



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS ASSOCIATION
125th ANNIVERSARY
GALLIPOLI BATTLEFIELD TOUR
14 – 23 June 2027

Proposed Tour Itinerary:

Day 1. Monday 14 June – ARRIVAL AND AN INTRODUCTION TO ISTANBUL

Welcome to Istanbul, Türkiye. After checking in to your hotel, join your local tour guide, Australian battlefield historian and fellow tour members for lunch at a local restaurant followed by an afternoon cruise along the Bosphorus, one of the most strategically important waterways in the world, control of which was central to the Gallipoli campaign you are going to explore over the coming days.

With beautiful mosques, palaces, and historic Ottoman-era houses revealed on both the European and Asian shorelines, this is a wonderful introduction to a modern bustling yet ancient city. Afterwards get to know your fellow expeditioners and tour staff at a welcome dinner at your hotel.

Overnight: Burdock Hotel, ISTANBUL

Meals: L D

Day 2. Tuesday 15 June - TRAVEL TO GALLIPOLI, THE NAVAL CAMPAIGN & COASTAL TOUR

This morning we travel by coach to Gallipoli, with an introductory discussion on the circumstances leading to Australia's involvement in both the First World War and the Gallipoli campaign. Your destination and home for the next five nights, the Kum Hotel, is the ideal accommodation for touring the battlefields. Located right on the Aegean coast and only minutes from Anzac Cove, all the battlefield sites are within easy reach. After check-in and lunch, we begin our study of the Gallipoli campaigns with a stop at the Rumeli Mecidiye gun battery for discussions on the British and French naval assaults of 1915, the failure of which led to the land campaign. We then turn to the ANZAC story to walk the beach on Anzac Cove, reflecting on the significance of the events that unfolded there and learn what was planned for the morning of 25 April 1915, what happened, and why – the perfect introduction to your explorations over the following days. Later, we return to the hotel for free time to relax and discuss the day's experience before dinner.

Overnight: Kum Hotel, GALLIPOLI

Meals: B L D

Day 3. Wednesday 16 June – DAWN SERVICE, THE LANDING BEACHES & SECOND RIDGE

An early start to the day with a pre-breakfast trip to Anzac Cove for a private Dawn Service. We will then return to the Kum Hotel for breakfast. Later, our exploration will focus on the landings and the initial fighting in the hills above the beaches. We visit the striking original landing area cemeteries beginning with Beach Cemetery, where the grave of John Simpson Kirkpatrick (the man with the donkey) lies and Ari Burnu Cemetery where the Dawn Service was held until 2000. Close by is the beautiful Shrapnel Valley Cemetery, and the grave of Major Hugh Quinn after whom Quinn's Post on Second Ridge was named. Our morning concludes with a walk up onto Plugge's Plateau, the first ground captured on 25 April 1915. Learn about the actual Ottoman opposition to the landing, with the same views that the defenders had that morning. While we take in the coast and landing beaches we see exactly where Watson's Pier was located and how important it was to the Anzac campaign. Then discover the surprising true size of what became the Anzacs' home for eight grueling months with a panoramic view of the entire beachhead and inland to Second Ridge. After lunch at the hotel, we begin our exploration of Second Ridge and the front line that was established after the first confused days of fighting.

Beginning at Lone Pine, we learn of the initial struggle to hold the high ground, taking time to reflect in the cemetery and at the National Memorial. We will then walk the old trench system at Johnston's Jolly, before following the line to Quinn's Post. Here we learn why it was considered the most dangerous position on the perimeter. After a stop at Scrubby Knoll, the furthest inland point any soldiers reached at Gallipoli, we return to the hotel for a BBQ dinner.

Overnight: Kum Hotel, GALLIPOLI

Meals: B L D

Day 4. Thursday 17 June – THE AUGUST OFFENSIVE & BIGALI

Today we examine the August Offensive, the last attempt to break out of the Anzac beachhead in conjunction with a new British landing at Suvla Bay. We begin at Lone Pine, with the attack by the Australian 1st Brigade. Planned originally as a feint to attract Ottoman attention away from activities further north, the fighting here was intense, lasting four days. Next, we move to Russell's Top to view the northern sector of the Anzac Beachhead before walking to The Nek via Walkers Ridge Cemetery. From there we walk through the old Australian trenches to the Nek, learning the circumstances of the disastrous attack by the 3rd Australian Light Horse Brigade on 7 August 1915, while appreciating the natural beauty of such a sad place. Last stop for the morning is Chunuk Bair, the New Zealand objective and site of bitter fighting from 7 to 10 August. It is now the site of the New Zealand memorial at Gallipoli and the location of their national service on Anzac Day. From there we get a personal understanding of the effects of the terrain on operations at Gallipoli, with a guided walk from Chunuk Bair down the spectacular Rhododendron Ridge to the northern outposts close to the coast. This is the ground covered by the New Zealanders in their attack on the heights in August 1915. After lunch at the hotel, you learn about the last major Australian action in the campaign, at Hill 60, where the only Victoria Cross awarded to a member of the Australian Light Horse in the First World War was awarded. We finish the afternoon with a stop for a Turkish coffee or apple tea in Bigali, an original Gallipoli village which housed Mustafa Kemal's Divisional Headquarters on the morning of 25 April 1915. His Division, the 19th, was based in the surrounding area and from here he launched the counterattack that stopped the Anzac advance inland on 25 April. The house he occupied in the village is now a museum. We will then return to the hotel for dinner.

