

What is the Turkish national animal?

Ever wondered what animal best represents a whole country? Well, get ready to be surprised!

The powerful and wise Grey Wolf is the chosen animal in Turkey.

Perhaps you were not expecting to learn that this powerful and wise animal is Turkey's national animal. It is not just any ordinary wolf. Yes! The Grey Wolf holds great significance in Turkish stories and history. It symbolizes courage, family, and teamwork.

You probably didn't know this, but many Turkish people had no idea that the Grey Wolf is their national animal. That's why I decided to write this article to provide you with more information about the national animal of Turkey, the grey wolf!

In this article, we'll explore why the Grey Wolf is vital to Turkey. We'll also look at other special symbols of this amazing country.

Let's start and discover the fascinating world of Turkish symbols!

Why the Grey Wolf Is a Turkey National Animal

We often hear that dogs are a person's best friend. But in Turkey, it's a different story. While many countries choose animals like eagles, lions, or dragons as their symbols, Turkey has a unique pick: the grey wolf.

However, many people question: Why is the gray wolf the national animal of Turkey?

This special choice wasn't just random. A very important leader named Mustafa Kemal Atatürk decided that the gray wolf should be Turkey's symbol. That's why it's so special to Turkish people.

Some Turks even believe that they come from a family of grey wolves! So, the grey wolf is more than just an animal to them; it's a symbol of their country and its spirit.

A grey wolf in real life may seem to be wild and something to be afraid of. However, to be more precise, it is much more than that. Wolves have been fascinating to any society since they are intelligent animals, have a very good sense of direction, and are very courageous animals. They are those of the wild world, the leaders.

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Like dogs, wolves are also social animals; they live in groups that are called packs. This means we can see that they valued family and teamwork.

What must not be forgotten, arising from this analysis, is the fact that the wolf signifying power and heroism is Turkey. It is symbolizing the spirit of the nation as well.

Now, it is time to learn about other important symbols of this amazing place!

Other National Symbols

Symbols are very essential in demarcation of the identity, values, and the cultural aspect that is unique to a particular country. This is what we have discussed earlier, the Grey Wolf for Instance.

However, there are other national symbols as well; all are significant in their own way and hold a specific meaning and relevance to that country.

Let me elaborate on what these are.

Flag of Turkey

This piece of cloth that Turkey uses to represent it has a back story to it that is eye-opening. That is a large rectangle of red color with white crescent and star in its upper right corner. It is also referred by people as the 'red flag' or the 'red banner' for short most of the time.

Red is a strong color. In Turkey, it means bravery and power. These are qualities Turks really admire.

The moon and star are important symbols in Islam, Turkey's main religion. But these symbols were used even before Islam came to the region. The flag looked a bit different back then. It had a star with eight points when it was first used in 1793. Later, in 1844, the star changed to five points.

Even though the flag existed before Turkey became a republic, it officially became the country's flag in 1936. This was after the Ottoman Empire ended.

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Turkey National Flower

Do you know of the existence of wrestling matches that are characterized by wrestlers's oil baths? Such is the situation with oil wrestling, a traditional Turkish sport referred to as "yağlı güreş" in the native language.

This external experiment dates back hundreds of years to the Balkans and Ottoman Empire provinces.

Although it is not as renowned as it used to be in today's world, oil wrestling is an interesting aspect of Turkish culture.

What sets it apart then? The oil! The term "pehlivan" refers to wrestlers who are slippery and oiled during wrestling competitions, making it difficult for an opponent to grab them.

The goal? Secure a tight hold on the kisbet, your opponent's baggy leather trousers known in Japan. Wrestlers often grab the rear of an opponent's kisbet and hook their arm in it.

Turkey's oil wrestling is much more than just weird. It's historic! It is impressive and interesting that the yearly Kirkpinar Oil Wrestling Festival currently happens to have the record of the longest running sporting event.

This is not unique to Turkey, actually. As a result, the festival entered the world's list of immaterial cultural heritage sites in 2010, according to UNESCO.

If you get a chance to visit Edirne in Turkey, do not forget to watch an oil wrestling match. That's the idea—it's a wild and slightly surreal ride.

Turkey National Bird

Turkey's national bird is the Redwing. It looks similar to an American Robin but has a red patch on its wing instead of its chest. Redwings can live in many different places because they are warm-blooded.

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Turkey National Anthem

The “İstiklâl Marşı” serves as the national anthem for both Turkey and Northern Cyprus. This powerful song inspired Turkish soldiers during the War of Independence.

The Grand National Assembly officially adopted the “İstiklâl Marşı” as the national anthem. Interestingly, this happened more than two years before Turkey became an independent country.

Turkey National Drink

In Turkey, tea, known as “çay,” is more popular than coffee, or “kahve.” Turks are hospitable people; they love to invite friends and guests to have tea.

This means that if someone offers you tea, you take it, even if you do not finish it. This signifies the reciprocation of the respect the one who offered the tea had for the other.

Last Words

As you’ve seen, national animal of Turkey just not an animal, it’s a representation of the nation’s strength and heritage.

Each emblem carries deep meaning, connecting the nation’s past to its present. Understanding these symbols offers a unique perspective into Turkish culture and identity.