



Sakarya

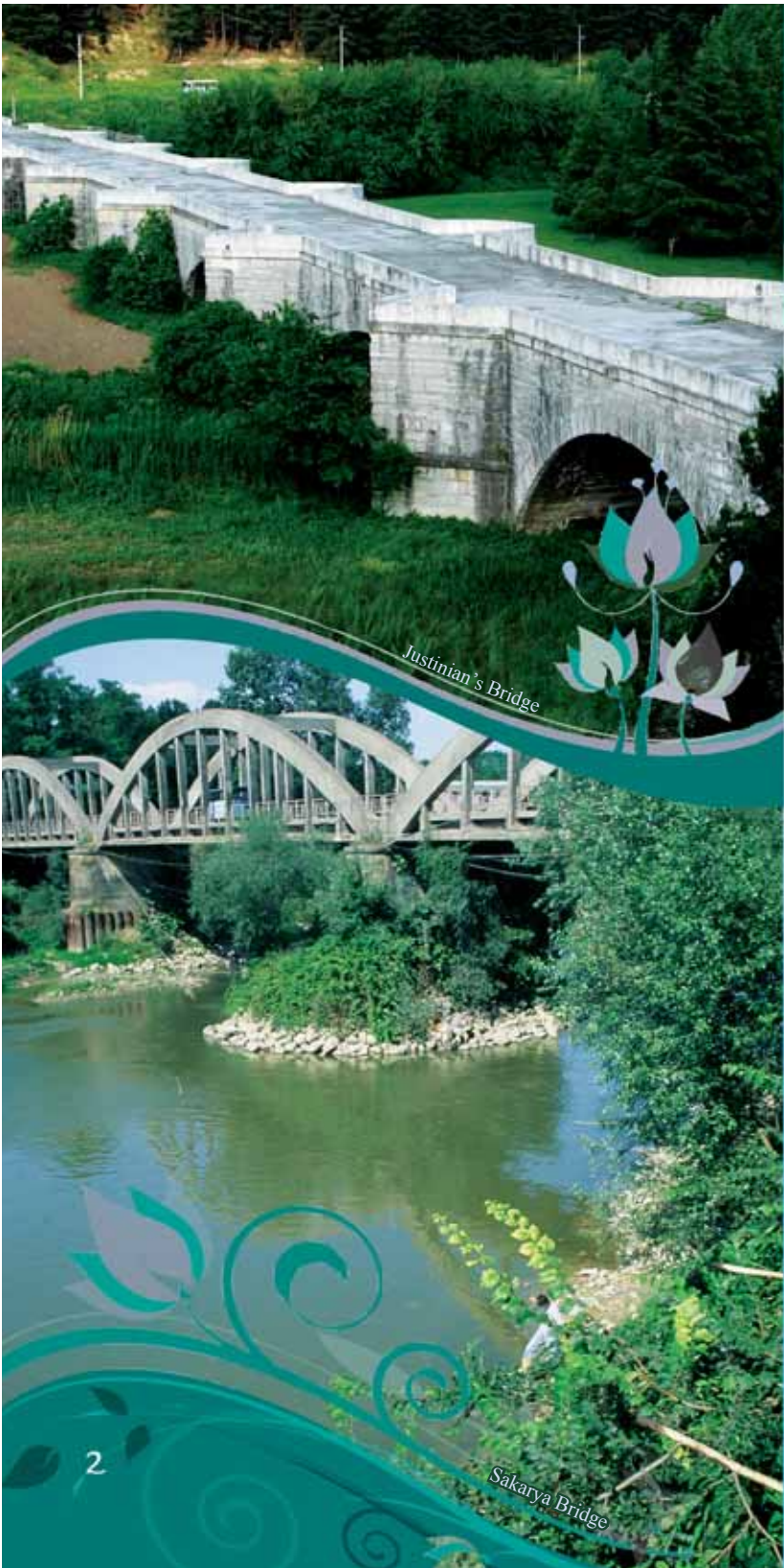
Land of Natural Beauty
in All Shades of Green!



Sakarya

Sakarya Province, which lies along the coast of the Black Sea in north-western Turkey, is only two hours drive away from İstanbul. Sakarya provides ample opportunities for those looking for alternative holiday choices through which they can enjoy various activities in nature rich in all shades of green. Sakarya has the advantage of location, being easily accessible from İstanbul, the eternal capital city of the world, and houses various kinds of natural beauties such as high plateaus, forests and lakes, each providing an oxygen-rich atmosphere for recreation within easy reach of city dwellers. There are twenty-two different trekking routes to take them away from the noise and stress of the city. The thermal springs and spas that have served people for thousands of years are at the disposal of those who seek a cure for their body and soul.

Sakarya sits at the junction of the routes that have spanned the gap between civilisations for centuries and which have provided the meeting place for cultural exchange between East and West. The military roads dating from the Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman periods and the historic Silk Road, which connected the Far East to Europe, cross at Sakarya. Reminders of these roads are still apparent in the monumental bridges, historic arches and stone-paved roads. The breathtaking panorama of the land that has attracted numerous travellers, explorers and merchants is best enjoyed following these historic routes. Over the years Sakarya has become a hub for outdoor sports activities as well as a picturesque centre for thermal springs and spas. Sakarya is such a magical destination that after your visit when you look at the photos you have taken it will be difficult to believe that they are real!



Justinian's Bridge

Sakarya Bridge

On the Silk Road:

Sapanca - Geyve - Taraklı

During the course of history, Anatolia has always been on the world's most important commercial routes. One of these routes, the Silk Road, gained particular importance during the Seljuk Period and developed during the Ottoman Period by adding additional routes connecting nearly all the cities of Anatolia. Because of its proximity to the capital city İstanbul, an important section of the Silk Road passed through Sakarya. The Sapanca-Geyve-Taraklı section of the Silk Road can still be followed by both nature lovers and history enthusiasts.

Sapanca was one of the most important settlements during the Ottoman Period due to its position on the Silk Road, and its history goes back quite a way. You do not have to bury yourself in books in order to learn about Sapanca's history. If you take a short tour through the town you come across tombs and gravestones from the Byzantine Period, buildings designed by world-wide famous Turkish architect Sinan, and 19th century timber framed mansion houses, which will make you feel as if you are wandering around in an Ottoman town. **Vecihi Gate**, which is believed to have been a mustering point on the Silk Road, is at the entrance of the district's cemetery. The centre section of the arch, believed to have been designed by Mimar Sinan, is the only original section remaining. The **Rüstem Paşa Mosque**, also believed to have been designed **3**

by Mimar Sinan in 1555, is in the Rüstempaşa Neighbourhood. The mosque has been destroyed a number of times by fire and earthquake, but has been repaired and rebuilt every time. Rüstem Pasha, who commissioned the mosque, was the son-in-law and Vizier of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent. Sultan Süleyman was known as the Sultan who greatly improved and extended the Silk Road.

Sapanca is also a centre for cultural activities. If you like poetry you must visit the town during early summer, although during each season the town has a different beauty. Since 2000, during June **International Poetry Evenings** are organised on the shores of the Sapanca Lake and sometimes on the historic Justinian's (Sangarius) Bridge. The event brings together culture, art and literature lovers, with poets from different countries reciting their own poems. Every year a night devoted to the poetry and music of a different country is organised, and literary experts and critics give lectures. This event is open to anyone who wants to experience the beauty of nature, history and poetry all together.

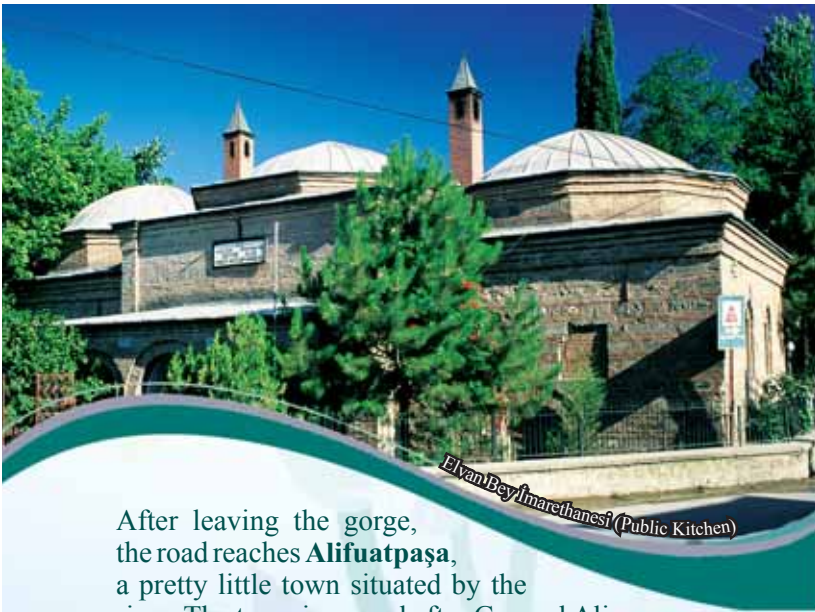
You may not want to leave Sapanca's rejuvenating climate and scenic beauty that take away all your stress and leave a peaceful feeling of calm. However, you will find even more amazing sights along the road!

