



# TURKEY'S TOURISM SUCCESS

Turkey's tourism sector has seen remarkable growth over recent years, proof that Turkey remains one of the world's top travel destinations despite the global economic crisis. Visitor numbers are up 1.4% year-on-year, with 21,830,038 foreign visitors visiting Turkey in the first 9 months of 2009, 4.18 million of those to Istanbul, Turkey's cultural capital, equating to 2.4% growth. Turkey received more than 26 million international tourists in 2008, up from 23 million in 2007, and that number is expected to reach 33 million by 2012.

Turkey is also one of the most popular holiday destinations for British tourists, who constitute a vital part of Turkey's tourism market – 2.1 million British tourists visited Turkey in the first nine months of this year, the third-largest group of visitors to Turkey (after Germans and Russians). There has also been huge year-on-year growth of British tourists to Istanbul, up 23% in the first 8 months of this year alone. Being outside the Eurozone and with the Turkish Lira offering great value against the Euro, Turkey has remained an affordable year-round holiday destination. Indeed the Post Office posted 51% growth in demand for the Turkish Lira between June-August compared to the same period in 2008. New investments in the tourism sector, a more sophisticated brand of tourism, a wider choice

of alternatives and good value for money have together contributed to this success.

The Mugla region – home to tourism centres Bodrum, Marmaris and Fethiye – is one of Turkey's most popular destinations for foreign visitors, attracting around 15% of tourist arrivals to the country. Mugla is especially popular among tourists from the UK, who make up nearly half of visitors: Of 2.5 million tourists who visited Mugla in the first 8 months of 2009, nearly 1.3 million of them were British. Mugla boasts a total of 57 Blue Flag beaches on its 1,100 kilometres of coastline; and in addition to its stunning natural beauty, the region's temperate climate, plentiful activities, historical sites and excellent resorts and infrastructure mean Mugla is sure to remain one of

Turkey's tourism hotspots. Cappadocia, in central Anatolia, is another travel destination increasingly popular with the British market. With its stunning, otherworldly landscapes, ancient churches carved into the rock caves, and activities like hot-air ballooning and hiking, the region offers a very different and attractive concept for a holiday. In the last few years Cappadocia has become one of Turkey's top destinations for boutique hotels, many of which are "cave hotels" built directly into the rock – offering guests a truly unique experience. And for those interested in golf, there's a new type of golf on offer: cross golf, an environmentally friendly game of golf, tailored to Cappadocia's dry, rocky topography, which is played within the natural terrain rather than on a man-made course.

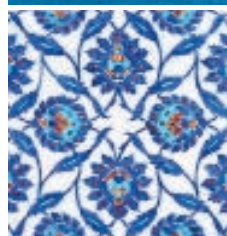


## ISTANBUL'S AUTUMN CULTURAL CALENDAR

The Istanbul Biennial, which was held from 12 September to 8 November, featured work by 70 artists from 40 different countries in three different venues, with an emphasis on Middle Eastern artists. In September, the Istanbul Modern launched the "Site" exhibition, the largest retrospective ever held of the work of the France-based, Turkish-born Armenian artist Sarkis, who is known for his avant-garde conceptual installations, running through 10 January 2010. Meanwhile, Marc Chagall's work has come to Turkey for the first time ever in an exhibit at the Pera Museum, which runs through 24 January 2010.

This autumn, Istanbul also kicks off the city's first shopping festival, Shopping Paradise, which runs from 15 November to 31 December. Offering fabulous retail offers, discounts and special entertainment activities in malls, the festival is aimed to draw shoppers to Istanbul and increase the city's profile as a shopping destination.

Other exciting programmes taking place in Istanbul in 2010 include the European Universities Theatre Festival, the world premiere of the play "Freedom of Prometheus," and an International Ballet Contest. Indeed, the events slated for Istanbul in 2010 are far too numerous to list here – which means you'll have to come see for yourself!



# ISTANBUL, EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE 2010

Already one of the world's top city-break destinations, Istanbul is set to be an even hotter destination in 2010 when it becomes European Capital of Culture. Visitor numbers show Istanbul's increasing popularity as a destination, as it has welcomed 4.18 million tourists so far this year, up 2.4% year-on-year.

