

South Aegean



Turkey's south Aegean can convincingly claim more ancient ruins per square kilometre than any other region in the world. Since time immemorial, conquerors, traders and travellers have beaten a path to the mighty monuments, yet few leave disappointed.

However large and loud the crowd (particularly when the local schools are out), the ruins rarely appear overwhelmed. Huge, majestic and aloof they tower above everything, colonised only by the wild poppies and butterflies in spring, or a stork shaping a shabby nest atop a colossal column.

As the sun begins to sink and the coach parties push off, the ruins are suddenly silent again. Turned crimson by the last rays of the setting sun, they seem as tremendous, timeless and enduring today as they must have done millennia ago. For many travellers, these sites supply the enduring memories of their trip.

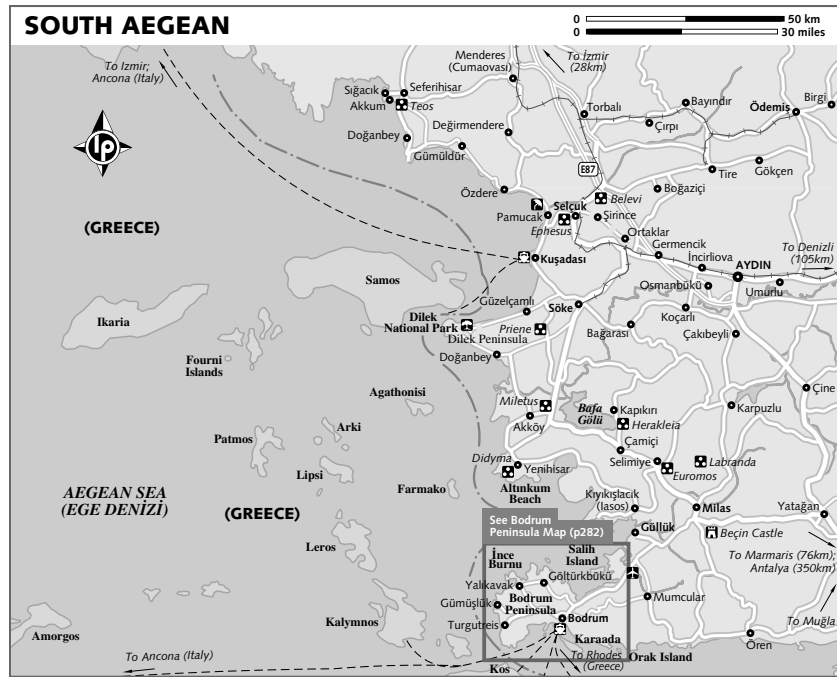
Turkey's south Aegean sites are special not just for their sheer age, but also for their state of preservation. History isn't just brought to life here, it's kicking and screaming. As well as Ephesus, the ruined Ionian cities of Priene, Miletus and Didyma are also well worth a wander. Lying quite close to the main coastal road, they're all easily accessible.

In between the ruins and providing a welcome rest from them are some clean sandy beaches such as at Pamucak, some ravishing rural villages such as Şirince or little Herakleia, and some attractive, easy-going towns such as Selçuk providing good hotels at great prices. Perhaps the best antidote of all to the culture-vulturing are the full-on, brash and boisterous coastal resorts of Bodrum and Kuşadası, perfect for some partying or for some cool café culture.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore extraordinary **Ephesus** (p251), the best-preserved classical city in the eastern Mediterranean
- Shimmy up to **Şirince** (p256), a heavenly hillside village set amid peach and apple orchards
- Admire the Underwater Archaeology Museum, then dance till dawn in **Bodrum** (p272)
- Wander the wilderness of **Dilek National Park** (p263) and swim in the secluded coves
- Hang out in **Herakleia** (p267) and experience the bucolic bliss of rural Turkey
- Roam the remarkable but less-visited ruins of **Priene** (p265), **Miletus** (p266) and **Didyma** (p266)





History

The Mycenaean and Hittite civilisations were the earliest recorded along the south Aegean. From 1200 BC, Ionians fleeing Greece established themselves in the area along the coast and founded important cities at Ephesus, Priene and Miletus. South of Ionia was mountainous Caria where the great King Mausolus' tomb, the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus, became one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Caria was also home to Herodotus, the 'Father of History'. Roman Ephesus prospered with rich trade and commerce, becoming the capital of Asia Minor. The city also attracted a sizeable Christian population. St John settled here with the Virgin Mary, where he is said to have written his gospel. In 1402 the Knights of St John captured the area now called Bodrum where they started building the castle, which today is synonymous with this part of the coast.

