DISCOVER**TURKEY** history and culture



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Turkey is a vast country, with a dramatic landscape as varied as her history

urkey is roughly rectangular and has an area of 814,578 square kilometres or 314,510 square miles, approximately 3.5 times the size of the UK. It is situated on two continents - 3% in Europe and the remainder in Asia - which are separated by the Bosphorus, which runs from the Black Sea through İstanbul, and the inland Sea of Marmara which flows through the Dardanelles and out to the Aegean. It has a coastline of 8333 kms or 5178 miles in length, and is bordered by the Black Sea (Karadeniz) to the north, the Sea of Marmara (Marmara Denizi) and the Aegean (Ege) to the west and the Mediterranean (Akdeniz) to the south. Turkey is a huge country and the distance from İstanbul in the north west to Hakkari in the south east is approx. 1814 kms or 1217 miles.

Turkey is an extremely mountainous country with an average altitude of 1,132 metres. The North Anatolian mountains run along the north of the country, parallel to the Black Sea, with the Taurus Mountains sweeping along the Mediterranean in the south. Turkey's highest mountain peak at 5165 metres or 16,946 feet is Mount Ararat (Ağrı Dağı), situated in the north east. Mount Ararat is a snow-capped inactive volcano, which rises above the surrounding plains. It is said to have been the resting place for Noah's Ark.

There are a large number of lakes in Turkey, some such as Lake Van, which is the largest natural lake at 3,713 square kms, covering as much area as an inland sea. A number of dams have been constructed during the past thirty years, which have resulted in the formation of several large dam lakes including the Atatürk Dam lake which started to collect water in January 1990. Amongst the many rivers which flow through Turkey, the K1211rmak, which flows into the Black Sea is the longest at 1355 kms. The Euphrates (Firat) and Tigris (Dicle) both originate in Turkey and flow through other countries before reaching the Persian Gulf.

Turkey is separated into seven geographical regions, which are, in order of size: East Anatolia (21%), Central Anatolia (20%), Black Sea (18%), Mediterranean (15%), Aegean (10%), Marmara (8.5%) and Southeast Anatolia (7.5%).

Climate

Turkey is such a large country with such diverse terrain that the climate varies greatly from one region to another. The south Aegean and Mediterranean coasts of Turkey have a typical Mediterranean climate with hot summers and mild winters. As you head north towards İstanbul, summers become shorter and the winters colder. The Black Sea coast is Turkey's wettest region, and the only region which receives rainfall throughout the year. The eastern part can receive up to 2,200 mms annual rainfall, with warm summers and mild winters. In central Anatolian the summers are hot and dry and the winters cold, and as you head east towards Eastern Anatolia the summers become milder and the winters harsher - temperatures can drop as low as -30°C to -38°C in the mountains and snow may lie on the ground 120 days of the year.

Natural Reserves

Turkey ranks 10th in the world in terms of the diversity of minerals produced in the country. One of the richest mineral deposits is boron salts and Turkey's reserves amount to 63% of the world's total. This ranks second in Turkey's exports of mining products after marble and natural stones, which has been rapidly developing since 1985, and has registered an average annual growth rate which is twice the world average. There are over 120 marble deposits of different colours, design and quality in 80 districts. In 2003 the total export value of this sector was \$431 million.

Agriculture

Turkey is one of the world's few self-sufficient countries in terms of agricultural production in general and food stuffs in particular. Almost 15% of Turkey's land consists of meadows and pastures; 29.5% is forest; and 35.5% arable lands. Wheat is Turkey's leading crop and in 2002 Turkey was the world's biggest producer of hazelnuts, figs and apricots and 4th biggest producer of fresh vegetables, grapes and tobacco. Approximately 30% of the population is employed in the agricultural sector.

Turkey is the world's sixth largest cotton producer and almost 85% of its textile and ready-to-wear exports are made of cotton. It is no surprise then that almost every T-shirt you buy in the UK bears the legend 'made in Turkey'. Turkey is the world's fourth largest ready-to-wear clothing exporter and exports of the textile sector made up 34% of total industrial exports amounting to \$15 billion in 2003.

The Southeast Anatolia Project (GAP)

In 1989 the GAP (Güney Doğu Anadolu Projesi) Regional Development Organisation was established to promote development in this region with an envisaged budget of \$32 billion of public expenditure. It is an integrated project including 22 dams and 19 hydroelectric plants and irrigation facilities to be built along the Tigris and Euphrates. It not only encompasses infrastructure, in terms of energy and irrigation projects, but also places emphasis on human development aiming to improve the lives of those in the area, particularly women and children.

▲ (top) cherries are widely grown in the Black Sea Region

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▲ (middle) Turkey is famous for its honey

