



## Five Affordable Destinations: Asia

### TURKEY

Once the Eastern capital of the Roman Empire, and later the seat of the Ottoman Empire, Turkey is steeped in history. While most of the country lies in Asia, it straddles the dividing line between Europe and Asia, and has for centuries been a bridge between East and West. A secular democracy, Turkey is one of the world's largest Muslim countries.

#### What To See and Do:

Take in the mix of old and new in the cosmopolitan metropolis of Istanbul, which boasts the sixth century dome of the Hagia Sofia, and the Ottoman Imperial treasury rooms of Topkapi Palace, with relics from the life of the prophet Mohammed. Walk among ancient Roman ruins, including the re-discovered sites of Ephesus and Troy. Explore the unique fairy chimney landscape of Cappadocia, whose underground and cave churches date from the early days of Christianity. Haggle at the bazaars for bargains on everything from carpets to pottery. Bask in the sun at the country's Mediterranean coastal resorts.

#### Getting there:

Non-refundable flights can run in the \$600-\$700 range out of high season. Since flights connect through major European hubs, lower prices can be found at times when airlines are offering deals on the transatlantic leg of the trip. KLM, connecting through Amsterdam, and British Airways, connecting through Heathrow, are frequent options from Boston.

#### Getting around:

A number of well-reviewed Istanbul hostels offer beds for less than \$10 per night, and travelers can find double rooms in small hotels for around \$20 outside the big cities and away from the coast. Buses go everywhere. Prices vary, since private companies compete on most routes, but as a rule of thumb, five dollars will take you around 100 km (62 miles). Food is good, cheap, and plentiful. A restaurant meal can cost as little as a couple of dollars and picnic meals from the market are even less.