SELÇUK

☎ 0232 / pop 25,410

An excellent museum, a fine old basilica and mosque, a stork nest–studded aqueduct, dozens of pleasant, small pensions and the ruins

of Ephesus on its doorstep – Selçuk really does seem to have it all. These days the town more or less lives on the proceeds of tourism, albeit of the smaller-scale, independent-traveller kind.

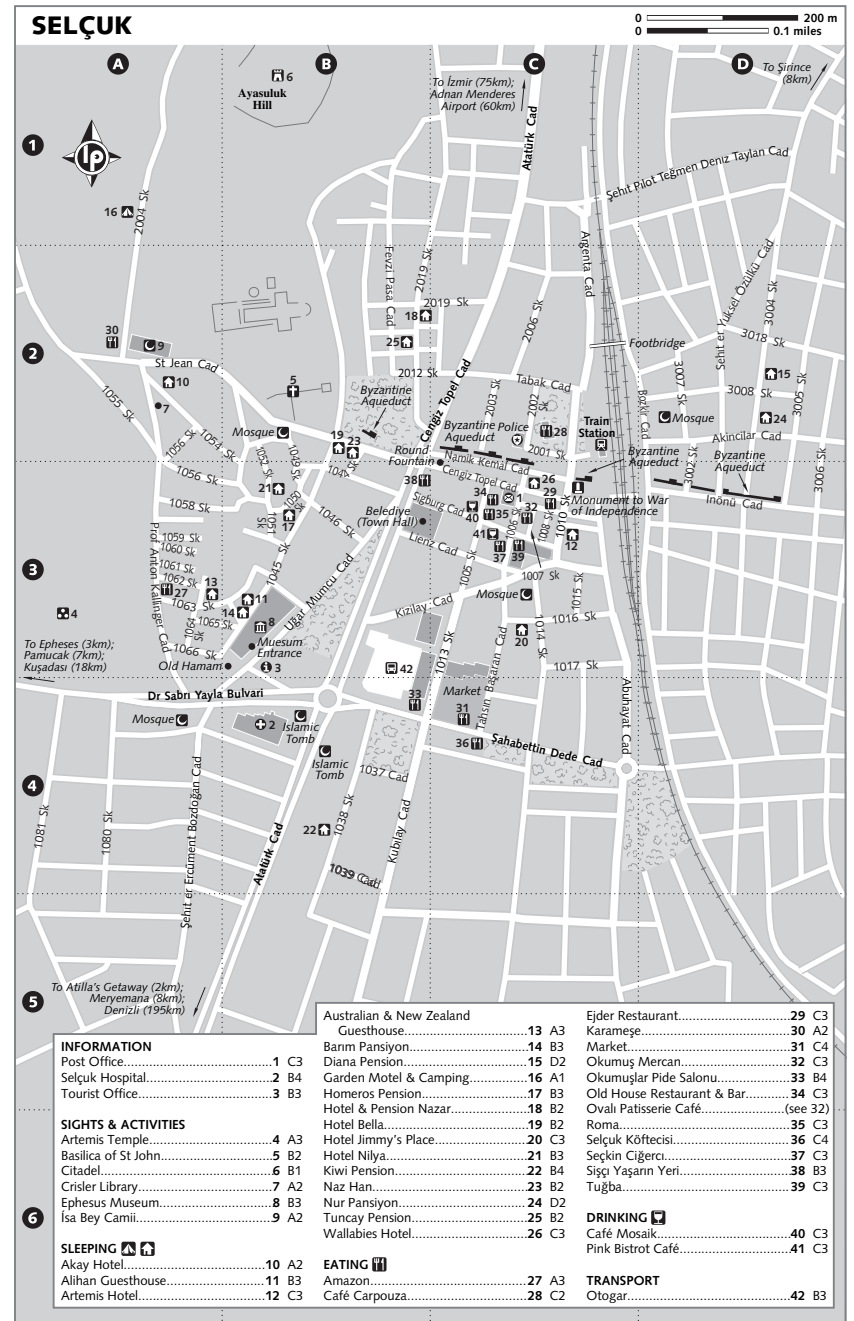
Orientation

Selçuk otogar (bus station) lies just east of the İzmir–Aydın road (Atatürk Caddesi), with the town centre and some pensions immediately north of it. Three pedestrianised shopping streets – Namık Kemal, Cengiz Topel and Sieburg Caddesi – run east from a round fountain on the main road, north of the otogar, through to the train station.

