The Ege Eye

Issue 210

FEBRUARY 2022

"News for the Turkish coast since 2005"

Celebrating Valentine's Day in Turkey

Although not strictly a Turkish tradition, Valentine's Day, or better known here as Lovers Day, has now established itself as a day for celebration in the last 3 decades. It was popularized by the men's magazine Erkekçe in the mid-80s. Turks know Valentine's Day by the name Sevgililer Günü which literally means Lovers Day.

In 2021 Turkey's Interior Ministry excluded flower deliveries from the nationwide weekend curfew around Valentine's Day. Florists were able to work on Feb. 13 and 14, a Saturday and Sunday.

Last year Turkish producers exported 70 million flowers to 22 countries including the Netherlands, the UK, Germany, and Romania ahead of Valentine's Day.

In 2019 hundreds of couples chose Valentine's Day to tie the knot across Turkey, while some romantics took the opportunity to pop the big question. In fact, 1 couple every 5 minutes married in Istanbul's Bagcilar district.

You are aware of the approaching celebration as malls, shops and restaurants visibly change their windows to "everything red".

Hotels and travel companies offer special packages and even some airlines will put on special offers. Florists will reach their peak sales and street vendors will sell flowers, balloons, and many heart-shaped products.

Turkey oozes romance every day whether it is Valentine's Day or not. Romantic trips would be to take a Hot Air Balloon ride in Cappadocia and enjoy the first rays of sun as you travel atop some amazing landscapes.

Indulge in a Turkish Bath which many say is one of the most exciting experiences that couples can be a part of.

For those who wish to enjoy a candlelight dinner, many restaurants will cater for romantic meals whilst enjoying some beautiful sunsets.

So, if you want to tell your other half that you love them in Turkish, a simple "seni seviyorum" will do, or you could make it a little sweeter by saying "Sevgililer Günümüz Kutlu Olsun which literally translates as may our Lovers' Day be happy. That is, instead of wishing that your partner have a happy Valentine's Day, you are wishing one for both of you together.

All that said, I am sure I will have a great night in with my cat, Netflix and some chocolates "yawn".

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Traveling home from work with a difference!

Cengiz Koçak, a 49-year-old general manager of Babadağ Cable Car Company located in the Mediterranean resort town of Fethiye has an unusual way of traveling home from work every day.

The Turkish official flies to his home in his wingsuit in what must be an amazing experience. The flight from the 1,965 metre high mountain takes around three to four minutes.

When Koçak was appointed to his post for the first time, he examined the distance between the house and the facility at the top of the mountain. Then he decided to put this idea into practice when he saw that his calculations were correct mathematically.

“I jump with a parachute from any fixed place such as antennas, bridges, cliffs, and buildings. At the same time, if these places are high enough, I jump with a wingsuit,” Koçak said, expressing that almost his whole day and now his life is being spent on the mountain.

Koçak began parachuting in 1991 after deciding at the age of seven that this was his dream.

Bride makes it to wedding in tractor

We all dream of the Big Day and of making that final commitment. A winter wedding in Turkey would seem magical with amazing landscapes and snowy mountains.

We cannot argue that the snowfall and cold temperatures have been especially bad this year, however, one Groom in Northern Turkey made sure that his bride-to-be was going to make it to the wedding on time.

Due to heavy snowfall in Mecitözü district of Çorum, the groom went to pick up the bride with a convoy of 15 tractors.

When cars could not be reached, the groom Murat Arslan and his relatives formed a convoy with 15 tractors and went to get the bride.

The groom and his relatives, who went to the upper quarter of the village, put the bride Melike Uzun on a tractor and took her to the village centre. The couple got married at the wedding held in the village.

The elder brother of the groom, Adem Arslan, said, “due to the winter conditions, the guests could not attend the wedding convoy with their own vehicles. We thought of tractors as a solution. It was a beautiful wedding ceremony; we would like to thank everyone who shared our happiness”.

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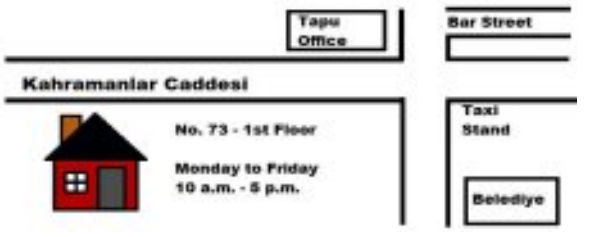

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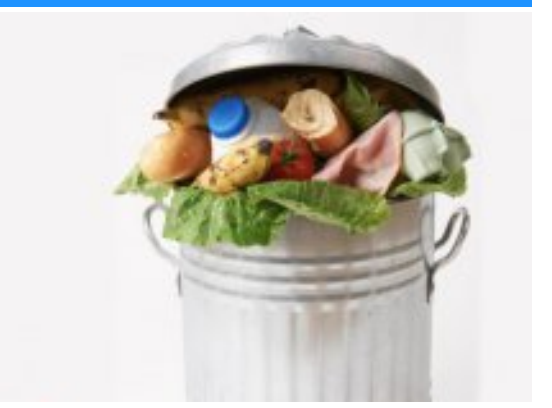
Turkey's guide against food waste



Not only do we have our early morning heroes collecting and recycling garbage from dawn to dusk, Turkey aims to reduce food waste.

