

# 6 of the BEST

## NATURAL WONDERS

Remind yourself of Turkey's top beauty spots with **Katie McGonagle's** guide

**b**eaches tend to steal the limelight any time clients are seeking inspiration for their next holiday, and understandably so. Given the current restrictions on our day-to-day lives, who wouldn't dream about lying back on a sun-kissed beach, cocktail in one hand and trashy novel in the other, as waves lap at their feet?

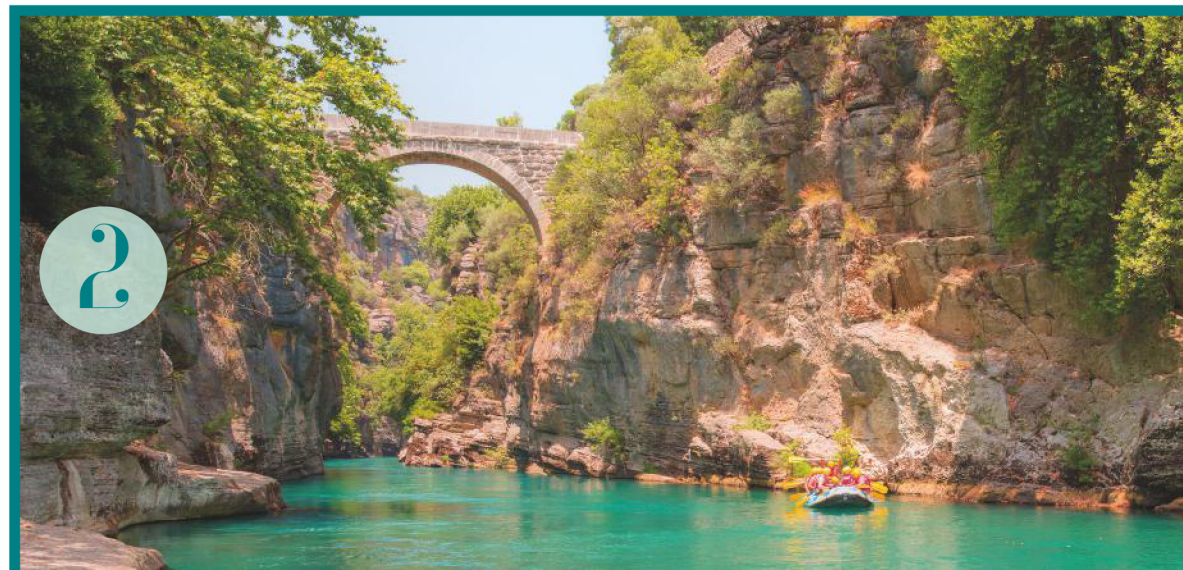
Turkey's stunning beaches, along both its Mediterranean and Aegean coastlines, fulfil that vision. Yet those aren't the only beauty spots you'll find in this vast country, where everything from steep-sided canyons to lunar-like landscapes can enrich your client's beach break no end.



### CAPPADOCIA

This region in central Anatolia is famed for its fairy chimneys and cave dwellings, though these days, it might be better known for the myriad hot-air balloons that take tourists to the skies at sunrise each day to see the remarkable landscape from above. Kuoni product and purchasing manager Angelo D'Avino says: "Cappadocia was formed 60 million years ago by erosion of layers of lava and ash from the volcanic mountain range. Nowadays, it has great importance in terms of tourism, particularly the traditional Cappadocian houses and dovecotes carved into caves, reflecting the uniqueness of this area of Turkey."

**Book it:** Kuoni offers five nights' B&B in a Stone Room at Argos, BA flights from Heathrow and transfers, from £1,149 for travel in June 2021. [kuoni.co.uk](http://kuoni.co.uk)



### KOPRULU CANYON

This national park offers not only dramatic scenery, its sheer rockfaces towering 400m above the turquoise waters of the Koprul River, but it's also a prime spot for white-water rafters to brave the currents in one of the best watersports spots in the country. The canyon stretches nine miles, but the national park, set an hour inland from Belek, covers an area of nearly 150 square miles. Expect scenic hiking routes through pine and cypress forests, look out for two Roman bridges so well-engineered they are still in use today, or head to mountain town Selge for more ancient ruins including a well-preserved Roman theatre.

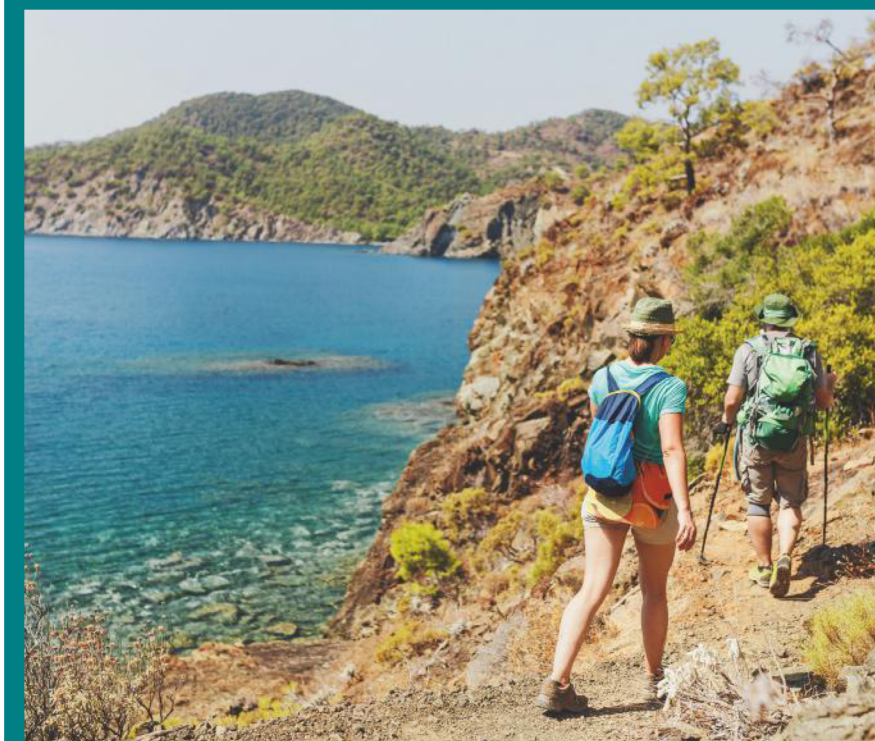
**Book it:** Tui offers seven nights' all-inclusive at the 5T-rated Tui Magic Life Masmavi, an hour's drive from Koprulu Canyon National Park, from £763 including flights from Gatwick departing April 20, 2021, and transfers. [tui.co.uk](http://tui.co.uk)

