

Istanbul & the Turquoise Coast

FEATURING
CAPPADOCIA AND A GULET CRUISE

SPONSORED BY

Brandeis | TRAVELERS

May 3-13, 2026

Featuring Professor Eva Bellin



Professor Eva Bellin

*Myra & Robert Kraft
Professor of Arab
Politics*

Eva Bellin is the Myra and Robert Kraft Professor of Arab Politics at Brandeis University, affiliated with the Department of Politics and the Crown Center for Middle East Studies. A comparativist, her research focuses on democratization, authoritarian persistence, political and economic reform, civil society, religion and politics, and cultural change. At Brandeis, she teaches courses on the Middle East and North Africa, including topics in contemporary Turkish politics and culture. Bellin is the author of *Stalled Democracy: Capital, Labor, and the Paradox of State-Sponsored Development* and co-editor of *Building Rule of Law in the Arab World*. She has conducted fieldwork in Tunisia, Egypt, Israel, and Pakistan, and earned her BA from Harvard and PhD from Princeton.

Brandeis | TRAVELERS

Dear Alumni and Friends,

Join us on an extraordinary nine-night journey through Turkey, featuring four nights in vibrant Istanbul, two nights in enchanting Cappadocia at a unique cave hotel, and a luxurious three-night cruise aboard an exclusively chartered gulet yacht.

In Istanbul, you'll explore awe-inspiring Byzantine and Ottoman landmarks, immerse yourself in the energy of bustling bazaars, and enjoy stunning waterfront views along the iconic Bosphorus Strait. In central Anatolia, discover the otherworldly landscapes of Cappadocia with its remarkable fairy chimneys, ancient rock-cut churches, cave houses, and fascinating subterranean city.

Sail along the breathtaking Turquoise Coast from Karacasöğüt to Bodrum, docking at charming port towns and secluded coves accessible only by sea, offering moments of tranquility and beauty. Explore the magnificent ruins of Ephesus and the dramatic cliffside tombs of Kaunos. Experience Turkey's rich heritage through a private home-cooked lunch in Cappadocia, visits to pottery workshops, and a mountain village famed for its exquisite carpet weaving.

In partnership with local guides and experts, Eva Bellin, the Myra and Robert Kraft Professor of Arab Politics in the Department of Politics and the Crown Center for Middle East Studies, will enrich and inform the journey by sharing her insights and knowledge of Turkish politics and culture.

Enjoy well-appointed accommodations that complement the unique character of each destination, including the five-star Barceló Istanbul, the Yunak Evleri Cave Hotel, and sleek 16-cabin Gulet Boreas.

Join us for a uniquely Brandeisian experience that offers stimulating conversation, camaraderie, and meaningful connections with fellow intellectually curious alumni and friends.

Space is limited, and we expect this journey will fill quickly. Reserve your place today and prepare for an unforgettable adventure by calling our tour operator AHI at 800-323-7373.

Sincerely,

F. Patricia Fisher
Vice President, Alumni Relations
Brandeis University

UNESCO World Heritage

1. Historic Areas of Istanbul
2. Göreme National Park and the Rock Sites of Cappadocia
3. Ephesus

Süleymaniye Mosque, Istanbul



Library of Celsus, Ephesus



Discovery begins here



Venture off on an enriching journey that shines a bright light on fabulous Turkey! You'll delve into its exhilarating capital city that straddles Europe and Asia, wonder at Cappadocia's awe-inspiring natural grandeur and sail across the crystalline waters of its gorgeous coastline aboard a gulet yacht. Along the way, take in Turkey's architectural treasures and world-class ruins, plus indulge in its tantalizing cuisine with a fusion of flavors from many cultures!

Top: Hagia Sophia Mosque, Istanbul | Above: Traditional Turkish cuisine

Cover: Cappadocia | Mail panel: Gulet Boreas anchored along the Turquoise Coast | Galata Tower and aerial view of Istanbul

Inspiring Moments



- Be awed by the extraordinary Byzantine and Ottoman **mosques and palaces of Istanbul**.
- Study beautiful Byzantine frescoes inside the rock-cut churches and chapels of **Göreme National Park**.
- Behold **Cappadocia's astonishing landscape** of surreal rock formations spectacularly sculpted by nature.
- Descend into the **underground city of Ozkonak** to explore its fascinating labyrinth of passageways and rooms.
- Revel in picturesque port towns and secluded coves along the **breathtaking Turquoise Coast** aboard a small gulet.
- Step back in time at the magnificent ruins of **Ephesus**, one of the most important Greco-Roman cities in Asia.
- Experience three **UNESCO World Heritage sites**.



