

South Aegean



With its coast home to some of the country's largest and most popular resorts and its interior seemingly filled with the faded wonders of lost civilizations, the south Aegean would seem the perfect place to experience the best of both modern and ancient Turkey. True, the region has its critics – its swarming, package-orientated holiday towns are not to everyone's taste and there are too many examples of once-idyllic hillsides having been submerged beneath gluts of ugly, hastily erected hotels and holiday apartments – but the good points easily outweigh the bad.

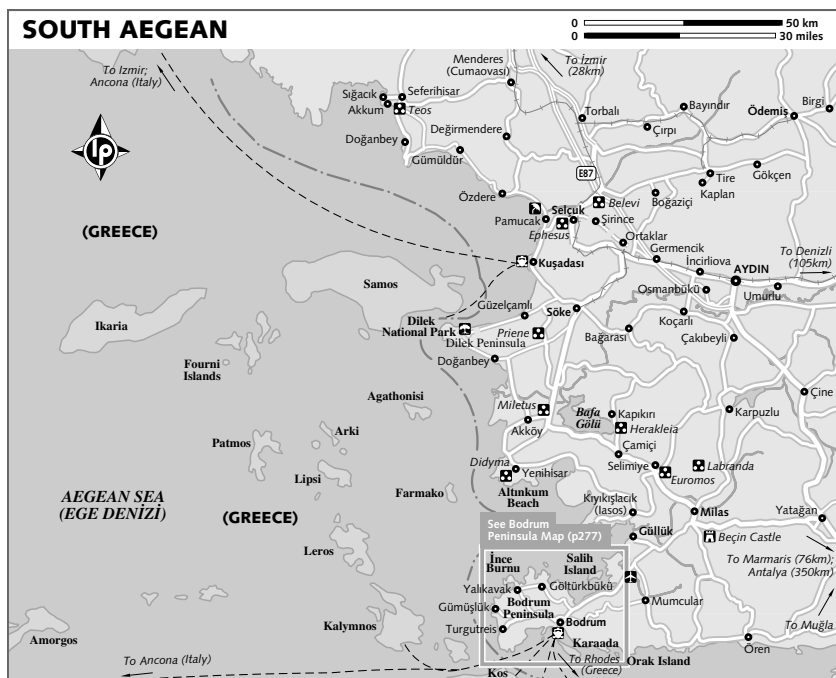
Development has extended its tentacles inland, but its embrace is by no means complete. Unspoilt, undeveloped pockets remain at places like Pamucak and the Dilek National Park, a glorious wilderness and wildlife haven. So rich is the area's history that it sometimes seems that for every modern high-rise there are another three ancient ruins. These include the grand-daddy of them all, Ephesus, one of the Mediterranean's best-preserved classical cities, even if it is today as big a tourist trap as any of the coastal towns, and often just as crowded. Priene, Labranda and Iasos receive far fewer visitors, and as such perhaps offer more pointed evocations of the faded past, their ancient stones now overgrown with weeds and home to scuttling lizards.

But you can only deny the area's true nature for so long. For all its aesthetic and historic wonders, there's no denying that the south Aegean is primarily visited for its party towns: Kuşadası, bloated, ugly and almost entirely artificial, but possessing a fine and surprisingly varied nightlife; and classier Bodrum, with its winning summer combination of cool cafés and a thumping, pumping, laser-strobing club scene.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Come see how the Romans lived, worked and played at **Ephesus** (p246), the best-preserved classical city in the eastern Mediterranean
- Explore the fragrant world of fruit wine at the charming hillside village of **Şirince** (p251), set amid blooming orchards
- Dive intensely, dine stylishly and dance wildly in **Bodrum** (p267), the region's premiere party town
- Try tracking down the rare Anatolian panther, then cool off with a swim in a secluded cove in the wonderful wilderness of **Dilek National Park** (p259)
- Be overwhelmed by natural splendour at **Bafa Gölü** (p263), a glorious lake fringed by olive-clad hills
- Roam the remarkable but less-visited ruins of **Priene** (p261), **Miletus** (p262) and **Didyma** (p262)





History

The Mycenaean and Hittite civilisations were the earliest recorded along the south Aegean. From 1200 BC, Ionians fleeing Greece established themselves in the area along the coast and founded important cities at Ephesus, Priene and Miletus. South of Ionia was mountainous Caria where the great King Mausolus' tomb, the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, became one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Caria was also home to Herodotus, the 'Father of History'. Roman Ephesus prospered with rich trade and commerce, becoming the capital of Asia Minor. The city also attracted a sizeable Christian population. St John settled here with the Virgin Mary, where he is said to have written his gospel. In the 15th century the Knights of St John briefly captured the area now called Bodrum before the Ottoman forces took over.

SELÇUK

☎ 0232 / pop 27,280

For such a major tourist destination, visitors might expect Selçuk to be a bit more than it is. After all, it's the site of one of the Seven

Wonders of the Ancient World and boasts an excellent museum, a fine old basilica and mosque, a stork nest-studded aqueduct and, of course, the ruins of Ephesus right on its doorstep. However, compared to the vast tourism factory of nearby Kusadası, Selçuk's tourism industry is more of a small scale, workshop-sized affair. It's not exactly a provincial backwater, but it's not too far removed either, with a collection of pleasant, low-key pensions that cater mainly to independent travellers on budgets.

Orientation

Selçuk otogar (bus station) lies just east of the İzmir–Aydın road (Atatürk Caddesi), with the town centre and some pensions immediately north of it. Three pedestrianised shopping streets – Namık Kemal, Cengiz Topel and Sieburg Caddesi – run east from a round fountain on the main road, north of the otogar, through to the train station.

On the western side of the main road a park spreads out in front of one wing of the famous Ephesus Museum. Many more small pensions can be found in the quiet, hilly streets between

the museum and Ayasuluk Hill, northwest of the town centre.

Information

There are banks with ATMs and foreign exchange offices along Cengiz Topel and Namık Kemal Caddesi.

Ephesus Assistance (☎ 892 2500) A 24-hour medical hotline.

Nethouse Café (Siegburg Caddesi 4/B; per hr TL1.50;

☎ 8am-1am) Just around the corner from the town hall.

Post office (☎ 892 6480; Cengiz Topel Caddesi) Will also change cash, travellers cheques and Eurocheques.

Selçuk Hospital (☎ 892 7036; Dr Sabri Yayla Bulvarı) Near the tourist office.

Tourist office (☎ 892 6945; www.selcuk.gov.tr; Agora Caddesi 35; ☎ 8am-noon & 1-5pm Mon-Fri winter, daily in summer) Opposite the museum.

Sights

Selçuk's attractions open from 8am to 7pm May to September and 8am to 5pm (or 5.30pm) the rest of the year.

BASILICA OF ST JOHN

St John is said to have come to Ephesus twice: once between AD 37 and AD 48 with the Virgin Mary, and again in AD 95 towards the end of his life, when he wrote his gospel on Ayasuluk Hill. A 4th-century tomb was believed to house his remains, so in the 6th century Emperor Justinian (527–65) erected a magnificent church, the **Basilica of St John** (St Jean Caddesi; admission TL5), on top of the tomb.

Earthquakes and building-material scavengers left it as a heap of rubble until a century ago when restoration began; virtually all of what you see now is restored. Nevertheless, it's still a very impressive building. In its day it was considered a near-marvel and attracted thousands of medieval pilgrims and still draws busloads of 'holy site' tourists during the season. Look out for the information panel with a plan and drawing, which gives a very good idea of the building's once-vast size – as do the old marble steps and monumental gate. It's well worth a wander.

Ayasuluk Hill offers fine views of the surrounding sites. The hilltop **citadel** to the north was constructed by the Byzantines in the 6th century, rebuilt by the Seljuks and restored in modern times. It remains closed since part of the wall collapsed. Restoration work is under way and it should eventually reopen, though lack of funding seems to be holding it up.

As at Ephesus, you may be approached to buy 'ancient' coins, which despite their grimy appearance are modern.

İSA BEY CAMİİ

At the foot of Ayasuluk Hill is the imposing and beautiful **İsa Bey Camii** (St Jean Caddesi), built in 1375 by the Emir of Aydın in a post-Seljuk/pre-Ottoman transitional style. There's a bust of İsa Bey diagonally opposite. The mosque is usually open to visitors except at prayer times. Leave your shoes at the door and remember to cover up properly.

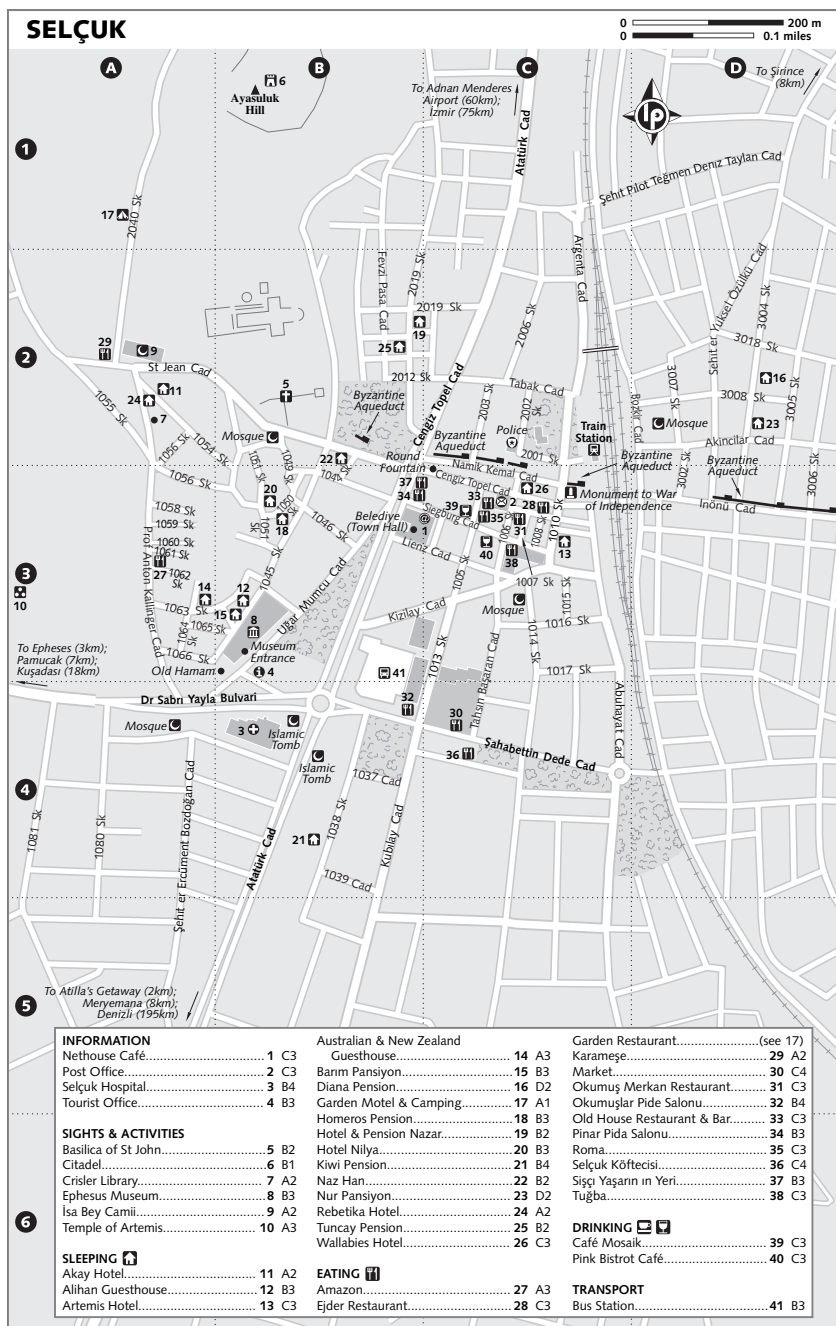
TEMPLE OF ARTEMIS

Ephesus used to earn sizeable sums of money from pilgrims paying homage to the ancient Anatolian fertility goddess Cybele/Artemis. The **Temple of Artemis** (Artemis Tapınağı; admission free; ☎ 8.30am-5.30pm), between Ephesus and Selçuk, was in its day the largest in the world, eclipsing even the Parthenon at Athens, a status that got it included in the list of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Today, you're more likely to wonder where it all went. Only one of its original 127 columns remains, often as not topped by a stork's nest, a poignant testament to the often transitory nature of human achievement. Still, it's a lovely tranquil place, the enormous pillar giving you some indication of the vast size of the temple.

EPHESUS MUSEUM

This excellent **museum** (☎ 892 6010; Uğur Mumcu Sevgi Yolu Caddesi; admission TL5) houses a striking collection of artefacts recovered from the ancient city. The first gallery you come to is dedicated to finds from the Terrace Houses of Ephesus – scales, jewellery, cosmetic boxes etc. This is also where you'll find the famous effigy of Priapus, the Phallic God, as seen plastered on every postcard from İstanbul to Antakya. No doubt to avoid offending delicate sensibilities, it's displayed inside a darkened case. Press the light to see him illuminated in all his rampant glory.

The other display areas, which include an outdoor courtyard, hold, among other things, collections of coins, grave goods and plenty of statuary, ranging from hand-sized representations of Eros to an enormous, and slightly creepy looking, head and arm of the Emperor Domitian, which once formed part of a 7m-high statue. Look out as well for the exquisitely carved multi-breasted marble



SELÇUK'S FABULOUS FESTIVALS

For such a tiny town, Selçuk has more than its fair share of festivals. The following lists its finest. If you can, try and coincide your visit with one.

Camel Wrestling (Third Sunday in January) From all across Turkey, camel owners marshal their male camels for the big fight in Selçuk. The eve of the festival is celebrated with much feasting, drinking and dancing. For more on the wrestling itself, see the boxed text, p245.

Oil Wrestling (First Sunday in May) Famous oil wrestlers, known in Turkish as *pehlivan*, rub themselves from head to foot with olive oil then grapple each other until one gives up.

Selçuk/Efes Festival (First week of September) This showcase of traditional dance from Turkey and around the world sees each country's representatives stage an energetic demonstration of their homeland's highlights.

During the festival, Turkish folk and pop music concerts are also held throughout the city. The bazaar is one of the festival's main venues, with the erection of a stage for musicians and dancers, as well as a craft village where potters, glassmakers, carvers, furniture makers and carpet weavers demonstrate their skills.

With thanks to Osman Bölük for help compiling this information

statues of Cybele/Artemis, which have become icons of the city.

The final room, near the entrance, holds an interesting exhibition based on the excavations of a gladiators' cemetery discovered in 1993. Displays describe the gladiators' weapons, detail their training regimes and cheerfully catalogue the various gruesome injuries they suffered.

Go early in the morning to avoid the schools and tour groups, and ideally after seeing Ephesus.

CRISLER LIBRARY

A new arrival to Selçuk, **Crisler Library** (☎ 892 8317; www.crislerlibraryephesos.com; Prof Anton Kallinger Caddesi 40; admission free; ☎ 10am-5pm Mon-Fri) is the result of a bequest from a distinguished American biblical scholar and archaeologist, B Cobby Crisler. Proving to be a terrific source of information on the ancient, classical, biblical and Islamic history of the area, it also boasts a full lecture program, a well-stocked bookshop and a coffee shop. Set up in order to 'build cross-cultural bridges through the medium of education and scholarly exchange', it's worth a visit – for neophytes as much as hard-core Ephesus fanatics.

BYZANTINE AQUEDUCT

Running east-west intermittently along Namık Kemal Caddesi and İnönü Caddesi stand the impressive remains of a Byzantine aqueduct, which serve today as a handy nesting place for storks who return to the same spots on it year after year. Eggs are laid in late April or May, and the birds stay right through to September.

Sleeping BUDGET

Competition between Selçuk's many pensions is intense, and the standard of service and value offered by these places is higher here than perhaps anywhere else.

Pension and hotel prices are set by the municipality, so proprietors tend to compete on extras. Most offer the following: free breakfast, home-cooked meals at good prices, free transport to Ephesus and Meryemana (and sometimes Şirince), free use of bicycles, good-value excursions and free internet access. If any of these are particularly important to you, check first. Many hotels charge extra (say TL2 per person per day) for use of air-conditioning or fans in summer and heating in winter.

Garden Motel & Camping (☎ 892 6165; info@gal.leriaselciukidi.com; Kale Altı 5; camp sites per person/tent/car/campervan TL10/5/5/10, tent hire for TL12; ☎) Located 200m north of the mosque, this green and grassy camping ground is large, well designed and well provided with facilities including kitchen, pool, laundry facilities, a very good restaurant and amusements for children.

Atilla's Getaway (☎ 892 3847; www.atillasgetaway.com; dm €8, bungalows without bathroom €8, r with bathroom €16; ☎) This is an attractively laid-out camping and bungalow complex 2.5km south of Selçuk. Presided over by the eponymous Atilla, an extremely welcoming and helpful Turkish-Australian, it's packed with facilities and has a fun, buzzing atmosphere. There's a great pool area with a lively bar, and guests have use of a pool table, table tennis equipment, a volleyball court and travel office. The rooms are simple but nicely done and airy, al-

though you can get air-con for an extra €4.50. Half-board is an extra €5.

Western Selçuk

Australia & New Zealand Guesthouse (☎ 892 6050; www.anzguesthouse.com; 1064 Sokak 12; dm TL12.50, d with/without bathroom TL45/30; 🚻 📺 📺) The rules posted in each room, 'don't smoke, don't be loud, don't eat your own, don't leave late, don't lose your key', suggest that this is a less welcoming place than is actually the case. Lots of comfortable clutter – sofas, cushions, rugs etc – adorn its central courtyard; the rooms are small and simple, and there's a great covered roof terrace where barbecue dinners are served for TL12. Movie nights are also occasionally organised up here. Bike hire is free or you can hire a motor-scooter for TL35 a day. Air-con is an extra TL9.50 a day, breakfast TL3.

Barım Pansiyon (☎ 892 6923; barim_pansiyon@hotmail.com; 1045 Sokak 34; r per person TL25; 📺) This has a more staid vibe than some of the town's other more party-orientated pensions and is a good choice for anyone wanting simple accommodation, friendly, helpful (but not intrusive) staff and a bit of peace and quiet. The rooms in this attractive 140-year-old stone house (its hideous exterior notwithstanding) are comfortable and filled with the wrought-iron work of Adnan, the owner. There's also a pleasant courtyard.

Alihan Guesthouse (☎ 892 9496; alihanguesthouse@yahoo.com; 1045 Sokak 34; r with shower per person TL25; 🚻) All spick and span with gleaming wood following a recent renovation, this is a cheery little place, just up the hill from the park, presided over by the keen-to-please Isa, his wife Melissa, and Sheila the dog. It's a mishmash of styles but is friendly, informal and cheap.

Homeros Pension (☎ 892 3995; www.homerospension.com; 1050 Sokak 3; s/d TL25/50; 🚻) On a quiet alley, the Homeros has rooms spread over two houses, all imprinted with the quirky character of the welcoming owner, Derviş. A carpenter, he is responsible for most of the traditional-style furniture, which gives the rooms a real lift, lacking in some of the more basically decorated competitors. Both buildings have roof terraces with good views.

Hotel & Pension Nazar (☎ 892 2222; www.nazarhotel.com; 2019 Sokak 14; s/d TL35/50; 🚻 🚻 📺) Completely overhauled a few years ago, the Nazar now offers a superior standard of pension accommodation. The 13 rooms are big, clean and comfortable. Air-con is a rather steep €10 a

day, although this is offset by superb home-cooked meals served on the roof terrace for a very reasonable €7. There's also a pool set in a courtyard-garden and an ever-friendly welcome from the owner, Osman.

Tuncay Pension (☎ 892 6260; www.tuncaypension.com.tr; 2019 Sokak 1; d with/without air-con €50/35; 🚻) It's a touch expensive for a pension, but a good choice, nonetheless, with very friendly owners. There's a cool courtyard area with a fountain where generous breakfasts are served, and the rooms are a good size and nicely decorated.

Also recommended if the above are full is the **Akay Hotel** (☎ 892 7249; www.hotelakay.com; 1054 Sokak 7; s €14-25, d €28-33; 🚻 📺). The hotel's main asset is its small pool set in a peaceful garden full of birdsong. The large roof terrace also has good views.

Eastern Selçuk

Kiwi Pension (Alison's Place; ☎ 892 4892; www.kiwpension.com; 1038 Sokak 26; dm TL12, s/d without bathroom TL20/32, s/d with bathroom TL25/40; 📺) Presided over by the energetic Alison, an English woman, the Kiwi Pension is well run, friendly and receives glowing reports from travellers. Rooms are simple but spotless and bright (complete with fresh daisies in a bedside glass), and a few have balconies. Guests can use the pool table, kitchen and laundry facilities and have access to a large and lovely private pool set 1km away in a mandarin orchard.

Diana Pension (☎ 892 1265; brothers_place@my.net.com; 3004 Sokak 30; s/d without bathroom TL20/30, s/d with bathroom TL25/40; 🚻 📺) If you're counting your Turkish lira, the Diana is cheap and cheerful with a pretty courtyard and terrace. It's quite close to the train station.

Artemis Hotel (☎ 892 6191; www.artemisguesthouse.net; 1012 Sokak 2; s/d €25/40; 🚻) Following its recent renovation the Artemis, close to the train station, is still pretty good value. All rooms have large, new beds, fresh linen and decent bathrooms. There's also a courtyard and a carpeted lounge area with nargileh pipes (traditional water pipe for smoking).

