

I am sure you have somewhere in the back of your head considered Turkey as a vacation destination, yes? There are stunning beaches, there are great cities, and there is simply so much to explore. However, do you know that Turkey has another name? Or that you could be mistaken about its capital? And have you ever thought where tulips come from in fact? Well, you might be surprised!!

Yes!

It is a big mistake to see Turkey only in terms of vacation: sea, sand, beautiful clothes and oriental bazaar. There is much to know about this country, which is rich in history, legends, and famous persons, different languages and many wars. In this article, I'll share 10 interesting facts about turkey that you did not know before.

After knowing these, you will be in a position to plan your tour and explore all the most recommended tourist activities.

10 Surprising Secrets & Interesting Facts About Turkey Country

Fact #1: The First Christian Church Was in Antioch, Turkey



The fact number one is a historical account that the first ever Christian Church was at Antioch in Turkey.

Many people may not be aware that the first church which Christians formed was in Turkey. It's true! Its name is the Grotto of St Peter and there is more about it in a city known as Antakya.

Saint Peter was one of the close friends of Jesus and he put the beginning of this church very many years back. People can still visit it today and see the old pictures and decorations to say the least. Most of the time, it is always interesting or cool to learn some facts about the history of the place.



If you are a fan of churches, this place might be of interest to you. There are many more places to visit in Turkey. If you move to the southeastern region of the country, there are quite several beautiful ones. Diyarbakir is a city with numerous churches among which is the St. Mary's Church.

Fact #2: Leonardo da Vinci once planned a bridge over the Golden Horn

Do you know anything about the Golden Horn? It is a large bay that divides the city of Istanbul into two parts. Leonardo da Vinci, the great artist of the renaissance age, opined that it would be fun to construct a bridge across it in 1503. He set some great strategies though they were not implemented.



Leonardo da Vinci

But here's the cool part: The president of Turkey a few years ago said they are going to try to build the bridge as Leonardo planned! What if you could actually have a chance to cross a bridge created by one of the most renowned artists in history?

Fact #3: Aesop, Herodotus, and St. Paul the Apostle were born in Turkey.

Did you know that some of the most famous people in history were born in Turkey? It's true! Let's meet three of them.

First, we have Paul the Apostle. He was originally called Saul and lived in a city called Tarsus in southern Turkey. Paul was a very important person in the early days of Christianity.

Next, there's Aesop. He was a famous storyteller who probably grew up near the Black Sea. Aesop is known for his clever fables, like "The Tortoise and the Hare" and "The Lion and the Mouse."

Finally, we have Herodotus. He was a Greek historian who was born in a city called Bodrum, which is now in Turkey. Herodotus wrote a book called “The Histories” about the wars between the Greeks and the Persians.

So, the next time you hear about Paul, Aesop, or Herodotus, remember they all have a special connection to Turkey!

Fact #4: Patara, Turkey, is the birthplace of Santa Claus

It’s true! A long time ago, there was a holy man named St. Nicholas. He lived in Patara and was famous for helping people. People believed he could do amazing things, like saving sailors from sinking ships.

Over time, stories about St. Nicholas became more and more popular. People loved hearing about his kindness and generosity. Eventually, these stories became the basis for the Santa Claus we know today.

But there’s more to Patara than just Santa Claus! It’s a beautiful coastal town with lots of sandy beaches. You can even visit Patara Beach from another city called Antalya. If you like swimming and sunbathing, Patara is a great place to go.

Even though Santa Claus was born in Turkey, the country doesn’t celebrate Christmas very much. This is because most people in Turkey follow Islam, a different religion. Instead, Turkey has its own special festivals, like Ramadan.

Fact # 5: Turkey is formally named as Republic of Turkey.

Yes! Turkey wasn’t always known as the country as Turkey, in fact this country has a very long history. Until 1923 Arabs were living in this territory as part of the Ottoman Empire. But then there was a huge war known as the ‘Turkish War of Independence’ for which Turkey was liberated and became its own country.

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was the person, who guided Turkey to gain independence. He was the first president sworn in to the new liberation country.

