Itinerary (Subject to updates and/or changes):

May 08 Fri  Depart from USA – Fly Istanbul; overnight trip

May 09 Sat  Arrive Istanbul

Our tour guide will meet us after the customs and baggage claim with a UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT sign. Meet, assist and transfer to hotel for check-in, dinner & overnight. (D)

May 10 Sun  Istanbul

After breakfast we visit Hippodrome Square where ancient chariot races were held; the Blue Mosque, unique with its 6 minarets, and famous for its blue Iznik tiles, and the St. Sophia Church, built in the 6th century, once the largest Christian church in the world. After lunch, we visit Topkapi Palace, Imperial Residence of Ottoman Sultans, with displays of priceless world-class collections of artifacts, jewelry and rare porcelain. Tonight, dinner at Ikinci Bahar Restaurant located in the historical Flower Passage building. Overnight Istanbul. (B,D)
May 11 Mon  Istanbul
After breakfast at our hotel, visit Taksim Square. See the Galata Tower, built by the Genoese circa AD 500 and used by the Ottomans as a watch tower. Then, visit the Galata Mevlevi Lodge Museum, one of the institutions which reflect the culture of the era in the best possible way. See the Tunnel, which is the second oldest subway of the world (after London), and the Istiklal Caddesi in the arty Beyoglu neighborhood. One of the most important streets of Istanbul is, without doubt, Istiklal Street, which extends from Tunnel to Taksim. Our walking tour will take us to local shops, churches, synagogues, cafes, restaurants, art galleries, movies, along this vivid street in the heart of the city. Then visit the famous Grand Bazaar complex including 4,000 tiny shops. Return to hotel. Tonight, dinner at Seafood Restaurant in Kumkapi district. (B,D)

May 12 Tue  Istanbul
After breakfast, we will drive to Eminonu port where we will embark our private boat for a relaxing Boat Tour along the Bosphorus. We will see both European and Asian shores of Istanbul – beautiful seen from the water. We will see the city’s most expensive villas, old palaces, two intercontinental bridges, minarets and mosques, etc. We will leave the boat in Sariyer where our bus and driver is waiting for us. In the afternoon, we will experience a real Turkish Bath (Hamam). Return to the hotel for some time to relax before a lecture by a local faculty member about the Political Science, European Union & Turkey. Evening is free and dinner on your own. (B)

May 13 Wed  Istanbul
After breakfast, we will participate in a Turkish Cooking Class and afterward enjoy the fruits of our labors. In the afternoon, we will visit Ortakoy Village. Since Ottoman times, Ortakoy has been one of Istanbul’s most cosmopolitan areas, with a healthy mixture of religions and ethnicities living in harmony. That diversity is still evident today, with Armenian churches, a synagogue and a Greek Orthodox church joining the mosques. There is also a nice mixture of bars, shops and cafes. We will see the Ortakoy Mosque located just underneath the Bosphorus Bridge, which is one of the city’s most picturesque mosques. After some free time to explore on our own, we will have dinner at a local restaurant in Ortakoy Village. Return to the hotel for overnight. (B,D)

May 14 Thu  Fly Izmir – Izmir City Tour
Our motor coach will take us to Istanbul Airport for 09:00 am flight to Izmir, arriving at 10 am. Transfer to the hotel in city center. Izmir (Ancient Smyrna) lies on the shores of a large bay encircled by mountains and is the third largest city in Turkey. We will visit the Izmir Ethnographical Museum which displays traditional Turkish dresses, wedding dresses, Ottoman furniture from late 19th century, hand arts and printing, carpet weaving and the instruments of daily life. A tour of the city center will take us to Dareo Moreno Street and the
Old Elevator where we can see a panoramic view of the Izmir Bay. Tonight, we will dine at a local restaurant in Izmir. Overnight at our hotel. (B,D)

May 15 Fri Bergama Town & Pergamum Archaeological Site

First we will visit Asklepion, the ancient Healing Center where the great philosopher/physician Galenus (Galen) lived and taught his healing techniques to the local people. Galenus, considered the “Father of Pharmacology” accepted the principles and ways of treatment of Hippocrates who lived about 700 years earlier. We will also see the ruins of the ancient healing venues such as Sacred Water, Herbs and Ointments, Sun Bath, Theater for music and social events. Then we will visit the Acropolis, a city built by one of the generals of Alexander the Great. We will see the steepest theater of the ancient world, the Temple of Trajan, the city walls, and more. After exploring the Bergama Town, we return to Izmir for a dinner at a local restaurant. Overnight at our hotel. (B,D)

May 16 Sat Ephesus – Kusadasi

We drive south to Selcuk to visit the House of the Virgin Mary, an important site for both Muslims and Catholics, visited by three Popes. Then, we visit the ancient city of Ephesus, the most famous ancient Roman city in Turkey, maybe in the world. See the Odeon, the Temple of Hadrian, the Celsus Library, Marble Street, the Great Theater, Harbour Road and more. Before driving back to Izmir, shopping opportunity at local Ceramic Center. Dinner and overnight at our hotel in Kusadasi. (B,D)

May 17 Sun Greek Island of Samos – Kusadasi

Transfer to Kusadasi port at 08:00 am to take the 09:00 am ferry to Samos. Arrive Samos at 10:30 am. Our Greek Tour Guide will meet us for a walking tour of Samos Town and also a visit to the Archaeology Museum of Samos. 5:00 pm ferry back to Kusadasi. Transfer to hotel in Kusadasi for dinner and overnight. (B,D)

May 18 Mon Half Day Sirince Village - Kusadasi

Morning tour of Sirince Village. Walk the narrow streets of the village, see traditional houses, visit local shops, watch the local women making “gozleme”, a local cheese pastry. Return to hotel in Kusadasi for a free afternoon. Dinner at the hotel. (B,D)

May 19 Tue Tire Village & Local Tuesday Bazaar – Izmir Airport – Fly Istanbul
Morning visit to **Tire Village**, and explore the famous Tuesday Bazaar. Transfer to Izmir Airport for afternoon flight to Istanbul. Meet and transfer to hotel for dinner and a final night in Istanbul.

(B,D)

**May 20 Wed  Departure** - Transfer to Istanbul Airport for departures.