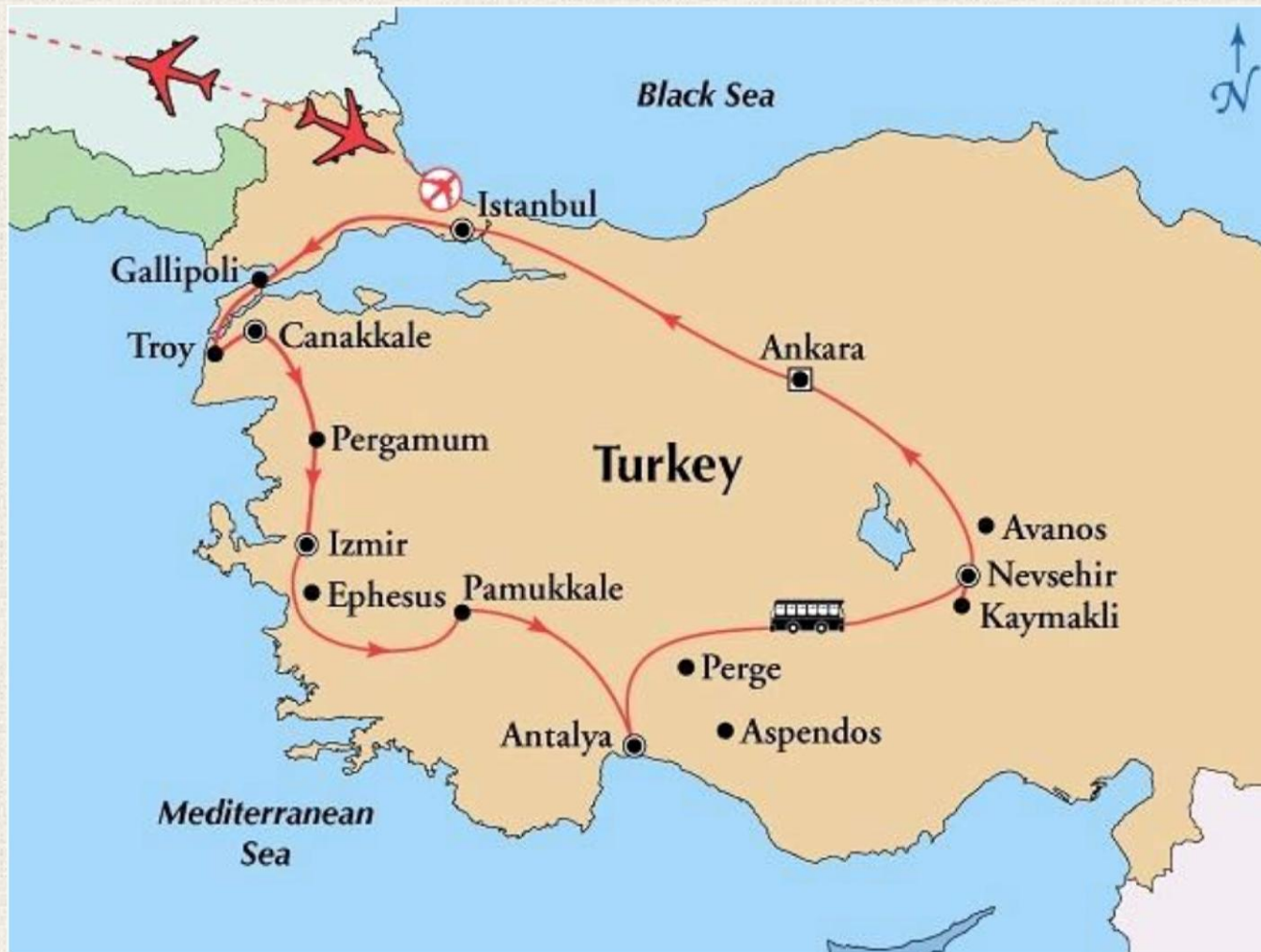


TURKEY, 2010





This was our Gate1 Travel bus route through Turkey - or Türkiye, the non-Anglicized spelling of the country's name.



From the roof of our hotel in Istanbul.



The Süleymaniye Mosque (I think) in Istanbul.

Inside one of the mosques.





Inside the Blue Mosque. The name “Blue” was given to the mosque because of the more than 20 thousand blue and white ceramic tiles.

A dome inside the Blue Mosque.



Inside the Hagia Sophia, a former Greek Orthodox patriarchal basilica (church), a Roman Catholic cathedral, an imperial mosque, and now a museum in Istanbul. It was originally constructed in the year 537.





The Basilica Cistern is the largest of several hundred ancient cisterns that lie beneath the city of Istanbul. The cistern was built in the 6th century during the reign of Byzantine Emperor Justinian I.



Another picture inside the Basilica Cistern.



Inside the Spice Bazaar, which was constructed in 1660. The aromas are wonderful. Unfortunately, we did not have time to thoroughly explore it.



Another picture inside the Spice Bazaar. It's a very colorful place.

One of the entrances to the Grand Bazaar, which was finished in 1461, according to the inscription carved into the wall.

