

Turkey

~~water~~  
~~the~~ ~~keys~~  
~~help~~

Oct 4, 2009

Seattle to Istanbul

Almost 9 hr. flight, smooth as silk. Watched 2.5 good movies. Very nice seatmate - kindred spirit woman going to rendezvous with her 23 year old son in Rome - he's been traveling around the world & she hasn't seen him in a year.

They fed us three times! Two meals & a big snack. The flight seemed long but not miserable.

Took busses to airport:  
10 min. walk to 1st bus  
30 min. ride to Bel Trans Ctr  
45 min. ride to airport  
Just under 2 hrs door to door  
Got to airport early - 3 hrs before flight. Time flew by though.

Amsterdam airport is clean & quiet - no obnoxious PA system. Oops - there is some, but not loud or often.

Didn't have to go thru  
customs or security - just  
walk to next terminal.

They have water bottle fillers  
on the water fountains, and  
lovely "sleeping" chairs  
like chaise lounges. Europe  
is much more civilized than  
U.S. in so many ways.

My eyes are very red & dry -  
this makes it hard to read.

I've been using eye drops constantly.

I'd forgotten how lovely the  
Dutch accent is.

Taking a motion sickness pill  
& Tylenol b4 flying really helps  
make the trip more comfortable.

Also nasal gel & eyedrops.

Tho' even eyedrops weren't enuf  
& my eyes were too dry & red  
to read much.

2nd flight to Istanbul. I got an exit  
aisle row & slept most of the  
way. Arrived a bit early &  
did Visa & customs quick &  
easy. Driver was waiting for  
us outside the main entrance.  
Quite a sight to see the sea  
of people holding dozens of signs  
with peoples' names on the m for  
pickup. Driver spoke very  
little English so it was fun  
to know some Turkish.

Our hotel is perfect. On a  
quaint, quiet side street in the  
old quarter. Very clean & comfortable  
with wood windows, a little table  
& chairs.

After a quick fresher up  
we headed out to explore.

Sultanahmet turns out to be  
very touristy. People call out to  
you in front of every shop or  
eatery - just like I remember  
Greece. We met a Turkish

guy who used to live in  
Everett. He was very nice,  
gave us a map and some  
suggestions of things to do here.

11/12 TPL  
11/15 E

A short while later we met a guy who used to live in Edmonds... He took us to his carpet shop for tea. We went because we were dying for a cup of tea & didn't feel like paying for it. It was delicious. But then his ~~brother~~ cousin showed up & ~~he was~~ we didn't like him. He was a pushy sales guy who lives in CA. He tried to sell us a tour. Then ~~a~~ when he saw we weren't going to buy a carpet or a tour he quickly lost interest in us. Then Mehmet took us to see his leather coat store - factory upstairs - made to order! We begged off another round of tea & went to a köfte shop recommended by Gokhan. It was OK, not great, & a bit pricey - about \$22 for two small meals of köfte (beef ground kebab) & lamb kebab, plus a small salad of tomato, onion, white beans, lettuce, cilantro, vinegar.

Then we walked some more & saw oodles of ruins, plus the hippodrome, the outside of blue mosque & aya sofya. We were in the hippodrome (now a long, narrow park with benches) when we heard the first call to prayer. It's hauntingly beautiful, but loud, and lasts about over 5 minutes. 5 times a day. Loudspeakers with music. I suspect it might get old if you lived here, or maybe you tune it out after a while?

We wandered into a small bazaar. We love the ceramic platters, painted with ornate designs. But it would cost a fortune to have one shipped home...

We almost wandered into the grand bazaar by accident, ~~but~~ turned around, knowing we were way too tired to do anything that ambitious.

Around dusk we wandered onto some side streets, where we finally got away from the tourists & into neighborhoods with shoe factories, sewing shops, & apartments with balconies festooned with laundry.

At last about 7:30 we stumbled back to our hotel, exhausted. We got a wee bit lost on the way, but Grant's unerring sense of direction (Viking blood) & asking for directions once, got us there.

Sultanhmet is much smaller than I expected, so you can't get too lost for too long.

Tues Oct. 6

Slept like rocks for 10 hrs, despite hard beds & thin pillows. Since no hotels (in our price range) have queen size beds (only doubles) we've opted for twin beds instead.

Woke to a gorgeous, sunny day. Up to rooftop terrace for fab breakfast of bread, cheeses, olives, cucles, tomato, fruits, jams, juices, coffee, tea. Sweeping view of marmara sea, aya sofya, blue mosque, people on every rooftop terrace breakfasting. Walked picturesque streets along the old city walls.

Aya Sofya is truly stunning, despite the hordes of tourists & tour groups. Go early!

It's probably impossible to capture <sup>the</sup> garden in words or photos. It's wonderful to tune out the people & try to imagine what it might have been like 1500 yrs. ago. Scaffolding obscures part of ceiling.

Cats everywhere - mostly kittens.

After a shady cold beverage break we entered the Blue Mosque (with the hordes). You take your shoes off & enter the cool, dark interior, with a plush, red carpet, stained glass windows, & tiled walls (which weren't as blue as I expected). We tried to sit quietly & feel the vibe of this holy place - difficult with so many people. Again, come early.

We then wound our <sup>way</sup> west & away from the main tourist area & found a "büfe" for me to eat lunch. I chose eggplant with meat cubes (to die-for) & spinach (good) but didn't know I could order a half portion, and it was way too much food.

