

# Facts for Visitors

## **A** *Antiquities*

### **Antiquities**

Please note that it is strictly forbidden to export antiquities or antiques from Turkey and there are severe penalties for those who attempt to do so. In order to export such items legally it is necessary to obtain a certificate from a directorate of a museum.

## **B** *Buses see Public Transport*

## **C** *Children • Currency • Customs Regulations*

### **Children**

Family is very important to Turkish people, and you will find that children are welcomed everywhere, which makes for a very relaxing and enjoyable holiday. It is perfectly normal for even very young children to eat out in the evening with their parents. Many restaurants do provide high chairs, and those that don't seem to be very good at improvising. Formula milk and nappies are easily available, although if you want a specific brand, then it is probably best to take it with you. It is not always easy to find baby food in jars, but restaurants and hotels are very accommodating and will usually be pleased to puree food for you. Again, if your child is used to a specific brand it may be better to take it with you. UHT milk is widely available in small cartons, with a straw, which is useful for toddlers and older children. Most hotels will provide cots if these are requested in advance. These can vary quite widely in standard, however, so it is a good idea to check in advance what type of cot is being provided and whether or not it is suitable for your child - some have lower sides than those common in the UK, for example, so are fine for a baby but not suitable for a more mobile toddler. Children's car seats are still seen as a luxury item in Turkey but most tour operators and car hire companies will be able to provide them for you on request. You should not, however, assume that this will automatically be the case. Many of the larger hotels have children's clubs and are able to arrange babysitting services. There are also some tour operators who provide these services.

In general, Turks and Turkey have a welcoming, relaxed approach to children and will go out of their way to be accommodating and helpful. As long as you are flexible you should have no problems.

### **Currency**

Turkish Lira is available in the following denominations:

Banknotes: 1, 5, 10, 20, 50 & 100 TL Coins: 1, 5, 10, 25 & 50 Kuruş and 1 TL

You can obtain currency before travelling to Turkey or on arrival. Exchange rates are usually slightly better in Turkey and all international airports have exchange facilities. Usually, cash can be exchanged without charging commission in exchange offices, banks or hotels. Please note that Scottish notes are not accepted in Turkey. Travellers' cheques can be exchanged in banks only. Cash point machines (ATM) are available in most areas, which accept major UK credit and debit cards and give instructions in English. It may be a good idea to inform your bank in advance that you are travelling to Turkey as some will automatically put a stop on

cards after the first usage in an attempt to combat fraud. Exchange rates are published daily in Turkish newspapers. If you are planning to exchange currency back from TL before leaving the country, or are making a major purchase, which may need to be declared to customs, you will need to keep your transaction receipts in order to show that the currency has been legally exchanged.

### **Customs Regulations**

*Please note that the following information is intended to give an idea about customs regulations, and our portal does not accept any responsibility for inaccuracy or misinformation. For further and accurate information please visit: [www.turkish-consulate.org.uk](http://www.turkish-consulate.org.uk) and [www.gumruk.gov.tr](http://www.gumruk.gov.tr).*

#### **On Entry:**

It is permitted to bring the following items into Turkey as duty free goods:

#### **Wines, Tobacco & Other Luxury Items**

EU Regulations applied.

#### **Valuables**

In order to avoid any problems when leaving the country it is recommended that you register valuable items with the customs office on entry to Turkey. All personal belongings and articles made of precious stones or metals (with no commercial purposes) worth under US\$ 15,000 may be brought into and taken out of the country. Jewellery worth more than this amount may only be taken out of the country providing it has been registered on entry or that you can prove that it was purchased in Turkey with legally exchanged currency.

#### **Sports Equipment**

Two partitioned camping tent; one diving suit for underwater diving sports (The quality and efficiency of the suit to be determined by the undersecretary.); glider (a pair); one boat; one surfboard with sailing equipment for water sports; flippers (one pair); other personal belongings one apiece (except for sea motorcycle and sledge); chess set; Draughts set; five packs of playing cards.

