

# FMC Travel Club

A subsidiary of Federated Mountain Clubs of New Zealand (Inc.)

[www.fmc.org.nz](http://www.fmc.org.nz)

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\*\*\* Eastern Turkey \*\*\*

plus an optional Crete add on

**Eastern Turkey : 31 days \$7495 ex Istanbul. 28<sup>th</sup> July to 27<sup>th</sup> Aug 2012**

**Trip leader : John Dobbs.**

*Requires 8 people and is subject to Euro exchange rates*

*All or any payments by visa or mastercard adds a surcharge of \$150*

**Crete : 16 days \$3495 ex Chania. 27<sup>th</sup> Aug to 11<sup>th</sup> Sept 2012.**

**Trip Leader : John Dobbs.**

*Requires 6 people and is subject to Euro exchange rates*

*All or any payments by visa or mastercard adds a surcharge of \$75*

## PRICE INCLUDES

- All transport in Turkey and Crete, two domestic flights in Turkey (these 2 flights are approx' \$800 pp)
- All accommodation in Turkey and Crete (small hotels, pensions, village houses, some camping in Turkey)
- Most meals in Turkey (61), (shown as B.L.D.) breakfasts only in Crete (16)
- Entry to parks and numerous historic sites as per the itinerary (at least 16 in Turkey alone), all airport and other transfers, fully supported camping sections and safety gear, all local taxes
- Local English speaking guide in Turkey, other support personnel in Kackars and Mt Ararat
- Additional baggage transport, English tramping descriptions, maps and information for Crete

## PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

- Flights to/from Turkey/Crete
- Meals not otherwise included
- Travel insurance (mandatory)
- Items of a personal nature, such as internet, tipping, alcoholic beverages, etc

## **Some trip highlights of Turkey**

- *Discover the architectural and historic treasures of old Istanbul*
- *Lose yourself in the labyrinthine Grand Bazaar, Istanbul*
- *Get out on the water for a different perspective, and enjoy the ambience of Istanbul at night*
- *Experience real Turkish food, one of the world's favourite cuisines, and warm hospitality*
- *Visit the Black Sea coastline*
- *Wonder at the amazing palaces, castles, churches and ruins of past civilizations across eastern Turkey*
- *Tramp through breathtaking alpine scenery in the Kackar Mountains in northeast Turkey*
- *Witness the ancient and modern existing side by side*
- *Summit enigmatic Mt Ararat, Turkey's highest peak and possible resting place of Noah's Ark*
- *Travel through Kurdish areas and learn about this big minority*
- *Marvel at the huge, ancient stone heads atop Mt Nemrut*
- *Enjoy the delights of surreal Cappadocia, below, on, and above ground!*
- *Optionally add a pilgrimage to Gallipoli before or after this trip if this is your first visit to Turkey*

## **Some trip highlights of Crete**

- *Soak up the unique and alluring history, culture and hospitality of Crete, Greece's largest island*
- *Climb mountains, tramp dramatic gorges and traverse stunning coastlines*
- *Explore historic towns and bucolic villages, connect with war history*
- *Swim in the Mediterranean and enjoy great Greek food*

## **Trip leader**

*John heads up the FMC Travel Club, organizing and marketing all trips and has been doing this for over 10 years. Sometimes he even gets to lead trips, when not otherwise working at Travel Smart in Napier. "My favourite activity is tramping and I take every opportunity to get out with the Napier T. Club and friends. All the Travel Club trips have wide tramping appeal with the appropriate level of exploration for the country we are visiting. This will be the 3<sup>rd</sup> trip I've led to Turkey, and the country is rightly very popular with Kiwis. This time we focus on the east of this big country – the stunning Kackar's and Mt Ararat in particular are brilliant for tramping. A real contrast to more well trodden western parts. Another addition is Crete. This, the largest of Greece's islands has wonderful tramping in mountainous and gorgy terrain and ruggedly beautiful coastlines. The best sights of Crete are wrapped up in our trip."*

*John's enthusiasm, care and attention to details ensures you have a memorable holiday and he welcomes your enquiries.*

## **Overview of Turkey arrangements**

***Istanbul** is the start and end point. What can be said about this timeless city that has not already been written many times. Istanbul is one of the most fascinating cities on earth, Byzantine art and architecture, a banquet of east meets west. We stay in a convenient area of the old city, within easy walking distance of many of the city's best features and near the Bosphorus Strait. We meet up with our local Turkish leader here, who will be with us throughout the trip.*

*Then we fly to **Trabzon** on the Black Sea Coast before heading into the **Kackar Mountains** and begin our first tramping section. The Kackar Mountains form a jagged lake studded chain around 30kms long with dense forests in the lower valley rising to passes and plateaus and high grazing. Our highest point will be Mt Kackar at 3937m. We camp in the mountains and use horses to carry the gear.*

Moving on into **the remote northeast corner of Turkey** is like a time warp and well removed from touristic routes. You'll find a bonanza of palaces, castles, mosques and churches dotting the steppe, and fairytale Georgian or Armenian monuments in splendid isolation - all testifying to Turkey's once flourishing ancient civilizations.