Nur Pansiyon (☎ 892 6595; www.nurpension.com; 3004 Sokak 16; s/d TL28/44; 🚻 📺) Past the train station in a part of town that can seem quite spooky and dark at night – but is generally pretty safe – the Nur is competitively priced, offering accommodation that is probably one class up from the Diana. The bedrooms are comfortable, but the bathrooms are rather small. The owners can help arrange tours.

If the above are full, try **Wallabies Hotel** (☎ 892 3204; www.wallabieshotel.com; Cengiz Topel Caddesi 2; s/d €11/22; ♿ ♻️) where some rooms have aqueduct views.

MIDRANGE

Naz Han (☎ 892 8731; nazhanhotel@gmail.com; 1044 Sokak 2; r €50-70; ♿ ♻️) Living up to its name, which means 'coy', the Naz Han is hidden away behind high walls. This 100-year-old Greek house has five simple but comfortable rooms arranged around a charming little courtyard filled with trinkets, artefacts and antiques. A small roof terrace grants views over Selçuk's scenic surrounds.

Hotel Nilya (☎ 892 9081; www.nilya.com; 1051 Sokak 7; s/d TL75/115; ♿) The courtyard of the Nilya, set behind a high wall, is a lovely, calm place with shady trees, lanterns and a tinkling fountain. The traditionally decorated rooms, though perfectly reasonable, don't quite come up to the same standard, being a little dark with small (and not particularly new) bathrooms. Still, it makes a relaxing choice. Meals can be arranged on request.

Rebetika Hotel (☎ 892 8078; www.rebetikahotel.com; 1054 Sokak 2; s/d TL80/120; ☒ ♿ ♻️) The town's first avowedly 'boutique' offering, the Rebetika has a nice, fresh, newly-minted feel to it, especially as (another town first) it's completely non-smoking. It does conform to local type with its roof terrace and pool, but these are nicely done and the rooms have wooden floors and large wrought iron beds, although the decorations are perhaps more suggestive of 'upmarket *pansiyon*' than true boutique.

Eating

RESTAURANTS

Ejder Restaurant (☎ 892 3296; Cengiz Topel Caddesi 9/E; pide TL4, kebab TL7; ☎ 8.30am-11pm) A firm favourite with travellers, this simple little place has seating on a café-lined square with views of the aqueduct. It's run by a welcoming husband-and-wife team: Mehmet does the meat, his wife the veg – she can put together a mean vegetable kebab, but then all the food is pretty tasty.

Okumuş Mercan Restaurant (☎ 892 6196; 1006 Sokak 44; mezés TL4-5, mains TL7-9; ☎ 7am-11pm) Set in a courtyard beside a fountain in the shade of a 100-year-old mulberry tree, this place is loved locally for its traditional home fare at good prices.

Garden Restaurant (☎ 892 6165; Garden Motel, Kale Altı 5; mezés TL5.50, mains TL7-11; ☎ 8am-11pm) About

as organic an experience as you'll find in town, the restaurant enjoys a great bucolic setting amid plots where the majority of the produce that finds its way onto your plate is grown. And to keep things totally fresh, there's also a pick-and-keep trout pond. The selection of mezés, which includes some tasty stuffed vine leaves, is particularly good.

Selçuk Köftecisi (☎ 892 6696; Şahabettin Dede Caddesi; köfte TL6, mains TL6-9; ☎ 8am-9pm winter, 8am-midnight summer) Established way back in 1959, and rather monopolised by tour groups these days, this family-run place opposite the market nonetheless churns out some superb home cooking at decent prices. If you want a table outside in the shade, come early or late.

Old House Restaurant & Bar (Eski Ev; ☎ 892 9357; 1005 Sokak 1/A; mains TL6-9; ☎ 8am-midnight) With tables set in a little courtyard amid grapefruit and pomegranate trees, and decorated with lanterns, bird cages and wicker chairs, this is a pretty, cool and intimate place that does tasty Turkish dishes. Try the appetising speciality 'Old House Kebab' (TL9) served sizzling on a platter.

Amazon (☎ 892 3879; Prof Anton Kallinger Caddesi 22; mains TL10-18; ☎ 10am-midnight) It's certainly one of the best-looking restaurants with a cool modern interior – stools around the bar and paintings by local artists on the walls. The menu is a bit of a hotchpotch of international dishes, some pretty good, some not so. The outside seating, just across the road, has views of one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World (and it's not every restaurant that can say that).

CAFÉS & QUICK EATS

Roma (☎ 892 6436; Sieburg Caddesi 21; 1 scoop TL1; ☎ 8am-midnight Apr-Dec) Having learnt the art of making ice cream from his father, Feridun, the owner, now produces some heavenly homemade flavours. His particular recommendations are: walnut, black mulberry and mixed chocolate.

Okumuşlar Pide Salonu (☎ 892 6906; Şahabettin Dede Caddesi 2; pide TL4; ☎ 10am-11pm) Next door to the bus station (and one of several branches), this busy place does fabulous pides (including veggie ones).

Pinar Pide Salonu (☎ 892 9913; Sieburg Caddesi 3; pide TL4; ☎ 9am-midnight) Some travellers claim that this little place serves the best pide anywhere. That may be stretching it a bit, but it definitely does what it does very well. Pide

CAMEL WRESTLING

Though camel wrestling exists throughout Turkey, it's primarily found along the Western Mediterranean and particularly Aegean coasts. Selçuk holds an annual festival (see the boxed text, p242), which is a great place to witness this ancient sport.

Wrestling camels known as *tülüs* are bred by crossing two distinct breeds. During winter, the camels come into season, which gets them interested in doing two things: finding a female to mate with, and fighting off any potential male rivals. Harnessing the latter behaviour is where the festival comes in, as the locals bring the aggressive, sexually-charged males together to 'wrestle'.

Though the camels' desire to fight is natural, ancient rules and practices govern the sport. First and foremost, camels must use accepted 'techniques' for wrestling. A board of judges and referees presides over the match and 14 *urgancı* (ropers) are close at hand to step in and separate the camels if required. The camel's mouths are also bound tightly with string so that they cannot bite one another. Instead, the camels must use their heads, necks and bodies to overcome their opponents. For a camel to be declared a winner, he must either force his opponent to flee the ring or force him to fall on to his side.

If you get the chance to watch a wrestle, do so: it's a colourful event. The venue used to be the stadium at Ephesus – what a spectacle that must have been – but was changed to a field near Pamucak a few years ago for fear of what an angry ungulate might do to the ancient ruins. Town criers publicise the event, then the *tülüs* – decked out in all their finery – are proudly paraded through the streets by their owners, accompanied by drummers and musicians, before the wrestling begins. There's no official seating, rather spectators watch from a 'natural grandstand' formed by a dip in the field. Tickets are around TL5.

are the mainstay, but it also does some pretty good kebaps and salads.

Şişçi Yaşar in Yeri (☎ 892 3487; Atatürk Caddesi; ☎ 9am-10pm winter, 10am-midnight summer) This small stall on the main road is hugely popular with those in-the-know for its delicious *köfte* (meat-balls) and kebaps (all TL6). Although rather hidden away, there's a small, shaded seating area around the back with a few tables.

Karameşe (☎ 892 0466; St Jean Caddesi 18; meals about TL10; ☎ 9am-midnight) Perhaps the town's most idyllic café, Karameşe lies away from the central hurly-burly, amid cool, rambling gardens adorned with statues and artefacts. It's a great place for a cuppa, a *gözleme* (savoury crepe, TL4) or even a snooze.

SELF-CATERING

Tuğba (☎ 892 1773; 1006 Sokak; ☎ 9am-midnight) This well-known chain sells Turkish delight in all colours, flavours and forms, as well as dried nuts, seeds and fruit (great for long bus journeys). They also gift-wrap if you want to cart a year's supply home.

Every Saturday, Selçuk holds a fantastic **market** (Şahabettin Dede Caddesi; ☎ 9am-5pm winter, 8am-7pm summer) behind the bus station. With its fresh fruit, veg, cheese and olives, it's a great place to stock up for a picnic.

Drinking

Pink Bistro Café (☎ 892 9801; Siegburg Caddesi 24; beer big/small TL5/2.50; ☎ 10am-2am winter, 10am-4am summer) The oldest drinking establishment in Selçuk, it's called a café, looks like a pub, but functions as a bar-cum-nightclub. Ask Mesut, the bar tender, to demonstrate some magic tricks.

Café Mosaik (☎ 892 6508; 1005 Sokak 6/B; beer/nargileh €1.65/2.75; ☎ 10pm-1am winter, 9.30pm-3am summer) Kind of like an open-ended den, Café Mosaik is carpet-clad and cushioned and decorated very much *à la Turquie*. It's a fun place for beer or a nargileh with a good mix of European, Turkish and Arabic music.

Getting There & Around

BUS & DOLMUŞ

Selçuk's otogar is across the road from the tourist office. While it's easy enough to get to Selçuk direct from İzmir (TL6, one hour, 80km), coming from the south or east you generally have to change at Aydın, from where buses leave almost hourly to other destinations (such as Bodrum, Marmaris, Fethiye, Denizli and Antalya). Dolmuşes (minibuses) to Aydın (TL5, one hour) leave every 40 minutes from Selçuk.

There are direct buses from Selçuk nightly for İstanbul (TL45, 11 hours) via Bursa,

and in summer at least one bus daily to Denizli (TL19).

Dolmuşes run to Kuşadası every 20 minutes (TL4, 30 minutes) and Pamucak (TL2.50, 10 minutes). There are no buses or dolmuşes to Söke; either change at Kuşadası or take a train (below).

If you're going to Priene, Mila or Didyma, the easiest way is to go to Söke and get one of the many buses from there.

TAXI

Taxi rides around town usually cost TL5 and to İzmir airport €80 to €100 (though many pensions can organise it for less). You can usually find taxis around the bus station.

TRAIN

Six trains run daily from **Selçuk train station** (☎ 892 6006) to İzmir (TL3.25, two hours), the first at 6.25am and the last at 7pm year-round. Trains also leave every evening to Söke (one hour) – the first at 7am, the last at 6pm – and five leave daily to Denizli (four hours): the first at 9.39am, the last at 11.05pm.

EPHESUS (EFES)

The best-preserved classical city in the eastern Mediterranean, **Ephesus** (☎ 892 6010; admission/parking TL20/3; ☎ 8am–5pm Oct–Apr, 8am–7pm May–Sep) is the place to get a feel for what life was like in Roman times. For information on the two different entrance gates, see p250.

Ancient Ephesus was a great trading city and a centre for the cult of Cybele, the Anatolian fertility goddess. Under the influence of the Ionians, Cybele became Artemis, the virgin goddess of the hunt and the moon, and a fabulous temple was built in her honour. When the Romans took over and made this part of the province of Asia, Artemis became Diana and Ephesus became the Roman provincial capital.

To avoid the heat of the day – which can get extremely intense, the sun reflecting harshly off the stones – come early in the morning or in the late afternoon. In the height of summer Ephesus can be a very crowded place, with busloads of visitors pouring in. But, in a way, all those people do at least make it easier for you to visualise it as a proper, working metropolis. The city load of people it welcomes every day has the effect of making Ephesus seem quite city-like – noisy, congested and, at times, rather frustrating. To avoid the very

worst (but by no means all) of the crowds, the advice is again to get here either early or late. And, if possible, try to avoid public holidays altogether. Note that the terrace houses cost an extra TL15 (and take about an hour) to visit.

You can hire one of the Ephesus guides (two hours for two to 20 people for €40) who hang around the ticket barriers. Consider bringing water with you as drinks at the site are expensive.

There are also (and quite good) one-hour **audio guides** (adult TL5) available. Note that only Turkish lira are accepted for the admission fee. An exchange office operates opposite the ticket office if you need to change money.

History

EARLIEST TIMES

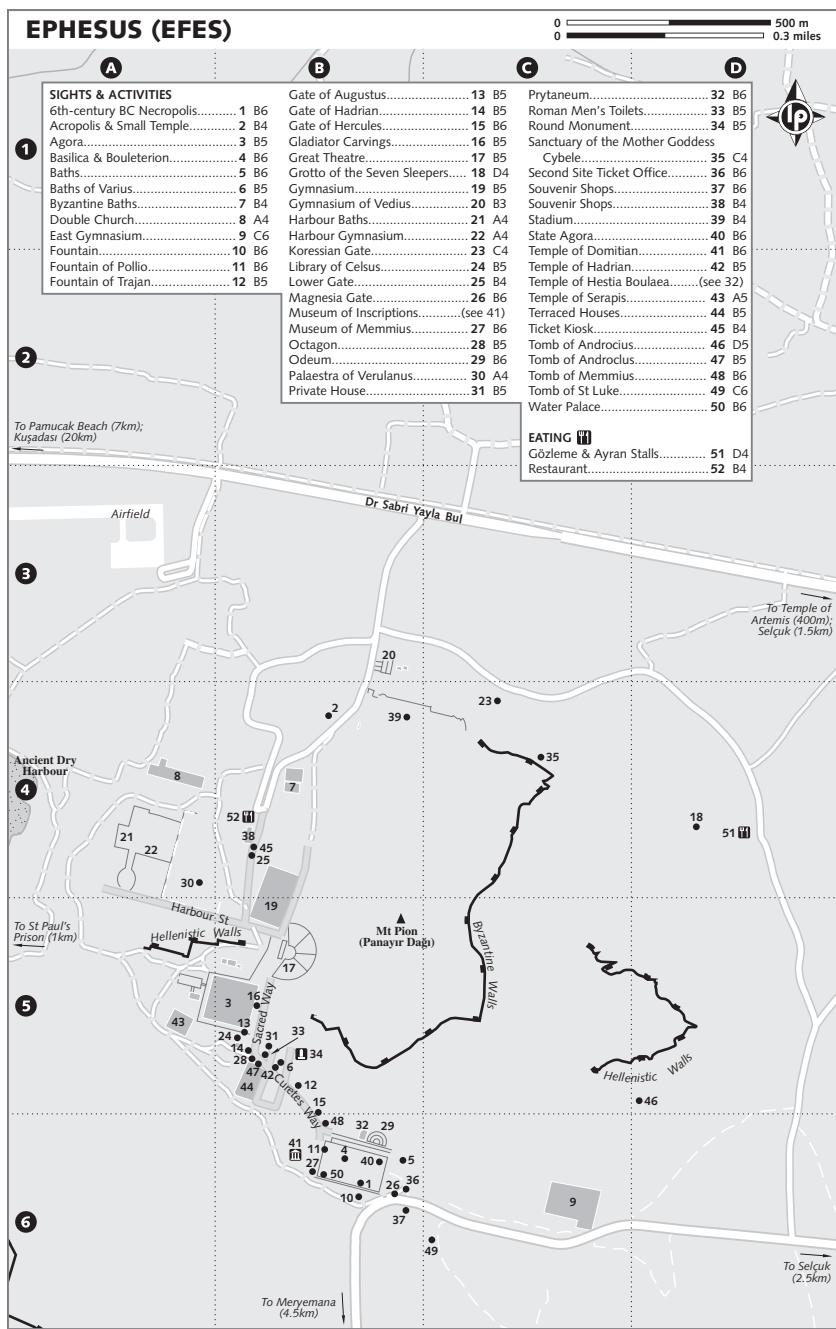
According to legend, Androclus, son of King Codrus of Athens, consulted an oracle about where to found a settlement in Ionia. The oracle answered in typically cryptic style: 'Choose the site indicated by the fish and the boar'.

Androclus sat down with some fishermen near the mouth of the Cayster River and Mt Pion (Panayır Dağı), the hill into which Ephesus' Great Theatre was later built. As they grilled some fish for lunch, one of the fish leapt out of the brazier, taking with it a hot coal, which ignited some shavings, which in turn ignited the nearby brush. A wild boar hiding in the brush ran in alarm from the fire and the spot at which the fishermen killed it became the site of Ephesus' Temple of Artemis (p240).

Despite modern tourist brochures' description of Ephesus as the place 'where history and sea meet', the two actually parted company a long time ago. In ancient times the sea came much further inland than it does today, almost as far as Selçuk, allowing early settlers to found a harbour, which by around 600 BC had become a prosperous city. The nearby sanctuary of Cybele/Artemis had been a place of pilgrimage since at least 800 BC.

CROESUS & THE PERSIANS

Ephesus prospered so much that it aroused the envy of King Croesus of Lydia, who attacked it around 600 BC. The Ephesians, who had neglected to build defensive walls, stretched a rope from the Temple of Artemis to the town, a distance of 1200m, hoping to win the



goddess' protection. Croesus responded to this quaint defensive measure by giving some of his famous wealth for the completion of the temple. But he destroyed Ephesus and relocated its citizens inland to the southern side of the temple, where they built a new city.

Neglecting again (or perhaps forbidden) to build walls, the Ephesians were forced to pay tribute to Croesus' Lydia and, later, to the new regional masters, the Persians. They then joined the Athenian confederacy, but later fell back under Persian control.

In 356 BC the Temple of Cybele/Artemis was destroyed in a fire set by Herostratus, who claimed to have done it to get famous, proving that modern society has no monopoly on a perverted sense of celebrity.

The Ephesians planned a grand new temple, the construction of which was well under way when Alexander the Great arrived in 334 BC. Much impressed, Alexander offered to pay for the cost of construction in return for having the temple dedicated to himself. The Ephesians declined his offer, saying tactfully that it was not fitting for one god to make a dedication to another. When finished, the temple was recognised as one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

LYSIMACHUS & THE ROMANS

After Alexander the Great's death, Ionia came under the control of Lysimachus, one of his generals. As the harbour silted up, the Ephesians moved reluctantly to the western side of Mt Pion, where the Roman city remains.

Little survives of Lysimachus' city, although at one time it had a defensive wall almost 10km long, long stretches of which survive on top of Bülbül Dağı (Mt Coressos), the high ridge of hills on the southern side of Ephesus. A prominent square tower, nicknamed 'St Paul's Prison', also survives on a low hill to the west.

Roman Ephesus was the capital of Asia Minor and its population rapidly grew to around 250,000. Successive emperors vied with one another to beautify the city and it drew immigrants from all around the empire. Despite the fame of the cult of Diana, Ephesus soon acquired a sizeable Christian congregation. St John supposedly settled here with the Virgin Mary, and St Paul lived in the city for three years (probably in the AD 60s).

THE END

Unfortunately, despite efforts by Attalus II of Pergamum, who rebuilt the harbour, and Nero's proconsul, who dredged it, the harbour continued to silt up. Emperor Hadrian tried diverting the Cayster, but eventually the sea was forced back to Pamucak. Ephesus began to decline. It was still an important enough place for the Third Ecumenical Council to be held here in AD 431, but by the 6th century, when the Emperor Justinian was looking for a site to build a basilica for St John, he chose Ayasuluk Hill in Selçuk.

Sights

GYMNASIUM OF VEDIUS & STADIUM

As you walk along the side road from Dr Sabri Yayla Bulvarı, the first ruin you will pass on your left was once the Gymnasium of Vadius (2nd century AD), with exercise fields, baths, toilets, covered exercise rooms, a swimming pool and a ceremonial hall. A bit further along is the Stadium, dating from the same period. The Byzantines removed most of its finely cut stones to build the castle on Ayasuluk Hill. This 'quarrying' of pre-cut building stone from older, often earthquake-ruined structures was a constant feature of Ephesian history.

DOUBLE CHURCH

Just past the car park, which is ringed with *çay bahçesi* (teahouses), restaurants and souvenir shops, are the ruins of the Church of the Virgin Mary, also called the Double Church. The original building was a museum, a Hall of the Muses – a place for lectures, teaching and debates. Destroyed by fire, it was rebuilt as a church in the 4th century. Over the centuries several other churches were built here, somewhat obscuring the original layout.

HARBOUR ST

As you walk down into the main site along a path bordered by evergreen trees, a few colossal remains of the **harbour gymnasium** are off to the right. At the end of the path you reach marble-paved Harbour St, which was the grandest street in Ephesus, a legacy of the Byzantine emperor, Arcadius (r AD 395–408). In its heyday, water and sewerage channels ran beneath the marble flagstones and 50 street lights lit up its colonnades. There were shops along its sides, and the **harbour baths** and triumphal columns at the harbour end. It was and is a grand sight.

GREAT THEATRE

At the eastern end of Harbour St is the Great Theatre, reconstructed by the Romans between AD 41 and AD 117. The first theatre on the site dated from the Hellenistic city of Lysimachus, and many features of the original building were incorporated into the Roman structure, including the ingenious design of the *cavea* (seating area), capable of holding 25,000 people: each successive range of seating up from the stage is pitched more steeply than the one below, thereby improving the view and acoustics for spectators in the upper seats. It is still (sometimes controversially) used for performances.

Behind the Great Theatre, Mt Panayır rears up, with a few traces of the ruined **city walls** of Lysimachus.

SACRED WAY

From the theatre, walk south along marble-paved Sacred (or Marble) Way, noting the remains of the elaborate water and sewerage systems beneath the paving stones, and the ruts made by wheeled vehicles (which were not allowed to drive down Harbour St). The large open space to the right of the street was the 110-sq-metre **agora** (marketplace), heart of Ephesus' business life. It would have been surrounded by a colonnade and shops selling food and craft items. Note the fine carvings of gladiators that survive along the Sacred Way.

On the left as you approach the end of the street is an elaborate building, which used to be called a brothel but is now believed to have been a **private house**. Either way, its main hall contains a fine mosaic of the *Four Seasons*.

The Sacred Way ends at the Embolos, with the Library of Celsus and the monumental Gate of Augustus to the right, and Curetes Way heading east up the slope.