From Wikipedia:

“The Grand Bazaar is one of the largest and oldest covered markets in the world, with 61 covered streets and over 3,000 shops which attract between 250,000 and 400,000 visitors daily.”



Inside the Grand Bazaar.

With 61 covered streets and over 3,000 shops, it was easy to get lost inside the Grand Bazaar, but it was a wonderful experience getting lost and just wandering around.



A reconstruction of the Trojan Horse, at Troy, which is near the city of Çanakkale.

There are many archeological layers at the site, and Wikipedia says the following:

“Troy is best known for being the setting of the Trojan War described in the Greek Epic Cycle and especially in the *Iliad*, one of the two epic poems attributed to Homer.

It is thought that Troy VII chronologically spans from circa 1300 to circa 950 BC. It coincides with the collapse of the Bronze Age. It was a walled city with towers reaching a height of nine meters. Manfred Korfmann, who excavated the site in the 1980s, estimated the area of Troy VII at 50 acres or more, and put its population at five to ten thousand inhabitants.”



An excavated road in Troy.





Excavated walls in troy.

Carolyn standing amongst rubble
at Pergamum (289-129 BCE).

Most of the structures have been
reduced to rubble, and it is
difficult to imagine what the city
and buildings might have looked
like thousands of years ago. Ah,
if I only had a time machine.





From Wikipedia:

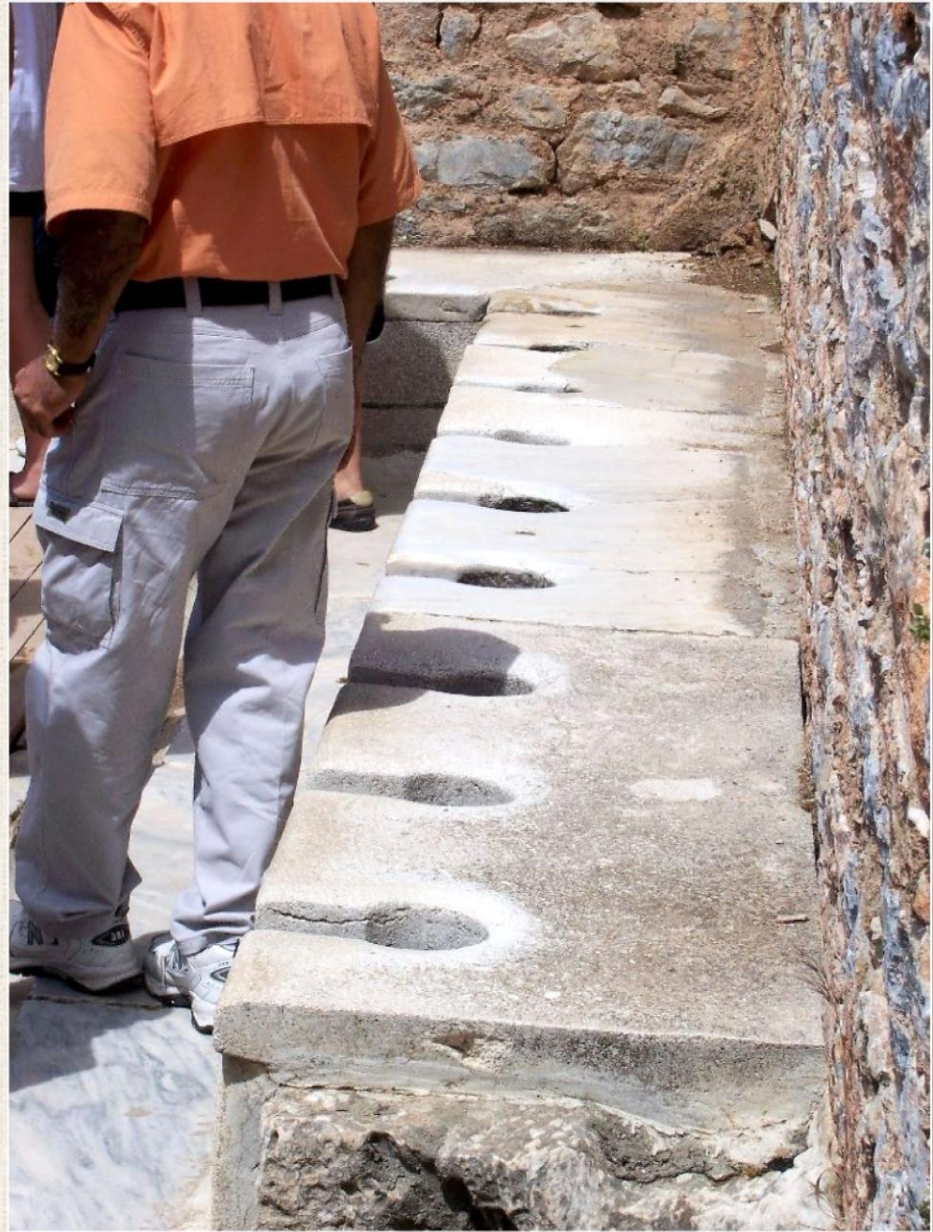
“At Ephesus, originally built in the 10th century BCE. It came under the control of the Roman Republic in 129 BCE, and, according to estimates, Ephesus had a population of 33,600 to 56,000 people in the Roman period.”

