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## The Aegean's Growing Allure Attracts GCC Tourists

**Dubai - Mar 19, 2018:** Visitors from the Middle East, and especially the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, have been flocking to enjoy the sun-kissed beaches of Bodrum and the hot springs of Pamukkale. So much so that Air Arabia, the [Middle East and North Africa's](http://www.tcfnewswire.net/en/company/turkey-tourism/features/middle-east-travellers-abiding-love-for-turkey) one of the largest low-cost carrier, announced direct flights to Izmir starting June 2018.

Turkey's government has invested in infrastructure in the region over the past 50 years to make it one of the most visited in [Turkey](http://www.tcfnewswire.net/en/company/turkey-tourism). With the largest number of hotels, motels and lodging facilities, prospects for the region point to continued visitor growth.

The Aegean region, lapped by the turquoise waters of the Aegean Sea to the west, and the beautiful Madra mountains north, is growing in popularity as an all year tourist destination. The area is dotted with picturesque harbors used for fishing and transport, well-liked vacation towns and the remains of ancient civilizations going all the way back to the Neolithic period.

The Aegean Sea, Ege Denizi in the Turkish language, is an elongated embayment of the Mediterranean Sea, off the east Anatolian territory, between the mainlands of Greece and Turkey. It covers an area of 214,000 square kilometers, and measures about 610 kilometers wide by 300 kilometers across, with a maximum depth of 3,543 meters. The Aegean islands of Kythera, Antikythera, Crete, Kasos, Karpathos, and Rhodes are found within its waters.

Occupying 11% of the total area of Turkey - 79,000 square kilometers - the region has a Mediterranean climate at the coast, with hot, dry summers and mild to cool, wet warm winters. The interior area has a semi-arid continental climate with hot, dry summers and cold, snowy winters. Therefore the region offers holidaymakers with something for everyone. From nature lovers, sun worshippers, and photographers, to sports enthusiasts, sailors and archaeologists.

Izmir, which is the third largest city in Turkey, is the gateway to the Aegean region. The city's history goes back over 5000 to 3000 BC hosted a number of civilizations, including the Hittites, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman empires. And more ancient discoveries being discovered. Many academic researchers from different universities are excavating and investigating Izmir's rich history.

The most recent excavations revealed the first mass burial site in the ancient city of Metropolis, in Torbalı district about 40 kilometers southeast of Izmir. Over 11,000 artifacts dating back from the Neolithic period were unearthed in an ancient burial chamber belonging to a noble family containing their bones, lamps, spoons, bronze mirrors, glass, and ceramic articles.

Nearby to the west of Izmir, the resort town of Çeşme lies on vivid blue Aegean Sea, overlooks the Çeşme Castle and the magical waters where Alexander the Great once docked. He and his

generals were said to have bathed in the thermal springs, and used by the ancients to cure illnesses, Çe\_me is renowned for its thermal springs mostly in the Il\_ca and Sifne districts. The Greek geographer Pausanias from the second century AD described the thermal spring waters in detail, and since then hundreds of articles have been written about the medical and psychological benefits the thermal waters. Some research points to the healing effects of the thermal springs in Çe\_me on rheumatism, joint diseases and high or low blood pressure.

Further to the east in Denizli's towns of Kaarahayit and Pamukkale, tourists not only enjoy the thermal waters but also have the opportunity to treat themselves with a unique holiday. Guests are nested in snow during the day and are treated in thermal waters in the evening. Pamukkale is a UNESCO World Heritage site that attracts travelers looking for a magnificent experience.

On the east side of the Çe\_me peninsula is sandy Ilica Beach, with warm thermal sulfur springs. The cerulean blue waters of the Ilica Beach are famous for their healing and rejuvenating effects, attributed to the minerals deposited in the sea water by thermal springs.

As a public beach, entry is free. Consistent winds on the beach make it a heaven for windsurfers. There are many restaurants, beach clubs, and eateries, and the soft, white sand inclining into shallow safe waters make Ilica Beach an excellent destination for a fun-filled family vacation.

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EXPERIENCE BEAUTIFUL IZMIR

<https://youtu.be/104zenLFphQ>

FAIRY CHIMNEYS OF CAPPADOCIA

[https://youtu.be/BzKkrPV\\_z8E](https://youtu.be/BzKkrPV_z8E)

MEET THE THRACE

<https://youtu.be/gAqiB3ruZJU>

### ENDS ###

#### **About Turkish Cultural and Tourism Office:**

The Turkish Cultural and Tourism Office in Dubai is the official representative of the Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism. One of the main aims of the Tourism Office is to bridge the gap between cultures and foster relationships with the travel industry by organising promotional activities throughout the GCC. The Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism participates in travel exhibitions and conferences to position the country as a leading tourist destination. With its breath-taking views, unique historical and archaeological sites, steadily improving hotel and touristic infrastructure and a tradition of hospitality and competitive prices, it's no wonder Turkey is among the most sought-after travel destinations in the world.

The primary functions of The Turkish Cultural and Tourism Office in Dubai are:

- Supervises all promotional activities relating to Turkey in the GCC
- Liaise with travel agencies



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- Organises roadshows to further promote Turkey as a destination for leisure, shopping, health, sports and invest in the MICE (meetings, incentives, conference and exhibitions) Middle East market.

To read aggregated news about Turkish Tourism please click "here":[http://www.tcf-me.com/client\\_portal/turkey-tourism/content\\_items](http://www.tcf-me.com/client_portal/turkey-tourism/content_items)

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