The **Justinian's Bridge**, just outside Sapanca, will amaze you with its impressive grandeur, remaining intact even though it was built 1,500 years ago. When you first see the bridge, which is the most important Byzantine structure not only in the province but also in the whole region, you will probably be curious about why such a grand bridge was built over such a small stream. Maybe you will believe in local people's legends, or you might look for a more logical answer. In fact the bridge is the living proof of that the province was located on important routes during the Byzantine Period, when it was built over the Sakarya River. However, contrary to what was written on its original inscription, the river could not be tamed and, as if not accepting being dominated, it changed its course and started to flow along a different bed three kilometres east of the bridge. The

bridge, which had provided a crossing over the Sakarya River on the eastbound roads from Byzantium for five hundred years, was abandoned and forgotten when the river changed its course. However, the bridge is still standing, and its majestic appearance challenges having been forsaken by the river.

After Sapanca, the next place that will dazzle you with its unspoiled beauty is the **Geyve Gorge**. Due to its strategic importance during the Turkish Liberation War, bloody skirmishes took place here for many months. However, the picturesque river and forest-covered steep sides of the gorge show no reminders of the long forgotten war years. The gorge, displaying all shades of green in its vegetation, is set between two mountain ranges and lies along either side of the calm waters of the Sakarya River. The picturesque ruins of **Çoban (Shepherd's) Fortress** are situated at the narrowest point of the gorge. It was built by the Byzantines, who were aware of the vital importance of controlling the traffic using the gorge in order to defend their capital. Not only this fortress but also the **Adliye (Court House) Fortress** at the entrance of the gorge and the **Bağlarbaşı (Vine Orchards) Fortress** near Geyve are also from the Byzantine era.





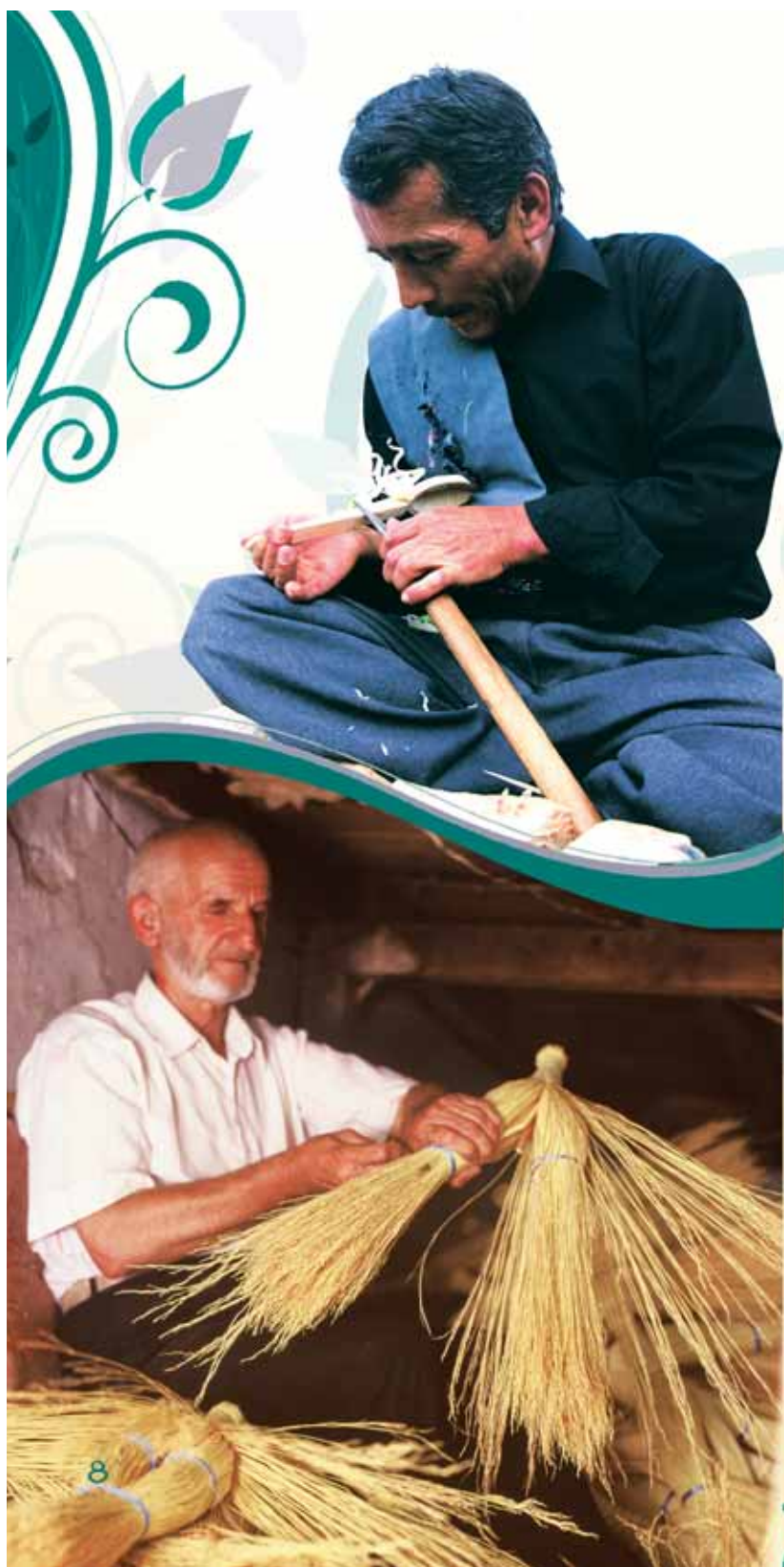
After leaving the gorge, the road reaches **Alifuatpaşa**, a pretty little town situated by the river. The town is named after General Ali Fuat Cebesoy, a hero of the Liberation War and a close associate of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. You can visit the tomb of the great commander, as well as the **Kuvay-ı Milliye (National Forces) Museum**, where his personal belongings and documents from the era are exhibited. The bridge by the museum, which has provided an easy crossing over the Sakarya River for five hundred years, was commissioned by Sultan Beyazıt II, the son of Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror. The **Beyazıt II Bridge**, another reminder of the historic Silk Road, was carefully maintained by Ottoman Sultans due to its importance on the route. The inscription on the east end of the bridge is interesting to read as it reflects the viewpoint of Ottoman Sultans about public works: “In order to safely cross the *Sırat* Bridge (which is believed to span the opening to Hell, and as thin as a hair and as sharp as a sword) in the other world, leave a bridge in this world.”

To the north of the bridge are the ruins of another bridge believed to have been constructed during the Byzantine Period, and used until Sultan Beyazıt II built the current bridge. It gradually collapsed, no longer able to resist time and the waters of the Sakarya River. The ruins of the bridge resembling a small island are a reminder of its past existence.

As you enter Geyve, situated higher than Alifuatpaşa and giving a birds-eye view over the gorge and the Sakarya River, the **Elvan Bey İmarethanesi (Public Kitchen)** appears before you. The tomb of Elvan Bey, whose name was given to the building, is in its garden. The kitchen building was constructed in the 15th century. Geyve was one of the early Ottoman conquests and the kitchen building is still in good condition. For a while it was used by travelling dervishes, who played an important role in bringing Anatolia under Turkish influence. The structure, which now serves as a library, is worth visiting for its architecture as well as its 19th-century wall engravings.

Although not many ruins can be seen in and around Geyve, it is an historic settlement dating back thousands of years and was called Tataion and Kabaia in previous times. At Elmadere Village it is also possible to view the remains of the **King's Road** built by the Lydian civilisation. These remains once again show the importance of this province as a meeting of roads for many civilisations: Ottoman, Byzantine, Roman and Lydian. If we consider that the history of the province goes back to the 13th century BC, we can also add to this list the Phrygians and the Cimmerians. Although there are no longer any remains from the era of the Bithynia Kingdom, roads through Sakarya were extensively used during this time due to the fact that they were near to their capital. Arabs have also passed through these lands in order to conquer the Byzantine capital. While at times commerce and at other times war brought civilisations together, the Sakarya region was common ground for them all for many years.

