

# EASTERN TÜRKIYE

WITH PROFESSOR JENNIFER TOBIN



FAR  
HORIZONS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL TRIPS

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Karahan Tepe

# EASTERN TÜRKIYE

with Dr. Jennifer Tobin

## Explore a Region Brimming with Historical Wonders: Castles, Tombs, and UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including Göbekli Tepe, Which, Along with Karahan Tepe, Is Considered Among the World's Earliest Sacred Spaces.

Eastern Türkiye evokes vivid imagery: women in traditional veils, mustachioed men in turbans wielding sabers, and camel caravans traversing vast, wild landscapes. However, the reality of Eastern Anatolia is strikingly diverse and vastly different from the rest of Türkiye.

This region boasts an eclectic mix of towering mountains, dense forests with waterfalls, green pastures, and the stark contrast of arid deserts in the south. As a historical crossroads of Eastern and Western cultures for millennia, Eastern Türkiye is rich in a wide array of historical remnants.

Join Far Horizons and a small group of just 13 others for a 16-day adventure into this less-traveled part of Türkiye. Explore four UNESCO Heritage Sites: Ani, Diyarbakır & Hevsel Gardens, Göbekli Tepe, and Nemrud Dağ. Delve into the mysteries of Göbekli Tepe, a religious space predating Stonehenge by 6,000 years, and Ayanis, the last capital of Urartu.

Discover Karahan Tepe, a site that might be even older than Göbekli Tepe. Your journey will take you from the mountainous terrains of eastern Anatolia to the fertile valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates.

This tour offers a deep dive into the rich history and culture of Eastern Türkiye, a true nexus of civilizations. This is an educational tour of Türkiye unlike those found anywhere else.

Still, considering what should be the destination of your next adventure? Browse our wider range of [Tours to Europe & Türkiye](#).

We also offer a pre-extension in Istanbul, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, with many highlights, including Aya Sofya, the Dolmabahçe Palace, Topkapı Sarayı, and a stunning cruise up the Bosphorus.





# Daily Itinerary

## Day 1

### Arrive in Istanbul, Türkiye

Arrive to Istanbul, Türkiye. Overnight at the YOTEL Istanbul Airport (Landside) Hotel for one night.

## Day 3

### Fly to Kars

Early afternoon, we fly from Istanbul to Kars. Upon arrival, transfer to the Ve Hotels Beylerbeyi Sarayı Hotel, with fascinating views of the city, and overnight for one night. Our welcome dinner will be at an elegant local restaurant. (B/ /D)

## Day 3

### Ani

Just outside Kars is the ancient Armenian capital of Ani. Clearly, the greatest achievement of medieval architecture to be seen anywhere in Turkey, this 11th-century metropolis was once home to 100,000 people. Consequently, in 2016, Ani was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Today, the extraordinary walled city still contains splendid frescos that proclaim the richness of the city's inhabitants and the excellence of the designers.

After exploring the site, drive on to Doğubayazıt. This town is on the border with Armenia. From here, we will witness stunning views of sacred Mount Ararat.

Overnight at the Atlihan Plus Hotel. (B/L/D)

## Day 4

### İshak Paşa Sarayı, Ayanis

İshak Paşa Sarayı is a dazzling array of pointed domes and striped minarets invoking images from "A Thousand and One Arabian Nights." Notably, a local feudal lord built this citadel in the 17th century. This lovely palace is one of the most memorable monuments in Turkey. And, for this reason, it is on the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List. The edifice is noteworthy not only for its beautiful classical style but also for its internal central heating system.

After a brief stop at the Muradiye Waterfall, continue through breathtaking scenery to the rarely visited Ayanis, the last castle complex of the Urartians. Here, we meet Professor Mehmet Işıklı, the director of the archaeological project, who will give us a private tour of the excavations.

Then it's on to Van, where we overnight for two nights at the Hilton Doubletree Hotel. (B/L/D)



ishak Paşa Sarayı



## Daily Itinerary *(cont'd)*

Akdamar Church



### Day 5

#### Çavuştepe, Tuşpa, Van

The Urartian fortress of Çavuştepe perches on a mountaintop with breathtaking views of the surrounding area. A very old stronghold, a cuneiform inscription on a temple here proclaims King Sarduri II, who ruled between 764 and 735 BC, as the builder.

In the afternoon, we return to Van, positioned on the edge of Turkey's largest lake within a lush green oasis encircled by stunning mountain peaks. Van is the location of the 9th-century BC former Urartian capital of Tuşpa. Interestingly, it is also famous for the Van Cat, a pure white, long-haired, one blue eye and the other green.

