

TURKEY



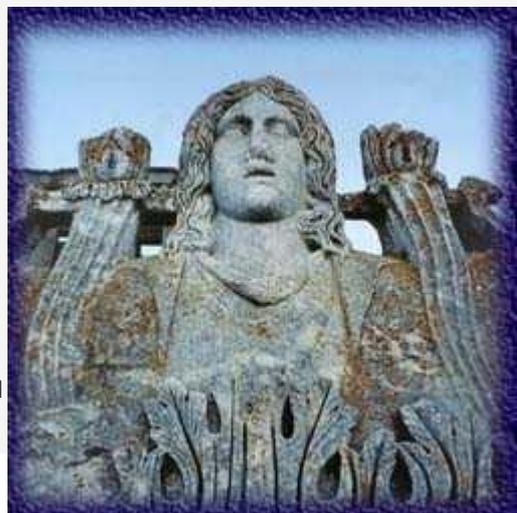
TURKEY IN BRIEF

A country of sun and history, Turkey is located where the three continents making up the old world, Asia, Africa and Europe are closest to each other and straddle the point where Europe and Asia meet.

Because of its geographical location, the mainland, Anatolia, has witnessed the mass migration of diverse peoples shaping the course of history. The home to countless civilizations, Anatolia has developed a unique synthesis of cultures, each with its own distinct identity, yet each linked to its predecessors through insoluble treads.

As an ancient land and modern nation; Turkey today is both the inheritor and conservator of the common heritage of mankind.

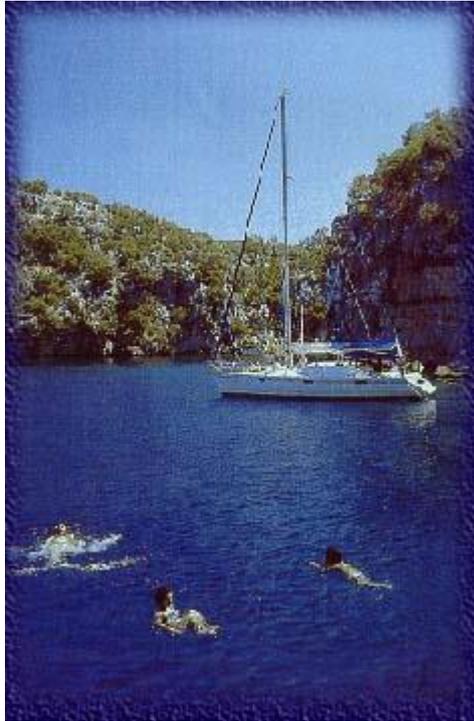
Location: Turkey straddles the borders of Europe and Asia with the majority of the country in Southwest Asia. It has a total area of 780,580 sq.km, that lies within Europe. The country is bordered at the east by Georgia, Armenia and Iran with Iraq, Syria and the Mediterranean Sea on the



south. The Aegean Sea, Greece and Bulgaria are to the west, and the Black Sea forms the northern border. Turkey's geographical coordinates are 36° 00' to 42° 00' north latitude and 26° 00' to 45° 00' east longitude.

Geographical Regions: Turkey, which has 80 administrative provinces, is divided into seven geographical regions; the Black Sea region, the Marmara region, the Aegean region, the Mediterranean region, Central Anatolia, the East and Southeast Anatolia regions.

Coastlines:



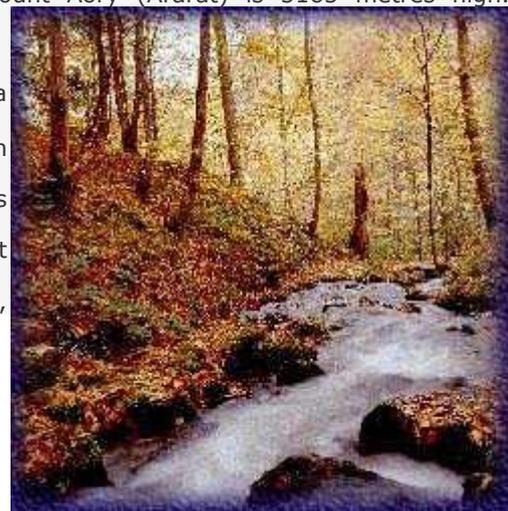
Turkey is surrounded by sea on three sides, by Black Sea in the north, the Mediterranean Sea in the south and the Aegean Sea in the west. In the northwest, there is an internal sea, the Sea of Marmara, between the straits of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus, which are important waterways that connect the Black Sea with the rest of the world. The coastline of Turkey (excluding islands) is 8333 km.

Rivers: Most of the rivers of Turkey flow into the seas surrounding the country. The Fýrat (Euphrates) and Dicle (Tigris) join together in Iraq and flow into the Persian Gulf. Turkey's largest rivers, the Kýzýlýrmak, Yebilýrmak and Sakarya, flow into the Black Sea. The Susurluk, Biga and Gönen pour into the Sea of Marmara, the Gediz, Küçük Menderes, Büyük Menderes,

and Meriç into the Aegean and the Seyhan, Ceyhan and Göksu into the Mediterranean.

Mountains: In the Marmara region the most important peak is the Uludağ (2543 m) at the same time it is a major winter sports and tourist centre. In the Aegean region, the mountains fall perpendicularly to the sea. In the Mediterranean region, located in the south of Turkey, the western and central Taurus Mountains suddenly rise up behind the coastline. The Central Anatolia Region is exactly in the middle of Turkey and gives the appearance of being less mountainous compared with other regions. The main peaks of the region are Karadağ, Karacadağ, Hasandağ, and Erciyes (3917 m). The Eastern Anatolia region is Turkey's largest and highest region. About three-fourths is at an altitude of 1500 - 2000 metres. There are numerous inactive volcanoes in the region, including Nemrut, Suphan, Tendurek and Turkey's highest peak where Noah's Ark was landed, Mount Ađry (Ararat) is 5165 metres high.

Lakes: In terms of numbers of lakes, the Eastern Anatolia region is the richest. It contains Turkey's largest, Lake Van (3713 sq.km.). There are also many lakes in west Taurus Mountains area; the Beyşehir and Eđridir lakes. Important lakes are; the second largest lake in Turkey, Tuzgölü, Burdur,



Sapanca, Iznik, Ulubat, Manyas (bird sanctuary), Akşehir, and Eber. As a result of the construction of dams during the past thirty years, several large dam lakes have come into existence in the Eastern Anatolia such as, Keban, Karakaya, and Atatürk.

The Climate: Although Turkey is situated in a geographical location where climatic conditions are quite temperate, the diverse nature of the landscape, and the existence in particular of the mountains that run parallel to the coasts, result in significant differences in climatic conditions from one region to the other. While the coastal regions enjoy milder climates, the inland Anatolia plateau experiences hot summers and cold winters with limited rainfall.

Language: The Turkish language is spread over a large geographical area in Europe and Asia; it is spoken in the Azeri, the Turkmen, the Tartar, the Uzbek, the Baskurti; the Hogay, the Kyrgyz, the Kazakh, the Yakuti, the Guvas, and other dialects. The Turkish spoken in Turkey represents that of the Turkish language group coming from the southwest branch of the Uralic-Altayic language family. The oldest written records of Turkish are found upon stone monuments in Central Asia, in the Orhun, Yenisey and Talas regions within the boundaries of present day Mongolia, and belong to the years 725, 732 and 735 A.D. After the formation of the Turkish Republic in 1923 and following the achievement of national unity, Latin alphabet using Turkish phonetics was adopted in 1928.