A stork nest, with a stork.



Ancient public toilets.

We were told about how they were used and what the 'cleaning' procedure was, but, trust me, you don't want to know.



A modern-day Turkish toilet.

From the pictures, it should be pretty easy to figure out which door to use.



The Library of Celsus, completed in 120 CE, is an ancient Roman building in Ephesus.

From Wikipedia:

“The interior of the library and all its books were destroyed by fire in the devastating earthquake that struck the city in 262. Only the facade survived. The facade was completely destroyed by a later earthquake, likely in the late Byzantine period.

In a massive restoration which is considered to be very true to the historic building, the front facade was rebuilt during the 1960s and 1970s.”



The next 4 pictures are of Pamukkale

From Tom Brosnahan:

“Somewhere deep in the earth beneath Pamukkale - which means ‘cotton castle’ in Turkish - and the ancient Roman city of Hierapolis lies a vast source of water heated by volcanic lava. The water dissolves pure white calcium, becomes saturated with it, and carries it to the earth’s surface, where it bursts forth and runs down a steep hillside.

Cooling in the open air, the calcium precipitates from the water, adheres to the soil, and forms white calcium ‘cascades’ frozen in stone called travertine.

The water has been bursting forth at Hierapolis/Pamukkale for more than two thousand years. The Romans built the spa city of Hierapolis so citizens could come and enjoy the health benefits of the hot mineral water. The beauty of the travertine was just a bonus.”



One of the many terraces. Note the beautiful colors of the waters and the terraces.



Carolyn standing at the base of the 'cotton castle'.



Carolyn standing at the top of the 'cotton castle'.



More terraces.



Sarcophagi at Hierapolis.

The arena at Aspendos, which was a city founded around 1000 BCE by Greeks.



The next picture is of our Gate1 Travel tour guide, Dilek, a Muslim woman. She began her career as an archeologist, but apparently discovered that she could make more money as a tour guide.

In the picture, you will notice that she has her hand on the marble statue of Trajan or Hadrian (I don't remember which one it is). Emperor Hadrian was the adopted son of Emperor Trajan.

When Dilek worked as an archeologist, she supervised the discovery and excavation of the statue, so I guess she has the right to touch it.



Dilek and either Emperor Trajan or Emperor Hadrian.



View from our hotel window in Antalya, looking south over the Mediterranean sea. The reflections in the window are an added photographic bonus.

From Wikipedia and Gizmodo:

“Derinkuyu Underground City is an ancient multi-level underground city. Extending to a depth of approximately 200 feet, it was large enough to shelter approximately 20,000 people, together with their livestock and food stores.

According to the Turkish Department of Culture, Derinkuyu was first built in the soft volcanic rock of the Cappadocia region, possibly by the Phrygians in the 8th-7th centuries BCE.

Conventional wisdom holds that the city was built to protect the populace during invasion. Some of the strongest evidence to support this theory includes the self-contained fresh water supply, as well as the enormous stone, circular doors, weighing up to 1,000 pounds, that could seal off passageways from invaders.”





Carolyn wandering around the underground city.

And now we come to the highlight of my trip to Turkey. It's difficult to choose between the exoticism of Istanbul, the ancient city of Troy, the colorful hotel where we stayed in Antalya, the beautiful water terraces in Pamukkale, the cruise on the Bosphorus, and probably many other wonderful experiences.

But the ultimate highlight of the trip to Turkey has to be the hot air balloon ride in the Cappadocia region of central Turkey.

Three days before we arrived in Cappadocia, Carolyn decided to go on the balloon ride, but I, being the frugal type, was extremely reluctant to spend the \$240 for the ride. However, after mulling it over for a few days, I knew that I had to go on the balloon ride, otherwise, Carolyn would be lording it over me forever.

On the evening before the balloon ride, we were told that it might be too windy for the balloons the next morning, but if we were going to go, then we would receive a telephone call at 4:00 AM. When our phone rang at 4:00 AM, I woke up and said to Carolyn, "There's the \$500 phone call."

After a light breakfast and a safety orientation - which mainly covered getting into and out of the balloon's wicker basket - we were airborne around 7:00 AM and drifted around for about 45 minutes. It was expensive but worth every minute.

The following pictures depict the balloon ride, from start to finish.

