G Adventures

Last Updated: May 2, 2018



Budapest to Tehran by Rail

28 days, Budapest to Tehrān

Trip code EABR

What's included

- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group
- Your Local Living Moment: Dinner with Local Family, Çavuşin

- Budapest orientation walk
- Romanian villages and countryside tour (half-day, from Sighisoara)
- 'Dracula's Castle' (Bran)
- Bucharest orientation tour
- Hike to Arbanasi village
- Sofia orientation walk
- Istanbul city tour with local guide
- Anitkabir visit
- Traditional dinner with local family (Göreme)
- Open Air Museum visit
- Trans-Asia train
- Mt Ararat day trip (Van)
- Ishak Pasha Palace visit
- Ahtamara Island visit
- Van Castle visit
- Tehran city tour, including Sa'd Abad Palace and the national Jewel Museum
- Karim Khan Citadel visit (Shiraz)
- Vakil Mosque visit
- Hafez and Sa'adi tombs visit
- Persepolis guided tour
- Naqsh-e-Rostam visit
- Koran Gate visit
- Pasargadae visit
- Isfahan city tour
- Golestan Palace visit (Tehran)
- National Museum visit
- Carpet Museum visit
- Transport between destinations and to/ from included activities

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and G Adventures. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

VALIDITY: Valid for all trips departing January 1st, 2016 - December 31st, 2016

Itinerary



NOTE: Accommodations vary per departure and are subject to change until tour start date; they are not final and should be used as examples only. Travellers may login to the G Adventures App to view accommodations specific to their departure.

Day 1 Budapest

Arrive at any time. We recommend booking pre-accommodation to fully explore this breathtaking city.

There are no planned activities until an evening welcome meeting.

Today's Activities

ACTIVITY

Your opportunity to meet your CEO and fellow travellers, and learn more about your tour. Opt to join the group for a local meal afterwards. Don't forget to see the notice in the lobby (or ask reception) for the official time and place to meet up with the group.

Day 2 Budapest/Sibiu

Enjoy an orientation walk of Budapest to get a feel for this westernized city with eastern charm. Opt to spend free time visiting Buda Castle, wandering the streets of Pest, or soaking in a thermal bath. In the evening, board an overnight train to Sibiu.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Orientation With CEO 30m-1h

Enjoy a brief walk with your CEO. He/she will give you some tips on finding things like supermarkets, main squares, and ATMs. For more specific or in-depth information, an official guided tour is recommended.

Free Time Budapest

So much to do in this city - get out and explore!

Overnight Train (beds) Budapest – Sighișoara 12h

Stretch out and get some well-earned rest en route to the next stop.

Optional Activities - Day 2

Buda Castle Visit Budapest 1500HUF 3h-4h

Set on Castle Hill overlooking the Danube River and Pest, Buda Castle was once home to the Hungarian kings of Budapest. Admire the gorgeous architecture and visit its two museums; the National Gallery and the Budapest History Museum. Permanent collections depict the past 500 yrs of Hungary's art history, including Medieval and Renaissance stonework, Gothic wood sculptures, and Gothic altars.

Budapest Bike Tour Budapest 28EUR 3h-4h

Join a group for a guided city tour by bike. Buzz around the city on two wheels to cover more ground and get your blood pumping.

Thermal Baths Visit Budapest 5700HUF 1h-3h

Bring two towels, your bathing suit and an aching body and prepare to be healed in the largest medicinal bath in Europe. Built in 1913, you can test the waters of 18 different pools (15 of which are

spring fed) amidst stunning neo-Baroque architecture. Play chess on floating chessboards, relax in the whirlpools and explore the wonderful mosaic domes of these historic thermal steam rooms.

Day 3 Sibiu/Sighișoara

With a local guide, venture into the Romanian countryside to visit traditional villages. Get a true sense of life in this less-visited region.

Explore Sighisoara's medieval walled citadel with its cultural attractions and great restaurants and bars.

Enjoy a half-day guided tour of the area. Take in the beautiful rolling scenery and visit medieval villages and fortified churches.

Sample some Romanian cuisine—the Casa Dracula (original home of Vlad, the model for Count Dracula) is now a restaurant specializing in hearty meat and game dishes of the region.

Today's Activities

Private Vehicle | Sibiu - Sighișoara | 1h30m-2h | 90km

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Sighișoara Region Guided Tour | Sighișoara | 5h-6h

Coast over rolling hills and into rural villages, learning about the life and folklore of olden times from our expert local guide.

Optional Activities - Day 3

Clock Tower Visit | Sighișoara | Free

Enjoy a visit to the Clock Tower, also known as the Council Tower -- it's Sighisoara's main point of attraction. It was built in the second half of the 14th century and expanded in the 16th century. After a fire in 1676 when the town's gunpowder deposits located in the Tailors' Tower exploded, Austrian artists rebuilt the roof of the tower in its present baroque style and, in 1894, colourful tiles were added.

The History Museum (Muzeul de Istorie) Sighișoara 50RON

Explore the Renaissance furniture, medical instruments, fine arts, and more in this museum located inside the Clock Tower -- it's been around since 1899!

Casa Dracula (Vlad Dracul Restaurant) Sighișoara 10-50RON 15m-4h

You will not be digging your canine teeth into any humans at the Casa Dracula. Once the original home for Vlad the Impaler, who was the model for Count Dracula, it is now a restaurant specialising in the hearty meat and game dishes of the region.

The Church of the Dominican Monastery Visit Sighișoara Free

Enjoy a visit to the Church of the Dominican Monastery. Built in the late Gothic style, it was last repaired in 1929, quite some time after it was first attested in a document back in 1298.

