2. great orient - railway round trip

1 - 16 May 2020

Turkey - Iran - Azerbaijan - Georgia

Flight Zurich (Europe) - Istanbul. Sightseeing of Istanbul, Bosporus - Passage. Afterwards journey with the express - train to Ankara. Visit of Ankara. We inquire about the Dogu Express from Ankara to Kars, visit an Emmental cheese dairy in Eastern Anatolia and the famous Armenian town of Ani, take the only electric train in Iran from Jolfa to Tabriz, cross the Albroz with the mountain railway from Tehran to Sari over the Veresk bridge, Visit the Jewel Museum and the former American Embassy in Tehran, explore the Tehran - Rasht railway line opened this year, visit the mountain village of Masouleh, enjoy a hot swim in Ab-Gaerm-Kivi before boarding the night train in Astara Azerbaijan to Baku. We visit the pulsating city of Baku. Then we board the new night trains from Stadler and drive from Baku via Tiflis to Ankara. Return flight via Istanbul to Zurich.

Registration and information under: Association Travel Times, Gerliswilstrasse 69, 6020 Emmenbrücke, Switzerland Phone: + 41 41 260 51 69 Mobile: + 41 79 710 46 67 or www.reisezeiten.ch
Day 1

Arrival in Istanbul from Europe. Visit of Istanbul. The pulsating city on the Bosporus fascinates again and again.

In the evening Bosporus cruise by ship almost to the Black Sea. Return journey with the modern metro.

Overnight stay in Istanbul

Day 2

We visit the underground cistern, the Hagia Sofia and the blue mosque. The Topkapi - palace from 1001 nights should not be missing. Onur of Railturkey will accompany us here and shows us also a few railway - delicacies of his city.

In the evening train ride with the express train to Ankara. Around 22:00 we reach Ankara.

Overnight stay in Ankara.

Day 3

Visit of Ankara with Masuleum of Kermal Ataturk, castle of Ankara.

At 18:00 departure of the Dogu Express to Kars.

Overnight stay in the train

Day 4

Train ride through Anatolia, Erzincan, Stop in Erzurum for a fine kebab, at Horasan 1'556 m.a.s.l. the climb begins to Sankamis 2'087 m.a.s.l. What a difference in altitude with this short stretch of path. The railway was built from Erzurum by the Russians.

We arrive in Kars (Inshallah) at 19:00, where Moshen picks us up with our bus and drives us to the hotel.

Overnight stay in Kars F / M / A

Day 4

Today we first visit an Emmentaler cheese dairy in Bogatepe, which was founded 110 years ago by the Swiss David Moser from the Emmental here just before the Armenian border. Of course we will try a piece of Kars-Gravyer. We continue to Ani, the old Armenian capital, which is located right on the border.

Towards evening we reach Igdir

Overnight stay in Igdir F/M/A

Day 5

Visit to the palace of Dogubeyazit and border crossing to Iran.

We visit the border town Maku and drive along the border to Nacivan to Poldascht. Along the border river Aras we continue to St. Stephanus Church, which is situated in a beautiful gorge. In the late afternoon we arrive in Jolfa, where the train takes us at 18:30 to Tabris.

Overnight stay in Tabris, F/M/A
Day 6
Today we visit the famous bazaar of Tabris, take a trip by cable car to Eynali Mountain, enjoy a tea or here called Chai in Shahgoli Park before we take the night train to Tehran at 21:45.
Overnight by train F/M/A

Day 7
Today we visit the first part of Tehran. Golestan Palace, bazaar, drive with the Telecabin to the 4000 meter high Tochal. Ride with the Metro from Tehran. Possibly visit of a locomotive factory of Mapna in Karaj.
Overnight stay in Tehran.

Day 8
Take the train through Elbrus. Tehran - Gamsar - over the pass at Firuzkuh, Gaduck, Pol-e- Veresk, then to Sirab and Sari. On this route the difference in altitude is 2'300 meters. A real masterpiece of railway technology. Our bus takes us back to Tehran in the evening.
Overnight stay in Tehran F/M/A

Day 9
Today we visit again the pulsating city of Tehran and the Jewel Museum, the former American Embassy and the observation tower Borj - e - Milad. We circle the freedom storm Azadi and enjoy a fine Mirza Ghasemi in the artist garden. In the evening we stroll over the famous Tabiat bridge.
Overnight stay in Tehran F/M/A

Day 10
Early in the morning at 07:45 we leave Tehran and explore the newrailway line Tehran - Quazwin - Rasht, the most beautiful province of Iran: Gilan. In this province everything is different than in the rest of Iran. We arrive at Rasht at 13:05. We visit the Caspian Sea and then go into the mountains to the best restored mountain village Massouleh.
We end the evening in one of the numerous restaurants.
Overnight stay in Massouleh F/M/A

Day 11
After a late breakfast we cross the mountains to Khalkal and then off to a hot spring, the Ab-e-Gaern Kivi. We let ourselves be pampered in the warm water. In the afternoon we go via Ardebil and the Talesch mountains to Astara in Iran. Crossing the border to Astara in Azerbaijan, where we will stop at 21:20 And they went on the night train to Baku.
Overnight in train F/M
Day 12
At 05:50 we reach Baku well rested and have a hearty breakfast. We get to know Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan in a tour and rest at the promenade at the Caspian Sea. A ride in the metro is not to be missed. We drive to the eternal flames of Baku.
Overnight stay in Baku F/M/A

Day 13
We enjoy another day in Baku. We take a funicular ride to the viewpoint over Baku and admire the daring architecture of the 3 Flammen hotels. The carpet museum is also interesting. For lunch we take the metro to a beautiful park, where only Azeris can be found.
In the evening we board the Stadler train from Baku to Ankara.
Overnight stay on the way F/M/A

Day 14
We are on our way by train via Tbilisi to Ankara.
Overnight stay on the way F/M/A

Day 15
We arrive in Ankara today. (Reserve day). Depending on the definite departure times of the trains we may have an extra day in Iran.

Day 16
Return flight to Europe
Notice:
The program will be adjusted as the definitive departure times of various trains are not yet published.

Our services:
- Flight Europe - Istanbul, Istanbul - Europe in Economy Class
- 16 days: All trains, bus and transfer costs. In Iran and in Turkey with our excellent driver Mohsen Amini
- All excursions and excursions according to program
- Hotel accommodation in upscale middle class
- Meals F / M / A , Lunch on the way in the form of sandwich
- English speaking tour guide
- Small group, max. 14 participants
- Visa costs Iran, Azerbaijan

Not included:
- Personal expenses for drinks and other meals

Price per person: Euro 3'350.-- in a single room, train 2er or 4er compartment

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