

 EXPO  
2020  
İZMİR-TURKEY  
Candidate City

 **Izmir**  
the frontier city of  Turkey

# İzmir

City of exquisite history, blue sea and good food.

City of gods, emperors, sultans; of the sun and the wind.

City of the wise, the hero, the learned and the free;

a treasure trove for historians, archeologists and scholars.

İzmir... City where historical **Silk Road meets the Aegean**,

and the skyscrapers salute the ancient ruins,

city where the future is brilliant and the horizon is bright.

City where life paces up in Kordon, slows down in Seferihisar and turns into pure pleasure in Çeşme.

İzmir... The city of olives, figs and grapes... The land of the natural, organic and fresh.

Leaning against 8,500 years of history and looking hundreds of years ahead, İzmir is gloriously situated on the western edge of Turkey, acting as the western port opening up to Europe. It was no coincidence that Darius built the Persian Royal Road in 5<sup>th</sup> century BC to reach this city; and that mausoleums and temples were dedicated to gods here.

Warmed by soothing thermal waters of Balçova, adorned with Bird Paradise, generously sprinkled with architectural masterpieces, delicately framed with beautiful beaches, İzmir is one precious gem by the Aegean.

The Temple of Artemis, an actual Wonder of the Ancient World; Asclepion, the historical center of healing and the Temple of Zeus are just some. Festivals and exhibitions, fairs and conventions fill up İzmir's calendar year 'round.

İzmir... The bountiful, the fruitful and the beautiful.



*Clock Tower*  
*Konak*

İzmir, with its 8,500 years of history encompassing 3,500 years of recorded urban history and its land spreading over 12,012 km<sup>2</sup>, is a metropolis in the west of Turkey. The economically fertile atmosphere stemming from its ports, economic variety, skilled manpower and its geographic location has turned İzmir into the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest economy in Turkey. With its spectacular growth rate, İzmir has recently been determined as one of the top 5 fastest growing metropolitan economies of the world.



Izmir, undoubtedly owes much of its economic and social prowess to its location and climate, but even more so to its social mosaic that has allowed many cultures and civilizations to flourish over the centuries. Persians, Greeks, Assyrians, Romans, Byzantines and Ottomans are only a few of the dozens of civilizations that Izmir has hosted throughout its long history.

Izmir takes pride in its multi-religious weave. In Izmir, several churches and synagogues are harmoniously intertwined with mosques and ancient houses of worship.

Half the 4 million population of Izmir is under 30, which makes the city a vibrant one. Izmir hosts tens of thousands of students, providing the whole country with a constant stream of scientists, artists, businessmen and scholars.

Its perfect climate makes Izmir a wonderful habitat for staples like olives, figs, grapes and cotton. Blessed with a great spot for fresh seafood and variety of olive oils to drizzle over, the purest and simplest forms of culinary wonders make Izmir a destination for foodies as well.

Although opening up to the blue, Izmir is also a very “green” city; it boasts numerous spots for healthy living, offers active life style solutions for its locals, takes measure to protect the environment and supports the use of renewable energy.

**Portrayed by 19<sup>th</sup> century French poet Victor Hugo as “princess”,** Izmir (formerly known as Smyrna) is a rooted city that has once been inscribed on ancient coins and a young, dynamic metropolis simultaneously.



*Gulf of Izmir*

# The Frontier city

fron·tier [ˈfrʌntɪə] : the farthestmost limits of knowledge or achievement in a particular subject

fron·tier city : İzmir

It is not easy being a frontier. This is not an easy undertaking. For a city of firsts throughout history, İzmir carries a major responsibility.

No matter from which angle you look at the picture, you can not deny the fact that Turkey is the fastest growing force in Europe and İzmir is the shining city among 81 Turkish cities (with a population of 4 million “young minds” in 75 million total). The city’s “First in History” list is endless. From agriculture to finance, health to education, from lifestyle to technology...

The first parchment paper, the first temple of healing (The Asclepion built in honor of Asclepius, the God of healing), first use of herbal medicine, psychotherapy and natural therapy and the first Asian

library of 200,000 volumes...The Iliad, among the oldest extant works of Western literature written by Homer was created in this land, not to mention the Lydians using the first coins and “creating” money!

