

DISCOVERING TURKEY

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I took these pictures during a trip to Turkey in April 2010. We traveled in a small group of 12 people, starting in Istanbul, and then visiting the Cappadocia region in central Turkey, with the spectacular fairyland landscape of Göreme and Nevsehir. We continued on to Antalya on the Mediterranean, then sailed along the coast in a 100' gullet sailing yacht to Marmaris. Finally, we concluded our visit at the Roman ruins of Ephesus.

Here's a small sampling of the many photos I took along the way.



View of Istanbul from the Galata Bridge. The large mosque on the hill is the Suleymaniye Mosque, built by Sultan Suleyman the Great from 1550 to 1558. It is the second largest mosque in Istanbul.
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Hot air ballooning in Cappadocia near Göreme and Nevsehir. The “Fairy Chimney” formations are the hard basalt remnants of volcanic lava that has eroded over millions of years. Some of the towers reach as high as 150 feet. Our balloon took us down the Ihlara Valley in the canyon formed by the Melendiz stream.



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The Anatolian residents of Göreme and Nevsehir carved homes and churches out of the rocks, including massive underground cities. The largest of these, Ozkonak, once had a population of sixty thousand.



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Try doing this with American ice cream. Turkish ice cream (*dondurma*) is thickened with the addition of *salep*, a flour made from the root of the Early Purple Orchid, and *mastic*, a resin, the combination of which impart chewiness and a delicious rich flavor.



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The town of Antalya on the Mediterranean coast is one of the prettiest in Turkey, as evident in this late afternoon street scene.



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We took a hike across Gemiler Island, also known as St. Nicholas Island since medieval sources claim that Santa Claus himself lived here for some time. After crossing the island and descending down to the Mediterranean, it was nice to see our gulet yacht waiting for us in the lagoon, with dinner almost ready.



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The outdoor market in Kusadasi on the Aegean coast (near the Ephesus Roman ruins) was a huge maze, covering about a dozen square blocks. The stalls were filled with all kinds of goods, including fresh produce, clothing, hardware, just about anything you could imagine. This farmer was a bit of an attraction himself.



Color photograph (©) by Robert Shaffer.

* **ROBERT SHAFFER**, a former New Hampshire resident, now resides in Arlington, MA. His engineering career has spanned the underwater world (development of advanced sonar systems and the earliest autonomous underwater vehicles) and large radar systems used to keep track of satellites and “space junk”. His hobbies include photography, playing the clarinet, bicycling, and hiking.