Our last stop of the day is the Van Archaeological Museum to view remarkable artifacts found in the area. (B/L/D)

### Day 6

#### Lake Van, Akdamar, Transfer to Tatvan, Ahlat

Nearby Lake Van is sprinkled with islands, several containing thousand-year-old monasteries and churches. This morning we will board a cruiser to cross the lake to Akdamar to view a breathtaking 10th-century church constructed by an Armenian king. Built of carved red stone blocks, the walls of the chapel are adorned with exquisite friezes depicting stories from the Old Testament.

In the afternoon, enjoy a drive along the southern shore of Lake Van to Tatvan. As we traverse spectacular scenery, we will stop at Ahlat, a historic town located on the northwestern edge of Lake Van.

Ahlat is primarily known for its fascinating cemeteries. Forests of elaborately decorated Seljuk tombstones still stand. Created in the 12th and 13th centuries, most stand seven or eight feet tall adorned with rich, ornate carvings.

Overnight for one night at The Crater Hotel in Tatvan. (B/L/D)

Ahlat





## Day 7

### Malabadi Bridge, Church of the Mother of God, Dara

En route to Mardin today, we stop at three interesting sites. First, we see the 10th-century Malabadi Bridge, the world's longest-spanned stone arch bridge. Thus, UNESCO has placed it on the World Heritage Tentative List.

Our next stop is Anitli village to see the Church of the Mother of God, arguably the most beautiful of the many churches of Tur Abdin. The church is part of a large monastic complex on the southern edge of the town of Hah and is thought to have been built around 450 AD and expanded by Byzantine Emperor Justinian in the 6th century, with additions being made right down into the modern period.

We end the day at Dara, once a crucial fortress city on the Byzantine-Persian frontier. According to medieval historians, it was a military garrison established by the Persian king, Darius III, and named after him. The necropolis here is impressive as for the tombs cut directly into the bedrock.

Overnight in Mardin for two nights at the HH Babil Konağı Hotel. (B/L/D)

## Day 8

### Mor Gabriel Monastery, Saffron Monastery, Mardin

Begin today with a visit to Dayro d-Mor Gabriel, also known as Deyrulumur, the oldest surviving Syriac Orthodox monastery in the world. Nearby Saffron Monastery, or Deyrulzafaran, was constructed in 493 AD and is said to have been built on the site of an older Sun Temple dating from 2,000 BC.

Return to Mardin in the afternoon for a walking tour of the city. Dinner is on our own. (B/L)



Dara

## Day 9

### Diyarbakır

Today we depart for Diyarbakır, a city at least 5,000 years old. Diyarbakır is encircled by a massive parapet built of jet-black blocks of basalt more than three miles long. It is a perfect example of medieval military architecture and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

From the top of the walls, there are magnificent vistas overlooking the Tigris River valley, including the Heysel Gardens, also with UNESCO World Heritage status. This huge green space linked the city with the Tigris River and has played a vital role in keeping the city provisioned and watered since the ninth century BC.

This evening's walking tour will take us along the walls and to Ulu Mosque, one of the oldest mosques in Anatolia.

Dinner and overnight at the Dies Hotel in Diyarbakır. (B/L/D)



# Daily Itinerary *(cont'd)*

## Day 10

### Mt. Nemrud

The Kingdom of Commagene emerged as a Roman puppet state in the first century BC. The most renowned ruler was King Antiochus I, a king whose lineage connected him to the Macedonian Seleucids and the Achaemenid Persians. He ruled the territory in the 1st century BC and built his extraordinary mausoleum on the summit of Mt. Nemrud, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Certainly, it is one of the most extraordinary tombs in the world. From this imposing sanctuary, we can see for almost fifty miles across the Mesopotamian Plain. Our climb takes us to both the East and West Terraces to see the huge statues of Hellenistic gods – Apollo, Zeus, Fortuna – with the king prominently seated among them.

Overnight at the nearby Euphrat Hotel. (B/L/D)



Mt. Nemrud

## Day 11

### Göbekli Tepe

Today's destination is Göbekli Tepe, perhaps the world's oldest sacred space, dating back 11,000 years and predating Stonehenge by 6,000 years. Excavations have uncovered several circles of standing stones, and inside each are two 16-foot-tall T-shaped pillars towering over the ring of shorter stones. Furthermore, many of these are richly garnished with carvings of foxes, vultures, lions, and other wild animals. Understandably, Göbekli Tepe has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

After our tour, drive to Şanlıurfa with origins that are rooted in the Bronze Age. Renamed Edessa in the 4th century BC, it became a famous religious and intellectual center during the Byzantine period.