Day 4 Sighișoara/Braşov

Ride the rails to the city of Brasov, the best preserved medieval city in Romania. Use some free time to explore the baroque architecture, beautiful squares, or just get acquainted with the rhythm of Romania.

Enjoy charming Brasov. Opt to explore the 'Black Church' or enjoy a coffee in one of the many cafés. Walk in the medieval centre, one of the best preserved in Romania.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Train Sighișoara - Braşov 3h

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

Free Time Braşov

Get out and explore.

Optional Activities - Day 4

Black Church (Biserica Neagră) Visit Braşov 30RON

The Black Church is the biggest church between Vienna and Istanbul. It's a famous landmark of the town of Brasov, is Romania's leading Gothic church, and has the largest church bell in the country, weighing a hefty 7 tons (6,350 kg)! Explore its beautiful interior, including stained glass windows and its collection of 119 Turkish carpets, the largest in Europe.

Day 5

Braşov

Visit the picturesque Bran Castle and learn the history (and rumours) of this fascinating place.

Impressively situated on a rock outcrop and dominating the valley, this 14th century castle is steeped in history and folklore. Soak in the gorgeous countryside as you learn about the creepier side of Romania.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Bran Castle Visit Bran 2h-3h

Visit the picturesque Bran Castle, impressively situated on a rock outcrop and dominating the valley. This 14th century castle is steeped in history and folklore and is an unmissable highlight. Sometimes called "Dracula's Castle", it served as a defense point to protect the border between Transylvania and Wallachia. Rumours abound regarding Dracula's interaction with the castle. You'll have to visit to find out the truth.

Optional Activities - Day 5

Catherine's Gate (Poarta Ecaterinei) Visit Braşov

Get ready to go back in history with a visit to Catherine's Gate, built in 1559 and the only original gate to have survived from medieval times.

Art Museum (Muzeul de Arta) Braşov 5-8RON

Take in the impressive and varied art at this museum, including anonymous 18th century painters from Transylvania to the most famous Romanian artists of the 20th century. It also boasts beautiful European crystal and porcelain and a significant collection of Oriental vases and statuettes.

Schei District Visit Braşov 30m-45m

During the Saxon rule of Brasov, from the 13th to the 17th century, Romanians were forbidden from owning property inside the citadel walls and so they settled in the southwestern Schei district.
Walk up Strada Prundului to Piata Unirii and the beautiful St. Nicholas Church; then, wander around the small curving streets that gradually slope upwards against the hill. Continue to the southern end of Schei and you'll end up on the gravel road to the impressive Solomon's Rocks (Pietrele lui Solomon), a popular picnic area for locals during the weekend but relatively quiet all other times.

Brasov History Museum Braşov 7RON 1h-1h30m

Explore the rare exhibits that showcase Brasov's history, including stone tools from the Paleolithic age and painted ceramics from the Neolithic age, at this impressive museum.

Tampa Mountain Visit Braşov Free-16RON 3h-6h

Tampa Mountain towers over the city of Brasov at 914.4m (3,000ft). Choose to hike to the top of the mountain, or take a cable car if you prefer, but the views from the top of the old town are not to be missed.

Day 6 Braşov/Bucharest

Travel to Bucharest and enjoy an orientation walk. Take time to explore the Soviet-esque architecture, the beautiful cathedral, or indulge in Bucharest's international cuisine.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Train Braşov – Bucharest 4h

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

Orientation With CEO 30m-1h

Enjoy a brief walk with your CEO. He/she will give you some tips on finding things like supermarkets, main squares, and ATMs. For more specific or in-depth information, an official guided tour is recommended.

Optional Activities - Day 6

National History Museum Visit Bucharest

Boasting more than 650,000 items, the museum, inaugurated in 1972, gives visitors a true understanding of Romanian culture. Housed in the former historic monument once known as the Palace of the Post, it is situated in the old historical centre of Bucharest.

National Village Museum Visit Bucharest

Check out examples of Romanian rural architecture at this outdoor museum that's literally a park 10 hectares large. It boasts rural homes built in the styles throughout Romania as well as churches, outhouses, and mills -- you'll really feel like you're walking through a Romanian village. To give an even more authentic feel to things, many structures are filled with furniture and pieces from the eras they replicate.

Arch of Triumph Visit Bucharest Free

Enjoy a visit to the Arch of Triumph to marvel at the exterior of this historic monument. The arch was initially built to celebrate Romania's independence so troops could march under it on their return to the city in 1878. The current arch was built in 1936, it replaced the wooden and quickly built structures that stood before.

Palace of the Parliament Visit Bucharest

Enjoy a visit to the Palace of the Parliament, which contains both chambers of the Romanian parliament as well as the National Museum of Contemporary Art (MNAC). It's the world's largest civilian building with an administrative function, according to the World Records Academy; it's also the most expensive administrative building.

Day 7 Bucharest/Veliko Tarnovo

Enjoy some free time to explore more of Bucharest in the morning before travelling to Bulgaria and one of the oldest cities in the world, Veliko Tarnovo. Wander the medieval town, visit the museums, or sample your first taste of Bulgarian cuisine.

Enjoy this charming town and opt to visit the Tsarevets Fortress just outside the city.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Free Time Bucharest

Get out and explore.

Private Vehicle Bucharest – Veliko Tarnovo 3h

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Free Time Veliko Tarnovo

Start exploring.