The Agriculture Ministry have published a guideline against wastage at food outlets.

One of the guidelines is to "ensure that the products that are still consumable, whose expiry date is approaching, are offered for sale at discounted prices. To increase the sales of products with short shelf lives, apply dynamic pricing strategies to these products as well".

The paper also suggests that products that cannot be sold with a discount be given free of charge to those in need.

As grocery stores have extra-volume cabinets and areas for products they donate free of charge. Those in need can procure food from here, or food donations may be made through associations and foundations, so it prevents food waste.

Emphasizing that foods that are not suitable for consumption in terms of human health can be used as animal feed in farms or shelters, it also noted that no food whose expiration date has passed or whose cold chain has been broken cannot be included in the production of animal feed.

The guide pointed out that these products can be used as biodiesel fuel.

According to the countries Scientific and Technological Research Council (TÜBITAK), Turkey wastes nearly 2 million tons of food every year and the amount of wasted fruit and vegetables is worth $1.9 billion.

According to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), one-third of all food produced globally is either lost or wasted, amounting to about 1.3 billion tons per year.

Turkey, a winter wonderland?

Heavy snow could be found in most of Turkey in the last few weeks and it is said that the country has been troubled by the heaviest snowfalls seen in decades.

In Istanbul roads were blocked, flights and intercity transportation cancelled, and thousands of vehicles stranded on highways blanketed with snow.

Heavy snowfall hit Marmaris, Bodrum, Köyceğiz and Fethiye in the coastal areas and while they made for some stunning images, it seems to me, that this is the coldest winter I have ever felt.

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The unique and evocative beauty of Ani

Lyn Ward

The DK Eyewitness: Turkey guidebook describes Ani as “one of the most evocative sights in Turkey. Set on a windswept, grassy plateau along the Barley River (Arpaçay), the sight contains important remnants of Armenian architecture, including the city walls protecting its northern border, parts of which are still intact”.

Registered on the UNESCO World Heritage List, the Ani Archaeological site, also known as the “city of a thousand and one churches”, attracts tourists all year round. The ancient city, which houses Islamic architectural works of the 11th and 12th centuries, was added to the World Heritage List on July 15th, 2016.

Ani is located in the northeast of Turkey, close to Arpaçay district in Kars province, on a secluded triangular plateau overlooking a ravine that forms the natural border with Armenia.

This medieval city that was once one of the cultural and commercial centres on the Silk Roads, is characterized by architecture that combines a variety of domestic, religious and military structures, creating a panorama of medieval urbanism built up over the centuries by successive Christian and Muslim dynasties.

Inhabited since the Bronze Age, Ani, flourished in the 10th and 11th centuries AD, when it became a capital of the medieval Armenian kingdom of the Bagratids, and profited from control over one branch of the Silk Roads.
Later, under Byzantine, Seljuk, and Georgian sovereignty, it maintained its status as an important crossroads for merchant caravans, controlling trade routes between Byzantium, Persia, Syria and Central Asia.

The Monastery of the Hripsimian Virgins

In fact, Ani has hosted some 23 civilizations since its establishment, and it is also considered to be the first entrance gate to Anatolia from the Causcasus.

The Mongol invasion, along with a devasting earthquake in 1319 and a change in trade routes, marked the beginning of the city’s decline. It was all but abandoned by the 18th century.

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Why we should say Türkiye instead of Turkey

Klaus Jurgens

You may have heard it already – the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan announced that in all international communication and correspondence ‘Türkiye’ must be used instead of the previously employed English spelling version, ‘Turkey’.

For our Turkish neighbours little is going to change as after all in the Turkish language, Türkiye had always been the correct wording. For us expatriates however it may take a little while longer getting used to it and that includes installing the right keyboard on our electronic devices.

Granted – few of us are engaging in correspondence with local or national authorities on a daily basis but it is a matter of courtesy so why not start referring to our fantastic new home the same way everyone else does?

Many of our readers may ask themselves why the swap in letters occurred in the first place; hence today’s column tries to shed some light on exactly that issue. Let us approach the topic from two different angles.

