your passport, ticket details, travel insurance, hotel address etc. plus a 24-hour emergency contact number and you should carry these with you at all times.

## **WEATHER**

Upon arrival in Ankara the weather will be between the low 40's and low 60's. In Konya, it will rise to the mid 50's and will remain in the 60's and 70's for most of the remainder of the trip. However, the temperature will once again drop to the low 50's/mid 60's in Istanbul.

## **DRINKING WATER**

Although tap water is chlorinated and, therefore, safe to drink, bottled water is recommended, which is readily and affordably available.