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COMPANY

Travel With Excellence!

# TURKEY

## TRAVEL GUIDE



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Tour Specialist Company (TSC Travel) is a worldwide online travel service company reaching directly to consumers all over the globe.

We were founded as an independent company who focuses on providing top-level customer service at affordable prices.

Each staff member has over 15 years' experience in the industry and all are committed to helping people learn about the country of Turkey through travel.

Our mainline customer service staff are also supported by over 500 additional members of the team throughout locations in Turkey, Greece, Egypt, Italy, Jordan, Syria and Israel.

We are also a member of American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA) and also an "A" class member of TURSAB (Association of Turkish Travel Agencies).

Turkey Tours Specialists are a creative company combining their passions for travel with the country of Turkey.

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SUBJECT	PAGES
Contents and contact details	3
History, facts, culture and social traditions	4/5/6
Turkish phrases and travel tips	7/8/9
Turkish food and coffee	10/11/12
Shopping for souvenirs	13/14
Istanbul	15/19
Cappadocia	20/23
Kusadasi, Pamukkale and Aegean Region	24/28
Antalya	29/30
Konya	31
Trabzon	32
Canakkale	33
Bodrum	34/35
Marmaris	36
Eastern Turkey	37/39
Christianity in Turkey	40
The journey of Saint Paul	42
Seven churches of Revelations	43
Whirling dervishes, Sufism and Rumi	44
Mustafa Kemal Ataturk	45

# Merhaba! TÜRKİYE'YE HOŞGELDİNİZ

(HELLO! WELCOME TO TURKEY)

Dear Guests,

We hope you are as excited as we are, and ready to explore Turkey. We cannot wait to share our passion with you so have prepared this travel guide detailing fun and interesting facts about Turkey.

During your tour, the professional guide will also give additional information and assist in any way possible to ensure you have a memorable experience.

If you need to contact us at any time or you would like us to send a copy of this guide to your family and friends back home, simply use the contact details below.

With Best Regards

## TSC TRAVEL TEAM

**Email:** [info@turkeytourspecialist.com](mailto:info@turkeytourspecialist.com)

**Toll Free (USA & CA):** 1-800-715-2425

**Toll Free (Australia):** 1-800-442-756

**International Calls:** +90-212-232-1010

## TURKEY AT A GLANCE...

The Republic of Turkey is in the Northern hemisphere and while most of it is situated in the continent of Asia, there is a small area of Istanbul in Europe.

• Language:	Mainly Turkish but Kurdish, Dimli and Azeri are also spoken
• Capital:	Ankara
• Government:	Parliamentary Republic
• Founder:	Mustafa Kemal Ataturk
• Size:	779.452 km <sup>2</sup>
• Currency:	Turkish Lira (TL)
• Time Zone:	EET (UTC)
• Neighbouring countries include Georgia, Armenia, Greece, Bulgaria, Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq, and Syria	
• Surrounding seas include the Mediterranean on the South coastline; Aegean Sea on the West coast and the Black Sea to the North.	

## BRIEF HISTORY OF TURKEY

Earliest records show Turkish ancestors lived in Central Asia some time before 2000 BC. By the 10th century, Islam had spread and some Turks travelled southwest to Anatolia of which historians class as a cradle of civilization due to numerous civilizations that have occupied the area including the Hittites, Assyrians, Lydians, Greeks, Persians, Macedonians, Ionians, Romans, Byzantines, and Turks.

In AD 1071, Seljuck Turks defeated the Byzantine Empire but their influence declined and Anatolia separated into many smaller states. Ottoman Turks conquered all of them and became the largest empire in recent history. They ruled from 1081 – 1922 but after losing World War 1, their empire was distributed among the Allies. A man called Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, led the Turkish people in a War of Independence (1919-1922).

Occupying forces were defeated and in 1923, the Republic of Turkey was established with foundations for a modern, secular state. Turkey is a member of NATO, OECD, the Council of Europe, and other major Western organizations. It is also in the process of joining the EU. Many finance experts consider it one of the fastest developing economies in the world.







## DO YOU KNOW THESE FACTS ABOUT TURKEY?

- The most popular religion of Turkey is Islam
- The part of Turkey in Europe is called 'Thrace', while the land in Asia is called 'Anatolia'
- The highest peak is Mount Agri (5,166 m) which some historians also suspect is the resting place of Noah's ark.
- The Temple of Artemis and the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, in Bodrum belong to the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.
- St Paul (Saul) was born in Tarsus, situated to the East of Mersin.
- Istanbul, formally Constantinople, was the capital of the Byzantine & Ottoman Empires and is the only city in the world spread over two continents.
- St. Peter's Church, in Antioch (Antakya) was the first church built by man.
- St. Nicholas (Santa Claus) was born in Demre, on the Mediterranean coast.
- Turks introduced coffee to Europe during the Vienna War in the 15th century.
- Cherries were introduced to Europe from Giresun (Northern Turkey).
- The Seven Churches of Revelations mentioned in the Bible are in the Aegean region
- The oldest known human settlements have been found in Catalhoyuk and Gobeklitepe.

# TURKISH CULTURE & SOCIAL TRADITIONS

Turks are very sociable, as you will soon discover from your time in Turkey. People from countries with reserved social practises may be in awe of the friendly nature shown to everyone but relax and make new friends!

## HOS GELDİNİZ!

You will hear this phrase often in Turkey. It means, “Welcome” and the words to reply with are “Hos bulduk” which means, “We feel welcome.”

## GREETINGS & BODY LANGUAGE

A kiss on both cheeks is the standard greeting between friends while strangers will shake hands. Expressing ‘yes’ in Turkey is done by bowing your head, while ‘no’ is shown by raising your head backwards while rolling your eyes.

## ADDRESSING PEOPLE

Surnames were only introduced in Turkey in 1934 and because of this; most Turks address each other by their first name or an endearing term. ‘Bey’ is added to the first name of a man, or ‘Hanim’ to a woman’s name eg Mustafa Bey.

Other common terms are ‘abi’ (older brother), ‘abla’ (older sister), ‘amca’ (uncle) and ‘teyze’ (aunt). While ‘abi’ and ‘abla’ refer to young to middle-aged people, ‘teyze’ and ‘amca’ are reserved for the older generation.

## MEN ONLY

Culturally women do not go in Turkish teahouses because they are “men only” environments. If in any doubt, look for other females, couples and families. Countless tables filled with men playing backgammon means it is a no go area for females.

## AN INVITATION TO A TURKISH HOUSE

Turkish people invite anybody and everyone to their houses. It might be for breakfast or a formal evening meal. Shoes are not worn in the house and visitors are given slippers. Whether alcohol will be served is dependent on the family and their background.

## MARRIAGE

Turks expect adults to marry and have children, and the vast majority do. Because men should not lower their wives’ standard of living, they are not supposed to marry women of a higher economic class. In traditional Turkish society, elders control the selection of spouses and the marriage ceremony. Don’t be surprised to find yourself invited to a marriage even if you are a complete stranger!

# TALKING TURKISH

Practising Turkish whilst in the country will be greatly appreciated by locals. Here are beginner phrases. Turkish pronunciation is phonetic; for instance, Merhaba is pronounced MARE - HA - BA with the MARE pronounced like "mare" in english, HA as in haha.