Then into Grand Bazaar. As expected, it's very touristy & overpriced. Don't shop here, but it's worth a short stroll through. We exited

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onto side streets, which we liked oh so much better. We bought some glass w/ eyes for 2 TL each (about \$1.50). Grant found a sandwich, but it wasn't what he'd hoped for. Shaved beef on bread with cold french fries & peppers.

Then we wound our way through more crowded bazaar streets (narrow, crowded) & into the spice market, which we loved! The colors, the smells! Salted nuts, Turkish delight, saffron, henna powder.

Then we headed down to the Golden Horn waterfront at Eminonu, where we saw fishermen, fish sandwiches, & the ferryboat docks. We walked halfway across the bridge.

Then we walked, a bit footsore, back to the hotel for a rest on the breezy rooftop terrace with what must be one of the great views of the

world: the Bosphorus, sea of Marmara, fishing & cargo boats, & the Asian side of Istanbul.

Idyllic weather! Warm, breezy, not too hot.

Tried the ubiquitous roasted corn-starchy, tasteless, disappointing.

It's pretty clean here - no dog or cat poop in streets, & little litter. Lots of garbage cans & shopkeepers sweep streets.

We had dinner at a lokanta: stuffed eggplant (meat) with tomato on top (excellent) and eggplant with vegetables & mashed potato on top (OK). Then we found a sweet shop to get a pistachio baklava & walked around until it was time for the whirling dervish show at the Press Museum. The chairs were uncomfortable, but the show was wonderful! Four musicians played Sufi music

with singing, and four dervishes whirled. They attend a local monastery (akin to attending a church - they also have regular lives). They whirled for one song, then rested a song, whirl one, rest one, etc. Very moving & genuine.

Walking back to the hotel we stopped to listen to more ~~to~~ live music in the courtyard of a local outdoor restaurant - fabulous "harp" player & drum. Along the way we each grabbed a square of Turkish delight.

Tonight I'm less tired & the bed feels much harder... Finally had to put my memory foam butt pad under my shoulder & ribs! We sleep with earplugs when travelling, so the Imam calls to prayer don't wake us.

Wed. Oct 7

It rained in the night & is now a gorgeous sunny day. Another breakfast feast on the ~~patio~~ terrace, the sun blazing in Asia, east across the sea. We're off to Topkapi Palace!

Topkapi Palace is truly incredible. Highly recommended. Like a Versailles of the East. Opulence completely over the top. Be sure to tour the harem. Unfortunately the palace kitchens were closed for renovation. The robes & jewels were stunning. Also the tiles, views, & swords. Ian would have loved this place. In the display of sacred objects, a man was chanting the Koran - fabulous! The deep, rich tones echoed through the stone interior. We spent about three hours here & were exhausted. Bring a picnic if you go. The cafes are expensive.

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We left by the side gate & worked our way north towards the bazaar quarter, where we wandered into a delightful neighborhood of narrow streets lined with working class food shops. I had another fabulous eggplant dish, and we tried Ayran (salted yogurt drink) and loved it! We sat & listened to the 1:00 call to prayer & watched a swirl of people pass by. Delightful.

After lunch we wandered back into the spice bazaar, which we loved just as much the second time. Then back down to Eminonu so Grant could have his lunch: a grilled fish sandwich. He'd been dreaming of one for months, and he loved it. Then we walked back along the waterfront to our hotel. The waterfront is very noisy, as it's paralleled by a busy road. But it's breezy & beautiful. We saw people actually swimming in the Bosphorus. The bank is lined with fishermen, snuggling couples, & sunbathers (male only).

I'd say about 40% of the women I see wear headscarves, and maybe 1% wear burkas.

Smoking is surprisingly minimal here, and every restaurant or building we've been in has "no smoking" signs. This has been a very pleasant surprise.

Now we're back at the hotel resting & waiting to hear from Betül, a Turkish woman friend of a Seattle friend. We're hoping to hook up with her tonight.

We did get ahold of Betül & we'll meet her this evening. We took the tram to the other side of the Golden Horn (across the Galata Bridge) & then ~~suit~~ transferred to a funicular that took us up to Taksim Square. There we saw dozens of police officers with anti-riot equipment (such as water cannon tanks).

The IMF is having a meeting here & there were large protests

two days ago.

We walked around and found a great little felafel shop for dinner. Then we waited in front of McDonald's for Başak. Betül had asked Başak to meet us & take us to an NA meeting. She was really nice & spoke excellent English. At the meeting we met another woman who also spoke great English. Başak translated during the meeting. There were 7 people. NA is small in Turkey, but slowly growing.

After the meeting the two women took us ~~the~~ back to Taksim Square where we met Betül at a Tea house. Betül was great - a bundle of energy. We finally got back to the hotel at 11! We have to get up at 6 to catch the Tam shuttle to the airport.

One more thing: had to stop on the way home to get my daily baklava - yum!

Thurs. Oct. 8

The cows here have gray bodies and black heads & wings.

Woke at 6 and packed. A driver picked us up at 7. It was just getting light - another perfect, warm day, the moon just under half full in a soft sky. The private van to the airport costs 35 lira, or about \$22.50. It takes about half an hour. A taxi may be cheaper - not sure. There's also a train, but we don't know how to use it yet & don't want to take any chances of missing our flight.

