

## The Things You Should Know About Antalya

Antalya is a large city on Turkey's Mediterranean coast. Since the second century BC, the city has been an important port and today it is a busy resort city and the gateway to the Turkish Riviera. With over 2,000 years of history, visitors to the city can see a diverse range of architectural monuments from different eras as well as from a variety of cultures, for instance, Greek, Roman and Byzantine. So, whether you are planning a trip or are just curious to learn more, here are some of the most interesting facts about Antalya.

### 1. Antalya is a large coastal city in Turkey

Antalya is located on the Mediterranean coast of southwest Turkey. With a population of 1,318,826 (as of 2022), Antalya is the eighth-most populous city in Turkey and the largest Turkish city on the Mediterranean coast. People often refer to it as the 'gateway to the Turkish Riviera'. The Turkish Riviera – also called the Turquoise Coast – extends from Antalya to Bodrum along the southwest coast of Turkey.

### 2. The city was originally called Attaleia

Attalus II Philadelphus, King of Pergamon, founded the city in the 1st century BC when he established a naval base to house his impressive fleet of ships. He named the harbour town Attaleia after himself. He ruled Attaleia until his death in the year 133 BC. When he died, he bequeathed Attaleia and his entire kingdom to the Roman Empire. Roman rule saw Attaleia thrive. Eventually, the city named evolved into Adalia and then its modern name of Antalya.

### 3. Antalya has a city within a city

Within Antalya, you'll find Kaleiçi, the historic city centre. The word Kaleiçi means "Inside the Kale" or "Inner Kale". Kale means castle or fortress. Kaleiçi has structures that date from the Roman, Byzantine, Seljuk, Ottoman and modern Turkish republican eras. Historically, all of these structures and the whole of Kaleiçi was confined within its walls, but today, this is no longer the case.

#### 4. Hadrian's Gate is in Antalya

One of the most famous structures inside Kaleiçi is Hadrian's Gate, also called Üçkapılar, which means 'Three Gates'. The Turkish built Hadrian's Gate in 130 AD to commemorate the visit of Roman Emperor Hadrian to the city. Workers built the gate into the surrounding city wall and it became a major gateway to the city. The gate's other name – the Three Gates or Tripple Gate – is because it has a trio of archways. Apart from having a lot of history, lots of legends surround the gate too, for instance, Sultana Belkis – the Queen of Sheba – passed through the gate and went to the palace in Aspendos on her way to meeting with King Solomon. Today, it's the only remaining entrance gate in the city walls.

#### 5. Antalya is home to the world's biggest tunnel aquarium

Antalya Aquarium is a major tourist attraction in the city. It houses the biggest tunnel aquarium in the world. The tunnel has a length of 131 meters and a width of 3.5 meters. It is located in the main tank, which has a capacity of 5,000 tons of seawater. The Antalya Aquarium has four thematic areas – the Indian Ocean, Red Sea, Atlantic and Pacific Oceans – and is home to 250 different species of marine life.

#### 6. Antalya has five national parks

Antalya is famed for its natural beauty. It is home to five national parks that protect the local landscape and flora and fauna. The five national parks are Üzümdere National Park, Mount Gulluk National Park, Altinbesik Cave National Park, Beydaglari Beach National Park, and Köprülü Canyon National Park. The province of Antalya has more national parks than any other province in Turkey.

#### 7. Many different empires have ruled Antalya

The Greeks founded Antalya in the second century BC. Then the Romans ruled the city, followed by the Seljuk Sultanate and then the Ottoman Empire. Italy briefly occupied the city for three years in the aftermath of World War I but the Turks recaptured the city during the Turkish War of Independence.