English	Turkish	Pronunciation
Hello	Merhaba	MARE-HA-BA
<b>How are you?</b>	<b>Nasilsin?</b>	<b>NA-SEL-SIN</b>
Good and you?	İyiyim. Sen?	EE-IM-SEN ?
<b>Thank you</b>	<b>Teşekkürler</b>	<b>TE-SH-OU-EER-LER</b>
You are welcome	Birşey değil	BEER-SHEY DEY-EEL
<b>Please</b>	<b>Lütfen</b>	<b>LUTE-FEN</b>
Good-Bye	Güle Güle	GUU-LEH GUU-LEH
<b>Where is the washroom?</b>	<b>Tuvalet Nerede?</b>	<b>TOO-WALET-NER-REYDE</b>
How much does it cost?	Ne Kadar?	NAY KAD-AR?
<b>Too expensive</b>	<b>Çok Pahalı</b>	<b>CHOC-PAR-HALA</b>
Yes	Evvet	EV-ET
<b>No</b>	<b>Hayır</b>	<b>HI-EAR</b>
Cheers	Şerefe	SHEREFAY
<b>Okey</b>	<b>Tamam</b>	<b>TAM-AM</b>
Very Beautiful	Çok Güzel	CHOC-GOOZ-EL
<b>One</b>	<b>Bir</b>	<b>BEER</b>
Two	İki	EE-CHE
<b>Three</b>	<b>Üç</b>	<b>OOCH</b>
I don't know	Bilmiyorum	BILL-ME-YOUR-UM
<b>Help me!</b>	<b>Yardım Lutfen</b>	<b>YARD-IM LUTE-FEN</b>

# TRAVEL TIPS

**Money Exchange:** Cash is exchanged without commission in most exchange offices, banks, or hotels. Cash point machines (ATM) are available in most busy areas. They accept worldwide cards and some cash points display instructions in English. Inform your bank in advance that you are travelling to Turkey as some automatically prevent use to combat fraud. Turkish newspapers and the Internet publish exchange rates daily.

**Water:** Tap water in Turkey is high in minerals and can upset the stomach so use bottled water instead. Some upper-class hotels offer complimentary bottled water while others will charge. Most shops sell bottled water and you can still brush your teeth with tap water but do not swallow.



**Working Hours & Public Holidays:** Offices and banks are generally open from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Friday, with a break from 12:00 to 1:30 PM. Touristic shops, restaurants, and bars usually open until late at night.

## OFFICIAL HOLIDAYS

- April 23 National Sovereignty and Children's Day
- May 19 Ataturk Commemoration and Youth & Sports Day
- August 30 Victory Day (victory over invading forces in 1922)
- October 29 Republic Day (anniversary of the declaration of the Turkish Republic)

**Please note:** Dates of the following two religious festivals change according to the Muslim lunar calendar and thus occur 10 days earlier each year. Shops, banks and offices opening hours will be affected.

- **Ramadan Bayrami / Sugar Feast:** Three-day festival to celebrate the end of the fast of Ramadan.
- **Kurban Bayramı / Sacrifices Feast:** Four-day festival to slaughter a sheep or cow and distribute the meat among the poor, neighbours and within the family.

**Internet:** Most hotels, inns, pensions, and hostels have a communal computer and open wireless Internet access (Wi-Fi) in at least one public space, such as the lobby or lounge. Wi-Fi access is usually free in smaller hotels and inns but larger hotels may charge. You should check with reception. Turkish airports, some cafes, and restaurants also have free Wi-Fi access.

**Laundry:** Some hotels offer laundry services and they normally display the price list in rooms. There are not many laundrettes in Turkey but dry cleaning shops are scattered throughout most cities.





**Toilets (Bath Room/WC):** Western Style flushing toilets are used in hotels, restaurants, museums and public toilets in Western Turkey while traditional “squat” toilets are often found in bus stations and more rural areas, especially Eastern Turkey. Many public toilets in Turkey require payment (normally around 1 Turkish Liras).

**Visiting a Mosque:** Foreign visitors should remove shoes and show the same respect they would to any other house of worship. Avoid visiting mosques during prayer time. Women should cover their heads and arms, and not wear miniskirts. Men should not wear shorts.

**Tippling:** Most tour and hotel staff appreciate small tips given with discretion but it is not mandatory. Taxis do not expect tips but rounding up the fare for convenience is common. In restaurants, the normal amount to tip is 10% of the bill depending on how happy you are with the service.

**Using the Telephone:** Turkish SIM cards are sold at most mobile phone shops but it is a lengthy process for foreigners. Some shops sell telephone cards to use in public phones and there are many iPhone apps that allow you to speak free. If you use the telephone in your hotel, check with reception re charges.

**Adaptors and Voltage :** Turkey has 220 V power systems and adaptors are needed because plug sockets are two prong.

#### AVERAGE PRICES

• Bottle of Water (1 Litre)	<b>1 - 2 Lira</b>
• Street Food (Doner Kebab, Pizza, Soup)	<b>5 - 10 Lira</b>
• Simple Lunch	<b>10 - 20 Lira</b>
• Restaurant Dinner	<b>25 - 50 Lira</b>
• Packet of cigarettes	<b>6 - 9 Lira</b>

Alcoholic drinks such as beer, wine, vodka are highly taxed in Turkey. In some seaside coastal resorts, the price of a beer is 5 lira while in the big cities, can be as much as 10 lira. You should check the menu prices before drinking.



# SAMPLING DELICIOUS TURKISH FOOD



Turkey's most famous creation is undoubtedly the kebab but the country has many more creative dishes influenced throughout history by Greek, Ottoman, Persian, Armenian and other cultures.

There is an emphasis on freshness and frozen ready meals are not popular. Mezes (appetizers) are widely served and main meals offer a variety of meat and vegetarian options. Seafood is particularly popular in the coastal resorts and desserts are often sold in cake and pastry shops.

## MEZE

Legend says Ottoman ruler, Suleyman the Magnificent introduced mezes by giving slaves small portions of his meals to ensure his safety. Eventually, the portions became known as meze, a Persian word for pleasant taste. Mezes are appetizers but a few hours in a meyhane (a tavern serving drinks and meze) will prove it's not merely a snack but a whole eating experience. Examples include...

**Beyaz Peynir:** Creamy White sheep or goat's milk cheese, similar to feta  
**Cacik** (pronounced "jajik"): Yogurt with cucumber and mint

**Acli Ezme:** Spicy tomato dip

**Haydari:** Yogurt, dill and garlic

**Sigara böreği:** Deep-fried cigar-shaped pastries filled with cheese

**Yaprak dolma/sarma:** Vine leaves stuffed with spiced rice and pine nuts

**Patlican Salatasi:** Eggplant, tomato and garlic salad





## STREET FOOD

Turkish street food is available on most street corners of large busy towns and is excellent if you are traveling on a budget because prices are very cheap.

The most popular is a durum doner kebab that is lamb or chicken slowly cooked on a revolving skewer and accompanied by a sprinkling of lettuce, tomatoes and onion in a bread wrap. You can also order it served between normal bread.

### OTHER EXAMPLES INCLUDE...

**Pide:** Turkish thin pizza topped with cheese, egg, minced meat and other toppings



**Gözleme:** Thin pancakes filled with cheese, spinach, or potato

**Borek:** Savoury pastries of varying shapes and fillings

**Lahmacun:** Very thin bread base with a variety of toppings and baked in a very hot oven. Traditionally served by squeezing a lemon on top and accompanying it with salad.



## KEBAPS AND KOFTE

The well-known Turkish Kebab is undoubtedly the national dish but who knew there were so many options. As well as being served as street food in a wrap, there are also versions, which are a full plate meal, accompanied with rice and salad.

