

# Introducing Turkey

## General Information

The Republic of Turkey, which is located in an area where the Asian, European and African continents come very close to each other, is surrounded by Georgia, Armenia, Nakhichevan (Azerbaijan) and Iran to the east, Bulgaria and Greece to the west and Syria and Iraq to the south.

Turkey is a passageway for the old Asian Turkish cultures to reach Europe due to her location and is at the same time the window of the west opening to the east.

Turkey's coastlines, which encompass her on three sides with the Mediterranean Sea to the south, the Black Sea to the north and the Aegean Sea to the west, make the country not only a neighbor to the nearby regions, but to the entire world as well. Turkey has become the center of the great trade and migration routes due to these long shores and her place as a bridge between continents.

The area of the Republic of Turkey is 814,578 km<sup>2</sup>. A total of 3 percent of the area is located in Thrace on the European continent. The remaining 97 percent, which is located on the Asian continent, is usually called Anatolia.

## Climate

In spite of Turkey being located in a moderate climate belt, due to the fact that the mountains are parallel to the coasts and the diversification of the surface morphology, differences in climate are observed among the regions. The coastal regions have a moderate maritime climate while the internal regions surrounded by mountains have a continental climate.

The Mediterranean Region which is under the influence of the Mediterranean climate, has hot and arid summers and mild and rainy winters. The Mediterranean climate also manifests itself in the Aegean Region and in the south of the Marmara Region.

The Black Sea Region is dominated by a more moderate and rainy maritime climate. In the interior regions, the summers are hot and slightly rainy and a steppe climate is observed in the winters, which are cold and snowy.

In the Eastern Anatolia Region, the summers are cool and the winters are very cold and snowy. In the Southeastern Anatolia Region, while the summers are hot and arid, the winters are not very cold.

## Geography

The mountains in Turkey cover an extensive area, but in contrast to this, there are also many areas where there are various plains, plateaus and depressions.

This characteristic varies the climate on the one hand, and influences settlements and economic life, on the other. Three sides of Turkey are surrounded by seas. For that reason, Turkey is connected to the oceans with the seaways in spite of the fact that the country is at the center of several continental masses.

The Marmara Sea and the Straits are very important water passages which open the Black Sea to the outside world. The Marmara Sea, which is located completely within the national borders, opens to the Black Sea via the Ostanbul Straits and to the Aegean Sea and the Mediterranean Sea via the Çanakkale (Dardanelles) Straits. Especially, the Aegean and Western Mediterranean shores in Turkey are indented and numerous bays are located in these places. This attribute of the coasts decreases towards the east of the Mediterranean.

## Regions

Turkey has been separated into seven large geographical regions by taking into consideration the factors such as climate, natural plant cover and distribution of types of agriculture:

- \* Marmara Region
- \* Aegean Region
- \* Mediterranean Region
- \* Blacksea Region
- \* Central Anatolia
- \* Eastern Anatolia
- \* Southeastern Anatoli