If you are interested in the history of Turkey then I will recommend you to go and visit the Topkapi palace in Istanbul. This palace was constructed in the period of Ottoman empire in Turkey. Overall it’s a very fascinating site to visit if you want to learn about Turkey’s history.

Fact #6: Istanbul straddles two continents: Europe and Asia

Istanbul is one of the largest cities in Turkey, and surprisingly it is located on two continents. The city is split up by a canal that is only a few hundred feet wide, known as the Bosphorus Strait. Istanbul is split right down the middle, with one-half of the city in Europe and the other half in Asia.

It's like having two cities in one! You can walk or take a ferry across the Bosphorus to visit both continents. If you're up for an adventure, you can even hike up a hill to see an amazing view of the strait

Therefore, whenever you are arranging a trip to Turkey, do not overlook the city of Istanbul. This is a unique and exciting place that offers many attractions for tourists.

Fact #7: Turkey is the source of about 75 % of the world's hazelnuts

You might be surprised, but up to 80% of all the hazelnuts consumed worldwide are produced in a single country. That's right—Turkey! Of all the hazelnuts produced globally, this Mediterranean country produces a stunning 75%. It is like a paradise for hazelnuts, Wow!

Italy is second with about 20% of the world's production of hazelnuts, but Turkey is in the lead. And for sure you have heard of Turkish delight which is made out of yummy ingredients such as hazelnuts which play a vital role in Turkish cooking especially in making desserts like Baklava.

If you enjoy eating Turkish cuisine which everyone does, then you are in for a treat. Delicious Turkish dishes include tasty kebabs and sweet goodies among other wonderful meals. So next time you use the tasty hazelnuts to cook a delightful Turkish meal, don't forget to thank Turkey for it

Fact #8: Istanbul's Grand Bazaar features 64 streets and 4,000 shops

You might be amazed to learn that the Grand Bazaar in Istanbul is huge! It's like a city-sized marketplace with more than 4,000 shops spread out over 64 streets. It's one of the oldest

and biggest markets in the world.

Every day, thousands of people visit the Grand Bazaar to see its colorful stalls. It's like a giant shopping mall, but instead of modern stores, you'll find traditional Turkish crafts, spices, jewelry, and much more.

If you're planning a trip to Istanbul, you definitely want to visit the Grand Bazaar. It's a great place to find souvenirs and dive into the local culture. Just remember to bring a map or a guide to help you navigate through the maze of shops!

Fact #9: The Tünel Funicular in Turkey is Europe's Oldest Working Underground Train

The Tünel is an old funicular in Turkey and is the oldest working underground train in Europe. It has been running since 1875, making it older than most other underground trains, except for London's Underground, which started in 1863.

The Tünel travels uphill for about 600 meters, linking the riverside area of Beyoğlu to the fancy neighborhood of Karaköy. In the past, Karaköy was a busy area with many banks and embassies, so it was a popular spot to visit.

If you're in Turkey, riding the Tünel is a fun way to experience a piece of history while seeing the city from a unique perspective.

Fact #10: Turkey's Black Sea coast stretches an impressive 1,175 km

Black Sea Coast of Turkey has a total length of 1,175 kilometers, which is our 10th interesting fact.

Isn't it amazing that Turkey's Black Sea coast is very lengthy, more or less 1,175 kilometers? That's how far it is to drive from London to Venice!

Going from the east, Trabzon can be visited, it is a truly beautiful city with some real medieval architecture. Yes, it is, especially when you want to take a break from your monotonous lifestyle. Thus, if you wish to find a quieter place, you should turn to Sinop

situated on the coast to the west. It has beautiful shores and other natural features with fairly a good and peaceful attitude.

Depending on what you like - an adventure or a vacation, or both - the Black Sea region of Turkey is a place to visit. It is always advisable for anyone planning to travel with the kids in mind to read more from our travel guide for families.

Last Words

So, that's it— you've explored ten amazing facts about Turkey! If you have to describe Turkey in one word then without doubt the word would be astonishing! It has history and wonderful view and there is something to do every single day. If you are interested in history, like a tasty cuisine, or tired of numerous parties, you will definitely have a good time in Turkey.