LIBRARY OF CELSUS

Celsus Polemaeanus was the Roman governor of Asia Minor early in the 2nd century AD. According to an inscription in Latin and Greek on the side of the front staircase his son, Consul Tiberius Julius Aquila, erected this library in his father's honour after the governor's death in 114. Celsus was buried under the western side of the library.

The library held 12,000 scrolls in niches around its walls. A 1m gap between the inner and outer walls protected the valuable books

from extremes of temperature and humidity. The library was originally built as part of a complex, and architectural sleight of hand was used to make it look bigger than it actually is: the base of the facade is convex, adding height to the central elements; and the central columns and capitals are larger than those at the ends.

Niches on the facade hold statues representing the Virtues: Arete (Goodness), Ennoia (Thought), Episteme (Knowledge) and Sophia (Wisdom). The library was restored with the aid of the Austrian Archaeological Institute and the originals of the statues are in Vienna's Ephesus Museum.

As you leave the library, the **Gate of Augustus** on the left leads into the *agora*. This monumental gateway was apparently a favourite place for Roman ne'er-do-wells to relieve themselves, as a bit of ancient graffiti curses 'those who piss here'.

CURETES WAY

As you head up Curetes Way, a passage on the left leads to the famous communal **Roman men's toilets**. The much-copied statuette of Priapus was found in the nearby **well**. It's now in the Ephesus Museum in Selçuk.

You can't miss the impressive Corinthian-style **Temple of Hadrian**, on the left, with beautiful friezes in the porch and a head of Medusa to keep out evil spirits. It was dedicated to Hadrian, Artemis and the people of Ephesus in AD 118 but greatly reconstructed in the 5th century. Across the street a row of shops from the same period are fronted by an elaborate 5th-century mosaic.

Across from the Temple of Hadrian are the magnificent **Yamaç Evleri** (Terraced Houses; admission TL15; ☎ 9am-4.30pm). It's a crying shame that the off-putting admission fee will deter most people from visiting a site that offers the next best chance after Pompeii (Italy) to appreciate the luxury in which the elite of the Roman world lived. In places, the Terraced Houses still stand to two storeys; their walls are covered in frescoes and their floors in elaborate mosaics. To add insult to injury, parts of the terraces regularly close, with no advance warning. Some small finds from the houses are on display in the Ephesus Museum (p240) in Selçuk.

Further up Curetes Way on the left is the **Fountain of Trajan**. Of the huge statue of the emperor (AD 98-117) that used to tower above the pool, only one foot now remains.

EPHESUS FROM THE AIR

If you fancy getting an elevated perspective on the famous ruins **Sky and Sea Adventures** (☎ 892 2262; www.skyltd.com.tr; flights €50) offer trips in a two-seater microlight out of Selçuk Airport, just east of Ephesus. Your journey will take you up above Selçuk taking in all of its principal sites, before heading out to the coast for a sky-high gawp at the more modern attractions of Kuşadası. To soothe any understandable nerves, the operator assures his clients that, even if the motor cuts out 'the aircraft will remain airborne' – although how comforting it is to know that there's a chance of engine failure is open to debate.

UPPER EPHESUS

Curetes Way ends at the two-storey **Gate of Hercules**, constructed in the 4th century AD, with reliefs of Hercules on both main pillars. To the right a side street leads to a colossal **temple** dedicated to the emperor Domitian (r AD 81–96), part of which serves as a rarely accessible **Museum of Inscriptions**.

Up the hill on the left are the very ruined remains of the **Prytaneum** (a municipal hall) and the **Temple of Hestia Boulaea**, in which a perpetually burning flame was guarded. Finally, you reach the **Odeum**, a small theatre dating from AD 150 and used for musical performances and meetings of the town council. The marble seats at the bottom suggest the magnificence of the original.

To the east of the Odeum are more **baths** and, further east, the **East Gymnasium**. There is a second site ticket office across from the slight remains of the **Magnesia Gate**.

Festivals & Events

During the International İzmir Festival (see p225) in mid-June to early July many events take place at Ephesus. The world-class acts – opera, ballet and music – are certainly worth getting tickets for. Tickets are sold at the Ephesus Museum. See also the boxed text, p242.

Getting There & Away

Many pensions in Selçuk offer free lifts to Ephesus. Note that there are two entry points roughly 3km apart. You may prefer

to be dropped off at the upper entrance (the southern gates or *güney kapısı*) so that you can walk back downhill through the ruins and out through the lower main entrance. It's a 30- to 45-minute walk from the tourist office in Selçuk to the main admission gate. The first 20 minutes are easy enough, along a tree-shaded road, but the next uphill section is much harder work with no pavement and little shade (not to mention constant attention from taxi drivers).

Frequent Pamucak and Kuşadası minibuses pass the Ephesus turn-off (TL4, five minutes, 3km), leaving you with a 20-minute walk to the main ticket office.

A taxi from Selçuk to the main entrance should cost about TL12. One good plan is to take a taxi to Meryemana for a short visit, then have it drop you at the southern entrance to Ephesus (about TL40). You can then spend as long as you like at Ephesus, before walking the 3km back to Selçuk.

AROUND SELÇUK

Meryemana (Mary's House)

Believers say that the Virgin Mary came to Ephesus with St John towards the end of her life (AD 37–45). In the 19th century, nun Catherina Emmerich of Germany had visions of Mary at Ephesus, although she had never visited the place herself. Using her descriptions, clergy from İzmir discovered the foundations of an old house on the wooded slope of Bülbül Dağı (Mt Coressos), not far from Ephesus, which have been dated to around the 6th century AD, albeit with some earlier elements, possibly from the 1st century. Pope Paul VI 'unofficially' authenticated the site on a visit in 1967 and it quickly became a place of pilgrimage. A service to honour Mary's Assumption is held in the chapel every 15 August. Mass is held at 7.15am Monday to Saturday (evening service at 6.30pm), and at 10.30am on Sunday. Note that 'appropriate dress' is required to enter.

The tiny **chapel** (☎ 894 1012; admission per person/car TL10/3; ☎ 8am–7pm) is usually mobbed by coach parties. There are information panels in various languages, but if you are interested in why over a million people visit here each year, we recommend *Mary's House* by Donald Carroll, which traces the extraordinary history of the site over 2000 years. A small shop also sells brochures (TL3.50 to TL6).

To Muslims, Mary is Meryemana, Mother Mary, who bore İsa Peygamber, the Prophet

Jesus. Below the chapel a wall is covered in rags: Turks tie the bits of cloth (or paper or plastic – in fact anything at hand) to a frame and make a wish.

If you want refreshments, head for **Café Turca** (☎ 894 1010; Meryemana Evi; coffee/breakfast TL2/6; ☎ 7.30am-7pm). Otherwise, the site is a great spot for a picnic – it's cool, verdant and full of birdsong.

The site lies 7km from Ephesus' Lower (northern) Gate and 5.5km from the Upper (southern) Gate. There's no dolmuş service so you'll have to hire a taxi (around TL40 return from the otogar) or take a tour.

Grotto of the Seven Sleepers

If you're driving from Meryemana to Ephesus you'll pass the road leading to the Grotto of the Seven Sleepers. According to legend, seven persecuted Christians fled from Ephesus in the 3rd century AD and took refuge in a cave on the northeastern side of Mt Pion. Agents of their persecutor, Emperor Decius, found the cave and sealed it. Two centuries later an earthquake brought down the wall, awakening the sleepers who ambled into town for a meal. Finding all their old friends long dead, they concluded that they had undergone some sort of resurrection. When they died they were buried in the cave and a cult following developed.

The grotto is actually a Byzantine-era **necropolis** (admission free; ☎ 24hr) with scores of tombs cut into the rock. It lies around 200m from the car park (1.5km from Ephesus); follow the well-trodden path up the hill.

It's probably not worth a special trip, as there's not a great deal to see, but the shady and kilim-covered *ayran* (yoghurt drink) and *gözleme* places by the junction make great places for a spot of R&R after Ephesus. The *gözleme* are famous.

Çamlık Steam Locomotive Museum

Trainspotters will delight in this open-air **museum** (☎ 894 8116; Köyü Selçuk; admission TL2; ☎ 8am-5pm Oct-Apr, 8am-6pm May-Sep), 10km from Selçuk on the Aydın road. The attractively landscaped site has over 30 steam locomotives, some as old as the 1887 C-N2 from the UK, and all of which you are free to climb on. Atatürk had his headquarters here and kept his special white train at this station during Aegean manoeuvres. A restaurant operates here but it's open to tour groups only.

Pamucak

☎ 0232

If you fancy seeing what Kuşadası looked like before tourism bloated it to its current extreme proportions, come to Pamucak beach, a few kilometres north along the coast and about 7km west of Selçuk. Although there are a few buildings and hotels here, particularly at the southern end where the great Richmond Grand Ephesus rises above the terrain like a land-locked ocean liner, much of this stretch of coast is undeveloped and all the more pleasant for it. The beach is sandy and very wide, which means that it doesn't feel crowded even on summer weekends when Turkish families descend en masse. Out of season, you may even get it entirely to yourself. However, be warned, there are no lifeguards and the waters here can get very choppy – swimming should only be undertaken with the utmost caution.

Without teams of hotel staff to mop up the daily detritus, parts of the beach do get a little litter-strewn at times, but this is by no means a dirty beach. From February to March, the estuary wetlands (a 15-minute walk from the beach) attract flamingos.

Minibuses run every half-hour from Selçuk (TL2.50, 10 minutes, 7km) in summer and every hour in winter. To/from Kuşadası, go to Selçuk first.

ŞİRİNCE

☎ 0232 / pop 960

Nine kilometres east of Selçuk, at the end of a long narrow road that winds its way up into the hills passing by grapevines and peach and apple orchards, sits Şirince, a perfect collection of stone-and-stucco houses with red-tiled roofs. It was probably originally settled when Ephesus was abandoned but what you see today mostly dates from the 19th century. The story goes that a group of freed Greek slaves settled here in the 15th century and called the village Çirkince (Ugliness) to deter others from following them. In 1926 a governor of İzmir decreed that its name be changed to the more honest Şirince (Pleasantness).

A century ago a much larger and more prosperous Şirince was mainly inhabited by Ottoman Greeks and acted as the economic focus for seven monasteries in the hills around. The villagers, who moved here from Salonica and its vicinity during an exchange of populations in 1924, are ardent fruit farmers who also make interesting fruit wines (TL8 to

TL20), including raspberry, peach melon and black mulberry varieties. Some are very nice – light and refreshing – while others require a good deal of chilling to be made palatable.

It is an idyllic place, but in recent years the cruise ships with their 'Authentic Turkish Village' day trips have all but turned it into a parody with high prices and souvenir shops cheek-by-jowl the entire length of the main street, which means incessant attention and entreaties as you make your way round. Of course, if you ignore this and stay the night (at a stiff premium of course) you'll be well rewarded with the chance to see the real village after the tour buses have gone.

The minibus from Selçuk drops you at the centre of the village near the restaurants.

Sights & Activities

Although you may want to drop into the ruined **Church of St John the Baptist** and examine its fast-fading frescoes, the real pleasure of a visit to Şirince lies in wandering its backstreets and looking at the lovely old houses.

The town is also a good, if not particularly cheap, place to shop. Pretty much every third house seems to be a wine shop, and plenty of places offer free tastings (accompanied by the inevitable intense sales pitch). Other shops and stalls sell jewellery, carvings, leather goods and locally produced olive oil and olive soap. Incidentally, if a local woman invites you to inspect her 'antique house', you should assume she'll have lace for sale.

Sleeping

Şirince is a captive market and prices, with a few exceptions, can be ludicrously inflated for what you get. Prices here are for rooms with bathroom and breakfast included.

Dionysos Pension (☎ 898 3130; www.dionysospension.com; s/d TL70/90) A tiny but delightful old village house, the Dionysos has four large rooms that have retained some of their original features and have a charming antiques feel. It's not great value, but the pension has tonnes of character and a little garden-terrace outside with views over the valley. Follow the signs from the village centre and look out for the two churches – it lies in-between.

Giritli Pansiyon (☎ 898 3029; www.sirincelejardin.com; €40-60) In the centre of the main street, this is a homey, slightly noisy choice. The bedrooms are nice and big, with colourful quilts, rugs and dark wood furniture and there's an apart-

ment with a fully equipped kitchen, complete with washing machine. The hotel restaurant, Le Jardin, just up the hill towards the town entrance, is very good.

Our pick Kirkinca Pansiyon (☎ 898 3133; www.kirkinca.com; s/d €50/70) Just up the hill opposite the bazaar, the Kirkinca is a sort of 'butik' complex comprising a pension, with 15 rooms, and another four 'apart houses'. They've all been very elegantly done and furnished with a mixture of quality bespoke modern pieces and antiques. Some of the rooms have four-poster beds and one even has its own mini-hamam. The main building has a shaded roof terrace with views of the town and countryside.

Nişanyan Evleri (☎ 898 3208; www.nisanyan.com; s/d from TL120/180; ☑) There are several choices here. The main inn, set in a 19th-century renovated stone house, is probably Şirince's smartest place, although you will have to brave the fairly steep 250m climb to the top of the village. Its five rooms are individually decorated à l'Ottoman, and there's a library, a good restaurant and a pretty terrace with views. The owners also operate a budget alternative, the Kilisealti near the village entrance, which offers a more basic, cheaper version of the same (single/double TL60/90). Three restored village houses can also be rented out nearby (TL185/260 for one/two people per night).

Eating

Le Jardin (☎ 898 3029; meze TL5-7, mains TL8-15; ☎ 9am-11pm) Around 100m past the town entrance, the Jardin is a pretty place with tables set on a greenery-filled terrace with good views of the town and valley beyond. The menu features plenty of snacks – such as *gözleme* for TL4 – and grilled meats, as well as a few international offerings for the cruise hordes (hamburgers, 'spag bol' etc).

Artemis Şirince Şarapevi Restaurant (☎ 898 3240; mains TL11-15; ☎ 8am-midnight) This former Greek school is set right by the entrance overlooking the valley and has perhaps the best views of any restaurant. The interior has old stoves and darkened floorboards, while outside there's a large terrace. It looks very grand and expensive but isn't (although check the price of wine before ordering), and the food is good (try the vermicelli with walnuts and cheese for TL5.50). You can also come here just for a drink.

By the bazaar, overlooking the main square where the buses stop, with a pleasant shaded

terrace and serving both mains and snacks at good prices is **Köy Restaurant** (☎ 898 3120; snacks TL4-6, mains TL8-14; 🕒 8am-11pm).

Getting There & Away

Minibuses (TL2.50) leave from Selçuk to Şirince every 15 minutes in summer, and every half-hour in winter.

TİRE, KAPLAN, ÖDEMİŞ & BİRGİ

Pleasant as Selçuk is, no one could call it undiscovered. However, it's possible to make a straightforward day trip into the Aegean hinterland, which will give you a fascinating insight into less-touristy Turkey. You can do this by dolmuş, but it really works best if you hire a car.

Tire, at the base of the Bozdağlar Mountains and surrounded by farmland, hosts a very popular Tuesday market, which has become a frequent stop for tour groups in recent years. As a consequence, the town is now not quite as unfamiliar (and inquisitive) of tourists as was once the case, although you should prepare yourself for a bit of careful scrutiny.

Head uphill to find the Tahtakale neighbourhood where it's possible to inspect *hans* (caravanserais) dating back to the 15th century and still in use as shopping centres. Poke around the backstreets and you will be able to watch felt-makers hard at work at a craft that has all but died out elsewhere in Turkey.

Tire is also known throughout the region for the religious intensity of its inhabitants, which no doubt accounts for the plethora of Ottoman mosques (over 30) clustered in its limited confines. The pick is the 15th-century **Yeşil İmaret Camii**, which was built during the reign of Murat II.

The market is a great place to stock up on lunch supplies for a relaxing picnic, or if you want something more formal, take the road to **Kaplan**, a tiny village perched high in the hills, and enjoy a meal and the sensational views from **Kaplan Restaurant** (☎ 512 6652; meals TL12; 🕒 8am-10pm).

Ödemiş is less interesting except on Saturday when there's a lively market. But from Ödemiş you can take a dolmuş or drive on to **Birgi**, an undeveloped village that's home to the gorgeous **Çakıroğlu Konağı** (admission TL2; 🕒 8.30am-noon & 1-5.30pm Tue-Sun), one of the finest historical houses open to the public in Turkey. The three-storey wooden house, completely covered in frescoes, was probably built in 1761

for Şerif Aliğa, a tradesman who owned the local tanning yards and had two wives, from İstanbul and İzmir. To keep them happy he had vistas of their home towns painted on the upstairs walls. Next door, **Konak** (☎ 531 6069; Çakırağa Sokak 6) is a café in a restored house.

Birgi also has a fine **Ulu Cami** (1311) with carved doors and windows and an old stone lion incorporated into the stonework, and the **Birgivi**, a shrine on the outskirts of town that is popular with devout Muslims.

Getting There & Away

There are hourly minibuses to Tire from Selçuk (TL3.25) and hourly onward buses from Tire to Ödemiş (TL2, 34km). Dolmuşes leave for Birgi from Ödemiş otogar (€1.50, 20 minutes, 8km).

KUŞADASI

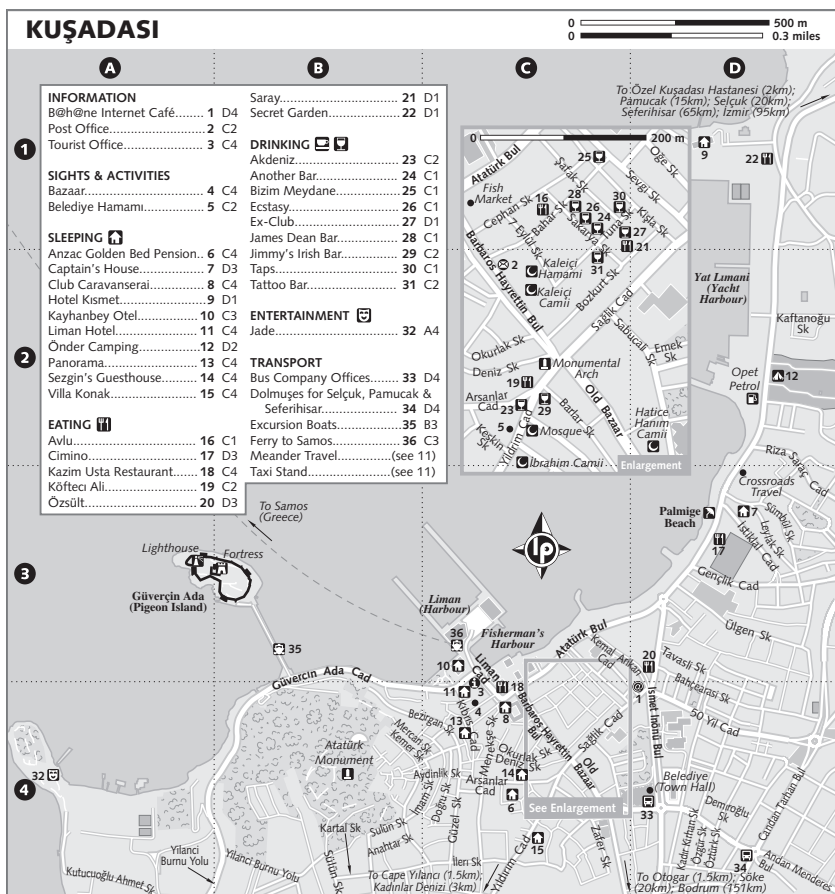
☎ 0256 / pop 54,660

It's easy to sneer at Kuşadası, 22km southwest of Selçuk. With its package hotels, fast food restaurants, in-your-face bazaar, karaoke bars, tattoo parlours and larger holiday crowds, it doesn't always show its best face to the world. But there are many locals who are very proud of the place, who see it as exemplifying a sort of can-do, make-the-best-of-yourself spirit, and see those who revile it as little more than snobs. After all, as one local bar owner put it, 'what's wrong with having a good time?' It all depends on your definition of 'good time'.

What you won't get in Kuşadası is much in the way of Turkish culture (although there is some, if you're prepared to seek it out). What you will get is a decent, if very crowded, beach and some of the coast's rowdiest, headiest nightlife – think Irish pubs, happy hours, sing-a-longs, tribute acts and drunken, swaying discos. Now, if that sounds all too ghastly for words, then you'd be better off basing yourself in the quieter confines of nearby Selçuk.

But if you want to let your hair down for a night or two of guilt-free Esperanto hedonism before heading back onto the cultural trail, then Kuşadası is your place.

And even if you don't like what it does, you still have to admit that it does it well. It's like a vast tourism machine – accommodating, feeding, entertaining and replacing an endless stream of visitors, who arrive from all points of the compass by charter plane, by bus and, more and more frequently, by cruise



ship, up to four of which dock here a day in high season.

Orientation

Kuşadası's central landmark is the Öküz Mehmet Paşa Kervansarayı, an Ottoman caravanserai that is now a hotel, known as Club Caravanserai. It lies 100m inland from the cruise-ship docks, at the intersection of the waterfront boulevard, Atatürk Bulvarı, and the town's main street, the pedestrianised Barbaros Hayrettin Bulvarı, which cuts inland.

Just beyond the PTT on the northern side of Barbaros Hayrettin Bulvarı, a passage leads to the old Kaleiçi neighbourhood (part of old Kuşadası) of narrow streets packed with restaurants and bars.

Turn right off Barbaros Hayrettin Bulvarı to find raucous Barlar Sokak (Bar St) and the hillside pensions overlooking Kuşadası's harbour.

The most useful dolmuş stand is 1.5km inland on Adnan Menderes Bulvarı. The otogar is right on the bypass road.

