

Have you ever heard of the beauty of Istanbul or the fairy chimneys of Cappadocia? There is one place in Turkey that is unique. Yes, I mean Ankara! This is not only Turkey's capital city, but it is also a living museum, full of historical and cultural significance and of course the modernity that comes with it.

If you have never considered travelling to this city, I will convince you to do so. This city is divided between the old world and the new world, the traditional and the liberal city. Imaging big mansions, beautiful gardens, and nice roads packed with things that make every part of Ankara to be amazing.

Well, let's get to know all the wonderful things you are to experience in Ankara.

About Ankara Turkey

Ankara is the second largest city of Turkey and it is located in the central part of the country. Unlike those coastal treasures, Ankara is situated in the middle of the Anatolian plateau surrounded by gentle hills. Its strategic position has placed it in the middle of history. The city is a perfect blend of ruins and new age buildings, which gives it a feel that is hard to come by in other cities.

You can wander through a traditional bazaar, visit a modern shopping mall and even walk through an art gallery all within the same area.

A Quick Look at History

Ankara has a very old history and it was inhabited in the Bronze Age. Anciently named Ancyra it was an important center for such ancient cultures as the Hittites and the Phrygians. In fact, it was during the Roman period that Ankara began to prosper. It was known as the city of beautiful temples, marvelous theaters and the Roman bath.

Moving to the Ottomans now. Although during this time Ankara was not as important a city as Istanbul. However, in 1923, the fate of the city was determined when it was made capital of the newly formed Republic of Turkey. It was strategically located and after that Ankara has turned into a cosmopolitan city of today which has a perfect blend of both the ancient and the modern.

What Makes Ankara Unique?

The question isn't why visit Ankara. It's why haven't you? Ankara offers experiences you won't find anywhere else. It's **Turkey's second-largest city**, but it feels less touristy, and that's a good thing. It offers authenticity in every nook.

Here's what makes Ankara stand out:

- **Anıtkabir**: This isn't just a monument. It's the final resting place of **Mustafa Kemal Atatürk**, the founder of modern Turkey. Visiting this place is like stepping into a part of Turkey's soul. It's powerful, emotional, and downright impressive.
- **Gençlik Parkı**: Imagine a park in the middle of the city with **lakes, amusement rides**, and vibrant festivals. That's Gençlik Parkı for you.
- **Traditional Markets**: Ever walked through streets filled with colorful stalls, fresh spices, and Turkish delights? The **Çıkırıkçılar Yokuşu** is where the charm of old Ankara thrives. Think of it as a time machine to Turkey's vibrant past.

Ankara doesn't try too hard, and that's its charm. The laid-back atmosphere, combined with its deep-rooted history, makes it a perfect blend for anyone looking for an **authentic Turkish experience**.

When is the Best Time to Visit Ankara?

Let's find out the best times to go!



June to September is the best time to explore this lively city. During these months, the weather is warm and sunny. You can walk around the city and enjoy outdoor cafes without feeling too hot. The streets are alive with activities and sights.

On the other hand, **November to February** brings cold weather. Temperatures can drop below -14 degrees Celsius in December and January. If you don't like the cold, it's better to avoid this time.

The Seasons of Ankara

Ankara has four seasons, and each one is special. **Spring** is wonderful because flowers bloom, and the weather is mild. You can easily explore without getting too hot.

For those who love warmth, **summer** can be quite hot. Make sure to pack sunglasses and sunscreen! Parks and cafes are great places to cool off.

As autumn arrives, **fall** paints Ankara in bright colors. You'll see shades of red, orange, and yellow. It's cool outside, perfect for walking around and enjoying the scenery.

When **winter** comes, snow covers the city, making it look like a postcard. If you like holiday festivities, you will love Ankara in winter.

How Long Should You Stay in Ankara?

If it is your first visit, you may be wondering how long to stay. A 2-3 day is enough to see the main attractions. A weekend trip works well for a quick visit. You can check out places like Anıtkabir and the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations. If you have more time, you can discover hidden spots around the city.



Best Places to Visit & Things to Do in Ankara

Ankara is a city which is full of activities to do. The fun and exciting thing is that you will never exhaust the list of things that you want to do. Here are some attractions you should not miss!

1. Anıtkabir - The Tomb of Atatürk

You haven't truly explored Ankara until you visit Anıtkabir. This impressive monument honors Turkey's beloved leader, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. It towers over the city and symbolizes Turkish pride.