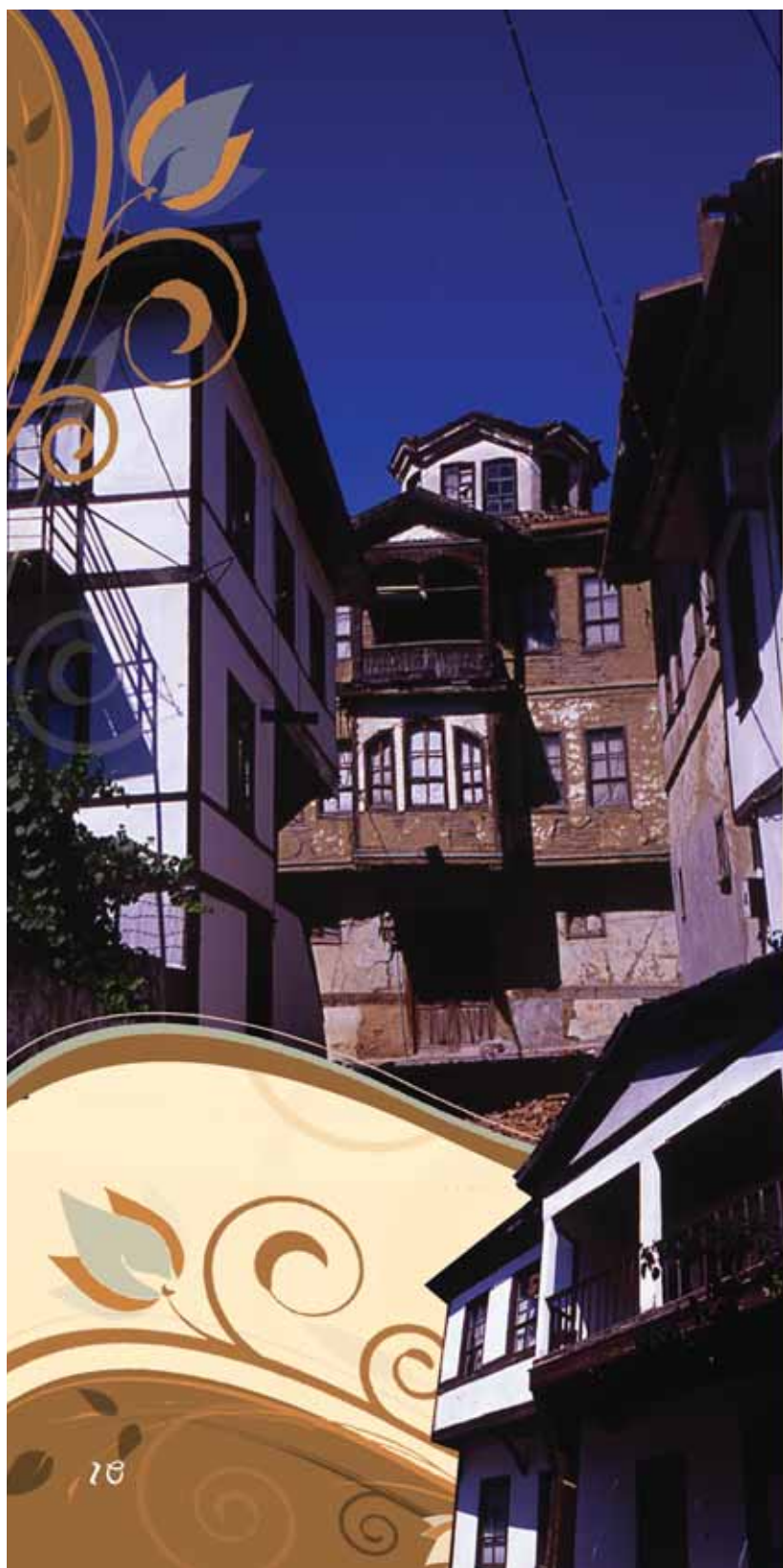
Geyve is an important fruit growing centre of Turkey, and seventy per cent of the country's quince production is grown in Geyve, Sapanca and the Pamukova region. Also, you must taste the white grapes of Geyve. Since they are only grown for export, it is impossible to find them anywhere else in Turkey.



Taraklı takes its name from the production of combs carved from boxwood. The people of the district are not only skilled in wood carving but they also have impressive skills in other handicrafts. You can watch craftsmen producing gifts using traditional methods in the ‘spoon houses’, where wooden spoons and ladles are produced. You can also purchase souvenirs as a reminder of your visit.

During the **Hıdırlık Rice Festival**, which takes place every year either at the end of May or the beginning of June, competitions between craftsmen demonstrating their skills in handicrafts such as comb carving are organised in order to help these traditional handicrafts survive. The skills of the spoon carving masters, who in just a few minutes can carve several spoons of various sizes with astonishing speed, are reflected in the elegance of the doors, ceiling roses and cabinets in the civic and religious buildings in Taraklı; each one is a work of art. However, the skills of the Taraklı people are not just limited to woodworking; their weaving skills can be seen in the **Taraklı linen**, which is woven in traditional ways and found only in Taraklı.

As you walk around Taraklı you might think that you are on a journey through time to an Ottoman town of the 19th century as you discover many attractive sights in every part of the district with its unspoilt streets, cobblestone roads and examples of civic architecture such as several grand houses and mansions, as well as historic inns and public bathhouses. Some of the mansions date back more than three hundred years. Taraklı’s many original features have been preserved almost intact, so the district is like a long forgotten treasure chest waiting to be discovered. The district has a fortress, which had its own cistern, as well as **Yunus Paşa Mosque** dating from the 16th century, **Hacı Atıf Inn**, which is the only wooden inn still standing that hosted many travellers on the Silk Road, and also has the **Orhangazi Bazaar**. Although its importance as a result of its location on an important commercial route decreased when the route changed, the district has still maintained its historic richness. At every 9



step you will feel as if you are turning the pages of a very rare book you found on a dusty shelf, and the sights you see will remain as strong memories for a long time.

While on military expeditions to Egypt with Sultan Selim the Grim, his Vizier, Yunus Pasha, was forced to spend the winter in Taraklı, and he commissioned a mosque to be built in the district. The mosque was called as the **Kurşunlu (Lead Clad) Mosque** by the townspeople because its dome was covered with lead plating. It was built to a square plan and had a single minaret. The mosque still maintains many of its original features. Using a method that was not widely used during those times, the mosque had an under floor heating system. Local thermal waters were used for heating and many sources of these waters can be seen throughout the town. The **oriental plane tree**, which is located in the Yusufbey Neighbourhood, dates back almost to the years of the Ottoman conquests and is listed as a natural monument. Despite having lived for so many years this tree, still standing upright, is like an embodiment of Taraklı itself.

When you feel hungry after all your sightseeing we suggest you try *cevizli çörek* (walnut bun) or *keşli mantı* (a sort of ravioli with special fried cheese) or *keşkek* (meat and cracked wheat boiled and mashed to a paste) and for desserts local specialities such as *köpük helvası* (meringue) or *uhut* (pureed juice and pulp of wheat sprouts mixed with flour). As soon as you taste them you will regret that you had not discovered them earlier. These are only some of the local specialities from Taraklı. We will leave it for you to discover and taste the rest!

You will discover that when you leave the **Sapanca-Geyve-Taraklı** road the beautiful sights on the Silk Road in the Sakarya region are not just limited to these towns. Nearly every part of the province is worth a visit. You will also come across buildings or beautiful natural landscapes, and thermal springs and spas in Adapazarı, Akyazı, Hendek, Karasu, Kaynarca, Kocaali and Pamukova.



Sakarya Museum

OSMANLI SIKKELERİ (1299-1923)
OTTOMAN COINS (1299-1923)

Cultural Treasures of Sakarya

Although Sakarya has been on the important commercial routes for centuries and several important towns developed during the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires, no large city was established. The destructive influences of the Sakarya River that flows through the province as well as powerful earthquakes have all played a part here. Nevertheless, it is still possible to find traces of Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman civilisations in many places in Sakarya.

If you are interested in the history of the province you should first visit **Adapazarı**, which is in the heart of the province and easily accessible by rail and road. If you travel by train, there are regular services from İstanbul. Adapazarı station is the last stop on the route, which on occasion runs alongside the Sakarya River and through lush greenery so that you will feel revitalised rather than tired from your journey. The **Sakarya Museum**, which dates back nearly a century, is right opposite the station. We recommend a visit to the museum, which is open every day except Monday. The museum is famous for the renowned visitors it has played host to, rather than its history. The founder and first president of the Republic of Turkey, Atatürk, and his mother, Zübeyde Hanım, stayed in the building for three days during the Liberation War. The building was restored and opened to the public as a museum in 1993.

The two-storey museum has an attractive design and is divided into two sections: the archaeology and the ethnography sections. The artefacts in the archaeology section show that the history of the province dates back thousands of years. Artefacts, including flat axes, earthenware, glass and metal pots belonging to the prehistoric, Roman and Byzantine ages were all found in the region. In the numismatic display, there are coins from the Classical, Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Ottoman periods. Sarcophagi, headstones, dedication steles and altars dating back to the Roman and Byzantine periods are displayed in the garden of the museum.

In the ethnography section there is a selection of weapons, seals and embroidery from museums in other provinces as well as some of Atatürk's personal belongings such as dining suits and other clothing, handkerchiefs, napkins and a National Assembly pendant. Visiting the museum also provides further information about Sakarya. The tumulus found in Küçük Çekmece Village of Adapazarı was associated with the ancient city of Tersiyе which is the oldest settlement in the province and it was dated back to the 1st century BC. Artefacts found during excavations in Beşevler Village, the cemetery sites in İkizce, Osmaniye and Akarca villages, and the sarcophagi found in Meşeli Village and displayed in the garden of Sakarya Museum all date back to Roman times. Adliye Village and Maltepe Neighbourhood are other places where graves and tombs were discovered. From the density of cemetery sites, we can conclude that nearly the whole of Sakarya region was used as the cemetery during the Roman Period. When you leave the museum you will feel that your time spent there was worthwhile.