On the western side of the main road a park spreads out in front of one wing of the famous Ephesus Museum. Many more small pensions can be found in the quiet streets between the museum and Ayasuluk Hill, northwest of the town centre.

Information

There are banks with ATMs and foreign exchange offices along Cengiz Topel and Namık Kemal Caddesi. The internet cafés on Cengiz



Topel Caddesi generally charge more than the pensions, despite having slower connections.

Ephesus Assistance (☎ 892 2500) A 24-hour hotline, and services that are recognised by most major travel insurance companies.

Post office (☎ 892 2841; Cengiz Topel Caddesi) Will also change cash, travellers cheques and Eurocheques.

Selçuk Hospital (☎ 892 9814; Dr Sabri Yayla Bulvarı) Near the tourist office.

Tourist office (☎ 892 6945; www.selcuk.gov.tr; Agora Caddesi 35; ☎ 8am-noon & 1-5pm Mon-Fri winter, daily in summer) Opposite the museum.

Sights & Activities

Selçuk's attractions open from 8am to 7pm May to September and 8am to 5pm (or 5.30pm) the rest of the year.

BASILICA OF ST JOHN

St John is said to have come to Ephesus twice: once between AD 37 and AD 48 with the Virgin Mary, and again at the end of his life, when he wrote his gospel on Ayasuluk Hill. A 4th-century tomb was believed to house his remains, so in the 6th century Emperor Justinian (527–65) erected a magnificent church, the **Basilica of St John** (St Jean Caddesi; admission €2.80), on top of the tomb.

Earthquakes and building-material scavengers left it as a heap of rubble until a century ago when restoration began; virtually all of what you see now is restored. Nevertheless, it's still a very impressive building (in its day it was considered a near-marvel and attracted thousands of medieval pilgrims). Look out for the information panel with a plan and

drawing, which gives a very good idea of the building's once-vast size – as do the old marble steps and monumental gate. It's well worth a wander.

Ayasuluk Hill offers fine views of the surrounding sites. The hilltop **citadel** to the north was constructed by the Byzantines in the 6th century, rebuilt by the Seljuks and restored in modern times. There is a Seljuk mosque and a ruined church inside but the citadel remains closed since part of the wall collapsed. Restoration work is under way and it should eventually reopen, though lack of funding appears to be holding it up currently.

As at Ephesus, you may be approached to buy 'ancient' coins, which despite their grimy appearance are modern.

İSA BEY CAMII

At the foot of Ayasuluk Hill is the imposing and beautiful **İsa Bey Camii** (St Jean Caddesi), built in 1375 by the Emir of Aydın in a post-Seljuk/pre-Ottoman transitional style. There's a bust of İsa Bey diagonally opposite. The mosque is usually open to visitors except at prayer times. Leave your shoes at the door and remember to cover up properly.

TEMPLE OF ARTEMIS

Ephesus used to earn sizeable sums of money from pilgrims paying homage to the ancient Anatolian fertility goddess Cybele/Artemis. The fabulous **Temple of Artemis** (Artemis Tapınağı; admission free; ☎ 8.30am-5.30pm), between Ephesus and Selçuk, was once one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. In its prime it

was larger than the Parthenon at Athens, with 127 columns, all with figures carved around the base. Unfortunately, little more than one pillar now remains, but it's well worth a visit. It's a lovely tranquil place and the enormous pillar gives you a good idea of the vast size of the temple. You can visit the temple on your way to/from Ephesus.

EPHESUS MUSEUM

This excellent **museum** (☎ 892 6010; Uğur Mumcu Sevgi Yolu Caddesi; admission €2.50) houses a striking collection of artefacts brought to life by some good information panels, photos and dioramas. Don't miss the delightful figure of Cupid riding a dolphin, and the exquisitely carved marble statues of Cybele/Artemis. Look out also for the unsettlingly realistic busts of the Roman emperors, including a huge one of the unpleasant Emperor Domitian, and the effigies of Priapus, the phallic god plastered on every postcard from İstanbul to Antakya.

There's also a very interesting exhibition based on the excavations of the gladiators' cemetery discovered in 1993. In the future, a 'Religions and Inscriptions' room should open. Go early in the morning to avoid the schools and tour groups, and ideally after seeing Ephesus.

CRISLER LIBRARY

A new arrival to Selçuk, **Crisler Library** (☎ 892 8317; www.crislerinstitute.com; Prof Anton Kallinger Caddesi 40; admission free; ☎ 10am-7pm) is the result of a bequest from a distinguished American biblical scholar and archaeologist, B Cobbe Crisler. Proving to be a terrific source of information on the ancient, classical, biblical and Islamic history of the area, it also boasts a full lecture program, a well-stocked bookshop and a coffee shop. Set up in order to 'build cross-cultural bridges through the medium of education and scholarly exchange', it's worth a visit – for neophytes as much as hard-core Ephesus fanatics.