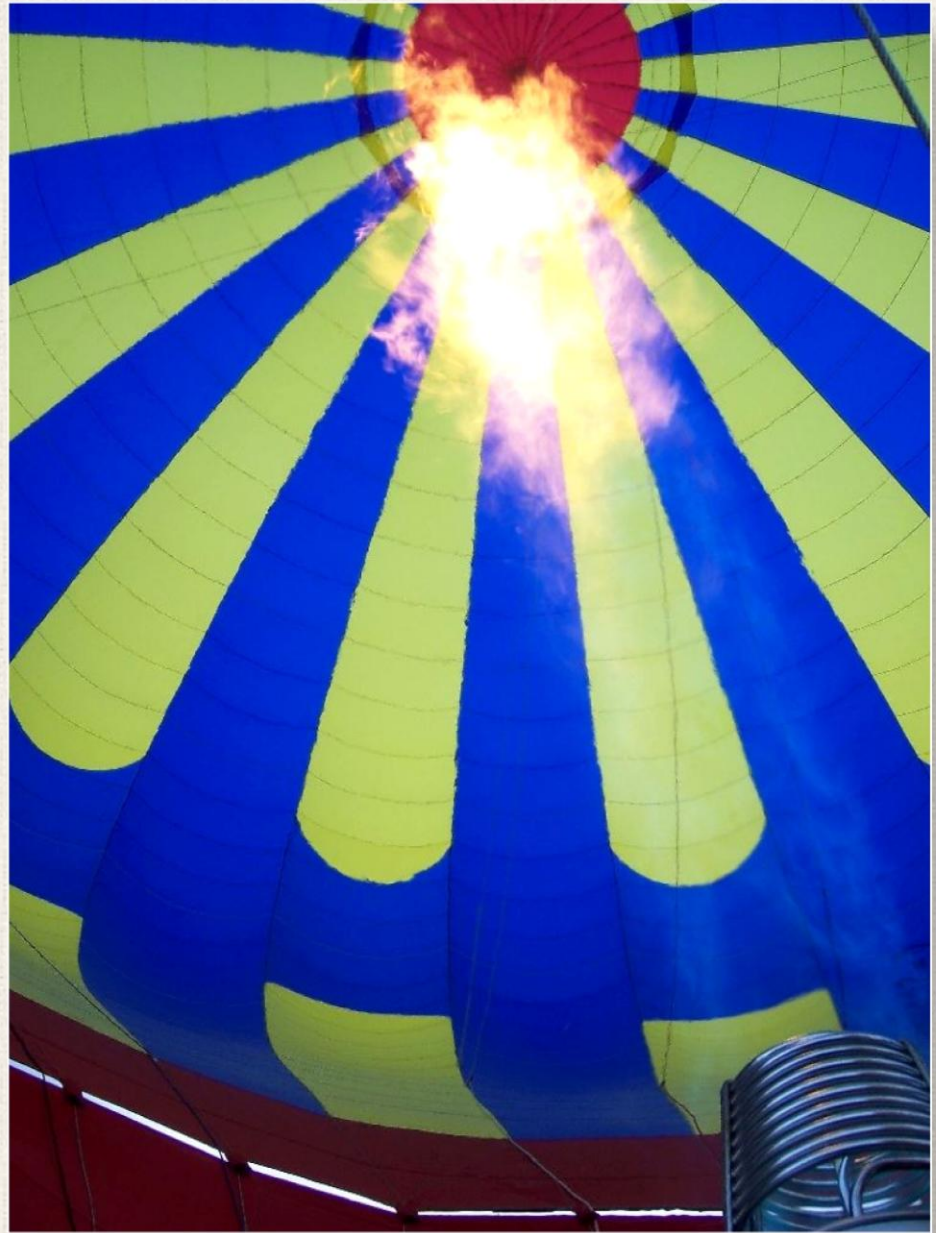


There were approximately 40 balloons being inflated between 6 and 7 AM.



Note the fan blowing the heated air into the balloon.

Looking up into the balloon.



People preparing to climb into the basket.





Ascending.



Note the village down below.