Sakarya was one of the first places conquered by the Ottomans and there are many early Ottoman buildings throughout the province. One of them is the **Orhan Mosque** in the centre of Adapazarı, which is the oldest Ottoman building in the province. The mosque was built from timber in 1325, fell into disrepair over time and was subsequently rebuilt by Sultan Abdülhamit II in 1892 in the design in which it appears today.





Islama Köfte



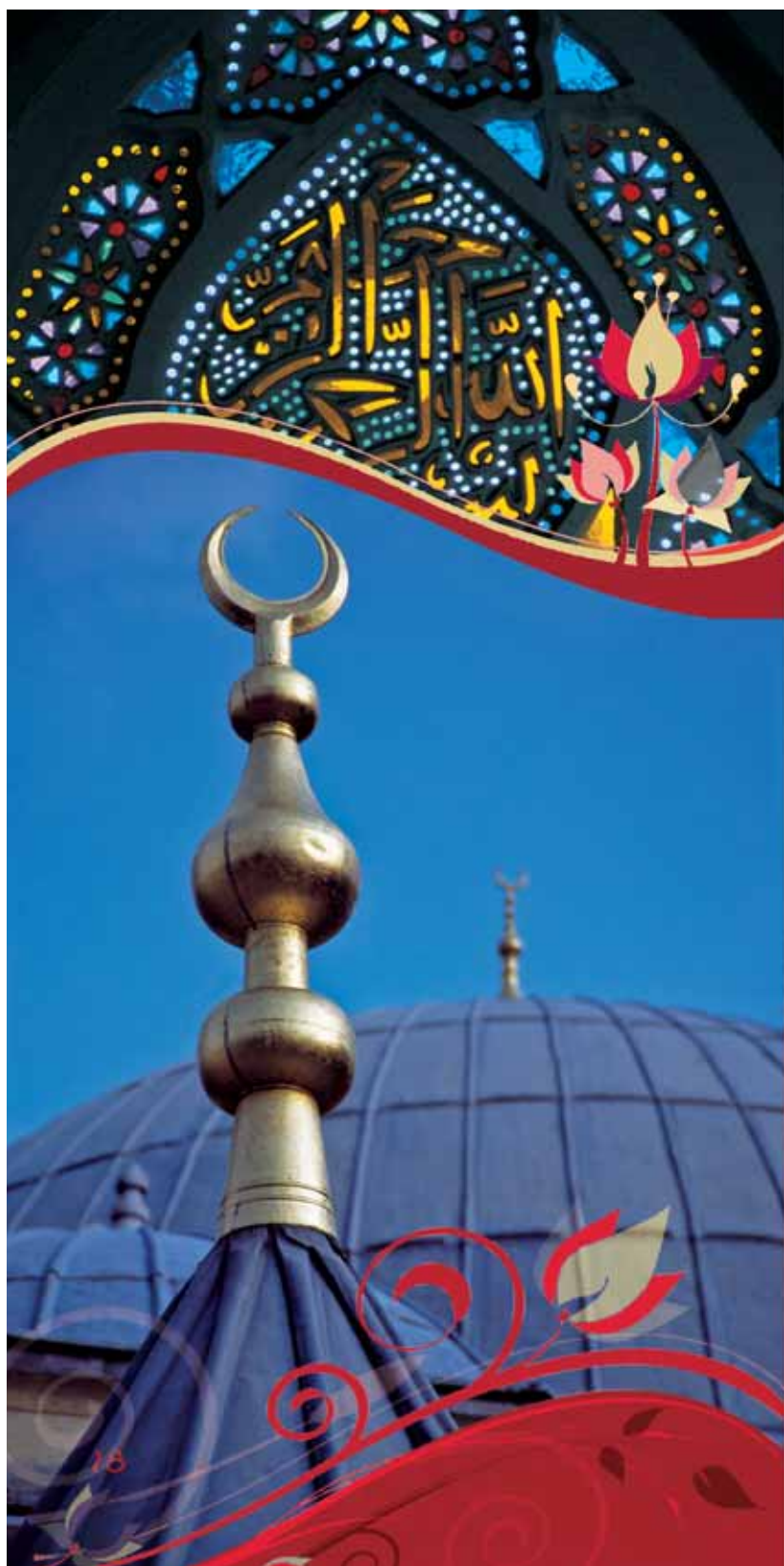
76 Kabak Tatlısı

The district names of Hasırcılar (reed mat makers), Semerciler (saddle makers), Papuçcular (shoe makers) and Tığcılar (netting needle makers) in Adapazarı reflect the province's rich tradition of handicrafts. The handicrafts are still practised today albeit only in a few towns such as Taraklı, Sapanca, Kaynarca and Geyve.

Before you continue your sightseeing tour, we recommend you to try the world-famous *ıslama köftesi* of Adapazarı (meatballs served on toast soaked in bone stock and spiced with red chillies), *köfteli kabak* (courgettes stuffed with meatballs served on a vegetable base) and *kabak tatlısı* (chunks of pumpkin slowly stewed in thick syrup served with a ground walnut or hazelnut topping) since you will not find such tastes anywhere else.

If you leave Adapazarı and travel to Harmantepe located in the north, you will find a fortress standing in the middle of farmland. **Harmantepe Fortress** is one of many border fortresses and dates back to the 12th and 13th centuries as a symbol of the final, hopeless efforts of the Byzantines to stop the endless Turkish raids on the Sakarya River, the natural line of defence. The fortress has survived with all its walls and towers in quite good condition. The fortress with five entrances has six bastions some of which are two-storeys high. Inside the bastions you can see the embrasures through which Byzantine soldiers shot their arrows at the enemy. You can also view the whole fortress by walking along the tops of the walls from where the soldiers kept watch for their enemies.

There are tumuli in the villages of Topçu and Kırktepeler in Kaynarca district, which is thirty-five kilometres north-west of the centre of the province. Another historic structure in the district is the **Sheikh Muslihiddin Mosque**. Although its date of construction is not known for certain, it is estimated that its construction was approved by Sheikh Muslihiddin, a member of *Ahi* Brotherhood, in the 14th century. The exterior of the mosque was clad with timber during the repairs carried out in 1820. The inscription describing the repairs is set in the fountain near the mosque. It is thought that when it was first built it was constructed of rubble-stone walls to a rectangular plan and was covered with 77

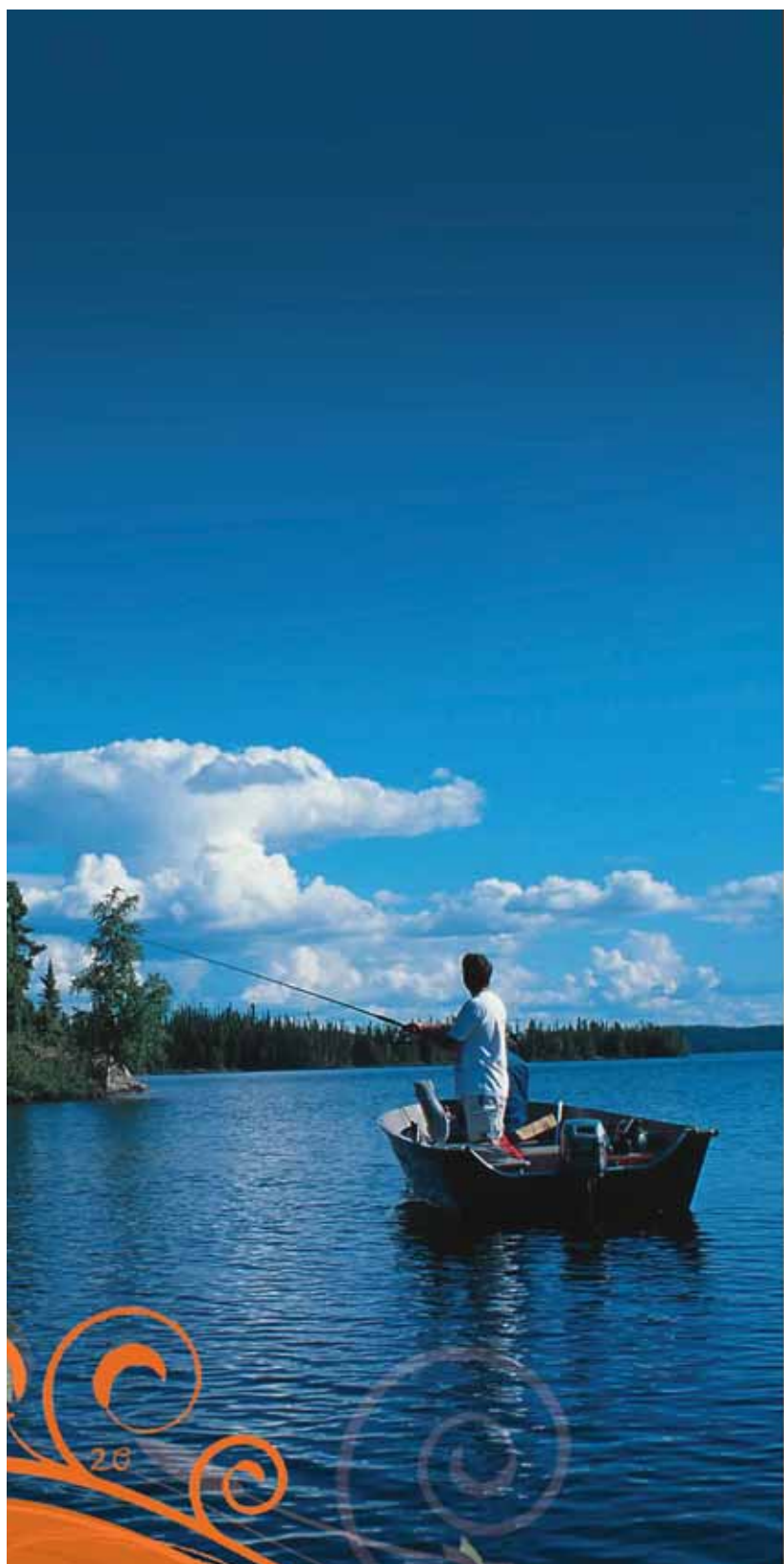


a roof. The present structure still has a rectangular plan, but it is in 'empire' style. Its minaret is round with a stone base and a single balcony.