▲ (bottom) Cotton is one of Turkey's main exports

• (main) The spectacular Kurşunlu falls near Antalya

Map of Turkey



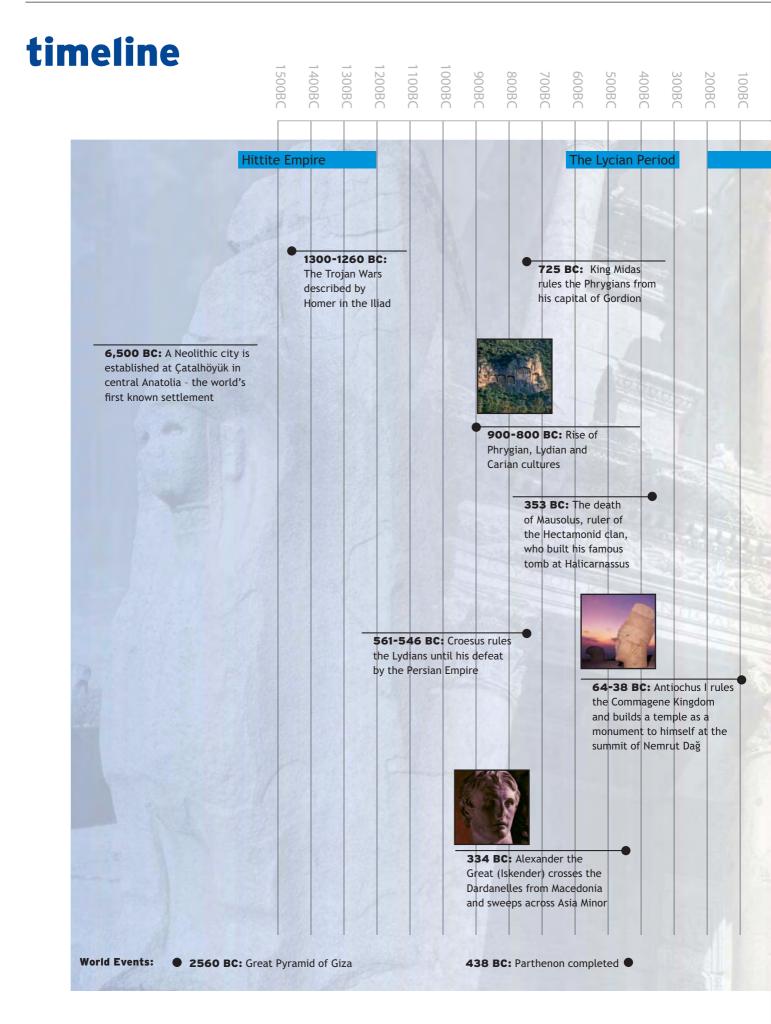


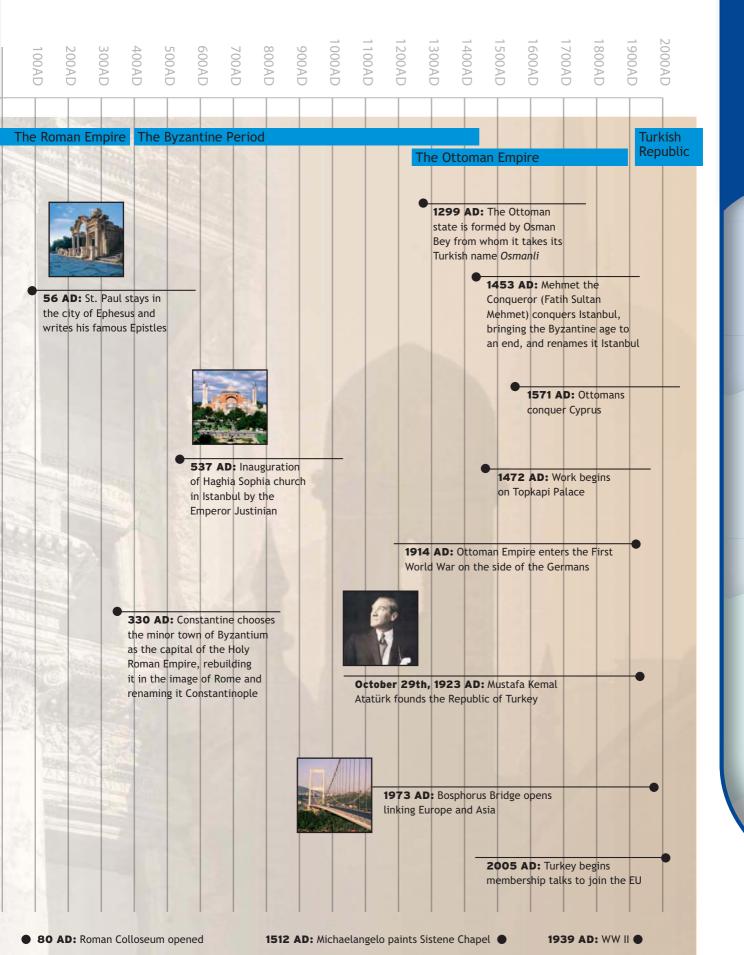
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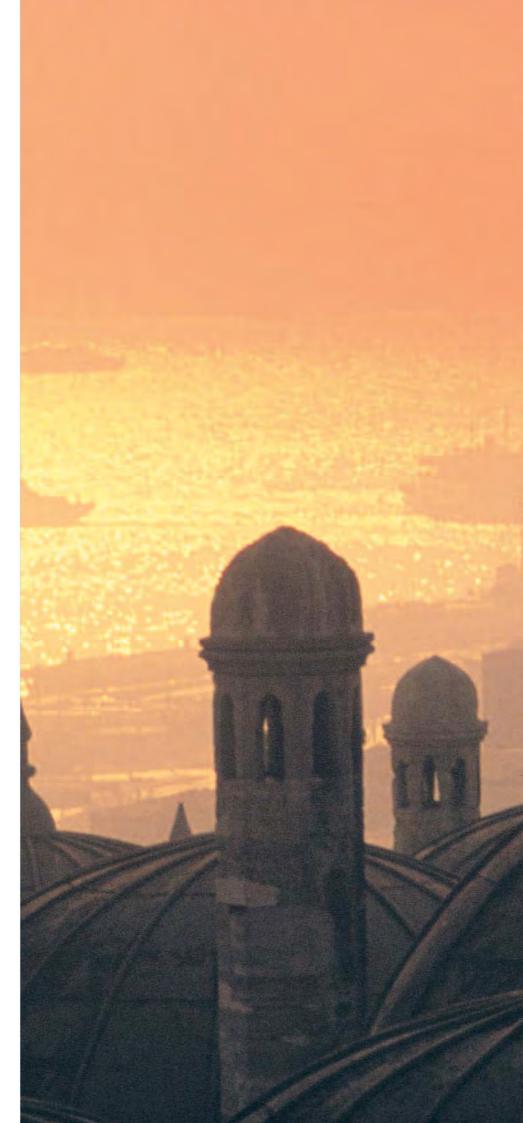
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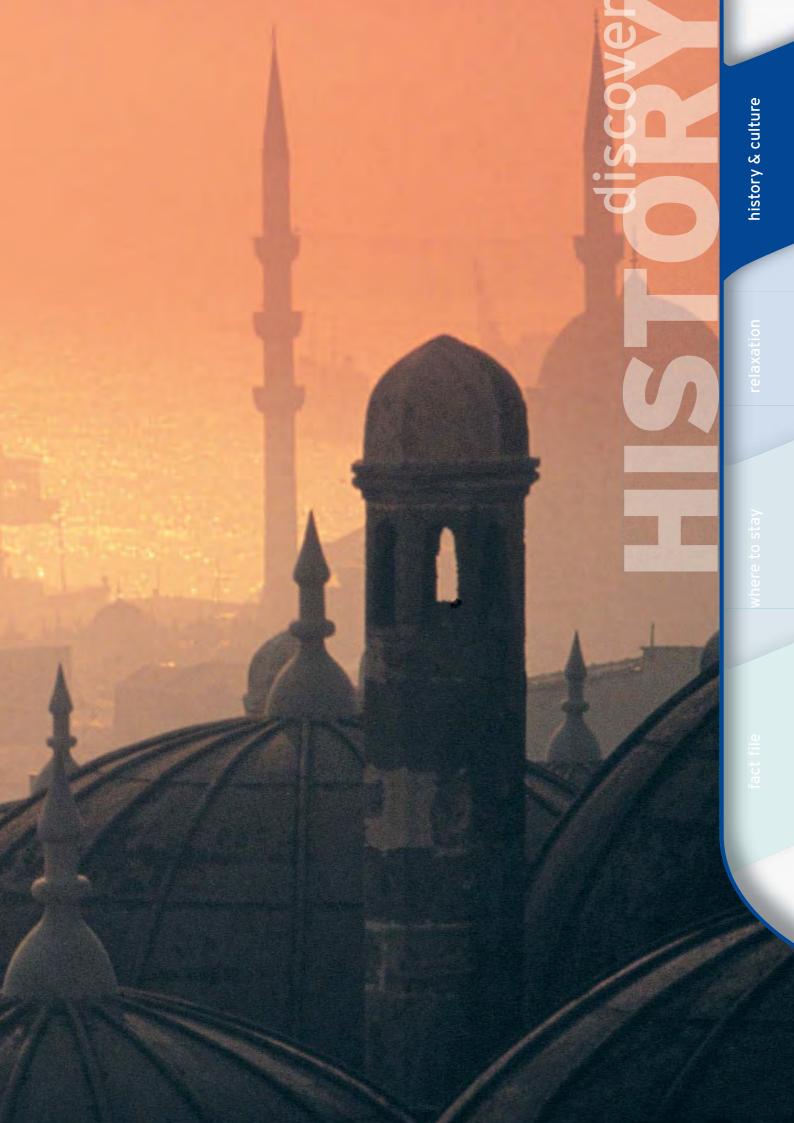
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The Ottoman Empire 1299-1923

t the peak of its military success, the great Ottoman Empire spanned three continents, stretching from Budapest to Azerbaijan and taking in Persia, Syria and the whole of the north African coast. It began, however, from relatively humble beginnings with Osman Bey, the leader of a small principality in northwest Anatolia, who gave the Empire its Turkish name, Osmanlı (with Osman). His first military conquests began in 1299 with the conquest of Bilecik, Yenikent, İnegöl and İznik. He resolved to take Bursa, and after a siege, which lasted some eight years, his son, Orhan, finally took the city in 1326 and, in 1335, made the city his capital.

His son, Süleyman, conquered Thrace in 1353 and it was his successor, Murad Hüdavendigar, who continued the expansion by taking the Balkans into the Empire. In 1362 Murad captured the city of Edirne, formerly known as Adrianople, and the following year established it as his capital. In 1453 Fatih Sultan Mehmet (Mehmet the Conqueror) conquered İstanbul thus bringing an end to the Byzantine era. In 1516-17 both Syria and Egypt fell to the Ottoman army, and with them the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, making the Ottoman





İstanbul is one of the few places in the world where you can see churches, synagogues and mosques built within a short distance of each other.

sultan the most important figure in the Sunni Muslim world. 1520-66 was the golden age of the Ottoman Empire, under the rule of Süleyman the Magnificent, but from then onwards it began a slow decline, losing its economic and military superiority over Europe.

Despite efforts at reform during the 19th century, a number of nationalist movements broke out in Ottoman territories and the Empire began to fragment. Its fate was sealed when it entered the First World War on the side of Germany. Following the end of the war, the victorious allies shared the Ottoman lands and Britain, Italy, France and Greece began to invade its territories. The Ottoman parliament was dissolved on March 16th 1920. The Turkish Grand National Assembly, with Mustafa Kemal as its President began the struggle for Independence, and in the process of establishing itself, decided on November 1st 1922 to abolish the sultanate. The last Ottoman Sultan Mehmet VI (Vahideddin) left İstanbul in secret on November 17th 1922 on a British Royal Navy vessel bound for Malta, and died in exile in 1926.

Ottoman Culture

Although the Ottomans became known in the west for their opulent lifestyle and military might, the Empire's real strength was the fact that it created a well-ordered society, based on principles of religious and cultural tolerance, caring for the welfare of the sick and the poor. The arts were cultivated and İstanbul and its other major cities became centres for trade in fine silks and other valuable commodities.

In the late 15th century, at a time when it was common in Europe for the mentally ill to be burned at the stake as witches, asylums in Edirne were using music therapy and the scent of flowers to treat their patients. The Ottoman Empire united peoples of many different faiths, nationalities and cultures. In the 19th century, İstanbul's population was made up of Muslim Turks, Orthodox Greeks, Gregorian and Catholic Armenians, Jews, Levantines as well as numerous foreign merchants. Even today, İstanbul is one of the few places in the world where you can see churches, synagogues and mosques built within a short distance of each other.

It was Mehmet the Conqueror (1451-1481) who established his patronage of the fine arts, setting up an atelier in the new palace

of Topkapı, which developed techniques such as calligraphy and miniature painting. He also encouraged study visits from foreign artists, which is how Gentile Bellini came to spend a year in İstanbul in 1479, when he painted his famous portrait of Sultan Mehmet II, which now hangs in the National Gallery in London. Even before the advent of Islamic belief, Turks had the tradition of illustrating manuscripts, however, the art of calligraphy flourished alongside the strict Islamic belief that it was wrong to depict people or animals, and was mainly used to illuminate words from the Koran. It was also used for the elaborate, stylised signature unique to each of the sultans known as the tuğra. The detailed miniatures, on the other hand, act as a historic document portraying the lives of the sultans and their court, showing both historic and everyday events. At a much later date, Sultan Abdülhamid II who ruled from 1876-1909, appointed state photographers and sent albums of their photographs to fellow heads of state around the world, to show them the progress and achievements of his empire.

The Ottomans were also great explorers and the famous Admiral Piri Reis was a renowned navigator and important cartographer, who charted and drew remarkably accurate maps of the world, including the oldest surviving map showing the Americas, which dates back to 1513 and is kept in the Topkapi Palace Museum.

The Ottoman Court

Building work on Topkapı Palace began in 1472 and was completed six years later, although successive sultans added considerably to its structure. It was home to the sultan and his court, and the seat of government until 1853 when the court moved to the new palace of Dolmabahçe.