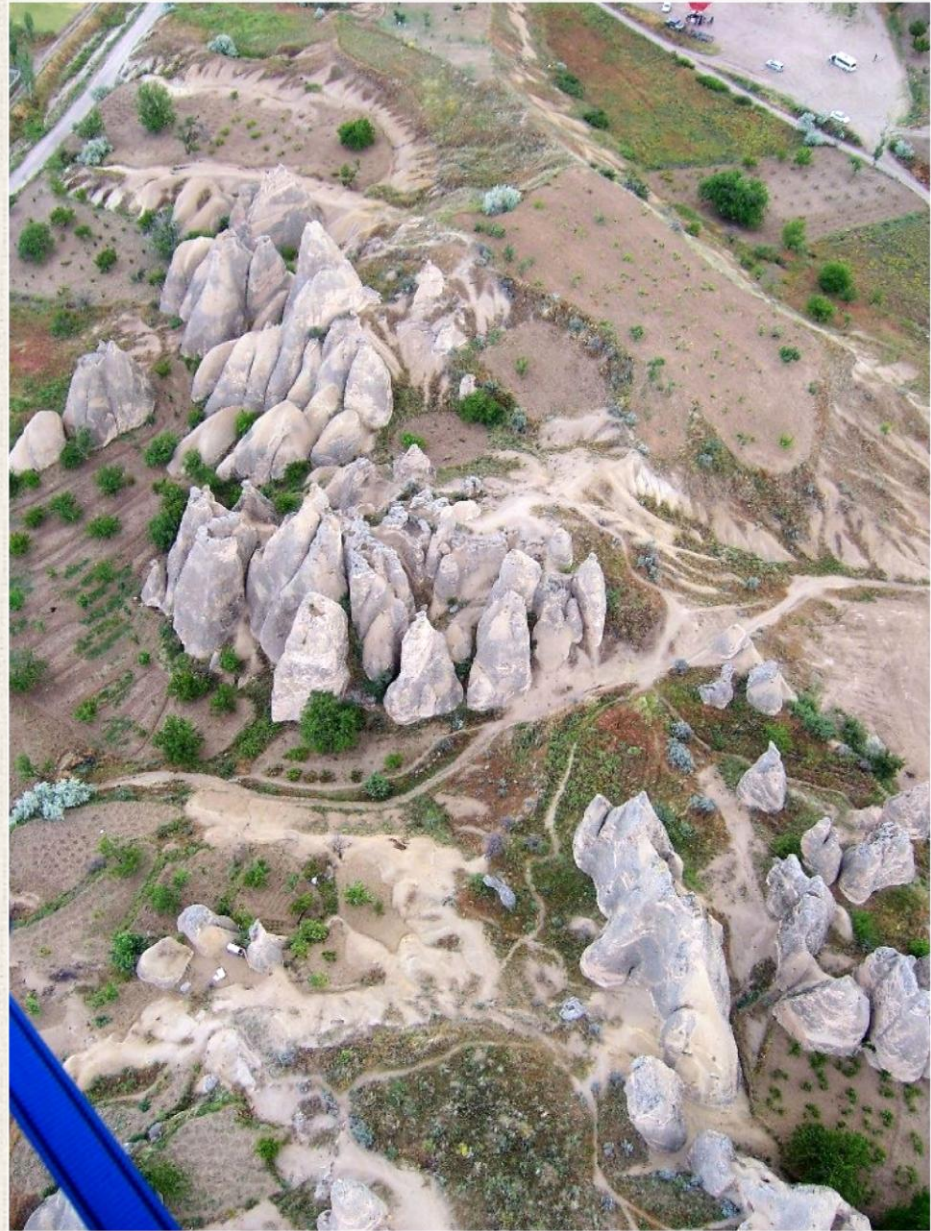


Floating above the 'fairy chimneys' of Cappadocia.

Looking down on more 'fairy chimneys'.

From Wikipedia:

“Sedimentary rocks formed in lakes and streams and ignimbrite deposits that erupted from ancient volcanoes approximately 9 to 3 million years ago, during the late Miocene to Pliocene epochs, underlie the Cappadocia region. The rocks of Cappadocia near Göreme eroded into hundreds of spectacular pillars and minaret-like forms. People of the villages at the heart of the Cappadocia Region carved out houses, churches, and monasteries from the soft rocks of volcanic deposits.”





Note the balloon in the distance.



At one point, Mustafa, the balloon pilot, brought the balloon down so low that a man in our basket picked some leaves from an olive tree, and then Mustafa gave the burner a blast of gas, and up we rose.



We were very close to a hillside.



A large town in the distance.



Homes that have been carved into the 'fairy chimneys'.

Mustafa, our balloon pilot. Note the liquid propane gas tanks and the communication devices on the left side of the picture.

Mustafa was in contact with people on the ground, controllers and the chase vehicle that would haul away the balloon and the basket after we had landed.



Another picture of Mustafa, our balloon pilot. As you can see, he was very serious about his responsibility. His gloved hand is resting on the multiple burner assembly.