Pamukova District is situated in the south of Sakarya Province. The ruins of the oldest settlement called **Midos City** are believed to be under the southernmost part of the present town. The district also has the **Malagina Fortified Area**, where the horses of the Byzantine cavalry were bred and trained and it was also the military mustering area for expeditions to the East. In the 7th century, Arabs, who were aiming to capture İstanbul, seized all the horses trained here. The traces of Arabs, who continued their raids for two hundred years, can also be found in the **Paşalar Fortress**, which is situated on a hill near Paşalar Village to the south of the town. Pieces of grave steles, altars and columns built into the walls can still be seen today and indicate how hastily the Byzantines constructed the walls in the face of sudden Arab attacks. They re-used the stone from the ruins of a nearby earlier Roman settlement, which may have been Midos City.

Once you have made the strenuous climb to reach the fortress, the scenery is well worth the effort and you will realise that there could not have been a better place to build a fortress. The stunning panoramic views from the top, where you will want to sit and look around for hours, cover the whole of the Pamukova Plain.

As everybody who visits the fortress will notice, one section of the fort was constructed in a different style. The parts dating from the Arab raids were those with steles and columns built in them and these parts of the walls remain standing. The section that was constructed by using rough rubble and brick was from the 13th and 14th centuries, during the period when Ottoman raids had intensified. This section is contemporary with most of the other fortresses in the province. The fortress had a cistern and some inner buildings, which can be seen as ruins today, and it was the first conquered fortress in the area during the Ottoman conquests. Mekece Fortress, Kemaliye Village Mosque and the Kemaliye-İznik aqueducts are other historically significant buildings in the district.

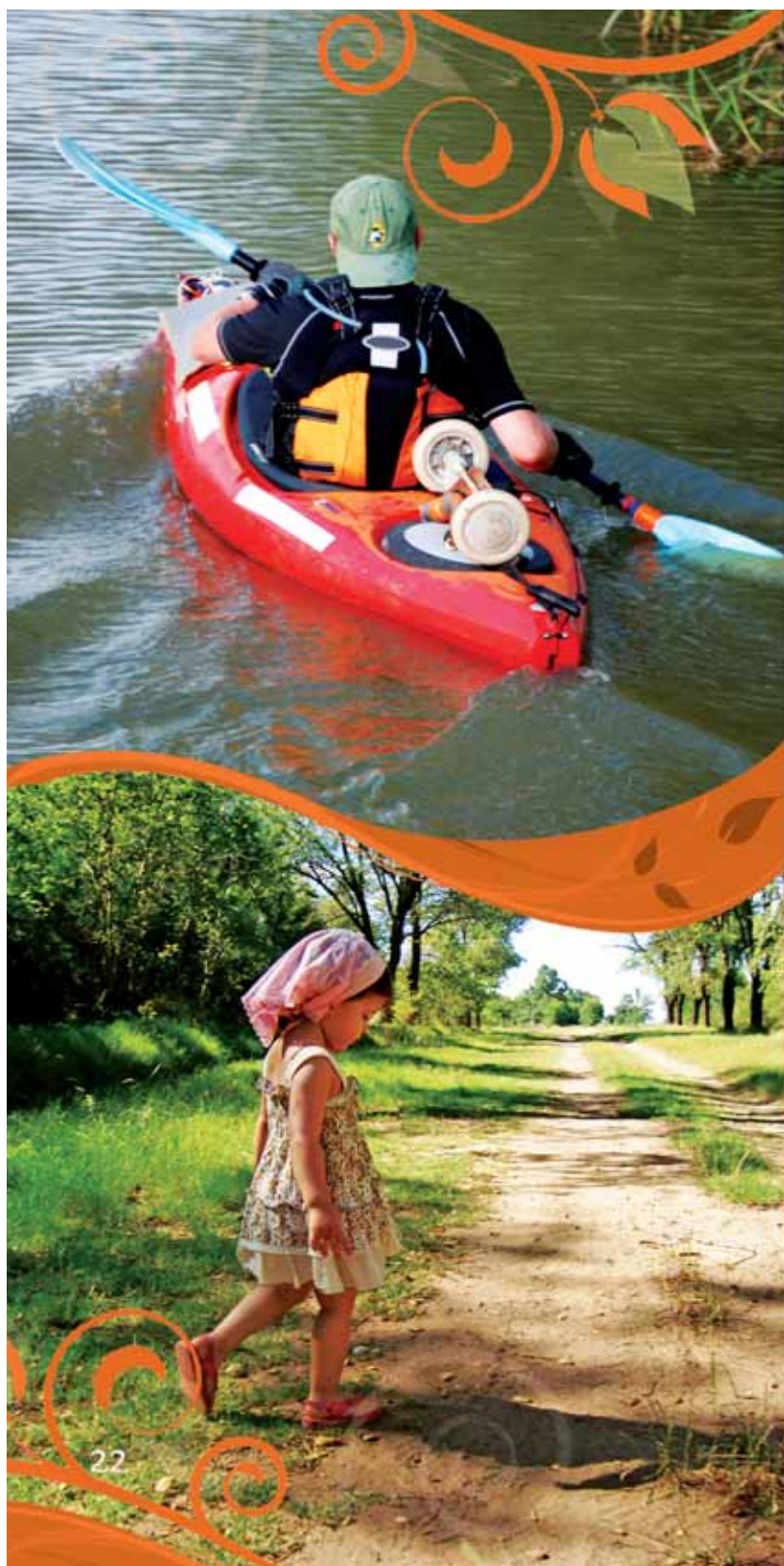


Sakarya:

The Place Where Entertainment meets Adventure

In Sakarya there are many options if you prefer your entertainment and adventure in a spectacular natural setting. Many of these options are available at Lake Sapanca, an ideal place for microlight (motorised paragliding) and balloon flights, as well as canoeing, tornado sailing (catamaran), water skiing, swimming, rowing and windsurfing. At **Kırkpınar**, microlight, ultralight and model plane activities are organised, along with riding competitions, which attract riders from neighbouring provinces. The richness of the wildlife of the Sakarya region manifests itself in Sapanca too. The forests, covering quite a wide area, and the unpolluted lake have a beneficial effect on the wildlife. The lake contains various species of freshwater fish and it is a real gem for **line fishing**. At its eastern end, Gölbaşı and Eşme are rich with freshwater lobster beds. On the sloping banks partridge, woodcock and rabbit hunts are organised.

Some of the trekking routes in Sakarya are located in Sapanca. The **Soğucak Waterfalls** and **Yanık Stream** treks are the most popular ones especially among the visitors coming from İstanbul at the weekends. The routes and rest areas are well signposted so trekking fans of all levels can easily follow them. **Soğucak High Plateau**, which is one



of twenty high plateaus in Sakarya, attracts nature lovers and it is only thirty-five minutes away from Sapanca.

Many trekking routes in Sakarya consist of high plateau tracks located within the borders of Geyve. Starting from Geyve town, there are pleasant walks along the Çataltepe, Ziyarettepe, Kırca, Gölcüklü, Zöpçe and Öküz Yatağı high plateaus.

Sapanca also boasts the highest mountain in the region. **Kartepe**, which is easily accessible, is also a winter sports centre and offers a ski resort, walking routes, camping sites and modern accommodation facilities.

Akyazı District also provides choices for outdoor sports fans. **Riding** competitions are organised in Akbalık and there are **white water canoeing** sections in the Mudurnu Stream. Mudurnu is also quite good for **rafting**.

Another town offering different choices for **outdoor sports** is **Kocaali** in the north of the province and on the Black Sea coast. The pleasant **waterfalls** on **Maden Stream** are popular and are frequently visited by nature lovers, and **walks** are organised along the 19th century mine tunnels. Trout and carp abound in the stream and anglers can fish there. The walking route passes along a deep gorge covered with thick forests and at the end the path reaches a dam lake behind a fifteen metre tall wall which is believed to date from the era of Genoese colonisers. The waterfalls over the dam which was hand-built of stone are worth a visit.