The airport was a breeze. No lines, no hassle. The Turkish people are clean, gentle, efficient, competent. We could learn a lot from them.

On the drive to the airport we passed a beautiful, miles long waterfront park with jog/walk paths, green grass, many nice play structures, & exercise stations.

Thursday Oct. 8 cont'd.

The flight was only an hour, but they served a full meal, and it was delicious. Hot tea, a cheese, tomato, & cucumber sandwich on a roll, & a piece of cherry cake.

The Izmir airport is small & very quiet. Our rental car rep. was a few minutes late, but our car was <sup>only</sup> about 100 feet away.

It's a nice 4-door Honda. It's easy to find your way out of the airport & onto the road to Selçuk. There were lots of easy to follow signs. The road was mostly empty & rural, with a few small towns. We're getting used to the different traffic lights & driving styles, but so far it's felt pretty comfortable. Pedestrians cross & walk along very busy streets, which can be a little unnerving.

It's about 60 Km to Selçuk, & we easily found our way to the Hornos Pension, on a quaint, cobbled side street. Inside, the building is dark wood & krick knacks

& everything covered in Turkish textiles & carpets. It actually feels quite Bavarian.

After a short rest we walked into the small town for lunch. We finally had iskender kebab & it was fabulous: shaved doner meat (beef? lamb?) on top of bread cubes coated in yogurt sauce. Some sort of very flavorful, but not spicy, red sauce over the meat. Served with a salad of tomato, carrot, cabbage, onion, & several shredded greens, dressed in oil & vinegar. You eat the iskender mixed with the salad. Like a Turkish felafel, & a great way to use up stale bread I would think. The usual gaggle of cats (kittens far outnumber adults somehow) begged loudly, and one even scratched Grant's leg.

We also ordered ayran, and this was in a glass, not in a carton. Too much food though - left me feeling lethargic! The heat didn't help - it's quite warm. Thankfully there is a nice breeze.

We wound our way past a nice plaza, & beautiful sections of old aqueduct, & up to St. John's Basilica. We didn't want to pay the entry fee so continued on to the mosque, which has a cool courtyard lined with broken pediments from an earthquake.

We couldn't see an easy way up the hill for a view (the citadel is closed for renovation) & were feeling very tired, so headed back to the hotel.

I'm sitting in one of the many sitting areas (this one open air but shaded) and the proprietress(?) is chatting in Turkish on her cell phone. Lovely music is playing - I think in Greek. (She said it was Turkish music.)

After a nap we migrated up to the terrace, where it is now a delightful temperature. The view is spectacular, a 360° panorama of the fortress, sea, town, & temple of Artemis. We are the only

people up here. Evocative smells of cooking are drifting up from the kitchen. Smoke is billowing up from field ~~the~~ fires. It's very green here. This is an idyllic place.

Around 6:30 other guests began to drift up to the roof. We chatted with a couple from England. This is their 2nd or 3rd trip to Turkey & this time they're staying a week in Selcuk, just relaxing. They moved to this pension from another, because of its reputation. There were about 14 of us on the roof. The sunset was spectacular.

At 7:30 most went down to dinner on the terrace below. This option is 12 liras extra & it's a phenomenal spread. Tonight it was lentil soup, pea & tomato stew, dolmades w/ yogurt, salad, meatballs, rice pilaf, & melon. ~~It was~~ late half & was stuffed.

One woman, American, has been living in Istanbul for a few years & speaks quite a lot of Turkish.

She was able to teach me a few things, & fill me in on the family. Dervis owns the pension. His sister runs it. His mom cooks. His other sister, oya, works here in the summer, but not now (she's the one I brought the coffee for).

Grant is feeling very tired & low energy today. He read after dinner & I went for a walk. The small town center is lit up & it seems that most of the men in town are out in the tea houses chatting & watching TV. Hawkers line a few streets & called out to me. I talked to a few of them, and they were very nice. Most I just said hello, smiled, & kept on walking.

I checked my email & headed back to the hotel for a shower, read, & snooze. My hips are sore today from all the walking. I hear the voices of the family through the open windows, happy, laughing, playing with a baby, drinking tea. The temperature is perfect - open windows, no mosquitoes.

Friday Oct. 9

Grant slept a total of about 16 hours between yesterday afternoon & 7:00 this morning.

Breakfast at 8: lots of fruit, cucumber, tomato, cheese, hard boiled egg, bread, butter, jam, honey.

We hightailed it to Efesus, hoping to avoid the tour bus crowds. We made the mistake of starting at the top - the tour busses drop people off at the top & pick them up at the bottom. Advice: start at the bottom! You'll have the place to yourself, & you'll walk uphill in the coldest part of the day.

Except for the crowds, Efesus is fantastic & well worth seeing. There are many spots where you can get away from the crowds & practically have the place to yourself. On the way back we met a fabulous couple from Shaw Island. They couch surf & highly recommend it. They are couch surfing around Turkey for a month. They loved

Turkish toilets  
reflux 2:

eastern Turkey.

We've only seen two Turkish "floor" toilets - the rest are European style.

My reflux hasn't bothered me a bit, & I've been eating huge portions, drinking coffee, & sleeping flat. It's a mystery, and always happens when I travel.