First, Turkey as we as international community most definitely appreciate is a proud and successful nation. Our local friends display this state of satisfaction with the country they live in on various occasions. We only have to think about the way the Turkish flag is used in public as a symbol to demonstrate this ever more clearly. Another good example is the affection of Turkish athletes with their nation – representing Türkiye as part of a national sports team delegation or during an international tournament is probably the absolute highlight of a career. And you show it and let others share your joy, and with pride!

Thus said it does not come as a surprise when now the local linguistic version is going to be used in international communications and especially trade, too. Which brings me to the second dimension as hinted above.

Soon, ‘Made in Türkiye’ will be displayed on all products manufactured over here and aimed at export markets. These three words will thus not simply travel the world but will become the hallmark of Turkish quality.

And now we enter the wider picture so to speak. Efforts are underway to establish Türkiye as a brand. Yes, you have read correctly. But can a country be marketed similar to a high-end good? Many analysts say, yes, of course. You only have to factor in a number of different perspectives. Let us consider a car manufactured in a particular country. As long as the quality is perfect it automatically becomes a symbol of the manufacturing standards of that very country. Hence, ‘made in…’ and if paired with top end quality does the trick. A nation state is no car – so the marketing, the branding of that nation state needs much more diversity. We would talk about a country’s history and culture, the music and food, the language and family traditions. The entire social fabric of that state has to be considered when putting ‘the package’ together. Successful trade relations are thus a vital but not the only aspect of Türkiye, the brand.

Still on the second angle, there is perception management. If you now pause a moment and think about for example Germany, then France, then England; whilst many of our esteemed readers will have their personal preferences and might reply with this or that reflection, a fair amount of comments and thoughts would focus on identical topics. Hence and what a branding expert has to understand is that an international audience may or may not have the right impression of what actually constitutes a certain country as some perceptions are outdated or outright wrong. You then add or delete and in the end the marketing mix is ready.

All this will take quite some time to be fully implemented. But it is a welcome departure from the past when the country was basically perceived as a mass tourism hotspot. Of course – tourism was and will be a major income factor for generations to come but even related to this subject the branding undertakings may reconsider and substitute the term ‘mass’ with the words ‘affordable quality’. Türkiye has turned herself into a splendid holiday destination open all year round – the image of sandy beaches is still perfectly alright but there is winter tourism, cultural tourism, youth and student tourism, health tourism, events and conference tourism and all of this in all four corners of the lands.

This brief introduction can not replace a longer essay about this important topic; it was meant to be a short overview and trying to figure out why the name change, and why now. Which allows me to present an afterthought – timing is crucial in any branding exercise and there can be no better point in time as now. In 2023 Türkiye celebrates her Centenary, and we are going to be part of yearlong activities and many major festivities. Linking the branding efforts with that so relevant date makes good sense as global interest in the country will most certainly rise even more.

May I wish you a happy February and lots of fun in and about town.

Luxury yacht building revenues exceed $1.4 billion

Total revenues generated to date from luxury yacht building in the Antalya Free Zone have exceeded $1.4 billion. The fiscal benefits of Turkey's 18 Free Zones (VAT-free, tax-free and duty-free) make yacht building more accessible.

Turkey has a rich maritime heritage and first-class craftmanship which in turn have created a niche that positions the country at the heart of yacht production.

There have been some impressive names to come out of Turkey, including the sailing yacht Maltese Falcon, the 348-ft. Dream, 253-foot Go, and the 236-foot Axioma, among dozens of others.

The Antalya Free Zone is the world's third largest after Italy and the Netherlands. 30 yachts were launched in 2021 which brought $125 million in revenue while 510 super luxury vessels have been built by the companies operating within the zone to date.

Countries where these luxury yachts have been sent to include the US, the Netherlands, Norway, Oman, Senegal and South Africa.

Approximately 142 ships have been brought in for maintaining services and 127 of those vessels have been completed, which generated $49 million in revenues.

This is a fast-developing sector and the yacht building industry really started to move forward in the 2000's.

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TECHNOLOGY

Turkey attracts more mobile phone firms

With an investment of $100 million, Singapore-based Omix joined nearly 15 other firms that produce smart phones in Turkey.

Muzaffer Gölcü, the CEO of Omix, said that the company will be the latest to start producing mobile phones in Turkey.

Omix aims to produce 1 million phones a year as the total production of mobile phones in Turkey is estimated at around 6 million units.

There will soon be new additions to the list of companies manufacturing mobile phones in Turkey to take advantage of the country's market and proximity to other markets.

Most of the mobile phones produced in Turkey actually arrive in the country in parts and are assembled here.