Running along the borders of Kocali-Düzce, Melen Stream is another choice for those wishing to raise their adrenalin levels as it is suitable for rafting, especially in the spring months when water levels are high. The stream is ideal for day trips from the neighbouring provinces, especially from İstanbul. It is also possible to enjoy the experience of **white water canoeing**.



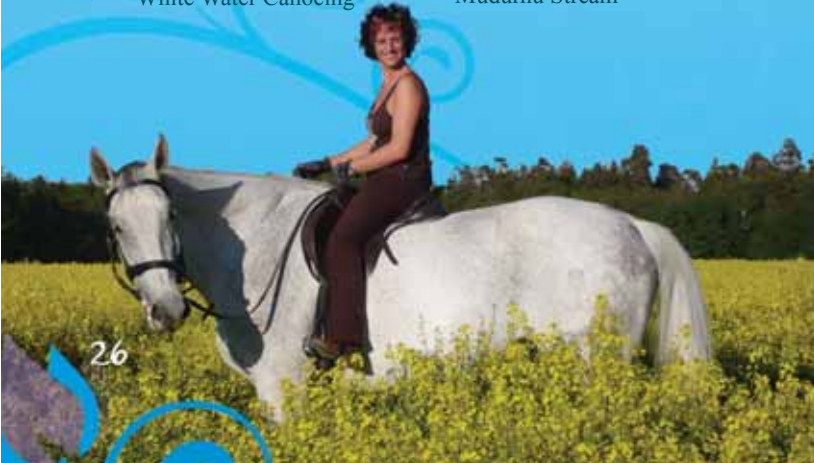
The coastal belt, most of which lies within the Karasu district borders, is in the north of the province. It has one of the longest beaches of the Black Sea and is one of the best places for swimming. The long, fine sand **beaches** of **Karasu** and **Kocaali** are believed to be beneficial for visitors with rheumatism and the seawater is always clean and clear. The beaches are good for relaxing and camping. Karasu has very popular accommodation and entertainment facilities and its wide, sandy beach is twenty kilometres long. The district generally caters for domestic visitors and after spending the day sunbathing and swimming everyone enjoys themselves during the evening at the town's live music and entertainment venues.

Pamukova, to the south of Sakarya Province, also provides popular activities organised in the high plateaus. **Katrözü Plateau** is one of the most beautiful of them and offers picnicking facilities as well as famous sources of spring water. There is a trekking path from **İnönü Plateau** to **Erikli Plateau** through the natural beauty of the surroundings that enables visitors to see both plateaus. On the **Karapınar Plateau** there are **riding** competitions as well as opportunities for **horse riding lessons**.

Venues for Alternative Tourism and Outdoor Sports



- Auto Drag Racing Serdivan
- Calm Water Canoeing Gölbaşı-Arifiye
- Camping Poyrazlar Lake
- Camping Soğucak Plateau
- Camping Çiğdem Plateau
- Camping Karagöl Plateau
- Camping Acelle Plateau
- Camping Kırca Plateau
- Civil Aviation Activities Kırkpınar-Sapanca
- Horse Riding Kırca Plateau
- Horse Riding Akbalık Horse Race Field
- Horse Riding Kırkpınar-Sapanca
- Microlight Flights Kırkpınar-Sapanca
- Motocross Taraklı-Geyve-Dokurcun
- Off-road Racing Serdivan
- Paragliding Karagöl Plateau-Taraklı
- Paragliding Serdivan
- Rafting Melen Stream
- Rally Cross Racing Gölbaşı-Arifiye
- Rally Cross Racing Race-course-Sakarya city centre
- Tornado (catamaran) sailing Sapanca Lake
- Trekking Maden Stream-Kocaali
- Trekking Kaymakam Suyu-Pamukova
- Water Skiing Sapanca Lake
- White Water Canoeing Mudurnu Stream



Sports Activities

Trekking Routes

- 1:Doğançay–Maksudiye–Kamışlı–Kulfallar (23 kilometres)
- 2:Karasu Village-Kuyumculu–Maden Deresi–Şerbet Pınarı–Çıralıdüzü–After Maden Deresi Gölkent Water Facility (19 kilometres) (This valley is known as Çamdağı)
- 3:Doğantepe–Bağcağız–Koru–Belpınarı–Hamzapınarı (22 kilometres)
- 4:Geyve State Road–Akçay–Fevziye–İlimbey–Balkaya–Güldibi–Sapanca (15 kilometres)
- 5:Aksu (bridge)–Güney–Yeniyayla–Orta Mahalle–Ufuk Mahalle–Göksu–Aksu (14 kilometres)
- 6:Mekece – Kemaliye – Çilekli – İnönü Plateau (accommodation) (19 kilometres) İnönü Plateau – Çilekli– Bakacak – Eskiayla (footpath) – Kırca Plateau (22 kilometres)

Motocross Routes

- 1:Taraklı–Mahdumlar–Karagöl Plateau–Hanyatak Plateau–Çatalkaya–Boztepe–Beldibi–Kuzuluk
- 2:Geyve–Burhaniye–Saraçlı–Setçe–Karagöl Plateau
- 3:Caferiye–Melen–Bezirgan–Aydoğan–Ortaköy–Yalpankaya–Yanıksayvan–Kızılüzüm (Hendek–Kocaali State Road) –Hendek
- 4:Geyve State Road–Kayıkbaşı–Akıncı–Melekşeoruç–Kırca Plateau–Eskiayla–Çilekli–Kemaliye–Mekece
- 5: Dokurcun–Dikmen Plateau–Eski Yatak–Güneyköy–Kadifekale–Dere Mahalle–Karadere

Water Sports

Canoeing/Pedalo/Speed Craft: Sapanca Lake

Canoeing: Sakarya River (Ferizli–Yenimahalle)

Rowing/Sailing/Surfing: Sapanca Lake

Other Water Sports

- 1: Sapanca Lake (between the old Sapanca Hotel and the Metin Restaurant)
- 2: Poyrazlar Lake
- 3: Gölkent

Source of Cure: Sakarya Spas



Sakarya Province is very rich in thermal springs, which are a source of therapeutic waters. Various springs, spas and baths in the region are very popular. Geyve has two sources. If you visit Ahibaba village, five kilometres south-east of Geyve on the road to Gölpazarı, remember to taste the water of the **Acısu Spring**, which is surrounded by pine forests. It is believed that this water, which has a slightly salty taste, has a curative effect on stomach, intestinal and liver diseases. It is possible to take a rest at the environs of this spring which is also used as a picnic area. Another mineral-rich spring is **Gazlısuyu** in **Ilıca Village** and you should also drink the water of this spring. It is located fifteen kilometres from Geyve on the road to Taraklı. Other places that have important spas are **Akyazı** and **Taraklı**.

Taraklı is particularly well known for its cure-all spas. The most important of these spas, its history of curing people dating back to the Byzantine Period, is **Kil Hamamı (Clay Baths) Spa** in Paşalar Village. It is believed that the water of this spa, which is 39°C at its source, is good for rheumatism and neuropathic diseases. The spa is also very popular for its pleasant forest location.

The popularity of Akyazı, twenty-nine kilometres away in the east of the province, stems from its spas. **Kuzuluk Spa** is eight kilometres away from the town of Kuzuluk. Its facilities cater for all your needs including accommodation. It is the largest and most important spa in the province. The Seljuks, discovering that this spa was believed to have curative effects for several diseases, used it as a therapeutic centre for many years. **Çökek Spa** also has healing effects on several diseases. It has a total of nine wells, four of them used for water baths and five for mud baths.

Maden Deresi, in Kocaali District, is another place that is popular for those seeking health therapy. The reason for this is its curative spring water that is thought to be good for stomach ache and its spas that are believed to be good for rheumatism and skin diseases.