Information

INTERNET ACCESS

B@h@ne Internet Café (Öge Sokak 4/A; per hr TL1.50; ☎ 8.30am-midnight) You can take drinks up here from the downstairs café.

MEDICAL SERVICES

Özel Kuşadası Hastanesi (☎ 613 1616; Ant Sokak, Turken Mahallesi) Kuşadası's excellent private hospital

is 3km north of the centre on the Selçuk road, and has English-speaking doctors.

MONEY

There are several banks with ATMs on Barbaros Hayrettin Bulvarı.

POST

Post office (☎ 612 3311; Barbaros Hayrettin Bulvarı 23-25; ☎ 8.30am-12.30pm & 1.30-5.30pm Mon-Sat winter, 8am-midnight daily summer)

TOURIST INFORMATION

Tourist office (☎ 614 1103; fax 614 6295; İskele Meydanı, Liman Caddesi; ☎ 8am-noon & 1-5pm Mon-Fri) Near the wharf where the cruise ships dock, about 60m west of the caravanserai. They don't have a lot of information, although they can provide up-to-date maps.

Sights & Activities

Kuşadası's town has a small artificial beach, but the area's most famous stretch of sand, and the primary focus for the majority of its package holiday visitors, is **Kadınlar Denizi** (Ladies Beach), 2.5km south of town and served by dolmuşes running along the coastal road. It's nice enough but crowded with big hotels and woefully inadequate for the high summer crowds. The coast south of Kadınlar Denizi has several small beaches, each backed by big hotels.

In town, the main formal attraction is the minor stone **fortress** that occupies most of Güvercin Ada (Pigeon Island), a small island connected to the mainland by a causeway. Its main hall hosts exhibitions of handicrafts and there are a few coops on stilts for the eponymous pigeons, but the fortress' main appeal is as a strolling route – it's particularly popular with local courting couples who secrete themselves among the battlements and canoodle.

East of the island are the cruise ship docks and, handily situated immediately to the south, the main **bazaar** area. This is a strictly tourist-oriented place – cheap leather jackets, knock-off designer bags, carpets, jewellery etc – and used to be a byword for extreme hassle, with vendors leaping en masse to present their pitches to the waves of cruise visitors. A crackdown by the authorities, however, which even saw a couple of the businesses shut down for a couple of days, seems to have reigned in the more persistent offenders.

Kuşadası's hamams are of the 'un-Turkish type', where there's mixed bathing (albeit with

towels). The **Belediye Hamamı** (☎ 614 1219; Yıldırım Caddesi 2; admission €15; ☎ 9am-7.30pm Apr-Oct) is up the hill from Bar St. It's a restored hamam (the original dates back 600 years) and is atmospheric and clean.

It's possible to use Kuşadası as a base for exploring much of the region. The town has numerous tour operators and travel agents offering trips to all the major local attractions, including Ephesus (full day with lunch from €45), 'PMD' (Priene, Miletus, Didyma, from €30) and Tire Market (from €30), as well as further afield to Pamukkale (from €40) and even İstanbul (two days from €200). Try **Crossroads Travel** (☎ 618 3326; www.crossroadstravel.com; Atatürk Bulvarı 70; ☎ 8am-8pm).

Sleeping

Kuşadası is chock-a-block with hotels and more are being erected all the time. The main budget places line the steep narrow streets just southwest of the bazaar. Only a few places stay open from November to March.

BUDGET

Camping

Önder Camping (☎ 618 1690; www.onderotel.com; Atatürk Bulvarı 84; camp sites per person/tent/caravan/car TL5/3/5/3; ☎) Despite its location on the main road opposite the Opet garage, this is a peaceful, almost bucolic camping ground with plenty of facilities, including a tennis court, swimming pool, laundry facilities and a decent restaurant. Plots are shaded by pine trees and olives.

Pensions

Beware the pension touts at the otogar and harbour (who are paid commission – your hotel hasn't shut down). Decide where you're heading before arrival and stand your ground.

Panorama (☎ 614 6619; www.otelpanorama.com; Kıbrıs Caddesi 14; s/d €20/28, ☎ ☎) Just a few steps from the bazaar, this used to be Sammy's Palace, a backpacker favourite of legendary long standing. It's now been taken over by Sammy's cousins, Ali and Murat, who are keeping up the good work and will offer you a warm welcome (and probably try to sell you a few tours and a belly dancing evening) when you arrive. The rooms are rather spartan and dog-eared, but exactly what you'd expect for the price and there's a rooftop terrace for the breakfasts and optional dinners.

ourpick Sezgin's Guesthouse (☎ 614 4225; www.sezginhotel.com; Arsanlar Caddesi 68; s/d €20/24;

GETTING WET IN KUŞADASI

Culture is all very well and the ruins of Ephesus and the like undeniably impressive and evocative, but sometimes you just want to slide down a big tube filled with water. The opportunity for a bit of wet and wild adventure is provided at **Adaland** (☎ 618 1252; www.adaland.com; Çamlımanı Mevkii; adult/child €20/12; 🕒 10am-6pm 5 May-5 Oct), Europe's largest waterpark with dozens of chutes, slides, river rides and pools, as well as a newly opened seapark, home to a variety of marine life.

For something a little more worthy, you can learn to scuba-dive – or if you've already learnt, just go for a dive – with the **Aquaventure Diving Center** (☎ 612 7845; www.aquaventure.com.tr; Miracle Beach Club, Kadınlar Denizi; 🕒 8am-6pm), by Ladies' Beach, which offers PADI open water courses for €250 and reef dives from €30. Staff can arrange pick-up from most of the major hotels.

📺 📺 📺) Perhaps the top budget choice, you really do get a good deal for your money: large, almost Swiss-style wood panelled rooms, comfortable beds, armchairs, TVs, fridges and small balconies overlooking a compact garden and pool. The owner, Sezgin, is friendly and helpful and organises regular special events, including Turkish-style barbecues and belly dancing.

Liman Hotel (Mr Happy's; ☎ 614 7770; www.limanhotel.com; Kıbrıs Caddesi, Buyral Sokak 4; s/d €24/35; 📺 📺) Presided over by the appropriately named 'Mr Happy' (AKA the more mundane Hasan Degirmenci), this is a stalwart of the budget scene. It occupies one of the best positions of any pension, right on the seafront. Some of the 17 clean, well-maintained rooms have sea views and there's a great terrace where breakfast (included), dinner (optional extra) and the obligatory belly dancing evenings are laid on. Extras include a library and free maps.

Captain's House (☎ 614 4754; www.captainshousepansiyon.com; İstiklal Caddesi 66; s/d TL25/50; 📺 📺) Everything is clean and shipshape in the Captain, which occupies a prime position on the seafront, opposite the beach in among the fish restaurants. The interiors of the 18 rooms aren't particularly inspiring, but are nice enough with pictures of seascapes on the walls and items of nautical paraphernalia here and there. Four rooms have large balconies with side sea views. The next-door restaurant/café is a popular nightspot.

Anzac Golden Bed Pension (☎ 614 8708; www.kusadasihotels.com/goldenbed; off Arsanlar Caddesi, Uğurlu 1 Çıkmazi 4; r with/without bathroom TL65/35; 📺 📺) Rather tucked away on a hillside cul-de-sac, the Golden Bay is worth seeking out. The rooms are, as the Australian proprietor Sandra admits, 'simply furnished', but bright and spotless and there's a host of extras to attract travellers: airport pick-up, book ex-

change, free Ephesus transfers etc. Up top is a nice terrace where you can have breakfast while admiring the views over town.

MIDRANGE & TOP END

Villa Konak (☎ 612 2170; www.villakonakhotel.com; Yıldırım Caddesi 55; s/d €40/50; 📺 📺) Hidden away from the hubbub in the old quarter of town is the Villa Konak, a restored 140-year-old stone house. The recently updated rooms have been attractively done with the odd Orientalist flourish and are arranged around a large and rambling courtyard-garden complete with pool, ancient well and citrus and magnolia trees. It's peaceful and cool and there's a bar, restaurant and library.

Club Caravanserai (☎ 614 4115; www.kusadasihotels.com/caravanserai; Atatürk Bulvarı; s/d €50/75; 🕒 1 Mar-15 Nov; 📺 📺) It's one of the town's unmissable sites, a grand 17th-century caravanserai, which at night has its battlements illuminated by yards of neon. It's a similar historic/cheesy story inside where the attractive courtyard plays host to gloriously kitschy 'Turkish nights' on summer weekends (very popular with cruise guests; €40 with dinner, €30 without). The rooms are very attractively done and the restaurant isn't bad.

Hotel Kismet (☎ 618 1290; www.kismet.com.tr; Atatürk Bulvarı 1; s/d €90/130; 🕒 15 Mar-15 Nov; 📺 📺) About as big a contrast to the town's core constituency as you can get, the Kismet is a very grand affair. Located at the northern end of town, the hotel occupies a building created by a descendant of the last sultan with lovely manicured gardens and very large, very well-equipped, but slightly blandly decorated rooms. All have balconies, either looking out to sea, or over the town. From up here everything looks serene and calm. There are several bars and restaurants and entertainment is provided by cruise-style crooners.

If the above are full, try the **Kayhanbey Otel** (☎ 614 1190; www.kayhanbey.com; Güvercin Ada Caddesi; s/d €60/80; ☺ ☑ ☒), just west of the cruise dock, with 72 comfortable (albeit anodyne) rooms with balconies with lovely sea views. There's also a hamam, and an outdoor pool on the roof terrace.

Eating

The town's prime dining location is down by the picturesque marina but competition keeps bills down. Always ask in advance the price of seafood and wine.

For the cheapest options, it's simple: head inland. The Kaleiçi, the old part of Kuşadası behind the PTT, has some atmospheric dining rooms as well as a few cheap and cheerful joints.

RESTAURANTS

Avlu (☎ 614 7995; Cephane Sokak 15; mains TL5-8; ☺ 8am-midnight) In the old town, this offers first-class home cooking in a clean and cheerful environment at unbeatable prices. A long-standing local fave, in recent times it's been discovered by the more daring cruise-ships tourists too. There's a great pick-and-point counter for those unsure what to order. It's a good choice for veggies too, as well as for sampling delectable Turkish puds.

Secret Garden (☎ 618 1178; Setur Marina; meze TL5-7; fish per 500g TL15-22; ☺ 9am-1am) Right at the far end of town, this place enjoys a very pleasant setting overlooking the marina. It's great for a splurge and for generally feeling a bit posh, with a wide range of fish (typically including bass, bream and turbot), and some excellent seafood specials.

Saray (☎ 612 0528; Bozkurt Sokak 25; mains TL10-18; ☺ 9am-2am) Enjoying a dedicated following among both locals and expats, the Saray shows two different faces to the world. Outside is a rather refined courtyard, all shady trees, candlelight and linen, while inside, particularly later in the evening, it can be a bit more happy hour and sing-along. The menu is a typical Kuşadası calling-all-ports affair – Chinese, Indian, Mexican, fish and chips etc – but with some decent Turkish choices, and several vegetarian options.

Kazim Usta Restaurant (☎ 614 1226; Liman Caddesi 4; meze TL5-12, mains TL15-30; ☺ 6am-midnight) Opposite the tourist office, this venerable establishment founded way back in 1950 is considered the top fish restaurant in town, though it's not

cheap. The sumptuous fish soup (TL15) is a speciality. If you want a table on the waterfront, reserve at least a day in advance.

CAFÉS & QUICK EATS

Köfteci Ali (Arşanlar Caddesi 14; ☺ 9am-midnight winter, summer 24 hr) Situated near the entrance of Bar St, ready to Hoover up the early morning post-club traffic, this simple street booth does some terrific spicy wrapped pide kebabs for TL5. The chances are you'll be served by Ali himself who sleeps just four hours a night in the season.

Özsüt (☎ 612 0650; İsmet İnönü Bulvarı 30; ☺ 9.30am-midnight; ☺) This well-known İzmirli chain has the usual delicious selection of traditional Turkish puds served up in smart surrounds, as well as great coffee and ice cream (TL1.25 per scoop).

Cimino (☎ 614 6409; Atatürk Bulvarı 56/B; ☺ 10am-midnight) A place to meet-and-eat locally, this mellow bistro-cum-café serves good cappuccino (TL4) and mainly Italian-style fare (TL5 to TL16). It's opposite the seafront and plays good jazz music.

Drinking & Entertainment

The centre of the town's tourist nightlife is the infamous Barlar Sokak (Bar St), which should probably be renamed Irish St as pretty much every bar is now themed on the Emerald Isle: Paddy's, Temple Bar etc. It's all incredibly full-on, like a sort of never-ending stag/hen party. The bartenders are employed to get everything started, leading the crowd in sing-alongs and dance routines, and, in a slightly queasy touch, all wear name tags with Anglicised names, so Yasser becomes Charlie, and so forth. From October to March, the scene shrinks to pretty much nothing.

Akdeniz (☎ 612 1120; Arşanlar Caddesi 1; beer TL4; ☺ 8am-2am Apr-Oct) With its elevated position overlooking the entrance to Bar St, this is a perfect spot to watch the dolled up crowds emerge for the evening's raucousness. The bar itself is shaded by a tall tree and rather peaceful. There's also an attached restaurant (not bad) and apart-hotel.

Jimmy's Irish Bar (☎ 612 1318; Barlar Sokak 8; beer TL5; ☺ 8pm-4am Apr-Nov) Still the biggest name in town, partly because it has the handiest position at the entrance to the street. For all its mass-market, karaoke, 'hey, where you from?' faults, this can be a good place to meet other travellers (so long as you can hear what

BEACH CLUBS

Kuşadası's nightlife is still overwhelmingly mass-market, but here and there the shoots of something more cultured are beginning to grow. The prime examples are the beach clubs of **Capec Yılancı** (Yılancı Burnu), the peninsula that lies less than 1.5km west of the town centre. Like giant entertainment complexes, they boast a wealth of facilities, including restaurants, volleyball parks, kids' playgrounds, tennis courts and four-poster sun-lounges for daytime fun. At night the attention turns to the elegantly furnished bars, dance platforms and stages set right over the water, where live bands perform – typically jazz, Latin and funk – and al fresco discos go on till the early hours. Aimed at a high-end clientele – as the champagne holders built into each table will testify – the best is currently **Jade** (☎ 612 7220; Yılancı Burnu; admission weekday TL20, weekend with drink incl TL30, beer from TL7; 🕒 10am–7pm & 8pm–midnight end May–end Sep).

To get here, take a dolmuş towards Kadınlar Denizi (Ladies Beach; €0.55). It can drop you at the roundabout from where it's a short walk.

they're saying, it's very loud). The giant satellite dish on the roof beams in the compulsory football matches.

There is another nightlife scene in Kuşadası, based largely in the old town where a number of old houses and courtyards have been turned into a collection of fabulously swanky bar-cum-nightclubs patronised largely (but not exclusively) by locals. In contravention of the way things normally work, these tend to be much more expensive than the tourist-oriented places, with beers costing around TL10. Most are open 10pm to 4am May to September, and a few sporadically open at weekends in winter.

Another Bar (☎ 614 7552; Tuna Sokak 10) Converted from an old citrus orchard, tables and stools are dotted among the remaining trees and a large, central palm. There's also a large screen and a dance floor.

Ex-Club (☎ 614 7550; Tuna Sokak 13) It's more of a club than a bar, although there's no designated dance area, so everyone just sort of cavorts between the tables. It can get very crowded.

James Dean Bar (☎ 614 3827; Sakarya Sokak 14) Set in a 200-year-old building, this recently refurbished club is open-air amid orange trees and beautiful bars draped with beautiful people.

Ecstasy (☎ 612 2208; Sakarya Sokak 10) bar is similar. Known to be gay-friendly are **Tattoo Bar** (☎ 612 7693; Tuna Sokak 7) and the British pub-style **Taps** (☎ 612 1371; Tuna Sokak 4).

MEYHANES

Kaleiçi (the old part of Kuşadası) is home to several *meyhanes* (taverns) where meze and raki (aniseed brandy) are served up accompanied by live music.

Bizim Meyhane (☎ 614 4152; Kışla Sokak; beer/raki €2.75/2.20; 🕒 8.30pm–4am) Low-beamed and covered with musical instruments on the old stone walls, this place looks more barn than bar. Run by a sister and brother who sing and play instruments, it's atmospheric, infectious and fun. Join the locals tossing back the raki.

Getting There & Away

BOAT

All Kuşadası travel agents sell tickets to the Greek island of Samos.

From 1 April to 31 October, boats depart daily from Kuşadası to Samos at 8.30am. From 1 May, there's an additional boat at 5pm. Note that ferries do not operate in winter. Tickets cost €30 for a single, €35 for a same-day return and €50 for an open return.

If you stay the night you will be landed with a €9 tax for leaving Greece and another €9 tax for coming back into Turkey. Some pensions discount these tickets, so ask, and flash your student card. You must be at the harbour 45 minutes before sailing time for immigration formalities.

The boats are operated by **Meander Travel** (☎ 612 3859; www.meandertravel.com; Kibris Caddesi 1; 🕒 9am–7pm winter, 9am–9pm summer), which has its office right by the dock and also offers a range of other domestic tours.

BUS

Kuşadası's otogar is at the southern end of Kahramanlar Caddesi on the bypass highway. Several companies have ticket offices on İsmet İnönü Bulvarı and offer *servis* (shuttle minibuses) to save you the trek out there. Note that dolmuşes leave from the centrally located Adnan Menderes Bulvarı.

DOLMUŞ SERVICES FROM SÖKE'S OTOGAR

Destination	Fare (TL)	Distance (km)	Frequency (per day)
Aydın	6.50	59	every 20 min
Bafa	6.50	30	every 20 min
Balat (for Miletus)	5	35	every 30 min
Didyma	5.50	56	every 20 min
Güllübahçe (for Priene)	3.25	17	every 20 min
Güzelçamlı	4.50	22	every 20 min
Kuşadası	4	20	every 20 min
Milas	7.50	82	every 20 min

In summer, three buses run daily to Bodrum (TL20, two to 2½ hours, 151km); in winter, take a dolmuş to Söke (TL4, at least every 30 minutes all year). For Didyma, Priene and Miletus, change also at Söke. For more information about getting to the 'PMD' ruins, see p260.

For Selçuk (TL4, 25 minutes), dolmuşes run every 15 minutes. For Pamucak or Ephesus, take the Selçuk dolmuş (which can drop you off there). For Seherihisar (TL6.50, 70 minutes), dolmuşes leave every 45 minutes all year.

Getting Around

You can't get a bus direct from Kuşadası to İzmir's Adnan Menderes airport, but will have to take the much more long-winded route of taking a bus to İzmir otogar (TL15, 1¼ hours, 80km), take the free shuttle service to the centre, then take a bus (see p229) or a taxi (€40).

Şehirçi minibuses (TL1.25) run every few minutes in summer (every 15 to 20 in winter) from Kuşadası otogar to the town centre, and up and down the coast. Kadınlar Denizi minibuses speed along the coast road south to the beach. You can pick up a minibus heading north along the coast to Kuştur (TL4) at the junction of İstiklal Sokak and Atatürk Bulvarı.

SÖKE

☎ 0256 / pop 66,160

Söke is a modern town that's enlivened only by Wednesday and Sunday markets. However, it's the main transport hub for this part of the region and you may be forced to come here to change buses as you travel around the coast.

You can also base yourself here for visiting the Dilek Peninsula or Priene, Miletus and Didyma, cutting out the transport time from Selçuk or Kuşadası.

Buses run to İzmir (TL10 to TL15, usually every 15 minutes), to Denizli (for Pamukkale; TL15 to TL20, four times daily) and Bodrum (TL15 every hour). For dolmuş services see the table (above). For Selçuk, go to Kuşadası and change.

DILEK PENINSULA

About 26km south of Kuşadası, the Dilek Peninsula juts westwards into the Aegean, almost touching the Greek island of Samos. West of the village of Güzelçamlı is **Dilek National Park** (Dilek Milli Parkı; admission per person/car TL5/10; ☞ 8am-7pm summer, 8am-5pm winter), a peaceful, mountainous nature reserve with some fine walking and horse-riding areas, and unspoilt coves for swimming.

Just outside the park entrance, look out for a brown sign with 'Zeus Mağarası' written on it, which indicates the location of a cave where you can swim in water that's icy-cool in summer and warm in winter.

National park dolmuşes drop you off at the cliff top above **İçmeler Koyu**, a protected cove about 1km past the entrance. It's a steep walk down to the sandy beach, which is very popular locally (and inevitably rather cigarette butt-strewn) and has lounge chairs and umbrellas. A paved road runs along the cliff-top, beside which are a number of purpose-built viewing points, where you can take in the lovely views out to sea. About 3km beyond İçmeler Koyu an unpaved turn-off heads 1km downhill on the right to **Aydınlık Beach**, a quieter pebble-and-sand strand about 800m long with surf and backed by pines.

Less than 1km further along is a **jandarma** (police) post. Shortly afterwards a turn on the left is signposted **Kanyon**. If you follow this path all the way it will eventually bring you back to Güzelçamlı, after about six hours' stiff walking through beautiful, peaceful pine

forest. Alternatively, you can just take a turn up and down the hill and then return to the main road.

After another 500m you reach the turn-off for **Kavaklı Burun** (also known as Kalamaki Beach and the last dolmuş stop), a sand-and-pebble surf beach. As at Aydınlık, there's a second entrance to the beach at the far end, another 1km along.

A final rather scrubby and pebbly beach, **Karasu Koyu**, is a further kilometre on. Just beyond this the park becomes a military zone to which members of the public are not admitted – slightly frustratingly as this is where the park's most exciting wildlife (including, reputedly, the extremely rare Anatolian panther) resides. It's 9.5km back to the park entrance.

