

Mount Ararat - Turkey's Sacred Summit

Trip Code: TAR

Version: TAR Mount Ararat - Turkey's Sacred Summit



MOUNTAINEER



GUIDED GROUP



CHALLENGING



HIGHLIGHTS

- Spectacular panoramas from the snow-capped summit of Mt Ararat (5165m)
- 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 - 5165 metres
- Join at Van

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- All meals included
- 5 nights Hotel
- 4 nights Camping

[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 (5165m).

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 visits to the Ishak Pasha Palace, a masterpiece of Persian and Ottoman architecture, 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 5165m 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: TAR Mount Ararat - Turkey's Sacred Summit

DAY 1

Meet at the group hotel in Van. A single transfer from Van Airport is provided.

The holiday starts at the group hotel in Van. It is just a short 15-minute drive to our hotel in the city centre. A single timed transfer is provided. Van is known as "the pearl of the east" because of the beauty of its surroundings, situated in a green, fertile oasis in the midst of a mountain area. The city has a long history. Under the ancient name of Tushpa it was the capital of the Urartian kingdom in the 9th century BC

Tonight, over dinner, our Tour Leader will brief us on the journey ahead. The rest of the evening is free.

Meals: **D**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 2

Acclimatisation walk to the summit of Mt Artos (3537m). Take tea on the shores of Lake Van. Overnight Van.

After breakfast we drive (40mins) to the town of Gevas, from where we will begin our hike to the summit of Mt Artos, one of the most famous peaks in eastern Anatolia. We will be rewarded with stunning views across Lake Van and the surrounding Anatolian highlands. Returning down to our vehicles, we will stop on the shores of Lake Van to enjoy some traditional Turkish tea, known as Cay, before returning to our hotel in Van for a second night.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Hotel



Ascent
1650M



Descent
1650M



Time
5 - 6 hrs trekking



Distance
14KM

DAY 3

Drive to Dogubeyazit via Muradiye Waterfalls. Visit the Ishak Pasha Palace. Overnight Dogubeyazit.

After breakfast we make the 3-hour drive to the town of Dogubeyazit. We will break our journey at Muradiye waterfalls. Arriving into Dogubeyazit we will have lunch at a local restaurant.

In the afternoon, we visit the Ishak Pasha palace/Fortress of 366 rooms. The palace is the last large monumental structure in the Ottoman Empire from the "Lale Devri" period. It is one of the most magnificent examples of the 18th century Ottoman architecture and is very valuable in terms of art history as it mixes Ottoman, Persian and Georgian architectural and decorative styles. The palace was also an administrative centre for trade along the Silk Road. It was once a major stop for caravans on this legendary roadway, as they transported their goods all the way from China to Turkey and back again.

Afterwards, we return to our hotel in Dogubeyazit.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Hotel

DAY 4

Drive to the village of Eli (2200m) and trek to Base Camp (3200m).

After an early breakfast, we make the short transfer to the village of Eli (2200m) and begin our trek. With mules or horses to carry our gear, we ascend 1000 metres to reach our first campsite at 3200 metres, on a green meadow site.

Meals: **B L D**



Accommodation
Camping



Ascent
1200M



Time
5 hrs trekking

DAY 5

Acclimatisation walk to Camp II (4200m) and return to Base Camp (3200m).

Today is set aside for acclimatising to the altitude. Our aim is to hike up to Camp II at 4200m. After an easy ascent, we will arrive at the Kum-Kampi at a height of 3700m where we will have time to take a break before we continue our ascent to Camp II (high camp). Here, we take time to have a picnic and get used to the thinner air. Afterwards, we descent down to Base Camp at 3200m, where we can spend the evening relaxing and prepare ourselves for the move up to Camp II.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 1000M		Descent 1000M		Time 6 - 7 hrs trekking		Distance 18KM
---	---------------------------------	---	------------------------	---	-------------------------	---	-----------------------------------	---	-------------------------

DAY 6

Trek to Camp II (4200m) with great views of Little Mount Ararat. Overnight Camp II.