Imagine this! A whole Christian world of billions of people, worshipping for over 2000 years around the globe. The first place of worship, the first Christian church mentioned in the Bible (7 Churches of Revelation) is in İzmir!

The first Turkish railway, the first baby born via in vitro fertilization, the first football team, the first zoo and the first natural life park, and the first and the oldest trade show, International İzmir Fair are a fraction of the “firsts” attributed to İzmir, a frontier in every sense of the word.



*Celsus Library, Ephesus*  
Selçuk



## The Seven Churches Of Revelation

Also known as The Seven Churches of the Apocalypse and The Seven Churches of Asia, are seven major churches of Early Christianity, as mentioned in the New Testament Book of Revelation and written to by Ignatius of Antioch. In Revelation, on the Greek island of Patmos, Jesus Christ instructs his servant St. John: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to **Ephesus**, and to **Smyrna**, and to **Pergamos**, and to Thyatira, and to Sardis, and to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."



*Celsus Library, Efes*  
*Selçuk*



# The Timeless city

İzmir is a city that has been founded twice. The first settlement of ancient Smyrna dates back to 3,000 BC. During the excavations in Bayraklı, these settlements were discovered at Tepekule area in the north-eastern part of İzmir. At around 205 meters high hill of Bayraklı there are some ruins belonging to the tomb of king Tantalus, a mortal son of Zeus, from 7<sup>th</sup> century BC.

The city was founded for the second time in Kadifekale (Pagos) in 4<sup>th</sup> Century by one of the generals of Alexander the Great. According to a legend, while **Alexander the Great** was hunting at the woods of Pagos hill, he fell asleep under a tree and dreamt that two nymphs were telling him to establish a new city at this location and that its citizens would have a very prosperous and happy life.

Today it is easy to elaborate on this dream, for the foundation of the city at this spot was a great decision for military and commercial purposes.

The castle that stands today was restored several times by Byzantines, Seljuks and finally by Ottomans. 186 meters above sea level, it is now one of the highest points of the city which offers a bird's-eye view of İzmir.

Countless historical sites adorn İzmir. Agora, the marketplace built by Alexander the Great like all other agoras of the ancient world was a meeting place for all commercial, political, and religious activities for the local people. It's the best preserved and largest among all the Ionian agoras.

Pergamum, that was the capital of the Kingdom of Pergamon during the Hellenistic Period, and Ephesus, one of the twelve cities of the Ionian League during the Classical Greek Era make İzmir a historian's dream! Ephesus, which is famed for the Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the World, is also home to the **Temple of Zeus**.

One of the most spectacular ancient ruins in the city is, without a doubt, the Library of Celsus located in Ephesus. This magnificent landmark built in honor of Roman Senator Tiberius Julius Celsus Polemoneus is astonishingly well-preserved. It is hard to imagine what it was like during the time it was built, in a bustling city of 25,000, however, the remains certainly give us a glimpse into its past. Thought to have held some 12,000 scrolls, Celsus is one of the most beautiful structures that has withstood time and weather.



*Amphitheatre, Ephesus*  
*Selçuk*

Kemeraltı, the old bazaar is filled with some colorful knick knacks that will remind you of İzmir. The oldest meeting point and shopping center of the city, Kemeraltı is the busiest pedestrian street of İzmir. On its twisting lanes and narrow courts, one can find everything for every budget.

The area is also famous for its 9 synagogues (on Havra Street), 4 of which are in good condition. Portugal Synagogue, among all, is famous for the passionate speeches of Sabbetai Sevi.

**Asansör (Elevator)** is probably the most recognized landmark of İzmir. Built by a Jewish banker, Nesim Levi, in 1907, it provides access from the lower coastline level to the hillside level. Now operated with electricity, originally both elevators in the structure were water driven. The balcony in the upper level provides excellent views of the entire Gulf of İzmir and is now a great dining spot. The charming old street at the foot of the elevator is named after Dario Moreno, an international singer and a native of İzmir.