**Iskender** is one such example. Thinly sliced meat is served on a bed of pitta bread and topped with yoghurt, a special tomato sauce, and burnt butter sauces.

**Sis Kebab (pronounced 'shish')** is small pieces of meat grilled on a skewer. They are delivered to the table like that. Most often, the meat served is chicken or lamb.

**Adana Kebab** is spicy mincemeat shaped around a skewer, barbequed and served with onions, paprika, parsley and pitta bread. Another favourite dish throughout the country is **kofte**, which is the Turkish equivalent of western style meatballs. There are many different varieties, most of which are regional traditions. These are also served as street food, or as a sit down meal with salad and rice.

# MAKING TURKISH COFFEE



## TURKISH COFFEE

Turkish coffee refers not to a type of coffee, but to the way in which it is prepared. Unfiltered, the coffee grounds are never completely dissolved. When drinking Turkish coffee, the trick is to keep gently swirling your cup. Otherwise, you will drink weak coffee and end up with a thick layer of grounds at the bottom of the cup or in your final gulp. Locals prefer Turkish coffee without sugar but if it is your first time tasting the coffee; it is wise to add sugar because it is very bitter and a strong taste.

***Turkish word for coffee: Kahve***

Traditionally, ground coffee is added to cold water in a copper pot (some use hot lukewarm water, to speed up the process, but the difference in taste is obvious. Turks call this hasty version “dishwater.”

The coffee and water mixture is stirred and slowly heated over medium heat. Just before the water boils, the pot is set aside and its contents are allowed to settle.

“ If the horseshoe floats, you know its good coffee. ”

Then the pot is put back on boil. This time, half is poured into a cup, while the rest is reheated and then used to top off the drink.

Locals have a traditional saying to indicate whether the coffee is of decent quality.

In some regions, an age-old tradition when choosing a bride was to judge her on the quality of her Turkish coffee. The intended family of the groom would be invited to her family's house and she would serve everyone coffee. An engagement and wedding would only be agreed to if the coffee tasted delicious!



# HAGGLE-A-HOLIC

Shopping in Turkey is great, with open-air markets, covered Turkish bazaars, and chic boutiques everywhere. From scarves and textiles to ceramics, gold and carpets, here are some examples of souvenirs and instructions on how to bargain on the prices.

**NAZAR BONCUK:** The “evil eye” is found throughout Turkey on everything from magnets and key chains to earrings and pendants. Believed to ward off envy and ill wishes, it is often handcrafted from blown glass, and sold in many shapes and sizes.



**CERAMICS:** Turkey has been famous since the 16th century for its ceramics. The master potters of Cappadocia still make plates, bowls, cups, tiles, and other items in traditional ways. They are sold all over Turkey for various prices depending on the item and its quality.

**LEATHER:** Turkish traditions have always used animal skins to make clothes so fine leather clothing & accessories are cheap. Istanbul is the trade center, but all cities have shops selling coats, skirts, dresses, vests, hats, gloves, handbags, wallets, and many other items.



**JEWELLERY:** Turkish jewellery is of higher quality and cheaper than western gold. When buying silver or gold, look for the maker's hallmark stamped into an inconspicuous part of the piece. Pewter and nickel silver are sometimes passed as sterling silver, though not by reputable dealers.



**ONYX:** There is an abundance of it in Turkey and skilled artisans all over the country sculpt it into chess sets, spice bowls, decorative bowls, bathroom fixtures, ashtrays, and vases. If you want to take just one souvenir home, make sure it is a piece of Onyx.

## CARPET & RUGS



Carpets and kilims were originally movable items for nomadic households, but Turks continued to use them, after they settled in houses. A Turkish carpet is not just a piece of woven cloth. At their best, hand-made carpets are original, one-of-a-kind works of art.

While in Turkey, you will probably visit a carpet factory to see how they are made and learn information about regional traditions. One or two assistants will also begin a show: they unfurl a carpet with a flourish, toss it in the air, and let it fall to the floor. Another follows, unfurled with a crisp snap. Soon it seems to be raining carpets. It is quite an impressive show!

## BARGAINING ON PRICES

Haggling over prices is often a drawn out affair involving a comfortable seat and several glasses of tea. First, ask the price and the shop owner responds. You then, say you do not want to pay that amount but will pay X amount. The shop owner agrees, disagrees, or lowers his price again.

This can go backwards and forwards many times until a price that suits both parties is agreed. Always remain good humoured and polite. Remember, it is perfectly acceptable, if you cannot agree on a price, to say, "No, Thanks!" and walk out of the shop. However, if a price is agreed, it is bad manners to change your mind.

Items to bargain on include leather, jewellery, carpets, ceramics, onyx, nargile pipes, individual one-man clothes shop, any purchase that is of a substantial amount or made in bulk.



## ISTANBUL

Istanbul is unquestionably one of the world's great metropolises. The city formerly known as Constantinople has served as a capital of great civilizations including the Roman and Ottoman Empire. Ankara usurped it as the seat of government when the Republic of Turkey was formed in 1923, but it remains the biggest city by far. Straddling Europe and Asia on both sides of the Bosphorus, it is an endlessly and compelling blend of East and West.

Historic sites such as the Blue Mosque

and Topkapı Palace are vivid reminders of the city's long run of glory, while teeming bazaars and ancient Turkish Baths also offer a window into the past.

Its history is not the only lure. International press have been talking up Istanbul for many years. There are numerous innovative boutiques, bars, galleries, clubs, and restaurants as there are Ottoman mosques. In a city of so many interesting sights, it can be difficult to know where to start so here are some suggestions.



## MUST SEE PLACES

**The Hagia Sophia Museum:** Originally built as a Christian church between 532 and 537 AD by the emperor Justinian, it became a mosque in 1453 when the Ottomans conquered Constantinople. It remained as such until 1935, when it became a museum. For 1,000 years, its dome was the world's largest – 98ft in diameter, surpassed only in the 16th century with the construction of St. Peter's in Rome.

**Topkapi Palace and the Spoon makers Diamond:** The world's seventh largest diamond was allegedly found on a rubbish heap in 1669 and bartered to a spoon maker who, in turn, sold it to a jeweler. It sits in the Topkapi Palace that was completed during the 15th century and home of Ottoman sultans for centuries.

**Kariye (Chora) Church:** An extraordinary Byzantine church dating from the

11th Century. Inside are truly unparalleled mosaics and frescoes depicting the lives of Christ and Mary.

**Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts:**

A must-see place if you have a passion for textiles and calligraphy. The floor-to-ceiling Usak carpets and beautifully illuminated Qurans are housed in a building that was originally the palace of Ibrahim Pasha, Grand Vizier to Suleyman the magnificent.

**Suleymaniye Mosque:** Often mistaken for the Blue Mosque by first time visitors, Suleymaniye Mosque dominates the Istanbul skyline and provides a magnificent landmark for the entire city.

**Istanbul Archaeological Museum:**

Divided into three buildings, this museum contains artefacts from the Hittite empire, Pre-Islamic Ottoman relics, Egyptian and Lycian sarcophagi and galleries of statues.



## RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES

**Watch the Ceremony of Whirling Dervishes:** In Hodja Pasha Culture Center, watch the mystical whirling dance of the dervishes as they perform their religious ceremony, known as the sema. Whirling dervishes are followers of the famous poet and philosopher Rumi.

**Eat Istanbul Cuisine in Ortakoy.** With its thriving cafe culture and position at the foot of the Bosphorus Bridge, which links Europe and Asia, Ortaköy has a distinctly cosmopolitan feel. The district boasts a fantastic choice of fish restaurants positioned directly on the waterfront, as well as a bustling Sunday market.