Day 1 | In Transit

Depart your gateway city for Istanbul, Turkey. 🌐

Day 2 | Istanbul, Turkey

Arrive and transfer ➡ to the Barceló Istanbul Hotel. This evening, meet your fellow travelers at a Welcome Reception and Dinner.

Day 3 | Istanbul

Enrichment: *Istanbul, The Crossroads of the World.*

Istanbul: Part 1. Meander through the aromatic Spice Bazaar brimming with spices, teas and treats. Afterward, enjoy lunch nearby with your group. Then, take a guided tour of the majestic, 16th-century Süleymaniye Mosque built by Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent. Finish with a pleasant cruise along the Bosphorus Strait.

Free Time: Make your own plans for dinner.

Day 4 | Istanbul

Istanbul: Part 2. Visit ornately tiled Topkapi Palace, the imperial residence of the Ottoman sultans for almost four centuries, and view its dazzling, jewel-encrusted artifacts. See the Hippodrome of Constantinople, where Roman chariots once raced, and go down into the atmospheric Basilica Cistern, an underground reservoir. You'll also tour the Hagia Sophia Grand Mosque, a Byzantine gem. During your explorations, stop for lunch in the old town.

Free Time: The rest of the day is yours to plan.

Day 5 | Istanbul | Kayseri | Göreme National Park | Cavusin | Ürgüp

Check out this morning and fly to Kayseri. Arrive and transfer to Cappadocia, celebrated for its astounding and otherworldly rocky landscape.

Göreme National Park. Within this captivating open-air museum, step inside small churches that were carved out of the rocks by a former monastic community and decorated with frescoes in the Byzantine period. Later, marvel at Love Valley's whimsical fairy chimneys and charming Cavusin, a village cut into the rocks. Check in to the Yunak Evleri Cave Hotel in Ürgüp. Tonight, gather for drinks and dinner, and watch a lovely sunset over Cappadocia.

Day 6 | Devrent Valley | Ozkonak | Avanos

🌐 **Elective | Cappadocia Hot Air Balloon Ride.** Float over the incredible, multicolored terrain on an unforgettable sunrise journey.



Above: Historic village of Cavusin, Cappadocia
Right: Spice Bazaar, Istanbul



Cleopatra Island, Turquoise Coast

Devrent Valley. See formations that resemble animals and objects in this scenic region.

Ozkonak Underground City. Take a guided tour of a subterranean network of chambers.

AHI Connects | Lunch in a Cappadocia Home. Be welcomed into a private home and enjoy authentic dishes prepared by your hosts.

Avanos Pottery Workshop. Watch skilled potters shape pieces out of the local red clay and learn about their techniques and designs.

Day 7 | Ürgüp | Kayseri | Izmir | Ephesus | Bodrum | Embark gulet

Check out today and travel to Kayseri for your flight to Izmir. Arrive and transfer to Ephesus.

Ephesus. Appreciate the well-preserved remains of this acclaimed ancient city, which was a major trading port for the Greeks and the Romans. During your guided tour, admire the impressive Great Theater that could seat thousands, the grand, second-century Library of Celsus, the Terrace Houses adorned with mosaics and other remarkable ruins.

Pottery demonstration, Avanos



After lunch with your group, continue to Bodrum and embark the gulet. Savor dinner later on board.

Day 8 | Cruising | Yaliciftlik | Etrim | Çati Bay

Relish the Turquoise Coast's picture-perfect coastal splendor as the yacht sails to Yaliciftlik. Disembark and travel by motor coach to Etrim.

