

Virgin Mary's House, Ephesus, the Selcuk Museum and St John's Basilica



Driving from the pier through the Turkish countryside along a hilly drive, you arrive at the House of Virgin Mary where the Blessed Virgin is reputed to have spent the last years of her life. The site was made famous by the travels of Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II. In November of 2006, Pope Benedictus the 16th paid an official visit to the House of the Virgin Mary. Outside is the Fountain of Our Lady, providing the faithful water from the holy foundation.

From there, a short drive will take you to the entrance to Ancient City of Ephesus that was built on a small hill. Once you enter the Open Air Archeological Museum of Ephesus and pass by the Magnesia gate, you will enter the administrative section of ancient Ephesus. The guided walking tour will take you through one of the most magnificent excavations in the world. See the Odeon, the Fountain of Trajan, the steam baths of Scholastika, temple of Hadrian and the impressive library of Celsius. The Grand Theater, where St. Paul preached, is one of the largest theaters in antiquity with a capacity of 24,000 seats. You will return to the buses through the Arcadian way, where Mark Anthony and Cleopatra once rode in procession.

At the Ephesus Archeological Museum, you'll be escorted through the 9 exhibits tracing the religious and chronological history of the ancient city. Filled with attractively displayed mosaics, statuary, and other artifacts, the museum exhibits several marble statues of the Mother Goddess Artemis, goddess of nature, childbirth, and the harvest. Combining the information at the Open Air Museum and the Archeology Museum will give you a very fulfilling idea of the city of Ephesus and its importance in the ancient times.

Overlooking Ephesus are the remains of St. John's Basilica, a once great church built on a 2nd century tomb thought to hold the remains of St. John. While the church is now in ruins, there are frescoes, mosaics and graceful columns that attest to the glory that marked the place where St. John, the Evangelist, lived and died. The site requires stair climbing at the entrance and walking over uneven dirt, stones and gravel walkways.

At the end of the tour, you will stop for a traditional Turkish lunch with a variety of dishes, followed by a demonstration on Turkish carpet weaving techniques before returning to the town.

Walking: Guests must be able to walk approximately 2.5 miles over uneven and cobblestone surfaces, inclines and 10 - 30 steps. Walking at the House of Virgin Mary includes approximately 0.5 mile over mostly paved walkways with some inclines to/from the coach parking area to the shrine. The coach parking area is constructed of uneven gravel/dirt surfaces.

WC: N/A

Duration: 7 Hours