



Ankara & Central Anatolia

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Atış Cafe (p426)
- ➔ Somaççı (p448)
- ➔ Sema Hanımın Yeri (p442)
- ➔ Balıkcıköy (p418)

Best Places to Sleep

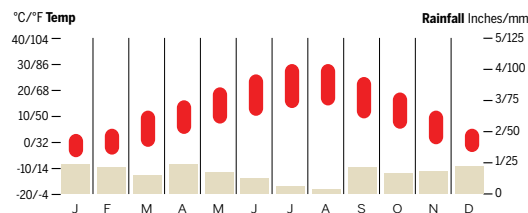
- ➔ Kahveciler Konağı (p426)
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Why Go?

Somewhere between the cracks in the Hittite ruins, the fissures in the Phrygian burial mounds and the scratches in the Seljuk caravanserais, the mythical, mighty Turks raced across this highland steppe with big ideas and bigger swords. Alexander the Great cut that eponymous knot in Gordian where King Midas displayed his deft golden touch. Julius Caesar came, saw and conquered, and in Konya, the whirling dervishes first spun. This central sweep of Turkey was also where Atatürk forged his secular revolution along dusty Roman roads that all lead to Ankara; an underrated capital city and geopolitical centre. Further north through the nation's fruit bowl, in Safranbolu and Amasya, 'Ottomania' is still in full swing; here wealthy weekenders come to capture a glimmer of a bygone age amid bendy-beamed mansions. Central Anatolia is the meeting point between the fabled past and the present – a sojourn here will enlighten and enchant.

When to Go

Ankara



May–Jun Fruit harvest: cherries the size of a baby's fist, apricots sweeter than a baby's face.

Jul–Aug Join summer's crowds of Turkish tourists in the Ottoman towns of Safranbolu and Amasya.

Dec Konya's Mevlâna Festival is a Sufi spectacular of extraordinary human spirit.



Ankara & Central Anatolia Highlights

- 1 Safranbolu** (p423) Turning back the clocks among Çarşı's cobblestones and timber-framed houses.
- 2 Museum of Anatolian Civilisations** (p411) Brushing up on Turkey's roots at the country's premier museum in Ankara.
- 3 Konya** (p442) Paying

homage to Rumi at the Mevlâna Museum then exploring the city's glut of Seljuk and Ottoman architecture.

- 4 Hattuşa** (p428) Hitting the hills in the heartland of Anatolia's first great empire.
- 5 Divriği** (p438) Marvelling at doorways of sublime artistry

on the Ulu Cami & Darüşşifası in this out-of-the-way town.

- 6 Amasya** (p433) Pondering tombs that poke out from cliffs above a rim of restored mansions.
- 7 Tokat** (p437) Meandering crooked alleys to search out *medreses* (seminaries), mosques and museums.