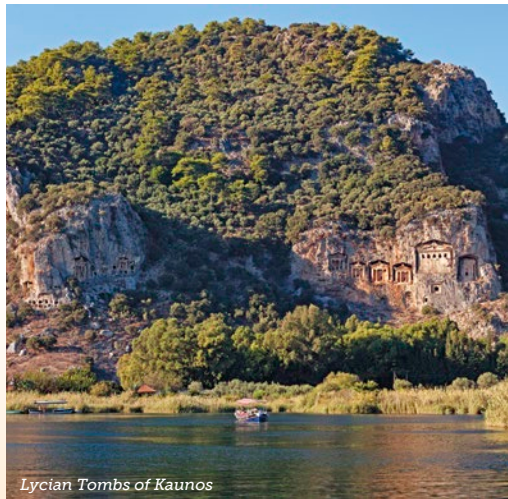
Etrim. Stroll through this peaceful Anatolian mountain village and learn about enduring traditions like carpet and kilim weaving.

Free Time: Unwind this afternoon as the yacht cruises to Çati Bay, where it will overnight.

Day 9 | Cruising | Cleopatra Island | English Harbor

Cleopatra Island & English Harbor. Delight in these tranquil spots where the yacht drops anchor and enjoy leisure time for snorkeling and other activities on the pristine waters.

Tonight, join your fellow travelers for a Farewell Reception and Dinner on the yacht.



Lycian Tombs of Kaunos



Day 10 | Karacasöğüt | Disembark gulet | Dalaman | Dalaman | Istanbul

After breakfast, disembark in Karacasöğüt and transfer to Dalaman. Next, cruise in a small boat along the Dalaman Strait to Kaunos.

Ancient City of Kaunos. From the boat, gaze up at the striking, Grecian-inspired temple tombs cut into the rugged cliffs and then head up to the hilltop for a guided tour of the archaeological ruins of this ancient city.

Continue to Dalaman and fly to Istanbul. Upon arrival, check in to the Barceló Istanbul Hotel.

Free Time: Enjoy your final evening in Istanbul.

Day 11 | In Transit

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for the return flight to your gateway city.

Note: Itinerary may change due to local conditions.

✈️ Flights and 🔄 transfers included for AHI FlexAir participants.

🕒 Elective experiences available at an additional cost.

Active Travel

This **Active Program** is designed for people who are in good health and can comfortably participate in a demanding daily schedule of physical activities. For more details, please call or visit our website.

Excursions on this program require:

- walking on cobblestones, unpaved paths and/or uneven and slippery surfaces
- getting on/off gulet yacht and motor coaches
- walking up steep inclines/declines and up and down stairs
- moving about a small yacht while it is in motion
- ducking and bending while navigating narrow, uneven tunnels in Ozkonak Underground City

Included Features

Accommodations {with baggage handling}

- **3 nights** in Istanbul, Turkey, at the first-class Barceló Istanbul Hotel.
- **2 nights** in Ürgüp (Cappadocia), at the first-class Yunak Evleri Cave Hotel.
- Cruise for **3 nights** aboard the **exclusively chartered**, first-class Gulet Boreas, a Turkish gulet yacht.
- **1 night** in Istanbul, Turkey, at the first-class Barceló Istanbul Hotel.

Transfers {with baggage handling}

- All transfers in the Land | Cruise Program: flights and deluxe motor coaches.

Extensive Meal Program

- 9 breakfasts, 8 lunches and 5 dinners, including Welcome and Farewell Dinners; tea or coffee with all meals, plus wine with dinner.

Your One-of-a-Kind Journey

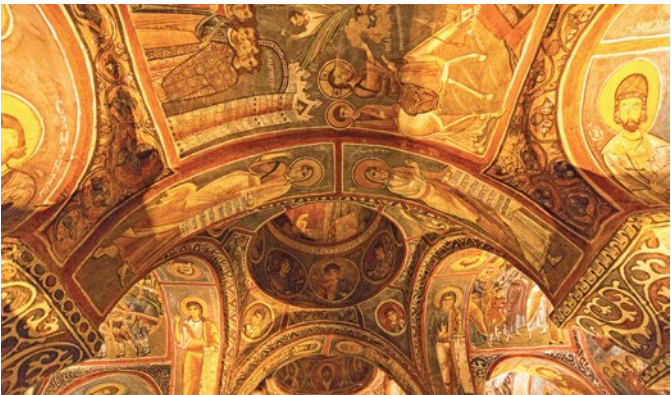
- **Small group:** Sized just right at 24 guests.
- **Enrichment by expert speakers** enhances your insight into the region.
- **Engaging excursions** showcase the local culture, heritage and history.
- 🕒 **Electives** and free time to pursue your individual interests.
- 🌍 **AHI Connects:** Local immersion.
- Welcome and Farewell Receptions to mingle with fellow travelers.
- A personal VOX headset to hear your English-speaking guide clearly.
- Tipping of guides and drivers.
- Complimentary travel mementos.
- 🌱 **AHI Sustainability Promise:**
We strive to make a positive impact wherever we travel.