Back to Selcuk for lunch at the same restaurant as yesterday. We think it's the best place in town. Delicious, inexpensive food, super friendly owner, & lots of schoolkids come here. Ayasuluk Restoran. Today I had a mixed plate with chicken stew, garbanzo stew, green beans, & rice. Wonderful.

We bought a small bag of Turkish delight (loukoum) which is really just flavored sugar cubes, gelatinous, coated in powdered sugar. The total was "seven fifty" which was actually seventy five kuruş (cents), but we

thought was seven & a half lira, which would have been really expensive. But he, like many Turks, still thinks in the old lira, which only changed two years ago. What was once 1 million lira is now 1 lira.

Turkish delight is a lot like gummy bears, though softer. I don't really like it much - give me baklava!

We stopped back at the hotel to get our beach gear & spend the hot afternoon at the beach, which is called Pamucak. It's gorgeous, just a few minutes from town, & there's hardly anyone here! For 5 lira each (about \$3) we each have a lounge chair & umbrella. It's completely silent except for the waves rolling gently onto the beach. The beach is fairly clean. The water is cool. Off to our left, blessedly out of sight around a point, is the madness of cruise ship port Kuzadası. The only evidence are a few sailing boats

(gulets) & a water park in the far distance on the point. Every other beach chair is empty, and there are a few people at the far (free) end of the beach. There are two small cafes & free parking. This beach isn't even mentioned in guidebooks. What a find!

Around 4:30 we packed up & drove to Şirince, a tiny hill town about 9 km above Selçuk. A narrow, steep, windy road leads to it - the kind where if you meet another car, & you're on the cliff side, you start praying. Unfortunately it turned out to be market day, & the place was a zoo. We headed straight up & away from the knot of busses & people. We climbed up steep, narrow streets & it was extremely quaint & picturesque. Still, you couldn't escape the hawkers. Though these were mostly old women in doorways selling embroidered cloth. We bought a bag of dried figs. Then I happened upon a woman

selling shalwars (the baggy, pjama-like pants that older women wear). I'd been wanting to buy a pair & seized the moment. I was ready to buy a purple flowered pair, but Grant talked me into something more understated, & I think they're better. I couldn't bring myself to bargain - it's uncomfortable, & I honestly don't know if it would have been expected. So I paid the 10 lira (about \$7.50). The pants are extremely comfortable & cool.

We finally & somewhat reluctantly made our way down from the quieter high streets (stuffed with high-priced pensions) & into the thick of the market. The noise & crowds frayed our nerves & we high-tailed it out of there. Back in town we stopped for gas. No self-serve, & they wash your windshield. Then we found out that my credit card was denied - darn BECU - I had called to authorize its use in Turkey. Luckily Grant's worked.

By the time we got back to the hotel we were a bit crabby. Although driving here isn't (so far) as bad as we expected, it's still new & different & a bit nerve wracking because people, cars, trucks, & motorcycles are darting about assertively.

A shower felt fabulous & reviving. Chatting on the terrace was lovely. Dinner was convivial & delicious. Dervis's sister Ayşe married an Aussie, & they are here for a visit with their adorable 7 & 8 year old girls. The girls kept a dozen adults riveted & enraptured with their intelligent chatter all through dinner & beyond. After most of the others had gone they practised Turkish with me.

Then I wanted to pay my bill, only to discover that they don't take credit cards - oops! So we walked into town to get cash, only to discover that Grant was

almost out of money. So off to the internet cafe to transfer funds from my account, & email BECU about the mixup with my credit card.

We also stopped to get me a baklava for breakfast, & <sup>to try the famous</sup> ~~the~~ local ice cream. It's more like sorbet, & intensely flavorful. I had cherry & Grant had black mulberry.

The plan is to get up & go early tomorrow. Better get some sleep!

Saturday Oct. 10

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Up at 6, pack, leave at 7. Ate dried figs, baklava, & granola bars for breakfast as we rolled along. Watched a red sun rise. Then the sun was in our eyes for a while, which was challenging for visibility. mist in fields.

Roads & signage are good; many clean, modern gas stations with clean restrooms.

Drove through fields of corn & cotton. Also some sort of grain stalks that are harvested green & piled into sheaves about 3 feet tall. Many small field fires cast a haze of smoke. Sheep, cows, donkeys. Fields of boulders reminiscent of the U.S. southwest.

Some roads made of interlocking pavers - a bit noisy & vibrating to drive on. Lots of road construction & widening. Men building beautiful stone walls. Too many billboards. Many small villages & towns. Cabbage fields. Many tractors on the shoulder, with scarved women perched on the fenders. Dark soil look very fertile.

Suddenly a view of Lake Köcyğiz far below. A mix of Turkish & Greek music on the radio. (Greek islands are not far offshore.) magpies, pine forests, many bee hives & a suited beekeeper. Winding mountain roads. Our car is a stickshift.

The driving isn't as bad as people said it would be. The scariest part for me is the way <sup>vehicles</sup> people start to creep out in front of you before you've passed by. You're certain they're going to hit you, but they of course never do. Grant is completely comfortable with everything about the driving except me saying "watch out" constantly...

We drove to Olü Deniz to see the famed "Blue Lagoon", but you had to pay to park your car anywhere near it, it was very hot, & it was a crowded tourist scene that we did not like at all. We are just not seaside types.

