

TURKEY'S MUSEUMS AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES DRAW 66 MILLION VISITORS



The museums and archaeological sites in Turkey continue to attract more and more visitors, which makes the country one of the world's cultural tourism centers. In 2025, the number of museums in the country increased by 4.4%, resulting in 664 museums, and the number of visitors at museums rose 6.8% to 65,862,639. Leading cities in terms of museum visits were Istanbul, Izmir, and Ankara.

Turkey's museums and cultural heritage sector has been growing steadily, and in 2025, there were 664 museums, including 220 museums managed by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 426 private museums, and 18 museums managed by the National Palaces Directorate. In addition, 148 archaeological sites are available to visitors. Thus, **Turkey appears to be a popular destination for cultural tourism, as the number of museums and archaeological sites grows every year.**

Over four million artifacts are stored in Turkey's museums. More precisely, in 2025, there were 4,012,294 artifacts, an increase of 0.4%. The number of objects of culture in the museums of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism increased by 0.5% compared to the previous year and amounted to 3,388,462. Private museums reported 292,271 (0.4%) and 331,561 (0.5%) fewer exhibits, respectively. The distribution of museum collections was different: 60.4% of the collections accounted for coins, 27.8% - archaeological artifacts, 6.7% - ethnographic artifacts, and 3.5% - tablets.

It is also noteworthy that a total of 52.9% of the almost 66 million visitors were distributed to museums and archaeological sites managed by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Of the total, 20,888,733, or 31.7%, were attracted to the paid museums. At the same time, private museums in Turkey recorded a significant increase in visitors, with 21,905,335 visitors (10.8% increase). The number of visitors to the museums managed by the National Palaces Directorate decreased by 8.8% to 9,122,685.

Museum cards issued by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism are still popular among tourists: 6,804,917 cards were issued in 2025. This data indicates the popularity of museums as cultural tourism destinations since the card provides discounts at most museums in the country.

In addition, it should be noted that Istanbul takes the leading position in Turkey in terms of the number of museum visitors, with 18,307,485 people. Izmir ranks second with 4,646,357 visitors, and Ankara ranks third with 4,642,683 visitors.

Moreover, in 2025, the number of objects of cultural heritage in Turkey increased by 2.6% compared to the previous year and amounted to 130,632. Of these, 34,558 are located in Istanbul, 8,120 in Izmir, and 5,332 in Mugla. At the same time, 27,703 (6.0% increase) monuments are included in the list of protected monuments, of which 97.1% are archaeological monuments.

The number of natural monuments in Turkey is also increasing, which makes the country attractive not only for its culture but also for its tourism sector in general. In 2025, 50 (2.0% increase) national

parks and 274 (2.2% increase) nature parks were listed in Turkey. They contain a total of 942,286 hectares and 94,294 hectares of forest, respectively. Meanwhile, 32 nature reserves and 111 natural monuments have been established in Turkey.

As a result, the data for 2025 show that Turkey is a popular tourist destination not only for its sun and beaches but also for its cultural heritage. A significant increase in the number of visitors to museums and archaeological sites and the growth of this industry confirms the trend. **The popularity of museums is also evident from the increasing number of visitors to private museums and those managed by the Ministry and the National Palaces Directorates.**

In particular, such cities as Istanbul, Izmir, Ankara, and Mugla, which have both museums and archaeological sites and are therefore of cultural tourism interest, play a major role in attracting tourists. Thus, Turkey has opportunities not only to develop its museum industry but also to attract more visitors by introducing it to people and integrating it into tourist itineraries.

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