



North Nicosia (Lefkoşa)

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Best Places to Eat

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- Boghjalian (p156)
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- Old Mosaic (p155)

Best Cultural Sights

- Büyük Han (p150)
- Bedesten (p151)
- Selimiye Mosque (p150)
- Mevlevi Shrine Museum (p153)

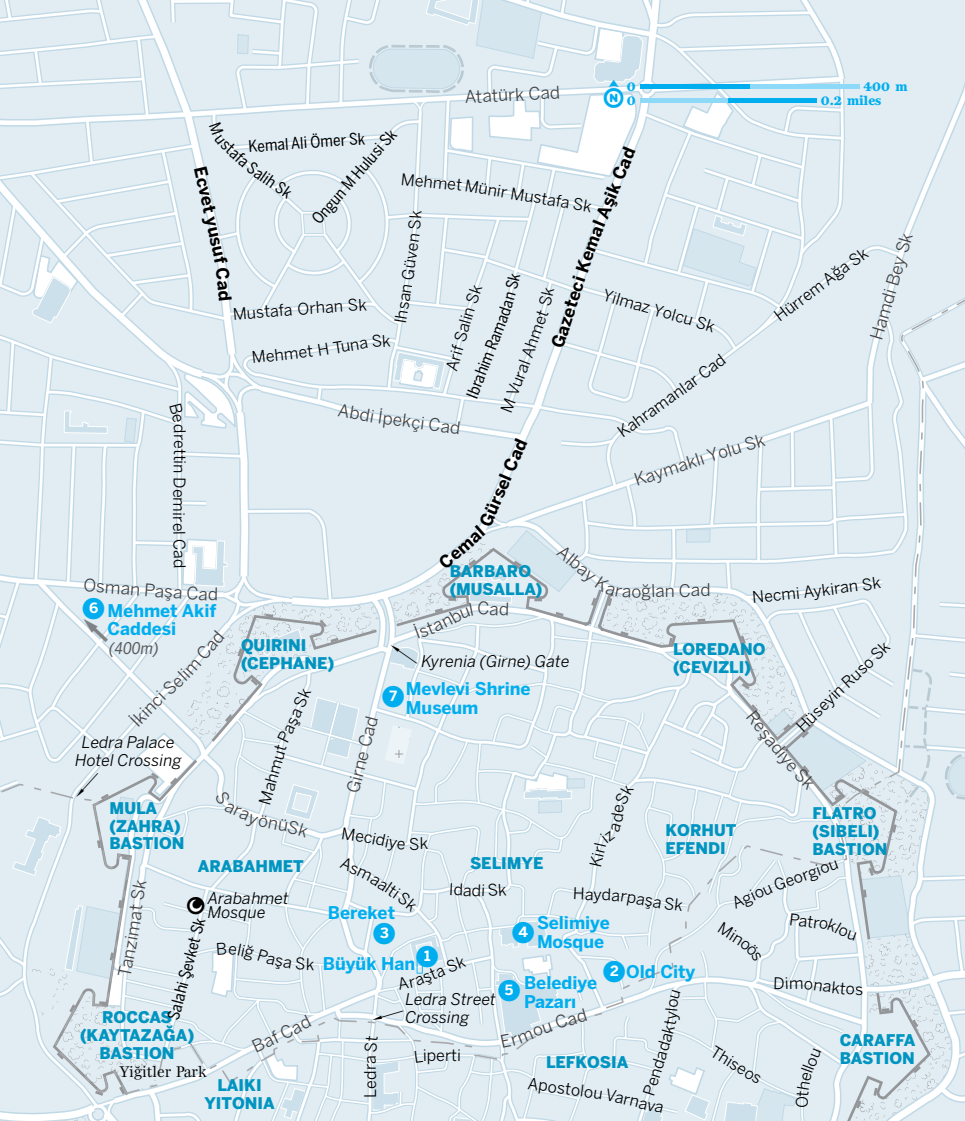
Why Go?

Home to roughly a third of the population of North Cyprus, the northern half of Nicosia is another world. Approached from the smart boutiques in Ledra St, North Nicosia (Lefkoşa) sees the avenue fracture into a medina-style market of stalls and kebab houses. Thanks to the Nicosia Master Plan, however, many of the historic buildings are being restored and the area around the Selimiye Mosque, in particular, has a real sense of heritage.

This is essentially a daytime city where the appeal lies in observing daily life and exploring the dusty historic streets lined with ancient mosques and Frankish ruins. Many visitors take a day trip via the Ledra Palace or Ledra St checkpoints. Consider staying until dusk, when the minarets light up and release their evening call to prayer and the air is scented with an intoxicating combination of wild jasmine and freshly grilled kebabs.

When to Go

- North Nicosia can be an uncomfortably hot and dusty city in July and August, which is also when many inhabitants leave for cooler coastal climes.
- Take note of when Ramadan falls, although it's not as strictly observed here as on the Turkish mainland.
- In September the temperature cools but the action heats up, with the town taking centre stage for the International Cyprus Theatre Festival.
- The spring and autumn months are pleasantly warm, while December and January see the most rainfall and the temperature is at its coolest, hovering around 15°C.



North Nicosia (Lefkoşa) Highlights

- 1 Visiting **Büyük Han** (p150), a grand Ottoman structure full of intriguing craft shops.
- 2 Strolling through the streets of the **Old City** (p150), an ancient and colourful maze.
- 3 Tasting a fantastic kebab, *pide* or *lahmacun* (Turkish pizza) at **Bereket** (p155), a traditional kiosk in North Nicosia.
- 4 Entering the sparseness and silence of the magnificent **Selimiye Mosque** (p150).
- 5 Walking between watermelon mountains at the **Belediye Pazarı** (p151).
- 6 Checking out the fashionable new restaurants and bars on cosmopolitan **Mehmet Akif Caddesi** (p157) in the New City.
- 7 Taking a twirl at the **Mevlevi Shrine Museum** (p153), a former shrine of the fascinating and mystic whirling dervishes.