**Follow James Bond through the Yerebatan Underground Cistern:** Yerebatan Sarayı ('sunken palace') appears in the 1963 James Bond film called "From Russia with Love". Do you remember the scene where 007 rowed a small boat through the marble columns? That was filmed at this sixth-century underground Byzantine cistern. The upside-down

head of Medusa supports one of columns.

**Haggle for Bargains in the Grand Bazaar:** Whether it is the highlight of your stay or an endurance test, Istanbul's Grand Bazaar will provide a memorable experience. Created during the 14th century, it is located in the heart of the old city and one of the world's largest covered markets, with thousands of shops lining 65 streets and alleys.

**Tour the Idyllic Princes Islands:** A 90-minute ferry ride from Istanbul brings you to Buyukada, largest of small islands collectively known as the Princes' Islands. For centuries, these were places of exile but now, tourists visit to enjoy the serenity of the leafy, traffic-free lanes.

**Feel Real Istanbul Life in Beyoglu:** Istanbul's modern centre is bustling with coffee shops, quirky boutiques, and galleries. Spend the afternoon exploring the area by foot, talking in the unobstructed views by strolling down Istiklal Caddesi.



# BEST PLACES TO EAT IN ISTANBUL



**Hamdi Kebab Restaurant** has popular terrace views of Galata Tower and the Golden Horn.

**Address:** Kalçin Sok. 17, Eminönü  
Reservation: 0212 528 0390

**Recommended Dishes :** Meze Platter, Findik Lahmacun, and Fıstıklı Kebab or Spicy Adana Kebab, Baklava

**Ciya Sofrası** is a humble eatery, headed by Musa Dagdeviren, formerly of the California branch of the Culinary Institute of America. Located up a busy market street near the Kadiköy ferry stop (on the Asian side; take the ferry to Kadiköy from Eminönü), it serves delectable and rare regional creations.

**Address :** Güneşli Bahçesi Sok. 43-44, Kadiköy/Istanbul Asian Side

**Reservation:** 0216 330 3190

**Balıkçı Sebahattin** is one of the few consistently good, high-quality restaurants in a neighbourhood of amateurs.

**Address:** Seyit Hasan Koyu Sok. 1 Sultanahmet (behind Armada Hotel)

**Reservation:** 0212 458 1824



**Asitane Restaurant** is famous for its authentic Ottoman Cuisine. The menu consists of specialties prepared from recipes obtained from Palace archives. The outdoor dining area overlooks the lovely Kariye Museum.

**Address:** Kariye Cami Sok. No:6 Edirnekapı/ Fatih

**Reservation:** 0212 534 8414

**Degustasyon Lokantasi** is in the midst of the confusion of Galatasaray Fish Market in Beyoğlu and it serves a huge selection of mezes.

**Address:** Sahne Sok. 41, Balıkpazarı, Beyoğlu

**Reservation:** 0 212 292 0667



**Banyan Sea-Side Restaurant** is a hot spot taking full advantage of its view overlooking Ortaköy and the Bosphorus. In colder months, the terrace is heated by an open fire pit.

**Address:** Salhane Sok 3, Muallim Naci Cad Ortaköy

**Reservation :** 0 212 259 9060

**Recommended Dishes :** Fried Calamari, Grilled Sea-Bass fillet and Tahini Halva Dessert



**360 Beyoglu Restaurant** offers a 360 degree view of Istanbul.. It serves as restaurant from 8pm to 11pm and night club 11pm to 2am.

**Address:** Istiklal Caddesi No: 311 Beyoglu District

**Reservation :** 0 212 251 1042

# CAPPADOCIA



Deep in the heart of Anatolia, Cappadocia offers surreal scenery, adventure activities, and an in-depth look into the history of Christianity. The lunar landscape is dotted with rocks nicknamed “Fairy Chimneys.”

Created because of wind and water erosion, some of them have been inhabited for many years, with rooms, windows, and staircases laboriously curved inside creating 5-storey structures. Known as cave homes and hotels, they are one of the main attractions of the region.

Cappadocia’s geological quirks, plus the wealth of caves and hideaways, have made it a place of refuge since biblical times, when it was popular with Christians fleeing persecution. Their legacy includes the underground cities at Derinkuyu and Kaymaklı as well as



the painted cave churches found in the Goreme and Zelve valleys.

Cappadocia has a steppe climate; there is a great temperature difference between day and night. The average temperature is +23 Degrees-Celsius (73 F) in summer and -2 Degrees-Celsius (28 F) in winter. It is cooler and drier than popular tourist areas of the Mediterranean and the Aegean coasts.





## MUST SEE PLACES

### **Cave Churches & Goreme Open air museum**

There is more to Cappadocia's otherworldly landscape than meets the eye. Take a closer look and you will discover hidden dwellings and subterranean churches, for it was here that early Christians escaping from persecution lived and worshipped. Of an estimated 3,000 cave churches in the area, some are open to the public, the most impressive of which are located in the Goreme Open Air Museum. The Tokali and Karanlik church, are among the best preserved with vivid frescoes.

### **OTHER PLACES TO SEE**

- Ihlara Valley
- Cavusin Village
- Soganli Valley
- Selime Monastery
- Belisirma Village
- Pasabag and Zelve Valleys
- Avanos & Kızılırmak River

### **Underground Cities:**

Archaeologists believe the Hittites were the starters of the underground communities and in the 6th and 7th century, they were expanded by early Christians with the addition of air shafts, kitchens, living quarters, churches, water wells, horse stables and wine cellars. Christians used the elaborate subterranean systems as both a shelter and a safe place to worship. You should not miss a visit to Derinkuyu underground city that is the largest of 36 in the area. It covers 4 square kilometers and sheltered 2,000 households on seven floors reaching a depth of 70 to 85 meters.

## RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES



**Hot Air Balloon Rides** over the unique lunar landscape and strange rock formations are popular. The region can be explored on foot, but to experience the breath-taking beauty of this remarkable area, take a hot-air balloon flight in Cappadocia at sunrise.

Quad-Biking in Goreme Valleys may sound crazy, but these four wheelers are one of the best ways to check out the scenery along the 10s to 100s of kilometers of paths criss-crossing this surreal landscape.

### **Massage Service in a Turkish Bath (Hamam)**

No visit to Turkey is complete without the experience of bathing in an authentic Turkish bath called a “Hamam” Beautiful marble sinks, brass fixtures and a gravity-defying dome deliver the right ambiance and exotic atmosphere.

A belly stone is a large, circular, heated platform in the center of the bath where you can lounge and relax. This is where the massage will take place. Some massages are hard and long, while

# BEST PLACES TO EAT



**Elai Restaurant** is on the lower slopes of Uchisar Castle and offers delicious dishes from French and Turkish cuisine. It has an open air roof terrace with extensive views of the Pigeon Valley, Red Valley and Goreme Town.

**Address:** Tekelli mah. Eski Goreme Cad. Uchisar – Cappadocia

**Reservation :**  
0 384 219 31 81

**Recommended Dish:**  
Kuzu Incik

**Seten Restaurant** opened in 2010, and has a mix of culinary treats and visual delights. The word “Seten” means “old rounded stone mill used to process grains” and they still have an original cave room used for centuries to press grapes into wine.