Optional Activities - Day 7

Tsarevets Fortress Visit | Veliko Tarnovo | 6BGN | 1h-3h

The Tsarevets fortress, just 1km (.62 mi) outside central Veliko Tarnovo, is a must-see. This huge complex has been an important stronghold for thousands of years, and you can wander at will around the remains of homes, churches, and watch towers dating from the 5th to the 12th century.

Day 8

Veliko Tarnovo

Hike to the hilltop village of Arbanasi. Soak in the views over Veliko Tarnovo. Opt to go mountain biking or view the murals at the Church of the Nativity.

Today's Activities

Arbanasi Village Visit | Arbanasi | 1h30m

Enjoy a visit to Arbanasi. This hilltop village was the residence of choice for the wealthy Roman elite and is still a country haven for the high-flyers of modern Bulgaria. The views all around and down to Veliko Tarnovo are amazing.

Optional Activities - Day 8

Nativity Church Visit | Arbanasi | 7.67EUR

Visit the 16th-century Church of the Nativity to see the amazing murals. For tours in English, there is an additional 25 EUR fee per group.

Mountain Biking | Veliko Tarnovo | 7EUR | 4h-8h

Hit the trails and enjoy the scenic countryside of Bulgaria on two wheels.

Day 9

Veliko Tarnovo/Sofia

Travel to Sofia and take an orientation walk of the capital city. Later, wander down the pedestrian street or visit the eclectic Ladies' Market.

A mix of western grandeur and Soviet bulk, Sofia boasts a gold-domed church and delicious international dining.

Sample modern takes on Bulgarian and international food, with some great trendy dining opportunities.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Local Bus — Veliko Tarnovo – Sofia — 3h-4h

Climb aboard, grab a seat, and enjoy the ride.

Orientation With CEO — 30m-1h

Enjoy a brief walk with your CEO. He/she will give you some tips on finding things like supermarkets, main squares, and ATMs. For more specific or in-depth information, an official guided tour is recommended.

Optional Activities - Day 9

St Alexander Nevsky Cathedral Visit — Sofia — Free-6BGN — 30m-45m

Don't miss the stunning gold-domed Alexander Nevsky church, honouring the Russian liberators whose contribution saw the end of Ottoman rule in Bulgaria.

Vitosha Boulevard Visit — Sofia — Free — 1h-2h

Enjoy a stroll down Sofia's chic pedestrian area, Vitosha Boulevard.

Ladies' Market Visit Sofia Free

Enjoy a visit to the eclectic Ladies' Market - Sofia's biggest market for fresh produce, meats, fish, cheeses and spices.

Day 10 Sofia/Plovdiv

Travel to Plovdiv, Bulgaria's second-largest city. Visit the hilly old town, museums, or the Theatre of Ancient Philippopolis, one of the many Roman ruins found here.

Opt to relax over coffee and a Bulgarian baklava, a specialty of the area.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Train Sofia – Plovdiv 2h

Climb aboard, take a seat, and enjoy the ride.

Free Time Plovdiv

Get out and explore.

Optional Activities - Day 10

Plovdiv Old Town Visit Plovdiv Free 1h-2h

Plovdiv is one of the oldest towns on earth, dating back as far as 4000 BC. Wander the atmospheric streets of the hilly area and view the colourful buildings. Opt to visit cafés or restaurants in this living museum.

Plovdiv Regional Ethnographic Museum Visit Plovdiv 5-8EUR

Visit the Ethnographic Museum, which has an impressive collection of traditional Bulgarian costumes.

Ancient Theatre of Philippopolis Visit Plovdiv 3.50EUR

Go back nearly 2,000 years and tread in the steps of Roman legionnaires by visiting the Theatre of Ancient Philippopolis.

Day 11

Plovdiv/Istanbul

Spend the day exploring more of Plovdiv before boarding an overnight train to Istanbul.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Free Time Plovdiv

Don't waste a minute, get out and explore.

Basic Overnight Train (beds) Plovdiv - Istanbul 14h

Occasionally, the overnight train to Istanbul will not be running. In those cases, we will use the overnight bus service instead.

Optional Activities - Day 11

Ancient Theatre of Philippopolis Visit Plovdiv 3.50EUR

Go back nearly 2,000 years and tread in the steps of Roman legionnaires by visiting the Theatre of Ancient Philippopolis.

Plovdiv Old Town Visit Plovdiv Free 1h-2h

Plovdiv is one of the oldest towns on earth, dating back as far as 4000 BC. Wander the atmospheric streets of the hilly area and view the colourful buildings. Opt to visit cafés or restaurants in this living museum.

Plovdiv Regional Ethnographic Museum Visit Plovdiv 5-8EUR

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Day 12 Istanbul

Take a city tour with a local Turkish guide. Opt to visit the Blue Mosque, the Grand Bazaar, Aya Sofya, and the Topkapı Palace.

After getting the lay of the land with a local guide, spend some free time visiting all you can in this eclectic city straddling two continents.

In the evening, there will be a farewell dinner for travellers coming from Budapest or London and a welcome dinner for travellers joining the tour here to continue to Tehran.

Day 13 Istanbul/Ankara

Enjoy some free time in the morning before catching a train to Ankara.

Meals included

Breakfast

Day 14 Ankara/Göreme

Visit Anitkabir, the mausoleum of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, before driving to the Cappadocia region. Enjoy a home-cooked dinner with a local family.

Visit Anitkabir before transferring to the town of Göreme, the base for exploring Cappadocia. With 2.5 days free to explore, there will be plenty of time to tour the area by bike, visit neighbouring villages, trek regional valleys or try a hot air balloon ride.