There is no cell phone that is completely manufactured in Turkey from scratch, which is in fact a method implemented around the world.

World giants such as Samsung and Xiaomi use the phrase "Assembled in Turkey" on their mobile phones., while some companies that started to produce motherboards and other materials in Turkey prefer the phrase "Made in Turkey."

Currently, phone manufacturers Xiaomi, Oppo, Tecno Mobile, TCL, Realme and Vivo have plans to produce nearly 6 million phones per year in Turkey.

Last year, Turkey imposed a 50 percent special consumption tax on imported smart phones and locally produced phones are being sold at about half-price of imported ones. **Source: Hurriyet Dail News**

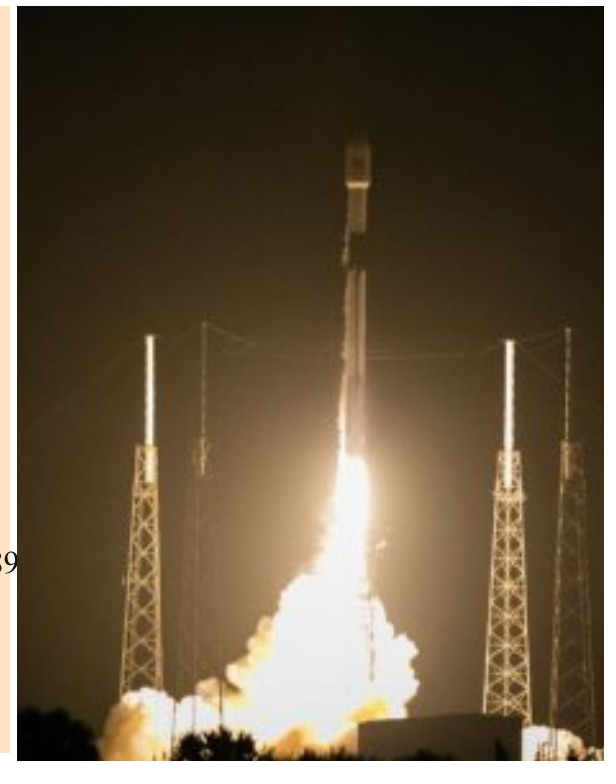
Spaceport in Somalia – land on the moon – Turkey's plans for the future

The Middle East Eye (MEE) reported that Turkey could establish a spaceport in Somalia with a $350 million investment as part of its nascent space program.

At the inauguration ceremony of the country's National Space Program, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan announced Turkey's plans to land on the moon by 2023. "Our first goal is to land on the moon by 2023, the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Turkey. I believe Turkish engineers will manage to carry out this mission," he said.

Somalia hosts Turkey's largest military training base and the "government's draft calculations suggest establishing and maintaining the spaceport in Somalia would cost more than $350m. The government also aims to allocate grants for Turkish doctoral students to go abroad to study astrophysics, and will provide research and development funding for Turkish universities, altogether for around $150m".

Relations between Turkey and Somalia are strong. Turkey has trained one-third of Somalia's military forces and the two countries also partner on health, education and other initiatives.



President Erdogan opens first phase of paper factory in Aydin

Last month you would have seen images of Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan visiting our province all over the news and social media platforms.

The President also addressed the opening ceremony of the Batı Kipaş Paper Mill, a key paper production facility that "promises to relieve the country's chronic current account balance issue and cut imports, while revving up its foreign sales".

The mill will play an important role to cut Turkey's (3.38 billion TL) in the countries paper imports and will pave the way for exports worth $200 million as well as employing 800 people in the first phase.

The second phase of the factory is to be completed by the end of 2022 and "an investment of $450 million is envisaged for the second stage, 40% of which is completed. Upon completion, additional employment for 600 people will also be provided there," Erdoğan said, taking its total employment to around 1,400.

It is said that the factory will be the largest production facility in Turkey and Europe that will produce kraft liner, angular white test liner and white kraft liner papers used in many fields.

Paper from the factory will be made from 100% recyclable waste paper which in turn will "prevent 12 million trees from being cut down per year in the first stage and 21 million trees in the second stage.

Approximately 1.5 million residential houses were sold in Turkey last year

According to data from the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK) there were approximately 1.49 million residential homes sold in Turkey last year.

The majority of homes were sold in Istanbul with 18,5 percent (276.223 house sales) of the share, followed by Ankara with 144,104 house sales and Izmir with 86,722 house sales.

It was determined that the overall figure was down by 0,5 percent from 2020 when in the second quarter of the year the coronavirus hit the economy.
There were approximately 461,523 new houses sold while the rest were second-hand sales.

Some 461,523 new houses were sold across the country, while the rest were secondhand sales.