**Address:** Aydinli Mah. Aydinli Sok. No:40 (Near Kelebek Hotel), Goreme

**Reservation:**  
0 384 271 30 25

**The Culture Museum Restaurant** is located in the center of Ortahisa town and is a nice place to enjoy traditional Turkish cuisine. There is also an ethnographic museum next

to the restaurant building and can be visited with an extra small fee. Here you can try best Mantı (Turkish Ravioli).

**Address :** Cumhuriyet Meydani No. 15, Ortahisar

**Reservation:**  
0 384 343 3344

**Sacred House Restaurant** has a medieval atmosphere supported by antique silverware, chandeliers, and chevalier tables that make you feel like you are in a castle.

**Address:** Dutlucami Mah. Barbaros Hayrettin Sok No:25 Urgup

**Reservation:**  
0 384 341 7102

**The Old Greek House** is nestled in the quaint village of Mustafapasa. The Ozturk Family, converted the Old Greek House into a restaurant which offers delicious tastes of both Turkish and Greek Cuisine.

**Address:** Sinasos Village, Mustafapasa /

**Reservation:**  
0 384 353 53 06

**Ziggy's Shop & Cafe** is inside a restored stone house and is a modern version of the ancient caravanseri. Its spacious with three outdoor terraces. The cozy dining room has deep armchairs and a blazing fireplace in the winter.

**Address:** Yunak Mah., Tevfik Fikret Caddesi No. 24 Urgup

**Reservation:**  
0 384 341 71 07

others are short and gentle.

Some masseurs are gentle on foreigners because they know we are “soft”. As a rule, no self-respecting Turkish woman would let a man scrub her. So if a woman found herself in a situation where a man was going to do the scrubbing she would be well within her rights to ask for a woman. (Sorry men, your washer will always be a man!)





## KUSADASI

Kusadasi is situated in the Aegean region of Turkey, and is a magnificent and perfect place for an unforgettable vacation. It is not only popular with holidaymakers but also large cruise line ships carrying thousands of passengers. Most of them come just to visit the nearby ancient ruins of Ephesus, but the area does have many more attractions.

It is no surprise that as a cruise line destination, shopping is big business in Kusadasi. Everything is for sale from cheap leather goods to authentic carpets, jewelry, clothes, and souvenirs. There is a local bazaar, near to the marina entrance or you can bargain for local deals in the outlet centers, located near Ephesus.

Kusadasi has every type of restaurant you can imagine, from international with English speaking staff to backstreet fast food establishments only frequented by locals. Although there is no big nightclub, the likes of what people will see in Bodrum, Kusadasi still has an active nightlife scene.

Beach clubs dotted around the coastal line are popular with visiting Turks while Ladies Beach has family friendly venues with games and activities to keep adults and children occupied. For those who really want to party, Bar street is the best place to be at.

From Kusadasi, you can also visit Pamukkale, Priene, Miletus, Didyma, Pergamum, Aphrodisias or embark on Greek Islands Cruise ships leaving from Kusadasi Port during High season (May till October).





# MUST SEE PLACES

## Ancient City of Ephesus

The ruins of Ephesus are one of the biggest attractions in Turkey. Once the second largest city of the Roman Empire, it is estimated there is still more than 60% of the city to excavate.

Visitors have a marvelous insight of this former seaport city. Walking down the cobbled agora street, they pass the public toilets and baths, temples and terraced houses of rich Roman citizens. The street leads to the impressive Celsius library that at one time, held more than 12,000 scrolls.

To the left of this magnificent monument is the grand amphitheatre. Originally used by performing artists, the discovery of a nearby gladiator's graveyard reveals that eventually it was an arena of death for enjoyment.

Situated in the hills above Ephesus is a small and humble house yet its existence is of major significance. Suspected to be the last resting place of the Virgin Mary, the house is now run by the Roman Catholic Church who opened it up to the public.



## Ephesus Today



1. Harbor Street.
2. Theater.
3. Commercial Agora.
4. Library of Celsus.
5. Gate of Maecius and Mithridates.
6. Marble Street.
7. Brochel.

8. Hillside houses.
9. Public toilets.
10. Labriana.
11. Scholastica Baths.
12. The Mosaic - Paved sidewalk.
13. Entrance Scholastica Baths.
14. Hadrian's Temple.

15. Trajan's Fountain.
16. Curetes Street.
17. Hercules Gate.
18. Memmius Monument.
19. Temple of Domitian.
20. An altar.
21. The list of Curetes.

22. Freshwater pipes.
23. The Fountain of Pollio.
24. Prytaneon.
25. Odeon.
26. Isis Temple.
27. Stage Agora.
28. Baths of Varius.



## PAMUKKALE AND HIERAPOLIS (The Cotton Castle)

In the Denizli province of Turkey, sits the cotton castle. Tumbling down the side of a small mountain, white calcium pools filled with healthy spa water have solidified to form stunning looking travertines in the landscape. From a distance, the white pools look like part of a strategic castle hence the nickname. Along with Ephesus, Pamukkale is one of the top attractions for foreigner tourists visiting the Aegean coast.

People have bathed in the spa water pools for thousands of years. Indeed, the Romans redirected water to the nearby city of Hierapolis as a centre of healing for wounded soldiers.

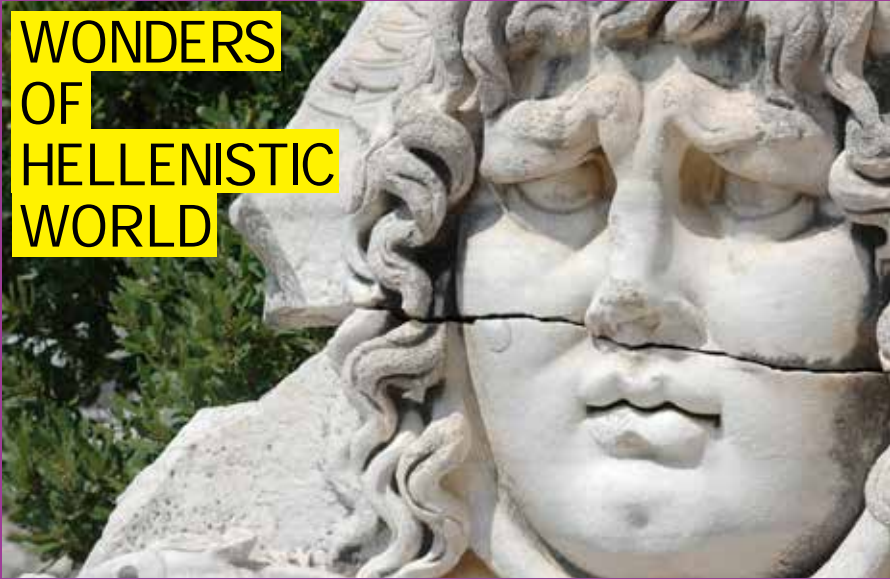
In ancient Greek, the name **Hierapolis** meant “holy city.” Founded in the 2nd century BC, as well as being a centre of healing, many people chose to retire or even travel there so it could be their last resting place. Eventually the city was given to the empire of Rome, and along with places like Ephesus, Christianity became strong in the region.

Visitors today can view a gymnasium, library, the Domitian gate, and baths that were constructed using just stone and no cement. One of the most



respected attractions though is the large amphitheatre. Nestled into the hillside, it is suspected to have been built in AD 60 with a capacity to seat 15,000 spectators. As often seen in other historical sites, there is also a Temple of Apollo. Pamukkale and the city of Hierapolis are UNESCO World Heritage Sites

# WONDERS OF HELLENISTIC WORLD



**Pergamum** was an ancient Greek city on the north side of the river Caicus and named in the book of Revelations as one of the seven churches of Asia (Revelation 2:12). Today, the main site of ancient Pergamon is near the small coastal resort of Bergama.

