

Ankara



Mountains cut across the dramatic Anatolian landscape, rising and falling in snow-capped peaks and fertile valleys. At its center emerged Ankara, formed at the intersection of two, three-thousand-year-old trade routes, with glistening towers, brilliant monuments, and a fortified castle complex. A mesmerizing history, touched by ancient Hittites, Galatians, Romans, Byzantines, and Ottomans, weaves its way through the city's neighborhoods, exceptional museums, and vivid archeological sites that lie nearby. But Ankara's intricate heritage transcends its dazzling constructions and sumptuous landscapes, revealing itself in the rituals and customs of a population devoted to preserving its past as it exuberantly progresses into the future.

Memorable Experiences

Great Heights

Ride a glass lift to the top of Atakule Tower and gaze at a sparkling city.

Prized Relics

Visit the Temple of Augustus and encounter Ankara's ancient Roman past.

Transporting Melodies

Enjoy sounds from around the world at Ankara's annual music festival.

Authentic Comforts

Relax with a cup of Turkish tea and a gozleme pastry at a Princ Han café.

Distinctive Details

Baskets brim with hazelnuts, pistachios, dried apricots, squash seeds, and dates. Known as Kuruyemis, dried fruits and nuts are an integral part of Turkish culture and often served at parties and celebrations.

Starwood Preferred Guest Recommends

Peace Park

Trees from nations such as Israel, Spain, and China grow from the verdant lands around Anitkabir, the tomb of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. Inspired by the leader's quote "Peace at home, peace in the world," this green oasis is known as "Peace Park."

Destination Information

Country Turkey
Province Ankara
Elevation 850 meters
Population 3,901,201 (2007)
Language Turkish



Area Code: 312
Country Code: 90



Ankara Esenboğa International Airport (ESB)

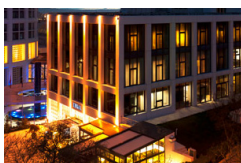


Transportation:
Car, Taxi, Train, Subway, Bus



Turkish Lira

Nearby Luxury Collection Hotels and Resorts



Lugal, Ankara

Noktali Sokak No. 1
Kavaklıdere, Ankara 06700
Phone: (90)(312) 457 6050



Culture

Impressive mosques and mausoleums testify to this ancient city's monumental devotion.

Highly Recommended



Anitkabir

Twelve pairs of white lions flank a vast, ceremonious walkway. At its head, one of the world's most stunning monuments looms against a clear blue sky. This symmetrically structure of clean, straight columns and yellow travertine is known as the Hall of Honor. Beneath its ceiling of gold mosaics, a forty-ton sarcophagus covers the revered tomb of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the leader of the Turkish War of Independence and founder of the Republic of Turkey. Marble, culled from around the nation, covers the walls and floors of this stately, tranquil complex.

Address: Akdeniz Cad

Phone: (90)(312) 231 7975



Kocatepe Mosque

Four minarets rise majestically above a breathtaking series of cupolas. Their gold-tipped spires act as landmarks, and can be seen from nearly anywhere in the city. Beyond its exquisite Ottoman façade, this immense structure, of divine architectural balance, houses a magnificent interior of domed ceilings, columns, and stained glass windows that glow with pulsating hues of turquoise and crimson. Thousands of crystals, linked by gold-plated chains, form a glistening orb that with a surrounding set of thirty-two smaller globes, illuminates this wondrous space.

Address: The Ulus Quarter, in Ankara City Center

Local Charms



Roman Baths

A row of Roman capitals stretches across a field of dry grass. Once the crowns of impressive columns, time has faded their intricate carvings. In the historic heart of old Ankara lies this open-air museum. Relics of Ankara's Roman past take the form of ancient limestone pillars and circular red bricks. Upon these 3rd century artifacts, a magnificent complex of bathhouses once stood. Witness evenly spaced stones that were the supports for the cool "Frigidarium," the warm "Tepidarium," and the hot "Calidarium," watery pools, central to Roman society.

Address: Cankiri Street stretching to Yildirim Beyazit Square from Ulus Square

Neighborhoods



The Citadel

Pedestrian streets lined with half-timbered houses are filled with children at play. Carpet shops and traditional restaurants preserve an extraordinary past in this fortified village, perched on a hill, nearly one thousand meters above the city. Twenty towers rise from a ring of red stone known as the outer castle, protecting Ankara's old town as they have since the 3rd century B.C. Believed to have been constructed by the Galatians, the ancient structures of this architecturally rich area also bare the mark of the Romans, Byzantines, and Ottoman Empires.