Overnight for three nights in the Ala Han Boutique Hotel in Şanlıurfa. (B/L/D)



Göbekli Tepe



## Day 12

### Urfa City Tour

In Şanlıurfa, our walk through the old quarter takes us to the bazaar with its interesting display of local goods. We will also see the city's 10th-century Great Mosque, which was constructed on what was thought to be the birthplace of Abraham. Afterward, we will visit two museums – The Şanlıurfa Archaeology Museum and the Halepli Bahce Mozaic Museum, home to the famous “warrior Amazon queen” mosaics.

After lunch, visit the Sayburc excavations, where ongoing discoveries continue to shape our understanding of early human civilization. (B/L/D)

## Day 13

### Karahan Tepe, Harran

Numerous historical ruins are located around Şanlıurfa. Karahan Tepe, along with the world-famous Göbekli Tepe, is part of a cluster of Neolithic settlements. These are spread over 125 miles of southeastern Turkey between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. The monumental structures carved out of the bedrock at Karahan Tepe contain T-shaped pillars and carved representations of animals, serpents, and other enigmatic figures similar to the ones in Göbekli Tepe. However, Karahan Tepe is believed to be considerably larger than Göbekli Tepe, covering an area of about 33 acres.

Sited along the road that ran from Nineveh to Carchemish, Harran was a major commercial, cultural, and religious center, first inhabited in the 6th millennium BC. It was mentioned in the Bible as the place where Abraham brought his family after they left Ur. Today, it is known for the curious beehive-shaped homes scattered throughout the village.

Return to Şanlıurfa with the rest of the afternoon and dinner on our own. (B/L)



Zeugma

## Day 14

### Halfeti, Zeugma, Yesemek

Begin today with a boat ride along the Euphrates River to Halfeti, a partially submerged village with hauntingly beautiful ruins. We continue on to the Roman frontier city of Zeugma, strategically located on the Euphrates River. Hidden for centuries under thick layers of dirt that almost completely obscured its former grandeur, the city has been remarkably well preserved. Here, high-ranking Roman officials, army officers, and wealthy merchants built great courtyard houses containing fine works of art, including exquisite mosaic floors. It is not surprising that many have labeled Zeugma the “Turkish Pompeii.”

We will also stop by Yesemek, an enormous stone quarry and statue-processing worksite between 2000 BC and 800 BC. Now it is an open-air museum filled with the captivating remains of Hittite sculptures. Continue on to Gaziantep and overnight for two nights at the Sirehan Boutique Hotel. (B/L/D)



## Daily Itinerary *(cont'd)*

### Day 16

#### Depart from Şanlıurfa Airport to Istanbul

Depart from Şanlıurfa Airport to Istanbul and our international flights home OR fly back to Istanbul to join Far Horizons' Western Türkiye tour. (B)

PLEASE NOTE: Occasionally, due to circumstances beyond our control, itinerary changes may occur. We appreciate your understanding and flexibility should this be necessary

### Pre and Post Trip Extensions

Far Horizons offers pre or post extensions for many of our trips. We can also arrange extra nights at the arrival and departure hotel should you wish to arrive early or depart later. Please contact us for details.

Diyarbakir Fortress



# Why Take This Tour?

**Eastern Türkiye Tour is led by Professor Jennifer Tobin who excavated at Zeugma**

**Tour the new Şanlıurfa museum**

**Private tour of Ayanis by the director of the archaeological project**

**Visit Göbekli Tepe, possibly the world's oldest temple**

**Visit Neolithic Karahan Tepe, possibly older than Göbekli Tepe**

**Tour four UNESCO Heritage Sites: Ani, Diyarbakır & Hevsel Gardens, Göbekli Tepe, Nemrud Dağ**

**See the Tomb of Antiochus on Mt. Nemrud**

**Limited to 14 participants**





# Tour Information

## Pricing

For current pricing, please visit [farhorizons.com](http://farhorizons.com) and navigate to our trip page.

## Inclusions

### Price based on double occupancy and includes:

- Internal flights during the trip (if applicable/unless otherwise noted)
- The accompaniment of your scholar throughout the entire trip
- Local English-speaking guide
- Hotel accommodations (3 or 4 stars; or best available based in the area)
- Ground transportation
- Airport transfers for arrivals and departures
- Most meals as noted in the itinerary
- Entry fees to all included sites and museums
- Gratuities to guides, drivers, and restaurant and hotel staff
- Coordination for any private presentations or tours

*Trip prices are based on a minimum number of participants. If this minimum number is not met, trip prices are subject to change. Should the prices need to change, Far Horizons will reach out to registered guests to discuss directly.*

## Single Supplement

Should a roommate be requested and one not be available, the single supplement will be charged.