The State Opera House, whose walls are adorned with fine paintings and The National Library, one of the most important libraries containing **20 thousand books from the Ottoman period to our day**, are other architectural landmarks of İzmir worth seeing.

The former Customs building, designed by the famous French architect **Gustave Eiffel** in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, is now being used as a recreational area that boasts several cafes, restaurants and shops.

**The Clock Tower** at the city center which was built in 1901 by German architects to commemorate the reign of Sultan Abdulhamit II is the city's unofficial symbol. In its lace-like stone masonry, standing 25 meters tall, the tower has 4 elegant fountains on 4 corners.

Historical Airgas Factory, which was constructed by the French 150 years ago, was restored by İzmir Metropolitan Municipality, preserving its original architecture. Today it hosts many cultural events such as exhibitions, concerts and open-air film screenings.

The Culture Park, İzmir's largest recreational area is home to İzmir International Fair and encompasses many indoor and outdoor venues such as museums and art centers, theaters, an amusement park as well as gardens, restaurants and cafes. The Culture Park resembles a botanical garden with its 8,000 trees and 200 species of plants and flowers. The İzmir International Fair it hosts, the oldest in the country, has been visited by millions since its first year, 1936.

Pasaport Pier, Alsancak Train Station, Stock Exchange Hall and Former Ottoman Bank are among the other architectural structures worth seeing based on their importance in their time and location.

# İzmir



*Asansör (Elevator)*

*Konak*



Şirince  
Selçuk



# The Refined city

Culture in its finest form.

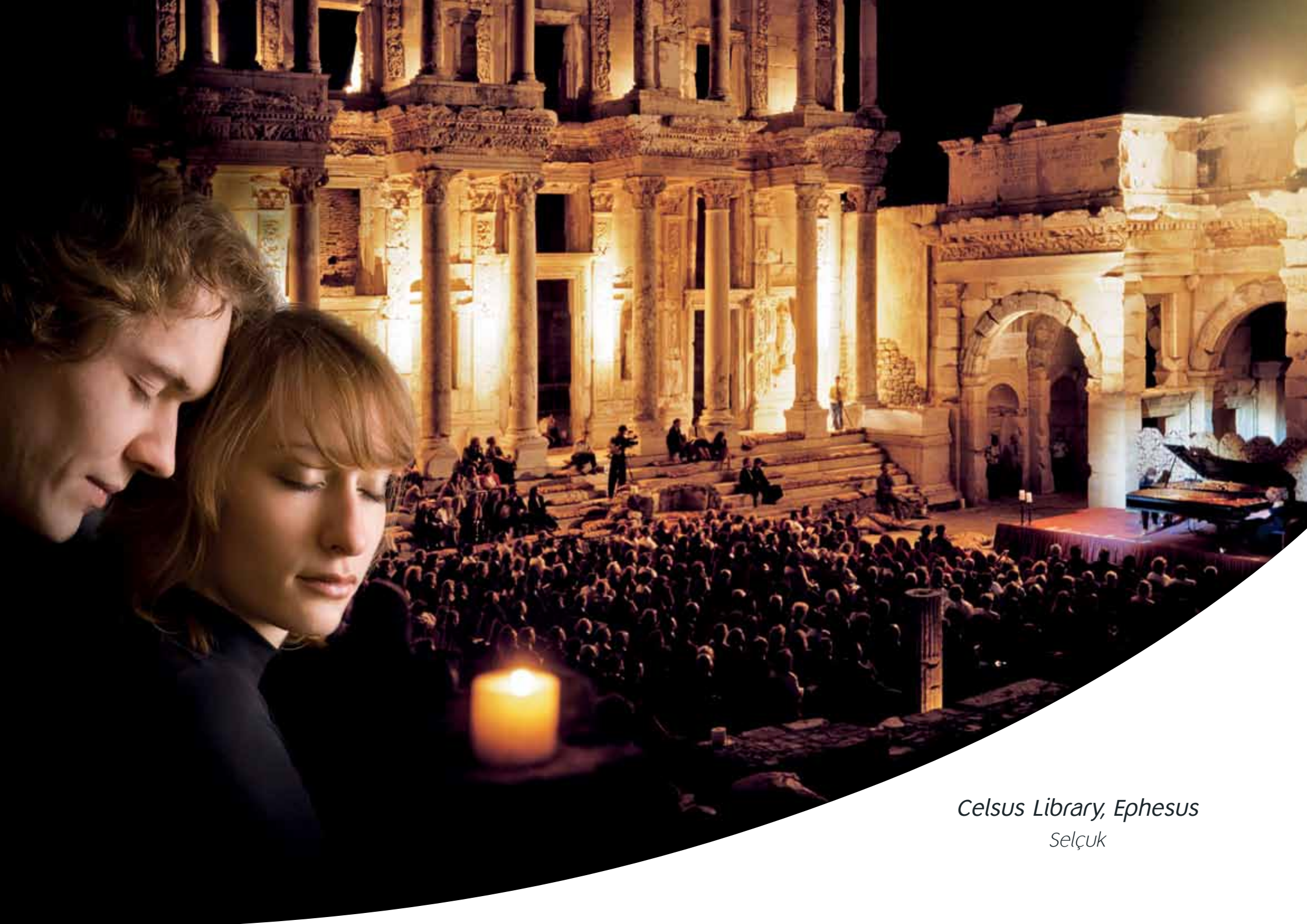
İzmir is full of museums, cultural centers and its socio-cultural calendar is packed with events, exhibitions, festivals year 'round.