Sleeping & Eating

Ecer Pension (☎ 646 2737; www.turkeypension.com; s/d €12.50/25) Though you'd be forgiven for mistaking it for a ramshackle farmhouse, the pension's rooms are simple, tidy and clean. Run by a charming Turkish-German couple, Anneliese and Necip, you can sip their homemade wine in their rambling garden. It lies 200m east of the bus station on the main road.

The owners' son can also arrange horses and guides (€15 to €30 per person for one to five hours) or take you on a trek (from one hour to eight hours) in the park. The scenery is beautiful and you may see ruined Byzantine monasteries and wildlife including wild horses and boar.

Although camping is not allowed in the national park, there are several sites near the gate at Güzelçamlı.

Outside the park are several, similar fish restaurants perched right on the water; choose the most popular when you visit. The beaches in the park have small cafés selling cold drinks and simple meals, as well as picnicking facilities.

Getting There & Away

Minibuses from Söke travel as far as İçmeler Koyu (TL4, 35 to 40 minutes); minibuses from Kuşadası continue right down the peninsula to Kavaklı Burun (TL4.5). You pay the park entrance fee while on the bus. Minibuses generally run from 7am to midnight in summer and 7am to 6.45pm in winter, but the later dolmuşes fill up quickly, especially at weekends.

You can walk the 2km from Güzelçamlı to İçmeler Koyu in 30 minutes.

PRIENE, MİLETUS & DIDYMA

☎ 0256

Ephesus may be the crème de la crème of the Aegean archaeological sites, but south of Kuşadası lie the ruins of three other, much-less-frequently visited (but still important) ancient settlements. Priene occupies a dramatic position overlooking the plain of the Büyük Menderes (Meander) River; Miletus preserves a spectacular theatre; and Didyma has a Temple of Apollo vaguely reminiscent of the great temples at Karnak in Egypt.

Beyond Didyma lies **Altınkum Beach**, one of Turkey's finest and busiest beaches, its swathe of 'golden sand' popular with the English package-holiday brigade for whom innumerable British-style cafés dish up the tastes of home. If you end your tour of the ruins at Didyma, you might want to take a quick dip in the sea at the beach before returning to base.

GETTING THERE & AROUND

If you start early in the morning from Kuşadası or Selçuk, it's just about possible to get to Priene, Miletus, Didyma and Altınkum Beach in the same day using public transport. However, it can be awkward and time-consuming as dolmuş services are patchy and you may have to keep backtracking to Söke.

If you do want to do it yourself, start out by catching a dolmuş from Kuşadası (TL4, 20km) to Söke and then another to Güllübağçe (for Priene; TL3.25, 17km). When you've finished at Priene, wait for a passing dolmuş heading for Miletus or Söke, hitch the 22km across the flood plain to Miletus, or return to Söke and set out again. For more information on the dangers of hitching see p689.

Getting from Miletus to Didyma can be tricky. Dolmuşes do run from Miletus to Didyma (TL4) but if there's no sign of a dolmuş from Miletus to Akköy, you will either have to try hitching or return to Söke and start out all over again. From Akköy, there are dolmuşes every 20 minutes to Didyma (TL3) and Altınkum.

Lost already? If so it's easy to pick up an organised 'PMD' tour, as they're known (around €30 per person) from Selçuk otogar, or any of the tour operators in Selçuk or Kuşadası. Your hotel in either town will probably be able to take care of the arrangements. Minibuses

usually leave around 9am, and spend one hour at Priene, 1½ hours at Miletus, 2½ hours at Didyma and 1½ hours at Altinkum Beach, before returning to Selçuk at about 6pm.

In high summer, tours run daily and you may need to book in advance. At other times, however, they may only operate when enough people have expressed an interest. In winter, note that there are fewer direct dolmuşes and you have to change more frequently from town to town.

Without a doubt, hiring a car is the easiest way to visit these places, allowing you to do them in reverse order, saving Priene, which enjoys the most splendid setting, till last. Ask at your hotel. Most international agencies rent out cars for around €50 a day, while a host of smaller travel agencies do it for about half that. Shop around.

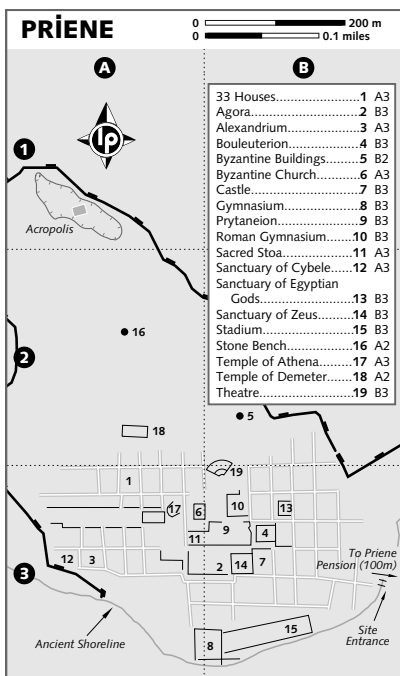
Priene (Güllübahçe)

Priene is one of the most atmospheric of all of Turkey's ancient sites. Perched high on the craggy slopes of Mt Mykale, it enjoys an isolated, windswept aesthetic in stark contrast to the crowds and commerce of Ephesus.

Outside of the official tours that arrive each day from Selçuk and Kuşadası, the site may be pretty sparsely populated when you visit – you may even get it completely to yourself. The emptiness can give it an almost eerie vibe, with the only sounds the wind, the high-pitched whirring of cicadas, and the soft scuttle of the lizards scampering around the stones.

Though an important city in around 300 BC when the League of Ionian Cities held congresses and festivals here, **Priene** (☎ 547 1165; admission TL3; ☎ 8.30am–6.30pm May–Sep, 8.30am–5.30pm Oct–Apr) was smaller and less important than nearby Miletus. As such, its Hellenistic buildings did not vanish beneath newer Roman ones.

Of the numerous buildings that remain, the most impressive are those of the **Temple of Athena**, which enjoys commanding views of the plain below. Designed by Pythius of Halicarnassus, it is regarded as the epitome of an Ionian temple. Five columns have been re-erected and all around lie the sections of other columns, like giant stone wheels, all in seemingly good condition and arranged so neatly as to look like the careful preparations for something new, rather than the aftermath of something very old. So many remain that



the temple's former reality seems tantalisingly close. As one American tourist asked, vocalising the unspoken thoughts of many, 'why don't they just put it back together again?'

Elsewhere, the **theatre** is one of the best-preserved examples from the Hellenistic period. It had a capacity to seat 6500 people; look out for the finely carved front seats for VIPs. Also worth seeking out are the remains of the **bouleuterion** (council chamber), a **Byzantine church**, the **gymnasium** and the **stadium**.

SLEEPING & EATING

All of the following are on or just off the main road, Atatürk Caddesi.

Priene Pension (☎ 542 1725; fax 547 1565; camping per person TL8, s/d TL40/60) Currently the only hotel in town, the Priene boasts a beautifully kept garden. Rooms are simple but quite spacious and clean.

Around 30m beyond the Priene, where the dolmuş stops is the **Şelale Restaurant** (☎ 547 1009; ☎ 8am–11pm). Attractively positioned in the shadow of a ruined Byzantine aqueduct, it has a pool home to trout (which you can eat; TL8) and ducks (which you can't). Next door

is the **Villa Sultan Café Bar Restaurant** (☎ 547 1204; köfte TL6, kebab TL7-9; ☎ 8am-11pm) in a converted kilim factory. The tables are set in a lovely courtyard with a fountain and orange trees and it offers excellent traditional fare.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Dolmuşes run every 15 minutes between Priene (Güllübahçe; TL3.25, 17km) and Söke; the last one back to Söke leaves Priene at 7pm.

Miletus (Milet)

The ancient town of **Miletus** (☎ 875 5562; admission TL3; ☎ 8.30am-6.30pm May-Jun, 8.30am-7.30pm Jul-Aug, 8.30am-5.30pm Oct-Apr) lies 22km south of Priene. Its **Great Theatre**, rising up as you approach from the south, is the most significant – and impressive – reminder of a once-grand city, which was a commercial and governmental centre from about 700 BC to AD 700. Later, the harbour filled with silt and Miletus' commerce dwindled. The 15,000-seat theatre was originally a Hellenistic building, but the Romans reconstructed it extensively during the 1st century AD. Though nearly 2000 years old, it's in good condition and has many features, including covered walkways around each tier of seating, still used in today's stadiums, which really help to bring it to life.

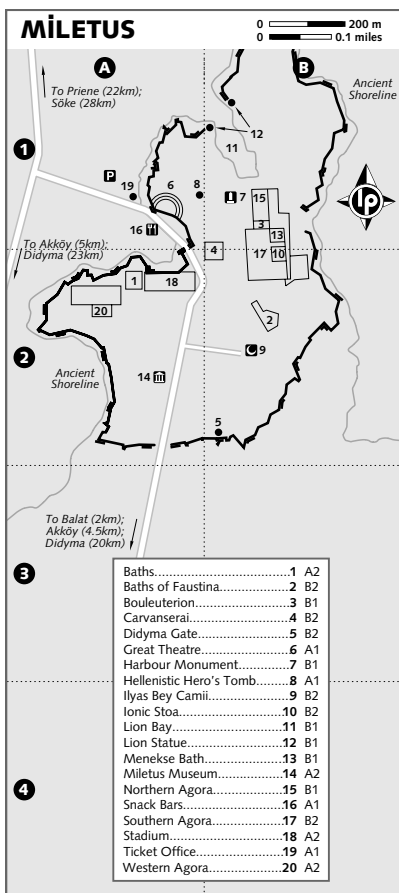
It's well worth climbing to the top of the theatre where the ramparts of a later Byzantine castle provide a viewing platform for several other groups of ruins. Look left and you'll see what remains of the **harbour**, called Lion Bay after the stone statues of lions that guarded it. Look right and you'll see the **stadium**; the northern, western and southern **agoras**; the vast **Baths of Faustina**, constructed for Emperor Marcus Aurelius' wife; and a **bouleuterion** between the northern and southern agoras.

South of the main ruins stands the fascinating **Ilyas Bey Camii** (1404), dating from a period after the Seljuks but before the Ottomans, when this region was ruled by the Turkish emirs of Menşe. The doorway and *mihrab* (niche indicating the direction of Mecca) are exquisite, and you'll probably have them to yourself.

Across the road from the Great Theatre, there are a couple of **cafés** (☎ 7am-6pm) serving reasonably priced snacks including delicious *gözleme* (TL3) and salads (TL5).

GETTING THERE & AWAY

From Söke take a dolmuş (TL2.50) to Balat and ask to be dropped at the Miletus turn-



off, from where it is about a 1km walk. From Miletus there are no dolmuşes so you'll have to re-trace your steps to the main road. If there's not much traffic about, it may be quicker to return to Söke (TL2.50) and start out again for Didyma. For current information on local timetables (which change regularly), ask at the ticket office at Miletus. If you get stuck, the staff can sometimes call the Balat dolmuş station and request a pick-up.

Didyma (Didim)

Ah, what might have been. Just a few more columns and Didyma's **Temple of Apollo** (☎ 811 0035; admission TL3; ☎ 8.30am-7.30pm 15 Apr-Sep, 9am-5.30pm Oct-14 Apr) might have been one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. But its

122 columns made it only the second-largest temple in the world, and with 127, the Temple of Artemis (see p240) near Ephesus took the slot instead.

It was still a very important site in its day, home to an oracle whose influence was second only to the one in Delphi (there's a bit of a pattern emerging here). But ancient Didyma was never a real town; only the priests who specialised in oracular temple management lived here. There's a town here now, all right, with the ruins of the temple crowded in on all sides by pensions, carpet stalls and restaurants.

It may be of little comfort now, but the ruins of the temple are much more impressive than those of Artemis. Significant sections of the thick, imposing walls remain standing and three columns have been reconstructed, showing their richly carved bases. Behind the temple porch is a great doorway where oracular poems were written and presented to petitioners. Covered ramps on both sides of the porch lead down to the *cella* (inner room), where the oracle sat and prophesied after drinking from the sacred spring. All around the ground are scattered fragments, including a photogenic head of Medusa (she of the snake hairdo). There used to be a road lined with statues that led to a small harbour, but after standing unmoved for 23 centuries the statues were taken to the British Museum in 1858.

Lovely Altinkum Beach (p260) is nearby.

SLEEPING & EATING

Medusa House (☎ 811 0063; www.medusahouse.com; s/d €30/55) Just around the corner from the temple on the Altinkum road is this restored 150-year-old stone house with five pleasantly decorated rooms set in a very attractive garden (complete with original Greek urns and shaded terraces).

Oracle Pension (☎ 811 0270; s/d €35/55) Next door to Medusa House, the Oracle has simple, rather weary-looking rooms, but this is more than made up for by the stunning views over the temple just next door from the shaded terrace.

Apollon Café & Bar (☎ 811 6050; snacks TL5-6, mains TL7-11; ☎ 8pm-midnight) Across from the temple entrance, the Apollon is located in a traditional stone house and has seating either in the cool interior or on the pleasant terrace overlooking the temple. The menu is extensive (it's aimed mainly at tour groups) and prices reasonable.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Dolmuşes run frequently between Söke and Didim (TL7.50, one hour) and Altinkum (TL7.50, 1½ hours). There are also frequent dolmuşes from Didim to Akköy (TL3.25, 30 minutes) from where you may be able to hitch to Miletus.

HERAKLEIA (LATMOS)

☎ 0252

About 30km south of Söke, the highway skirts the southern shore of the huge Bafa Gölü (Lake Bafa), once a gulf of the Aegean but left behind as a lake as the sea retreated. At the southeastern end of the lake is a village called Çamiçi (Bafa), from which a paved road is signposted 10km north for Kapıkırı (for Herakleia). Watch carefully for the sign, which is easily missed.

At the end of a twisting, rock-dominated road, you'll come to the ruins of Herakleia ad Latmos in and around the village of Kapıkırı, which enjoys a dramatic lakeside setting.

Above the village looms dramatic **Besparmak Dağı** (Five-Fingered Mountain; 1500m), the ancient Mt Latmos that featured in Greek mythology as the place where the hunky shepherd boy Endymion happened to fall asleep. While he was napping, the moon goddess Selene glanced down and fell in love with him. Endymion had asked Zeus to grant him eternal youth and beauty in exchange for staying asleep for eternity. The unfortunate Selene could only gaze down at him night after night, as the moon is forever fated to look down on us mere mortals.

Bafa is an area where Christian hermits took refuge during the 8th-century Arab invasions (note the many ruined churches and monasteries in the vicinity). The monks reputedly considered Endymion a saint for his powers of self-denial.

Herakleia is a fascinating place where the urban and the rural co-exist in such proximity that it almost seems as if a village has been built in the middle of a farm. Fields dotted with beehives close in on all sides, chickens and donkeys stroll the roadsides and there are probably more cowsheds than houses. Remnants of ancient sites are strewn throughout the town, popping up here and there as you make your way around. In a way, the whole village is the attraction, which is why the ticket booth has been set up at its entrance (TL8 if the ticket attendant is around).

Note that there's only one small shop and no bank or ATM in the village.

Tourism has brought much needed revenue to an otherwise rather impoverished community. However, there is still a good deal of poverty and you can pretty much guarantee that when you arrive, you will attract the attention of the town's women (and it will be the women) who may latch on to you as impromptu guides. All carry trays of goods – tablecloths, jewellery, lace etc – wrapped beneath a scarf on their backs, which they will offer to you in hope of a purchase. You will probably get in a lot of refusing practise.

Sights & Activities

The main draw is the glorious lake itself, with the village enjoying wonderful views over its silvery expanses. To get to its edge, head down the road past the **Temple of Endymion**, partly built into the rock, until you reach the ruins of a **Byzantine castle**, which looks down on the city's **necropolis** – a series of rectangular tombs cut directly into the rock.

At the lakeside, near the ruins of a **Byzantine church**, there's a small beach of white coarse sand. The island just offshore can sometimes be reached on foot as the lake's water level falls. Around its base can be seen the foundations of several ancient buildings.

The Agora Pension, among others, offers boat trips around the lake to see the birds and the ruins and to swim. Half-day tours cost €30 and full-day tours €50. The restaurants by the lake also offer tours.

Elsewhere, a path behind the Agora car park leads westwards to the large **Temple of Athena**, on a promontory overlooking the lake. Though only three walls remain, the large and beautifully cut building blocks (put together without cement) are impressive. Other signposted paths lead eastwards to the **agora**, the **bouleuterion** and, several hundred metres through stone-walled pastures and across a valley, to the unrestored and oddly sited **theatre**; its most interesting features are the rows of seats and flights of steps cut into the rock. Stretches of **city wall** dating from around 300 BC are also dotted about the village.

Sleeping & Eating

Pensions offer half-board, but you can normally request bed and breakfast if you wish.

Haus Yasemin Pension (☎ 543 5598; s/d €22/45) Further up the hill, past the *agora*, this place

has a welcoming feel, its grounds filled with family clutter. The traditionally styled rooms are simple but spotless and there's a nice terrace with views over the village. It's better value than most.

Agora Pansiyon (☎ 543 5445; www.agora.pansiyon.de; s/d with shower & half-board €40/50; ♿ ♿) Though the rooms are attractively decorated, the hotel's setting is its biggest asset, with flower-filled gardens and a peaceful outlook. There's also a *hamam* and shaded terrace with hammocks. Mithat, the son of the owner, can act as guide to the area and take you hiking (seven-day hiking programs, with half-board accommodation from €460).

Pelikan Restaurant (☎ 543 5158; meze TL5, fish meals TL12-18; ☎ 7am-midnight) With great views from its terrace out over the lake, this restaurant offers a simple menu made from local ingredients – pine honey, olives, cheese, eggs and, of course, fish. There's also a slightly gloomy attached pension and the owner, Murat, offers boat tours of the lake.

Kaya Restaurant & Pansiyon (☎ 543 5380; meals €5.55; ☎ 8am-midnight) This is another good restaurant with a great position down by the waterfront. To get to it, take the road that forks left down to the water just before the ticket booth if entering the village.

If you don't fancy staying in the village, there are other lakeside accommodation options. One of the best is the **Club Natura Oliva** (☎ 519 1072; www.clubnatura.com; Pıracık Köyü; s/d with half-board €35/53; ♿ ♿), around 10km north of Herakleia turn-off, a lovely 30-room hotel set in an olive plantation (it makes its own olive oil using a traditional stone mill) with awe-inspiring views over the water and offering a wide program of nature walks.

Getting There & Away

Minibuses from Bodrum (TL6.25), Milas (TL3.50, 45 minutes) or Söke (TL5, one hour) will drop you at Bafa. Unfortunately *dolmuş*es no longer run from Bafa to Herakleia, but you can get a taxi (TL12), or if you've decided where to stay, you can call the pensions for a free pick-up. From Bafa, *dolmuş*es run to Milas and Söke only.

MILAS

☎ 0252 / pop 48,890

As Mylasa, Milas was capital of the Kingdom of Caria, except during the period when Mausolus ruled the kingdom from Hali-

carnassus (present-day Bodrum). Today, it's a fairly sleepy but still sizeable agricultural town. Don't be put off by what you see from the otogar – the town is fairly attractive and makes a pleasant break from the bright lights of the coastal resorts. On Tuesday there's an excellent local market, which has become an attraction in its own right, welcoming weekly tour parties in summer from Bodrum.

Since Milas is actually closer to Bodrum's international airport than Bodrum itself, you could stay the night in Milas if you arrive late in the day during high season when Bodrum is likely to be full.

Orientation

Approaching Milas from Söke, you pass the otogar 1km before reaching the road to Labranda on the left. To the right, İnönü Caddesi is marked for 'Şehir Merkezi' (city centre). It's another 1km to the centre of town at the Milas Belediye Parkı.

Sights & Activities

Coming into town along İnönü Caddesi, watch for signs pointing to the right for the *belediye*; opposite the *belediye* turn left for the **Baltalı Kapı** (Gate with an Axe). Cross a small bridge and look left to see the well-preserved Roman gate, which has marble posts and lintel, plus Corinthian capitals. The eponymous double-headed axe is carved into the keystone on the northern side.

Return to the road until you reach the shady Milas Belediye Parkı. Turn right at the traffic roundabout, in the centre of which is a model of the Gümüşkesen monumental tomb.

Continue to the end of the road and turn right, then left at Gümüşkesen Caddesi (by the Ambar Café), from where, following a steep 600m walk to the top of the hill, you'll find the **Gümüşkesen** ('That Which Cuts Silver' or 'Silver Purse'; admission free), a Roman tomb dating from the 2nd century AD and thought to have been modelled on the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus (albeit on a much smaller scale). As in the mausoleum, Corinthian columns support a pyramidal roof, beneath which is a tomb chamber with fine carvings on the ceiling. A hole in the platform floor allowed devotees to pour libations into the tomb to quench the dead souls' thirst. The small surrounding park is popular with local families.

Return to the roundabout and continue straight across, until you reach the end of

the road. Turn left and, around 100m further on, you'll find the city's small archaeological collection, the **Milas Müzesi** (Şair Ülvi Akgün Caddesi; admission TL3; ☎ 8.30am-noon & 1-5.30pm), which houses various finds from the local region, including Bronze Age tools, gold pieces from Stratonikeia, one of the most important towns in ancient Caria, and various fragments of Roman statuary and buildings, many of which are displayed in the garden outside.