During one of the evenings, travel to a nearby village and enjoy dinner with a local family.

Meals included

Breakfast | Dinner

Today's Activities

ACTIVITY

Enjoy seasonal homemade dishes, and talk with friendly hosts about life in rural Cappadocia.

Anitkabir Visit Ankara 1h-2h

Visit the monumental tomb of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the republic of Turkey. Learn about his significance to gain more insight into your Turkish exploration.

Day 15

Göreme

Enjoy an included visit to the Göreme Open Air Museum before free time to explore this unique region. Opt to see it from above on a hot air balloon ride.

Outdoor enthusiast? Hire a bike to get around on two wheels or join your CEO on an optional trekking tour through one of the beautiful valleys of the region.

If you want to go further afield, take a local bus to explore nearby villages.

> If you pre-booked the Cappadocia hot air balloon ride, you will be flying today (weather permitting).

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Göreme Open Air Museum Guided Tour Göreme 1h-2h

Be inspired by the natural beauty of the historic Göreme Open Air Museum, a complex of medieval painted cave churches carved out by Orthodox monks. Tour the more than 10 caves on site, and enjoy the color and vibrancy of many of the churches that are up to 1,000 years old.

Day 16

Göreme/Tatvan

Enjoy one more morning in Cappadocia before driving to nearby Kayseri. Board an overnight train for Eastern Turkey.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Private Vehicle Göreme – Kayseri

Settle in and scan the scenery from the convenience of a private vehicle.

Overnight Train (beds) Kayseri – Tatvan

Stretch out and get some well-earned rest en route to the next stop.

Day 17

Tatvan/Van

Arrive to Tatvan and board a ferry for the scenic ride across Lake Van. Arrive to the other side and the town of Van in the afternoon.

Today's Activities

Ferry Tatvan - Van

Get to the next spot on your route aboard a convenient and efficient ferry boat.

Day 18

Van

Enjoy a day trip to Mt Ararat with a visit to the Ishak Pasha Palace.

Day 19

Van

Use a full day here to enjoy Lake Van. Drive to Gevas for a short cruise to Ahtamara Island to visit a beautiful Armenian Church. Opt to swim at the local beach.

Day 20

Van/Tehrān

Enjoy another day in the Van area with a visit to the Van Castle. Board the Trans-Asia train in the evening for the journey to Tehran.

Today's Activities

Overnight Train (beds) Van - Tehrān

Stretch out and get some well-earned rest en route to the next stop.

Day 21

Tehrān

Spend the day absorbing the scenery from the train, arriving into Tehran in the evening.

Day 22

Tehrān/Shiraz

Explore Tehran with a local guide, visiting the Sa'd Abad Palace and National Jewel Museum before boarding an evening train to Shiraz.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Overnight Train (beds) Tehrān - Shiraz

Stretch out and get some well-earned rest en route to the next stop.

Day 23

Shiraz

Arrive in Shiraz in the late morning. Spend the day visiting the Karim Khan Citadel, Vakil Mosque, and the tombs of Hafez and Sa'adi.

There is free time to explore the city's beautiful Regents mosque, Nasiralmolk mosque, Khan madrasa, Bagh-e Eram gardens, and perhaps even listen to some poetry being recited at the Hafez tomb.

This vibrant student city is buzzing with life and is a great place to interact with some Iran's youth.

Meals included

Lunch | Dinner

Day 24

Shiraz

Explore the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Persepolis, the ceremonial palace of Darius, and admire its amazingly well-preserved carvings. Later, wander the streets and mingle with the students in laid-back Shiraz.

Travel to Persepolis to explore this fascinating sight. On the way back to Shiraz, visit the rock cut tombs at Naqsh-e-Rostam, the burial place of Darius the Great and his successors.

With free time, enjoy the vibe of Shiraz.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Persepolis Tour Persepolis 4h

Visit the country's premier attraction, Persepolis. In Greek, Persepolis literally means the 'capital of Persia'. It was built in 518 BC by Darius the Great as the capital of the mighty Achaemenid Empire. Alexander the Great burnt the city to the ground in 330 BC, but many remnants of its former glory remain and Persopolis lives on as one of the greatest wonders of the ancient world.
Learn the history of this amazing ancient place and marvel at the stunningly preserved bas-relief carvings.

Naqsh-e-Rostam Visit Fārs 1h30m

Visit the rock cut tombs at Naqsh-e-Rostam, the burial place of Darius the Great and his successors.

Day 25

Shiraz/Isfahan

Stop at the Koran Gate and the UNESCO-listed Pasargadae complex en route to Isfahan, one of the finest Islamic cities in the world.

Embark on an included visit to Pasargadae and explore the capital and burial site of Cyrus the Great.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Pasargadae Visit Pasargadae 1h

Visit Pasargadae, the capital and burial site of Cyrus the Great. it's a UNESCO World Heritage Site and also an important archaeological site.

Day 26

Isfahan/Tehrān

Tour the beautiful city of Isfahan, enjoying the famous square, mosques, and bartering at the bazaar. Hang out on the many bridges that make Isfahan unique, or shop for an authentic Persian rug. In the evening, board a final overnight train to Tehran.

Wander the tree-lined boulevards of Isfahan, the jewel of ancient Persia. On a city tour, visit Imam Square and mosque, Sheikh Lotfallah Mosque, and the Ali Qapu Palace. Wander the bazaar and learn the history of Isfahan's bridges.

Stop in a miniatures shop and learn about this intricate art form before sampling some delicious gaz, a candy famous in Isfahan.