#### **Medical Items**

Beds belonging to a patient; motorised and non-motorised wheelchair; drugs for personal treatment; gas mask and similar protective clothing (maximum 2 pieces).

#### **On Exit:**

For valuable gifts and souvenirs, such as a carpet, proof of purchase is necessary, together with receipts showing that any currency used in its purchase has been legally exchanged. Please note that it is strictly forbidden to export antiques from Turkey. Minerals can only be exported with a special document.

#### **Currency**

Up to US\$ 5,000 worth of Turkish or foreign currency can be taken out of the country, providing that it can be shown that the currency has been obtained from authorised banks. Larger amount of foreign or Turkish currency must be transferred abroad through banks.

Cash brought into the country to be exchanged for export out of Turkey must be declared on entry.

## **D** *Disabled Travellers • Driving • Drugs • Duty Free See: Customs Regulations*

### **Disabled Travellers**

If you have any queries relating to any special needs for your holiday, it is best to check direct with us and/ or your tour operator before booking your holiday. The resorts which are located in relatively flat areas, and are, therefore, better suited to wheelchair users are: Marmaris, Ifmeler, Dalyan, Fethiye/ Calig Beach, Side. Anyone who has difficulty in walking should certainly avoid resorts on steep hills such as Kalkan and Turunc. Obviously, hotel locations vary so do check before booking. Some of the newer and larger hotels have rooms specifically designed for wheelchair users, however, even where hotels do not have specific facilities they will usually try their best to be helpful by, for example, allocating a ground floor room. Many Turkish resorts and cities are not planned for wheelchair access, which can make life difficult, however, you will find that Turks always try their best to be helpful and will gladly improvise to find a solution.

### **Driving**

You can drive in Turkey with EU, US or International driving licence. You should have your driving licence, your passport and insurance documents of the vehicle with you in the car at all times, as you will need it if you are involved in an accident. All of the major international car rental companies, as well as a number of local ones, have offices at airports and all major centres.

Driving in Turkey is on the right, as in continental Europe. Turkish road signs conform to the International Protocol on Road Signs and archaeological and historic sites are indicated by yellow signs. Turkey has a good network of well-maintained roads. There is a 50 km per hour speed limit within urban centres and 90 km outside urban centres (120 km on Motorways). Petrol stations are fairly easy to find and on main highways, they are often open 24hrs and have restaurants and other facilities attached. Unleaded (kurşunsuz) petrol is easily available. Garages for repairs are often concentrated on certain streets within a town or can be found on highways.

If you are planning on driving to Turkey, as well as your passport, you will need to take your international driving licence, car registration documents and international green card (insurance card) with the TR sign clearly visible (NB: This can be purchased on arrival at the border). You can bring your own car into the country for up to six months. If you wish to keep your car in Turkey for more than six months, you are liable to pay import tax.

### **Drugs**

Please note that bringing into or out of the country, together with consumption of, marijuana and other narcotics is strictly forbidden and is subject to heavy punishment. If you have prescribed medication, which you need to take on holiday with you, you will need a doctor's note and/ or a copy of your prescription which can be sent to our office for translation. Please call our office for further details.

**E** *Electricity • Emergencies, Police, Medical Treatment see Useful Numbers, • Exports see Customs Regulations*

### **Electricity**

The mains voltage for electricity is 220V and 50Hz. Central European type wall socket (two-pin plugs) is standard in Turkey.