**Asklepion** was built in the name of Aesculapius, the god of Health and Medicine. It contains ancient sites such as a small theater with a capacity for 3,500 people, rooms where patients were cured, the temple of Asklepion and the library.

**Priene** was formerly on the sea coast, built overlooking the ocean on steep slopes and terraces. Today, after several centuries of changes in the landscape, it is an inland site. Priene possessed a great deal of famous Hellenistic art and architecture. It is believed around 4 to 5 thousand inhabitants occupied the region.

**Miletus** is located near Akköy at the mouth of the Meander River. It was one of the largest cities in Anatolia with a population of between 80,000 and 100,000. Highly prosperous, it was the home of the 6 BC philosophers Anaximander, Anaximenes and Thales, the town planner Hippodamus and architect of Hagia Sophia, Isidorus. Having a prominent position, Miletus became the most important port in this area and it was the most active member of the twelve cities of the Ionian Confederation.

**Didyma:** The word Didyma means “twins” and it was associated by some as being the meeting place of Zeus and Leto to have their twins Apollo and Artemis. Didyma was famed as a prophecy center dedicated to Apollo, which served a similar purpose as the Delphi of Anatolia. It was not a city but a sanctuary linked to Miletus by Milesians with a 19 km sacred road.



## RECOMMENDED ACTIVITIES



The **Greek wine making village of Sirince** is high in the hills, only reached by a winding mountain road. Originally started by freed slaves from Ephesus, it is now a popular jaunt for Turks as well as foreigners. Taste homemade wine, be intrigued at the local handicrafts for sale, and do not forget to buy some souvenir olive oil soap.

Daily ferries are available from Kusadasi port to the Greek Island of Samos in the morning and late afternoon. After 1½ – 2 hours at sea you will arrive at Samos' main port 'Vathi', where you'll be greeted by beautiful pastel colored shops and restaurants built around the bay with picturesque mountains in the background.

### **Enjoy Dinner with a Turkish Night Show in Thousand Year-Old Caravanserai**

Not only is it a really fun evening where you get to watch traditional Turkish dancing and Belly dancing, it's also held in a fantastically beautiful building that's called the Caravanserai.

Once a roadside inn where travelers could rest and recover from the day's journey, it was built by an Ottoman vizier Okuz Mehmet Pasha in 1618 AD.

It has been furnished to meet present day needs, whilst preserving all the typical characteristics of a Caravanserai - two floors, two entrances and a spacious courtyard.



# ANTALYA

The Antalya region is the second most popular holiday destination in Turkey after Istanbul. It attracts everyone from rich and influential millionaires to budget holidaymakers. The long sandy beaches and typical Mediterranean climate lure all nationalities from British, Russians, Scandinavians, and Americans.

While Antalya city centre has many attractions, hotels, bar and restaurants, people tend to flock to the nearby coastal resorts of which a few include...

**Alanya** is popular because of its long, sandy beaches, landmark historical castle, and the nearby mountain regions. The resort is open all year round although in winter, sunbathing is definitely off the agenda.

**Side** has the added bonus of the historical amphitheater and structures in the heart of the resort. At the end of the harbour stands the ancient temple of Apollo and the nighttime bars here,

make ideal environments for relaxing with close company, while dining on fine food and wine.

**Kemer** is typically a manmade resort that heavily features five star all inclusive hotels and large nightclubs. This destination is a favorite for Russians. Belek is the golfing capital of Turkey. Tiger Woods and other big names have played in many golf courses. This resort is small but ideal if you want luxury at no cost.

**Cirali** is a small, one street rustic village with cheap accommodation and the area is ideal for hikers and trekkers. The long beach is also protected because of loggerhead turtles that lay their eggs in the sand.

**Kaş** (pronounced cash) is everything that a typical Mediterranean seaside resort in Turkey should be. White washed houses cascade down the winding mountain roads to show the way to beautiful beaches and a harbor.



## THINGS TO DO IN THE REGION

Mount Tahtali cable car ride should be first on the list because it gives an amazing panoramic view over the coastline and backing Taurus Mountains. During high season, be prepared for long queues.

The ancient Greco-Roman ruins of Aspendos is a must see. Suspected to date from 1000BC, it was often the focus of invasion, specifically by Alexander the Great and the Romans. Visit the Ancient City of Perge, the place where most of the statues on display in Antalya Museum were unearthed.

The theater stage has finely carved marble reliefs, and other carvings from around the city are displayed in the stadium. Amateur archaeologists will want to see the handsome city gate flanked by two lofty towers, a long colonnaded road once paved with mosaics and lined with shops, a large agora, the public baths and a gymnasium.

Gushing waterfalls are plentiful in Antalya with the most popular being Duden that flows into the sea. Manavgat also features on most daily excursions and it has a traditional Turkish tea garden to relax in.

History lovers should head to the city centre to view the impressive Hadrian's Gate that is the entrance into the old town. Nearby, the large archaeological museum holds many artifacts from across Turkey while the local landmark of Hidirlik tower is said to date from the second century. A day should be spent in this old part of the city known as Kaleici.



# KONYA



Konya was one of the first inhabited cities in the world and to this day, it still contains traces of many ancient civilizations that have earned it the nickname of a museum city.

Its location in the middle of the barren Anatolian plains is significant because it was a major stopping point on the ancient and exotic Silk Road. Spice and cotton traders traveling from the Middle East to Europe used to stop there overnight in one of the many stone caravansaries of which a few can be seen today.

The main reason for anyone to visit is to see the shrine of the famous poet, philosopher, and ancient Sufi master called Rumi.

Even today, the wisdom of this man who lived in the 13th century has earned him a place as one of the world's bestselling poets.

Also known as Mevlâna, Rumi was born in ancient Persia but spent much time traveling before arriving in the city of Konya. His words were carefully thought out before speaking, allowing him to practise patience, kindness and positivity with neighbours, friends and family.

The **Konya Alaeddin Mosque** was constructed between the 12th and 13th century. It is in perfectly preserved condition and is a major landmark of the city. It was originally a Christian basilica but was converted in 1080 when Seljuk Turks captured the city. The grounds hold the gravestones of a number of sultans of the Seljuk dynasty.

Konya **Archaeological Museum** opened in 1962 and has many artefacts from civilization up to the Byzantine era. They include Greek artefacts and sarcophagus from Roman times.

Konya is also well known for its traditional carpets, made painstakingly by hand for many months by local women. They first came to the attention of the traveller Marco Polo when he said, "they are the most beautiful carpets I have ever seen". Carpets shops are situated in the city however we advise you take your guide with you to ensure you are buying an authentic and genuine carpet.



# TRABZON

## BLACK SEA REGION

On the route of the historical and exotic Silk Road, Trabzon is one of the pearls of the Black Sea region of Turkey. Situated on the Northeast coast, this large city has been home to numerous civilizations throughout history.

Many Turks have nicknamed it the city of sultans, mainly because the notable

sultan Suleiman the magnificent was born there. Without a doubt, the main attraction is the historical Sumela Monastery clinging to the side of a cliff face.

It is said the reason for its location was

a statue of the black Madonna was found in a cave by two priests and they assumed it was a sign from the angels.

Although it is no longer in use, the frescoes adorning the ceiling are marvelously well preserved. The monastery can be reached within a half hour drive from Trabzon city centre.