Housing sales to foreigners jumped by 43.5 percent on an annual basis to reach 58,576 units in 2021 with Istanbul taking the largest share.

This was followed by the Mediterranean resort city of Antalya with 12,384 properties, and the capital Ankara with 3,672.

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Weather records broken in 2021 in Turkey

Turkey broke its own heat and precipitation records in 2021, with thermometers hitting as high as 49.1 degrees Celsius in July and floods in the summer, an expert has said.

Academic Deniz Demirhan, from Istanbul Technical University who has investigated the official 2021 data of the State Meteorological Service, said November was the warmed month in the past half-century.

She stated that “November 2021 was the warmest month in the last 50 years, and that the Cizre district of the southeastern province of Şırnak reached the highest temperature with 49.1 degrees Celsius in July 2021.”

Demirhan said that “when you evaluate the year month by month, you see that Turkey has different new things it witnessed each month”.

“In the summer of 2021, temperature was beyond the seasonal norms across the country. June 2021 was the 16th, July 2021 was the second and August 2021 was the sixth warmest month over the past 50 years,” she warned and stressed specially on the southern province of Adana as it saw a daily temperature of 32.1 degrees Celsius in November 2021”.

January and November were the two months in 2021 when the country faced the highest precipitation. “The rainfalls caused floods in the Black Sea provinces in the summer of 2021,” she recalled.

Demirhan warned that authorities must take action to avoid re-living future years like 2021 again.

In 2022

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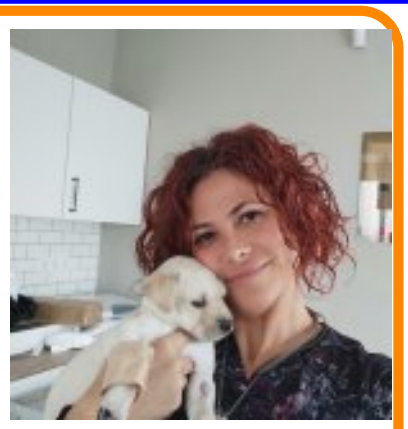
Dr. Didem EREN, has 18 years of experience and is also known as for her passion towards animals. She is dedicated to her career and always keeps up on recent developments of animal care by joining
both national and international seminars.



Veterinerian Doctor
Didem Eren

Her expertise is Surgical Operations & Radiographical viewing also currently working on cats “Spinal Cord imaging on Computed Tomography (CT) and Magnetic Resonance (MR)” thesis.

Kusadasicentral vet Kusadasicentralvet 0553 941 41 18 Email: vetem09@gmail.com

Türkmen Mahallesi, Emine Tümer sokak-Efem sitesi D Blok no 4 (Tura Turizm bulunduğu sokak) Kuşadasi)

Celebrating ten years of Paws and Claws

Oya Sume Davidson

As we finished our 10 active years helping street animals in the Kusadasi area and 8 years as a legal Turkish charity, I wanted to share a few of our accomplishments with you.

During this past year, 2021 we provided vet care for 395 street animals, sterilized 82.

Since becoming a legal charity in 2014 we have provided medical care/ treatment for
2200 street animals, our numbers growing with each year.

With our sterilization project we were able to reduce reproduction even though it is just a drop in the greater bucket.

We were able to provide food for the dogs on the streets, especially at the outskirts of town, particularly during the most desperate pandemic times and in the winter.

At times of need we have been able to assist our nearby shelters with needed supplies and medications.

With the partnership of rescues in UK, Germany & Holland we rescued dozens of wonkie animals to travel to fabulous forever homes.

We were the first active group and the first charity in town; in many ways we helped the community, community leaders gain awareness, as well as opening the path to other charities to form.

I am very proud of our work, very grateful for all who pitched in to help the animals personally, and for all the kind souls, over the years who served on the charity Board.

I can not thank enough and give credit to our local veterinary professionals, who demonstrated exceptional skill, insight, kindness with unsurpassed integrity since I arrived in Kusadasi 11 years ago with my three Texan cats. Vet, Mine Keskin Kürklü and vet Cağdas Kürklü have been the backbone of our operations and have provided great care.

And most of all I THANK each and every one of you who joined us with your donations, your fund raising ideas and activities. We certainly could not have done any of this without you. I must add that this work has been an exceptional blessing for me personally; bringing the greatest people into my life, giving me precious friends

Remember:
Here at the Foreign Citizens Advice Centre we can assist you with any problems you may have living or considering to live in Turkey.
Go to our website at https://adviceturkey.org/ and you will find the details and who to contact for a specific problem.

‘World’s most ridiculous building’ to be demolished

Located in the Mediterranean province of Kahramanmaraş, mostly known for being “the most ridiculous” or “the weirdest building in the world” in Google searches, will be demolished, the province’s mayor has said.
Hayrettin Güngör stated at a press conference that the “building will be destroyed in four months”.