**F** *Ferry Services • Filming in Turkey*

### **Ferry Services**

Local ferry services operate from Istanbul across the Sea of Marmara. For details visit [www.ido.com.tr](http://www.ido.com.tr)

The other ferry services and routes are as follows:

#### Between Turkey and the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus:

Alanya - Girne;  
Mersin - Gazimagosa (Famagusta).  
Taşucu - Girne (Kyrenia);

#### Between Turkey and the Greek Islands:

Ayvalık - Lesbos;  
Bodrum - Kos;  
Çeşme - Chios;  
Datça - Symi.  
Kuşadası - Samos;  
Marmaris - Rhodes

#### Between Turkey and Italy:

Çeşme - Ancona  
Çeşme – Brindisi

### **Filming in Turkey**

If you are planning to film in Turkey for commercial or broadcast purposes, you will need to obtain the relevant permission in advance. The process usually takes a minimum of two weeks.

Members of the Press do not need filming permission or filming visas to follow news stories in Turkey. They need to inform the Press Office of the Turkish Embassy which will inform the Press Office at the Prime Minister's Office, prior to going to Turkey.

**I** *Imports see Customs Regulations*

**H** *Health see Medical Treatment*

## L Language • Living & Working

### Language

The official language is Turkish. English and German are widely spoken in major cities and tourist resorts, and you will find that most Turks welcome the opportunity to practise their language skills and will go out of their way to be helpful. Foreign visitors who attempt to speak even a few words of Turkish, however, will definitely be rewarded with even warmer smiles. It is not an easy language to learn, however, it does have one huge advantage in that it is completely phonetic. Unlike English, each letter of the alphabet has only one sound and is always pronounced in exactly the same way, apart from in combination with 'y' or 'g'. Even foreign words used in Turkish are adapted into Turkish phonetic spellings, which can offer some clues towards pronunciation - try saying the following out loud: ketçap, taksi, futbol, ofsayt. There is no 'q', 'w' or 'x' in Turkish and there are some additional characters. The accent usually falls on the first syllable in the word. The following should give you a rough guide to pronunciation:

**a** a cross between a long and short

'a' somewhere between the 'a' in

'man' and the 'a' sound in 'are'

**c** pronounced 'j' as in 'jam'

**ç** pronounced 'ch' as in 'church'

**e** a short sound as in 'egg'

**g** a hard 'g' as in 'go'

**ğ** this character is silent but elongates the vowel to either side of it

**ı** pronounced 'er' in 'number'

**i** a short sound as in 'ink'

**o** pronounced as in 'off'

**ö** pronounced as in the 'or' sound (with a silent 'r') in 'word'

**s** is a hissing sound as in 'seven'

**ş** pronounced 'sh' as in 'shut'

**u** pronounced 'oo' as in 'cool'

**ü** pronounced 'u' as in 'fuse'

**y** is generally used to separate vowels and creates some slightly different sounds in combination as follows:

'ay' pronounced 'eye';

'ey' pronounced as in 'they';

'iy' pronounced 'ee'

### Living and/ or working in Turkey

If you wish to stay in Turkey longer than the three month period allowed to tourists or to set up a business with or without a Turkish partner, you will need a residence visa. You will need to apply to the Turkish Consulate in London for your visa and it is advised that you submit all documents relevant to your application at least eight weeks before your intended date of departure. Your application will be referred to the relevant Turkish authorities for their approval.

After obtaining the visa, you are required to register with the local police within a month following your arrival in Turkey in order to obtain a residence permit. If you wish to extend your permit for a further period, you should apply to the same police headquarters before the permit expires. Household items may be taken into Turkey through a system called "temporary import" provided that the validity of the residence permit is at least one year. For details of the relevant regulations please contact the Office of the Finance and Customs

Counsellor at the Turkish Embassy in London which can also provide information on the regulations concerning the temporary import of a car into Turkey. Those who wish to apply for a work permit will need to supply various additional documents to the Turkish Consulate including proof of a job offer, normally in the form of a letter from the prospective employer,