## Exclusions

- International round trip airfare
- A separate donation check of \$150.00 per person to a designated donation project
- Passport or visa fees
- Required vaccines or tests
- Airport or departure taxes
- Alcoholic drinks, beverages or food not included on set menus
- Excess baggage charges
- Personal tips and hotel incidental expenses
- Laundry or other items of a personal nature

## Donation Checks

As a tour company that benefits from the cultural and natural riches of our destinations, we have a policy of donating to the scientific and cultural sites and projects which we visit. This has created a bond between Far Horizons and the academic and local communities that has helped us establish an extensive list of lecturers and contacts in each of our destinations. We ask that each participant donate to the noteworthy project we designate. The donation amount is \$150.00 per person. Note that the donation is required as part of your registration for the trip and that it is non-refundable.

## Exchange Rate Fluctuations

Prices are based on currency exchange rates keeping below a projected level. While it is unlikely, if the exchange rates should change substantially, Far Horizons reserves the right to charge an additional amount to the trip cost.

## Registration

A deposit of \$1000 per person is required along with your registration & health forms, which will be linked in the email confirmation you receive once you pay your deposit on our booking platform. Final payment is due 120 days before departure. Prior to departure, you will be sent a reading list and a tour bulletin containing travel information.





# Tour Information *(cont'd)*

## Cancellation

Cancellations received in writing at least 120 days before departure will receive a refund less a \$500 per person administrative fee. Cancellations received less than 120 days before the departure date will not receive a refund. If for any reason you are unable to complete the trip, Far Horizons will not reimburse any fees. Upon registering for the tour, the purchase of travel protection with both trip cancellation and emergency evacuation is strongly advised. Links to recommended insurance policies will be included in the email you receive confirming receipt of your deposit.

## Expectations During Travel

Our trips are designed for flexible, energetic people who like to be active, have a spirit of adventure and a positive attitude. We have designed this trip to be as comfortable as possible, while also aiming to visit some remote or unique sites that other companies do not attempt to include in their itineraries. There may be days where we have very long drives and the conditions of the roads may vary. Hotels and transportation in some remote areas may not be up to western standards. There may be times when no bellhops are available; please pack with the understanding that you need to be able to handle your own luggage at times. Sometimes we may be walking over uneven trails for a mile or more; hiking boots are strongly recommended. Not every meal will be haute cuisine and several lunches may be picnics or box lunches. By maintaining a flexible attitude we will soon be captivated by the beauty of the natural scenery, the hospitality of the local people, and the fascinating sites we will see. Your flexibility and patience will be appreciated.

## Air Ticketing

International round trip flights are not included in the cost of the trip. If Far Horizons must change the trip dates or cancel the trip for any reason, Far Horizons is not responsible for any air ticket you may have purchased. Please send your complete air schedule as soon as you have it. NOTE: Please contact Far Horizons if you would like for us to handle your air ticketing.

## Private Tours and Talks

The private tours of archaeological sites and talks by specialists are scheduled in advance and include a donation to each. Specialists working at these sites are excited about showing their work to interested enthusiasts. However, please be aware that there may be times when the director or a member of the staff may not be on site when our groups arrive due to other commitments.

## Walking and Standing

Far Horizons expects all participants to be physically active and able to walk and climb independently throughout the full touring days. This includes walking over uneven terrain (uphill and downhill) for 2 miles or more at each site. You should expect to be on your feet for much of each day, averaging as much as 5 miles of walking per day. **As such, each participant should be able to walk unaided at a pace of 3 miles per hour for at least an hour at a time, and to stand unsupported for at least 60 minutes.** Bearing this in mind, we suggest that, if you have not already done so, you begin walking several miles every day, ideally including stairs and hills. If you have questions about your ability to keep up with the group or the strenuous nature of this trip, please contact the Far Horizons staff.





# Tour Information *(cont'd)*

## Travel Insurance

We strongly recommend that you consider purchasing travel insurance. Should illness or an unforeseen event force you to cancel your travel plans after your final payment or during your trip, it would be doubly unfortunate to incur a significant financial loss. Trip cancellation protection will enable you to be reimbursed for the loss of your payment if you are unable to travel for any of the covered reasons in the "Outline of Coverage" section, or should you have an accident or suffer from any medical conditions during the trip.