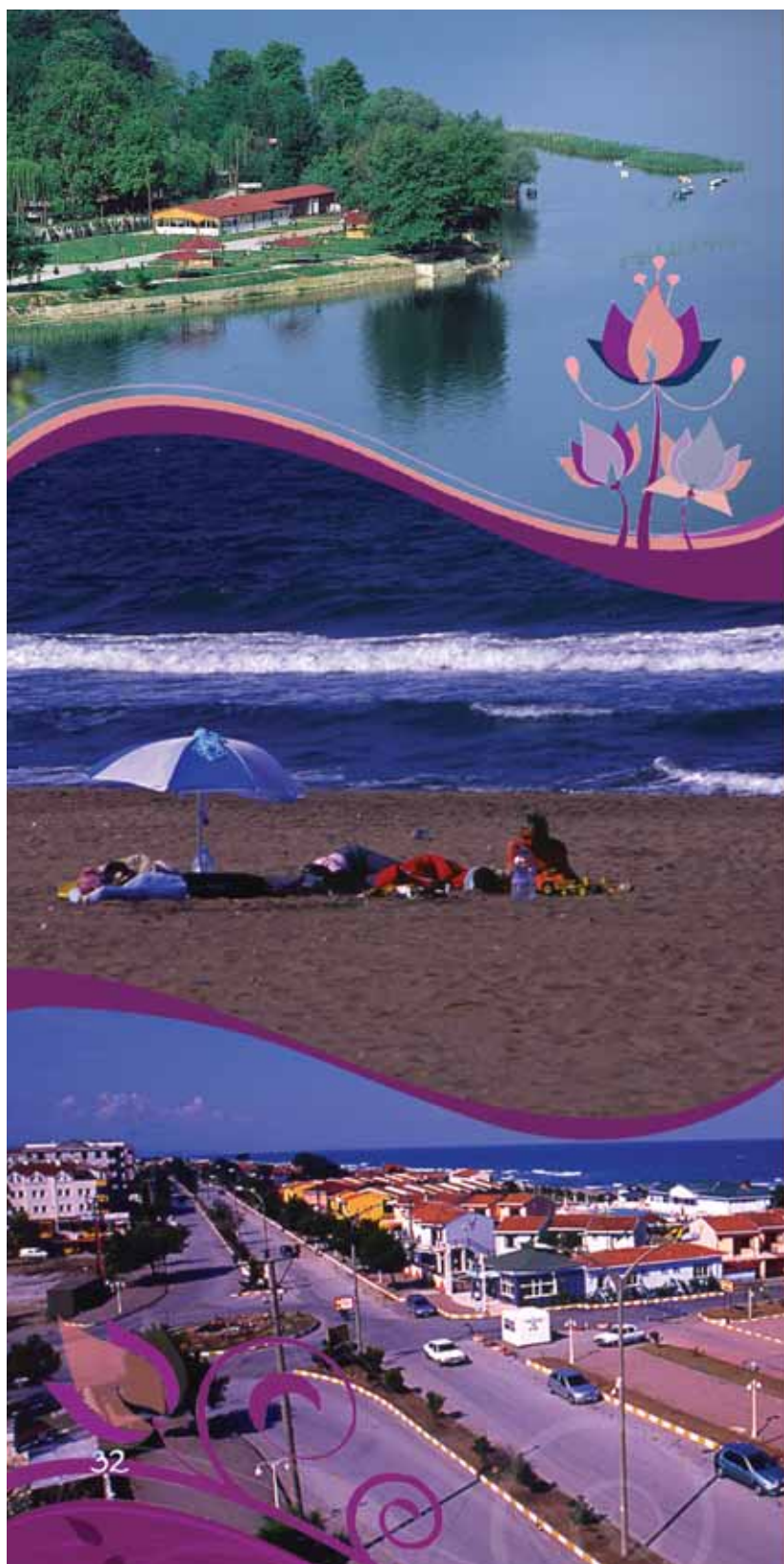


Sakarya's Natural Wonders

The clean air and unspoilt natural environment of Sakarya first make themselves felt to those arriving from İstanbul by road at **Sapanca**, the first stopover on the Silk Road. The green of the surrounding forest and the blue of the lake act in harmony for your relaxation. At Sapanca, with its blend of tranquillity, romance and entertainment, you can swim in the clear water of the lake, hire a rowing boat, relax in the picnic grounds alongside the lake shore or watch various sporting activities and competitions taking place on the lake. With its rich forests, natural beauty and clean air, Lake Sapanca and its surroundings are a picturesque centre for those wanting to get away from the stress of city life and crowds. With lakeside facilities catering for every need as well as providing many other options for a holiday break, Lake Sapanca is a must-visit destination.

Maşukiye, located on the lower slopes of Kartepe, the only ski resort in Sakarya Province, also attracts many day-trippers and nature lovers, especially in the summer months.

There are many plateaus in the province, which host a variety of fairs and festivals during the summer months. These are the best places for those who want to escape from the heat and routine of daily life. If you are planning a visit during the summer, you should include these fairs and festivals in



your schedule. In Geyve, at the beginning of July the traditional **Kırca Fair** is held by people from the Melekşeoruç and Melekşesolak villages. The fair takes place within a very picturesque area surrounded by woods and flowing streams. There are also traditional wrestling matches, and there is always strong competition to become the master of ceremonies for the year. You will be treated to the famous village buns as well as a dinner consisting of rice pilaf, pancakes, yoghurt drinks and chicken, offered to guests al fresco as they are entertained with folk dancing.

If you visit the **Kırca Plateau** you should take time to walk around to discover its hidden beauty. The geological structure of Sakarya Province generally does not allow cave formation. One of the few caves that you should take time to visit is Kırca Cave with an entrance of one and a half metres in diameter. The cave has a depth of about two hundred and fifty metres and has three large chambers, narrow tunnels, stalagmites and stalactites and an underground river. The **Gürleyik Spring**, which emerges from a cave underneath the Domdom Rock in Hırka Village, three hours away from Geyve, is another place well worth a visit.

There are other rugged lands within Taraklı's borders that are also worth visiting. **Karagöl** has rich forest areas with numerous types of trees. It is also one of the most important plateaus in Sakarya. Towards the end of April, **Karagöl Plateau** is an area for paragliding, with its flat centre and sloping sides. The **Doğancıl Plateau** is on the route to the Karagöl Plateau, and the **Samanlı Mountains** surrounding these two plateaus, open their arms to nature lovers with rich forests displaying all shades of green.

Another place in Sakarya famous for its plateaus is **Akyazı District**. After spending a day on the **Acelle, Davlumbaz, Çiçek, Karapınar, Turnalı, Sultanpınarı** and **Keremali plateaus**, you may not even want to return home! In Acelle, one of the most

popular plateaus for nature lovers, there are wooden bungalows providing overnight accommodation. Nearby **Sülüklü Lake**, where the only sound to be heard is birdsong, is a place that provides walking tracks around its shore for those who want to escape the hullabaloo of the city.

Hendek District is also famous for its natural beauty and plateaus. With an altitude of one thousand five hundred metres, the **Çiğdem Plateau**, described as one of the ten most beautiful plateaus in Turkey, is easily accessible from Hendek. Every July festivities are organised there.



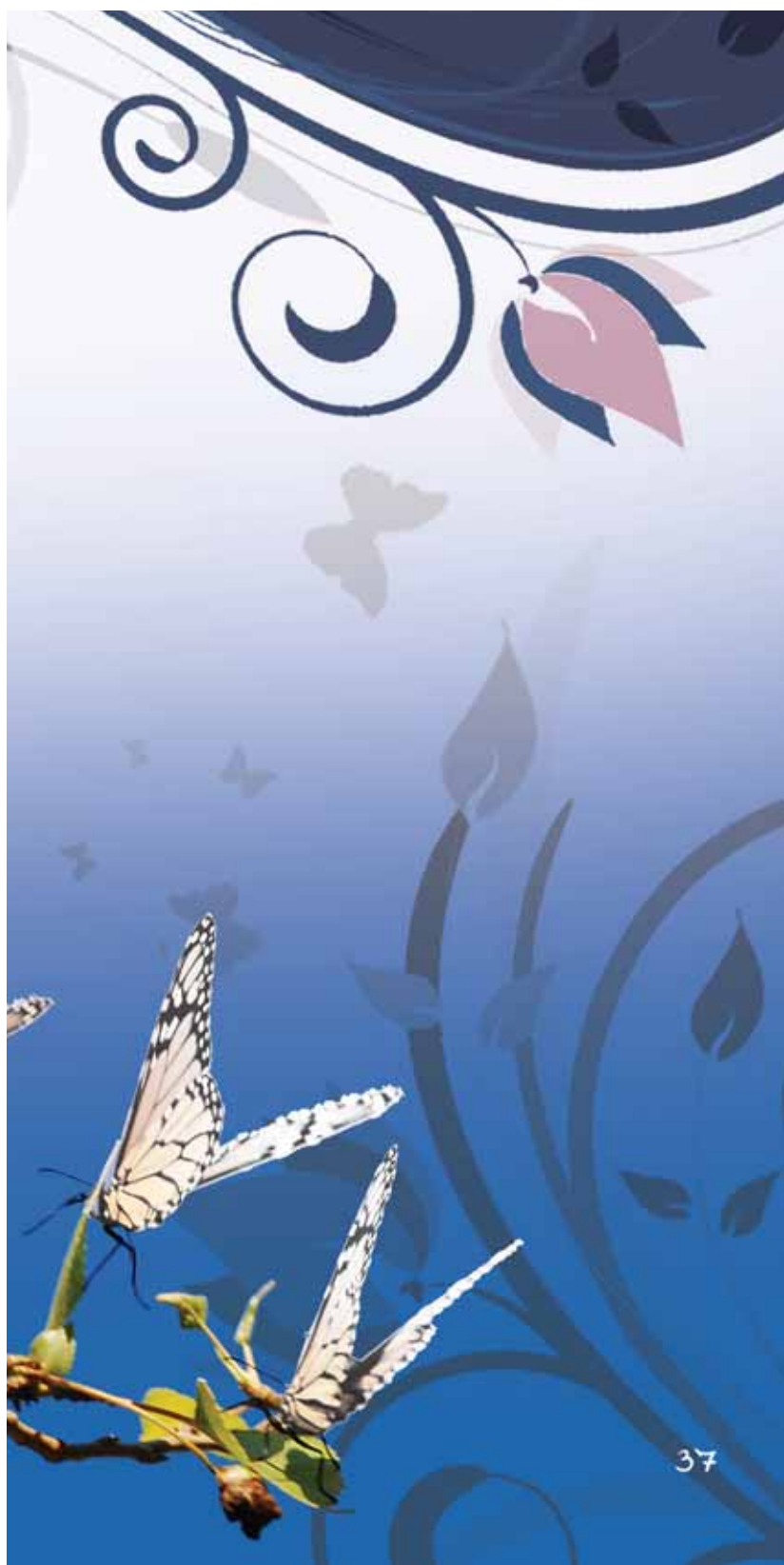
Poyrazlar Lake, which is eight kilometres to the north of Adapazarı, has a natural beauty much like Sapanca. The lake, which was declared a protected zone of natural beauty, with its picnic areas, walking and cycling tracks along its shore and its unspoilt natural landscape, offers visitors a very pleasant atmosphere to relax in. During the spring months the area surrounding the lake must be seen by all **bird watching** enthusiasts. Many migrating birds, including swans, visit the lake at the beginning of spring and stay there for about three months. Hunting and fishing are prohibited in the lake and its environs. Poyrazlar is rich in **flora** as well. The water lilies on the lake and flowers of all colours that grow in the fields along the flats around the lake add to its splendour. After picnicking in this beautiful place and listening to the birdsong you can enjoy the atmosphere by strolling along the walking tracks, or by cycling or taking a boat trip on the lake.