The building was built in 1994 and was dubbed “the yellow building” by locals. However, when Google began showing images to people who searched for “the most ridiculous building”, it was decided that it would be demolished.

Trying to defend the structure, the mayor noted, “It was constructed in line with that time’s conditions 30 years ago. However, yes, it has always been an object at issue.”

The demolition of the 18-story building will cost some 6.6 million Turkish Liras ($480,000) to the contracting firm.

Once the building is pulled down, a new agora with a landscape design will be formed in the area.

Did You KNOW ?

Oil wrestling is the national sport

Also known as grease wrestling is considered to be a national sport. The wrestlers will douse themselves with olive oil before they take on their opponent.

Authorised Translator

DUTCH

TURKISH

ENGLISH

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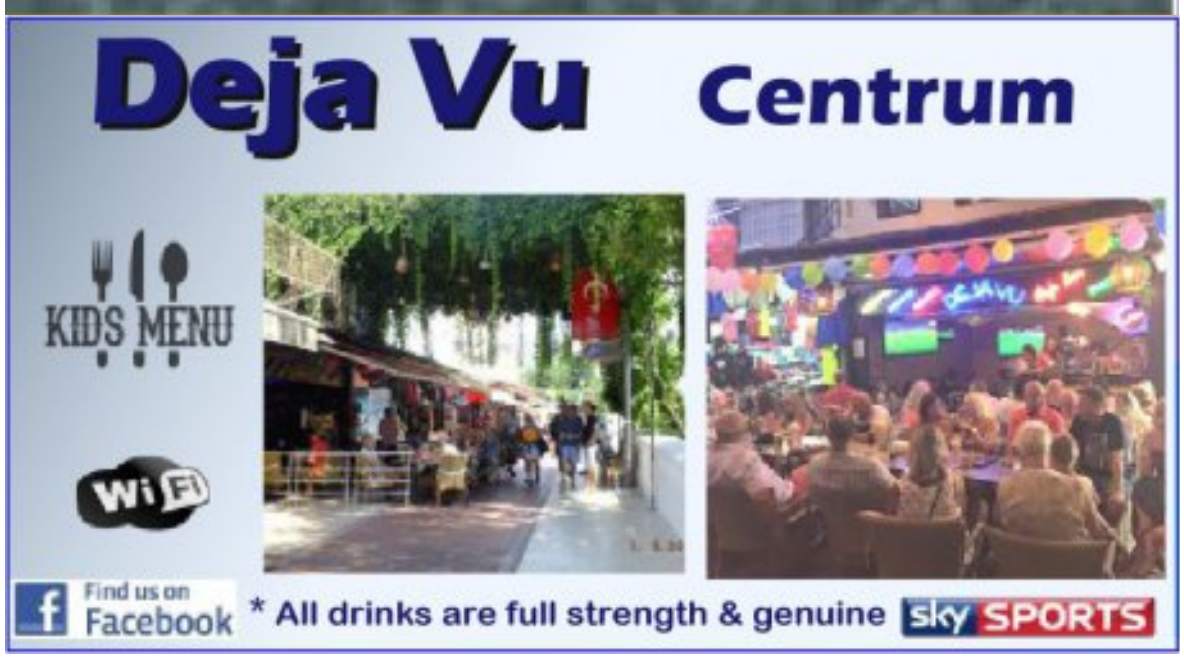

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TOURISM and TRAVEL NEWS

UK's Top Travel Destinations for 2022

Spain is expected to lead bookings, with Canada and Turkey newly in the UK's top 10

With foreign travel now much easier thanks to the removal of pre-departure tests at the time of printing, ABTA – the Travel Association has revealed the top 10 destinations that people are planning to visit this year, with travellers craving a mix of far-flung, bucket list destinations and firm favourites closer to home.

Number one on people's travel wish list is Spain, with 29.3% of respondents saying they plan to visit in 2022. Offering sun, sea, and sand aplenty, Spain has long been the UK's favourite holiday destination and usually attracts over 18 million of us each year.

Moving up to second place – and topping the list of long-haul destinations – is the USA, which reopened its borders to UK tourists in November 2021. Almost 1 in 5 (18.1%) people plan to travel there this year, with New York and Florida among the most popular destinations.

Two further long-haul destinations that are rising in popularity are Australia (5.1%) and Canada (4.5%), both up two places from last year to eighth and ninth respectively. Offering breath-taking landscapes, incredible wildlife and cosmopolitan cities to explore, their increased popularity points to two trends ABTA expects to see in 2022 – people catching up on travel by booking a holiday of a lifetime and taking the time to reconnect with family and friends abroad.