The Harem

Although *harem* was simply the word used to describe the female living quarters in a residence, to many westerners it conjures up a romantic image, based largely on the Imperial *harem* at Topkapı Palace. The most important person in the *harem* was the *Valide Sultan* (Mother of the Sultan), followed by the *Sultanas*, sultan's daughters, his favourites and other concubines and odalisques (a word which comes from the Turkish '*odalık*' or chamber-maid). Traditionally, there were up

to four kadıns or favourites, who were the equivalent of legal wives and thus accorded privileges. Nurbanu, for example, the favourite of Selim II was given an entourage of 150 ladies in waiting. In fact, many of those living in the harem had no contact at all with the sultan but simply acted as servants to the other members of the household. At its peak there were 1000 women living in the harem at Topkapı Palace. All of these were slave women, and non-Muslim, brought from all corners of the Ottoman Empire, avoiding the risk of betrayal by a wife, who might have interests of her own. The women of the *harem* were said to be the most beautiful in the Empire and the most attractive were trained to entertain the sultan by dancing, reciting poetry, playing musical instruments and mastering the erotic arts.

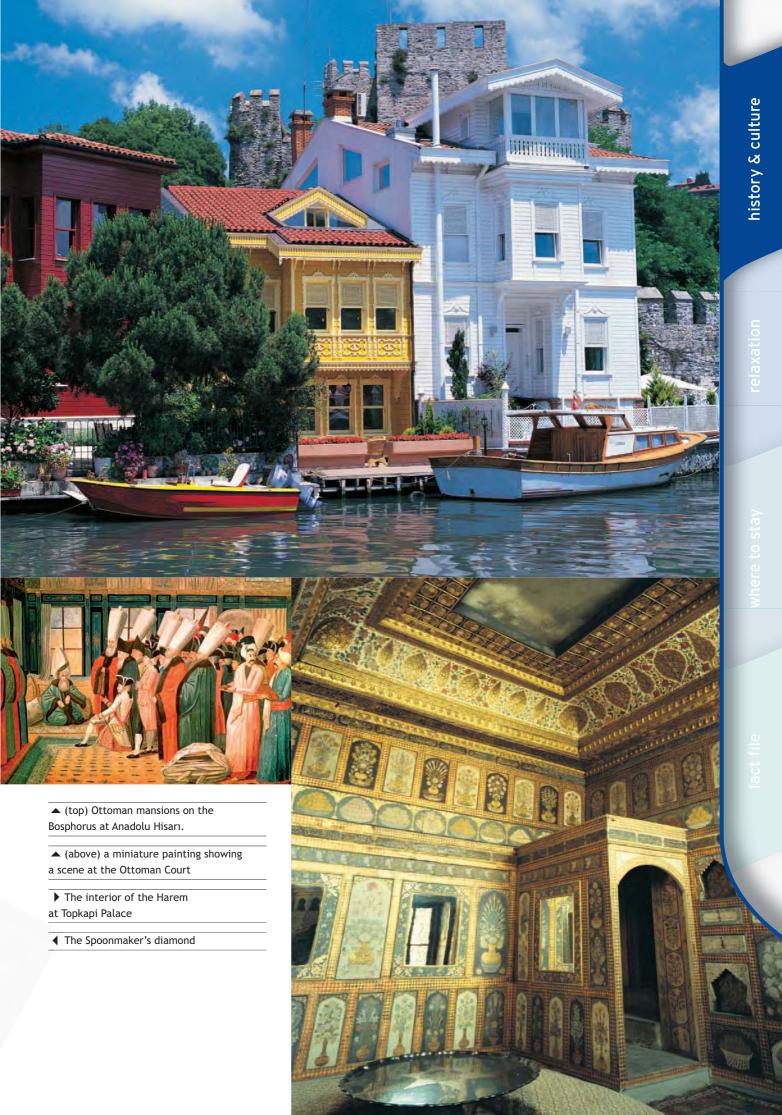
According to Muslim tradition, no man could lay his eyes on another man's *harem*, which lead to the tradition of the *harem* being guarded by the black eunuchs, who were male prisoners of war or slaves fully castrated before puberty, captured from territories such as Egypt, Abyssinia and the Sudan. At the height of the Empire as many as 600-800 eunuchs served in the palace

The Chief Black Eunuch (*Kızlar Ağa*), was the Ottoman Empire's third highest-ranking officer, after the Sultan and the Grand Vizier. His duties were wide-ranging: overseeing the protection of their women, the purchase of new concubines, arranging all royal ceremonies and sentencing those women accused of crimes.

The Janissaries

Christian subjects were required by the practice of *devşirme* to give up one of their sons to the service of the sultan. After the boys had converted to Islam they became either civil servants or soldiers, joining the elite army corps known as the *Yeniçeri* or Janissaries. Striwas imposed upon them, but those who were gifted and ambitious could rise through the ranks, even as far as becoming Grand Vizier – the highest rank after the sultan. The Janissaries became

so powerful, howev they protested whenever they felt their privileges were being threatened,





◀ The Grand Haydarpaşa station, built in 1873, was the starting point of the first Anatolian railway

✓ The traditional marching band of the Janissaries

signalled by their overturning of their soup kettles and often leading to full scale riots. The system persisted, however, until 1826, when the Janissaries lost popular support and were disbanded by Mahmut II. The traditional marching band of the Janissaries, the *Mehter Takumi*, has been revived in recent times and you can see them perform in the traditional uniform, playing kettle drums, clarinets and cymbals.

Ottoman Architecture

Architectural monuments to the greatness of the Ottoman Empire stand, not only, throughout Turkey, but also throughout the many lands which were under its rule. The Ottomans were prolific builders and some of their finest works are public buildings such as mosques (cami) and their surrounding külliye (complex) consisting of buildings providing for the welfare of the community such as: sifahane (hospital), medrese (college), imaret (alms kitchen), tabhane (guest house) and hamam (Turkish baths). Palaces, bridges, fountains, tombs and kervansarays (travellers' inns) are also amongst the fine buildings which remain to the present day. The Ottomans were fond of hunting and of spending time outdoors, often with lavish picnics, and you will find wooden köşks (pavilions or summer houses) in many parks and woodlands.

Private houses, amongst which are the *konak* (mansion) and *yalı* (summer house, especially those on the shores of the Bosphorus) were traditionally built of wood, with the ground floor and foundations only being built of stone. Some have survived to the present day, despite the fire hazard that their wooden structure posed. Recently, great interest has been shown in their preservation and many of them have been renovated and some converted to hotels and pensions. Typically the upper floors jut out over the street and the windows are obscured by wooden lattice-work, intended so that the women of the house could look out without being observed.

The houses were planned around a central gallery room known as a *hayat* off which the other rooms opened. The quarters were divided into the *harem* (the private part of the house only visited by the family and female guests) and the *selamlık* (where the man of the household received his guests). In grander houses these two areas would have separate courtyards, sometimes with fountains and ornamental pools.



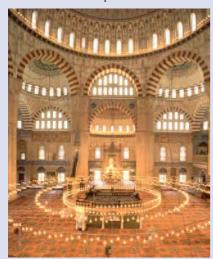


▲ Yeşil Cami and Yeşil Türbe (Green Mosque and tombs) - Bursa

Commissioned by Mehmet I in 1412, the Green Mosque is Bursa's most significant monument and was the first Ottoman mosque where tiles were used extensively as interior decoration, setting an important precedent. The Green Tomb is the tomb of Mehmet I.

Koza Han - Bursa

Built in 1491 by Beyazit II as part of the market and covered bazaar area, it has been central to Bursa's famous silk trade since that time, trading in silk cocoons as well as the finished product.



▲ Selimiye Mosque - Edirne

Built between 1569 and 1575 by the great architect Mimar Sinan for Sultan Selim II, Sinan described it and in particular the dome, which is 31.5 metres in diameter, as his masterpiece.

Sultan Beyazit II Mosque - Edirne

Work began on this mosque in 1484. Designed by the architect Hayrettin, it has a single dome 21 metres in diameter over the prayer hall, and nearly a hundred smaller domes over the buildings of the complex.

Rüstem Paşa Kervansaray - Edirne

This grand traveller's inn was built by Mimar Sinan for Süleyman the Magnificent's celebrated Grand Vezir Rüstem Paşa and still serves as a hotel today.



Dolmabahçe Palace - İstanbul

One of the last great buildings of the Ottoman era, the extravagant Dolmabahçe Palace, which replaced Topkapı as the home of the sultans, was completed in 1856 on the orders of Sultan Abdül Mecit. It was designed by the most famous architects of the time, Karabet Balyan and his son Nikoğos.

Süleymaniye Mosque - İstanbul

Constructed in 1557, this grand mosque, which Sinan referred to as his `journeyman's piece', came to symbolize the greatness of Süleyman the magnificent. It is also notable for its clever ventilation system designed to draw off the smoke from burning candles.

Topkapı Palace - İstanbul

Built between 1472 and 1478, it was the home of the sultans and the centre of Ottoman power for 400 years, during which time it was a work in progress as successive sultans added new buildings and made alterations.



Sultanahmet Mosque (Blue Mosque) - İstanbul

Constructed between 1609 and 1616 for Sultan Ahmet I by the architect Sedefkar Mehmet Ağa. It takes its name from the exquisite blue Iznik tiles which decorate its interior and is also the only mosque to have 6 minarets.