You might also want to see some of Milas' fine mosques, especially the **Ulu Cami** (1378) and **Orhan Bey Camii** (1330), built when Milas was capital of the Turkish principality of Menteşe. The larger, more impressive **Firuz Bey Camii** (1394) was built shortly after Menteşe was incorporated into the new and growing Ottoman Empire.

Milas has kept some of its older houses and there is some very impressive Ottoman and early-20th-century architecture, especially along Atatürk Bulvarı and behind the *belediye*.

Sleeping & Eating

Yazar Otel (☎ 512 4203; Kadiağa Caddesi 70; s/d TL35/50; 🍴) Conveniently located for the Tuesday bazaar (which starts at its steps), this hotel is small but cheerful, comfortable and clean. Rooms have TV and minibar. It lies right next door to the Halk Bank.

Milashan Otel (☎ 513 7901; www.milashanotel.com; Cumhuriyet Caddesi; s/d with bathroom & air-con €50/65; 🍴) Handy for the airport, the Milashan is on the opposite side of town to the Yazar, opposite the Ören road. It's big, pink and businessy, but the rooms are comfortable and there's a reasonable restaurant. A good overnight pit-stop.

Dilek Pastaneleri (☎ 512 4140; Kadiağa Caddesi 32; coffee from TL1.20, ice cream TL0.75; ☎ 7.30am-midnight) On the same street as Yazar Otel, this is a pleasant place for breakfast, snacks or coffee and cake.

Other decent stop-offs include **Pamukkale** (☎ 512 1919; Menteşe Caddesi; ☎ 7.30am-1am), just around the corner from the Yazar Otel where you can get a good kebab in pide for TL4 and the **Park Café** (Milas Belediye Parkı; ☎ 8am-7.30pm), where you can enjoy a tea (TL0.50) under shady trees while you plan your next move.

Getting There & Away

The otogar is on the main Bodrum to Söke road, 1km from the centre, although dolmuşes

from Bodrum (TL6.50, one hour) drop off in town as well. There are also frequent dolmuş services from Söke (TL7.50, 82km).

A small **dolmuş station** (☎ 512 4014; Köy Tabakhane Garajı) in the town centre offers time-tabled minibuses to Ören (TL4) and Iasos (TL4.25).

AROUND MİLAS

Beçin Castle

Just over 1km along the road from Milas to Ören (watch for the brown sign immediately after a corner), a road on the right leads to **Beçin Kalesi** (Beçin Castle; admission TL3; ☎ 8am-dusk), a Byzantine fortress on a rocky outcrop that was largely remodelled by the Turkish emirs of Menteşe who used Beçin as their capital in the 14th century.

The castle walls are striking, perched on high with a giant Turkish flag flapping in the breeze, and offer great views of Milas down below. Be careful when exploring as the drops from the unfenced sides are sheer and steep. Don't let anyone tell you to 'go back a bit' for a photo.

There's not a lot to see inside. Atop the adjacent hill, some 500m away, are other remnants of the 14th-century Menteşe settlement, including the **Kızılhan** (Red Caravanserai), **Orhan Bey Camii**, the **Ahmet Gazi tomb** and, the highlight, a newly restored **medrese** (seminary).

Labranda

Set into a steep hillside in an area that once supplied the ancient city of Mylasa with its water, the site of ancient Labranda is surrounded by fragrant pine forests peopled by beekeepers. Late in the season (October) you can see their tents pitched in the groves as they go about their business of extracting the honey and rendering the wax from the honeycombs. It's a beautiful place to visit that's well worth seeking out, not least because so few people make it up here.

Labranda (admission TL8; ☎ 8am-5pm) was a holy place, where worship of a local god was going on by the 6th century BC and perhaps long before. Later it became a sanctuary to Zeus, controlled for a long time by Milas. The great **Temple of Zeus** honours the god's warlike aspect (Stratius, or Labrayndus, which means 'Axe-Bearing'). There may have been an oracle here; certainly festivals and Olympic games were held at the site.

Two men's banqueting halls, the **First Andron** and **Second Andron**, are in surprisingly good

condition, as is a fine 4th-century **tomb** and other buildings. Excavated by a Swedish team in the early 20th century, the ruins are interesting enough but it's the site itself, with its spectacular views over the valley, which is most impressive.

Labranda seems to have been abandoned around AD 1000. Today, a caretaker will show you around; he speaks only Turkish (with a few words of English), but the site is well labelled.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

The junction for the road to Labranda is just northwest of Milas on the road to Söke. It's 14km to the site. The road passes through the village of Kargıcak, 8km along, but even if you could find a dolmuş going as far as that you'd still have a long walk ahead of you. Do be careful as there's a quarry up past the site, and lorries roar up and down the narrow road all day long. Hitching is possible but not always reliable.

A taxi from Milas shouldn't cost more than TL30 – the drivers near the Otel Arı seem more willing to negotiate than those near the Ören dolmuş station. Be sure to agree on a price that includes at least an hour's waiting time.

Euromos

The ancient city of Euromos once stood on a site about 12km northwest of Milas and 1km from the village of Selimiye. Today, almost all that remains of it is the picturesque, and partly restored, **Temple of Zeus** (admission TL8; ☎ 8.30am-5.30pm Oct-Apr, to 7pm May-Sep) with some unfluted columns, which suggest it was never completed.

First settled in the 6th century BC, Euromos originally held a sanctuary to a local deity. With the coming of Greek (then Roman) culture, the local god's place was taken by Zeus. Euromos reached the height of its prosperity between 200 BC and AD 200. Emperor Hadrian, who built so many monuments in Anatolia, is thought to have also built the temple here.

If you're interested in ruins, you can clamber up the slopes to find other bits of the town. Climb up through the olive groves past the toilets, past part of a fortification wall and you'll find yourself on flat ground that was once the stage of the ancient **theatre**. It's badly ruined, with olive trees poking up from the

few remaining rows of seats. The town's **agora** is down by the highway, with only a few toppled column drums to mark it.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

To get here, take the Milas to Söke bus or *dolmuş* and ask to get out at the ruins. They're around 200m from the highway. Alternatively, take a *dolmuş* from Milas to Kıyıkışlacık, get out at the road junction for Iasos and walk the short distance north along the highway until you see the Euromos ruins on the right.

Kıyıkışlacık (Iasos)

☎ 0252

About 2km southwest of Euromos (10km northwest of Milas) is a sign for Kıyıkışlacık (Iasos). From here a road heads coastward for around 20km, winding high up into the hills, and offering great views of the river plain, until it reaches Iasos, a sleepy Aegean fishing village set amid the tumbled ruins of the ancient city.

The small harbour is crowded with fishing boats. A handful of small pensions and restaurants cater for travellers who want to get away from it all for a few days.

SIGHTS

About 100m before you reach Iasos proper, the road forks. Bear right along the gravel road where the large yellow sign reads 'Balık Pazari Açık Hava Müseyi', and you should come to the **Balıkpazarı Açık Hava Müzesi** (Iasos Museum; admission TL3; ☎ 8.30am-5.30pm Tue-Sun) and, opposite it, a small cabin (the ticket office). Housed in the old fish market, the museum holds the village's most interesting ruin, a monumental Roman tomb (as well as various other classical fragments).

If, instead, you bear left, the road continues to the port, then up over the hill and along the coast. The hill above the port is covered with ruins, including a walled **acropolis-fortress** (admission TL2; ☎ 8.30am-5.30pm Tue-Sun). Excavations have also revealed the city's *bouleuterion* and *agora*, a gymnasium, a basilica, a Roman temple of Artemis Astias (AD 190) and numerous other buildings.

SLEEPING & EATING

Climb the hill behind the restaurants to find the delightful **Cengiz** (☎ 537 7181; cengiz1955@gmail.com; s/d TL25/40), the **Zeytin** (☎ 537 7008; s/d TL25/40; ☎ Apr-20 Oct) and **Kaya Pension** (☎ 537 7439; www

.iasos.de; s/d €15/29; ☎). All have simple, spotless rooms and lovely terraces with gorgeous views. The rooms of the Cengiz and Zeytin have balconies (some with sea views – ask for rooms 1, 2 or 6 at the Cengiz), but the Kaya has a nice pool. All places lie on Kıyıkışlacık Köyü, the main road, on the hill above the harbour.

If you haven't yet feasted on Turkish fish, here's your chance. Restaurants offer delicious fresh fish at feasible prices. The **Dilek Restaurant** (☎ 537 7307; ☎ 9am-midnight May-Sep) at the far end of the harbour has a great, open meze buffet (with around 20 different types of meze) for TL15, and fish (such as sea bream) for around TL10 to TL18. **Iasos Deniz Restaurant** (☎ 537 7066; ☎ 10am-midnight) also serves fish (from TL10), and has a terrace right over the water where you can watch little fish dart in and out of the seaweed.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

In theory, during summer and on Thursdays during the rest of the year (for the Güllük market), municipality boats sail from Güllük to Iasos (TL6, 15 minutes) and back. In practice, they often don't, so check. You can also hire a fishing boat yourself (TL20 one way, 20 minutes) if you want to.

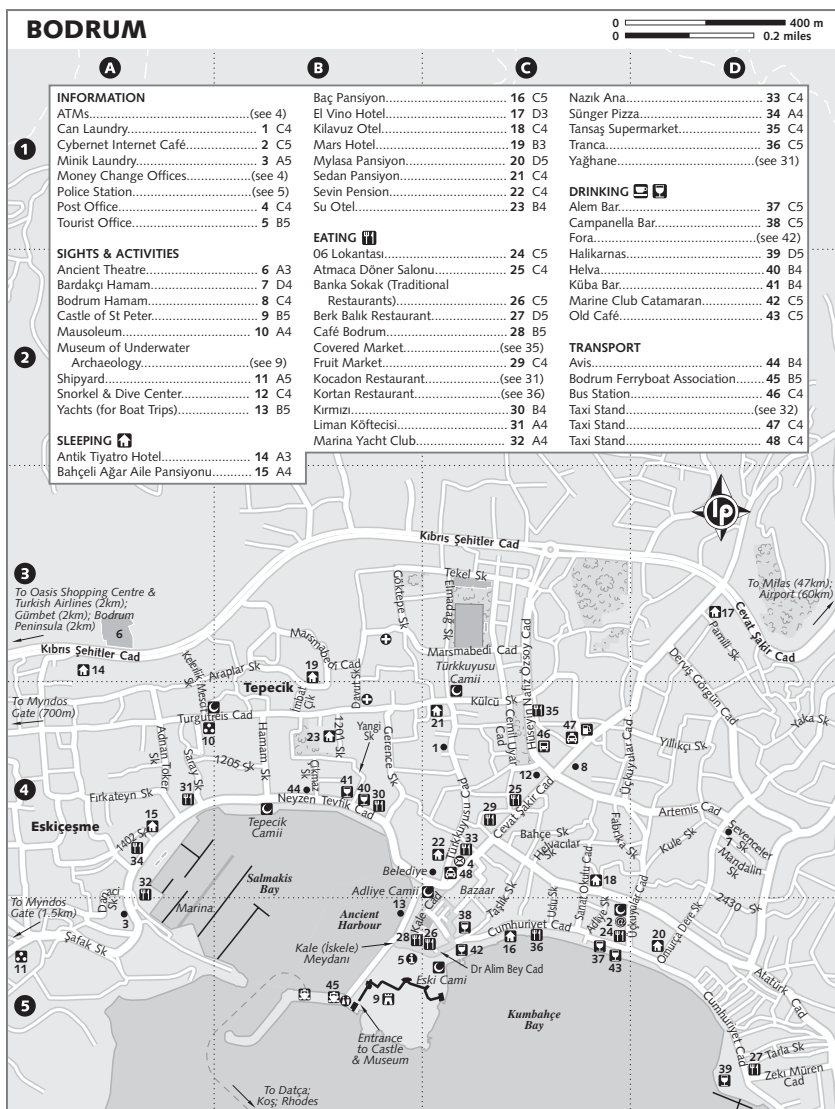
Between Iasos and Milas (TL4), *dolmuş*es run every hour in summer (every 1½ hours in winter).

BODRUM

☎ 0252 / pop 28,580

Some people will tell you that Bodrum is an unsophisticated low-end resort town. These people obviously haven't been to Kuşadası. In fact, while Bodrum certainly welcomes the hordes during the summer months, it manages to do so without diluting its essential character or charm – not an easy trick to pull off.

With laws in place restricting the height of the town's buildings, it has nice architectural uniformity to it. Out of season, its whitewashed houses and subtropical gardens can appear almost idyllic. And even when its seafront bars are spilling over with people and their clubs are pumping, there's still something rather refined about the place. Despite its full-on reputation, tourism is by no means restricted to packagers and budget travellers, although they are very well catered for. Rather, Bodrum operates a sort of two-tier form of tourism with plenty of happy-hour bars and cheap excursion boats for



the fun-and-sun seekers from Europe, alongside a marina filled with multi-million dollar yachts and a collection of high-end restaurants aimed at wealthy Turks.

Sunbathing, dining and nightlife aside, Bodrum does boast a few worthwhile attractions, chief among them the outstanding Museum of Underwater Archaeology,

located in the Castle of St Peter, the town's defining landmark.

History

Aeons ago Bodrum rose to fame on the back of the Mausoleum, the spectacular tomb of the Carian King Mausolus that Roman historian Pliny the Elder designated one of the

BODRUM'S BIG BLUE

With high visibility, clean water, and pleasant and steady temperatures, Bodrum is a good place for diving or snorkelling. Marine life that can potentially be spotted in its waters include octopus, turtle, barracuda, jack fish and parrot fish, although sadly not much coral. Diving clubs also have access to 'two old navy hulks' and are pushing to be given permission to dive some of the hundreds of incredible wrecks lying just off Bodrum's coast, which if granted would probably make it one of the best wreck diving sites in the world.

The **Snorkel & Dive Center** (☎ 313 6017; www.snorkeldiveshop.com; Cevat Şakir Caddesi 5; 🕒 10am-6pm winter, 9am-midnight summer) sells and rents snorkelling and diving equipment, and organises dives (full day's diving with two dives, boat, all equipment, insurance, hotel transfers and lunch per person €45). All-day snorkelling trips cost €20 per person. A four-day PADI Open Water course costs €350 per person.

Seven Wonders of the World. Sadly, not much remains to be seen today. Most visitors will be more impressed by the Castle of St Peter, standing sentinel over the town's twin bays.

Herodotus (c 485-425 BC), the 'Father of History', was Bodrum's most famous son. Between the two World Wars, writer Cevat Şakir Kabaağaç lived in political exile here and wrote an account of idyllic voyages along the Carian and Lycian coasts, then completely untouched by tourism. The 'Fisherman of Halicarnassus' called his most famous book *Mavi Yolculuk* (Blue Voyage), a name since co-opted for all cruises along these shores. More recently the late singer Zeki Muran settled in Bodrum, putting it on the map for gay travellers.

Orientation

The road to Bodrum winds through pine forests before cresting a hill to reveal a panorama of the town dominated by its striking Crusader castle, which sits atop a promontory neatly dividing the town into two roughly equal-sized bays. The main road into town is Cevat Şakir Caddesi, which takes you down past the otogar (around 400m inland) and then down along the front of the Salmakis Bay, where it turns into Neyzen Teyfik Caddesi.

From the otogar, walk south towards the sea, past the fruit market, and you'll come to a small white mosque, the Adliye Camii (Courthouse Mosque), which pretty much marks the centre of town. Just ahead of you is the covered bazaar and beyond that a small square where you'll find the tourist office. Continue south and you'll reach the castle entrance and ferry pier.

Bodrum's two bays have very different characters. Salmakis Bay, which runs from

the castle promontory to the marina, is the more self-consciously upmarket side of town, its waters filled with expensive yachts backed by a row of mostly high-end restaurants and clubs. Kumbağçe Bay, on the other hand, is very much the budget side of town, its services geared mainly towards European visitors. It's here that you'll find the town's narrow and rather ugly beach – although that doesn't stop it from being packed with sun-loungers in summer. Running behind it is the pedestrianised Dr Alim Bey Caddesi, packed with shops, bars and restaurants, and its continuation, Cumhuriyet Caddesi, whose long line of bars stretches all the way down to famed Halıkarnas, which marks the end of the bay. Past the club is another small curve of beach and a cruise ship pier.

Information

There are many ATMs and currency exchanges along Dr Alim Bey Caddesi and Cevat Şakir Caddesi.

Can Laundry (☎ 316 4089; Türkkuuyusu Caddesi 99; per 5kg load TL4; 🕒 8.30am-9pm Mon-Sat, 10am-9pm Sun)

Cybernet Internet Café (☎ 316 3167; Üçkuyular Caddesi 7; per hr TL2; 🕒 24hr)

Minik Laundry (☎ 316 7904; Neyzen Teyfik Caddesi 236; 4kg wash & dry TL7.50)

Post office (☎ 316 2760; Cevat Şakir Caddesi; 🕒 post office 8.30am-5pm, telephone exchange 8am-midnight)

Tourist office (☎ 316 1091; Kale Meydanı; 🕒 9am-6pm Mon-Fri, daily in summer) There is also a small tourist information booth next to the otogar entrance.

Sights & Activities

CASTLE OF ST PETER

When Tamerlane invaded Anatolia in 1402, throwing the nascent Ottoman Empire temporarily off balance, the Knights Hospitaller

based in Rhodes took the opportunity to capture Bodrum. By 1437 they had erected the Castle of St Peter, which they continued to augment with new defensive features – including moats, walls and water cisterns – over the ensuing decades. However, in 1522, when Süleyman the Magnificent captured the Knights' headquarters in Rhodes, the Bodrum contingent was forced to abandon the castle without having ever truly tested its fearsome defensive capabilities. The castle fell into decline during the succeeding centuries and suffered some shell damage during WWI. Reconstruction didn't begin in earnest until the 1960s, when it was used as an informal storage space for the booty collected during underwater archaeology missions, before becoming, in 1986, Bodrum's **Museum of Underwater Archaeology** (☎ 316 2516; www.bodrum-museum.com; admission TL10; ☎ 9am-noon & 1-7pm Tue-Sun summer, 8am-noon & 1-5pm winter).

It's an excellent museum and arguably the most important of its kind in the world with imaginatively displayed well-lit items, accompanied by plenty of information panels, maps, models, reconstructions, drawings, murals, dioramas and videos.

The views of the town from the battlements are spectacular and worth the entry price alone. As the museum is spread throughout the castle, you need two hours to do it justice. Arrows suggest routes around it (red for long; green for short), but guides are not available.

As you head up the stone ramp into the castle past a **Crusader coats of arms** carved in marble and mounted on the stone walls, keep an eye out for bits of marble filched from the ancient Mausoleum. The ramp leads to the castle's main court, centred on an ancient mulberry tree. To the left is a long display of **amphorae** – the castle owns one of the largest collections in the world – with examples from the 14th century BC to the present day, all recovered from the waters of southwest Turkey. The adjoining courtyard café, adorned with Greek and Roman statuary, provides a shady resting place, and there's a small glass-blowing workshop where you can watch glass bottles and jewellery being created (similar to those recovered from coastal wrecks).

The chapel here contains both a one-tenth-size complete model and a full-sized reconstruction of the stern of a 7th-century eastern **Roman ship** discovered off Yassıada. Visitors

can walk the decks, stand at the helm, look below decks at the cargo of wine and peek into the galley.

Follow the path to the left of the chapel to ascend to the towers. Up the ramp is the **Glass-Shipwreck exhibit** (admission TL5; ☎ 10-noon & 2-4pm Tue-Fri). As you enter, look for the castle-shaped dove-cote on the castle wall. Discovered by a sponge diver in 1973 and excavated by the American Professor George Bass and a team of marine archaeologists, the 16m-long, 5m-wide ship sank in AD 1025 while carrying 3 tonnes of mainly broken glass between Fatimid Syria and the Black Sea.

Next up is a small **Glass Hall** where glass finds from the 15th century BC to the 14th century AD are displayed. The assorted Mycenaean beads, Roman glass bottles and Islamic weights are kept in near darkness with each piece backlit individually so as to better reveal its delicate structure. Next door is a small exhibition of coins, including numerous examples from Ancient Caria.

Beyond, the **French Tower** has finds taken from the *Tektaş Burnu*, the only ancient Greek shipwreck (thought to date from around 480 BC to 400 BC) from the Classical period to be fully excavated. Displays include numerous amphorae, talismanic marble discs, kitchen utensils, as well as photographs of the excavation itself, which took place off the coast of the Çesme Peninsula in 2001.

Next door, the **Carian Princess Hall** (admission €2.75; ☎ 10am-noon & 2-4pm Tue-Fri) holds the remains and effects of a high status woman, discovered by Turkish archaeologists in 1989. Though popularly said to belong to Queen Ada, the last Carian queen, who was brought back from exile and installed as monarch by Alexander the Great following his conquest of Halicarnassus in 334 BC, there is no concrete evidence for this. Buried with a gold crown, necklace, bracelets, rings and an exquisite wreath of gold myrtle leaves, her identity doesn't lessen the incredible value of the find.

Guarding the castle's southeast corner, the **English Tower** was built during the reign of King Henry IV of England (whose coat of arms is displayed above the entrance to the uppermost hall) and is now fitted out as a medieval refectory with a long central dining table surrounded by suits of armour, stag horns and the standards of the Grand Masters of the Knights Hospitaller and their Turkish

adversaries. Piped medieval music plays in the background giving the place the feel of a Crusader Knights theme restaurant. Look out for the Latin graffiti carved into the stone window ledges by Crusaders.