Traditional rug weaving, Etrim





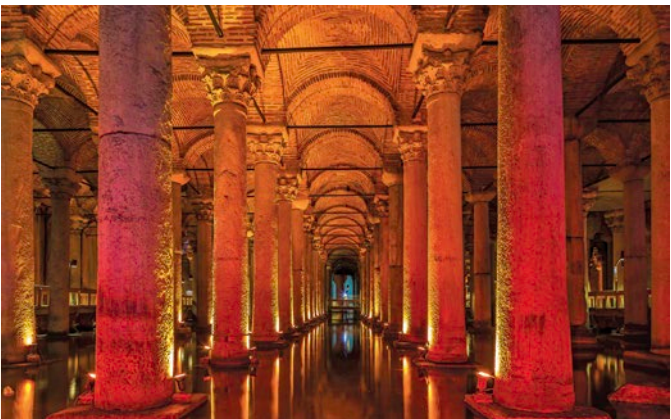
Great Theater of Ephesus



Beautifully preserved frescoes in the Dark Church, Göreme National Park



Devrent Valley, Cappadocia



Basilica Cistern, Istanbul

2026 | Departure Details

Program Dates

Travel dates ⬆ **May 3-13, 2026**

⬆ Travel dates include any overnights required for international travel. These dates may vary depending on air schedules.

Tour dates* **May 4-13, 2026**

* Tour dates begin on the scheduled arrival date at your destination and end on the scheduled departure date from your destination.

Land | Cruise Program

Category-Deck	Full Price	Special Savings Price*
A-Master	\$9,045	\$8,295
B-Master Aft	\$8,745	\$7,995
C-Twin	\$8,245	\$7,495
D-Single	\$9,745	\$8,995

***This Special Savings Price includes our \$250 Early Booking and \$500 Pay-in-Full discounts and is valid if you book by the date on the address panel and pay in full at booking.**

Deposit amount is \$750 per person.
Final Payment is due at least 120 days prior to departure.

All cabins are located on the same deck. Single cabins have limited availability. Price includes applicable program taxes (such as VAT and port charges).

All prices quoted are in USD, per person, based on double occupancy and do not include air transportation costs (unless otherwise stated). Special offers, promotions and discounts cannot be combined.

Please note: Program-specific terms and conditions are available at <https://brande.ahitravel.com/destinations/1948A?schoold=276>.

AHI FlexAir

Let us arrange your flights

Our experts are ready to assist you in booking flights. Our personalized air program offers the following advantages:

- **price guarantee** to protect you from fuel surcharge increases after ticket purchase
- arrival and departure **transfers** on group dates
- **flexibility** to change or cancel your reservation before departure on most flights (Fees may apply.)
- **assistance** in the event of schedule changes or delays

AHI Travel Expertise

Travel Consultants assist with the reservation process.

Travel & Air Coordinators offer their personalized assistance with flights, electives and special requests.

Travel Information provides pre-departure details and enrichment about your destination.

Your Travel Director, a seasoned, multilingual professional, manages daily logistics so you enjoy a seamless experience.

Handpicked Expert Guides and **Knowledgeable Lecturers** deepen your appreciation for the region and its history, culture and current events.

Accommodations



Barceló Istanbul Hotel | Istanbul



Yunak Evleri Cave Hotel | Ürgüp (Cappadocia)



Gulet Boreas

Look forward to a relaxing voyage along the stunning Turkish Riviera aboard this sleek, 16-cabin gulet yacht! Settle into an inviting lounge chair or stretch out on a sunbathing cushion and bask in the unfolding scenery. Throughout your cruise, enjoy personalized service from the attentive gulet crew and delicious Turkish cuisine served in the dining salon. The stylish, comfortable guest cabins include private bathrooms and convenient amenities. The yacht is also equipped with gear for water sports.



Book your journey today!

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