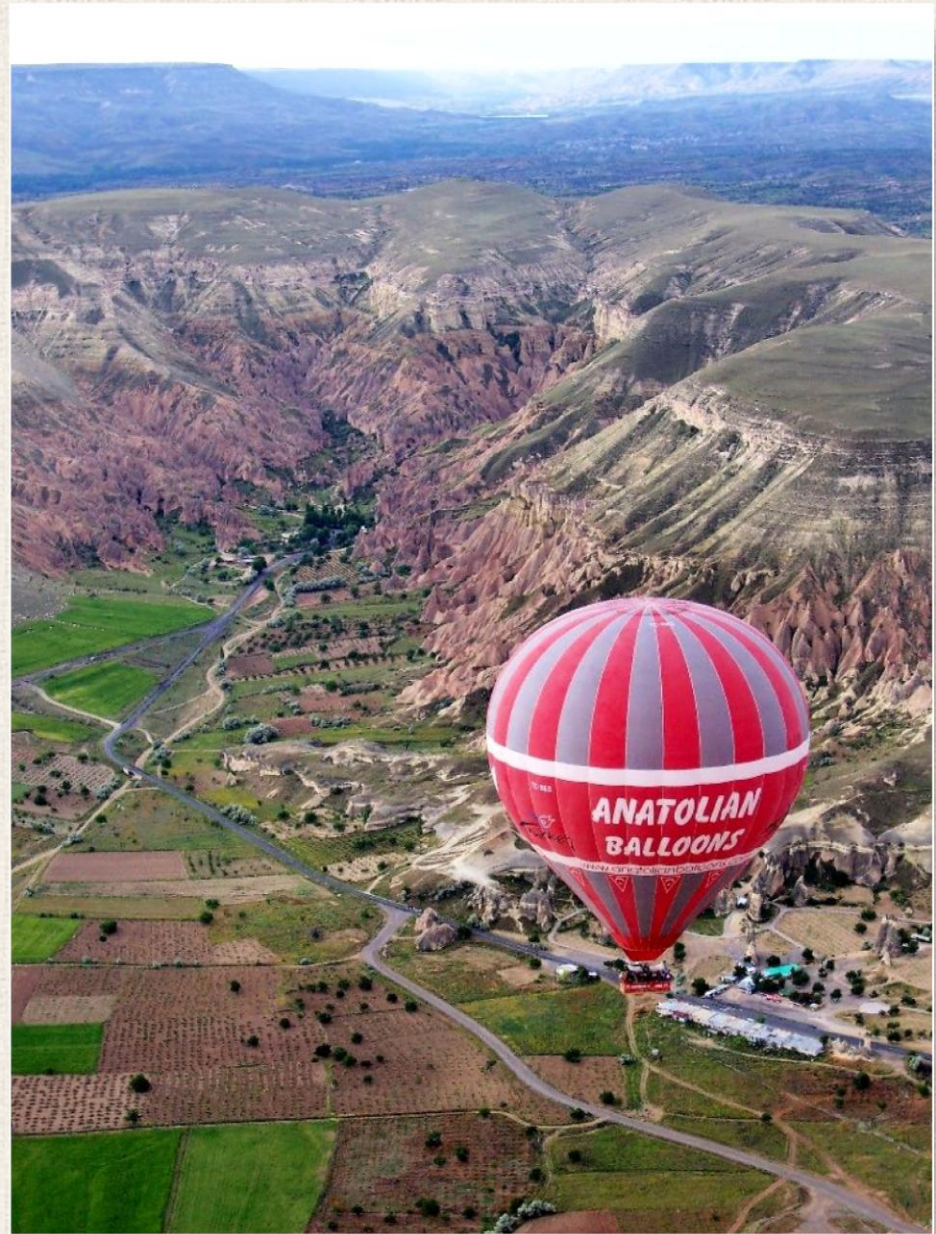


Looking at a balloon above us.





Looking at a balloon below us.





A large village below us, with a river running through it.

A mosque in the village shown in the previous picture.





Balloons are beginning their final descent.



Two high fliers.



Some baskets had only 2 or 3 people, and some had many more. I think our basket had about 15 people in it.





Miss Hot Air Balloon of 2010.



Approaching our landing trailer. Mustafa was so good that he landed the basket right on the trailer.

Carolyn beginning her exit from the basket.



Carolyn completing her exit from the basket.





We survived! We survived!



Preparing the champagne and the fruit juice.

Carolyn standing in front of a tree covered with glass 'evil eyes'* in the town of Ürgüp, in the Cappadocia region. This is the town where we stayed during our hot air balloon adventure.