Address: Slightly east of Ankara City Center



Shopping

Treasure rare and authentic goods, from carpets to handicrafts, throughout the city.

Shops & Boutiques



Bakircilar Çarsisi

In long covered passageways, the clanging rhythms of hammers upon metal resound as fires burn. Skilled craftsmen beat the alluring designs of Asia into wide round trays and smooth bowls that gleam in the light of the flame. Carefully, they weld tiny hooks to wall clocks, etch pomegranate blossoms into elegant teapots, and pound the forms of landmark mosques and palaces into decorative plates. Sunlight streams in from above, reflecting off exquisite pieces displayed in workshops where dozens of expert coppersmiths uphold an ancient Turkish tradition.

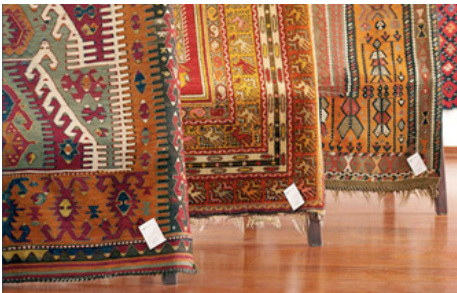
Address: Located at the end of Cikiricilar Yokusu near Ulus



Pirinc Han

Hand-woven carpets drape over the balconies of a sprawling half-timbered house. Their earthy tones and intricate patterns reflect a revered Anatolian heritage. A bohemian, yet intellectual spirit pervades this charming amalgam of hidden courtyards and inviting antiques shops near Ankara Castle. Small signs hang from windows bursting with red geraniums, baring the names of vendors who dwell within. Over two dozen boutiques reside within this former inn, offering an exquisite assortment of fine antique kilims, copperware, porcelain, and brass goods.

Address: Pirinc Sokak



Kerim Sefer

The curved shape of the “Ram’s Horn” represents heroism while a bird symbolizes happiness, and an eight-pointed star, fertility. Classical Anatolian rugs are loaded with meaning, weaving an entire story of power and heartache into their vivid threads. Thousands of radiant creations fill this acclaimed, eight-level carpet store, covering wooden floors with vivid patterns of crimson, tangerine, and Mediterranean blue. For two centuries, generations of a single family have upheld a cherished tradition by offering carpets from Turkey, Afghanistan, Iran, and China.

Address: Turan Gunes, Bulvari 98, Cankaya

Phone: (90)(312) 4409777



Turkuaz

An evocative necklace combines a cord of blue silk with persimmon-hued beads and coiled copper in a regal collar fit for the wife of a sultan. Thin carpets, known as “susani” bare the vivid patterns of turquoise vines and scarlet blossoms, typical of traditional embroidery. A trove of antiques and handicrafts, this vibrant boutique is filled with distinctive products of supreme quality, hand-selected by proprietor Halit Kaya, who is also skilled in custom framing.

Address: Turan Güneş Bulvarı, Çankaya

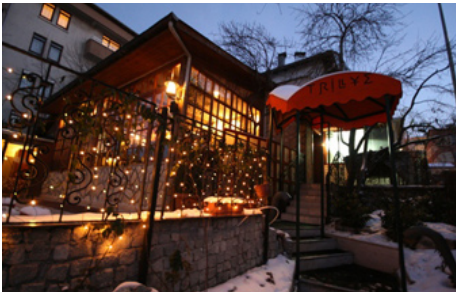
Phone: (90)(312) 4426373



Cuisine

Distinctive settings host feasts of local specialties and alluring dishes from abroad.

Acclaimed



Trilye Restaurant

Enticing clams marinate in a stew of olives, tomatoes, and dill. A filet of red snapper rests upon a medley of zucchini, eggplant, and grilled onions. A dollop of creamy tartar sauce accompanies a plate of traditional English style fish and chips. Acclaimed for their delectable entrees of fresh, skillfully prepared seafood, this exceptional restaurant is housed in an atmospheric villa. Flagstone covers the interior walls, while outside, a patio of terracotta tiles is shaded by elegant verandas and the delicate branches of apple trees.

Address: Hafta Sokak, 11/ B Gaziosmanpaşa
Phone: (90)(312) 4471200



Park Fora

Tables, set with magenta orchids, await a bounty of international fare. Stuffed mackerel from Armenia joins Spanish paella and fish croquettes from France on a menu centered on seafood. Mediterranean appetizers include boiled octopus, stuffed anchovies, and grilled squid, tantalizing preludes to a memorable meal. Touches of traditional elegance adorn this modern dining room in cream tones and wooden accents. Outside, a leafy canopy shades a charming brick terrace.