Acarlar Flooded Forest in Müezzinler Village, near Karasu District, which has been declared a protected nature site, is the second largest flooded forest in Turkey. The flooding is caused by mountain streams that carry the run-off to an inland basin covering a large area. The flooded forest area is situated six kilometres to the west of the mouth of the Sakarya River on the Black Sea coast and is one and a half kilometres inland running parallel with the shore. The depth of water in the flooded forest changes according to the rainfall; however, about 2,517 hectares of land is more or less covered with water throughout the year. It is one of the most beautiful natural sites in the world. The forest is home to numerous varied plant species that love lots of fresh water and by law the area has the highest level of protection. There are boat trips to view the water lilies and water violets that are only endemic in two places in Turkey, as well as other rare flowers and plants. In addition, two hundred and forty-three different species of birds can be seen.

Death Dance of Mayflies on the Sakarya Bridge

If you visit Adapazari during the first week of July, you may witness a natural spectacle that is rarely seen in any other part of the world. To see this spectacle in full you have to spend the night on the **Old Sakarya Bridge**. The thousands of mayflies (*Ephemeroptera*), named locally as willow moths, emerge as it gets dark and make you feel as if you are in a snowstorm. Although the death of thousands of mayflies at the end of their flight will sadden you, witnessing such a natural spectacle is a unique experience. The lifespan of mayflies is only one day and normally the spectacle is over in just three days.





Climate

The climate is similar to Marmara and the Black Sea climate. The air is humid in Sakarya and winters are quite rainy and mild while summers are hot. The yearly average temperature is 14.4°C, the lowest recorded temperature is -14.5°C and the highest recorded temperature is 41.8°C.





Transport

Sakarya, which has been at the junction of the roads connecting several important centres for two thousand years, is a place that you can easily reach and it is quite close to İstanbul.

Road Transport

Sakarya Province has road connections to all neighbouring provinces, and is on the motorway between Ankara and İstanbul, the two most important cities in the country. Many coach operators have scheduled routes to the city, and there are regular coach and minibus services. It is 148 kilometres to İstanbul and 306 kilometres to Ankara. The D100 highway and the TEM motorway are the two busy main roads that pass through the province in an east-west direction.

Trains

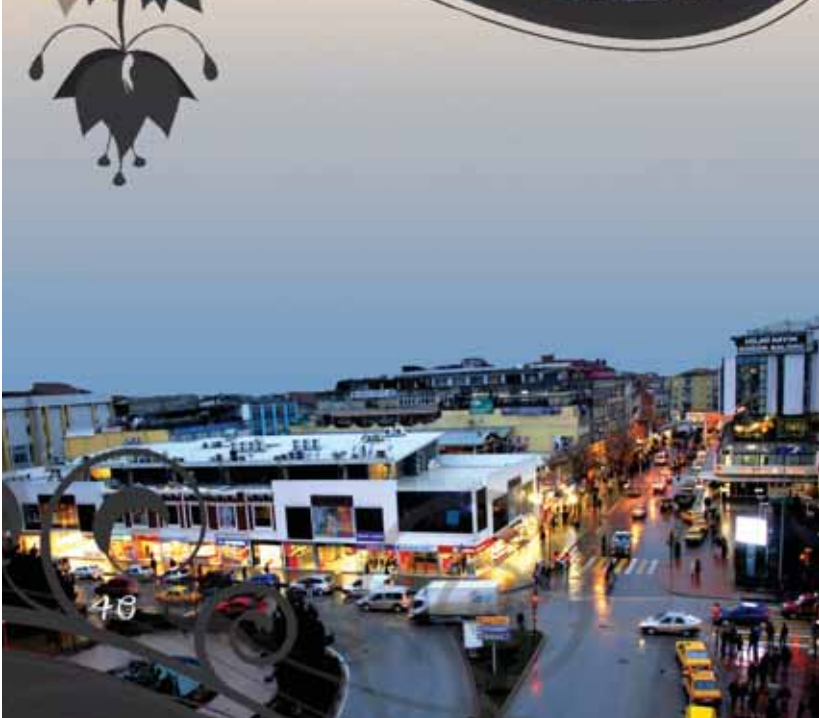
The railway connecting İstanbul with Ankara and other provinces passes through Sakarya. There are regular train services between Adapazarı and İstanbul. There are also regular train services from Arifiye to Ankara, İstanbul, Konya and Denizli.

Air Travel

The nearest airport is at İstanbul.



Adapazarı



Important Phone Numbers

Governorship

(+90-264) 251 35 15

Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism

(+90-264) 241 40 88

University of Sakarya

(+90-264) 277 36 68

Municipality

(+90-264) 274 50 20

Sakarya State Hospital

(+90-264) 275 10 10

Adapazarı Train Station

(+90-264) 277 37 00

Bus Station

(+90-264) 275 11 89

Sakarya Museum

(+90-264) 277 36 68

Alifuatpaşa Kuvay-ı Milliye Museum

(+90-264) 517 00 70





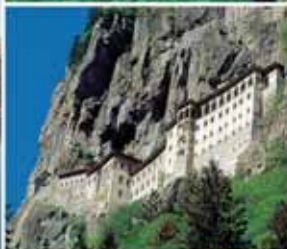
Did you know?

- That the best example of a bridge built during the early Byzantine Period in Turkey is in Sakarya?
- That the Acarlar flooded forest is one of the rare places that water violets grow and is the second largest flooded forest in Turkey?
- That the facilities for all kinds of outdoor sports are available in Sakarya?
- That the forests and plants of the province act as an oxygen-generating system providing clean air not only for the province but also for the whole region and for neighbouring provinces?



Do not leave Sakarya without:

- Visiting the 1,500-year-old Justinian's Bridge,
- Walking around Taraklı District's unspoilt historic streets and houses and tasting its speciality meringues,
- Going up to one of the high plateaus with their clean air and wonderful natural environment,
- Visiting Lake Sapanca and eating Sapanca's famous bread baked in wood-burning ovens,
- Eating the world-famous Adapazarı *islama köfte* and *kabak tatlısı*,
- Taking a cure in its spas and thermal springs,
- Tasting the Geyve grapes that can only be found in Geyve,
- Buying wooden spoons and Taraklı linen produced in traditional ways, as well as kilims, textiles, socks and cotton scarves rich in colour, design and variety, handcrafted in Kaynarca...



Cultural Heritage is Fragile



The world's cultural heritage is like a big puzzle. Each monument, each object, is an irreplaceable part of the overall picture which gives us insight into our origins, our development and our lives today. It helps us to understand and appreciate other cultures. Each discovery, each new interpretation adds to the puzzle and makes the picture clearer. We must ensure the protection of every single piece today, so that future generations may have the opportunities to enjoy the puzzle.

Many people are not aware that our cultural heritage is under stress from natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods, and from slower acting processes such as pollution or human actions. Even the most innocent gestures such as collecting ancient pieces of pottery or mosaics as souvenirs have a destructive impact if repeated by thousands. Touching an object of stone, metal or textile leaves traces of grease, acid or sweat on its surface. Climbing a monument wears down the structure underneath and can dismantle it. Writing or engraving names inflicts permanent damage. Strolling around narrow crowded places with bulky bags or backpacks might knock over an object or scratch a mural painting and ruin it. There are countless ways in which one can unknowingly contribute to the destruction of cultural heritage.

In 2020 there will be 1.6 billion visitors per year worldwide. Let us raise awareness of this issue so that we may join together to protect and enjoy the diversity and richness of our cultural heritage.



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MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND TOURISM
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