



Cappadocia

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Best Places to Eat

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Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Hezen Cave Hotel (p475)
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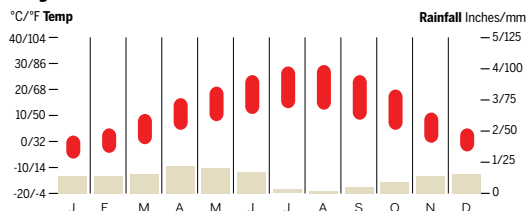
Why Go?

As if plucked from a whimsical fairytale and set down upon the stark Anatolian plains, Cappadocia is a geological oddity of honeycombed hills and towering boulders of otherworldly beauty. The fantastical topography is matched by the human history here. People have long utilised the region's soft stone, seeking shelter underground and leaving the countryside scattered with fascinating cavern architecture. The fresco-adorned rock-cut churches of Göreme Open-Air Museum and the subterranean refuges of Derinkuyu and Kaymaklı are the most famous sights, while simply bedding down in one of Cappadocia's cave hotels is an experience in 21st-century cave living.

Whether you're wooed here by the hiking potential, the history or the bragging rights of becoming a modern troglodyte for a night, it's the lunarscape panoramas that you'll remember. This region's accordion-ridged valleys, shaded in a palette of dusky orange and cream, are an epiphany of a landscape – the stuff of psychedelic daydreams.

When to Go

Kayseri



May A shake-up of art, music and yoga descends on the valley moonscapes with the Cappadox Festival.

Jul Pull on your hiking boots. This is the prime time to tackle the Ala Dağlar.

Dec–Feb Join the snow bunnies at Erciyes Dağı (Mt Erciyes) ski resort.



Cappadocia Highlights

1 Güllüdere (Rose) Valley (p455) Seeking out hidden churches on a hike amid the thin rock spires known as 'fairy chimneys'.

2 Derinkuyu (p473) Delving into the Byzantine tunnels below the surface at Cappadocia's deepest underground city.

3 Göreme Open-Air Museum (p454) Examining fresco-clad finery inside this complex of cave-cut churches.

4 Ala Dağlar National Park (p488) Hitting the lonely trails to experience the Taurus Mountains' stark beauty.

5 Zelve (p467) Imagining cave-cut life amid knobbly cliffs of abandoned caverns.

6 Ihlara Valley (p489) Strolling between verdant fields and soaring cliffs speckled with rock-cut chapels.

7 Uçhisar Castle (p464) Gazing out over a panorama of rippling rock from the summit.

8 Soğanlı (p483) Exploring this monastic clutch of churches hewn out of conical rocks.