Meals included

Breakfast

Today's Activities

Isfahan City Tour Isfahan 4h

Enjoy a tour of this fascinating city, with its beautiful tree-lined boulevards and an atmospheric bazaar. Start in the world's second largest public square – Imam Square. Learn about life under Persia's greatest ruler, Shah Abbas, and visit the Imam Mosque, Sheikh Lotfallah Mosque, and the Ali Qapu Palace. Imam Square, actually built as a royal polo ground, was once home to entertainers, storytellers, preachers, and Silk Road caravans. Explore the bazaar with its wonderful scents and spices, and watch the locals as they engage in masterful bargaining. You might pick up a tip or two!

Overnight Train (beds) Isfahan – Tehrān

Stretch out and get some well-earned rest en route to the next stop.

Day 27 Tehrān

Arrive early and enjoy a final day of sightseeing in the busy capital of Tehran. Visit Golestan Palace, the National Museum, and the Carpet Museum.

Ramble through the enormous bazaar and visit the Imam Khomeini Mosque. View the many political murals that surround the former US Embassy then relax like the locals do by drinking chai and chewing on dates in a traditional chaikhuneh (teahouse).

Try some more of the fine Iranian cuisine like dizi (stew you crumble bits of bread into and mash up with a mortar and pestle right at the table!) while enjoying traditional music at a local restaurant.

Day 28 Tehrān

Depart at any time.

Meals included

Breakfast

What's included

- Your Welcome Moment: Meet Your CEO and Group
- Your Local Living Moment: Dinner with Local Family, Çavuşin
- Budapest orientation walk
- Romanian villages and countryside tour (half-day, from Sighisoara)
- 'Dracula's Castle' (Bran)
- Bucharest orientation tour
- Hike to Arbanasi village
- Sofia orientation walk
- Istanbul city tour with local guide
- Anitkabir visit
- Traditional dinner with local family (Göreme)
- Open Air Museum visit
- Trans-Asia train
- Mt Ararat day trip (Van)
- Ishak Pasha Palace visit
- Ahtamara Island visit
- Van Castle visit
- Tehran city tour, including Sa'd Abad Palace and the national Jewel Museum
- Karim Khan Citadel visit (Shiraz)
- Vakil Mosque visit
- Hafez and Sa'adi tombs visit
- Persepolis guided tour
- Naqsh-e-Rostam visit
- Koran Gate visit
- Pasargadae visit
- Isfahan city tour
- Golestan Palace visit (Tehran)
- National Museum visit
- Carpet Museum visit
- Transport between destinations and to/ from included activities

What are the main highlights of this trip?

Discover the rich and varied culture of Eastern Europe, visit 'Dracula's Castle' and charming Slavic villages, soak in the dramatic scenery of Cappadocia, absorb the ancient history of the region, marvel at the dazzling bazaars and colourful mosques.

What are the main highlights of this trip?

Discover the rich and varied culture of Eastern Europe, visit 'Dracula's Castle' and charming Slavic villages, soak in the dramatic scenery of Cappadocia, absorb the ancient history of the region, marvel at the dazzling bazaars and colourful mosques.

Is there a travel disclaimer for my itinerary I should review before booking this trip?

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.

What is the maximum and typical number of participants on this tour?

Max 15, avg 12.

What meals are included in this trip?

17 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 2 dinners

What are the modes of transportation on my trip?

Train, private vehicles, public bus, metro, ferry, walking.

Is there an extra cost for travelling solo?

We believe solo travellers should not have to pay more to travel so our group trips are designed for shared accommodation and do not involve a single supplement. Single travellers joining group trips are paired in twin or multi-share accommodation with someone of the same sex for the duration of the trip. Some of our Independent trips are designed differently and solo travellers on these itineraries must pay the single trip price.

Where will we stay during the trip?

Hotels/pensions (21 nts), overnight train (6 nts).

Do any exceptions apply to Rooming or “My Own Room” on my tour?

Days 2, 11, 16, 20, 22, 26 (overnight trains).

What is the joining hotel?

For details of your joining hotel please refer to your tour voucher, G Account, the G Adventures App or contact your travel agent.

What are the joining instructions?

Please note that day 1 is an arrival day and no activities have been planned on this day. Upon arrival to the city on day 1 (or earlier if you have booked pre-accommodation with us), please make your way to the joining hotel (note that check-in time will be in the afternoon). Once you arrive at the hotel, look for a note or bulletin board in the reception with a note from your CEO. This note will give the details of your Welcome Meeting on day 1 (usually between 5pm and 7pm), where you will get a chance to meet your CEO and other travellers, as well as learn more about how the tour will run. If you don’t see a note, please ask reception for details!

If you are arriving later and will miss the Welcome Meeting, your CEO will leave a note at reception for you with any information you may need, and with morning instructions for the next day.

To arrange an arrival or departure transfer, we recommend you book through our preferred transfer provider - Welcome Pickups

Choose from a range of transport options including both private and shared transfers at a discounted rate.

We advise that you book both your arrival and departure transfers in advance. Please make sure you have the following details before booking:

- Flight number

- Flight Arrival Time and Date

- Flight Departure Time and Date

- Passenger's Name

- Number of Passengers

- Email

- Valid Mobile Telephone Number

- Drop off and/or Pick Up Address

What should I do if I can’t find my airport transfer or experience arrival issues?

We don't expect any problems, and nor should you, but if for any reason you are unable to commence your trip as scheduled, please refer to the emergency contact details provided in this dossier and contact us as soon as possible. If you have a pre-booked transfer, and you have not made contact with our representative within 30 minutes of clearing customs and immigration, we recommend that you make your own way to the Starting Point hotel, following the Joining Instructions. Please apply to your travel agent on your return for a refund of the transfer cost if this occurs.

