



Turkey is a rapidly modernising country with one foot in Europe and one in the Middle East. It's not all oriental splendor, mystery, intrigue and whirling dervishes but it is a spicy maelstrom of history knocking up against a pacy present.



The Turkish people have an unrivalled reputation for hospitality, the cuisine is to die for, the coastline is a dream, and many Turkish cities are dotted with spectacular mosques and castles.



There's an enormous variety of things to see and do ranging from water sports to mountain trekking, archeology to night-clubbing and river rafting to raki drinking in Turkey. Whether you leave Turkey with magnificent carpets, amulets to ward off evil, belly-dancing tips, an appreciation of its history, or just a tan, you're likely to want to go back for more.



Turkey provides 70% of the world's **hazelnuts**; the nut in your chocolate bar was most probably grown in Turkey.



Tulips are not native to Netherlands. Turks gave the Dutch their famous **tulips**.



St. Nicholas, today's Santa Claus, was born in Patara (next to Kalkan, Antalya) and lived as the bishop of Myra in Demre (also near Kalkan, Antalya).



According to legend, **Noah's Ark** landed on Mount Ararat (5,165 m) which is the highest mountain in Turkey.



Turkey is a long-time member of **NATO** (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) since 1952.



Suleyman the Magnificent (the famous Ottoman Sultan, 1494-1566) was a poet who wrote over 3000 poems, some of them criticizing the greed of mankind.



Istanbul's Robert College (established in 1863), is the **oldest American school** outside the United States.



From the days of the Ottoman Empire through to the present, coffee has played an important role in Turkish lifestyle and culture. Turks introduced **coffee** to Europe.



The **last home of Virgin Mary** is in Selcuk, Izmir. Pope John-Paul II declared the Shrine of Virgin Mary as a pilgrimage place for Christians.



Temple of Artemis and the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, are among the **7 wonders of the ancient world**.



The **first church** built by man (St. Peter's Church) is in Antioch (Antakya). It was here that **Christianity** first took this name.



The only city in the world located on two continents is **Istanbul**, which has been the Capital of three great empires, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman for more than 2000 years.



The famous **Trojan Wars** took place in western Turkey, around the site where a wooden statue of the Trojan Horse rests today.



The **oldest known human settlement** is in Catalhoyuk (near Konya), Turkey (7500 B.C.).

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