İshak Paşa Palace - Doğubeyazit

Part of the unique character of this palace is its remote setting. It was constructed by an Ottoman governor on an important trading route and is a mixture of Ottoman, Persian and Seljuk styles. It was built between 1685 and 1784.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and the founding of the Turkish Republic

t the end of the First World War, the Ottoman Empire, which had entered on the side of the Germans, was effectively occupied by the Allies. The Ottoman government was defeated and the sultanate had lost credibility. Mustafa Kemal a popular young General in the Ottoman army, who had remained undefeated throughout the war, emerged as the leader to take Turkey forward into a new era. During the War of Independence which lasted from 1919-1923, Mustafa Kemal was elected President of the Turkish Grand National Assembly which was inaugurated on April 23rd 1920 and, with his Minister of Foreign Affairs, İsmet Pasha (İnönü), in 1923 he successfully negotiated the Lausanne Peace Treaty which set Turkey's national borders and recognized Turkey's right of sovereignty. The Turkish Republic was proclaimed on October 29th 1923.

Mustafa Kemal undertook a wide range of far-reaching reforms. In order for Turkey to become a modern nation, he believed that it was imperative to separate religious and state affairs. Faith became a matter of personal choice, Shariah courts were replaced by secular courts and the religious school system was abolished. In 1937 the secularity of Turkey was added to the Constitution as a clause, making Turkey the only country with a predominantly Muslim population to be a secular state. Atatürk believed that Turkey's future lay with the west, and embraced all aspects of modernity with enthusiasm, including adopting European dress. In 1925 the international (rather than the Islamic) time and calendar systems were adopted. The new Turkish alphabet was prepared by the Ministry of National Education, with the aim of increasing levels of literacy, and the move was made from the Arabic to the Latin alphabet. Atatürk saw the role of women as crucial to the development of the new Republic. Polygamy was prohibited, and by 1930 women had been granted the right to vote and to hold office in municipalities.

In 1934 all citizens had to adopt a surname and Mustafa Kemal was given the name 'Atatürk', 'Father of the Turks'.

Atatürk died on November 10th 1938 in Dolmabahçe Palace in İstanbul. The clocks in the palace are all stopped at 09.05, the time that he died. Atatürk is buried in his capital, Ankara, in his imposing mausoleum, Anıtkabir. Atatürk is revered in Turkey and you will notice that most offices have a picture of him on the wall. It is unacceptable to Turks to insult him or show disrespect, even in jest.

The Turkish Constitution

According to the Constitution, Turkey is a republic, and at the same time it is a democratic, laic and social state governed by the rule of law respecting human rights and committed to Atatürk's principles and nationalism. Laicism is the important principle that the basic social, economic, political and legal order of the state may not rely, even partially, on religious rules. The Constitution of the Republic of Turkey guarantees the rights of Turkish citizens to lead dignified lives and develop their material and spiritual being. Everyone is equal before the law and the Constitution does not allow any discrimination based on language, religion, denomination, race, skin colour, gender, political opinion, or philosophical beliefs.

The following clauses of the constitution cannot be amended:

- The Turkish State is a republic
- The Turkish State is an indivisible whole, with its country and nation
- The language of the Turkish State is Turkish
- The Turkish State has a flag with a white crescent and pentagram on a red background
- The national anthem of the Turkish State is the İstiklal Marşı (Independence March)
- The capital of the Turkish State is Ankara

Political Structure

The Republic of Turkey is based on a secular, democratic, pluralistic and parliamentary system. The Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA)is comprised of 550 deputies elected every 5 years. Every Turkish citizen over the age of 18 has the right to vote and every Turkish citizen over the age of 30, who has completed primary education, has the right to stand for election. The nation is governed by the Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister. The President is the head of State and represents the Republic of Turkey and the unity of the Turkish Nation. The President is elected by the TGNA for a seven year term of office.

Turkey is a founding member of OECD, the Black Sea Economic Co-operation Organisation, a member of NATO, the Council of Europe, the Islamic Conference Association and an associate member of the European Union.

Turkey and the EU

Turkey first applied for associate membership of the EEC in 1957 and signed an association agreement in 1963. An application for full membership of the EC was made in 1987 and turned down 2 years later. A customs union with the EU was signed in 1995 and Turkey was recognised as a candidate for membership in 1999. Membership talks to join the EU began on 3rd October 2005.

Population

According to the 2000 census, 67,844,000 people live in Turkey, with 64.9% living in urban areas. The province of İstanbul, Turkey's largest city, recorded a population of over 10 million. Turkey is a country with a young population with 30% aged 14 or under and only 5.6% aged over 65, compared to overall EU figures of 17.2% and 15.7% respectively.



(top) celebrations of Atatürk's
 Commemoration and Youth and
 Sports Day on the 19th May.

🔺 (middle) Atatürk's mausoleum, Anıtkabir.

▲ (bottom) most towns have a commemorative statue of Atatürk, this one is in Kastamonu.

• (main) Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, founder of the Republic of Turkey.



Turkish lifestyle is a vivid mosaic; juxtaposing the Occident and the Orient, the ancient and the modern

ife in Turkey is a rich variety of cultures and traditions, some dating back centuries and others of more recent heritage. The visitor to Turkey will find a great deal that is exotic, and also much that is reassuringly familiar. The following pages should offer you an insight into the intriguing blend of East and West that makes up the Turkish lifestyle.

Language

Turkish is spoken by over 200 million people and is the world's 7th most widely used language, out of over 4000. Today's Turkish has evolved from dialects known since the 11th century and is one of the group of languages known as Ural-Altaic which includes Finnish and Hungarian.

It can be quite difficult to get to grips with Turkish. Words sound unfamiliar and even the way they are written appears strange. The key, however, is the Turkish version of the Latin alphabet – the same one which is used for English with the addition of 6 different characters. Turkish is unusual in that it is completely phonetic – each letter of the alphabet has only one sound, so each word sounds





religion has no place whatsoever in the running of the country's affairs

exactly how it is written. During Ottoman times Turkish was written in Arabic script, which few people could write, so in 1928, Atatürk, founder of the Turkish Republic decided to switch to the new alphabet to improve levels of literacy. Once you get the hang of the sounds of the letters (see page 91 for tips) you can improve your vocabulary with a few basics such as taksi, çizburger and ketçap – the ç is pronounced as 'ch' so just try saying them out loud! Although English is widely spoken in tourist areas, it will still be appreciated if you make the effort to learn a few phrases. Turn to page 92 of this guide for some suggestions.

Religion

Although 99% of the population is Muslim, in Turkey religion is seen as strictly a private matter. In fact, Turkey is the only Islamic country which is a secular state. This is enshrined in the constitution and means that religion has no place whatsoever in the running of the country's affairs. In line with other European countries, the weekly holiday is Sunday - not the Islamic holiday of Friday - and the Gregorian calendar is used. The constitution guarantees freedom of religion and the right to worship. During the time of the Ottoman Empire, people of many different faiths lived in what is now Turkey, and since that time, this diversity has been preserved. Today there are 236 churches and 34 synagogues open for worship in Turkey.

Tourists visiting coastal resorts are unlikely to see much evidence that they are in a Muslim country, except for the call to prayer which can be heard 5 times per day. Dress is relaxed beachwear for locals and tourists alike. Similarly there is little difference between the way in which people dress in large cities in Turkey and the rest of Europe. It is only in smaller villages, more remote areas and the east of the country that dress codes are more formal. The best advice is to take your cue from the locals and adapt your dress to fit in with theirs. It is quite common for village women to wear headscarves but this is generally as much out of practical and cultural than strictly religious considerations.

The only time when you need to worry about dress codes is when visiting a mosque. Everyone should wear clothes which cover their legs, so no shorts for either sex, and women should also make sure that their shoulders and head are covered. Shoes should be removed before entering a mosque. There is usually a rack or storage area where they can be left or you can carry them with you in a bag. Mosques are usually closed to visitors during prayer times. As in any place of worship, visitors should speak quietly and behave respectfully.

There are two major Islamic Festivals which are celebrated in Turkey. The dates of both change each year, according to a lunar calendar. The festivals are Seker Bayramı which falls at the end of Ramadan, a period of fasting, and Kurban Bayrami, the Feast of Sacrifice, when traditionally a goat is sacrificed and the meat distributed to friends, family and neighbours. Government offices and some other institutions are closed during these periods but life in resorts continues much as usual, since many Turks also head to the coast when these holidays fall in the summer months. During Ramadan, or Ramazan, as it is known in Turkey, it is common for locals to fast from sunrise to sunset. This should not affect visitors to tourist areas. Please see page 93 for dates of religious festivals.

Hospitality

Visitors to Turkey are often pleasantly surprised by the friendliness of the Turkish people, who will go out of their way to assist and happily spend time chatting. Hospitality is a cornerstone of Turkish culture, and Turks believe that visitors should be treated as guests of God. This attitude has survived to the 21st century and does not appear to have been diminished by mass tourism. In fact, quite the reverse, most Turks welcome the opportunity to meet foreign visitors, learn about different cultures and practice their language skills. It is usual for Turks - even the men - to greet each other by kissing on both cheeks. Turks are proud of their country and you should avoid insulting or showing disrespect for their flag.

Food

Turkish cuisine is renowned as one of the world's best. It draws its influences from all corners of the former Ottoman Empire, and each region has its own specialities. Turkey is self-sufficient in food production and produces enough surplus for export as well. This means that Turkish food is usually made from fresh, local ingredients and is all the tastier for it.