Just to the north is the extraordinary gallery of **Bronze Age shipwrecks**. Its principal exhibit is the 14th-century BC *Uluburun*, the oldest excavated shipwreck in the world. There are full size replicas of the ship's interior and the wreck site on the seabed. The aptly named Treasure Room holds a wealth of finds, including Canaanite gold jewellery, bronze daggers, ivory cosmetic boxes, wooden writing boards and the gold scarab of Queen Nefertiti of Egypt.

Further north, descend the **Gatineau Tower** to the dungeons beneath. Over the inner gate is the inscription 'Inde Deus abest' (Where God does not exist). The dungeon was used as a place of confinement and torture by the Knights from 1513 to 1523. A sign warns that the exhibits of torture implements might not be suitable for children, but most video-game-hardened visitors will find the display dummies and the taped groans more laughable than disturbing.

MAUSOLEUM

Founded some time in the 11th century BC, the ancient kingdom of Caria, which encompassed modern day Bodrum, became absorbed into the Persian Empire, although it continued to exercise a degree of autonomy until the arrival of Alexander two centuries later. During that time its most famous leader (or satrap) was Mausolus (c 376–353 BC), an admirer of Greek culture, who moved the capital from Mylasa to Halicarnassus. After his death, his wife, Artemesia, undertook the construction of a monumental tomb, as planned by Mausolus himself and designed in a Hellenic style by Pytheos, the man behind the Temple of Athena at Priene. The Mausoleum, an enormous white-marble tomb topped by a stepped pyramids became one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and stood relatively intact for almost 19 centuries, until it was broken up by the Crusaders in 1522 and the pieces used as building material. The most impressive remains, including friezes incorporated into the walls of the Castle of St Peter, and statues of Mausolus and Artemesia discovered at the site, were shipped off to the British Museum in London in the 19th century, where they remain.

In light of its almost utter obliteration, you may consider giving the **Mausoleum** (Turgutreis Caddesi; admission TL8; ☎ 8.30am–5.30pm Tue–Sun) a miss. In fact, the site is still worth visiting. It has pleasant gardens, with the excavations to the right and a covered arcade to the left. The arcade contains a copy of the famous frieze now in the British Museum. The four original fragments on display were discovered more recently. Models, drawings and documents give an idea of why this tomb made Pliny's list of Wonders. Other exhibits include a model of Halicarnassus at the time of King Mausolus, and a model of the Mausoleum and its precincts.

A description written in 1581, supposedly taken from a 1522 eyewitness account, describes how the Knights Hospitaller discovered the buried Mausoleum, uncovered it, admired it and returned to the castle for the night. That night, pirates broke in and stole the treasures, which had been safe as long as they had been buried. The next day the knights returned and broke the tomb to pieces for use as building stone. In reality, research suggests that tomb robbers had already beaten the knights to the treasure and that earthquakes had shattered it long before they ever set foot in Turkey.

Don't hold your breath in expectation over the actual site. Of the remains, only a few pre-Mausolean stairways and tomb chambers, the Mausolean drainage system, the entry to Mausolus' tomb chamber, a few bits of precinct wall and some large fluted marble column drums survive.

OTHER RUINS

A restored **ancient theatre** (Kıbrıs Şehitler Caddesi; admission TL8; ☎ 8am–5pm Sat–Thu), which could originally seat 13,000 people, is cut into the rock of the hillside behind town on the busy main road to Gümbet. Recently, tombs dating to before the theatre were discovered here.

Just beyond the marina are the recently restored remains of the **shipyard** (Şafak Sokak; ☎ 9am–6pm). In 1770 the entire Ottoman fleet was destroyed by the Russians at Çeşme and had to be rebuilt from scratch in boatyards like this. The shipyard was fortified as a defence against pirates in the 19th century. Its tower occasionally hosts art exhibitions, while the rest of the site is mainly used as a children's playground and is principally memorable for the views from the top, where there are several old tombstones dating from the period when the Latin alphabet was replacing Arabic.

BOATING IN BODRUM

Boats are the big thing in Bodrum, according to Chris Drum Berkaya, Editor of the *Bodrum Observer*, a newspaper aimed at the peninsula's expat community. 'The influx of the wealthy with their boats makes everyone think sailing/boating is out of reach, but I still think the best experience in Bodrum is to take a day boat trip out. Choose your boat, there are noisy ones, or quiet ones, some with good food, but they all drop anchor in a few bays over the day where you can swim and enjoy a five-star life for the day.'

Most of the excursion boats are moored along Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi and depart daily, either at 10am returning at 5pm, or noon returning at 7pm, and cost around €12, including lunch and afternoon tea.

The itineraries tend to change daily, but nearly always take in **Karaada** (Black Island), where hot springs gush out of a cave and swimmers rub the orange mud from the springs onto their skin, as well as few of the area's other more idyllic beaches and swim spots. You can book the trips directly at the boats, through most of the town's hotels or at one of the numerous tour operators on Cevat Şakir Caddesi who can also arrange trips to more far-flung destinations, including the Milas Tuesday market (€8), Dalyan (€30), Ephesus (€30) and Pamukkale (€30). Try **Botur** (☎ 313 1922; botur@usa.net; Cevat Şakir Caddesi 24), just south of the otogar.

At the far western end of Turgutreis Caddesi are the restored remains of the **Myndos Kapısı** (Myndos Gate), the only surviving gate from the original 7km-long walls, which were probably built by King Mausolus in the 4th century BC. In front of the twin-towered gate are the remains of a moat in which many of Alexander the Great's soldiers drowned in 334 BC.

HAMAMS

Across from the otogar, **Bodrum Hamam** (☎ 313 4129; www.bodrumhamami.com.tr; Cevat Şakir Caddesi, Fabrika Sokak 42; full massage TL35; 🕒 6am-midnight) is convenient and clean with separate sections for men and women. Though the exterior looks unpromising, the **Bardakçı Hamam** (☎ 313 8114; Kumbahçe Mahallesi Dere Sokak 22; bath/massage TL15/30; 🕒 7am-midnight), founded in 1749, has a lovely marble-clad interior and great atmosphere. Bathing is mixed.

Festivals & Events

For two weeks in August each year, the Castle of St Peter hosts national and international ballet stars at the **International Ballet Festival** (☎ 313 7649), which showcases classical, modern and experimental dance. Check out www.biletix.com for information on tickets. In the first week of October, there is a colourful international **Yacht Festival**.

Sleeping

Bodrum's accommodation options fall into three main categories: package, budget and boutique. Most of the former types of hotel

are located well outside town and cater mainly to large groups arriving en masse by charter plane. Still, if you're planning to stay a week or so, it's worth checking with the relevant agencies to see if you can pick up some kind of cheap deal.

There are plenty of budget hotels and pensions, particularly in the centre and along Kumbahçe Bay, although be aware that the closer you are to the front the less chance you'll have of getting a good night's sleep – action at the clubs rarely kicks off before midnight and usually goes on until past 4am. Thankfully there are also a number of quieter inland choices.

Upmarket boutique hotels are a recent and fast-growing addition to the holiday scene. A number line the coast just east of Kumbahçe Bay.

In high summer, especially at weekends, Bodrum fills up quickly, so try to arrive early in the day. More places stay open in winter than in previous years, although the majority do close.

BUDGET

There are various camping grounds on the Bodrum Peninsula's northern shore. Check with the tourist office for information and bookings.

Sedan Pansiyon (☎ 316 0355; off Türkükuyusu Caddesi 121; s/d without bathroom €10/16, s/d with bathroom €12/24) Very much at the basic end of the spectrum with rooms of varying sizes and states of repair arranged around a ramshackle but peaceful courtyard, tucked away off the street. It's

friendly and good value, and guests can use the kitchen.

Sevin Pension (☎ 316 7682; www.sevinpension.com; Türkuyusu Caddesi 5; dm €13, s €18-22, d €25-36; 🍷 🍷) Be under no illusions, it's basic – think cracked floor tiles, grimy taps and furniture made level with folded cigarette packets. But for the price it offers a lot: a prime (albeit very noisy) location, TV, free wi-fi, good breakfasts and friendly, helpful staff. Its 37 rooms vary in size considerably, so check what you're getting.

Mylasa Pansiyon (☎ 316 1846; www.mylasapansiyon.com; Cumhuriyet Caddesi Dere Sokak 2; s/d €25/35; 🍷) The archetypal Bodrum pension. Just back from the beach but very much at the heart of the party scene. The rooms are small with TVs, but none too modern looking. But then, that's hardly the point. The café-restaurant is lively (and operates the obligatory happy hour discounts) and there are great panoramic views from the rooftop terrace. Don't expect to get much sleep.

Bahçeli Açar Aile Pansiyonu (☎ 316 1648; 1402 Sokak 4; s/d €20/36) This endearing little pension is in a passageway off Neyzen Tevik Caddesi, opposite the marina. Run by İbrahim and family, and with a little courtyard overhung by vines, it has an intimate feel, and guests have use of the kitchen. Rooms are small and simple, but spotless, quiet and peaceful; all have balconies.

Kilavuz Otel (☎ 316 3892; www.kilavuzotel.com; Atatürk Caddesi Adliye Sokak 17; s/d €35/40; 🍷 🍷) Striking a good balance between proximity to the front and the need for a bit of peace and quiet, this family-run place offers 15 simply-furnished, clean rooms, a moderately sized pool, good meals at its adjoining restaurant and, its biggest asset, great friendly service.

Baç Pansiyon (☎ 316 2497; bacpansiyon@turk.net; Cumhuriyet Caddesi 14; s €28-33, d €45-65; 🍷) Small but stylish and all in marble, wood and wrought iron, this centrally situated hotel also boasts about the best hotel views in Bodrum. A gem amid the market maelstrom, it sits right above the water and four of its 10 comfortable rooms have delightful balconies over the water.

Mars Otel (☎ 316 6559; www.marsotel.com; İmbat Çikmazı 29; s/d €34/45; 🍷 🍷) Set a good five-minute-walk from the front, the Mars is quiet, peaceful and good value. It's a bit of an exercise in miniaturisation with compact rooms – all clean and tidy with TVs – a small pool and a two-person bar, but Murat, the owner, is keen to please and there are free bus station transfers.

MIDRANGE

Su Otel (☎ 316 6906; www.suhotel.net; Turgutreis Caddesi, 1201 Sokak; s €55-65, d €65-85; 🍷 🍷) Follow the blue mosaic snake down the alley to find this cheery number, whose bright multicoloured decor makes it look a bit like a giant children's climbing frame. All of the large, clean rooms have balconies, some overlooking the large central pool. If you're in Bodrum for more than a week, the Su also has a couple of lovely old cottages near the mausoleum (from €80 for up to three people) for rent.

El Vino Hotel (☎ 313 8770; www.elvinobodrum.com; Pamili Sokak; s/d €80/120; 🍷 🍷) The dark backstreet location doesn't look that promising, but behind the stone wall is one of the town's loveliest hotels. Rooms are large and well appointed with wooden floors, large beds, TVs and writing desks. The best have views of the central pool and garden area (where breakfast is served) or the town. Even better views are available from the rooftop restaurant.

TOP END

Antik Tiyatro Hotel (☎ 316 6053; www.antiquetheatrehotel.com; Kıbrıs Şehitler Caddesi 243; d/ste from €120/225; 🍷 🍷) Rooms, arranged around a lovely pool set on the edge of a terraced hillside, have stunning views over the castle and sea, and are stylishly decorated with original art work and antiques. Double glazing keeps out most of the noise of the busy nearby road and there's a great poolside restaurant.

Eating

Bodrum's finest and most expensive restaurants are all located along the western bay; its worst in the eastern. In between, on Cevat Şakir Caddesi and in the bazaar are the best value options. Here you'll find a collection of Turkish restaurants and *büfes* (snack bars), where you can pick up a döner wrapped in pide for TL4.

Restaurants open and close all the time. Those described here have proved more long-standing and dependable.

SALMAKIS BAY

In July and August prices in Bodrum's gastronomic heartland can exceed even those of İstanbul, although there are some notable cut-price exceptions. As elsewhere, check prices before ordering fish.

Liman Köftecisi (☎ 316 5060; Neyzen Tevik Caddesi 172; meze TL4; 🍷 8am-midnight) Despite being

nationally famous, the Liman serves delicious food at very decent prices. *Köfte* are the speciality. Of the six types (TL7 to TL12.50), the TL10 *Liman köfte* – served with yoghurt, tomato sauce and butter – is the house speciality. The service is also exemplary.

Kırmızı (☎ 316 4918; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 44; meze TL5-8, mains TL10-14; ☎ 11.30am-midnight) Serving Mediterranean food made from the freshest local ingredients, the Kırmızı is a characterful place with three floors and a garden terrace. The walls are used to exhibit the works of local artists, and Duygu, the charming owner, will accord you a warm welcome. The three-course fixed lunch for only TL6 is astonishing value.

Sünger Pizza (☎ 316 0854; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 218; salads TL5-7.50; ☎ 8am-midnight) Named after the owner's grandfather who was a *sünger* (sponge) diver, this place is generally packed with locals. The 'best pizza in Bodrum' comes in four sizes: small, medium, large and jumbo (TL14/24/32/38 respectively for the 'special'). Grab a table on the rooftop if you can.

Marina Yacht Club (☎ 316 1228; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 5; beer €2.75, pizzas TL9-17, mains TL15-30; ☎ 8am-2am) Despite the rather grand entrance and chichi yachting surrounds, the food and prices are quite reasonable at this three-restaurant complex and there's live music every night from 9pm to 1am. It serves either traditional Turkish food or Italian food in the Café Vela.

Kocadın Restaurant (☎ 316 3705; Saray Sokak 1; meals €15-25; ☎ dinner May-Oct) Expensive but worth it, this attractive dining space set in the cobbled courtyard of a very attractive 200-year-old stone house serves some of the town's very finest food. The three-course set menu (for lunch or dinner, TL40), which includes an open buffet of 10 meze, a fish dish and seasonal fruits is excellent. Otherwise mains from the à la carte menu start at TL25. Dig into your wallet and enjoy some fine cuisine alongside Bodrum's high flyers.

Yağhane (☎ 313 4747; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 170; mains TL16-28; ☎ 10.30am-midnight) Housed in an old olive mill built in 1894, this is an attractive and atmospheric place, with the walls hung with the works of local artists. The menu, which specialises in old Ottoman dishes, is very imaginative. Try the delicious regional speciality *çökertme* kebab – grilled meat with garlic yoghurt, grated potatoes and butter (€11). The wine list is also impressive.

CENTRE

At the very southern end of the bazaar, Banka Sokak (locally known as Meyhaneler Sokak or Tavern St) is a lovely and strangely quiet alleyway, shaded by foliage and filled with attractive, traditional Turkish restaurants and *köfteci* (*köfte* restaurants) where many locals come for their lunch.

Nazik Ana (☎ 313 1891; Eski Hukümet Sokak 7; meat mains TL4-5, veg mains TL2-3; ☎ 9am-10pm, closed Sun in winter) Rather hidden away down a narrow alley but definitely worth hunting out, this simple but atmospheric place is a huge hit locally, particularly with the police officers from next door. With its point-and-pick counter, it's a great place to sample different Turkish dishes. If you don't like something, it's so incredibly cheap it doesn't really matter. It lies off Cevat Şakir Caddesi.

Atmaca Döner Salonu (☎ 313 4150; Cevat Şakir Caddesi 39; beer €1.10; ☎ 11am-10pm) Very popular locally for its delicious kebabs (pide sandwich TL4, döner with rice TL9, İskender kebab TL13) at dirt-cheap prices, this place also has a secret, shaded garden behind the stall front. It's clean and cool and the food's delicious.

Café Bodrum (☎ 316 6163; Iskele Meydanı 10; mains TL22-28; ☎ 10.30am-midnight) In a 200-year-old building next to the excursion boats, this café serves a pretty decent selection of fish, seafood and grilled meat choices – the sea bass with spicy sauce is particularly good – but the real draw is the rooftop terrace overlooking the harbour. From up here everything seems idyllic and serene.

KUMBAHÇE BAY

Dr Alim Bey Caddesi and Cumhuriyet Caddesi are packed with bars and restaurants, most with seating over the water or by the beach. Here, at the sunbathing and dancing end of town, prices and standards are generally lower than in the western bay, although costs can shoot up in summer when tables are at a premium. The food is a mixture of Turkish and the national cuisines of the major package nations: roast beef (with 'real gravy sauce'), schnitzel, pizza, 'Irish breakfasts' etc.

06 Lokantası (☎ 316 6863; Cumhuriyet Caddesi 115; meze TL5, mains TL8-11; ☎ 9am-3am winter, 24hr summer) Though simple, the Lokantası is well-run, reasonably priced and much loved locally; its prices are unbeatable. Grilled meats and kebabs are the menu mainstays,

although fresh fish is also served as are good veggie options.

Berk Balık Restaurant (☎ 313 6878; Cumhuriyet Caddesi 167; meze TL5-7, all fish per 500g TL12; ☎ noon-1am) Run by a group of friends, this restaurant specialises in fish and seafood, served on a terrific upstairs terrace that buzzes like a village tavern. It's absolutely packed with locals tossing down octopus in garlic and butter or excellent fresh fish at pleasing prices.

Tranca (☎ 316 6610; Cumhuriyet Caddesi 36; meze TL8-10, mains TL12-24; ☎ 11am-midnight) Jutting out into the bay, the family-run Tranca probably boasts about the best views of anywhere. Its specialities are *tuzda balık* (fish baked in salt) and *testi kebabı* (casserole served in a clay pot that's broken at your table), both cost TL40 to TL50 with a minimum of two people. Reserve a seafront table if you can.

Kortan Restaurant (☎ 316 1300; Cumhuriyet Caddesi 32; ☎ 9am-1am Apr-Sep) Worth a visit just to see the interior of this lovely, 350-year-old former tavern, the Kortan also boasts five tables on a pretty terrace (phone to reserve one). The speciality is grilled fish (sea bass, red snapper and bream for TL12, swordfish TL26 for 500g).

SELF-CATERING

The large covered market about 250m north of the bus station is a great place for picnic-hunting, selling very fresh fruit and veg as well as Turkish sweets and nuts. And if you can't find everything on your list, there's a large adjoining **Tansaş supermarket** (☎ 313 4932; Garaj Üstü; ☎ 8.30am-10pm).

There's also a fruit market on Cevat Şakir Caddesi just south of the main crossroads, and a small collection of butchers and wet fish shops, just behind it on Çarşı Sokak.

Drinking & Entertainment

As with accommodation and eating out, there's a simple rule of thumb: for cheap and cheerful head to the eastern bay, for expensive and classy, think western bay. Dr Alim Bey Caddesi and Cumhuriyet Caddesi are the town's main evening promenading routes, offering a long line of loud, largely interchangeable waterfront bar-clubs. Expect happy hours, big-screen TVs showing major football matches, bartenders performing synchronised dance routines and a largely (but not exclusively) foreign clientele. In all these places local beer, raki and spirits will be much cheaper than imported liquor.

Over on the western bay you'll find a collection of more sophisticated alternatives: elegantly designed open-air places patronised largely by Turks and charging upwards of TL10 for a beer.

Halikarnas (The Club; ☎ 316 8000; www.halikarnas.com.tr; Cumhuriyet Caddesi; admission weekday/weekend TL30/35; beer & spirits from TL10; ☎ 10pm-5am mid-May-Oct) Since 1979 the open-air Halikarnas has been a clubbers' institution. With its kitschy Roman temple styling and top-quality sound and light equipment, it's an extraordinary experience, particularly when at capacity (5000 people). Internationally known DJs regularly play. Women go half-price on Sunday's 'Ladies' Nights'. Note that it doesn't get going much before 1am. Guests are asked to 'dress for the occasion' but it's unlikely you'll be refused entry.

Marine Club Catamaran (☎ 313 3600; www.clubbodrum.com; Hilmi Uran Meydanı 14; admission weekday/weekend TL30/35, beer TL10; ☎ 10pm-5am mid-May-Sep) This floating nightclub sets sail at midnight for five hours of frenzied fun. Its transparent dance floor can pack in no fewer than 1500 clubbers plus attendant DJs. A free shuttle operates every 15 minutes back to the eastern bay. It lies on Hilmi Uran Meydanı (square) on Dr Alim Bey Caddesi.

Helva (☎ 313 2274; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 44; ☎ noon-4am) Quieter and a bit less super-fashionable than Küba down the road, this is nonetheless aimed at the Turkish smart set. Despite its exhortations to 'express yourself in dance' this is more of a sit-down bar at which dancing sporadically breaks out rather than a proper disco. It's stylish, lively and (inevitably) expensive.

Fora (☎ 316 2244; www.forabar.com; Hilmi Uran Meydanı 10; ☎ 10am-4am May-Oct; ☎) If you want to dance the night way and don't fancy paying for the privilege, this is the place to do it. Set above the water, with modern minimalist decor, it boasts great views of the castles. It's cool and peaceful during the day when it serves a simple bar menu (club sandwich TL6) and fast and fun during the night. Happy 'hour' is between 9pm and 11pm daily.

Küba Bar (☎ 313 4450; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 62; beer €8.35, meals €25; ☎ 9am-4am summer, 9am-2am winter, Wed-Sat only Dec & Feb) With its chic black and marble counters, this place is popular with İzmirli socialites and fashionistas tempted out from their peninsula summer homes to drink and dance. It's fun but rather expensive.