Iconic **Mt Ararat** (5137m) hovers majestically over the countryside and climbing this beautiful peak will be a highlight of our trip. The Kurdish town of Dogubeyazit is our launch pad. For years, Ararat has been off limits for security concerns, but this fantastic mountain is now back on the tramping map. Permits and a local guide are mandatory and approval to tramp and climb are obtained well before. It is not technically difficult but will require plenty of stamina, and we will encounter perpetual ice and snow towards the summit, where safety gear (such as ice-axes) may be necessary and will be supplied and usage fully briefed. Expect stupendous views and stunning landscapes.

South to **Lake Van**, Turkey's largest lake. This is southeastern Anatolia, and it feels different from the rest of the country, and that's part of the appeal. Apart from a few Arabic and Christian pockets, this huge territory is predominantly Kurdish. Despite occasional negative media coverage, this region is safe to travel through and the warm-hearted hos geldiniz (welcome) here will linger. There are so many interesting sights, natural and man made and too many to list in detail, but include: Climb enigmatic **Nemrut Dagı**, which is topped with colossal ancient statues, explore the maze of the ancient Kurdish capital of **Diyarbakir**, visit **Sanliurfa**, swathed in historical mystique, savour the best pistachio baklavas in **Gaziantep**, and much more!

Our final few days are spent in the centre of the country in unique and captivating **Cappadocia**. The surreal, eroded volcanic landscape has some wonderful valleys and hills and we will walk to discover the delights of the area. Here are remnants of a Christian civilization fleeing persecution, monasteries and churches carved out of the soft volcanic tufa, and a number of extraordinary underground cities.

Return to **Istanbul** for a final look around and celebration dinner.

**The entrance fees included in the trip are:**

Aya Sofia, Topkapi Palace (Istanbul)

Sumela Monastery and Aya Sofia Church (Trabzon)

Ani, Ishak Pasa Palace, Van Castle, Cavustepe, Akhdamar Island (far east to Lake Van area)

Arsameia, Nemrut Dagı, Gaziantep Museum, Harran, Gobekli Tepe (southern regions)

Goreme Open Air Museum, one underground city, Guzulyert and other valley walks, Soganli, Uchisar Castle (Cappadocia)

**A very popular and memorable option is an early morning balloon ride over Cappadocia. This can be arranged once in Turkey and may be paid with a credit card or variety of currencies. This is only major option and highly recommended.**

## **Overview of Crete arrangements**

The largest and most mountainous Greek Island is the cradle of Europe's earliest civilization and the land where ancient myth and modern reality blend seamlessly against a backdrop of outstanding natural beauty. Crete is certainly an island of contrasts! The itinerary incorporates wonderful tramping and exploration of the west, central and eastern parts of the island in that order, beginning in the port town of Chania and ending in the main city of Iraklio.

Essentially a 'do it yourself trip' in the best Kiwi traditions, our route and accommodations are all planned out, but we do have our own minivan for part of the way and self guide our way along – we do not have local leaders. Luggage is transported so you only need to carry a day pack when tramping. We also have total freedom for lunches and dinners and discovering local cuisine will be part of the experience.

The southwest has the spectacular White Mountains and brilliant gorge tramps, including Europe's largest gorge – the 18km Samaria. This leads down to charming fishing villages and quiet beaches, some accessible only by boat. Eastwards and into central regions lead us to old villages in the hills and Crete's highest mountains – Psiloritis (2456m) and Dikti

(2148m), which we climb. Expect to encounter numerous ancient churches, monasteries and ruins amid the countryside and olive and citrus groves. Discover the birthplace of Zeus and world renowned Minoan civilization ruins.

This is a comprehensive trip and for the first time visitor an ideal overview, providing a fitting contrast and complement to our Turkey programme.