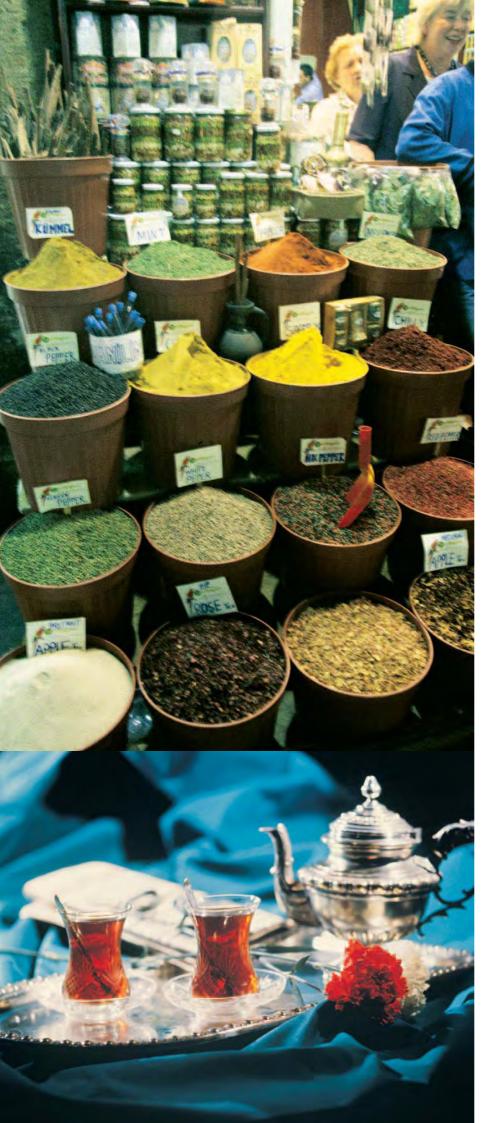


 (middle) tel kadayif - a rich dessert soaked in honey.

(bottom) *lokum* - better
 know as Turkish Delight

(main) dining out in İstanbul's
 Çiçek Pasaji (Flower Passage)





◀ (top) the Turkish cuisine uses a wide array of aromatic spices.

◀ (bottom) the Turks are avid tea drinkers.

▶ Turkish coffee or *Türk kahvesi* is the perfect way to finish off a good meal.

A main meal will usually start with the meze, a variety of small cold and hot dishes which are made for sharing. In many restaurants a waiter will bring these round on a tray for you to inspect and make your choice. In any case, it is common for a Turk to have a look at the food being prepared in the kitchen before deciding on what to eat, so if you are not sure, don't feel shy about asking. Meze includes anything from dips such as *taramasalata* and *cacik* (yoghurt, garlic and cucumber) to *dolma* (anything stuffed with rice such as vine leaves or peppers), karides (prawns) or arnavut ciğer (cubes of liver fried with spices and onions). Turks have hundreds of ways to prepare aubergine and imam bayıldı is one of the best; aubergine cooked in olive oil and filled with tomato and onions, its name literally means 'the priest swooned' - presumably due to the delicious taste.

The main course is usually meat or fish. Turks always eat bread with their meal and main courses are usually served with rice. Typically a *coban salatası*, a 'shepherd's salad' of tomato, cucumber and onion, dressed with olive oil and served with lemon, will be placed in the middle of the table to share. Lamb is the most common meat and this and chicken are prepared in a variety of ways and usually grilled. Şiş kebab (cubes of meat on a skewer) is popular and well known. Köfte, which are like small lamb burgers are well worth trying and those who prefer something a little spicier should order the Adana kebab, which is also made of minced lamb but with the addition of peppers and formed around a skewer. There are numerous variations and regional specialities of the kebab. Somewhat rich but very tasty, is the *İskender* or Bursa kebab, named respectively after Alexander the Great and the town in which it originated, which is slices of *döner* meat layered with yoghurt, tomato sauce and pitta bread. Turks are also fond of stews or what they term sulu yemek (food with sauce) and there are restaurants which specialise in these and will usually have large containers of the different varieties on display.

İstanbul and the coastal resorts are big on fish and seafood. Mostly fish is simply grilled to bring out its natural flavour and there is a wide variety of seafood *meze* including *midye tava* (or mussel kebab served on a skewer). It is worth asking for recommendations but some of the most tasty are levrek (seabass) and kalkan (turbot). Fish is often sold by weight and many restaurants will show you the freshly caught fish to make your choice before cooking it. Do

the traditional tipple is *raki*, an aniseed based spirit, which is sometimes known as lion's milk.

check the price, however, as it can work out to be relatively expensive.

Mostly a meal will be rounded off by a plate of fresh fruit, beautifully prepared and placed in the centre of the table for sharing. Karpuz (water melon) and kavun (melon) are popular. Those with a sweet tooth will be delighted by the sticky, honeyed desserts. There are many varieties, of which baklava (layers of filo pastry and pistachio nuts soaked in honey) is perhaps the most common. Also worth trying is the sütlaç, a cold, slightly sweet milky rice pudding. The adventurous might want to order tavuk gögusu, a milk pudding made from pounded chicken breast - it sounds strange but is actually delicious, and when well made it is impossible to tell it is made from chicken.

Turkish breakfast *kahvaltı* usually consists of fresh white bread, honey, *beyaz peynir* – cheese similar to feta, literally translated as 'white cheese' – tomatoes, cucumber and black olives, washed down with black tea. The Turkish equivalent of a fry up is *menemen* a type of omelette with peppers and other vegetables or eggs fried with *sucuk*, a garlic sausage.

Soup has a special place in the Turkish diet and is drunk at any time of day. There are cafes which only serve soup and are popularly frequented after a big night out. *Mercimek* (lentil) and *domates* (tomato) are common as are more exotic soups such as *işkembe* (tripe), *yayla* (yoghurt with mint) and *düğün* (literally 'wedding' soup) which contains egg and lemon.

Börek can be served as part of a meze or as a snack on its own. It is frequently translated on menus as 'pie' which is completely misleading. It is actually different variations on filo pastry filled with cheese, minced meat, egg, potato or spinach – or combinations thereof. *Sigara börek* and *muska börek* are respectively small cigar and triangle-shaped filo parcels usually filled with cheese, which come as a part of the *meze*. *Su böreği* is layered pastry which is soft and runny and can be served with sugar or white cheese as a snack, and can taste more like thin layers of pasta than pastry.

Fast food

Turkey is full of street vendors selling all sorts of different snacks, from the better known *döner kebab*, which can be made of chicken or lamb to *kokoreç*, which is lamb entrails cooked on a skewer – popular with the locals, but not for the timid. Turks have their own variety of pizza, *pide*, a type of pitta bread with toppings such as cheese, minced meat, egg and *sucuk* (garlic sausage) as well as *lahmacun* which is a very thin flat bread spread with minced meat, which is rolled up before eating.

Vegetarians

The concept of choosing not to eat meat is somewhat alien to the average Turk, so it can be difficult for them to grasp that, for example, a strict vegetarian would not want to eat vegetables cooked in meat stock. Many Turks do not even count chicken as meat but use the term to refer only to red meat. Although strict vegetarians should bear this in mind, there are plenty of options available such as the vegetable meze dishes and snacks such as börek or *pide* with cheese or egg toppings and fillings, as well as the obvious choices such as omelettes, toasted sandwiches and soups. Those who eat fish will find that they have no problems as seafood is popular in all coastal areas.

Soft Drinks

Common fruit juices include *vişne* - sour cherry juice - and *şeftali* – peach. Another favourite drink, particularly in hot weather, which is credited with curing all ills, is *ayran*, a yoghurt drink, which is often salted and, therefore, somewhat of an acquired taste. Bottled mineral water or *su* is cheap and easily available and fizzy drinks are sold everywhere.

Alcoholic Drinks

Alcohol is freely available in Turkish resorts and cities. It is only if you are heading off the beaten track or to particularly conservative areas that you may have to check whether or not restaurants serve alcohol. The traditional tipple is *rakı*, an aniseed based spirit, which is sometimes known as lion's milk. It is clear but turns cloudy when water is added. Most people

do dilute it with water although some drink it only with ice. It is unusual for a Turk to drink alcohol without eating at the same time. Rakı traditionally accompanies a meal of fish and in-between meals, melon and/ or white cheese are often served alongside it. Turkey is credited with being the first nation to produce wine and in recent years this traditional art has experienced something of a renaissance. Local wine producers have been studying the latest methods used in other countries and importing or developing grapes, and this, combined with the favourable local conditions has produced some excellent results. Most people will be pleasantly surprised by the varieties of both red and white wine available. Two of the biggest local producers are Doluca and Kavaklidere. Those who prefer beer will not be disappointed in the well-known local brand, Efes. There are also locally produced vodka, brandy, whisky and gin, which are a lot cheaper than imported brands although they can be a little rough and ready.

Tea

Usually Turkish tea or *çay* is brewed in a sort of combined kettle/ tea pot which is placed directly on the hob and has water boiling in the bottom section and tea brewing in the top so it can be made weaker or stronger as required. It is drunk from small tulip-shaped glasses, always black and usually with plenty of sugar. Unless you specifically ask for Turkish tea, hotels will assume you want English tea and often present you with a cup of boiling water and a tea bag on the side.

Coffee

Turkish coffee or *Türk kahvesi* is the perfect way to finish off a good meal. When ordering you specify whether you want it *sade* (plain), *orta* (with some sugar) or *şekerli* (very sweet) and it is brewed with the specified amount of sugar mixed in with the coffee granules. It is served in small cups. It is quite an art to know when to stop drinking as one sip too many and you will end up

there have been *hamam* or public bath houses in Turkey since medieval times

with a mouthful of the sludgy residue which falls to the bottom of the cup. Even this has its uses, however, as you may find a local willing to tell your fortune from it – cover your cup with the saucer, wait until it becomes cold when you will be asked to turn it upside down, turn it around several times and then your destiny will be divined from the shapes which are formed. It is said that it was the Ottomans who introduced coffee to Europe when their retreating army left bags full of it at the gates of Vienna.