İzmir's Archeology Museum which is a short walk up the hill from Konak contains a fine collection of Greek and Roman artifacts. The beautifully decorated sarcophagi, the head of a gigantic statue of Domitian that once stood at Ephesus, and the impressive frieze depicting the funeral games from the mausoleum at Belevi (250 BC) highlight the museum. Filled with exhibition halls, laboratories, warehouses, photography-rooms, libraries, and conference halls, the museum contains 1,500 monuments in its building and garden.

Next door to Archeology Museum is the **Ethnography Museum**, originally built in 1831 as St. Roche Hospital. The lovely 4-story stone building houses colorful displays of local arts and crafts. You'll learn about many handicrafts special to İzmir.

Museums in İzmir appeal to every interest and taste from İzmir Museum of History and Arts, İzmir Museum of Painting and Sculpture to specialty museums like İzmir Mask Museum, Game and Toy Museum, Railroad Museum and İnciraltı Naval Museum. In addition to the museums, a dozen old and renovated mansions now being used as bright and equipped cultural centers host countless exhibitions, concerts and screenings and are busy 365 days a year.





*Celsus Library, Ephesus*  
Selçuk

The Aegean Region and İzmir are also home to many types of handicrafts of which **the evil eye bead (nazar boncuğu)** is a highlight. An "evil eye" (nazar) is an envious look or gaze that is believed by many cultures to be able to cause bad luck or injury for the person at whom it is directed. The function attributed to the evil eye bead is to fend off such a gaze by absorbing the negative energy. Various kinds are designed and handmade by artisans who produce this magic amulet with an amazing technique. This 3,000 year old art of making evil eye beads has changed very little and is still widely mastered in Görece and Nazarköy villages near İzmir.

Apart from these artisan crafts, weaving, rope making, pottery, felt making and tin-plating are also highlights of the area and many artisan houses showcase beautiful samples, true to their originals.

As regionally authentic as all of the above sound, İzmir is also a center of world class entertainment and high fashion. Stadiums and small venues welcome dozens of artists, symphony orchestras and rock bands every year and malls and high end boutiques carry all European and world brands for consumers.

From the backpacking crowd to the exclusive businessmen, accommodations are plenty. Boutique hotel rooms as well as global chain hotel amenities are abound for all visitors.

Since İzmir is a 365/24/7 happening city, like its other metropolitan counterparts, the calendar for the business and the art savvy is filled to the brink. The International İzmir Festival, İzmir European Jazz Festival, International İzmir Short Film Festival, International Puppetry Festival, more than **80 year old International İzmir Fair**, International Natural Stone & Technology Fair, and Organic Products Fair are among the events with the highest participation.