**Each trip is very comprehensive and inclusive, meaning you have almost nothing to add except some meals and spending money!**

**After each trip reaches minimum numbers, further information will be disseminated through a newsletter to everyone. Items included would be a recommended gear list, money and cultural matters, a finalized programme for Istanbul, language pointers, recommended reading, responses to any questions raised, sundry items etc. So while this dossier is an overview, we cannot hope to cover every possible point now – hence the newsletter!**

**You need to be tramping fit and have some stamina to partake and enjoy both programmes. The effects of altitude in the Kackar's and Mt Ararat are mitigated carefully and proper acclimatization incorporated, along with usage and instruction of safety gear. The Crete itinerary has a steady and fairly continuous tramping programme, but does not reach the higher altitudes of Turkey.**

**A quality 3 season or above sleeping bag is required while camping in Turkey, while a reasonably sized and robust day pack and larger main pack are the ideal 'containers'. Packs are typically treated harshly at times! Suitcases of any kind are totally inappropriate.**

**If this is your first trip to Turkey, a pre or post trip 'bolt on' to Gallipoli is ideal and very worthwhile. This is best done as an overnight trip as the distances there and back take most of a day and the Gallipoli peninsula deserves half a day to visit all the sites without rushing. Some of the options also include ancient Troy. Contact John Dobbs to discuss tour options, and also to work through the flight options of getting to and from Turkey and Crete.**

**If you have any questions before committing to join either or both trips, don't hesitate to contact John.**

## **Turkey Itinerary**

### **Day 1. Sat 28<sup>th</sup> July. Istanbul**

Arrive into Istanbul and transfer to the accommodation in the historic old city. Meet up and enjoy your first Turkish dinner at a local restaurant. Merhaba – welcome to Turkey!

### **Day 2. Sun 29<sup>th</sup> July and Day 3. Mon 30<sup>th</sup> July. Istanbul**

A programme of visits to the most significant sights of old Istanbul will be available, with entry fees included. A ferry up the Bosphorus right up to the Black Sea shores is also a really excellent thing to do. We will try to secure an authentic cultural performance and aim to arrange this closer to departure. Get lost in the Grand Bazaar and many other markets and museums, soak up the city skyline from the Galata Bridge or Genoese Galata Tower. Istanbul is a great city to walk around, you will get a good workout as there are plenty of hills! An Istanbul lunch institution is the fresh fish sandwich down at the Eminonu docks. Head to a meyhane (Turkish tavern) for a really fun night, live music and good food, or try your first Turkish Bath at one of the hammams. All these are great activities and the essence of what Istanbul and Turkish culture is all about. **B. D.**

### **Day 4. Tue 31<sup>st</sup> July. Trabzon**

This morning we take a domestic flight to the city of Trabzon, a bustling eastern Black Sea port with a near 3000 year history. A drive of 45mins up into the Pontic Mountains brings us to Sumela Monastery, clinging improbably to a sheer rock wall above a forested valley where frequent swirling mists give it a surreal quality. We then hike up the 300m from the carpark to the monastery entrance – it will be a good practice for the tramping that lies ahead! After the descent and

*lunch we will visit the Byzantine church of Haghia Sophia. Tonight we will have a briefing for the tramping section to the Kackar's. B.*

**Day 5. Wed 1<sup>st</sup> Aug. Begin the Kackar Mountains tramping section**

*Drive into the foothills of the Kackar's to the village of Ayder at 1300m & an afternoon tramp up to Yukari Kavron where we overnight in a lodge or pension. There may be an opportunity to try out the thermal baths at Ayder! B. D.*

**Day 6. Thu 2<sup>nd</sup> Aug. Kackar Mountains.**

*Our destination is oddly called 'No-name lake'. The tramp will only take a few hours and climbs around 600m, but there is additional 3 hours possible to get awesome views of the unseen north face of the Kackars. Return to camp beside the lake. B. L. D.*

**Day 7. Fri 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug. Kackar Mountains**

*We spend much of the day around 3000m and head over the Caymakcur Pass. If the weather is kind and the trail mostly snow-free, this should be a reasonably easy day, but the effects of weather and altitude can make it tough. Overnight at Dobe Duzu camp. B. L. D.*

**Day 8. Sat 4<sup>th</sup> Aug. Kackar Mountains**

*The first part of the day takes us down to the hamlet of Ogunlar, before ascending to our base camp at Dilber Duzu. Maybe a 6 hour day and total ascending about 850m. B. L. D.*

**Day 9. Sun 5<sup>th</sup> Aug. Kackar Mountains**

*An early start for a full and satisfying day as we aim to climb Mt Kackar itself. An approx ascent of 950m to the summit at 3937m. return to Dilber Duzu camp. B. L. D.*

**Day 10. Mon 6<sup>th</sup> Aug. Kackar Mountains**

*We complete our tramping today by descending back down valley to Ogunlar and on to the little village of Yaylalar. We may then take a rough drive of 3 – 4 hours on to Barhal, a delightful little village with an interesting Georgian church, which breaks our journey up better for tomorrow. B. L. D.*

**Day 11. Tue 7<sup>th</sup> Aug. Savsat**

*Leaving the region of the Kackar's, we travel northeast through beautiful and seldom visited country to Savsat. This is an old Georgian town with a fairytale castle nearby setting the scene. This region is green and remote and we will have a strong sense of the peoples of adjacent countries, such as Georgia & Armenia. Farmers ploughing with horse-drawn ploughs for example. B. D.*