So we hightailed it out of there & drove to Kayaköy, the ghost town featured in the book "Birds Without Wings." The drive through

the pine forest is really lovely, & the town itself feels surprisingly quiet & off the beaten path. We are so used to being charged for everything, including parking, that we were astonished to see a sign that said "Free parking." Next to it were free, clean bathrooms. We kept looking around for the catch, but astonishingly, there wasn't one. We had lunch at a little place ~~that~~ where we were greeted by an older Australian woman who was minding the store while the owner stepped out. She's lived there for five years & hardly speaks a word of Turkish - how can that be? I had a nice salad of potatoes & vegies. Then we took a short stroll through the town. There's an 8 lira charge to ~~se~~ wander through the ghost town, but we didn't have the time or inclination - you have a pretty good view from down below. This town was inhabited by Greeks who had to abandon their homes during the forced ethnic exchange in about 1922. Thankfully, the tour

busses appear not to have discovered this town. There is a lot of hiking around here - you'd definitely need hiking boots.

It's pomegranate season. The trees are laden. I tried the juice - it's quite tart, but has a nice flavor. I probably could have sweetened it. (We stopped at a scenic viewpoint earlier. I ordered a pom. juice from the vendor there, but was shocked when he offered me a small glass for 5 lira. (~\$3)) I walked away from it, saying, "too expensive." I felt bad...

The driving is tiring & our moods slipped a bit. It's also normal to get a bit tired of each other after so many days together.

Fewer people speak English here than I was led to believe. However, they all know what they need for their jobs serving tourists. The fact that I can speak some Turkish doesn't impress people as much as I thought it would.

There are many cell phone towers, & they do mar the scenery.

(When someone dies, the muezzin announces it during the call to prayer.)

As we approached Kaş we passed a large valley filled with plastic-clad tomato greenhouses.

Kaş is nicer than I feared. Our hotel terrace has a spectacular view. It's at one end of town, away from the central "tourist" plaza & harbor. We found a reasonably-priced "pide & pizza" restaurant with no English menu. I had eggplant kebabs (stuffed with lamb), and Grant had mushrooms with melted cheese. They also brought us a small round of pizza bread with some yoghurt sauce & parsley on it. The food here is surprisingly lightly seasoned.

Now we're back at the hotel, & loud live music is drifting up from the plaza.

Sunday Oct. 11

We left home a week ago today, & home seems a world & a lifetime away. Today is a hangout day.

I got up at 7 and sat on the rooftop terrace for an hour all alone, in the quiet, cool morning. The sun rose over the hills above the town. Grant came up a bit later & we had breakfast from the buffet with all the usual delightful choices & then some.

Then we went out to walk the town before it got too hot.

☒ Watched an old woman scrubbing a rug on her hands & knees with a soapy brush. They say that Turks are very clean, & I have noticed it.

Everyone I've met has been gentle & kind - I wonder where they got their fierce reputation.

We walked up to a Lycian tomb, carved into the hillside. What a fabulous place to be buried! Then to see the large marble sarcophagus in the center

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of town. Then along the harbor & down to the campground. It looks idyllic there, & they have cabins for rent too.

Then up to the small ancient theatre. At the top sat an old woman, calling out shrilly to everyone in Turkish. We quickly gleaned that she would take us to see the tomb on the hill, ~~and~~ <sup>then</sup> ask for money. We instead went back to our hotel, donned swimsuits, & headed down to the beach to swim in the turquoise ~~blue~~ blue, clear Mediterranean. Utter bliss! Buoyant, salty, refreshing.

We just had a wonderful lunch on the hotel terrace: a Turkish pancake (Gözleme), like a crepe filled with white cheese & parsley; and fried cubes of eggplant, zucchini, carrot, & potato. Delicious! Cooked by the adorable young wife of one of the men who works here. He is super nice & speaks Turkish

with me. His wife is expecting their first baby in March, & the poor thing is very nauseous, which makes it hard to cook.

After lunch we put on our walking togs & headed for Liman Aġzi, 4 kms east on the Lycian Way trail. 1 km from Kaş we came to the Big Pebble Beach. Here, Grant's blood sugar plummeted & he developed diarrhea. Luckily there was a nice, shady restaurant with a WC. An older woman was smashing carob pods with a hammer. When I asked why, they said they make molasses with it, & they brought me some to try. Tasted just like molasses! They gave Grant some carob pods to chew on, and said they were good for his stomach. We ordered an omelet & they brought a huge loaf of fresh bread to go with. We sat for a while, & Grant realized he couldn't continue, so he went back to the hotel & I continued on the walk.