*Street Bazaar*

# The Sunshine city

With 629 km coastline along the Aegean, the sun shines in the perfect brightness and the wind blows in the ideal knot while the sand is in its most comfortable warmth in İzmir and its resort towns.

Lined by one spectacular beach after another, summer tourism is a natural high; attracting not only thousands of local tourists from all cities in Turkey, but also windsurf lovers from around the world.

Contained along the coasts are many “**Blue Flag**” beaches, an international eco-label for beaches and marinas awarded to 3650 beaches in 46 countries around the world. İzmir holds great pride in having nearly 35 of these flags.

Çeşme, now a world renowned small resort town, tenfolds in summer months in terms of population. Situated on a peninsula, the northern and southern winds clash at this spot to make this a destination for windsurf lovers.

In Alaçatı, near the tip of the Çeşme Peninsula, the narrow streets reveal picturesque stone houses at every turn and the night life is absolutely on par with world standards. Attracting a great crowd in September with an **International Windsurf Competition**, Alaçatı, once a farming village, welcomes its visitors with dozens of inns and boutique hotels.

Foça, about 70 km northwest of the city center, is another coastal district which attracts thousands every summer with its sun, sea and sand.

The districts of Dikili, Karaburun, Menderes (featuring **Gümüldür** beach) and Seferihisar with their unique and authentic feels just complete this city from the north and the south, offering its tourists sunshine that keep them warm even after they leave.



*Paşalimanı*  
*Çeşme*





# The Spiritual city

From Virgin Mary's final days to the **7 Churches of Revelation** as mentioned in the New Testament, from Hellenistic civilization to Byzantine victories, a Wonder of the Ancient World dedicated to Artemis, a magnificent library dedicated to Celsus, architectural beauties such as basilicas, churches, synagogues and names that pop up in every historical İzmir book... Alexander the Great, Herodotus, Cyrus the Great, Apostle John... İzmir is engulfed in sacred history.

With its 8,500 year history, the city of İzmir is one of the oldest cities of the Mediterranean basin. The original city was established in the third millennium BC. With the passage of several civilizations over the land, İzmir was and still is a cradle of diving religions. Greeks, Lydians, Persians, Romans brought immense prosperity to the land one after another.

In the first century AD, Smyrna became one of the earliest centers of Christianity and was the home of the Seven Churches of Revelation. Both Revelation and the Martyrdom of Polycarp indicate the existence of a Jewish community in Smyrna as early as the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries AD.

Smyrna got under Byzantine rule in the 4<sup>th</sup> century; and Seljuk rule in the 11<sup>th</sup>. 1415 marked the beginning of the Ottoman rule in the area that continued until the Empire collapsed. The city earned its fame as one of the most important port cities of the world between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The majority of its population was Greek but merchants of various origins (especially Greek, French, Italian, Dutch, Armenian, and Sephardic Jewish) transformed the city into a cosmopolitan portal of trade.





*House of Virgin Mary  
Selçuk*

This religious variety is one of the characteristics that make İzmir the colorful city that it is. All civilizations and religions that have left their footprints and their churches, mosques and synagogues as well as their monuments here make İzmir a spiritual and a religious pilgrimage destination. Pilgrimage tours retrace the travels and ministries of Saint Paul among the marble columns and colorful mosaics when he preached a radical new religion and takes you to a tiny stone house up in a mountain where a mourning woman, whose son had just been crucified, lived.

With the majority of the population of the city being Muslim, the most prominent mosques of İzmir are also frequented by visitors both for worship purposes or as a part of a sacred tour. One of the most monumental constructions of İzmir, the Hisarönü Mosque in Kemeraltı built in 1597 is covered by a grand dome and smaller cupolas around it. The mosque displays one of the finest examples of Ottoman art. Yalı (Konak) Mosque in Konak Square is another showcasing of Islamic art. Located in the city of Selçuk, İsa Bey Mosque, built in 1375 on the western slope of Ayasuluk Hill where St. John's Basilica is located, is one of the oldest and most impressive works of architectural art remaining from the Anatolian Beyliks (principalities).