Overnight: Kum Hotel, GALLIPOLI

Meals: B L D

Day 5. Friday 18 June - CAPE HELLES & THE BATTLE OF KRITHIA, WATERLOO DINNER

This morning we head to the southern tip of the Peninsula to discuss the British and French landing areas. We begin at Achi Baba, geographically one of the key points on the Peninsula and at once both a British objective and an Ottoman stronghold on 25 April 1915. Discussion here provides an understanding of the British landing plan and the problems they subsequently encountered, while the view gives us a sense of the scale of the peninsular campaign and the nature of the terrain. Moving further south, we visit the impressive Turkish Memorial at Morto Bay which reveals the horrendous cost to the Ottoman defenders at Gallipoli. After a stop nearby at the only French cemetery at Gallipoli, we will visit the main British landings at 'V' and 'W' Beaches and walk up to the Commonwealth Memorial at Cape Helles. Although considered a British and French area of operations, Cape Helles also is of significant interest to Australians. In May, the 2nd Australian Brigade and the New Zealand Brigade were sent down from the ANZAC sector to reinforce a further attack on the village of Krithia. Despite heroic efforts by both ANZAC formations the attack failed, with heavy casualties. Lunch will be at a local restaurant in Alçıtepe (Krithia). The afternoon begins with a discussion of the Australian attack in the 2nd Battle of Krithia and a stop at Redoubt Cemetery, the furthest point reached by the Australian advance. We then return to the hotel for relaxation before this evening, attending the **special commemorative Waterloo Dinner in honour of Lt Stan Watson RAE** who after overseeing the construction of Watson's Pier at Anzac Cove on 18 June 1915, held a dinner upon its completion with his fellow sapper officers on what was the 100th Anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo.

Overnight: Kum Hotel, GALLIPOLI

Meals: B L D

Day 6. Saturday 19 June - TROY & ÇANAKKALE

Today is a break from the battlefields. After breakfast we cross the Dardanelles to Asian Türkiye, to explore the ancient city of Troy, made famous for the setting of the legendary Trojan War in Homer's epic poems the *Iliad and the Odyssey*. A relaxed walk through this UNESCO World Heritage site will reveal the history of the nine cities destroyed and rebuilt here over 4000 years. We then return to Çanakkale for lunch and afterwards explore Fort Çimenlik and the Naval museum or enjoy free time along the waterfront promenade and surrounding lane ways to take in the local culture, before returning to the hotel for dinner and our last night on the Gallipoli peninsular.

Overnight: Kum Hotel, GALLIPOLI

Meals: B L D

Day 7. Sunday 20 June - TRAVEL TO ISTANBUL

Following breakfast, and check out, we return to Istanbul via a short stop at the Gallipoli War Museum in Gelibolu. We will stop for lunch enroute to Istanbul. After checking into your hotel, centrally located within the Old City, we explore the sixth century Basilica Cistern, the largest of Istanbul's ancient water storages and featured in many movies and novels. At just under 10,000 square meters in size with 336 marble columns supporting the ceiling, two depicting the Medusa head, it is an impressive site to explore. Dinner tonight will be at leisure, with the chance to enjoy one of the many restaurants or cafes in the surrounding lively laneways.

Overnight: Vogue Supreme Hotel, ISTANBUL

Meals: B L

Day 8. Monday 21 June - ISTANBUL 'OLD CITY' WALKING TOUR

After breakfast, we have a full day guided walking tour of the famous sights of the old city. We begin at Topkapi Palace, the main residence of the Ottoman Sultans for over 400 years, to see the extensive grounds and rooms with impressive displays of jewels, potteries and armours. Then we move onto the Hippodrome and the beautiful Blue Mosque, with its immense interior lined with 20,000 handmade ceramic tiles. After a stop for lunch, we leisurely explore the famous Grand Bazaar to browse some of the 5,000 shops selling gold, silver, leather, carpets, ceramics, Turkish delight and all kinds of souvenirs. The remainder of the afternoon is free to continue shopping or exploring this fascinating city.

Overnight: Vogue Supreme Hotel, ISTANBUL

Meals: B L

Day 9. Tuesday 22 June – ISTANBUL 'OLD CITY'

This morning we visit the Hagia Sophia, one of the great marvels of architecture and the most important Byzantine monument in Istanbul. The remainder of the day is free to explore this fascinating city at your leisure. Later together, we attend the tour farewell dinner in a restaurant with the most spectacular views of Istanbul at night.

Overnight: Vogue Supreme Hotel, ISTANBUL

Meals: B D

Day 10. Wednesday 23 June – DEPARTURE

After breakfast the tour concludes with a transfer to Istanbul international airport for your onward journey.

Meals: B

*** Itinerary is subject to change at Tour Manager's discretion when circumstances prevail.*