**Day 12. Wed 8<sup>th</sup> Aug. Kars**

*Our travels through these border lands includes 'The Devil's Castle' & several lakes on our way to overnight in Kars, a small city with Azeri, Turkmen, Kurdish, Turkish & Russian influences & dominated by a stark medieval fortress. B. D.*

**Day 13. Thu 9<sup>th</sup> Aug. Dogubeyazit**

*Our journey is about 250kms and takes us close to the border. "Dogu" is a small and very Kurdish city with a magnificent setting – sandwiched between Mt Ararat and Ishak Pasa Palace, a breathtakingly beautiful fortress/palace/mosque complex. It is the jumping off point for all trips to Ararat. B. D.*

**Day 14. Fri 10<sup>th</sup> Aug. Begin Mt Ararat tramping section**

*In the morning we transfer to the starting point (around 2200m) and tramp up to the base camp (known as Green Camp) at 3200m, our base for 3 nights. Gear will be carried by mules or horses, so we should make it to camp in 3 to 5 hours. There will be other groups also camped here B. L. D.*

**Day 15. Sat 11<sup>th</sup> Aug. Mt Ararat acclimatization**

*Tramp to camp 2 at 4200m and then return to Green Camp, a 5 to 6 hour day. An important feature of the day will be instruction and practice in the use of crampons and ice-axes. This will include trying on the crampons (ties vary from model to model) and understanding the theory of how to self-arrest in case of fall, using an ice-axe. B. L. D.*

**Day 16. Sun 12<sup>th</sup> Aug. Mt Ararat Camp 2**

*Head back up to Camp 2, at about 1000m below the summit. A further short course on usage of crampons and ice-axes. We overnight here and again are fortunate to have the animals carry our gear up. The campsite is smaller and more restricted, but there should be a great sense of camaraderie with others also preparing for the push to the summit tomorrow! B. L. D.*

**Day 17. Mon 13<sup>th</sup> Aug. Mt Ararat summit and descend to camp 1**

*A very early wake up call (3am to 4am). The summit is at 5165m, but from above 4800m, glaciers and perennial snow are present. So while this is still a tramp, the upper part of the ascent is done with equipment necessary for ice climbing. Temperatures can get as low as minus 20C even in the summer and minus 10C are not untypical! Therefore endurance and stamina are important qualities. In case of adverse weather conditions or your own situation, it will be the guide's decision as to whether or not the summit can be reached. Guides act under clear instructions that safety is paramount and will receive our full backing for their decision to abort the ascent, should it be necessary. All going well, the summit and return to Green Camp may take up to 10 hrs. A 965m ascent and a 1965m descent, overall. B. L. D.*

**Day 18. Tue 14<sup>th</sup> Aug. Mt Ararat descent and return to Dogubeyazit**

*Descend to Cevirme Village, which should take around 3 hrs, then transfer back to Dogubeyazit. Let's have a celebration dinner to toast our Ararat summit success! B. D.*

**Day 19. Wed 15<sup>th</sup> Aug. Dogubeyazit**

*At last, a free day! But we include a visit to Ishakpasa Palace, an amalgam of Seljuk, Ottoman, Georgian, Persian & Armenian styles. Magically located aloft a small plateau with brilliant views towards Mt Ararat, it is sure to be a real highlight of this part of Turkey. B. D.*

**Day 20. Thu 16<sup>th</sup> Aug. Van**

*We are now in southeastern Anatolia. Lake Van, at 3750 sq. km is far and away Turkey's largest and was formed when a volcano to the north blocked its natural outflow. It is also the largest saline lake in the world. Although its alkaline waters are denser than seawater, it still supports several species of fish. The lake is almost completely undeveloped, and beautifully surrounded by snowcapped mountains and a circumnavigation of its shores reveals plenty of surprises. Impressive Van Castle has much to see and we can spend some time here. We will also visit the dramatic Kurdish fortress of Cavustepe, built in the 8<sup>th</sup> century and once home of the kings of Urartu, a people group that settled here. The museum in Van city boasts an outstanding collection of Urartian exhibits. Overnight in Van city. B. D.*

**Day 21. Fri 17<sup>th</sup> Aug. Tatvan**

*As we follow the scenic shore of Lake Van, we will take a boat trip across the lake to visit Akdamar Island, with its 10<sup>th</sup> century Armenian church of the Holy Cross, before travelling on to Tatvan, a small city on the western lake shore in a magnificent setting. Interestingly, Mt Nemrut Dagi forms the backdrop, but this is not the Nemrut Dagi we are going to climb in a couple of days time, further west in the national park of the same name. Confused? B. D.*