Flora and Fauna: As the climate and topography vary greatly in Turkey, so does the flora and fauna. The Black Sea region is renowned for its forests of leaf bearing and coniferous trees and for the apples, pears, cherries which is originated from Turkey, hazelnuts, mandarin oranges, tobacco and tea that are grown there. Along the eastern Mediterranean shores the local vegetation is tropical, with flourishing banana, palm and citrus trees and sugar cane and cotton. From the western Mediterranean, Aegean and Marmara coasts: olive, citrus and pine trees along the mountains are found. On the steppes of Central Anatolia: natural pastures with scattered-forested areas. In Europe, there are 11,500 kind of flora with flowers. In Turkey, this number is 9,000 but 3,000 of this flora only grow in Turkey.

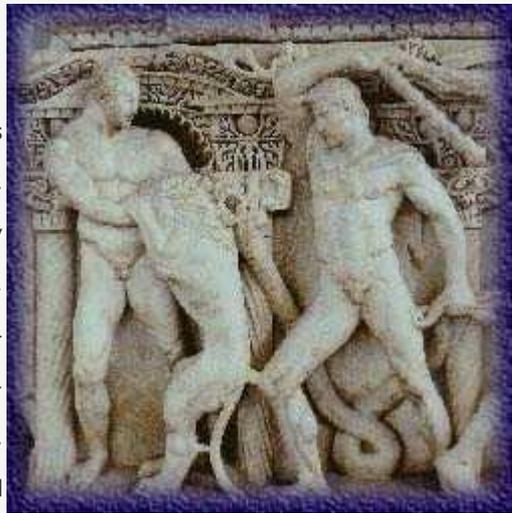
Animals: Turkey is the habitat of the same animals that can be found in the European countries, plus many from Asia and Africa. There are 60,000 animal species in the whole continent of Europe. Turkey has 80,000. Turkey is home to birds of many kinds, especially in the "Birds Paradises" the national park on Lake Manyas, Sultan Sazlıđı near Kayseri, in Izmir Çamaltı Tuzlası etc.

Population: On the general basis, the population in Turkey is characterised by youth and dynamism. According to a 1997 population census, Turkey has 62.6 million inhabitants. Although there has been a marked migration into town, approximately 47 percent of the population still lives in the rural areas. Although the official language is Turkish, English is widely spoken in Turkey. There are many high

schools and universities where the curriculum is based on English, German and French are other commonly spoken foreign languages. Istanbul, which was the capital of three empires, is Turkey's largest city, with approximately 9.1 million inhabitants. Ankara, the capital city, has 3.69 million inhabitants. The next largest cities are Izmir, Konya and Adana.

History According to the historical records of China, the earliest known Turks lived in Dzungaria, to the north of East Turkestan in 2000 B.C. During the 1500's B.C., the Turks scattered, becoming nomads and warrior tribes and settling in the regions of Altai and the Tien Shan Mountains. Political military and climatic changes, in this region from the 2nd century onwards, caused the nomadic tribes to establish settled civilisations along the edges of the steppes. The Huns settled in the Central Asia and Europe; the Akhuns in Afghanistan and north India; the Oghuz in Iran and Anatolia; the Bulgars in the Balkans and on the banks of the Volga; the Sabars in the Caucasia; the Pechenegs, Kipchaks and Uzs in Eastern Europe and the Balkans; and the Uigurs in inner Asia. Thus, between the 2nd century B.C. and the 20th century A.D. the original Turkish tribes scattered themselves over an area of 18 million square kilometres, and founded several states and empires.

Meanwhile Anatolia, where eastern and western civilisations meet, nourished the most ancient civilisations of the world, the Hattis were the oldest known people of Anatolia; they attained a high level of civilisation in 2500 B.C. The Hittite, who entered Anatolia via the Caucasus mountains, integrated with the Hattis and established the first social and political organisation in Anatolia. The Hurrians, Luwians, Urartians, Phrygians, Lydians, Carians, Lycians, Ionians, and Byzantines all established great civilisations here. Eventually,



ly, Anatolia's final owners, the Turks, created three great states on this soil.