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### LYCIAN WAY

It would take a month to walk the full 335-mile Lycian Way, which links ancient Roman roads and old donkey tracks, quiet mountain villages and sweeping coastal scenery, on a route stretching from Fethiye to Antalya. Most walkers tackle day-long sections with transport in between, as on solo specialist Friendship Travel's new Lycian Way walking holiday, which has its first departure in autumn. Founder Colum McLornan says: "Olu Deniz is an ideal base because the start of the Lycian Way is close by. The busy beach and Blue Lagoon are only a 15-minute ride down the hill, but up on the hillside, when you're following the ancient mule tracks, you could be in another world."

**Book it:** Friendship Travel offers a seven-night holiday with three guided walks, flights from Gatwick, transfers and accommodation with four dinners, from £635. [friendshiptravel.com](http://friendshiptravel.com)

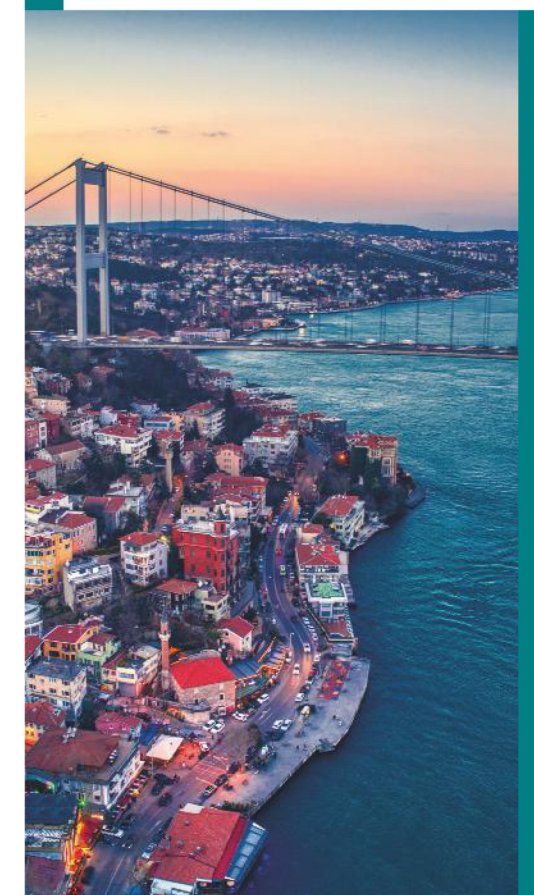


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### BOSPHORUS

The Bosphorus strait is the dividing line between two continents, splitting Istanbul into its historical and commercial centre on the European side, and residential suburbs on the Asian side. This mighty waterway is the main reason this city, once known as Constantinople, was at the very centre of the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, and while it's now frequented by tourist boats and cruise ships, sailing its wide expanse still feels like retracing the steps of long-forgotten conquerors.

**Book it:** Do Something Different offers an Istanbul Full Day Bosphorus and Asia Side Private Tour with Lunch from £78. The tour includes a cruise along the Bosphorus, visits to the Spice Market and Beylerbeyi Palace, and a photo stop to see the Bosphorus from above at Camlica Hill. [dosomethingdifferent.com](http://dosomethingdifferent.com)





## DESTINATIONS

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#### PAMUKKALE

The brilliant-white travertine terraces of Pamukkale look like something from a film set on an alien planet, such is their feeling of otherworldliness. With a name that translates as ‘cotton castle’, the Unesco-listed landmark was formed from the chalky deposits of calcium bicarbonate left behind over millions of years by the nearby hot springs, and covered with a cascade of mineral-rich waters. It was a centre of healing for the area’s oldest settlers too, with the ancient Greek spa town of Hierapolis – of which well-preserved ruins of its streets, temple, bath house and theatre remain, along with a much-underrated museum – just next door.

**Book it:** Attraction World offers a day trip to Pamukkale from Marmaris from £60 (£55 per child), including hotel pick-up, breakfast and lunch. [attractionworld.com](http://attractionworld.com)

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#### OLU DENIZ

Turkey has more than its fair share of stunning shoreline, but chief among its coastal beauty spots is the Blue Lagoon at Olu Deniz, where the water seems to positively glow in varying shades of electric blue. Craig Davidson, trade sales manager at Jet2holidays, says: “This Unesco World Heritage Site is surrounded by emerald forests and ribbons of soft white sand, making it pure paradise. Visitors can enjoy a dip at this incredible scenic spot, as well as a stroll around the picturesque village at the foot of the mountain, and it’s accessible from the ever-popular resorts of Dalaman and Izmir.”

**Book it:** Jet2holidays offers a week’s B&B at the three-star ATA Lagoon in Olu Deniz from £439 including flights from Stansted on October 20 and transfers. [jet2holidays.com](http://jet2holidays.com)