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**Samsun** is a distinctive and important tourism destination which is home to the thousand year cultural heritage of the Anatolia and the Black Sea Region dating from the time of Amazons to the Ottoman Period.

With its natural beauties including streams, waterfalls, lakes and forests, its therapeutic thermal springs, its local architecture, its rich cuisine and rousing festivals, Samsun is a place of great interest. Situated in the northernmost part of Anatolia, along the shores of the Black Sea, the Samsun region comprises a fertile land cut through by the deltas of the Kizilirmak and Yeşilirmak rivers.

Samsun (ancient *Amisos*) was founded on a spot known colloquially as the 'Mesopotamia of the Black Sea'. Administratively it is subdivided into the counties of Alacam, Asarcik, Ayvacik, Bafra, Çarsamba, Havza, Kavak, Ladik, Ondokuzmayis, Salipazari, Tekkekoy, Terme, Vezirkopru, Yakakent, İlkadım, Canik and Atakum. The city is a hub for rail, air, sea and road transport systems, with easy links to the cities along the Black Sea coast as well as the central parts of Turkey.

## HISTORY

Samsun was one of the important cities of the region which was known as Paphlagonia in antiquity. The earliest settlements in Samsun dates back to the Old Stone Age (Paleolithic Era) according to the findings from the caves situated to the south of Tekkekoy. Samsun also fostered settlements in the Middle Stone Age (Mesolithic Era) and the New Stone Age (Neolithic Era); and the Dundar Tepe Mound indicates that a civilization flourished there during the Chalcolithic (Copper) and Bronze ages. The earliest known residents of Samsun were Kaskians as mentioned in Hittite sources.

Following the Kaskians, who are believed to have inhabited the region during the Late Bronze Age, the legendary female warriors, the Amazons, settled in the region near the Terme River around 1200 BC. In the 6th century BC Amisos (Samsun) was founded as a colony by settlers from Milet (Miletus). Afterwards came the Persians, and they were followed by Alexander Ihej Great and his Successors, the Roman and Byzantine Empires, the Danişment Principality

and the Anatolian Seljuk Sultanate; all in turn dominated the city.

During the reign of Sultan Mehmet Çelebi it fell under the Ottoman rule. The most important role played by Samsun in recent history was to be chosen as the landing site for Mustafa Kemal Pasha and his close associates on 19 May 1919, at the initiation of the Turkish War of Independence.

Throughout its long history Samsun has accumulated a rich historical and cultural heritage, from prehistoric cave settlements to the beginning of urbanisation with the Neolithic mounds; and from the splendid Ottoman buildings to the monuments of the early Republican Period.

If you are interested in history and culture, you can visit museums and the ruins without paying anything by getting a 'museum card' (Müzekart) for a reasonable price.

## State Opera and Ballet (Atatürk Culture Center)



Canik  
Culture  
Centre



## Samsun Metropolitan Municipality Art Centre



## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

- Vezirköprü Oymaağaç Ruins
- Dünder Tepe Ruins
- İkiztepe Ruins
- Kaledoruğu Mound
- Lerdüğe Tumuli
- Baruthane Tumuli
- Amisos Hill King Tombs (İlkadım)
- Asarkale ve Rock Tombs (Bafra)
- Nerik Antik Kenti (Vezirköprü)



## MUSEUMS

- Panoramic 1919 Museum
- Kent “ City” Museum
- Museum of Archaeology and Ethnography
- “Bandırma” Museum
- House of Atatürk
- Gazi Museum
- Atatürk House and Museum (Havza)
- Bafra Museum (Bafra)
- Population Exchange Museum (Alaçam)



## HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL BUILDINGS

- Büyük ( Grand ) Mosque
- Tomb and Mosque of Şeyh Seyyid Kudbettin
- Göğceli Mosque
- Şeyh Habib Mosque
- Sivrikise Mosque
- Gököl Mosque
- Italian Catholic Church
- Fazıl Ahmet Paşa Madrasah



## EATING AND DRINKING

The age-old cultural history of Samsun has endowed it with a rich and varied local cuisine. Corn, cabbage, haricot beans and rice are the main staples in Samsun dishes, and various succulent pastry and meat dishes are there to tempt you. The first dish that comes to mind whenever Samsun is mentioned is the famous ‘Samsun Pide’.

It may be covered (as in calzone) in the Bafra style, or open-top, as they make it in Terme; however it's made, Samsun Pide is always luscious. With the salpicon consisting of minced meat, pastrami, spicy sausages, thinly chopped meat or cheese, the pide is an indispensable part of Samsun dinner tables.

## HANDICRAFTS

Samsun is a Centre for linen cloth-making; these linens are used to make harvester shirts, outer wears and clothes. In the mountain villages’ woolen fabric-weaving, as well as cotton cloth-weaving, wool knitting and pantalets weaving are among the handicrafts most commonly engaged in. Ondokuz Mayıs County is renowned for kilim weaving, and around the lakes of Bafra wicker basket-making is still practised.





## SHOPPING

Samsun boasts modern shopping centres as well as shops specialising in the sale of authentic local goods and handicrafts. Each year Samsun Advanced Technical School for Girls creates a variety of panels, bed linen and tablecloths, along with sculpture and woodwork, for exhibition and sale.



## TRANSPORT

Samsun is accessible by road, rail, air and sea. There are intercity coach services to almost every other city in Turkey, and the international airport is just a quarter of an hour from the city centre. Modern rail services connect the city to eastern, western and southern destinations across the country.



## FESTIVITIES

Hıdrellez: Meeting of the prophets Hıdır(al Khidr) and İlyas (Elijah)	6 May
Hüseyin Dede Festivities, Alaçam	7 May
Yeşilirmak Culture and Arts Festivities, Çarşamba	20-23 May
Golden Rice Festival, Terme	3-4 June
Water melon Festival, Bafra	Last week of August
Ladik Transhumance Festival, Ladik	First week of July
Bengü Dry Wrestling, Bengü village/Bafra	10 July
Sea Games Festivities, Yakakent	22-23 July
Amazon Festival, Gölyazı/Terne	1-3 August
Kunduz Transhumance Festivities, Göl/Vezirköprü	August
Golden Hazelnut Oiled Wrestling Köybucağı/Terne	9 September
Yaşar Doğu Festivities, Kavak	September
Köprülü Mehmet Pasha Culture, Arts and Sport Festival,	September
Traditional Dry Wrestling and Horse Competition, Asarcık	End of September
Neyzen Tefik Culture Festival, Bafra	October
Wicker Basket and Oil Lamp Festivities, Bafra	Ramadan (Hijri calendar)
International Folk Dance Festival, Samsun	23-29 July

*Did you know....?*

- *That the legendary female warriors, the Amazons, lived in the Samsun,*
- *That Samsun has very ancient timber framed buildings with the original features still intact,*
- *That the mouth of the Kızılırmak (Red River) is in Samsun,*
- *That Samsun provides facilities for winter sports and ecotourism as well as offering boundless sea, sand and sun,*
- *That Mustafa Kemal Atatürk launched the Turkish War of Independence from Samsun*

*Do not leave Samsun without...*

- *visiting the museums and archaeological ruins,*
- *seeing the centuries-old examples of timber architecture,*
- *tasting Samsun “Pide”, “simit”, and “Bafra nokulu”,*
- *enjoying a panoramic view over the Black Sea,*
- *having your photo taken before the Atatürk Monument*