The classic European holiday havens of France (17.8%), Italy (16.4%) and Greece (10.1%) round off the top five, all promising world-renowned culture and gastronomy as well as lots of options for a sunshine-filled beach getaway during the summer months.

While Portugal (8.7%) and Germany (8.2%) remain the sixth and seventh most popular locations, Turkey (4.0%) has moved up two places to the tenth most popular destination this year. This increased popularity could be due to the exceptional value for money it currently offers UK holidaymakers as the Turkish lira has fallen considerably against the pound.

ABTA has put together comprehensive advice for travelling during the pandemic at www.abta.com/readysteadytravel. Travellers should also regularly check the travel advice pages for the country they intend to visit at www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice to ensure they can meet the latest entry requirements.

The top 10 overseas destinations people plan to travel to in 2022 (and their change in ranking compared to last year) are:

1. Spain (29.3%) =
2. USA (18.1%) +1
3. France (17.8%) -1
4. Italy (16.4%) =
5. Greece (10.1%) =
6. Portugal (8.7%) =
7. Germany (8.2%) =
8. Australia (5.1%) +2
9. Canada (4.5%) +2
10. Turkey (4.0%) +2

Source: https://www.hotelnewsresource.com (abridged)

Winter fun in Turkey

Turkey has three different climate zones due to its immense size. The winter in Turkey starts from mid-December and ends in mid-March. Different regions of Turkey experience different quality of winter. It can range from mild to snowy or from rainy to dry cold. Temperatures may vary from -13C to 24C depending upon the climate zone.

Turkey is much quieter in winter, you do not have the hustle and bustle of the summer tourists, accommodation is cheaper, and you have a wide choice to choose from.

Most people envisage Turkey as a destination bustling with people in summer clothes or lying on beautiful sandy beaches. However, in the winter a lot of the country sees heavy snow and you get to witness a completely different Turkey with the landscapes adorned with fresh, soft snow.

Istanbul is busy no matter what season you travel, though in winter you can enjoy exploring without feeling hot and sticky, having to pick your way through the crowds.

The coldest place in the whole of Turkey is Erzurum during winter, located in the east of the country; however, Ankara is also an icy spot, sometimes heading into minus numbers. Snow here is very possible much of the time.

During winter Turkey offers ample snow and ski activities. There are amazing ski resorts in Uludag, Izmit, and Palandoken.

Cappadocia is one of the most popular winter destinations in Turkey. It is indeed a winter wonderland. Due to prehistoric volcanic eruptions, the soft Tufa rocks have formed shapes of their own. These resemble magical chimneys also known as 'fairy chimneys.

During the summer, it's not particularly easy to visit Pamukkale without feeling stressed. You'll have a far calmer and more enjoyable experience if you visit during the winter and the sunsets? Unbelievable!

Halfway between Ankara and Istanbul, you'll find a natural wonder that is ideal for winter fun. Yedigoller National Park is named after the seven lakes in the park created by a huge landslide many years ago. The park is set in fragrant woodland, complete with waterfalls, hiking trails, and plentiful wildlife. If you adore the Great Outdoors and you enjoy camping, a winter visit to Yedigoller National Park will be a scenic, though, a cool experience.

HEALTH NEWS

Keeping your body healthy during the winter months

During the winter season, with the cooling of the air, the resistance of the body decreases and symptoms such as cold, flu, fatigue begin to appear almost immediately. Many factors such as seasonal changes, stress, irregular eating habits weakens the immune system and causes the body to become vulnerable.

Turkish cuisine is inherently healthy and highly seasonal, with many dishes being built around the multitude of fresh produce available.

The staples of the Turkish kitchen: eggplants, tomatoes and peppers grow round and juicy under the warmth of the sun. Citrus crops, pomegranates, olives and nuts thrive in the coastal climes, as the valleys of Anatolia grow thick with wheat and grains.

The variety of produce available means seasonal specialities are made to welcome each change of the season and to promote good health throughout the year.

Pomegranate, one of the most popular fruits of the winter season, is a true antioxidant. It helps strengthen the immune system and protects the body from various diseases.

Fruits such as orange, tangerine, grapefruit and lemon are rich in terms of vitamin C. Therefore, they help strengthen our immune system and fight against possible infections. Our bodies do not produce and store vitamin C, hence, we need to consume this vitamin and add citrus fruits to our diet.

Onions and garlic are very strong antioxidant nutrients and they protect the body against infections they are usually referred to as natural antibiotics. They lower bad cholesterol and raise good cholesterol. Because of this and many other benefits, it is necessary to consume plenty of onions and garlic in the winter months.