Turkish Delight

One of Turkey's most famous exports, *lokum* or Turkish delight as we know it, comes in many flavours and not only the rose, lemon and pistachio varieties which are common elsewhere. It is often served with Turkish coffee at the end of a meal. There are now some Turkish Delight factories where you can book a tour to watch it being made and sample the wares.

Evil Eye

Wherever you go you will see the nazar boncuk, a charm to ward off the 'evil eye', which is sometimes made into jewellery or used in designs for material or painted on to pottery, china and tiles. The charms are usually made out of blue glass with a stylised eye design and can be of any size - large ones for the home or office, smaller to hang in a car or a tiny one to pin on a child's back with a safety pin. According to the tradition, when someone praises something or someone they run the risk of attracting the 'evil eye' to whatever is being praised, by arousing envy in others. The nazar boncuk deflects this. Few Turks have blue eyes, so it was probably mistrust of foreigners which gave rise to the traditional blue colour of the charms. It is said that the design is the basis for the Paisley pattern.

Turkish Bath

Cleanliness has always been a priority in both Turkish and Islamic society, There have been *hamam* or public bath houses in Turkey since medieval times. The tradition reached its height during Ottoman times, when it became the social focus for women, for many of whom it provided a rare opportunity to leave their own home and see their friends. Bathing would become a social occasion, accompanied by a picnic, and, it is said, that it provided the ideal opportunity for mothers to shortlist potential brides for their sons. Even today there are separate baths for men or women, or where a town has only one hamam, different times of day or days of the week are allocated to men and women. The only exception to this is the baths open to tourists in beach resorts, where it is not uncommon to have mixed bathing and even to be massaged by someone of the opposite sex, which would never happen in a traditional bath. When you enter the hamam you leave your clothes in a locker and wrap yourself in a towel or cloth called a *peştemal* which is provided along with wooden slippers. Once in the main bathhouse, you fill your bowl with water from the taps set along the walls and wash yourself by tipping the water from the bowl over yourself. When it is your turn you lie down on the central marble slab or göbek taşı where you are scrubbed with a rough cloth (called kese) and then lathered with soap and massaged. There is usually an extra charge for these treatments.

Carpets

The first carpets were almost certainly those made by the nomadic tribes who wandered central Asia, and bear a close resemblance to the cotton kilims still available today. Turkish rugs are usually made from wool or silk, woven and knotted on a loom. The density of the knots determines the quality of the carpet - the more knots per centimetre, the more hard-wearing it will be. The colours used for the designs vary from region to region and usually stem from the indigenous plants which were available in that region for producing dyes. The symbols used to decorate the carpets also vary and most have a meaning attached to them - usually they are motifs taken from nature representing flowers, plants and animals. Most carpetsellers are well versed in the history of the carpet and will be happy to spend some time explaining it - often over a glass of apple tea. In recent years, a number of 'carpet schools' have been opened where the traditional arts can be preserved and the process of carpet-making from dying the wool to weaving can be demonstrated to visitors.

İznik tiles

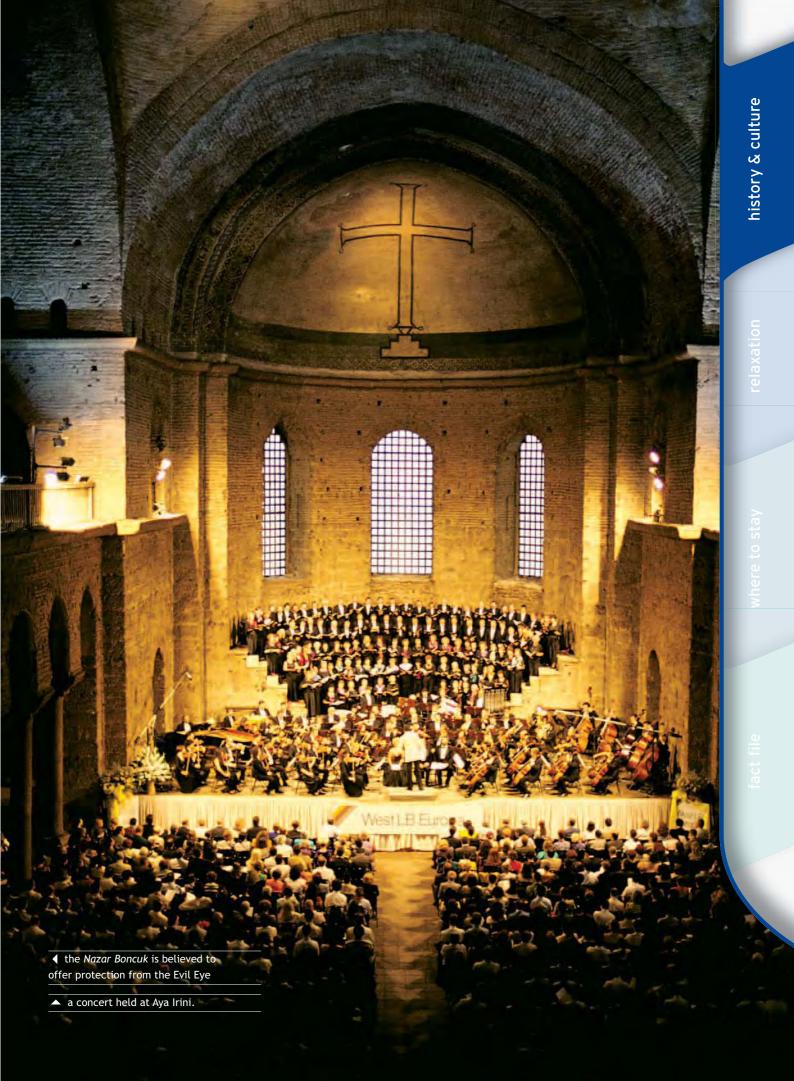
Iznik tiles, which are named after their place of origin, a small town in the province of Marmara, near Bursa,

are traditionally made using a unique technique which combines three successive layers of quartz and a mixture of clay and glaze, which blend naturally at very high temperatures. The background is white and the colours which are used reflect those of semi-precious stones, the dark blue of lapis lazuli, turquoise, coral red and emerald green. The patterns are symbolic representing flora and fauna and other elements of the natural world, together with inscriptions of Islamic texts. The popularity of İznik tiles was at its height during the 16th century, with the red wall tiles which decorate the Süleymaniye Mosque marking its apogee. In the 17th century there were at least 300 workshops in İznik specialising in tile-making. During the Ottoman period these tiles were exported throughout the world via the island of Rhodes, which was part of the Empire. This industry declined along with the Ottoman Empire, and suffered greatly throughout the War of Independence, but has been revived in recent years.

Music

Turkey has a rich musical tradition of varied and often contrasting styles. From the folk music which originated on the steppes of Asia to the refined music of the Ottoman court; from the strident military music of the mehter takımı, the Janissary band, played with kettle drums, clarinets and cymbals to the mystical sound of the ney or 'reed pipe' which accompanies the Whirling Dervishes as they dance. Classical Turkish music is monophonic ie all instruments essentially play the same tune. There are a number of instruments commonly heard such as the *kemence* or violin; ud or lute; kanun, which is similar to a zither; zurna similar to an oboe; and zil or cymbal. It was only with the formation of the Turkish Republic that efforts were made to develop a form of modern polyphonic Turkish music, but there are now numerous successful classical composers. At the other end of the spectrum, there is also a thriving popular music industry in Turkey boosted by the MTV

style TV channels playing non-stop music videos. There are a number of prominent music festivals in Turkey including the Aspen-







(top) The whirling dance of the Mevlana

◀ (bottom) the traditional puppet show featuring the antics of Karagöz and Hacivat

dos Opera and Ballet Festival which is held in June and July and the İstanbul Jazz Festival.

Folk dancing

Turkey has a rich tradition of folk dancing with dances performed at all social occasions. These could be weddings, celebrations held for young men leaving for military service, national and religious festivals, or local festivities such as those marking the return from the mountain plateaux to the villages at the end of the summer. Some dances reflect natural events or daily life, and others portray social events and affairs of the heart. Each region has its own dances which reflect the cultural life of that region. Some of the most famous dances are the bar which originates in the province of Erzurum, the halay in the East and Southeast, the hora in Thrace, the horon in the Black Sea and the spoon dances in and around Konya. Recent developments in Turkish folk dance have seen the emergence of *Riverdance* style troupes performing modern variations on the traditional dances in elaborate, spectacular, stage shows.

Mevlana - Whirling Dervishes

The order of Mevlevi, better known in the west as the Whirling Dervishes, was founded by the 13th century Sufi mystic, Celaleddin Rumi, who was also known as Mevlana. He was a poet, who believed that music and dance provided the means to enter a religious state of ecstasy thereby discovering divine love, and formed a religion, or philosophy based on tolerance. His most famous poem represents the central beliefs of Sufism:

Come, come, whoever you are, come! Heathen, fire-worshipper or idolator, come! Come even if you have broken your penitence a hundred times, Ours is the door of hope, come as you are.

There were dervish lodges or *tekke* throughout Anatolia but Konya, where he settled, was the centre of the movement. His museum, situated in the original *tekke* can be visited there today where there is a Mevlana festival held in December every year. Central to the religion is the *sema*, the ceremony, the climax of which is the whirling dance. It is performed in traditional symbolic costume of a conical hat or *sikke*, which represents the tombstone of the ego, and white robes or *tennure*, which represent its shroud. The dervish whirls with his right hand pointed upwards towards God and his left pointing down to the earth to the accompaniment of the *ney* or reed pipe.

Central to the religion is the *sema*, the ceremony, the climax of which is the whirling dance.