It was the Seljuks of Oghuz Turks who opened the doors of Anatolia for the Turks. They established a powerful empire in western Asia in 990 A.D. In 1071 the Seljuk Emperor Alparslan reached the frontiers of Anatolia and defeated the Byzantine emperor, Romanus IV Diogenes at Malazgirt in Eastern Anatolia.

The Anatolian Seljuk State was based at Konya and owned a flowering civilisation, but it was short-lived because of the attacks of the Mongols who defeated it fatally at the Battle of Erzinçan in 1243. After this defeat, Anatolia broke up into several principalities. One of these, the Ottoman Turks, eventually reunited the other principalities previously under Seljuk domination and re-established the unity of Anatolia.

Thus, they founded one of the largest and longest-lived empires of history and created a great civilisation and culture which reached its apogee in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries under a succession of brilliant rulers, including Mehmet II, the Conqueror of Istanbul; Süleyman I, known in Europe as 'the

Magnificent'; and Murad IV, Conqueror of Baghdad and Yerevan. These sultans were not only brilliant generals and statesmen, but also highly educated men who wrote poetry and composed music within the Ottoman Court tradition and were generous patrons to the visual arts. From the end of seventeenth century, however, the Ottoman Empire went into a gradual decline, which culminated with the end of 1st World War.

The Ottoman Empire, which joined the World War in 1914 as a result of a "fail accompli", had come to the brink of collapse at the end of this War. Having been defeated by the Allied Powers, it was forced to sign the Serves Treaty in 1920, which brought forth the partition of the empire.

At this most defining moment of our history, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the Turkish nation waged the War of Independence, against the foreign powers to be able to live as a free, sovereign and independent country.

The War of Independence started on May 19th, 1919 and ended by the proclamation of the Republic of Turkey on October 23rd, 1923. The Turkish Grand National Assembly abolished the Sultanate on November 1st, 1922, thus ending over six centuries of the reign of Ottoman Empire.

The Lausanne Peace Treaty, which was signed on July 24th, 1923, the following long negotiations certified and legalised the victory won in the Turkish War of Independence.



The revolutionary reforms that Great Atatürk put into force during his presidency of fifteen years following the founding of our Republic were aimed at transforming the country into a constitutional, modern state. These reforms laid the fundamentals of the new Republic.

The Republic has introduced universal principles of law to Turkey. In this context, the idea that all citizens are equal and free without any discrimination based on race, language, and religion, establishes the basis of the Republican Covenant, which ensures social unity. Secularism, which brings under guarantee the freedom of religion and belief; democracy, which enables citizens to express their thoughts freely and to participate in political process; and the rule of law, which makes it possible for them to live free from fear and oppression, are products of the social contract of the Republic. The constitutional democracy in Turkey is established on this sound basis. In retrospect, the experience of 75 years proves that the Turkish people have taken hold of this new beginning to reach the level of modern civilisation.

Marriage: Since the adoption of the Republican Civil code in 1926, based of the Swiss Civil Code, Turkish males can marry only one woman at a time. It is forbidden by law in Turkey to marry before the age of 15 in the case of females and 17 in the case of males. Early marriages are more frequent in the rural areas than in the cities, where the education, military service, acquiring a profession and other factors tend to delay marriages. In rural areas, marriages are generally in line with the wishes or approval of the families involved whereas in cities it is generally the couple themselves that make the decision to marry.

Religion and Secularity: 99% of the Turkish population is Moslem. However, everyone in Turkey has freedom of religion and beliefs. The first phases in the introduction of secularism were the abolition of the Caliphate and the Ministry of Sheria and Pious Foundations on March 4th, 1924, followed by the introduction of separate educational and judicial systems, the hat reform, the closure of dervish retreats and religious sects, the acceptance of a Sunday weekend holiday rather than the Moslem Friday and finally the adoption of the principle of secularism in the constitution on 1937. In secular Turkey, all religious affairs are carried out by a central government organisation affiliated to the Prime Ministry, namely the Department of Religious Affairs.