It is very important to get probiotic support, especially in the winter months. Yogurt and kefir are very rich in probiotics and help strengthen the immune system. They also have positive effects on intestinal system and bone health. For this reason yogurt and kefir should definitely be on the list of foods to consume during the winter time.

Carrots, which are rich in vitamin A and beta carotene is a source of healing for many diseases, such as cancer. It is also very good for skin and eye health. Consuming carrots on a daily basis, especially during the winter time will be very beneficial in terms of our health. Because carrots gets rid of the toxins in our body and increases the fight against microbes and viruses.

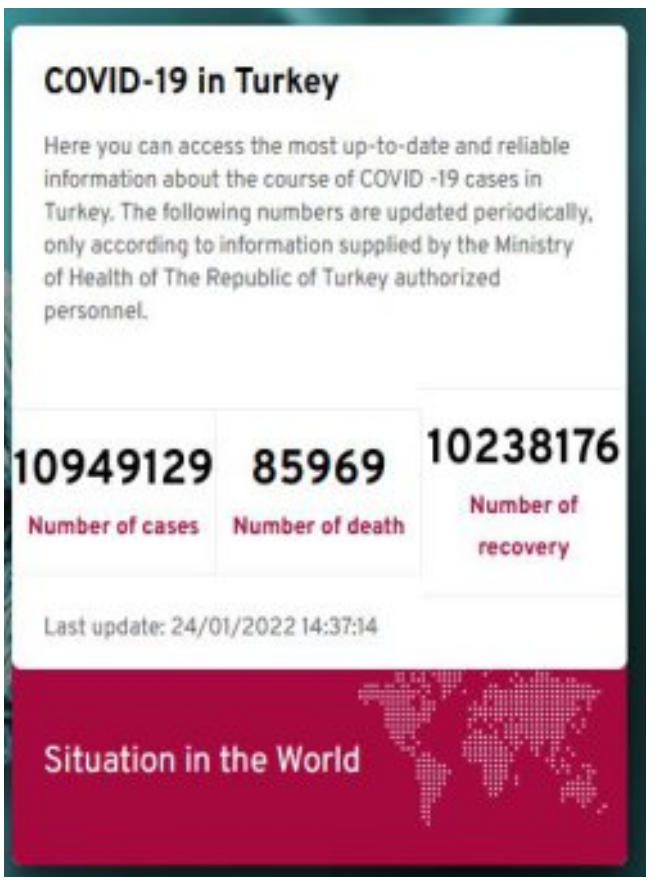
So, as well as staying warm, your body needs to be kept healthy during the winter months also.

COVID-19 in Turkey

Here you can access the most up-to-date and reliable information about the course of COVID -19 cases in Turkey. The following numbers are updated periodically, only according to information supplied by the Ministry of Health of The Republic of Turkey authorized personnel.

https://covid19.tubitak.gov.tr/en

The portal shows various graphs and gives the figures of the situation in Turkey. It also shows the situation around the world and has lots of useful information on how to book a test and many news articles concerning Covid-19.



Turkey’s early morning heroes – garbage collectors

It is not uncommon to see garbage collectors early in the morning before dawn rushing to dumpsters before the municipality garbage crews start their day.

According to Davur news, “at any moment on nearly any one of Istanbul's endless maze of streets, a recycler of paper, plastic and other products can be seen rummaging through trash cans, stuffing their hulking carts to the brim which they pull by hand, deftly maneuvering through the city's choking traffic. They are everywhere yet hidden in plain view. They appear inseparable from their carts, and few people stop to think about where they live, where they came from, and what is like to do this dangerous, grueling job day in and day out”.

These people make their livelihood by searching the bins, looking for any bit of waste that can be recycled, such as milk cartons and plastic bottles. At the end of the day their collections are taken to depots and from there conveyed to factories for recycling.

Started in 2017 by first lady Emine Erdogan, the “Zero Waste Project” has gained motion and will grow with further regulations that require all buildings to have separate bins for plastic, glass, paper and other types of waste. However, these collectors which are seen as the “middlemen”, are doing a crucial job by sorting and recycling waste.

Mahmut Alper recently arrived in Istanbul from the province of Mardin and in order to provide for his family, he started collecting garbage. He starts at 6am and works until 8pm. Mahmut stated that he collects everything from plastic to tin cans. On a daily basis he can walk nearly 19 miles in the busy suburb of Bahcelievler and enjoys when it rains as he has not got the same competition.

Volkan Çiltaş runs one of many depots across Istanbul where recycled items are taken before processing. He stated that things have changed massively since his grandfather’s time, who also collected garbage. In the past garbage was collected in one place and put in landfills. Now, as we can see for ourselves there are bins everywhere.

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