Karagöz

A sort of Turkish Punch & Judy show, Karagöz is a shadow play performed by traditionally designed puppets, made of translucent stretched and painted camel skin. There are two main characters the eponymous Karagöz and Hacivat. Karagöz is a down-to-earth type who frequently finds himself at odds with his friend, Hacivat who is well educated in Islamic theology but ultimately unreliable. There are various other characters who take part in the plays, which always follow the same format but have different stories. The plays are humorous, drawing on double entendres, caricatures and mimicry. There is a strong element of satire, which was used during Ottoman times to provide a humorous critique of those in authority.

During this period, Karagöz, was one of the most important forms of entertainment with shows performed at festivals and feasts - even at the circumcision parties held for the young princes - in coffeehouses and gardens. It was most popular in the Sultan's capital, İstanbul, but was spread throughout Anatolia by travelling performers.

Nasrettin Hoca

Nasrettin Hoca was a popular scholar, whose tales are famous throughout Turkey for their satire, wit and humour, beneath which lies a serious message. He was born in the district of Hortu, in Sivrihisar in 1208 and died in Akşehir in 1284. He has acquired such mythical status, however, that fact and fiction have become muddled in the stories surrounding him and the anecdotes attributed to him. His stories refer to everyday situations amongst the common people of Anatolia and his wisdom opposes the stricter elements of Islamic law with humour, as he baffles those around him with his logic. Many of the stories feature his donkey, itself a symbol of suffering, which was an everyday part of village life.

Why He Sat On The Donkey Backwards

One day, Nasrettin Hoca was riding home from the mosque on his donkey, with a large crowd behind him. Suddenly, he got off the donkey, and got on again backwards, facing the animal's tail. Naturally, the people asked him what he was doing. He replied: 'I thought about it, and decided to ride my donkey like this, because I have no time for disrespect. If you move ahead of me, then you will be turning your back on me, which would be extremely disrespectful. If I go on ahead, I will be turning my back on you, and that is also quite unacceptable. This way, I can go on ahead of you and you can follow behind, and we can still keep looking at each other!'

Traditional Sports

Cirit Oyunu

This traditional game is a team event, involving two teams of horsemen, who throw wooden javelins at each other to score points. During the Ottoman period it became a popular war game demonstrating the bravery of its participants, with competitions held in the Hippodrome in İstanbul. Despite its popularity, it was banned in 1826 by Sultan Mahmut II, who considered it to be too dangerous. Although it was still played regularly until about 50 years ago, now it is only played in a few regions to mark ceremonial occasions, mostly those around Erzurum and Kars in the east of Turkey, although it can also still be seen in Konya, in central Anatolia, and in Balıkesir on the Aegean.

Kırkpınar Yağlı Güreş or Greased Wrestling



This is the Turkish national sport, a competitive wrestling tournament, made more difficult by the fact that the combatants are smothered in oil. The competitors wear traditional black costumes and the event is held every year in June in a meadow just outside Edirne. Known as Kırkpınar, it literally means 'Forty Spring' and is said to have been named after the forty Ottoman warriors who, in the 14th century, made the first crossing of the Dardenelles into Europe.

Camel Wrestling

It is thought that this sport has its origins in the nomadic tribes who depended on camels for their livelihood. Today, it is mostly popular in the Aydın region, where contests are held in the winter months from December - March. Male camels are bred and trained specifically for wrestling and must be of a certain type, known as *tülü* camels. Contests are held under strict regulation to protect the welfare of the animals who may only wrestle once per day in a match which lasts for only 10 or 15 minutes.



The Van Cat

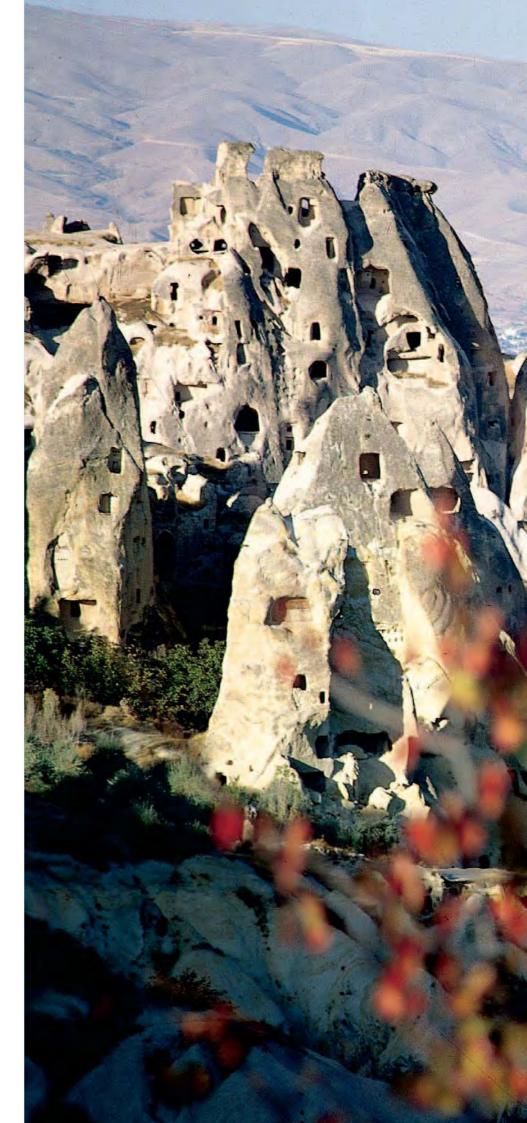
Indigenous to the area around Lake Van, these fascinating cats are, sadly, becoming increasingly rare. They are pure white and typically have one amber and one blue eye (although they can also have two eyes of either colour). The other unusual feature of the Van cat is that it is the only species of cat which loves swimming and playing with water. The unique natural and historical wonders which are drawing visitors away from the coast...

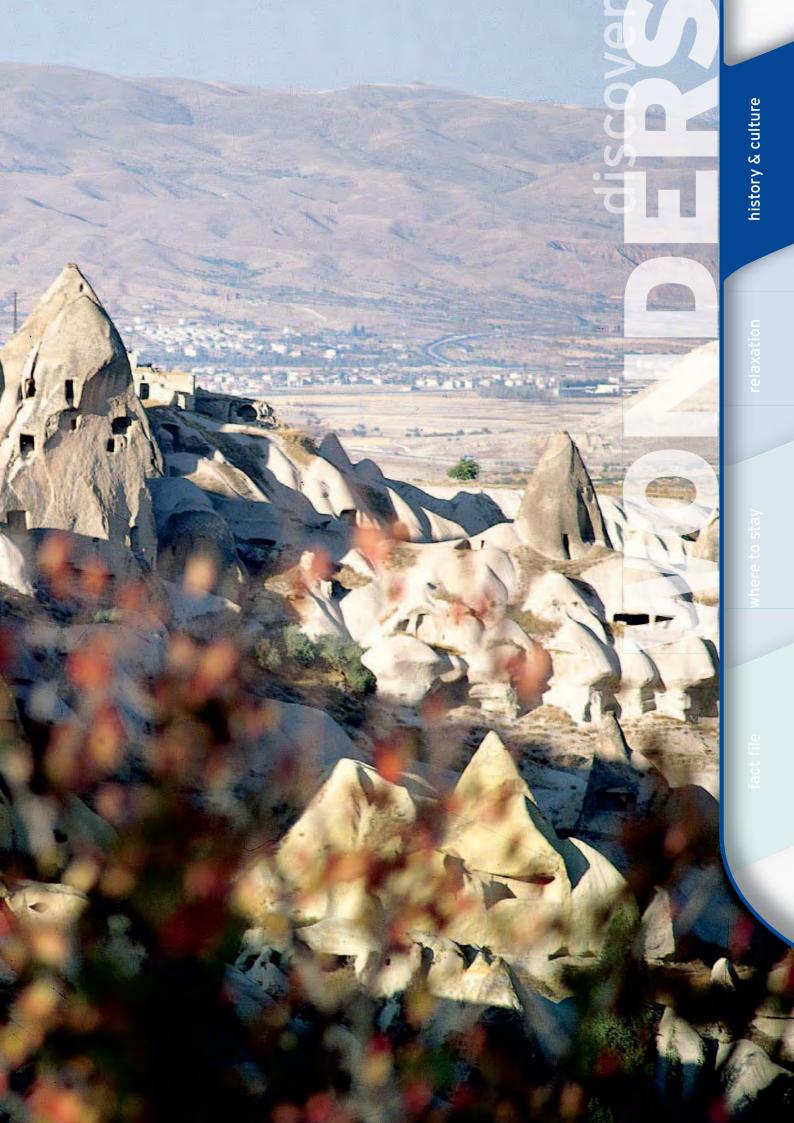
n increasing number of visitors to Turkey are discovering that there's a great deal more to this country than its fabulous beaches. Turkey is a vast country with unique natural landscapes and a rich history and culture, the remains of the many civilisations which have inhabited this ancient land. To date, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has registered 9 locations in Turkey on the World heritage List.

The sites are:

- Göreme National Park and the Rock Sites of Cappadocia
- Great Mosque of Divriği
- · Historic Areas of Istanbul
- Hattusha
- Nemrut Dağ
- · Hierapolis-Pamukkale
- Xanthos-Letoon
- City of Safranbolu
- Archaeological Site of Troy

 Rock dwellings carved into the 'fairy chimneys' near Nevşehir in Cappadocia.





