

Ensemble Experience

ISTANBUL, TURKEY

Ship/Sailing:	Grand Princess	November 10, 2008
Tour Date:	November 15, 2008	
Ship Time in Port:	8:00 am	- 6:00 pm
Tour Name:	<i>Two Continents and Highlights of Istanbul</i>	
Full Day Tour:	Depart: 8:30 am	Return: 4:00 pm

This delightful tour will show you intriguing Istanbul from a new perspective. Begin with a scenic cruise along the city's European and Asian shores on your private, non-air-conditioned motorboat. Admire the impressive Dolmabahçe, Ciragan and Küçüksu palaces, the mansions, and summer residences that line the Bosphorus' shores as you glide tranquilly by. Then continue past the Conqueror's Bridge and Beylerbeyi Palace to the Asian side of the city where you'll continue to the narrowest point of this strait, where the Black Sea and Sea of Marmara meet. Here you will see the imposing fortresses set along the banks before disembarking from your boat for the drive into the old city.

Enjoy a delicious lunch of Turkish specialties on the grounds of a Turkish restaurant where a feast of Turkish specialties awaits. After lunch you'll visit the famed Hippodrome where chariots once thundered around the course and see the Egyptian Obelisk of Theodosius, brought here from Karnak temple, the Serpentine Column and the German Fountain of Wilhelm II. Then visit the symbol of Istanbul, the famous Blue Mosque with its six minarets and breathtaking interior, renowned for its blue Iznik tiles and glorious chandeliers, a masterpiece of 16th century grandeur. Afterwards walk across the street to the equally stunning St. Sophia, a 6th century masterpiece of Byzantine architecture whose dome measures 102 feet across. First a church, then a mosque and now a museum, revel in the beauty of its mosaics, polychrome marbles, porphyry columns and Arabic calligraphy.

As the perfect finale to your visit, spend some time shopping in the Sultanahmet-Hippodrome area. Browse through the many shops where you will find beautiful rugs, fine jewelry, clothing, leather goods and a wide variety of merchandise. Then it will be time to return to the ship.