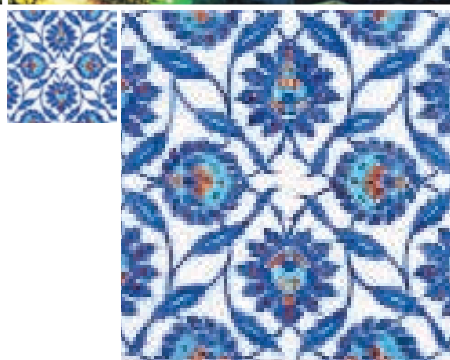
Already home to a vibrant arts and cultural scene, Turkey's cultural, historical and financial capital is being further transformed by preparations for its title as Capital of Culture, with new galleries and cultural spaces, restaurants, hip hangouts, clubs, shopping centres and boutiques opening up on a daily basis. The city will host a plethora of arts and cultural events throughout 2010 encompassing visual arts, music and opera, performing arts,

literature, cinema, museums and traditional arts, showcasing the city as an international art and cultural capital.

In preparation for 2010, extensive restoration work is being carried out on Istanbul's important historical sites and monuments. This includes conservation and restoration of the mosaics and hand-drawn decorations in several sections of Hagia Sophia and renovation of the kitchens of the Topkapi Palace, which will house the palace's Far Eastern (Chinese and Japanese) porcelain collection, considered the largest such collection outside China. The Ataturk Cultural Centre, which houses Istanbul's opera and ballet companies and the State Theatre Company and which is considered to be one of the most important monuments from

Turkey's Republican era, is also being substantially renovated to transform the building into a dynamic, living performance centre.

Another highly anticipated development will be the opening of the Museum of Innocence during the first half of 2010. Inspired by and based on the novel of the same name by Nobel Prize-winning Turkish writer Orhan Pamuk, the museum will offer a poetic and documentary representation (through films, photos and other memorabilia) of the culture and daily life of Istanbul from the 1950's to the present. The museum will be located in Istanbul's Cukurcuma neighbourhood, which has preserved much of its traditional architecture dating back to the beginning of the 20th century.





# INFRASTRUCTURE AND INVESTMENTS

## 2009 HIGHLIGHTS

The past year has seen the opening in Turkey of a number of major luxury hotels, among them the ultra-luxurious Mardan Palace which opened in May 2009 in Antalya; the Hilton Dalaman Golf Resort & Spa, the Radisson Blu Resort & Spa in Cesme, the Sheraton Istanbul Atakoy Hotel, the Rixos Grand Ankara and the Dedeman Gaziantep Hotel & Convention Centre.

Travellers to Turkey now also have greater choice when flying and a number of airlines have increased flights and routes to Turkey, such as Turkish Airlines' new route from London Stansted – Sabiha Gokcen on 9th November 2009. Low cost carriers have also been instrumental in driving growth in capacity this year, with Turkey's leading low-cost carrier Pegasus Airlines launching daily London Stansted – Istanbul Sabiha Gokcen flights in April of this year and a direct London Stansted to Bodrum in 2009, whilst EasyJet began 3/week direct flights from London Gatwick to Bodrum as well as 3/week direct Manchester – Dalaman flights during the summer season. Flyglobespan also launched 1/weekly Aberdeen – Dalaman flights.

In line with airline capacity growth, Istanbul has a brand-new terminal that opened on 31 October 2009 at Sabiha Gokcen Airport, the city's second busiest airport. The new terminal more than doubles the airport's annual passenger capacity to 25 million. In 2008, 4.5 million passengers used the airport, a number expected to reach 20 million by 2018. The state-of-the-art terminal complex includes a four-storey car park, a 128-room hotel, a 5000 sqm foot court, and one of Europe's largest Duty-Free shopping areas at 4500 sqm.

Other infrastructural developments include the opening in August 2009 of the long-awaited D-Marin Yacht Marina in Didim. The 70,000 sqm marina, which can host more than 1,000 yachts, represents a \$75 million investment in the Didim region. September saw the completion of Istanbul's largest congress centre, the Istanbul Congress Centre in Harbiye. The centre, which opened its doors for the first time to host the high-profile IMF/World Bank meetings in October 2009, is located in the heart of Istanbul and has state-of-the-art meeting facilities. The adjacent Muhsin Ertugrul Theatre and Harbiye Open-Air Theatre were also redesigned to fit together with the new conference centre.



# ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES

**In 2009, major discoveries were made in the areas of archaeology and art history in Turkey and it was a year of many "firsts."**

Interesting findings were obtained from numerous archaeological excavations continuing all around Turkey and just a handful of these

discoveries include: In excavations at Andriake, located in Antalya's Demre district, evidence of a Jewish temple was found for the first time. In Samsun, the first cuneiform tablets in Northern Anatolia mentioning the Hittites were found. In the ancient city of Kibrya in Burdur, a depiction of Medusa in a stone portrait

has been found. This is thought to be a first in Anatolia. Also, this year in Denizli, in the ancient city of Laodikeia, a bust of Emperor Augustus was found – a very significant and rare finding. The only other known depiction of Augustus, the first god-emperor of the Romans, is located in the Vatican.