The road climbs past a village & then you're out in the rocky fields, with olive, oak, & scratchy scrub. It's very peaceful & lovely. After about 20 minutes I began walking through piles of rocks & walls - remains of ancient villages. The trail forks here, & I wanted to go left, but I missed the fork & somehow ended up on the wrong fork. The trail got narrower & more overgrown, & after a while it began to plunge steeply down the cliff - scary.\* So I had to backtrack. But I did get to see a bright green stick bug and a big sarcophagus. I retraced my steps & found the junction I had missed, but by then

\* the village enticingly close, but straight down.

it was too late to <sup>get</sup> continue to ~~the~~ <sup>Liman Aġzi</sup> village before dark, so I turned around. As I passed by the village on the way back, a Turkish woman called out to me from her yard "Would you like some tea?!" I said

no thank you, but she was so insistent & came running to the gate. She asked where I was from, & when I said America she cried out that her daughter lives in Maryland & she has photos. So I went in. Who could refuse? We spoke mostly Turkish, & a little English. She had a small Turkish-English dictionary that was very handy. We shared photos of our kids. Her husband died 5 years ago & she is very sad. Her son lives with her but is retarded. She seemed very smart, but very old for her age - I think it ~~may~~ has been a hard life. She has a grandson in the U.S. that she has never seen. She can't get a visa to visit. She showed me letters from U.S. bankers & such, vouching for her son-in-law. She takes these to the Turkish ~~emb~~ consulate, but no visa. Her sister-in-law stopped by. Finally I said I had to go or my husband would be worried. She kissed my cheeks. I wish I'd taken a photo of her.

I walked fast back to Kaş, but it took a while, & was almost 7 by the time I returned. Over 3 hours of non-stop walking. Tired & sweaty! Shower felt great.

Walked to dinner at same restaurant as last night. They brought us dips on the house: intensely salty, thick haydari; a thick, mildly spicy tomato mix; & a mix of vegies like we had at lunch today; plus bread. I don't know why they keep bringing us free things. We also had a "pizza" & a dish of eggplant & yogurt with lamb on top. Both were OK, not great.

After dinner we strolled all around town looking at the vendors' stalls & the shops. Tons of stuff for sale, from really cheap junk to super high end jewelry & "objects." We bought more evil eyes (mezallah) and some corn nuts for road food tomorrow.

Monday Oct. 12

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no dog poop anywhere  
gas prices about \$10 gal  
Sahlatin - name of man at Kas

lucky horseshoes as gifts  
goat bells, estuary, boats  
red light counter - red, yellow, green  
police checkpoint  
scenery - coast, pine forest  
motorcycle baby  
Gazinda

roadside garbage bags  
busses stop at cafés  
hanging over centerline  
passing 3 abreast  
close to peds

motos no helmets  
oleander, bougainvillea  
mt. Olympus, clouds, snow?  
weak dollar, prices  
Antalya - big city traffic, smog  
Picnic

Atagsun - Turkish Alps / Baw village  
alpine valley

~~Sagalassos~~ Sagalassos  
Sagalassos - wander freely  
only 3 other people  
~ 1.5 hrs. steep mt. roads  
map 4 lira - not needed

nice  
to old man

map 4 lira

2 hr total detour

lizard eating lizard  
fountain

sheep along road

yellow fall color in valleys  
farms, farmhouses, red tile roofs  
no guardrails on the tier 2  
roads

honey & olive stands

tree planting on hillsides  
river bottom like Montana

Army exercises - Isparta

Tall new apt blocks galore

Drivers cut around (pass)

very close - right onto front  
bumper

light traffic on road -  
do the many busses siphon  
traffic off roads?

pine log yards, piles of firewood  
in roadsides & yards

Egirdir ~4pm. Very windy.  
Pension spartan, chilly. Dinner pricey.  
Walk to town across windy causeway.  
Walk around - people staring. Dinner  
at place with really nice man

who brought us many extras,  
including raw meat / pepper ~~keat~~  
kötlet. I had Güveç - good,  
but spicy. 14.5 lira. Back to hotel,  
exhausted.

Bed was hard as a board.  
I woke up stiff & sore, with  
a headache.

[Sagalassos was amazing -  
highly recommended.]

Byzantine castle walls in Egirdir.

Breakfast - shrivelly, but  
great sour cherry jam

Family all seem quite glum

Egirdir didn't do much for us

no decor in room - no  
rugs or wall hangings

Tues Oct. 13

Up at 7, left at 8:25

Sunny day, less wind

Every town has minarets -  
like church steeples elsewhere.  
Muzzer calls to prayer like  
church bells.

Many produce stalls by  
roadsides. Lots of apples,

Giant piles of apple culls -  
Yeşilköy. What do they do  
with them? Country looks just  
like Lake Chelan, except for  
peasants in shalwar & headscarfs.  
Old women with swaddled baby  
tied on back like papoose.  
I wish we could stop & ask  
questions.

Very few cars. Gorgeous  
country roads. Fall color.

Horse & donkey carts.

Lots of power lines.

Hüyük Road - gorgeous!  
wheat(?) fields, many  
black from burning. High  
plains, pine & juniper,  
snack stop - view of  
lake & valley - wave to  
tractor drivers as they pass -  
big smiles.

It's a beautiful day. warm,  
not hot, light breeze, blue  
sky with many a cloud.

cross 4800' pass.

Konya:

Almost a million people  
4500' high  
brown plain

Anatolian Steppes - brown, dry

Air brown from dust &  
hay stubble fires.

Sugar beets grown here.

Sultanhuni Karavansaray  
huge old stopping spot  
where weary traders could rest  
for the night, their goods &  
animals safe behind high  
stone walls & locked gates.

A group of scruffy school  
kids came running right up to  
the car asking for money -  
first time we've seen that  
here.

Inside the Han we met  
two Turkish women, <sup>one</sup> of whom babbled  
on in Turkish. I got the gist  
of it I think - a sister who lives  
in California, married to an  
American man, has three kids.  
Fun to use my Turkish. They  
are from Bodrum.