Truly majestic landmarks like the House of Virgin Mary, St. John's Basilica and Tomb, The Seven Sleepers where seven Christian young people were left to die by Roman soldiers and Pergamon Church where St. John addressed the third of his letters in the Revelation make İzmir a holy land for Christians. The House of Virgin Mary, a Roman Catholic and Muslim shrine for many, is located on Mt. Koressos (Bülbül Dağı). The house was discovered in 19<sup>th</sup> century and today Catholics visit it based on the belief that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was taken to this stone house by St. John and lived there until her ascension.

The Jewish history of the city dates back to the times of Alexander the Great. Although they declined in numbers at times, centuries later, after the inquisitions in Spain in 1492, Sultan Beyazıt II invited the Jews of Spain and Portugal to live and prosper under the Ottoman rule and several thousand arrived in İzmir. Around 19<sup>th</sup> century, İzmir was known all over the world for its high standard in Jewish learning. Among the synagogues in İzmir, the largest is Beth Israel in Karataş, the most famous are the nine synagogues of Havra Street of which three are still active and the newest and the most attended synagogue is Shar Hashamayim in Alsancak District.

*Hisar Mosque and Kızlarağası Inn  
Konak*





*House of Virgin Mary  
Selçuk*



# The Healthy city

With an integrated approach to well-being through healthy living and sports, İzmir promotes an active lifestyle and balanced, organic nutrition.

The most important healing center of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, named after the ancient god of medicine and healing Asclepius, Asclepion was built in Pergamon, İzmir. The fame of the city's **thermal waters**, mud baths and mineral springs date back to 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. Ancient Baths of Agamemnon, today known as Balçova Thermal Springs is a healing heaven for locals and tourists suffering from arthritis, asthma, rheumatism, sciatica, gallstones and eczema. Several thermal establishments in the area deliver this high sulphur healing water at the average temperature of 23 degrees Celsius and make Balçova a relaxation and healing as well as pampering destination. The resort town of Çeşme is also renowned with its underwater thermal springs, with dozens of hotels benefiting from and offering the waters.

The city's health offerings are exceptional not only in the natural sense, but also technologically. There are a growing number of medical schools, science and research institutions and trained

clinicians, making the city a preferred go-to destination for health and medical services.

With approximately 300 days of sunshine, the city offers a variety of outdoor activities like windsurfing, kitesurfing, mountain biking, swimming, diving, trekking, and camping. **Host to the Mediterranean Olympics and Universiade (World University Games)**, İzmir is expanding its portfolio of sports facilities with the construction of several sports arenas.

There are over 100 mountain trails for hiking and mountain biking; in fact only the city center has a 40 km long coastal path including a track and a cycling trail.

The district of Seferihisar is a certified Cittaslow (Slow City) - a model for a calmer, healthier lifestyle. It meets more than 60 of the criteria set forth for Slow Cities: preserving local tastes, supporting the Slow Food philosophy, using clean energy, maintaining places of historical and cultural value, and many more.



*Gündoğdu Square*  
*Konak*

*Gulf of Alaçatı*  
*Çeşme*







# The Natural city

With its location, its climate, sea, wind and sunshine, İzmir promises everything... Most naturally!

The city has almost become synonymous with renewable energy. Considering natural resources such as sunlight, geothermal heat and wind, all of which İzmir has plenty, the city is naturally replenished and has tremendous further potential. All these sources of renewable energy have already been tapped in and the initiatives and efforts to utilize them to the maximum is an ongoing process. İzmir generates **36% of all wind energy** in the country.

First organic agricultural products were produced in İzmir. The annual İzmir Organic Products Fair welcomes thousands of guests and traditional agricultural methods are encouraged for healthier living standards, from nutrition to textiles. Bostanlı is home to the

first organic products market in the country and consumers can find a variety of products here in dozens of stalls.

To witness natural life at its perfection, all you have to do in İzmir is to visit either İzmir Natural Life Park or İzmir Bird Paradise, both of which attract visitors from all over the country and the world. Natural Life Park, established over an area of 425,000 square meters in Çiğli accommodates more than 1,200 animals of 120 species and İzmir Bird Paradise, wetlands of massive proportions (8,000 hectares) is a spectacular preservation and reproduction area for marine birds with over 200 different species; a natural wonder with striking **biodiversity**.

