

June 26

Istanbul to Cappadocia

Another poor night's sleep so I may sleep on the lunchtime flight. Breakfast was the usual - still good - and we were packed, prepared and sitting in the lounge with time to spare.

We chatted to a couple of Brazilian ladies who had lived in London for years and were very happy there.

Our transport arrived early and took us on the half hour drive along the waterfront to the airport in bright sunshine.

We passed through one security check inside the front doors, just like Shanghai, and stood in front of the check-in machines wondering what to do next. A nice young man helped us insert our passports - even he put mine in the wrong way up - and we were soon equipped with boarding passes.

We joined a queue of about ten minutes at the bag drop, then passed through another security check. My hip set off the first one but not the second. Very strange.



Dated but tidy Domestic Terminal



An excellent food display

The main lounge was busy, a bit dated but clean and comfortable. We had a tea and a coffee, I took photos of the impressive food counter and we awaited boarding.

Unlike the flight from London, this one showed Turkish Airlines to be highly efficient. We boarded with plenty of time to spare and pushed back a few minutes early. There was a queue for the runway but we reached Kayseri ahead of time.



We arrived safely at Kayseri

Our bags arrived quickly and we emerged into the real world to find a very attractive lady, Ayse (Ayeesha) brandishing a board with our names on it. We climbed into a very smart Mercedes van and drove at speed along none too smooth roads for about an hour. This did Valerie's back no good at all.

The roads started at near motorway standard and gradually narrowed until we reached the hotel down a very narrow cobbled street between the buildings.



We left the city ...



... and passed into the countryside

The countryside was dry, with lots of irrigated fields. Industrial process plant appeared from time to time and there were lots of quarries.



Signs of irrigation



Lots of semi desert

I took lots of photos out of the van windows but I expect that the quality will be poor. This proved to be the case so that many of the things that I saw will not be illustrated.



We left the motorways!

We arrived at the Gamirasu Cave Hotel, an amazing place, built into the cliffs. Our room was up several flights of steps with views over the rest of the hotel and the surrounding area.



Stairs everywhere

It was extremely well appointed with seemingly no expense spared. As soon as we had arrived, we were offered glasses of local white wine, very good, and plums from the hotel garden.



An unusual doorway



Swimming pool with roses



A smart room

We wandered round the hotel taking photos, explored the incredibly historic church which was part of the complex, in an adjoining cave, and marvelled at the wonders in front of us.



Murals (or frescos) in the church



A very smart bathroom

After a rest, we walked a couple of hundred yards into the village of Ayvali, which was old but not really picturesque, and looked at the stream which flowed past the hotel.

We then returned for a rest and to prepare for dinner.



A quiet main street



An Adana kebab



Buildings on all of the hills

The hotel food was good. An interesting dish of baked local pastrami, something I would never have thought of. It was basically cured beef, baked with lots of lemon and tomato. Valerie had a spinach dish and I had an Adana kebab, supposedly a local delicacy but not really different from the version that they sell at the Turkish restaurant in Bourne End. The small pudding of baked figs in syrup, which we shared, was excellent.



The source of our early morning alarm



Evening colours

Valerie retired early and I remained downstairs, had a tea, wrote my diary and watched foot ball on the TV.