Watching the changing of the guards is an unforgettable sight. Afterward, take a relaxing stroll in the surrounding Peace Park. This place is more than a tourist stop; it represents Turkish identity. You will feel the respect and admiration for Atatürk as you walk through the area.

2. Ankara Castle (Ankara Kalesi)

Second, go to Ankara Castle which is located on a hilltop of Ankara. This castle has one of the most beautiful outlooks of the city that I have ever seen. Some of its walls are said to have been built during the Roman period. Just getting to the castle is half the fun as you have to go up some very steep streets.

While on the move, look at the houses which are built in the traditional architectural designs. Some of them have been turned into comfortable cafes and shops. This journey gives a feel of old world Ankara and is a perfect place to take a break.

3. Museum of Anatolian Civilizations

History freaks will have a field day with the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations. This museum is one of the best museums in Turkey. It has relics from every civilization that inhabited Anatolia at a given time. Just think of the possibility of coming across Hittite statues, Bronze Age pottery and Roman mosaics.

Every exhibit is like going back in time and gets a glimpse of Turkey's heritage and history

that is so colorful and full. For those that would like to understand more about the cultural history of the country, this museum is a must visit.

Ankara is also famous for the active cultural life. If you are an art enthusiast or you simply like watching great performances, then you will find it here.

4. State Opera and Ballet

For a taste of high culture, don't miss Ankara's State Opera and Ballet. Picture watching world-class performances in a stunning, grand theater. From classical ballets to breathtaking operas, the Ankara Opera House showcases the best talent in the city.

The building itself is a masterpiece, and entering it feels like stepping into a world of elegance and artistry. Even if you're not usually a fan of opera or ballet, this experience will leave you amazed. It's more than just a show; it's a true cultural immersion.

5. CerModern Art Gallery

If contemporary art catches your eye, CerModern should be your next stop. This modern art space features both local and international artists showcasing their work. Located in a beautifully restored railway warehouse, CerModern provides a refreshing contrast to Ankara's historical sites.

Explore photography exhibits and interactive installations. This gallery is a hub for creativity and innovation. No matter your level of art expertise, you'll leave feeling inspired by the talent of modern Turkish artists.

Where to Stay in Ankara

Ankara has a wide range of accommodations to suit every traveler's budget. Here are some top picks:

1. JW Marriott Ankara

For those who prefer luxury, the **JW Marriott** is hands down one of the best places to stay. Offering everything from plush rooms to **high-end dining**, this five-star hotel has it all. It's

also conveniently located near government buildings and top attractions, so you'll never be far from the action.

With a **rooftop pool** and sweeping views of the city, the JW Marriott is ideal for travelers who want to experience Ankara in style.

2. Divan Cukurhan

Want a stay that mixes history with comfort? **Divan Cukurhan** is a boutique hotel set in a beautifully restored 16th-century inn. The rooms are luxurious, yet retain an old-world charm that gives you a taste of Ankara's past. It's located right next to the **Ankara Castle**, so you'll be in the heart of the historic district.

It's perfect for travelers who want something unique and cozy without sacrificing modern amenities.

3. Otel Mithat

If you're traveling on a budget, Ankara still has you covered. **Otel Mithat** is an affordable option that doesn't skimp on comfort or cleanliness. Located near the **Ulus district**, it's close to several key attractions, making it an excellent choice for those who want convenience without breaking the bank.

How to Get Around Ankara

Getting around Ankara is easy, whether you're traveling alone or with family. The city has a public transportation system that is efficient, affordable, and simple to use.

1. Metro System

Ankara's metro system is fast, clean, and connects most of the city's major areas. There are several lines that take you across the city, making it the best way to get around quickly. The stations are well-marked in Turkish and English, so you won't have trouble finding your way.

2. Buses

Ankara also has an extensive **bus network** that reaches areas not covered by the metro. The buses are affordable, but they can be a bit crowded during rush hours. If you're heading to places like **Ankara University** or **Hacettepe University**, buses are your best bet.

3. Taxis and Ride-Sharing

Taxis in Ankara are reliable and affordable. You'll find them everywhere, especially near major attractions. **Ride-sharing apps** like **BiTaksi** and **Uber** are also available, offering a hassle-free alternative to public transport.

For the adventurous, **renting a car** is another option. While Ankara's traffic can get busy, having your own vehicle gives you the freedom to explore **nearby attractions** like **Lake Tuz** or the **ancient city of Gordion**.