Foça is considered a natural haven and home to Mediterranean seals which are in danger of extinction. Most parts of this town are under strict environmental protection. These seals, although rarely, can be seen in the caves and coves in Foça and are rather human-shy!



*Urla*



*Bird Paradise*  
*Çiğli*



# The LUSCIOUS city

The extravagantly simple cuisine of İzmir follows the main idea of the traditional Mediterranean cuisine and is all about a well-balanced and healthy diet.

İzmir cuisine has largely been affected by its multicultural history, hence the large variety of food. The city's food shows the influence of Cretan, Greek, Balkan and of course Turkish cuisine, and was reshaped according to the taste of the Levantines, who lived under the Ottoman Empire before the Republican era.

The fertile land as well as the surrounding sea of İzmir provide the city with abundance of fresh vegetables and seafood and İzmir and Aegean cuisines have become much more popular in recent years with the increasing demand for healthy food.

Although grapes, figs and citrus fruits enchant the land, olive oil forms an integral part of the culinary tradition and has been used in Aegean cooking for over 4,000 years. In fact, one of the oldest olive oil processing facilities in the world is located in Urla. Olive orchards and production plants are plenty in the region and even the simplest grilled fish or blanched herbs find new heights once drizzled with this liquid of the Gods.

There are two other trademark tastes of İzmir: **boyoz and kumru**. Can be easily found almost anywhere but sanitarily made in bakeries all over İzmir, these two are "must-taste"s for all visitors. With Judeo-Spanish roots, boyoz, mainly a mix of sunflower oil and flour and a little sesame paste is a round pastry made plain, or with meat, spinach or cheese filling.

Kumru, on the other hand is a special kind of sandwich, featuring kasseri cheese, soujouk (spicy sausage), and slices of tomato. With bakeries open 24/7, especially in Çeşme, kumru is the first choice of all who want a satisfying bite fast.

Without a doubt, culinary highlight of the Aegean and İzmir is the wild greens and herbs, collected by villagers from gardens, fields, plains and farms; prepared and cooked in the simplest ways, slightly blanched or sauteed with olive oil. It may take a bit of knowledge to fully perceive the variety because the little on the **meze platters** (small appetizers) they may seem fairly uniform at first glance. Save your appetite and try ivy, mallow, nettle, wild cabbage, radish, wild mustard, blessed thistle, chicory, glasswort, angel's tears and watercress.

Seafood is another highlight and countless fresh seafood restaurants border the seashore. The city is famous for salt encrusted grouper, red mullet on vine leaves, fried or stuffed mussels, flounder fillets on skewers, gilthead seabream, grilled seabass and an İzmir specialty, fish in milk.

Before you leave, a must-see place is **Şirince**, a small village famous for making (and friendly serving) the best house wines and "gözleme", a savory Turkish pastry made on big round griddles right in front of your eyes. With its local architecture under protection, valleys, peach gardens and olive groves to wander around, this is a fairy tale of a town.



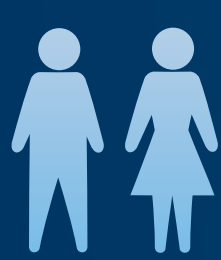
*Local Tastes*

Şirince  
Selçuk









**4 MILLION**  
POPULATION  
50% BELOW **30**



AVERAGE  
AGE

**34**

**91%**  
OF THE  
POPULATION  
LIVES IN  
THE CITY



27.5 °C



13 °C

AVERAGE TEMPERATURES

**300**  
SUNNY  
DAYS  
A YEAR ON AVERAGE



38.4202° N, 27.1283° E

**30**  
DISTRICTS

**629 km**  
COASTLINE

**8500**  
YEARS OF HISTORY



**12.012 km<sup>2</sup>**



HISTORICAL PLACES



YACHTING / WATER SPORTS



BLUE FLAG BEACHES



OUTDOOR SPORTS



SHOPPING



THERMAL FACILITIES



WINTER SPORTS



MUSEUMS



NATURAL LIFE PARK



BIRD PARADISE



AIRPORT





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