**M** *Medical Treatment • Medication see Drugs • Mobile Phones • Museums*

### **Medical Treatment**

You will need to pay for any medical treatment which you receive in Turkey. For this reason it is advisable to take out medical insurance before travelling. It is not difficult to find English-speaking doctors in all but the most remote areas. There are also foreign run hospitals in many of the larger towns and resorts. There are pharmacies in most places with trained pharmacists who are able to offer advice on minor illnesses. *For further information please visit: [www.healthinturkey.org](http://www.healthinturkey.org)*

### **Mobile Phones**

The major GSM operators in Turkey are Turkcell, Vodafone and Avea. You can use your mobile phone in Turkey if your provider has enabled international roaming. However if you intend to stay for a long time in the country or make several calls, it may be preferable to buy a local prepaid SIM card. Take your mobile phone and passport to a Turkish mobile phone shop where your new SIM will be registered along with your handset's IMEI number and your personal information. (Unregistered phones will be blocked and unable to receive or make calls.) Turkey has very wide mobile coverage networks so you shouldn't have any problems in the main cities and tourist resorts.

### **Museums**

Most museums and palaces are open every day of the week except Mondays. There are a few notable exceptions: Topkapi Palace is closed on Tuesdays instead of Mondays; Dolmabahce Palace is closed Mondays and Thursdays and the Chora Church is closed on Wednesdays. For further information on museums visit: [www.kulturturizm.gov.tr](http://www.kulturturizm.gov.tr)

**P** *Phone see Mobile Phones • Police • Post Office Services • Property • Public Holidays • Public Transport*

### **Police**

There are two types of police in Turkey - civil police polis and military police jandarma. In many areas you will find that there is just one or the other, and that both fulfil the same function. In some places, there are also specialist tourist police. If you need to report a crime you should go to the nearest police station to where the crime occurred. In tourist areas there will usually be someone available who speaks English or you can request a translator. You will usually be asked to submit and sign a statement. It is advisable to request a copy of any documents in case you need them at a later stage.

### **Post Office Services**

Turkish post offices are easily recognizable by the yellow and black 'PTT' signs. Major post offices are open from 08.00-00.00 Monday to Saturday and from 09.00-19.00 on Sundays. Smaller offices are open from 8.30-12.30 and from 13.30 - 17.30 and may be closed at weekends.

As well as selling stamps and telephone tokens and cards, some post offices will exchange cash as well as international postal orders and travellers' cheques.

### **Public Holidays**

There are two types of public holiday in Turkey: those which are decided by the government and which fall on the same day each year; and the religious festivals which change according to the lunar calendar and, therefore, fall on different dates each year.

On public holidays, banks and government offices are closed. In general, life in seaside resorts is not affected as these are the times when Turkish people also go on holiday. Shops and businesses away from tourist areas may close, however, so you should bear this in mind when travelling inland or to city areas.

### **Public Holidays**

New Years Day, 1 January

National Sovereignty and Children's Day, 23 April

Ataturk Commemoration and Youth Sports Day, 19 May

Victory Day, 30 August

Republic Day, 28 (half day) 29 October

### **Religious Festivals**

#### Şeker Bayramı (Eid)

This is the festival which falls at the end of Ramazan, a period of fasting. Traditionally, sweets are exchanged as gifts. In more rural and conservative areas, you may find it more difficult to eat or drink in public during Ramazan period.

#### Kurban Bayramı (Great Eid)

Traditionally, a sheep or cow is sacrificed at this time and the meat distributed to the needy and friends, family and neighbours.

### **Public Transport**

The preferred means of transport in Turkey is by coach, and the air-conditioned intercity coach services are comfortable, fast and inexpensive. Each town has a bus station (otogar), where each bus company has its own office, where you can make reservations and buy tickets. Alternatively, you can buy tickets from local travel agencies.

There are good services, between Istanbul and Ankara and the overnight sleeper services are both comfortable and convenient. You can buy tickets and make reservations at local train stations or through travel agents based in Turkey.

