

It is hard to sum up the impact of such a trip in one convenient package. The first thing to be said is that it was wonderful. Our guide, Hakan Berberoglu, was absolutely great, and the fact that he invited his parents to join us on our tour speaks to the level of friendship and trust that we share. To have three Turks guiding us around Turkey was absolutely fantastic. The group got a truly genuine sense of Turkish hospitality, acceptance, and warmth. It seemed like they were willing to share everything with us. Their company was very precious and it enriched our entire experience.

Similarly, every individual or group that hosted us in their restaurant, school, or home conveyed a profound sense of generosity, friendship, and appreciation. One constant throughout the trip was a sense that not only was the experience meaningful for us, but it was also meaningful for those who took us in. It meant a great deal for these Turks to welcome us into their homes and schools. They demonstrated how people the world over care for one another and engender peace and brotherhood. Despite all of the distance and differences between us, they treated us better than most neighbors do each other. I begin to believe that in this world there need not exist strangers. I certainly never felt like one in Turkey.