Rugs laid in road for cars  
to drive over.

~~to~~ Found rug repair shop,  
but it wasn't Turabi's. No one  
spoke English, but they called

someone who did. He offered to have someone take us to Turabi's, but it was a few km away, and no one there speaks English, so we decided it would be too time consuming & unproductive to go.

Lots of heavily-laden, slow moving sugar beet trucks - passing them very stressful - lots of road construction. But finally we passed the sugar beet factory, and no more beet trucks.

Still a fair amount of trucks on road. Dust & mirage effect make passing difficult/stressful.

Lots of wonderful Turkish traditional & pop music on radio

After Aksaray, road gets much better. 4 lanes, fewer trucks. Still, the dust & brown gets to your mood.

We arrived in Uchisar about 3:30. Grant is exhausted from all the driving.

We are at Kilim Pension, & it seems nice. The owner, who speaks English, is not here, but his father showed us to our room. It's warm, sunny, breezy, peaceful. Terrace in the sun. Fabulous view out over the Kapadokya landscape

~~The~~ Uçisar rolls up the sidewalks at night, & there is nothing to do or see. The hotel charges 16 lira for dinner - way high - so we & isn't til 8 pm - way late - so we went into town & found edible cheese pizza for 5 lira each. Found out there was a huge screwup with our rental car - the wrong company (the one I cancelled) showed up - we think - still hoping to get it figured out via email.

Back to hotel where they're serving the fancy meal. This place

is more upscale than we realized.  
Mostly French tourists here.  
Speaking French is very helpful.

Wednesday Oct. 14

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A gorgeous morning. Watched the sun rise, glad I had a windbreaker. Met a great couple from CA who've been here for a week. They say the wind has cleared the air from the heavy fire smoke of yesterday. Ballooning was cancelled due to wind.

We tried walking from Uçisar to Göreme, but the path was too slippery for tennis shoes. You'd need boots to really hike here.

Uçisar has lovely side streets, clean & landscaped ~~the~~<sup>near the</sup> pricey pensions.

We drove to Göreme & up Zemi Valley ("Love" Valley) a ways & parked. We started walking up but quickly hit mud & turned back.

Bought figs & olives in Göreme & parked at the entrance to

Sword Valley to avoid paying the 3 lira parking fee.

Paid our 15 lira to get into the Open Air Museum, but not really worth it. It's smaller than I expected, & only features churches & frescoes of Jesus scenes. I like the outsides better than the insides. At least it's not too crowded this time of year.

Picnic at tables w/ fab view: leftover pizza + olives, cheese.

It's windy today & grit gets in your eyes. The sky is cloudy & grey brown.

Older people coming to any of these sites should definitely bring trekking poles. Steep stairs & ~~a~~ few handrails.

~~Hotel~~ Cavusin - vieux village  
Jendarme & cookie apple

Bought some expensive baklava in Goreme - we didn't especially like the town. Felt artificial & pricey.

Drove to Cavusin. Get there before they start charging. Way more interesting than Goreme museum, and no tourists. Grant not feeling well so I walked up trail 10 minutes, past old houses carved into the stone, & onto a hill with a gorgeous view of green & pink cliffs & green valleys. Not a soul there.

Then to Urgup to see if we could straighten out the car problem. Argus Tourism was really nice. They apologized for the mistake & will give us the other company's rate, plus a free shuttle to Kayseri. We are very pleased & relieved. Agency in old (former) prison.

Back to hotel so Grant can let his stomach recover.

Squash harvest - tons of large yellow & green winter squash. They scoop out & dry the

seeds, & feed the squash to animals or compost it. Apparently it doesn't taste good.

We had been warned that the food in Kapadokya isn't so great, and we are finding that to be the case.

The handicrafts we're seeing outside of Istanbul are mostly either schlocky or unappealing.

Sisik is the pension owner. He speaks French, English, Italian, Kurdish, & Turkish. He's born & raised here, but is very cosmopolitan. He's a fabulous chef & cooks a 4 course meal every night. It's 16 lira (\$12). Tonight we had lentil soup with bread baked in a wood stove, then cold stuffed eggplant, then a lamb stew with rice and potatoes, and for dessert some sort of flan made of apple, raisin, potato, & flour!

I'm getting to speak a lot of French here, and am pleased that I'm still able to speak it well.

Road blocked because Turkish Army General staying in town. One of the Gendarmes offered me a cookie.

There's a large police/Gendarme presence in Turkey, but they seem very nice.

← Decided to eat at pension for want of other options, & for something to do in evening

Thurs. Oct. 15

57

Woke with stomach cramps, alas.  
Drive south to Mustaphapaşa,  
quiet town with old rock buildings  
mixed with new stone ones.

Fewer road signs out here.  
Have to feel our way along.  
Beautiful, scenic road. Lots of  
green river bottoms with poplars.

Potato country. A dozen tractor  
trailers filled with potatoes.

Now up on high, empty  
road - nothing for miles. Only  
one other car on road.

Söğanlı charges to enter the  
town! Instead we went to  
the restaurant at the entrance.  
It's owned by a super sweet  
man who speaks ~~many~~ <sup>three</sup> languages.  
He's created a beautiful  
outdoor garden. We had delicious  
lentil soup, homemade bread, &  
yogurt with honey. His wife makes  
the yogurt from their cow's milk.