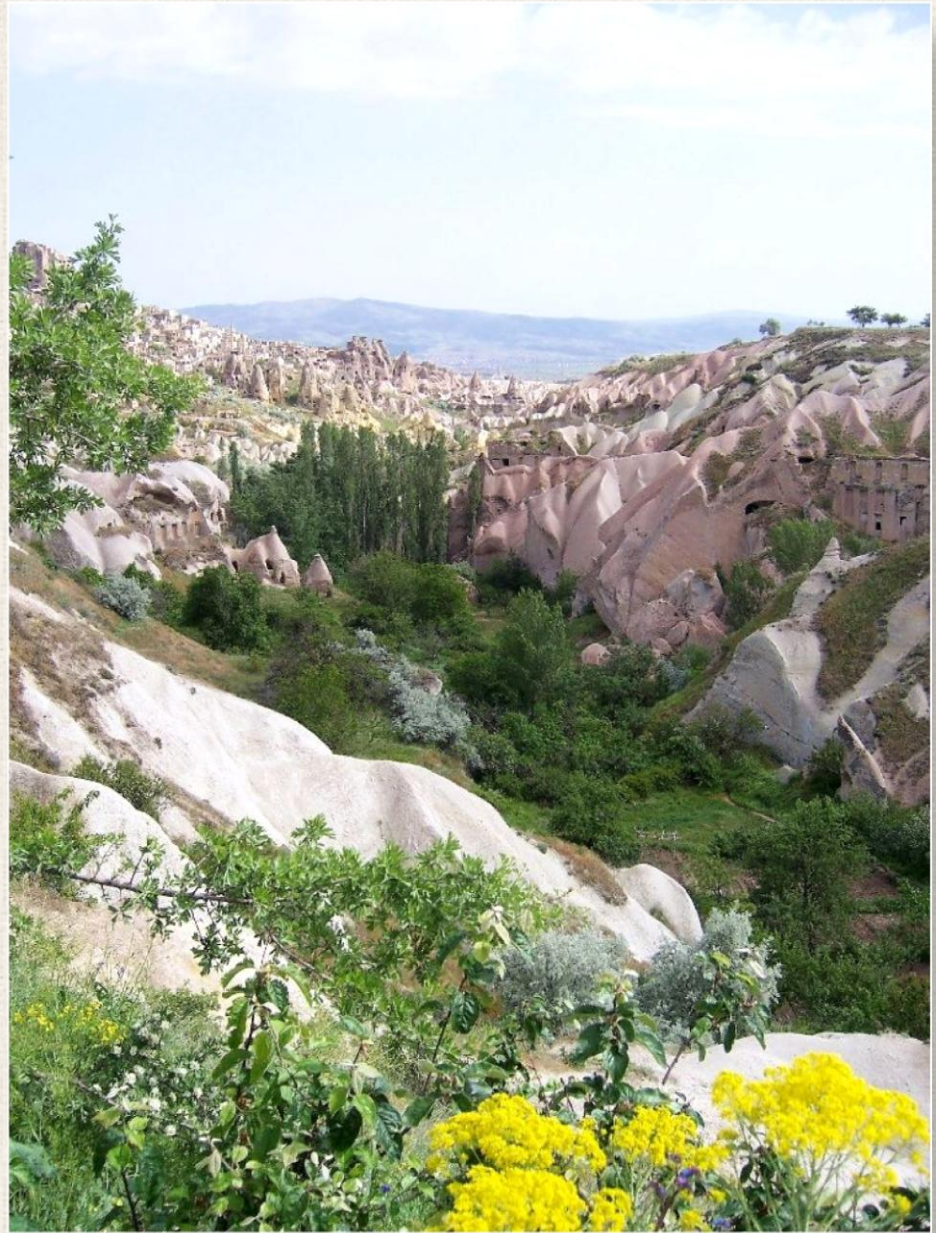
***From Wikipedia:**

“A nazar (Turkish: *nazar boncuğu*) is an eye-shaped amulet believed to protect against the 'evil eye'. In Central Asia people held similar superstitions like horseshoes, garlic, wolf's tooth, dried thorn, lead, stones, but the crystal blue eye has always been the most popular one.

It is a common sight in Turkey, where the nazar is often hung in homes, offices, cars, children's clothing, or incorporated in jewelry and ornaments.”



Looking down a small valley in
the town of Ürgüp.





A hillside covered with homes, many of which were carved into the 'fairy chimneys'.

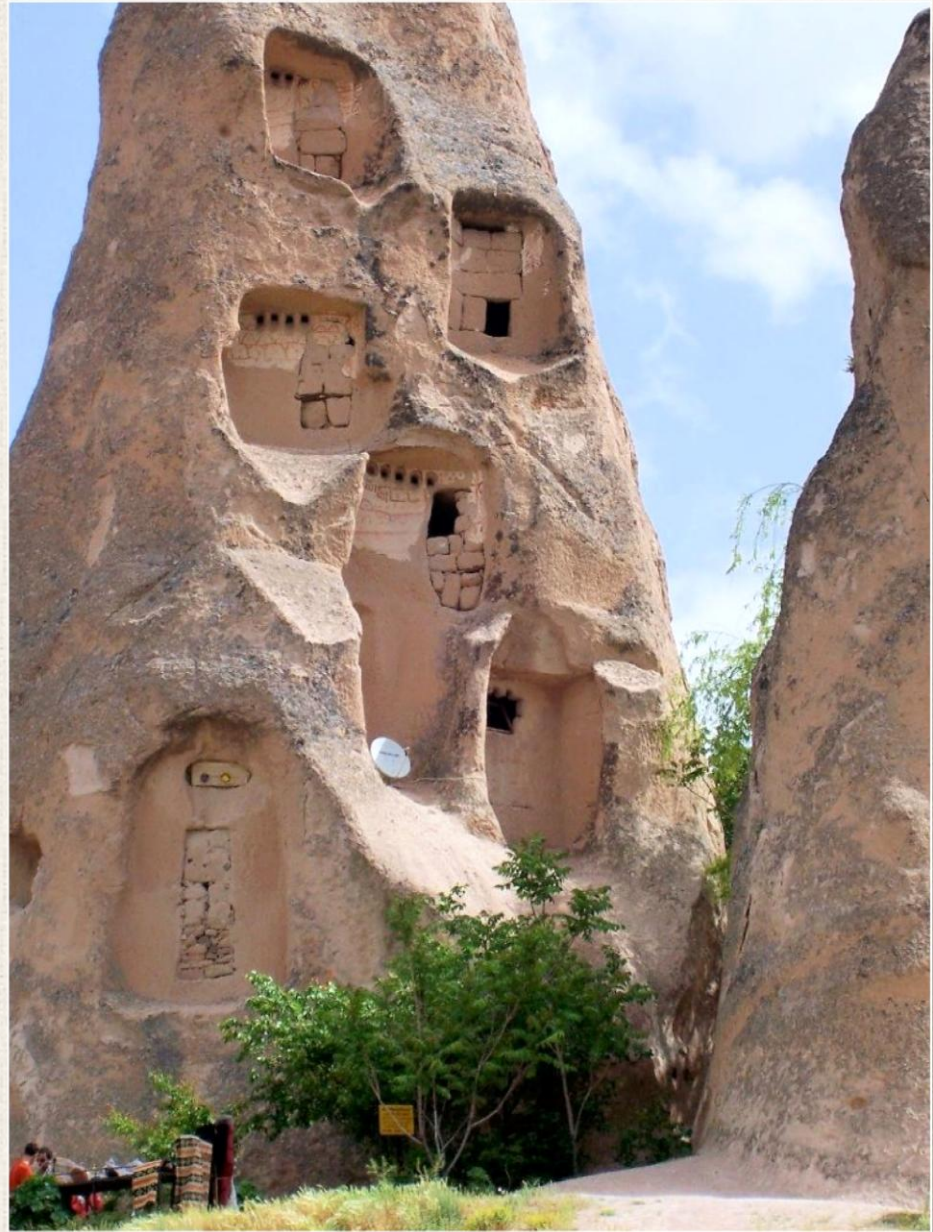


More homes in the 'fairy chimneys'.