# LOOKING AHEAD

**A number of airlines have plans to further increase their flights to Turkey or to introduce new routes.**

In 2010, Sabiha Gokcen Airport, plans to increase passenger numbers from 1 million to 1.8 million with the opening of the new terminal. Jet2.com, the low fares airline, has announced low fare seat-only flights to Dalaman from the airline's new base at East Midlands Airport.

Exeter International Airport has announced that it has made arrangements with Thomas Cook for weekly flights to Dalaman starting in May 2010.

A number of international hotel companies are expanding in Turkey, including the Hilton group, which plans to open 13 new hotels across the country by the end of 2010. The company will also be introducing a Hilton Garden Inn in Bursa in 2010, with other Hilton family brands to open in Turkey in the next few years.

In Istanbul, a host of new hotels are expected to open in 2010 to coincide with the European Capital of Culture, including the celebrated Pera Palas Hotel (built 1892) and the Divan Hotel (built 1956), two of Istanbul's oldest and most distinguished hotels, which are both being completely rebuilt and are also set to reopen in 2010.





# TURKEY IN THE UK

**Turkey continues to increase its presence in the UK by participating in a variety of cultural and tourism events.**

Turkey was featured in the Thames Festival in London this year on the South Bank, showcasing Turkish arts and crafts, including the traditional Turkish art-form, Ebru, a form of marbling, in the New European marquee near the London Eye. Turkish traditional music group Cemre performed on the New European Stage on both days, playing traditional Turkish music with a twist. The band played music derived from rarely heard pieces from Anatolia on traditional Turkish instruments.

The London Turkish Film Festival (LTFF) also celebrates its 15th year this year, with a line-up of more than 20 different feature films, 25 shorts and 10 documentaries. Held between 5 and 19 November 2009, the festival kicks off with a gala night at BAFTA featuring the British Premiere of THE BOGEYMAN. The filmfest is expected to draw over 8000 viewers. This year the LTFF introduces a series of special awards, the highlight of

which is the UK's first-ever Digital Distribution Award. This award will provide a digital distribution contract for the UK and Ireland for the festival's most promising film – which is chosen for "displaying the qualities necessary to connect with audiences in the UK." The LTFF Jury is made up of British and internationally acclaimed members of the film industry, including Jo Blair, Programmer, City Screen, Empire Journalist David Parkinson, Director of Programming at Curzon Cinemas, Jason Wood and Turkish actress Hülya Koçyigit. Legendary actress Turkan Soray is also announced as the recipient of the first ever Lifetime Achievement Award. [www.ltff.org.uk](http://www.ltff.org.uk)

The Turkish Culture and Tourism Office UK re-launched its official website this summer [www.gototurkey.co.uk](http://www.gototurkey.co.uk), featuring a brand new user-friendly design, up-to-date content and a wealth of practical information for trip-planning, making it the best source of information in the UK on visiting Turkey.

This year, Turkey has also been featured as a travel destination

in over 4000 articles in the UK press – in most of the national press from The Daily and Sunday Telegraph to the Mail on Sunday, and magazines from the Sunday Times Travel magazine to Wanderlust and Conde Nast Traveller, which ran feature articles on Antalya for the first time, and most recently 12 pages on Istanbul. This year has also been a fantastic year for TV and Radio coverage of Turkey: The Travel Channel recently filmed programmes on "Essential Istanbul" and "Eastern Turkey" which will be broadcast in 2010; "Globe Trekker" has recorded episodes in Turkey; whilst BBC and ITV have filmed shows including the first Blue Peter summer road trip in Turkey since the 1970s, a one-part documentary on Cleopatra's sister Arsinoe in Ephesus and ITVs Coach Trip; Turkey has also been featured in various BBC Radio programs including Traveller's Tree on BBC Radio 4 and an upcoming show on Mimar Sinan's architecture. For its part, the Turkish Office of Tourism and Culture was instrumental in arranging more than 100 individual and group press trips across Turkey to facilitate such press coverage.

# TURKEY AT WTM 2009

**At WTM this year Turkey will be celebrating the country's recent tourism successes and the continued increase in visitor numbers – particularly in the Mugla region – and launching Istanbul 2010, European Capital of Culture.**

The Turkish Office of Culture and Tourism is hosting special events at WTM, including a press conference with Turkey's Minister of Culture and Tourism Ertugrul Gunay, "Looking Ahead: Strategy for the Future & Launch of Istanbul,

European Capital of Culture 2010" on Monday followed by a drinks reception on stand EM120 at 15.00.

[www.gototurkey.co.uk](http://www.gototurkey.co.uk)