



A MEDITERRANEAN ODYSSEY

A private journey through Turkey and Italy in Summer 2011

A client from the Far East briefed Brown + Hudson at short notice to craft a journey to some of the Mediterranean's most iconic sights and most beautiful locations. He was travelling with a friend and his young son. Having never visited this region before, he asked for diverse experiences that would introduce everyone in the party to its history, culture and geography in a most engaging manner. And he expressed a passion for gourmet cuisine and fishing. Choosing to travel independently, he desired a comprehensive itinerary to ensure their time would be incredibly well spent, while giving the party a level of fluidity and flexibility to also explore their beautiful surroundings on their own.

The journey we created took our travellers from Istanbul with its magnificent architecture and unique "East-meets-West" atmosphere to the stunning landscapes of Cappadocia, onto Turkey's Aegean coast with its ancient ruins and dreamy bays and beaches. Sailing onboard a privately chartered, luxurious gulet, they trav-

elled through picturesque isles and swam and snorkeled in turquoise waters, before reaching the Greek Island of Kos, where they boarded a plane to Naples. After a few wonderful days exploring legendary Capri, they returned to the mainland, driving the hair-raising coastal roads from Pompeji to Amalfi. The trip was rounded off with a few days in the ultra-comfortable surroundings of Villa d'Este on Lake Como.

All along the way we build personalised experiences into the journey ensuring everyone in the group got the most out of it. Hand-picked expert cultural guides in Istanbul, Cappadocia, Ephesus, Pompeji and the Amalfi were briefed on our group's particular interests, making sure they saw the sights that mattered the most to understand the locality and its contexts in a way that was enlightening and entertaining for everyone. Vehicles were provided for independent exploration where this was useful and pleasant, whereas private chauffeurs took the wheel where self-driving might have negatively impacted the experience.

In response to our client's love of good food and excellent fishing, we leveraged our knowledge of the region and contacts there to create opportunities for him to indulge these passions in often unexpected ways. For instance, after having cruised the waters of the Bospurus in a private yacht in the morning, in the afternoon our guide took the group to the Galata bridge where locals have dangled their rods into the waters for centuries. Pulling some fishing equipment from the back of the vehicle our clients joined the local men for a spot of impromptu fishing and corresponding banter. Later they tried the famed Balik Ekmek fish delicacies caught in these waters at a local stall. Truly fishing 'Istanbul-style'.

The theme continued with fishing off the back of the Gulet expertly aided by the yacht's captain and crew, scuba diving to see marine denizens in Bodrum and Capri, a night-time outing with local fishermen on the placid waters of Lake Como, and a fly-fishing river adventure in the hills of Piedmonte with a legendary mountain guide.

The culinary focus of course also included fabulous lunches and dinners in some of the most famous and acclaimed restaurants along the way. Each was selected to provide our group with the finest local dining available, giving them insight into the gastronomic diversity and excellence of the region's cuisines. A special mention should go to the private cooking class arranged by Brown + Hudson for our client with the illustrious chefs at Don Alfonso's. With 3 Michelin stars this is the leading restaurant in southern Italy and one of the best in the world.

Of course the properties we involved played a role in the success of the trip, each setting the stage in its own way for its locale. One of Istanbul's finest addresses right on the shores of the Bospurus in the majestic walls of a 19th palace was followed by a boutique hotel built into the very rocks and caves of Cappadocia. Fabled hotels reminiscent of the glamorous sets of Hollywood classics in Capri and the Amalfi could only be topped by Villa d'Este, which has won multiple awards as the best hotel in the world. Naturally we worked with each property to secure the rooms with the best views, which we knew was important to our travellers.

From the first presentation of the itinerary, our clients were as pleased with the selection of destinations and properties, as with the overall flow of their travel story. Despite the short notice, the travel time at peak season, and the popularity of some the places visited, we had succeeded in crafting a journey for them that was 'spot-on' brief. Once on the road, what excited them the most, however, was how we took things further through the myriad personal touches and experiences we curated for them. These made their journey truly unique and ultimately personal, as they were based purely on our implicit understanding of their wishes and needs.



Facts about this Brown + Hudson journey

Size of group: 2 adults + 1 child

Lead time from initial enquiry: 4 weeks

Length of journey: 3 weeks

Seasonality: Our group travelled in July due to school holidays. June and September tend to be less busy and hot, but equally beautiful.

If this travel experiences has inspired you, please call our team on +44 203 358 0110, or write us at enquiries@brownandhudson.com.