**Day 22. Sat 18<sup>th</sup> Aug. Diyarbakir**

*The city of Diyarbakir is an energetic place with heart, soul and character and recognized as the 'capital' of the Kurdish areas. Behind grim basalt walls, the old city is crammed full of historical buildings and Arab-style mosques. Stroll along the narrow, twisting alleyways and soak up the uniquely unforgettable ambience. In fact, Diyarbakir's history goes back to 1500BC and many civilizations have waxed and waned here. B. D.*

**Day 23. Sun 19<sup>th</sup> Aug. Sunset on Mt Nemrut, overnight Kahta**

*Another fascinating day of sights and good walking with an overnight in the dusty small city of Kahta, not far from Nemrut Dagi and the national park of the same name. Nemrut Dagi is one of the 'must sees' of eastern Turkey and we*

*plan to climb to the summit at sunset, when the rockscape below is cast into shadow and the vast stone heads littering the summit are bathed in golden light. These remains are part of the great temple mausoleum Antiochus 1 crafted in the first century BC. Though he wanted to be worshipped as a god in his own lifetime, his ambitions were thwarted by the arrival of the Romans into Anatolia, who smashed the temple to the ruins we see today. We also check out the ancient Commagene capital of Arsameia site within the national park. **B. D.***

**Day 24. Mon 20<sup>th</sup> Aug. Sanliurfa**

*A terrific day with some amazing sights and history. View the huge Ataturk Dam across the Euphrates that provides irrigation waters to the parched landscape of the south. Visit ancient Gobekli Tepe, a 9,000 year old religious and cultural site being excavated right now. It is also considered by some to be the site of the original garden of Eden. On to Sanliurfa which has many Biblical connections and visit the Citadel, Golbasi and lively Bazaar. This place has more of a Middle East feel than anywhere else on the itinerary. **B. D.***

**Day 25. Tue 21<sup>st</sup> Aug. Gaziantep**

*On the way through to Gaziantep, we will stop to see a colony of Bald Ibis birds at Birecik. The Mosaics Museum at Gaziantep as one of the finest of its kind in the world and holds priceless items from a number of ancient sites now drowned by the rising waters of the Ataturk Dam. This city makes the absolute finest pistachio baklava, a mouth watering treat! **B. D.***

**Day 26. Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> Aug. Cappadocia**

*Via the icecream capital of Turkey, Kahramanmaras, and into the magical region of Cappadocia. The soft volcanic rock here has produced a quite surreal eroded landscape both unique and captivating. Our next few days provide some wonderful light tramps through valleys of incredible colours and shapes. The rock has been turned into churches, all sorts of accommodations. Ice cream cones, phallic symbols, candy colours, rock citadels and mysterious underground cities – it is all part of the experience! The towns and villages here are delightful too, very laid back. Consider an early morning balloon flight – it is absolutely magical!*

*The final compilation of activities and the order we do them will be provided later. There will not really be any repeats to the Cappadocia component of the 2010 Turkey trip either. **B.***

**Day 27. Thu 23<sup>rd</sup> Aug and Day 28 . Fri 24<sup>th</sup> Aug. Cappadocia**

*Continuing our programme. Taking a balloon flight over the Cappadocia landscape is rated as one of the world's greatest ballooning opportunities, and is absolutely the best way to really appreciate the magic of the place. There are a number of operators and flights can be arranged for any morning we are based here. These do not need to be pre-arranged. **B.** In Cappadocia we don't include dinner, so you have freedom to choose among the many tempting options.*

**Day 29. Sat 25<sup>th</sup> Aug. Fly from Kayseri to Istanbul**

*A final morning in the area before we drive to the city of Kayseri for the afternoon flight back to Istanbul. **B.***

**Day 30. Sun 26<sup>th</sup> Aug. Istanbul**

*Final day in Istanbul with free choice time. Tonight, we will have a special end of trip celebration dinner. **B. D.***

**Day 31. Mon 27<sup>th</sup> Aug. Turkey trip concludes, Crete trip begins**

*If you are ending your holiday here, you will transfer to one of Istanbul's two international airports for onward flights, OR, if continuing on to Crete, you will fly to Chania, Crete via Athens today. Please note that cost included airport transfer is to the main Ataturk Airport, NOT to the alternative Sabina Gocken Airport. **B.***

# Crete Itinerary

## **Day 1. Mon 27<sup>th</sup> Aug. Chania**

Return to Istanbul Ataturk Airport and fly to Chania, Crete, via Athens. Transfer to the accommodation with time to explore this port city on the northwest coast. Said to be Crete's most romantic and alluring town, it has a rich mosaic of Venetian and Ottoman architecture. A web of atmospheric streets in the old town tumble onto a picturesque harbor. **B.**