Göreme National Park and the Rock Sites of Cappadocia

Some 30 million years ago, a series of volcanoes erupted in this area, the largest of which was the now extinct Mount Erciyes. They spewed lava and volcanic ash over the landscape which, as it solidified, turned into a soft stone known as *tuff*. *Tuff* is easily eroded by the elements, and over millions of years, the wind and the rain have formed the strange rock shapes which can be seen today. Known in Turkish as peri bacaları or 'fairy chimneys' they have been shaped into all manner of strange forms of all sizes, each contributing to the other-worldly atmosphere of this unique lunar landscape. Man has added to the work of nature, the softness of the *tuff* allowing it to be easily carved out and excavated to form subterranean dwellings and troglodyte villages. The early Christians fled here, escaping persecution as early as the 4th century and built their churches underground, hewn from the soft rock. A highlight of Cappadocia is the Göreme Open Air Museum, which has the area's greatest concentration of chapels and monasteries cut out of the rock, dating mostly from the 9th century onwards. Many of them are decorated with beautiful Byzantine frescoes, showing Biblical scenes, which have been carefully restored.

For further information on Cappadocia see page $82\,$

Great Mosque and Hospital of Divriği

This region of eastern Anatolia was conquered by the Seljuk Turks at the beginning of the 11th century and became the seat of the Mengüceoğulları tribe. In 1228-29 Emir Ahmet Shah, their leader, founded a mosque, with its adjoining hospital at Divriği. The külliye or mosque complex is one of the finest examples of Seljuk stone carving and architecture in Turkey. What makes it so unusual is the intricate, highly decorative sculpture work featuring plants and animals, which seem to leap out of the stone. The doorways are particularly ornate, which is in stark contrast to the plain walls of the interior. Although Divriği should definitely be incorporated into any tour of eastern Turkey, it is a little out of the way. It is approximately 160 kms southeast of Sivas, a 5 hour train journey away, and 8 hrs by train from Erzurum. For further information on Eastern Anatolia see page 86.

Historic Areas of İstanbul

İstanbul is strategically placed at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, guarding the entrance to the Black Sea. Its location has ensured its historic significance, and it has been the capital of three empires: Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman. İstanbul is divided by the Bosphorus straits which separate Europe from Asia, and the historic peninsula, known as the Sultanahmet area is further set apart from the more modern centre of İstanbul by the Golden Horn. This relatively small area, surrounded by water, at the point where the Sea of Marmara, the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn converge, is home to a treasure trove of historic riches. Its masterpieces include the ancient Hippodrome of Constantine, the 6th-century Haghia Sophia (Ayasofya), Topkapı Palace, the Blue Mosque (Sultan Ahmet Cami) and the 16th-century Süleymaniye Mosque.

For further information on İstanbul see page 76.

Hattusha or Hattuşaş

The archaeological site of the ancient walled city of Hattusha or Hattuşaş, former capital of the Hittite Empire, is one of the most important in Anatolia. At the height of their power, around 1300 BC, the Hittites had conquered most of Anatolia and were rivalling the other great powers of the day, Egypt, Babylon and Assyria. Much of what we know about the Hittities has been learned from the thousands of bronze and clay tablets which were found at this site. Set in a National Park area in what is now known as Boğazköy, the city was built around 1600 BC on a strategic site, surrounded by deep ravines. Perhaps the most famous of its monuments is the Lion's Gate or Aslankapı, although the carved lions which now guard the site are only copies, as the originals are in the Museum of Anatolian Civilisations in Ankara. Hattuşaş was a hugely important city, originally containing some 70 temples. The largest of these was the Büyük Mabet which has been extremely well preserved. It was dedicated to the worship of Teshuba, the storm god, and Hebut, the sun goddess. Approximately 3kms away is the site of the temple of Yazılıkaya, literally 'stone with writing', named after the famous friezes carved into the rock face to the rear of the site, which depict Hittite deities. The city of Hattuşaş was destroyed around 1200 BC. The Hattuşaş National Park is located approximately 3hrs east of Ankara near Cappadocia.

For further information on Cappadocia see page 82.





(top) carvings near Hattuşaş.

- (middle) unusual rock formations in Cappadocia.
- (bottom) Ayasofya museum, Constantine's Church of the Divine Wisdom.
- (main) interior of the Great
 Mosque at Divriği.

two of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World were to be found in what is now Turkey

Nemrut Dağı

The image of the huge disembodied stone heads of Mount Nemrut is one of Turkey's most iconic. The site is remote, on a mountaintop some 2150 metres high, so it is not entirely surprising that it lay undiscovered until 1881, when it was found by a German engineer, carrying out a survey. The statues are part of the dream of one man, Antiochus I (69-34 BC), who reigned over the Commagene kingdom. He certainly had delusions of grandeur, claiming to be descended from Alexander the Great and also the Persian king, Darius, and believed that on his death he would join the god, Zeus, in heaven. The tomb and temple complex which he had built, consists of three terraces cut into the north, east and west sides at the top of the mountain and a sanctuary at the summit. The terraces featured seated statues of Greek and Persian gods, which were some 26-33 feet tall. Even the best preserved has been decapitated but the remains are still very impressive and in addition to the statues there are a number of carved stone reliefs. The site can now be reached by road and the most popular times to visit are dawn and dusk. For further information on Eastern Anatolia see page 86.

Hierapolis-Pamukkale

Pamukkale literally means 'cotton castle' and is one of Turkey's most impressive natural wonders. It is made up of a series of white travertine terraces cascading down a cliff, which is almost 200 metres high. The hard, white mineral deposits, which from a distance resemble snow, are caused by the high mineral content of the natural spring water which runs down the cliff and congregates in warm pools on the terraces. This is such a popular tourist attraction that strict rules had to be established in order to preserve its beauty, which include the fact that visitors may no longer walk on the terraces. Those who want to enjoy the thermal waters, however, can take a dip in the nearby pool, littered with fragments of marble pillars. It was the thermal waters which lead to the founding of the spa town of Hierapolis at the end of the 2nd century BC by the dynasty of the Attalids, the kings of Pergamon. The remains include the ancient ruins of the baths, temples, the well-preserved theatre, and the largest necropolis or graveyard in Anatolia containing over 1200 tombs. It is easy to book an excursion from any of the major beach resorts to visit Pamukkale, and this is sometimes combined with a visit to Ephesus.

Xanthos-Letoon

The remains of the ancient federation of Lycia, which encompassed some 19 independent cities, can be seen throughout the southwestern corner of Turkey. Most prominent are their tombs, especially the rock tombs, often cut high into cliff faces, and representing a house for the dead. Xanthos, which is situated close to the village of Kınık between Fethiye and Kalkan, became the capital of Lycia during the 2nd century BC. It is an impressive site containing some excellent examples of Lycian tombs. It was here that a pillar inscribed in both Greek and Lycian was found, which enabled the Lycian language to be understood. Letoon, is approximately 4 kms from Xanthos and was the Lycian religious centre, where the temples of Leto, Apollo and Artemis were situated. It is now partially flooded.

For further information on Kalkan see page 66 and on Fethiye see page 58.

City of Safranbolu

Safranbolu is renowned for its superb Ottoman houses. It has become almost like an open air museum and is attracting more and more interest as the architecture which was once so common is now disappearing from other parts of Turkey. From the 13th century to the advent of the railway, Safranbolu was an important stop on the main East-West trade route, reaching the apogee of its cultural and economic success in the Ottoman period, during the 17th century. The city's inhabitants became wealthy and built themselves lavish houses, many of which still survive today. Some of the most interesting houses have been restored and turned into museums, including Kileciler Evi, Mumtazlar Konağı and Kaymakamlar Müze Evi. The public buildings too give an idea of the vast wealth of the city at that time. You should visit the Köprülü Mehmet Paşa Mosque, which was completed in 1661; the Cinci Hanı, the most famous building in the Carşı district, which is a caravanserai dating back to 1645, and the Cinci Hamamı, a 17th century Turkish bath which is still in use today. Safranbolu is on the north-west Black Sea coast. It is approximately 4 hours from Ankara by bus and 5 hours from İstanbul. For further information on the Black Sea region see page 84.

Archaeological Site of Troy

The name of Troy is perhaps one of the best known and most evocative names of any historic site in the world. Relatively few people realise, however, that it is situated in Turkey, close to the town of Canakkale at the entrance to the Dardanelles. Homer immortalized Troy in the Iliad, with his tale of passion, betrayal and cunning, and it is this, more than anything else which has afforded Troy its fame. In recognition of this, a replica wooden horse stands at the site. Troy is, however, also of archaeological significance. When the controversial German archaeologist, Schlieman, excavated at the end of the 19th century, he found nine cities, built on top of each other which date back to 3000 BC. Although heated debate still continues it seems likely that the fortifications which can still be seen and which date from the 6th city, were those defended by Priam and his sons Hector and Paris, and into which the Greeks smuggled their infamous wooden horse.

For further information on the North Aegean see page 70.

The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World

Two of these Wonders were situated in what is now Turkey, although sadly neither of them has survived to the present day – the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus and the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus.

The Temple of Artemis at Ephesus

The Temple was built to house the cult image of Artemis Ephesia which shares many features in common with the Anatolian Mother Goddess, Cybele. The exact construction of the temple is not known but, although it was devastated by fire in 262 AD, some of its sculptures have survived and are now housed in the British Museum in London.

The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus

The Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, in what is now Bodrum, was built of white marble, some 135 feet high. It was the tomb of the Persian Governor of Caria, Mausollos. The tomb's fame spread to such an extent that the word 'mausoleum' is taken from a corruption of the Latin form, Mausolus, of the governor's name. Today, only the foundations remain, although some of the sculptures can be seen in the British Museum in London.

▲ (left) the wooden Ottoman houses of Safranbolu.

▲ (right) the monumental stone heads of Nemrut Dağ.

• the travertines of Pamukkale.



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