We leave Base Camp and trek up the mountain back to Camp II at 4200 metres, essentially a cleared area amongst the basalt boulders. From this camp, we have good views of the lesser cone of Little Mount Ararat (3896m) which rises up to the south-east, separated from its bigger neighbour by the 'lava plateau'. After arrival and a cup of warm tea, we take time to relax. In the afternoon, it is possible (optionally) to walk a little bit higher to get acclimatized for conditions of this height. Tonight we will have an early dinner and go to bed early. Tomorrow we will be woken early as we set our sights on Ararat's summit.

Meals: **B L D**


	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 1000M		Time 4 - 5 hrs trekking		Distance 9KM
---	---------------------------------	---	------------------------	---	-----------------------------------	--	------------------------

DAY 7

Climb to the summit of Ararat (5165m). Descend to Base Camp (3200m).

We make an alpine start at around 0230 to get ready and eat some breakfast, aiming to set off at first around 0300-0330 so we can watch the sunrise from the summit. The first part of the climb is across typical volcanic terrain of loose scree and this continues for 900 metres, with some patches of snow. At around 4750m we reach the glacier, where we fix our crampons. The upper slopes of Ararat are permanently snow-covered but present no significant technical difficulties. On top of Ararat, we can enjoy views across the Eastern ranges of Turkey and across into Armenia and Iran. After time to take in the scenery and enjoy our achievement, we begin our descent, aiming to go all the way down to Base Camp (3200m).

Meals: **B L D**





	Accommodation Camping		Ascent 937M		Descent 1937M		Time 10 - 12 hrs trekking		Distance 23KM
---	---------------------------------	---	-----------------------	---	-------------------------	---	-------------------------------------	---	-------------------------

DAY 8

Trek to the road head. Drive to Van.

We trek down to the village of Eli where our vehicle will be waiting to take us to Dogubeyazit. We will have lunch in a local restaurant before driving back to Van. The rest of the day is free to relax after yesterday's exertions.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Hotel		Descent 1200M		Time 3 hrs trekking		Distance 9KM
---	-------------------------------	---	-------------------------	---	-------------------------------	--	------------------------

DAY 9


Visit Akdamar Island and Van Castle. Overnight Van.

This morning we return to Gevas (30mins) from where we take the ferry to visit small island of Akdamar in Lake Van, home to the famous 10th century Armenian holy cross cathedral. The unique importance of the church comes from the array of bas-relief carvings that adorn its external walls.

Later we continue to Van Castle, constructed by the Urartian King, Sardur, a massive stone fortification and the largest example of its kind. It overlooks the ruins of Tushpa, the ancient Urartian capital during the 9th C. The most remarkable structures around are the rock tomb of Arghisti I orf Uratui, outside which is a long inscription relating the events of his reign and an inscription of Xerxes the Great on a smoothed section of the rock face.

In the late afternoon/early evening we return to Van, where we spend one last night at the hotel.

Meals: **B L D**

	Accommodation Hotel
---	-------------------------------

DAY 10

Departure day. A single timed transfer to Van Airport is included.

Departure day. A single timed transfer to Van Airport is included in the morning.

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.

Meals: **B**

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.

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. Travelling as a group or on public transport saves energy. If this is not practical, we can provide private transfers at an additional cost. Taxis are also available.

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

Meal Plan

All meals are included in the holiday price.

Food & 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.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide 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 diet 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.

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).

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 'Dates and Prices' table. Other than in exceptional circumstances, we will not cancel a trip once it has achieved this guaranteed to run status and 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.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday. Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

Health & Vaccinations

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. You will need to carry your own treatment for the allergy with you, as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' are not carried as standard by KE leaders and staff. You should inform your leader on arrival of your allergy, and let them know where you keep your adrenaline pen.

Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations.

GHIC / Medical cover

UK residents should carry a free Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). This entitles you to state provided medical treatment when you're visiting an EU country or Switzerland. This is not a substitute for medical travel insurance which is vital when travelling overseas.

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 prior to 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. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: www.travel.state.gov for essential travel advice and tips.

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 direct 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.

Please note that a paper copy of your travel insurance is required if you are travelling to Huaraz and the Huayhuash region.

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
- 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)

The following items are optional:

- Helmet
- 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

We regret that it is not possible to hire equipment through KE for this trip.

Cotswold Outdoor



Many of the Equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive 12.5% discount voucher from Cotswold Outdoor and other retailers. [>> Find out more](#)

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

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 20/05/2024 and the trip is subject to change