### Other Landmarks

Gulbahar (mother of Yavuz, the Ottoman sultan) Mosque is a monumental landmark for the city. Built in 1510, it displays innovative Ottoman architecture from that time.

The Hagia Sophia is not as large as its counterpart in Istanbul but this ancient church / mosque has wonderful frescoes depicting scenes from the bible.

The House of Ataturk is a museum with many artefacts from the 1920s. It was given to the founder of Turkey as a present by the citizens of Trabzon. It has a marvelous view over the coastline.



# ÇANAKKALE (Near Istanbul)

On the North West coast of Turkey, sits the Dardanelles straits and within that is the famous town of Canakkale. It belongs to both Asia and Europe but that is not the reason for its popularity.

Most people visit because of two connections; it is the closest town to the ancient and historical site of Troy. It is also sadly, where the battle of Gallipoli took place and over 50,000 men lost their lives.

## The Battle of Gallipoli

At the time of World War One, Canakkale was under Ottoman rule, however they were on the losing side of the war. Their empire was due to be carved up and divided among the winning forces. A few select men managed to rise everyone up against this invasion and the Turkish war of independence started. The battle of Gallipoli took place when the French and British attempted to gain control of the Dardanelles strait, a strategic and important point. They however made one small error that cost them the battle; they landed on the wrong beach.

Thousands of men died in the battle that lasted for many months under horrific conditions. Every year, on the morning of April the 25th, dawn services start to commemorate Anzac day. New Zealanders and Australians travel to Turkey to honour the memories of the fallen and their ancestors.



## The Ancient site of Troy

During the Trojan War, Greeks used a large, man-made wooden horse to enter the legendary city of Troy. Inside sat elite fighters who waited until night before creeping out and opening the gates to let the rest of their army in.

Some historians have suspected that the story is fabricated and the wooden horse was simply a large wooden ram, however they all agree that the city was located near Canakkale. Today, a large replica horse stands in its



place but the important attraction is the nearby ruins of Troy.

Listed as a UNESCO world heritage site since 1998, excavations started in 1865. It took a lot of hard work and research before archaeologists were convinced they have found Troy.

# PEARLS OF THE AEGEAN COAST



## BODRUM

Situated on the Aegean coast of Turkey, the Bodrum peninsula is the playground of the rich and famous but also the haven of budget holidaymakers. It manages to achieve a harmonious blend of Western and modern influences with traditional roots as a small fishing village.

It first gained fame in the 1950s thanks to Cevat Şakir Kabaağaçlı who was the famous “Fisherman of Halicarnus.” Exiled to the region in 1920 because of his political views, the devastating news turned out to be a blessing in disguise.

He fell in love with the sandy beaches, strutting coastline ruins, blue waters, and friendly locals of the small villages. Boat makers in the area adapted the old style-fishing vessel of a Turkish gullet boat, to a new style so they could accommodate many who were flocking to the region to sail the Turkish Riviera.

There are many resorts to choose from including Bodrum town centre itself. This is the most convenient location because it is near to all major landmarks such as the castle and museum.

It also accommodates everyone by providing varied styles of everything from five star luxury hotels to budget bed and breakfast rooms, from fine eating establishments to roadside cafes selling street food. The town centre is also best for anyone seeking an active nightlife scene.

If you want to get away from the hustle and bustle of Bodrum town centre, Gumbet is a neighbouring resort. Although British visitors have heavily influenced the atmosphere and lifestyle, it is cheap, has a long sandy beach and a variety of water sports to keep teenagers entertained.

**Turgutreis** is small yet busy enough



to attract couples, families, and solo travellers. This resort has quite a few art galleries because it is a haven for inspiring artists.

There is one main beach in the centre but around the surrounding coastline are many small coves and bays should you want to get away from the crowds.

**Yalikavak** is popular with the ex-pat community. A long beach centres the resort that eventually leads up the hillside to pine tree forests.

This resort is well known for the windmills in the centre and fishing enthusiasts will appreciate the boats for hire at the harbour. Get ready for an orange, vibrant sunset as well.

**Bitez** is another destination popular with British holidaymakers. Although not large when compared to places like Bodrum town centre, it still provides everything for an ideal break.



The local market on Wednesdays attracts everyone, while visitors first normally head to the historic 17th century Mustafa Pasa tower.

If you want upmarket and luxury, the best resort to head to is **Golturkbuku**. It is a favourite destination for the rich and famous of Turkish society. Hotels, beach clubs, and restaurants all focus on providing top class service no matter what the price.



# MARMARIS

The Marmaris peninsula is one of the top holiday spots in Turkey. It grew from a small fishing village into a large city, surrounded by many small coastal resorts. The most popular destination to stay is **Marmaris centrum** because all amenities are close by.

Hotels ranging from five star all-inclusive to budget bed and breakfast are located on the seafront but if you want to be away from all the action, look at staying in the Armutalan area. Nightlife is mostly active on the well-known bar street by the harbour and the beach front also has numerous bars and clubs open until the early hours of the morning.

People who want to stay in a cosier and traditional environment will benefit from choosing one of the surrounding resorts of which a few include...

**Icemeler** is a 20-minute bus drive from Marmaris town centre and is a scenic resort, fronted by a long sandy beach and backed by green pine

tree forests. Water sports are popular in this area. This is an ideal destination for families with young children.

**Bozburun** is the home of traditional gulet boat building. Credited with constructing the vessels used to sail the Turkish Riviera, this is an ideal choice for people looking for quiet and rustic holiday spots.

Honey, almonds, and fish are the main attractions of the **Datca Peninsula**. Beehives dot the mountainside while locals eagerly anticipate harvesting time for the almond trees. As a fishing village, it is no surprise to find fish dishes are top of the menu. Windmills also dot the coastline and the nearby ancient ruins of Kaunos excite history lovers.

**Turunc** has adapted well to foreign visitors because it has not given way to mass tourism and still stuck to its original beginnings as a small fishing village. This resort is a two-hour transfer from the nearest airport of Dalaman.





# TREASURES OF EASTERN TURKEY



Thanks to the Internet, travel to Eastern Turkey is becoming more popular, sought after by people who crave more than sandy beaches and home comforts. Eastern Turkey offers a completely distinctive experience, steeped in culture and tradition; it is a lifestyle incomparable with Western values and trends. It is more conservative than the West coast of Turkey and ancient values are very much existent in everyday life. Some notable places to visit include...

**The ruins of Ani in Kars** are on the outskirts of the city of Kars and near the border with Armenia. They are a large collection of ancient churches, built inside the walls of an ancient Armenian kingdom. Nicknamed “city of 1001 churches,” excavation and restoration took place in the last century to rebuild a number of notable structures.

**Lake Van** is the largest lake in Turkey and the highest point. Ideal times to visit are in summer because winter weather elements are harsh with temperatures often plunging into the minuses. Many civilizations have ruled over the area in the past including the Armenians, Byzantines and Seljuks. As a result, not only is a place of natural beauty but there is plenty of historical attractions to visit including the castle, Church of the Holy Cross and ancient Armenian monasteries.

**Mardin** is a contender for the UNESCO World Heritage Site list because of its ancient buildings with Arabic architecture trends. The narrow cobbled streets leading down the hillside often feature in most publications about the southeast of Turkey. Nearby sites to see include the ruins of Dara, an old Roman city, the old town of Midyat and Deyrulzafaran monastery belonging to the Syriac Orthodox religion.