## **Day 2. Tue 28<sup>th</sup> Aug. Sougia**

We transfer to the south and the White Mountains for our first gorge tramp of 7kms – Agia Irini. The gorge is carpeted with oleander and chestnut trees and fragrant with rosemary, sage and thyme. We end this warm up tramp on the south coast at the laid back and undeveloped little village of Sougia right on a lovely sand and pebble beach. **B.**

## **Day 3. Wed 29<sup>th</sup> Aug. Sougia**

Close to the coast, we walk west through beautiful Selinou Gorge, thick with pink oleanders and carob trees and on to the ancient site of Lissos. It was part of a league of city-states and dates to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. There is much to see here along with a delightful beach to cool off. The return walk to Sougia will take 3 – 4 hours. Then in the afternoon, follow the E4 track heading east as far as the church of Profitis Ilias (approx 4hrs return). **B.**

## **Day 4. Thu 30<sup>th</sup> Aug. Omalos**

While the luggage is taken by ferry east along the coast to Agia Roumeli, we need to take what we need for one night. Travel by local bus up into the mountains towards the Omalos Plateau. Here we will climb Mt Gingilos (2080m), a non-technical summit with spectacular views. The mountain is also home to the wild goats of Crete (Kri-kri), the rare griffon vulture and lammergeyer. Descend by the same route and overnight in a family owned hotel on the Omalos Plateau. **B.**

## **Day 5. Fri 31<sup>st</sup> Aug. Agia Roumeli**

A short drive takes us to the entrance of the awesome Samaria Gorge National Park. The 16kms tramp is fairly long and at times, hard. However, it is very popular and there are likely to be many other walkers today. Several little churches can be seen along the route. Around mid-way the gorge narrows to 3.5m apart where there is a wooden bridge across the 20m or so of water to the other side. Complete the walk down into the little village of Agia Roumeli. There is a pebble beach here and it is a nice place to cool your heels after the heat of the gorge! **B.**

## **Day 6. Sat 1<sup>st</sup> Sep. Loutro**

The luggage (which was delivered to the accom' at Agia Roumeli) is transferred by ferry further east along the coast to Loutro today. Another 6hr coastal track is before us today, a mix of sand, rock, forest and bushy sections, but never more than 50m above sea level, so not too arduous. On the way we pass picturesque St Pauls chapel. We can have a swim at Marmara Beach enroute to Loutro, a small fishing village decorated with blue and white houses. Loutro is the only natural harbor on the south coast of Crete and is only accessible by boat or on foot, so it is quiet and peaceful. **B.**

## **Day 7. Sun 2<sup>nd</sup> Sep. Loutro**

Anopoli village and Aradena Gorge. A full day of tramping a big loop that combines mountain trails, spectacular gorge and coastal paths. Ascend the mountain path up to Anopolis (climb 680m). Here is where the revolution against the Turks began in 1866, and Anopolis is a very traditional village where traditional costumes are still seen. From Agia Ekaterini's church are gorgeous views to the south coast and the Libyan Sea. Visit the square, relax at the coffee shop with the locals and return the same way if you have had enough. Alternatively, continue walking through Aradena Gorge which connects up with the E4 coast route again via Marmara Beach and back to Loutro. **B.**

## **Day 8. Mon 3<sup>rd</sup> Sep. Axos**

Our last coastal walk is just 2 hours east to Chora Sfakion and we need to leave early, as the luggage will be transferred by the 15 minute ferry ride and we need to meet it on arrival at Chora. From here, we have an interesting drive of 2 – 3 hours through the countryside heading east to the mountain village of Axos, our base for the next 3 nights. **B.**

**Day 9. Tue 4<sup>th</sup> Sep. Axos**

Around 3 hours driving time. Much to see today in the countryside and culture of Crete. A 4 – 5 hours loop walk connects up the ancient city of Eleftherna built between 970 – 820 BC, and the following sights. Admire the Byzantine tower, the Roman reservoirs and the Hellenistic bridge, and excavations are continuing here. We can explore traditional pottery making in the village of Margarites. Perhaps we can also include the village of Anogia, a centre of WW11 resistance to the Germans, home to some of Crete's best traditional music and famous for its wild and extravagant wedding celebrations! **B.**

**Day 10. Wed 5<sup>th</sup> Sep. Axos**

Imposing Mt. Psiloritis, also known as Mt Idi (2456m) is the highest in Crete. At the eastern base is the Nida Plateau, a wide expanse used for sheep grazing surrounded by a circle of imposing mountains. The winding 22 km road up from Anogia has many round stone shephard's huts and passes the Skinakas Observatory. We will follow the E4 track up to the summit ( 6 – 7 hours return), and will hopefully be rewarded with views right out to the north (Aegean Sea) and south (Mediterranean Sea). There is a little stone church on the summit. A feature of the mountain is a huge cave - Ideon Andron Cave – the place where, according to legend, the God Zeus was reared. Return on the same track or a loop option, and return to Axos. **B.**