Far Horizons offers customized protection plans through Travel Insured International (a Crum & Forster Company) with the following benefits:

- Trip Cancellation and Trip Interruption for covered reasons
- Trip Delay
- Baggage Loss and Baggage Delay
- Emergency Medical Expenses and Emergency Medical Evacuation
- 24-Hour Accidental Death & Dismemberment
- 24-Hour Travel Assistance & Concierge Services
- Option to upgrade to 'Cancel for Any Reason (CFAR)

We recommend reviewing the language in detail so you are aware of specific parameters; Depending on the policy, to waive the Pre-Existing Medical Condition Exclusion or to upgrade to CFAR coverage, the plan must be purchased within 14 to 21 days of the initial trip deposit, full trip cost must be insured, and traveler is medically fit at time of plan purchase. Otherwise, coverage may be purchased at any time prior to departure.

To obtain a personalized quote and/or purchase a plan through Far Horizons/Travel Insured International, simply click [HERE](#). For specific questions regarding the Worldwide Protector Plan, please contact Travel Insured International's Customer Care Center at 1-800-243-3174 or by email at [customercare@travelinsured.com](mailto:customercare@travelinsured.com), and refer to Far Horizons' account number: 54070.

## Itinerary Changes

Changes in our itinerary, accommodations, and transportation schedules may occur. While we are committed to keeping as close to the published details as possible, sometimes it is simply not possible. Weather events, government affairs, or other factors out of our control sometimes come into play. A good book to read as well as patience, flexible attitude, and a sense of humor are essential.







Meet Your Study Leader...

**Dr. JENNIFER TOBIN**

**Jennifer Tobin received her BA in Classical Studies from Stanford University and her PhD in Classical Archaeology from the University of Pennsylvania in 1991. From 1992-97, she was Assistant Professor at Bilkent University, Ankara, Türkiye.**

She is now Professor Emerita in the Department of Classics and Mediterranean Studies at the University of Illinois, Chicago. Professor Tobin has worked on archaeological projects in Israel, Türkiye, Jordan, and Greece. She speaks Modern Greek, German, French, Italian and Turkish, and has published widely on everything from Roman architecture in Syria to Alexander the Great.

Her books include *Black Cilicia: A Study of the Plain of Issus during the Roman and Late Roman Periods* and *Herodes Attikos and the City of Athens*. She has been a featured teacher for The Modern Scholar series – Learn Out Loud, recorded not-for-credit lecture courses taught by university

professors including the *Glory that was Greece* and *The Grandeur that was Rome*. Twice a recipient of the University of Illinois at Chicago's Silver Circle Teaching Award, Professor Tobin's enthusiasm, marvelous teaching skills, and appreciation of the people and archaeology of the Mediterranean World is infectious.



*"I've taken two trips with Jennifer. It's like traveling with a favorite, old friend who happens to know a lot about history."*

*- Brian Sibbald*





What People Are Saying About...

# Dr. Jennifer Tobin

Jennifer is a fantastic Study Leader: knowledgeable and communicative, personable with a humorous attitude which one needs traveling.

- COLLEEN QUIGLEY

Could not ask for a better study leader. Extremely knowledgeable, well prepared, personable, enthusiastic and accessible.

- BARBARA WATKINS





# Why Travel with Far Horizons?

With over forty years of experience, and an 85% customer return rate, we have stood the test of time. Remind yourself what makes Far Horizons so unique.

## ✦ Scholar Led Tours

Every tour is led by a well-respected PhD scholar with expertise in the subject & regions we visit.

## ✦ Trusted Partnerships

Trusted Partnerships: Every tour is led by a well-respected PhD scholar with expertise in the subject & regions we visit.

## ✦ Behind the Scenes Access

Our groups have private access to closed areas and on-site specialists.

## ✦ Unique Trips

Our itineraries are designed to showcase sites that are off-the-beaten path; we explore places that many travelers never see.

## ✦ Personalized Service

We love knowing our guests and helping with the decision process. We are here to assist you.

## ✦ Small Groups

Our tours have a maximum of 14 travelers. So you can trust that you will have a boutique experience every time.





# GET READY TO TRAVEL TO EASTERN TÜRKIYE

WITH PROFESSOR JENNIFER TOBIN

Email with Questions  
[journeys@farhorizons.com](mailto:journeys@farhorizons.com)

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[farhorizons.com](http://farhorizons.com)



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