

THE CRADLE OF CIVILIZATION

★ A PILGRIMAGE THROUGH ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIA ★

October 11-18, 2027

The lands of southeastern Türkiye lie at the crossroads of history, faith and civilisation. Here the world's earliest known temple was raised, Abraham began his journey of faith, and some of Christianity's oldest communities continue to worship in a language closely related to the Aramaic spoken by Jesus. This pilgrimage traces that remarkable story, from the Roman splendour of Gaziantep and the mysteries of Göbekli Tepe to the ancient monasteries of Tur Abdin and the beautiful stone city of Mardin. Combining worship, archaeology, breathtaking landscapes and living Christian tradition, it offers an unforgettable journey through the cradle of civilisation.



Led by

**Canon James
Buxton**

Chaplain in Izmir

TUTKU

— EDUCATIONAL TRAVEL —

Mor Gabriel Monastery

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Mount Nemrut

Wednesday 13 October The Kingdom of Commagene – Mount Nemrut - Urfa

Today we travel into the mountains to the extraordinary sanctuary of **Mount Nemrut**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Here, King Antiochus I created one of the ancient world's most remarkable religious monuments, combining Greek and Persian traditions beneath the gaze of colossal stone statues. The site reflects humanity's enduring search for the divine and offers breathtaking views across the surrounding landscape. Continuing across the Euphrates, we arrive in Urfa. *Dinner at a local restaurant.* Overnight in Urfa. (B,D)

Thursday 14 October In the footsteps of Abraham – Urfa

In the morning a short drive takes us to **Harran**, traditionally associated with Abraham before his journey to Canaan, famous for its beehive houses and ancient centre of learning. Returning to Urfa, we visit **Balıklıgöl (the Pool of Abraham)**, the **Citadel** and the outstanding **Urfa Archaeology Museum**, whose collections illuminate the remarkable story of this region from prehistory to the classical world. *Dinner at a local restaurant.* Overnight in Urfa. (B,D)

Friday 15 October From the World's First Sanctuary to the Heart of Syriac Christianity – Mardin

Today's visits span thousands of years of history: At **Göbekli Tepe**, the world's earliest known monumental sanctuary, we encounter humanity's first great place of worship. Travelling east, we reach the magnificent, terraced city of **Mardin**, overlooking the Mesopotamian plain. We visit **Deyrulzafaran (Mor Hananyo) Monastery**, for centuries the seat of the Syriac Orthodox Patriarchate and one of the oldest centres of Christian monastic life. Here we encounter a living tradition whose worship is still celebrated in Syriac, a language closely related to the Aramaic spoken by Jesus. There will also be time to explore Mardin's atmospheric old streets. *Dinner at a local restaurant.* Overnight in Mardin. (B,D)



Gobekli Tepe



Antique Syriac Sanctuary Curtain

Tour Itinerary:

Monday 11 October Arrival in Gaziantep

Arrive at Gaziantep Airport (GZT), where we are met by our guide and transferred to our hotel. Dinner and overnight in Gaziantep. (D)

Tuesday 12 October Roman Splendour and Ancient Civilisations - Gaziantep

We begin at the magnificent **Zeugma Mosaic Museum**, home to one of the world's finest collections of Roman mosaics, rescued from villas beside the Euphrates before the Birecik Dam was built. These masterpieces reveal the meeting of Greek, Roman and Eastern cultures. Later we explore the historic heart of Gaziantep, with its bustling bazaars, traditional copper workshops and medieval citadel, discovering a city that has flourished for millennia at the crossroads of Anatolia and Mesopotamia. *Dinner at a local restaurant.* Overnight in Gaziantep. (B,D)



The Eucharist at Deyrulzafaran Monastery, Mardin

Saturday 16 October *The Living Faith of Tur Abdin - Mardin*

Today we explore **Tur Abdin**, the "Mountain of the Servants of God", one of Christianity's oldest monastic landscapes. We visit **Mor Yakup Monastery** at Barıştepe before continuing to the ancient village of **Hah (Anitli)**, home to the historic **Church of Yoldath Aloho (Bearer of God)** and **Mor Sobo Church**, enduring witnesses to the faith of the Syriac Church. Following lunch in the welcoming village of **Beth Kustan**, we continue to the magnificent **Mor Gabriel Monastery**, founded in AD 397 and still home to an active monastic community. As evening approaches, we join the monks for **Ramsho (Evensong)**, experiencing the beauty of Syriac chant within one of Christianity's oldest living traditions. *Dinner in Midyat* before returning to Mardin. (B,D)

Sunday 17 October *Worship, Witness and Reflection - Mardin*

This morning we worship alongside the local **Syriac Orthodox community**, sharing in the Divine Liturgy and experiencing one of the world's oldest continuous traditions of Christian worship. Later we visit the remarkable ancient city of **Dara**, once a great frontier fortress of the Eastern Roman Empire. Its vast underground cisterns, rock-cut tombs and impressive fortifications recall centuries when Christian communities flourished on the frontier between Rome and Persia. Returning to Mardin, there is time to relax, enjoy the unique atmosphere of this beautiful city, and reflect on all we have experienced before gathering for our farewell dinner, celebrating a remarkable journey through the cradle of civilisation and the enduring witness of the ancient Syriac Church. *Dinner and overnight in Mardin.* (B,D)

Monday 18 October *To onward destinations from Mardin airport.*



Pool of Abraham, Urfa

LAND RATES

GBP 1,365 Per Person in Double Occupancy
GBP 560 Single Room Supplement

INCLUDING

- 2 Nights at Sirehan Hotel or similar in Gaziantep
- 2 Nights at Hotel El Ruha or similar in Urfa
- 3 Nights at Maran House Hotel or similar in Mardin
- Daily open buffet breakfasts
- 2 Dinners at the hotels-5 dinners at local restaurants
- Transportation by private van or coach, depending on the size of the group.
- All airport transfers
- English Speaking Bible-oriented licensed tour guide
- All entry fees to the sites and museums
- Service charges and local taxes
- TUTKU gifts, archaeology map of Turkey, t-shirt, round-ended electric adapter

EXCLUDING

- Flights
- Lunches and drinks
- Tips to tour guide (£50 per person) and driver (£20 per person)
- Travel and Health Insurance, any kind of personal expenses

PAYMENT PROCEDURE

- **£50 per person Deposit : At the time of booking**
- **Full Balance Payment : August 1,2027**

Cancellation Policy:

Cancellations made 120 days or more before departure: Full refund
Cancellations made 90-119 days before departure: 90% refund
Cancellations made 60-89 days before departure: 75% refund
Cancellations made 45-59 days before departure: 50% refund
Cancellations made 30-44 days before departure: 25% refund
Cancellations made 0-29 days before departure: No refund

In addition to the above cancellation policy, we charge a 5% processing fee for all refunds, regardless of the date of cancellation. This fee covers bank charges and administrative costs.

REGISTRATION

you can fill in the secure form at TUTKU website



OPTION 1

REGISTER NOW

<https://tutku.travel/tour/2710BUXTON>

OPTION 2



1. Open the Camera app on your device.
2. Move the QR code into the frame.



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