His garden had many apple trees. He said to help ourselves, & brought us fresh walnuts.

A German Tour group of 20 was coming for lunch, but we left before they came. Tour groups seem to eat about 1:00.

Saw a truck filled with HUGE cabbage - maybe 12" diameters.

Warm & fall day with puffy white clouds,

Underground food storage in hillsides with vents sticking out of ground.

Strange to see peasants in field talking on cell phone.

Bahceci Got lost in a small town dead end where women were turning ~~raisin~~ grape juice into molasses. They gave us sips of the juice & the molasses. We couldn't not drink it, but

it's the last thing our sore tummies need.

We went back to the hotel & I slept for 3 hours to escape from my stomach ache. I woke up feeling very nauseous & groggy. We did a ~~slow~~ stroll into town to buy crackers instead of eating a dinner, as food doesn't sound good to either of us right now.

I took a motion sickness pill to see if that helps with the nausea. (It did.)

There are two freestanding ATM machines in ~~the~~ town. They seem anomalous. They work.

We're impressed with Turkey's infrastructure.

We saw many hot air balloons today. It's supposed to rain tomorrow.

~~The road was bl~~

Friday Oct. 16

61

After sleeping most of the last 16 hours I woke up feeling better but still weak. After a very light breakfast we said goodbye to grandpa & cousin & left for Uziup about 8:30. We dropped the car & walked around a bit, but weren't feeling too great, so went back to wait for shuttle. The people there were so nice to us. Kept asking us if we wanted tea. It turns out that the rental car company we reserved with wants to charge us full price, so the company we cancelled with, but whose car we ~~used~~ got, won't charge us anything. They even threw in the airport shuttle for free. All with smiles & no hard feelings. Kayseri airport is small, clean, efficient. ~~less~~ Flight was only 1 hr. 10 minutes, but still they fed us a nice meal! Sandwich, salad, hummous, strawberry yogurt.

We took the metro back to our hotel & it was easy & cheap. Took about an hour <sup>or there about</sup> or a bit less. It's drizzling here but is warm & muggy. Went to dinner then walked quite a ways up to a hotel where they're having an NA convention. Grant bought a t-shirt for Bob, and we got to say hi to Betul. Then we walked back. Long walk on very crowded, noisy streets, which I find tiring, but Grant finds invigorating.

Istanbul feels very safe, & people are very kind & gentle. We did find people in the interior to be a bit more down. Maybe life is harder there?

There was a group of young boys at the NA conference. They are street kids from eastern Turkey that were addicted to sniffing glue or paint. They are in Turkey's first treatment center that uses the 12 step program (other programs use medicine). 6 months in treatment, 6 months in halfway house, then on their own.

~~Saturday Oct 27~~

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They are being taught handicrafts so they can hopefully make a living. They looked so young and so sweet. Heartbreaking to imagine what their lives have been like.

Saturday Oct. 17

65

After a mellow breakfast at the hotel we walked to Eminönü to buy our ferry tickets. It's a perfect day: blue sky mixed with clouds, light breeze, maybe 65 degrees.

Walked into spice market to buy souvenirs: mashallah bracelets for Alex & me, t-shirts for the boys.

Got in line for the ferry early & got good seats up top, facing forward, but unpadded seats. Motion sickness pills recommended.

Incessant chant of surrounding vendors of other Bosphorus tours. We're taking the public tour: 1.5 hours each way, with a 3 hour stop at the Black Sea end.

met a nice couple from Budapest. They say Budapest is very nice, but a bit more expensive than Istanbul, & the people aren't quite as friendly. He says they are more acquisitive & want fancy cars & work a lot to earn money & get ahead.

Tips for ferry: warm clothes.  
Prepare for people crowding to balcony for  
We sampled the famous Kaniğa yogurt, with  
powdered sugar on top. Good, but  
sour.

The views are spectacular  
on this trip. Beautiful palaces  
& old houses (yalı).

Most people got off at  
Sarıyer - not sure why, as  
it's hardly mentioned in the  
guidebook.

The wind is colder now -  
perhaps because we're closer  
to the Black Sea?

We saw many fabulous  
places today - I hope the photos  
will capture it.

At the last station  
we had 2.5 hours. (The trip  
up actually took almost  
2 hours, not 1.5 as they said.)

67  
We walked about 30 min.  
up a very steep hill to a  
wonderful old fortress with views  
of the Black Sea.

Then back down to town for  
lunch with the Hungarian couple.  
They had a lot of trouble deciding  
what & where to eat, but finally  
agreed to a fish sandwich.  
A smidge pricier than Eminönü,  
but captive audience, and  
fab atmosphere.

Ride back boat mostly  
empty - no crowding rails for  
photos - easy to see both  
sides of river. Black Sea  
wind to our backs so warmer.

Walk Hungarians to  
spice market, buy me a  
small lamp. Walk, walk,  
walk back to hotel. Rest.  
Walk to dinner: güzleme &  
manti (parcake & ravioli) at  
small place, very atmospheric,  
off "tram street" - only

Turks there, mostly young, hanging out on Saturday night. "Sherbet" turns out to be rose juice - nice, though a bit cloying. Mainly intended for sipping after - smoking a water pipe I think.

Started raining on walk back to hotel, as if to say "time to leave Istanbul!"

Now to pack & up at 3:30 for airport shuttle.