Who do I contact for arrival issues or in the event of an emergency?

Should you need to contact us during a situation of dire need, it is best to first call our G Adventures Local Office. If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, so they may return your call and assist you as soon as possible.

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS
G Adventures UK office (manned UK 8am - 8pm)
+44 (0) 2072439878

If you are unable for any reason to contact our local office, please call the numbers listed below which will connect you directly with our Sales team who will happily assist you. Hours of operation by region can be found here.

Toll-free, from calls within North America only: 1 888 800 4100
Calls from within UK: 0344 272 0000
Calls from within Germany: 0800 365 1000
Calls from within Australia: 1 300 796 618
Calls from within New Zealand: 0800 333 307
Outside North America, Australia, New Zealand, Germany and the UK: +1 416 260 0999

For absolute emergencies after office hours please contact +44 7817 262559
If for any reason you do not receive an immediate answer, please leave a detailed message and contact information, and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

What are the packing guidelines and luggage restrictions?

We recommend using a backpack for your convenience, or a medium-sized suitcase if you prefer. A daypack is also essential for carrying everyday items. Space is limited on transportation, so there is a limit of one main piece of luggage per person. You will be responsible for carrying your own luggage. You must be prepared to carry your luggage up and down stairs, on and off transportation, and to hotels (max 15-20 mins.)

What should I pack for this trip?

Documents:

- Flight info (required) (Printouts of e-tickets may be required at the border)
- Insurance info (required) (With photocopies)
- Passport (required) (With photocopies)
- Vouchers and pre-departure information (required)
- Visas or vaccination certificates (With photocopies)

Essentials:

- Footwear (required) (Closed toe suggested)
- Toiletries (required) (Shampoo, bodywash, soap, etc.)
- Binoculars (optional)
- Camera (With extra memory cards and batteries)
- Cash, credit and debit cards
- Day pack (Used for daily excursions or short overnights)
- Ear plugs
- First-aid kit (should contain lip balm with sunscreen, sunscreen, whistle, Aspirin, Ibuprofen, bandaids/plasters, tape, anti-histamines, antibacterial gel/wipes, antiseptic cream, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, rehydration powder, water purification tablets or drops, insect repellent, sewing kit, extra prescription drugs you may be taking)
- Flashlight/torch (Headlamps are ideal)
- Fleece top/sweater
- Hat
- Headphones (Noise-cancelling recommended)
- Locks for bags
- Long pants/jeans
- Moneybelt
- Outlet adapter
- Personal entertainment (Reading and writing materials, cards, music player, etc.)
- Reusable water bottle
- Shirts/t-shirts
- Sleepwear
- Small travel towel
- Sunglasses
- Swimwear
- Watch and alarm clock
- Waterproof backpack cover
- Windproof rain jacket

Warm Weather:

- Sandals/flip-flops
- Shorts/skirts (Longer shorts/skirts are recommended)
- Sturdy water shoes/sandals
- Sun hat/bandana
- Swimwear

What are the visas and entry requirements for my trip?

All countries require a valid passport (with a minimum 6 months validity). Contact your local embassy or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. It is your own responsibility to have the correct travel documentation. Visa requirements for your trip will vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as far as possible, but rules do change and sometimes without warning. While we provide the following information in good faith, it is vital that you check the information yourself and understand that you are fully responsible for your own visa requirements.

Visa information specific to your destination and nationality can be found in our Important Pre-Departure Information page here

Iran:

PLEASE READ THE ENTIRETY OF THE TEXT BELOW AS THIS IS IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR YOUR ENTRY INTO IRAN

Please note that visas are the responsibility of the individual traveller. The visa requirements for your trip vary depending on where you are from and where you are going. We keep the following information up to date as much as possible, but rules do change. It is important that you check for yourself with the Embassy of Iran. Please, keep in mind that all countries require passports valid for at least 6 months from the moment of departure from the country.

To apply for an Iran visa, all nationalities must present an official Iran Authorization Number/Visa Approval Number.

It is the responsibility of the traveller to check with their nearest Embassy and confirm the requirements for entry into Iran

IMPORTANT: Once your trip is confirmed, at 90 days prior to your entry into Iran, you must submit an application for your Authorization Number/Visa Approval Number. A link will be emailed to you in your confirmation email. The details will be forwarded to our local agent in Iran and you will be emailed your Authorization Number/Visa Approval Number approximately 45 days after you submit your application. As an Iran Authorization Number/Visa Approval Number is only valid for 30 days once it is issued, you must apply for your visa as soon as you receive this number. Iran LOI's cannot be rushed.

If you have booked the tour within 90 days of the start date, you must complete this Authorization Number/Visa Approval Number application at the time of booking. You will receive the Authorization Number/Visa Approval Number approximately 15 days before the start of your tour.

As Iran visas are dated specifically for entry and exit, please ensure you enter the correct dates. Americans, Canadians and British citizens must be accompanied by a guide at all times while in Iran, so these dates are important for obtaining your visa. Note that because a guide must be arranged, we can only provide an Authorization Number/Visa Approval Number for the length of the tour, plus any pre or post-night accommodation booked through G Adventures. We allow ONLY 2 pre-nights and 2 post-nights to be booked in Iran, and a complimentary guide will be provided in the cost of the hotel for these days. Any additional days must be requested (allowing 2-3 business days for a response), and will be subject to an additional charge for the guide.