**Day 11. Thu 6<sup>th</sup> Sep. Zaros**

We are not far from the main city of Iraklio, so we will take a detour to nearby Knossos to enjoy the magnificent archaeological area holding remains of a Minoan city that thrived 3500 years ago and the famous palace dated 1700 – 1450 BC. Knossos is Crete's most visited site and deserves a few hours. Another diversion could be the Iraklio Archaeological Museum which contains the most important Minoan treasures and frescoes. Then drive an hours drive southwest to the little town of Zaros, a refreshingly unspoilt place that's known for its spring water and bottling plant and also numerous links to the Minoan and Roman periods. **B.**

**Day 12. Fri 7<sup>th</sup> Sep. Zaros**

A 'detour' today to the isolated southwest corner of central Crete, which combines a visit to a monastery, the Agiofarango (Holy gorge), a swim at an isolated cove and some of the best traditional Cretan cuisine! Moni Odigitrias is a historic monastery with a preserved tower from which the monks fought off the Turks, Germans and the odd pirate. We may climb the tower for superb views. The monastery was a base for many monks who lived as hermits in the surrounding caves and remote chapels. There is a small museum and a church with 15<sup>th</sup> century frescoes and icons. Agiofarango is a great walk with oleander, numerous caves and makeshift chapels and hermitages in the cliffs. The gorge emerges at a lovely pebble cove and crystal-clear beach. On the way back we will stop at the village of Listaros and sample traditional recipes. **B.**

**Day 13. Sat 8<sup>th</sup> Sep. Lasithi**

The Lasithi Plateau, 900m asl is a vast expanse of pear and apple orchards, almond trees and fields of crops. It would have been a stunning sight when it was dotted by some 20,000 metal windmills with white canvas sails built by the Venetians in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. There are less than 5000 still standing today and few are in service, most having been replaced by less attractive mechanical pumps. The plateau's rich soil has been cultivated since Minoan times. The inaccessibility of the region made it a hotbed of insurrection during Venetian and Turkish rule. We will do several walks here including the dramatic rocky escarpment up to the Minoan settlement of Karfi, a 6km trip. We may also visit Dikteon Cave which has links to Zeus and cult worship in Minoan periods. **B.**

**Day 14. Sun 9<sup>th</sup> Sep. Lasithi**

Our final mountain climb – Mt Dikti (2148m) and 6 – 7 hours return. The views over the eastern part of Crete are expansive and we may be fortunate to see eagles soaring over the cliffs here. **B.**

**Day 15. Mon 10<sup>th</sup> Sep. Iraklio**

We head for Iraklio now, but may make a diversion to include Agios Nikolaos. A striking position on a hill overlooking Mirabello Bay with a lake and pleasant harbor. The town was the focus of the TV series "The Lotus Eaters". In Iraklio we will have a celebration end of trip dinner and prepare to leave Crete tomorrow. **B. D.**