SERVICES FROM BODRUM'S OTOGAR

Destination	Fare (TL)	Duration (hr)	Distance (km)	Frequency (per day)
Ankara	50	12	689	1 nightly
Antalya	35	8	496	2
Denizli	25	5	250	1
Fethiye	25	6	265	2
Istanbul	70	12	851	2 nightly
İzmir	25	4	286	3
Konya	45	12	626	6
Kuşadası	20	2½	151	2
Marmaris	20	3	165	hourly
Milas	15	1	45	hourly
Muğla	15	2	149	hourly
Söke	15	2	130	4

Campanella Bar (☎ 316 5302; Cumhuriyet Caddesi; ☼ noon-4am) Though small, this Orientalist-style bar, adorned with flower boxes set above a shop on a small alley, is full of atmosphere and usually has live music playing.

If you fancy a puff on a nargileh, the **Old Café** (☎ 316 1928; Cumhuriyet Caddesi 110; nargileh TL10, beer TL5; ☼ 10am-midnight winter, 24hr summer) has comfortable seats in either the Ottoman-style salon or on the beach outside. Water-pipe smoking is also on offer at the **Alem Bar** (☎ 316 4084; Cumhuriyet Caddesi; nargileh TL10, beer TL4; ☼ 10am-midnight winter, 24hr summer), which stages live Turkish music between 10pm and 4am every night in summer.

The castle and the antique theatre are often used for cultural events such as opera and ballet performances. Check out www.biletix.com to see if anything is on while you're in town.

Getting There & Away

AIR

The **Bodrum international airport** (☎ 523 0080), 60km away, is nearer to Milas than Bodrum. Check the charter-flight brochures for bargains, especially at the start and end of the season, but prepare to be disappointed as there are fewer flights than you might expect. **Turkish Airlines** (THY; ☎ 317 1203; www.thy.com; Kibris Şehitler Caddesi) is in the Oasis Shopping Centre, about 2km out of town off the Gumbet road. To get here, take a dolmuş (TL1.25) from the otogar asking for 'Oasis'.

To get to the airport, you can take the Havaş (airport) bus (☎ 523 0040; €3) run in conjunction with Turkish Airlines, which leaves two hours before all Turkish Airlines departures from the Turkish Airlines office. It also meets flights and

drops passengers at the otogar. If you're not flying with Turkish Airlines, an expensive taxi (€45 from the centre) is really your only option.

BOAT

If you want to visit Istanbul, and don't mind taking your time, **Deniz Cruise & Ferry Lines** (☎ 444 3369; www.denizeline.com.tr) operates a twice weekly service from Bodrum from July to September. The journey takes 24 hours.

Ferries for Datça and the Greek islands of Kos and Rhodes leave from the western bay. For information and tickets contact the **Bodrum Ferryboat Association** (☎ 316 0882; www.bodrumferryboat.com; Kale Caddesi Cümriük Alanı 22), on the dock past the western entrance to the castle. Check times as they can change.

For Kos, ferries (one way or same-day return €25, open return €50) leave Bodrum daily throughout the year (weather permitting) at 9.30am, returning at 4.30pm. The hydrofoil service (one way €30, same-day return €35, open return €60, 20 minutes) operates from Monday to Saturday between May and October, departing at 9.30am and returning at 5pm.

For Rhodes, hydrofoils (one way €50, same-day return €60, open-day return €100, 2¼ hours) leave Bodrum from June to September at 8.30am on Monday and Saturday and return at 5pm the same day.

For Datça, ferries (single/return/car/passenger TL20/30/50/5, two hours) leave Bodrum at 9am or 5pm from April to May, and twice a day at 9am and 5pm from June to October. No same-day returns are available. The ferry docks at Körmen on the peninsula's northern coast, and the onward bus

journey to Datça (15 minutes) is included in your fare.

You don't need to book in advance unless you have a car (on the ferries only).

BUS

Bodrum has bus services to more or less anywhere you could wish to go. The table lists some useful summer daily services. For Gökova, change at Muğla. For Pamukkale, change at Denizli and go from there (TL6, 10 minutes, 14km).

CAR

Major car-rental agencies can be found on Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi. **Avis** (☎ 316 2333; www.avis.com; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 92/A) rents compact cars without air-conditioning from TL100 per day.

Getting Around

Short hops around town in a dolmuş cost TL1.25. Note, if driving, that most of Bodrum's roads follow a strict clockwise one-way system. Miss your turning and you'll probably have to go all the way out of town and do the whole thing again.

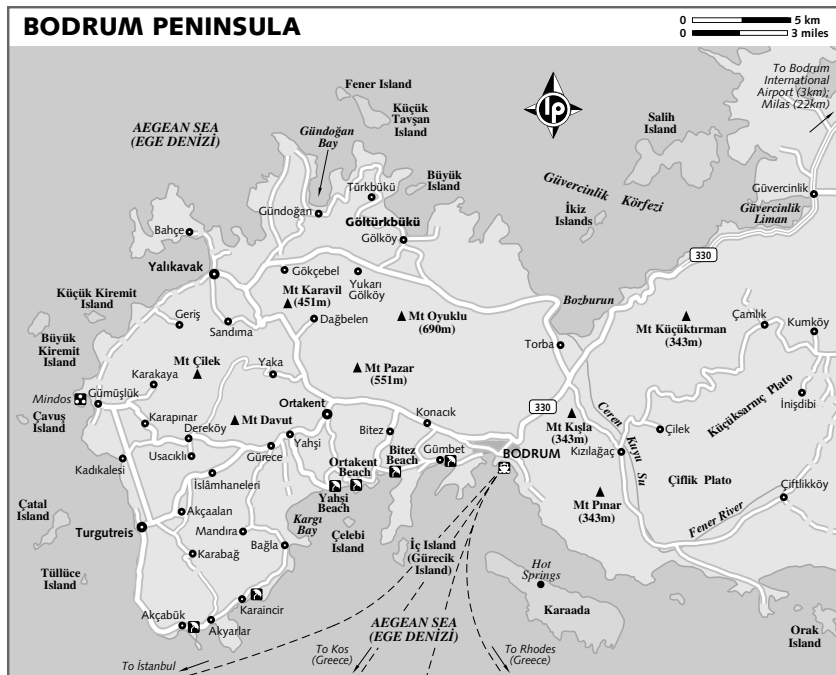
BODRUM PENINSULA

☎ 0252

Once upon a time the Bodrum Peninsula must have been a pretty idyllic place. You can get some idea of its former glories on the road between Torba and Gököy, a still relatively pristine stretch of coast where pine-clad hills overlook serene bays. Much of the rest of the peninsula, however, has been given over to tourism, some of it fairly grim, with patches of Legoland-like housing eroding the hillsides, and some of it rather fancy. Though there's little to do beyond swim, drink and eat, several of the beach villages make for enjoyable day trips from Bodrum, boasting boutique hotels whose style and luxury are unrivalled along the coast.

GETTING AROUND

Dolmuşes from Bodrum's otogar ply back and forth to most places on the peninsula. The furthest journey, to Gümüşlük, will cost TL3.50. In low season, you need to watch out for the departure times of the last minibuses back to Bodrum. Alternatively, you can hire a scooter and ride around the peninsula, although the



main road from Bodrum to Turgutreis is basically a highway.

Slightly bizarrely, there's no dolmuş from Gümüşlük to Yalıkavak and no dolmuş service from Yalıkavak to Gököy, so you'll have to keep returning to Bodrum to proceed along the northern coast.

Gümüşlük

About 18km from Bodrum is Gümüşlük, a hamlet on the shore of a fine natural harbour protected by high headlands. New building work is prohibited, ensuring that the actual village retains its quiet charm. However, that hasn't been enough to protect the views. Ranks of half-built villas massing on the hillside opposite illustrate the difficulty of shielding anywhere on the coast from developers.

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Gümüşlük makes the best day trip from Bodrum. Come here to swim or climb the headlands and to take lunch on the shore; or come for an afternoon swim and stay for a sunset dinner.

Little remains of ancient **Mindos** apart from slight ruins on Tavşan Island, the rocky islet to the north, which is reachable on foot or by swimming from in front of the Fenerci Restaurant.

The **beach** to the south is long and generally uncrowded. Though weedy in places, the sea is fine for swimming.

SLEEPING

In the low season (mid-October to mid-May) most of Gümüşlük's pensions are closed. If you want to visit early or late in the season, phone first.

Hera Pansiyon (☎ 394 3065; fax 394 4021; Yalı Mevkii 89; apt for 2/4 people €44/55) Well-run by a charming family, Hera Pansiyon has eight simple but spotless and pleasant apartments set in a garden near the beach. There is also a reasonably priced restaurant and a shaded lounging area. It is located just over halfway along the bay.

Sysyphos Pansiyon & Restaurant (☎ 394 3016; www.sysyphos-gumusluk.net; Yalı Mevkii 97; s/d TL60/90, 2-bedroom apt TL110; ☞ May-Oct) At the quiet southern end of the beach, perched almost on the waterfront, this 80-year-old, bougainvillea-clad pension has a large, rambling garden that's filled with birdsong, making it the perfect place for some R&R. The 20 rooms

boast delightful balconies, some directly overlooking the sea.

Liman Motel (☎ 394 3747; fax 394 3463; s/d €45/60; ☞ May-Oct) By the harbour, the newly opened Liman is the town's first 'boutique' choice. The seven rooms, five with sea views, are large and tasteful with TVs and minibars and there's a decent restaurant by the water.

EATING & DRINKING

Batı Restaurant (☎ 394 3079; mains TL18-30; ☞ 8am-3am May-Oct) An old travellers' favourite, this is a great place for both eating and drinking. A 120-year-old fig tree leans on the restaurant and provides shade for its customers. There's also a fun, cushion-clad chilling area in one corner. The friendly owner is a mine of information about the town and his *güveç* (casseroles; TL10 to TL14) are well worth sampling.

For a mellow drink watching the sunset under giant, grass-roofed parasols, try the **Gusta Restaurant Café Bar** (☎ 394 4228; Yalı Mevkii 95; beer TL2; ☞ 8.30am-2am summer only) or **Club Gümüşlük** (☎ 394 3401; beer TL2; ☞ 6.30am-2am) at the northern end of the bay, which is a popular haunt for younger locals (and is open all year).

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Dolmuşes run from Gümüşlük to Bodrum (TL3.50, 30 to 40 minutes) at least every half-hour and to Turgutreis (TL1, 15 minutes) every 20 minutes. Vehicles are banned from entering the village, but there is a municipal car park (TL3 per 12 hours) 300m from the waterfront. The last dolmuş to Bodrum departs at midnight (10pm out of season).

Yalıkavak

In the northwestern corner of the peninsula, 18km from Bodrum, is Yalıkavak. As Dağca is to Marmaris, so Yalıkavak is to Bodrum: a smaller, quieter version with the constant threat of similar development looming over it. In the meantime it's remarkably pleasant, with no high-rise buildings to spoil the harbour and several attractive hotels and restaurants.

Yalıkavak's *köfte* are rightfully famous throughout Turkey; there's no better place to try them.

SLEEPING

Miray Hotel (☎ 385 4920; www.e-mirayhotel.com; Begonvil Sokak 17; s/d €32/45; ♿ ♿) This hotel

PENINSULA PECULIARITIES

As you potter around the peninsula, look out for some interesting architectural anomalies. The odd-looking igloo-shaped buildings are *gümbets* (stone cisterns), once used to store fresh water for times of need. On many hilltops, old windmills still stand, though most are redundant, making way for modern living. More unusual are the *kule evleri* (stone tower houses), similar to those seen on the Mani Peninsula in Greece. In Ortakent, you can find two fine 17th-century examples – on the older stone house, look out for the turned-up corners of the roof. It's an architectural effect that can be traced to Minoan Greece. The 'horns' are said to hark back to the cult of the Minoan bull and were probably put on the houses to ward off the evil eye.

lies in the centre of town, just a minute from the seafront and has 15 comfortable rooms, a swimming pool, a bar-restaurant and a nargileh garden.

Adahan (☎ 385 4759; www.adahanotel.com; Seyhülislam Ömer Lütfü Caddesi 55; s/d €75/95; 🗓 Apr-Oct; ♿ 🚿) Designed to look like an old caravanserai with pointed arches and imposing wooden doors, the Adahan has spacious and comfortable rooms arranged around an arcaded courtyard containing a lovely pool. Anatolian antiques furnish the corners and from the kitchen come scintillating smells – the charming owners also run a gourmet restaurant. It lies around 80m from the new yacht harbour on the road to Gümüşlük.

Taskule Hotel (☎ 385 4935; www.taskulehotel.com; Plaj Caddesi; d €75-100, ste €100-225; ♿ 🚿) Right by the beach the 'boutique' Taskule has been thoroughly renovated in the past few years and now has 15 bright, modern-looking rooms, all with wooden floors, large beds and wi-fi. There's also a pool and a good little restaurant (mains TL18 to TL22) for watching the sunset.

4 Reasons Hotel (☎ 385 3212; www.4reasonshotel.com; Bakan Caddesi 2; d €165, 3-4 person apt €165-200; ♿ 🚿) One of the peninsula's top hotels – as featured in dozens of lifestyle magazines – this place enjoys an idyllic position (and views) on a hill 2km from Yalıkavak. There's a nice pool, a great poolside restaurant (live jazz on summer weekends) and the rooms are large and designery, with TVs, minibars and fireplaces, and come in three options: 'passionate' (with balcony), functional (twin bedrooms) and casual (no sitting area). In case you're wondering the 'four reasons' are serenity, design, attitude and quality.

EATING & DRINKING

All of the following are found at the northern end of the bay.

Kavaklı Köfteci (☎ 385 4748; Merkez Çarşısı İçi; meatballs TL6-7; 🕒 7.30am-midnight) Around 50m inland, this place is famous for its Yalıkavak meatballs served up on simple wooden tables with garlic bread. Smoky-flavoured, slightly spiced and succulent, they're gorgeous! Fight for a table if you have to.

Cumbalı (☎ 385 4995; İskele Meydanı 126; 400g fish TL18-20; 🕒 8.30am-midnight) A favourite for fish, Cumbalı does delicious dishes at pleasing prices 'to attract locals as well as tourists' as the owner puts it. The seafood meze (TL5 to TL7), which you can eat right on the seafront, are sumptuous.

Ali Baba (☎ 385 3139; İskele Meydanı 166; 400g fish TL18-22; 🕒 11am-1am) On the edge of the harbour with seafront seating, the Ali Baba does a fine line in fish and seafood, including grilled sea-bass, octopus casserole and pan-friend jumbo prawns, although, if you really want to get everyone's attention, order the amphora kebab, which your waiter will smash open at your table.

Dede (☎ 385 5257; Plaj Caddesi 6/A; cocktail TL5-8, 🕒 11am-1am) With cushions and sun-loungers, Dede, by the town's small beach, is the place to hang out with a cocktail at the end of the day. It also offers a decent menu of casseroles, kebabs, steak and fish (TL17 to TL24.50).

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Dolmuşes go to Bodrum (TL3, 25 minutes) every half-hour in summer (but only when full in winter). Surprisingly, although the road is good, there's no dolmuş to Göltürkbükü. You'll have to take a taxi for around TL30 to TL40 daytime and TL40 to TL50 at night, or return to Bodrum and catch another dolmuş (TL2, every 45 minutes) from there.

Göltürkbükü

About 18km northwest of Bodrum lies Göltürkbükü, the self-styled 'Turkish St Tropez'.

The name is a portmanteau amalgamation of two separate villages, Gölköy and Türkbükü, which lie either end of a small bay and today represent the peninsula's most upmarket tourist destinations (www.golturkbuku.com).

GÖLKÖY

Long seen as the lesser of the two villages, Gölköy is currently trying to push itself in a more upmarket direction with new hotels – all studiously boutique – opening almost monthly, most boasting beach clubs with large wooden platforms, laden with cushions and sun-loungers, erected over the sea. The beach, however, is narrow, pebbly and poor.

Made up of a series of modern buildings decorated in a traditional style, **Sultan Hotel** (☎ 357 7260; www.sultangolturkbuku.com; Sahil Sokak 3; s/d €45/75; ☎ Apr–Nov; ♿) is set in a peaceful garden. Rooms are simple but spotless and have little balconies from where you can hear the water lap. There's also a good seafront restaurant that's open to the public and offers three courses for a very reasonable TL14.

Set on the waterfront at the southern end of town, the **Villa Kilic Hotel** (☎ 357 8118; www.villakilic.com; Sahil Sokak 22; s/d €120/165; ♿) is a new and very luxurious addition to the accommodation scene with 33 lavish, designer rooms – think flat-screens, hardwoods and marble – and suites (which have hot tubs), a large pool, a conservatory restaurant and the largest bathing platform in town (300 sq metres) where DJs play in summer.

Nearby, the restaurant of the **Orkide Hotel** (☎ 357 7626; snacks TL7–12; ☎ 8am–midnight May–Oct) is shaded by greenery and makes a welcome spot for a drink or a light snack.

TÜRKBÜKÜ

About 1.5km north of Gölköy along a twisting, turning road is Türkbükü, the summer playground for many of Turkey's rich and infamous. It boasts a small harbour backed by a long beach made up of a mixture of pebbles and sand, although most of the swimming and sunbathing is done from the hotels' purpose-built wooden platforms, and a long esplanade of fancy boutiques and restaurants (plus a few cheaper souvenir and trinket stalls to provide a bit of balance). At the northern end of town is a collection of terribly luxurious hotels and beach clubs where A-listers descend en masse in summer. It's a great place to people-watch.

SLEEPING & EATING

Maki Hotel (☎ 377 6105; www.makihotel.com.tr; Kelesharimi Mevkii; d from €200; ♿) Much beloved by the fashionable, the rich and the beautiful, Maki Hotel is right at the northern end of the seafront and offers comfort and style. There's a gorgeous pool set just above the sea, a restaurant with a fine Italian chef, hyper-hip rooms (check out the chrome and orange-painted balconies) and a large and very stylish bathing platform, complete with bar.

Ada Hotel (☎ 377 5915; www.adahotel.com; Tepecik Caddesi 128; d €245–290, ste €575–900; ☎ Apr–Oct; ♿) Designed to resemble an old stone house, the most basic room category here is deluxe, which should give you some idea of prices. It boasts a hamam, a health centre and two restaurants, while room adornments include antiques, candles and CD players.

Divan Hotel (☎ 377 5601; Keleşharım Caddesi 6; meze TL10–28, fish mains TL22–40; ☎ 11.30am–1am) Famous throughout Turkey, the restaurant here is considered by many as the top table in town. With an İstanbul chef with a reputation for creativity, the dishes are superb.

Fidèle (☎ 377 5081; beer TL8; ☎ 11.30am–1am) Nearby Fidèle is a great spot for an evening drink. Try the house speciality – spicy vodka.

Ship Ahoy (☎ 377 5070; meze €4–12, fish mains €10–14; ☎ 8am–6am May–Aug) The perennially popular Ship Ahoy is a pretty place on the seafront. It serves up superb fish and meze and turns into a nightclub from 11pm in summer.

Another place worth seeking out, right at the southern end of the front, is **lasos** (☎ 377 5141; Atatürk Caddesi 31; meze TL5, fish mains TL15–30; ☎ 11.30am–2am May–Sep), a popular fish restaurant whose prices are a bit lower than the town norm.

ÖREN

☎ 0252

A relatively low-key seaside resort patronised mainly by Turkish families. Ören has a trim and tidy seafront with a long pebbly beach lined with sun-loungers and bordered by neat flowerbeds, behind which sits a row of largely interchangeable fish restaurants. Inland, it's a slightly less tranquil story. The original village of old Ottoman houses, 1.5km inland, surrounded by the ruins of the ancient city of **Keramos**, has had numerous litters. New developments now sprawl into the surrounding fields in all directions.

Hamile Dağı (Pregnant Woman Mountain) soars above the village. With a bit of imagination the jagged western hump becomes the face, the swollen middle hump the belly, and the long ridge closest to town the legs of the woman. Paragliders launch from the ‘knees’, now sprouting radio towers.

Bring funds with you unless you want to have to trek about 4km back along the road to Milas to use the ATM machines outside the gates of the Kemerköy power station.

Sleeping & Eating

Ören has a handful of pensions and hotels near the waterfront.

Hotel Keramos (☎ 532 2250; www.hotelkeramos.com; Atatürk Bulvarı 30; s/d TL35/55; 🚗 May-Oct; 🍷) Just back from the front, the modern neoclassical-style Keramos has small but sparkling rooms with nice balconies overlooking gardens.

Hotel Kardelen (☎ 532 2678; www.orenkardelen.com; Yalı Mevkii Milas; s/d TL35/60; 🍷) Across from the minibus stop, the Kardelen has simple and rather stark but spacious rooms, as well as a large rooftop terrace.

Hotel Alnata (☎ 532 2813; www.alnatahotel.com; per person with half-/full board €25/35; 🍷 🍷) Ören’s top hotel, the three-star Alnata enjoys a striking green and yellow colour scheme and is comfortable and well run. All rooms have balconies, some with direct sea views. There’s a nice pool as well as a pebble beach with sun-loungers. Various water activities are offered, along with boat trips.

In summer, there’s a mass of places along the seafront selling pide, kebaps and fish. You’re best advised to browse and pick the most popular: places change fast in Ören.

Güverte Restaurant (☎ 532 3319; Yalı Mahallesi Sahil Yolu; meze TL3-7, fish per 500g TL10-15; 🚗 8.30am-midnight summer) Operated by the same people as the Hotel Keramos, this is a good waterfront dining option serving a wide range of fish and seafood as well as decent kebaps for TL10.

Getting There & Away

Minibuses run from Milas to Ören village and beach and back (TL4.50, one hour), every hour. To Bodrum (TL7.50) and Muğla (TL6.25) three minibuses leave daily.

© Lonely Planet Publications. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it’s fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don’t upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - ‘Do the right thing with our content.’