Input your name the same way it is in your passport. The information on the application form must match your passport.

If you have an umlaut or other character not recognized in the english alphabet in your name (ie. ü), please enter it in the longer form (ie. ue).

For the following multi-country trips, the days spent in Iran are as follows:

EABR - Budapest to Tehran by Rail: Days 20-28

Please note: The Iran Government has implemented a new requirement for all American citizens asking passengers to provide a resume or CV in order to issue the LOI. Please make sure to attach this to your LOI application below as both are required to begin this process. This should be a copy of your resume or CV and should contain a cover letter detailing the place and date of your birth, as well as any education and employment you have had and any change in location (countries only). If you have married or had children, it should also detail the dates and locations of these events as well as full names. Finally, please conclude this letter by stating where you currently reside. If you are retired, please also include your date of retirement.

If your country has an official Iran Consulate/Embassy, you must choose this as as your 'Visa pickup Embassy'. If you do not see a local Consulate/Embassy on this list, please locate your nearest neighbouring Embassy or Consulate. Please contact your Travel Agent or G Adventures for further assistance if needed. Most nationalities may be able to obtain a visa upon arrival at the Tehran Airport (Canadians, Americans and British citizens may NOT obtain their visa on arrival), but you must make sure to check with your Embassy if this applies for your nationality before choosing this option. A visa obtained on arrival is only valid for 15 days, so for stays of longer than 15 days you must apply for your visa in advance. A copy of your flight tickets is also required for this option.

At time of writing, the below documents will be needed to obtain your visa (however, we do advise you confirm this with your nearest Embassy):

1. A standard visa application form from the Embassy or Consulate where you will collect your visa
2. 2 colour, passport sized photos, taken within 14 days (most Iranian Embassies require female travellers to have their hair covered under a scarf in these photos)
3. Payment for the visa (this will be dependent on nationality and will sometimes need to be made at a local nearby bank - check with your Embassy to confirm details)
4. Passport with empty pages and at least 6 months validity
5. Iran Authorization Number/Visa Approval Number
6. Resume or CV (for Americans)
7. Trip vouchers as well as proof of onward travel (flight tickets entering and leaving the country)
8. No evidence of any Israeli stamps inside the passport is allowed (your visa WILL be refused if you have Israeli stamps)
9. We also recommend bringing a copy of the itinerary, printable from our website. While this may not be needed, we recommend having a copy on hand if needed.

Please carefully check all the information below prior to submitting

Once you have received your Authorization Number/Visa Approval Number you can apply for your visa by going to the Iran Embassy you listed in the online application. Processing times vary but generally are between 3 and 6 business days. However, it is best to check with the Embassy/Consulate for clarification on this. Please be aware that Iranian Embassies and Consulates observe many statutory holidays and are often closed, delaying processing time.

We advise all travellers to contact their nearest Embassy to find out the best way to apply for their visa. Depending on nationality and how close to the tour start date it is, there may be a need to visit the Embassy in person

When you are completing your visa application at the Embassy or Consulate, please make sure that you write the Authorization Number/Visa Approval Number directly onto the application. If there is no spot to do so, please write it clearly on the top of your application.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Because this is a time sensitive process, we highly recommend NOT using a visa service to get your Iran visa.

As the LOI is issued by the Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs - unexpected delays can occur.

Information accurate as of December 9th, 2015

What should I consider when planning my personal expenses and discretionary spending for this itinerary?

Every traveller is different and therefore spending money requirements will vary. Some travellers may drink more than others while other travellers like to purchase more souvenirs than most. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping and tipping. Please also remember the following specific recommendations when planning your trip.

What emergency funds do I need access to on this trip?

Please also make sure you have access to at least an additional USD $200 (or equivalent) as an 'emergency' fund, to be used when circumstances outside our control (ex. a natural disaster) require a change to our planned route. This is a rare occurrence!

What activities are optional on this trip?

- Please see the itinerary for information on optional activities, descriptions and estimated pricing.

What general safety tips and free-time guidelines should I follow?

Many national governments provide a regularly updated advice service on safety issues involved with international travel. We recommend that you check your government's advice for their latest travel information before departure. We strongly recommend the use of a neck wallet or money belt while travelling, for the safe keeping of your passport, air tickets, travellers' cheques, cash and other valuable items. Leave your valuable jewelery at home - you won't need it while travelling. Many of the hotels we use have safety deposit boxes, which is the most secure way of storing your valuables. A lock is recommended for securing your luggage. When travelling on a group trip, please note that your group leader has the authority to amend or cancel any part of the trip itinerary if it deemed necessary, due to safety concerns. Your Chief Experience Officer (CEO) will accompany you on all included activities. During your trip you will have some free time to pursue your own interests, relax and take it easy and explore at your leisure. While your CEO will assist you with options available in a given location, please note that any optional activities you undertake are not part of your itinerary, and we offer no representations about the safety of the activity or the standard of the operators running them. Please use your own good judgement when selecting an activity in your free time. Although the cities visited on tour are generally safe during the day, there can be risks to wandering throughout any major city at night. It is our recommendation to stay in small groups and to take taxis to and from restaurants, or during night time excursions.

Water based activities have an element of danger and excitement built into them. We recommend only participating in water based activities when accompanied by a guide(s). We make every reasonable effort to ensure the fun and adventurous element of any water based activities (in countries with varying degrees of operating standards), have a balanced approach to safety. It is our policy not to allow our CEOs to make arrangements on your behalf for water based activities that are not accompanied by guide(s).