**Day 16. Tue 11<sup>th</sup> Sep. Fly home**

Fly Iraklio to Athens and onwards from there. **B.**

**Booking Conditions : FMC Travel Club and Travel Smart Napier :**

1. The FMC Travel Club (FMC) offers this small group trip in conjunction with Travel Smart Napier (TSN). All travel arrangements are made with TSN. Participants agree to all terms and conditions by signing the Registration Form.
2. FMC and TSN are not responsible or liable for any injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity which may arise from weather, defect in any vehicle, vessel or aircraft, or through the acts or default of any person or company engaged in carrying out of any of the arrangements of the trip.
3. We reserve the right to cancel the trip if minimum numbers don't eventuate. In such an event, all monies paid will be fully refunded. We also reserve the right to make any modifications that may be essential, or to offer a modified trip to a smaller number of people.
4. The trip includes a payment to FMC and the apportioned cost of the trip leader's travel.
5. Registrations are accepted in good faith on a first comers basis on receipt of the Registration Form. **It is not necessary to pay tour deposits when you register. These will be requested by invoice only when we have secured the numbers to operate.** The deposit is \$1500 for Turkey and \$1000 for Crete. These will be due by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011, **but may need to be brought forward to 30<sup>th</sup> November 2011.** The balance will be due by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012. All payments may be made by cash, cheque, EFTPOS, internet banking, visa or mastercard to the office Of TSN. **All or any payments by visa or mastercard adds \$150 to the final trip price for Turkey, and \$75 for Crete. Our preferred payment method is internet banking . Please use : 010685 0151601 00 at ANZ Napier. Heerlen Ltd T/A Travel Smart Napier. Make cheques payable to Travel Smart Napier.**
6. The trip price is expressed in NZ Dollars, but arrangements are made in either Euros or Turkish Lira, so subject to currency fluctuation. Events beyond our control in respect to currency fluctuation or the imposition of new taxes for example, may result in a variation to the trip price until such times as full payment has been received. Upon full payment, the trip price is guaranteed.
7. Cancellations and travel insurance. If you need to withdraw your registration for any reason, this must be given in writing to TSN as soon as possible. An email is acceptable but a phone call is inadequate. Cancellation fees apply as follows :
  - Cancellations received from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2012 incur a fee of \$750 per person per trip
  - Cancellations received from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2012 incur a fee of \$2000 per person per trip
  - Cancellations received from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2012 onwards incur a fee of 100% of trip costsIf you find someone suitable to replace you, cancellation fees MAY be waived  
Travel insurance will cover you for unforeseen circumstances but will not cover you for changing your mind after committing to this trip. Travel Insurance is essential and it must be adequate to cover all aspects of travel plus full repatriation back to NZ. We recommend QBE Travel Insurance and can provide cancellation and full cover policies at any time. TSN will give a discounted premium and can provide printed or emailed forms, policy wording etc at any time. Ideally, cover should be taken out when you pay your deposit.
8. Please supply a scan or photocopy of your passport when registering. You must have 6 months available on your expiry date from the completion of the trip or you will need to replace your passport. NZ passport holders do not need a visa to enter Turkey or Greece for up to 90 days for touristic purposes. If this trip is part of wider travel arrangements, or if you are travelling on other than a NZ passport, you may require visas or other documentation. For any questions relating to passports and visas, and for international flights and other travel arrangements, discuss with John Dobbs at TSN.

# Registration Form for Eastern Turkey and Crete 2012 :

Complete and send to John Dobbs with your passport copy. Registrations close by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2011, or earlier if the trips fill earlier. Your early commitment is appreciated. It is not necessary to send your trip deposit when you register, these will be called for when we have a viable group registered. All or any payments by visa or mastercard attract extra costs (refer to Booking Conditions page). Our preferred payment method is internet banking into : 010685 0151601 00 at ANZ Napier. Heerlen Ltd T/A Travel Smart Napier.

I am / we are registering for      Turkey      Crete      please circle your choices

My / Our names as in passport(s) and circle preferred 1<sup>st</sup> name.....

.....

Mailing address.....

Home phone.....Mobile.....Work phone.....

Email.....Date(s) of birth.....

Specify any dietary requirements, allergies, medical conditions.....

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Tramping or other type club affiliation to FMC (if any).....

Contact person in NZ for emergencies : name, address, contact phone numbers, email and the relationship to you. In the event of any emergency, this is the sole person you are permitting us to liaise with

.....

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Please continue over and answer further questions about tramping experience and gear, thank you

I / We have read the full trip dossier and I / We will pay the per person deposit of \$1500 for Turkey and \$1000 for Greece upon invoice, when trip viability is established. I / We agree to pay the remainder of trip costs by due date, as advised by invoice. I / We understand that the final trip price is subject to securing a minimum number of participants to proceed, and to currency fluctuations; therefore the final trip price cannot be guaranteed until such time as full payment has been made.

.....signed and dated by each person registering

Please send to : John Dobbs, FMC Travel Club Convenor  
Travel Smart Napier, P O Box 4140, Napier.  
P : 06 8352222 F : 06 8354211 E : [john@tsnapier.co.nz](mailto:john@tsnapier.co.nz)

We would like to find out something of the abilities of the party and what gear might be available. Write your answers here or email them, thank you.

- 1. Tents and roll mats will be supplied, BUT you must supply your own sleeping bag, and you MAY prefer to bring your own thermarest etc. The final 300m thrust to the summit of Ararat may require crampons and also ice axes. Ice axes and other safety gear will be supplied, but you may be able to supply your own crampons. Are you are to supply your own 3+ season quality sleeping bag? Are you able to bring your own thermarest? Are you able to supply crampons?*
- 2. Summarise recent tramping experiences, whether NZ or overseas. Are these day trips, weekend, or some even longer? Maybe a mix? Are you able to handle multi-day tramping for the extent of the Kackars and Ararat tramping sections?*
- 3. Are you happy to tramp and travel in a small group with the levels of tolerance and support needed within such a group? Generally 8 – 12 people.*
- 4. Anything else about your tramping or outdoor abilities, skills or interests that would be helpful to know?*

*Ararat permit arrangements must be made well in advance and approved before anyone departs NZ. This is a special commitment to an iconic mountain and numbers are controlled, and we will be priviledged to have the opportunity to tramp its flanks and hopefully make the summit!*