Known as the city of pistachios nuts and sweet Turkish baklava (Pastry covered with sweet syrup and filled with nuts), **Gaziantep** has a set cultural route for visitors to be introduced to local traditions including the old copper bazaar, coffee houses and whirling dervish lodge. Formally called Antep, its popular attraction is the Zeugma mosaic covering a massive 1700 meters and displaying marvelously intact mosaics from the ancient city of Zeugma that used to sit on the Euphrates River.

**Sanliurfa** has strong connections to Abraham who features in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. **Balikli Gol**, the place where Nimrod is suspected to have thrown Abraham into the fire, is the main reason to visit but there is also



Harran



Göbeklitepe

the castle to see and traditional Urfa cuisine to try.

On the outskirts of Urfa, recommended sites to see include the beehive **houses of Harran** and the oldest settlement of **Gobeklitepe** which is a pre-historic site, built, roughly twelve thousand years ago, circa 10,000 BC. With no settlement or society to speak of, with farming still a far cry away, in a world of only roaming hunter-gatherers, the complexity and developed blueprints of these temples represented another enigma for archeologists.



**Akdamar  
Church, Lake Van**



# CHRISTIANITY IN TURKEY



Turkey is a predominately-Muslim country yet many people are surprised to learn its history is steeped in Christianity, from the house of the Virgin Mary in Selcuk, near ancient Ephesus to the earliest known church in Antakya.

Biblical tours of Turkey are very popular with visitors from Christian countries, keen to learn more about how Christianity grew in this area to spread worldwide.

Indeed, three saints of the Christian religion are called the Cappadocia fathers, due to their involvement in spre-

ading the word even when faced with certain death.

Another Saint was Paul who was born in Tarsus, present day Mersin in the Southeast of the country. He was a Jew, and originally persecuted followers of Christ until in his own words; he experienced a miracle on the road to Damascus.

From there, he vowed to spread the word. It is said that without people like the Cappadocia fathers, Saint Paul and John, Christianity would never have become as popular as it did.



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# RETRACING THE JOURNEY OF SAINT PAUL

The starting place for any tour should be the birthplace of Saint Paul in Southeast Turkey. In history, the importance and size of Tarsus even outshone places like Alexandria and Athens. Attracting famous rulers and officials, Mark Anthony and Cleopatra had a romantic rendezvous in this city. Saint Paul's house and church is open for visitors.

Antakya is where Saint Paul helped establish the first church. Saint Pierre is a pilgrimage journey for many Catholics but other churches in the region are still in use. The mosaic museum in the city centre houses artifacts from that era and it is eye opening to visit

an old traditional house. Near the cotton castle of Pamukkale is the ancient city of Hierapolis, another destination Saint Paul visited, to spread the word of Christianity. This city was also an ancient spa centre for healing Roman soldiers after battle, and a significant amount of it has been excavated.

Although Saint Paul travelled to many other major cities including Pergamon, the prize jewel is Ephesus. Opposition to Christianity in this large seaside city was strong and many Christians prayed in secret. With Saint John though, Paul enlisted followers in the second largest city of the Roman Empire.







## SEVEN CHURCHES OF REVELATION

All the 'Seven Churches' of Apocalypse are seven major churches of Early Christianity, as mentioned in the New Testament Book of Revelation and written to by John the Apostle.

In Revelation, on the Greek island of Patmos, Jesus Christ instructs his servant John to: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, and to Smyrna, and to Pergamos, and to Thyatira, and to Sardis, and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea. "Churches" referred to the community of



Christians living in each city, and not merely the building in which they worshipped.

- 1: Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-7) - the church that had forsaken its first love (2:4)
- 2: Smyrna (Revelation 2:8-11) - the church that would suffer persecution (2:10).
- 3: Pergamum (Revelation 2:12-17) - the church that needed to repent (2:16).
- 4: Thyatira (Revelation 2:18-29) - the church that had a false prophetess (2:20).
- 5: Sardis (Revelation 3:1-6) - the church that had fallen asleep (3:2).
- 6: Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13) - the church that had endured patiently (3:10).
- 7: Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22) - the church that was lukewarm and insipid (to God) (3:16).

# WHIRLING DERVISHES, RUMI & SUFISM



## Who was Rumi?

Mevlana Celaleddin-i Rumi was the great Anatolian mystic, poet and the father of the Sufism philosophy. He was born in 1207 in the city of Balkh, Horasan.

After his education, he settled in Konya upon the invitation of Alaeddin Keykubad, the Seljuk Emperor. He is one of the best-selling poets of our times. To quote UNESCO

“ ***Rumi is one of the great humanists, philosophers, and poets who belong to humanity in its entirety*** ”

After the death of Rumi, followers in Turkey formed the Mevlani branch of Sufism otherwise known as the whirling dervishes of Konya. Each whirling dervish practices Sufism and is also called a Sufi.

## What is Sufism?

Sufism is existent in several continents. It is the belief that a person does not have to wait for the afterlife to be closer to God. They have the power to achieve a state of inner peace, show kindness and generosity and this brings them closer to God in this life.

You can see the Whirling Dervishes in many locations including Istanbul, Konya and Cappadocia. It is considered a mystical transformation and in Turkey; it is a great introduction to Anatolian mysticism.

# MUSTAFA KEMAL ATATURK



“ Peace at home, peace in the world. ”

Mustafa Kemal Ataturk is the founder of the Republic of Turkey. Displayed on the Turkish money, on flags and in shops, and offices, you will also see a statue of him in every town.

He was born in 1881 in Salonica (current Greece). After his education in military schools, he joined the Ottoman Army.

In 1915, when the Dardanelles campaign was launched, Colonel Mustafa Kemal became a national hero by winning successive victories and finally repelling the invaders.

After the 1st World War, The Allies (UK, France, Italy, Russia and Greece) occupied Turkey and Ataturk started The War of Independence against them.

In defiance of the Sultan's government, he rallied a liberation army in Anatolia and convened the Congress of Erzurum and Sivas that established the basis for the new national effort under his leadership. On April 23, 1920, the Grand National Assembly was inaugurated. Mustafa Kemal was elected as President.

In 1934, when the surname law was adopted, the national parliament gave him the name "Atatürk" (Father of the Turks).

Following an illness of a few months, he died On November 10, 1938. For this reason, 10th of November of every year is Mustafa Kemal Ataturk day. Flags of him will be in streets, out of the windows and houses. Turkish Schools will also have a minute's silence.

## FACTS ABOUT MUSTAFA KEMAL ATATURK

- He formed the Republic of Turkey in 1923. Previously the land within its current borders was part of the Ottoman Empire.
- He abolished Islamic justice systems and adopted Western law methods.
- He adopted the Latin alphabet
- He made it law for women to choose whether or not to wear a headscarf
- He banned the headscarf from all government and education buildings.
- The capital was moved from Istanbul to Ankara making it less vulnerable to attack.



HOW WAS YOUR VISIT?

WE LOVE TO SEE YOU SMILE!



Do you have a great picture you would like to share from your trip to Turkey?  
We would love to see it and feature it on our Facebook page.  
Best Photos will be chosen and receive a basket of Turkish Souvenirs will be sent to your home address.

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*(Tour Specialist Company)*

Address: Abidei Hurriyet Cd. No: 115 D: 15 Sisli - ISTANBUL TURKEY 34381

Phone (Worldwide): +90-212-232-1010

USA & CANADA (Toll-Free): 1-800-715-24 25

AUSTRALIA (Toll-Free): 1-800-442-756

Email: [info@traveltsc.com](mailto:info@traveltsc.com) Web-Site: [www.traveltsc.com](http://www.traveltsc.com)

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