Note the satellite dish in the lower middle of the picture.



Some of the homes even have balconies and windows.







Carolyn inside one of the cave homes, sitting with a couple of homies.





Man, does he look cool, not to mention groovy and outtasight.



The trees in the foreground are apricot trees, and they appear to be very old.



Wanna buy a trinket, gogah, or doodad? These are authentic antiques, made just last week in China.



After we returned to Istanbul, we went on a cruise of the Bosphorus Strait, which separates Europe from Asia.







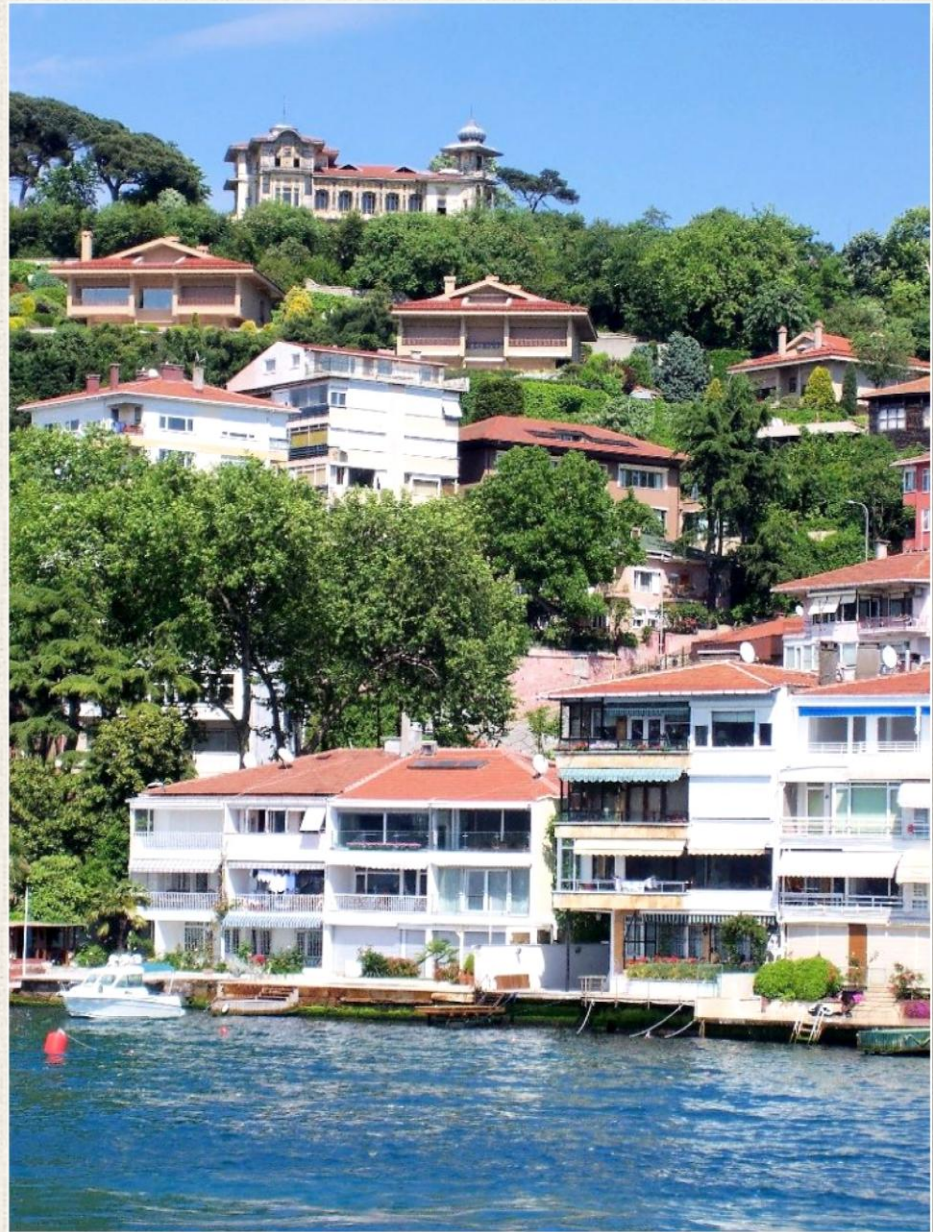


The bridge in the distance connects Europe (left) and Asia (right).



Homes on the Asia side of the Bosphorus Strait.

More homes on the Asia side of the Bosphorus Strait.



Relaxin' on the Bosphorus Strait,
restin' up for the flight home the
following day.



Near the end of a wonderful trip to Turkey.





Two happy travelers, ready to go home.

**This is the end of the Turkey slide show
presentation.**

You may close this window.