Address: Nenehatun Caddesi 97, Gaziosmanpasa
Phone: (90)(312) 4477300

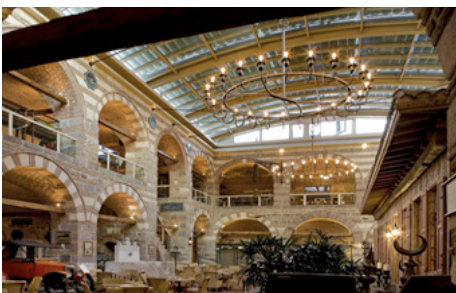


Budakalti

A pristine garden of towering pines, billowy hydrangea blooms, and beds of pink begonias surrounds a four-story house in Ankara's Diplomatic Quarter. Within this acclaimed kitchen run by chef Mehmet Ali Menemen, Turkish cuisine mingles with Italian gastronomy. Almonds are shaved over slices of chicken in a verdant salad, Norwegian salmon is baked with aromatic tarragon, and traditional dumplings known as Manti, are filled with lamb. Each Sunday, the restaurant's stonewalled dining rooms and bright, glassed-in sunroom fill for a renowned weekly brunch.

Address: Arjantin Avenue Budak Street 6, Gaziosmanpasa
Phone: (90)(312) 4278545

Indigenous Flavors



Çengelhan Brasserie

Immense iron chandeliers illuminate a vast arcade, conjuring images of regal banquets. Thick wooden beams span 16th century arches of thin red brick and grey stone blocks that frame a collection of vintage automobiles. Beneath a rooftop of glass, this enthralling restaurant, housed in the Rahmi M. Koc Museum, fuses an evocative medieval atmosphere with a distinctive menu of European culinary specialties. Dishes such as stewed sea bass, veal drizzled in honey, and classic Wiener schnitzel are paired with an impressive list of wines from around the world.

Address: Tarihi Ankara Kalesi Necatibey Mah. Depo Sok. 1, Ulus
Phone: (90)(312) 3096800



Noteworthy

Ancient underground cities and authentic villages delight, short journeys from Ankara.

Day Excursions



Gordion Museum

The quiet of an arid countryside permeates ancient limestone tombs. Within excavation sites, brown earth is carefully swept aside to reveal the relics of early civilizations. The region's rich history unfurls within a museum where artifacts from the Bronze Age and Early Phrygian Period fill glass display cases. Here, perfectly intact urns from King Midas' palace rest beside those once broken and now pieced together again to reveal geometric designs. Courtly leopards pose upon shards of tile, and timeworn mosaics comprise millions of tiny stones.

Address: Yassihöyük Village, 93 kilometers southwest of Ankara



Cappadocia

Chalky towers of soft volcanic rock rise from mystical valleys on a high plateau in central Anatolia. Steep, conical structures glow red in the afternoon sun. Eroded over many centuries by wind and water, this barren terrain has been shaped into one of the most extraordinary landscapes on Earth. Hidden below its curious surface, long corridors link a sophisticated complex of underground cities once inhabited by Hittites and then early Christians. Hidden caves house magnificent churches, which blaze with the vivid blue and red hues of stunning frescoes.

Address: 32 kilometers south of Ankara

Further Afield



Beypazari

Two-story houses with white stucco, dark wood frames, and terracotta roofs sit upon high stone foundations. They line mountain streets where a heritage of spirited music, food, and celebrations are upheld. Once an important stop upon a historic trade route that linked Istanbul to Baghdad, this authentic village weaves the customs of the Romans, Ottomans, and Byzantines into a culture all its own. Renowned for intricate silverwork, embroidered velvet jackets, and baklava, Beypazari holds a festival of "Historical Houses, Handicrafts, Carrot and Stew" each June.

Address: 100 kilometers northwest of Ankara

Recreation



Atatürk Orman Çiftliği

Sunlight filters through leafy canopies of towering oaks while the sound of tumbling water fills the air. Pine hedges cover the ground beneath radiant birch trees while white ducks skim across tranquil ponds. Just west of the city center, twenty-five thousand acres, set aside in 1925 by President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk as an agricultural oasis, offer unparalleled encounters with nature. Amidst this forest where a replica of Atatürk's birth home, a small zoo, and an old-fashioned brewery are situated, a charming farm store provides a taste of homemade ice cream.

Address: Gazi, 3 kilometers west of Ankara city center