Other Things to Experience If You've an Extra Time

Ankara's location makes it perfect for day trips. If you have extra time, here are a few destinations you shouldn't miss.

Lake Tuz

Just a short drive from Ankara, **Lake Tuz** is one of Turkey's most stunning natural wonders. The **salt lake** stretches as far as the eye can see, and its white shores make it feel like you're walking on another planet. It's a perfect day trip for nature lovers who want a peaceful escape from the city.

Make sure to bring a camera—the mirror-like reflection of the sky on the lake creates some stunning photo ops.

Gordion

History buffs, this one's for you. A trip to **Gordion**, located about an hour away from Ankara, takes you deep into ancient history. This is where **King Midas** (yes, the one with the golden touch) ruled. You'll explore ancient ruins and **tumulus tombs**, which give a fascinating glimpse into the past.

Gordion is an archaeological treasure, and a day here will make you feel like you've stepped back in time.

Beypazarı

If you want to see a more traditional side of Turkey, head to **Beypazarı**, a charming town known for its **Ottoman-style houses** and artisan crafts. This quaint town is famous for its **silverwork**, and you'll find plenty of beautiful handcrafted jewelry to take home as a souvenir.

The town also boasts delicious food—try their famous **Beypazarı Güveci**, a slow-cooked meat dish that's bursting with flavor.

In Addition, let's not forget the joy of shopping, especially for women. Ankara's markets and malls offer plenty of options for every taste and style.

Kızılay Square

Start your shopping adventure at **Kızılay Square**, the beating heart of modern Ankara. Here, you'll find everything from international fashion brands to local Turkish shops. It's a great place to shop for clothes, electronics, and even quirky souvenirs.

Need a break? The area is dotted with cafes where you can relax with a traditional **Turkish coffee** and people-watch.

Tunalı Hilmi Avenue

For a more upscale experience, head to **Tunalı Hilmi Avenue**. This street is famous for its **boutiques, jewelry stores**, and high-end fashion. You'll also find plenty of chic cafes and restaurants lining the avenue, making it a great spot to take a leisurely stroll.

Souvenirs at Çıkırıçılar Yokuşu

If you're hunting for unique, hand-crafted souvenirs, the markets at **Çıkırıçılar Yokuşu** are where you need to be. This bazaar-like area is full of **antique shops, carpets, pottery, and jewelry**. It's the perfect place to find something special to take home.

Don't forget to **haggle**—bargaining is part of the fun here!

Tips for First-Time Visitors

To make your trip to Ankara as smooth as possible, here are some useful tips that will help you Travelthe city like a pro.

1. Learn Basic Turkish Phrases

While many people in Ankara speak English, especially in tourist areas, learning a few basic Turkish phrases will go a long way in enhancing your experience. Locals appreciate when visitors make the effort, and even simple phrases like "Merhaba" (Hello) or "Teşekkür ederim" (Thank you) can make a difference.

2. Dress Modestly

Ankara is a modern city, but it's still important to be mindful of the local culture. **Modest clothing** is appreciated, especially when visiting mosques or historical sites. For women, wearing a **scarf** when entering religious places is essential. For both men and women, covering shoulders and knees is a sign of respect.

3. Carry Cash

While most businesses in Ankara accept credit cards, it's always a good idea to carry some **Turkish lira** for small purchases, especially in markets and smaller shops. ATMs are readily available throughout the city, so withdrawing cash isn't difficult.

4. Watch Out for Traffic

Ankara's streets can get busy, especially during rush hour. If you're driving or using a rental car, be prepared for heavy traffic and sometimes aggressive drivers. If you're not used to urban driving, it might be best to rely on public transport or taxis.

5. Respect Prayer Times

Ankara has many mosques, and you'll likely hear the **call to prayer** throughout the day. While most tourist attractions remain open during these times, it's important to be mindful of the culture and avoid loud activities near mosques during prayer times.

6. Plan for a Diverse Itinerary

Ankara has a little bit of everything—historical sites, cultural experiences, natural wonders, and vibrant nightlife. To make the most of your trip, plan a well-rounded itinerary that lets you experience the full range of what the city has to offer.

Last Words

I'm pleased to provide all the information about Ankara Turkey. With history, culture, and places to visit, explored in this guide, I wish you a great trip. No matter if you're just thinking about paying a visit, or just becoming more familiar with this stunning city, Ankara is a perfect mix of tradition and contemporaries.

Enjoy exploring!