Swimming, including snorkeling, is always at your own risk. Read more about travel safety for ways to further enhance your personal safety while traveling.

What are the mandatory group rules regarding laws and behaviour?

Illegal drugs will not be tolerated on any trips. Possessing or using drugs not only contravenes the laws of the land but also puts the rest of the group at risk. Smoking marijuana and opium is a part of local culture in some parts of the world but is not acceptable for our travellers. Our philosophy of travel is one of respect towards everyone we encounter and in particular the local people who make the world the special place it is. The exploitation of people in the sex trade is completely contrary to this philosophy. Our CEOs have the right to expel any member of the group if drugs are found in their possession or if they utilize the services of paid sex workers, in any capacity.

What are the mandatory travel insurance requirements for this trip?

Travel insurance is compulsory in order to participate on any of our trips. When travelling on a group trip, you will not be permitted to join the group until evidence of travel insurance has been sighted by your leader, who will take note of your insurance details. When selecting a travel insurance policy we require that at a minimum you are covered for medical expenses including emergency evacuation and repatriation. A minimum coverage of USD200,000 is required. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and loss of luggage and personal effects. Some tours include adventure activities that require extra coverage (e.g. crampon use); please review your itinerary and make sure that you are covered for all included activities. If you have credit card insurance we require proof of purchase of the trip (a receipt of credit card statement) with a credit card in your name. Contact your bank for details of their participating insurer, the level of coverage and emergency contact telephone number.

What is Planeterra?

Planeterra International Foundation is a non-profit organization committed to turning travel into impact by helping local communities earn an income from tourism. Planeterra connects underserved local communities to the benefits of tourism by developing and supporting small community-owned businesses. These businesses support Indigenous people, empower women, grant youth access to employment opportunities, and protect the environment. Planeterra also works to ensure these businesses have a thriving customer base by integrating their projects into G Adventures' itineraries globally.
G Adventures is Planeterra's largest corporate donor, covering all operating costs, so 100% of your donation will bring opportunity to people in need.

G Adventures Dollar-a-day Program - Make Every Day Count - Turn your travel into impact with Planeterra Foundation.

Did you know? Most communities around the world do not benefit from tourism. Give back to the places you visit on your travels by creating opportunities for local people to earn an income, and protect the environment.

Make every day count by donating $1/day for the length of your trip, and join us in empowering the communities you will visit when you travel. 100% of your donation goes directly to Planeterra projects.

How can I share feedback about my trip experience?

Earn 5% off your next G Adventures Tour (up to $100 USD)*

After your travels, we want to hear from you! Your feedback information is so important to us and to thank you for your time, we are pleased to offer a 5% discount (up to a maximum of $100 USD) off your next G Adventures holiday. All you need to do is submit the form within 4 weeks of the completion of your tour, and you'll be able to join the thousands of travellers who have taken 2, 3, 4 or even 10 or more tours with us!

Discount cannot be combined with other offers or applied to 'Independent' style trips. Maximum discount value is $100 USD (or equivalent currency). Valid for new bookings only. G Adventures reserves the right to withdraw or modify this offer at any time without notice. Limited to one discount per person.

Does G Adventures have an email newsletter I can subscribe to?

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from G Adventures, subscribe at www.gadventures.com/newsletters/

Stay current on how our company invests in our global community through our foundation – Planeterra. Sign up for Planeterra's monthly news to learn more about how to give back and support the people and places we love to visit.

What are the age restrictions for this trip?

You must be 18 to travel unaccompanied on a G Adventures tour. For minors travelling with a guardian over 21 years old, the minimum age is 12.

Are international flights included in this trip?

No, international flights are generally not included in the price of your tour.

However, on some tours travelling between two different countries, international flights are included as part of the itinerary and price of the tour. Please speak to your GCO or booking agent for further details.

In addition, check-in times and baggage allowances/restrictions vary by airline and can change at any time. For the most up-to-date information for your flight, please contact your airline. We recommend checking in online in advance to avoid potential delays at the airport.

What should LGBTQ+ travellers know about safety and travel considerations on this trip?

The safety and well-being of all of our travelers is a priority at G Adventures and that includes our travelers who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. We recognize that there are specific concerns and questions you may have about your adventure in terms of safety and security. We encourage you to visit our LGBTQ+ page for useful resources to ensure you feel safe and comfortable throughout the duration of your trip. The Equaldex tool linked on this page can be of particular help when deciding where you may want to visit next.

Dossier Disclaimer

The information in this trip details document has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and the operator. The itinerary featured is correct at time of printing. It may differ slightly to the one in the brochure. Occasionally our itineraries change as we make improvements that stem from past travellers, comments and our own research. Sometimes it can be a small change like adding an extra meal along the itinerary. Sometimes the change may result in us altering the tour for the coming year. Ultimately, our goal is to provide you with the most rewarding experience. Please note that our brochure is usually released in November each year. If you have booked from the previous brochure you may find there have been some changes to the itinerary.

VERY IMPORTANT: Please ensure that you print a final copy of your Trip Details to review a couple of days prior to travel, in case there have been changes that affect your plans.

Itinerary Disclaimer

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described below, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion it may be necessary, or desirable to make alterations. The itinerary is brief, as we never know exactly where our journey will take us. Due to our style of travel and the regions we visit, travel can be unpredictable. The Trip Details document is a general guide to the tour and region and any mention of specific destinations or wildlife is by no means a guarantee that they will be visited or encountered. Aboard expedition trips visits to research stations depend on final permission.

Additionally, any travel times listed are approximations only and subject to vary due to local circumstances.