Within towns and between local villages, there are local bus services as well as the dolmus services. These are shared taxis, usually a minibus, and sometimes a large car, which operate along set routes, picking up and setting down passengers as they go. There is a set fare depending on how far you are travelling and you pay this to the driver. They are an inexpensive way of getting around. The name "dolmus" literally means 'stuffed' - from the fact that they do not have a set timetable but wait until they are full before setting off.

**R** *Residence see Living & Working*

## **S** *Student & Youth Travel*

### **Student & Youth Travel**

All students and young people holding ISIC, IYC and IYHF cards or travelling through member organisations of BITS, FIYTO or ISTC may take advantage of the youth holiday opportunities available in Turkey.

## **T** *Taxis • Time Difference • Trains see Public Transport • Turkish see Language*

### **Taxis**

Taxis are easy to spot as they are all bright yellow in colour. All have a meter, and you should ensure that this is switched on at the beginning of your journey. There are two tariffs 'gunduz' for journeys which take place during the daytime and 'gece' for those which take place at night, which are charged at a higher rate. If you are travelling outside the city boundaries it is usual to agree a fixed rate in advance.

### **Time Difference**

Turkey is GMT+2, that is to say two hours ahead of the UK and one hour ahead of the Central Europe.

## **U** *Useful Numbers*

### **Useful Numbers**

Emergency	112
International Operator	115
Directory Assistance	118
Police	155
Jandarma (Gendarme)	156
Fire Department	110

## **V** *Visas*

### **Visas**

While planning your trip to Turkey do not forget to check your passport if it is valid for at least 90 days. Depending on your nationality, most probably your stay as a tourist is limited up to 3 months (for one entrance). For tourist visas, there is no need to apply in advance or to fill in any forms. If you are flying to Turkey, you will buy your visa at the Turkish airport on arrival. You will see the visa desk, situated just before passport control. You must buy your visa, which will be stamped on your passport by the official, before you join the queue for passport control. The visa for UK passport holders currently costs £10 and must be paid for with a Sterling note. The visa for other EU state-passport holders currently costs € 10 and must be paid for with a Euro note. Visas are multiple entries and are valid for three months. Each passport-holder, including infants, must purchase a visa. With tourist visas you will not have the right to take up paid or unpaid employment or to reside, or to study (including student exchange program) or to establish yourself in business in Turkey.

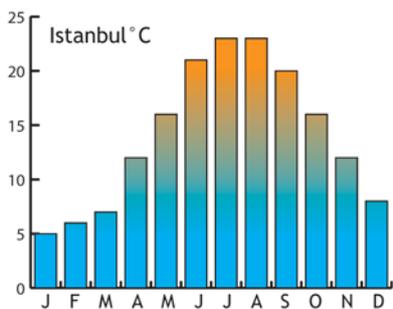
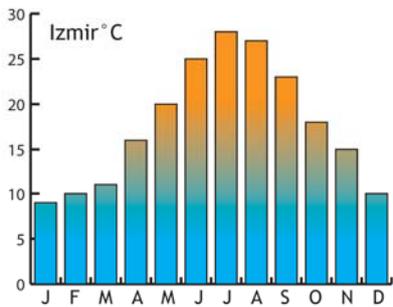
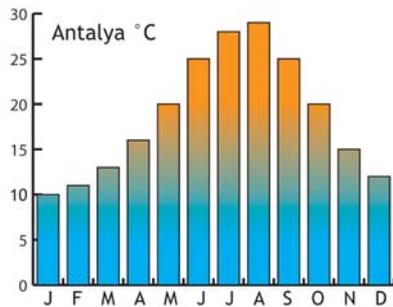
## W Water • Weather

### Water

Although tap water is chlorinated and, therefore, safe to drink, bottled water is recommended, which is readily and affordably available.

### Weather

For general information on the climate and up-to-date weather forecasts visit [www.meteor.gov.tr](http://www.meteor.gov.tr) Average daily maximum temperatures shown below:



## Y Youth Travel see Student & Youth Travel