BYZANTINE AQUEDUCT

Running east-west intermittently along Namık Kemal Caddesi and İnönü Caddesi stand the impressive remains of a Byzantine aqueduct, which serve today as a handy nesting place for storks who return to the same spots on it year after year. Eggs are laid in late April or May, and the birds stay right through to September.

Sleeping BUDGET

Competition between Selçuk's many pensions is intense, and the standard of service and value offered by these places is higher here than perhaps anywhere.

Pension and hotel prices are set by the municipality, so proprietors tend to compete on extras. Most offer the following: free breakfast, home-cooked meals at good prices, free transport to Ephesus and Meryemana (and sometime Şirince), free use of bicycles, good-value excursions and free internet access. If any of these are particularly important to you, check first. Many hotels charge extra (say €1.65 per person per day) for use of air-conditioning or fans in summer and heating in winter.

Garden Motel & Camping (☎ 892 6165; info@galleria selciukidi.com; Kale Altı 5; per adult/child €4/2, per tent/cat/campervan €4/2/5, tent hire for 1/2 people €5/6; 📍) Located 200m north of the mosque, this green and grassy camping ground is large, well designed and well provided with facilities including kitchen, pool, laundry facilities, a pleasant restaurant and amusements for children.

Atilla's Getaway (☎ 892 3847; www.atillasgetaway.com; dm €10, bungalows with shared bathroom €12.50, r with bathroom €16.50; 📍 🚽) About 2.5km south of Selçuk is Atilla's, a place so lively and buzzing that it feels like a kind of cool holiday camp for 20- and 30-somethings. Its namesake, Atilla, a proactive Turkish-Australian, is very welcoming and keen to please. Facilities include a pool table, table tennis, a volleyball court, travel office and a fun, poolside bar. Horse riding is planned for the future. Accommodation is simple and clean, and all prices are per person and include half-board. Air-con in the rooms is €4.50 extra per day.

Western Selçuk

Australia & New Zealand Guesthouse (☎ 892 6050; www.anzguesthouse.com; 1064 Sokak 12; dm €8, d with shared bathroom €11, d with bathroom €19-22; 📍 🚽) The rooms, set around a slightly chaotic courtyard covered with international flags are simple (some on the small side), but clean and bright. The drawcard here is the party-feel in summer and the good facilities, including movie nights and BBQs. The roof terrace, covered to resemble a large nomad's tent, is relaxed and mellow.

Barım Pansiyon (☎ 892 6923; barim_pansiyon@hotmail.com; 1045 Sokak 34; r per person €11; 📍) Don't

SELÇUK'S FABULOUS FESTIVALS

For such a tiny town, Selçuk has more than its fair share of fab festivals. The following lists its finest. If you can, try and coincide with one.

Camel Wrestling (Third Sunday in January) From all across Turkey, camel owners marshal their male camels for Selçuk. The eve of the festival is celebrated with much feasting, drinking and dancing. It's a great opportunity to hear traditional Turkish folk music. For more on the wrestling itself, see the boxed text, p250.

Oil Wrestling (First Sunday in May) Famous oil wrestlers from right across the region summon their strength to descend on Selçuk. Known in Turkish as *pehlivan*, the wrestlers rub themselves from head to foot with olive oil then wrestle each other until one gives up.

Selçuk/Efes Festival (First week of September) Showcasing not just Turkish traditional dance but also that from other countries too, each participant stages a spectacular show of their homeland's highlights. During the festival, Turkish folk and pop music concerts are also held throughout the city. In the bazaar, Selçuk's best artisans also set up shop: potters, glass makers, carvers, furniture makers and carpet makers all showcase their sensational skills. It's a fantastic opportunity for a spot of souvenir shopping.

With thanks to Osman Bölük for help compiling this information

AUTHOR'S CHOICE

Naz Han (☎ 892 8731; nazhanhotel@gmail.com; 1044 Sokak 2; r €50, Jun €61, Jul & Aug €67; 🍷 🍷) Meaning 'coy', the Naz Han is well named. Hidden away behind high walls like a precious jewel, this 100-year-old Greek house has five simple but comfortable rooms arranged around a small but enchanting courtyard filled with trinkets, artefacts and antiques. A small roof terrace grants quite good views over Selçuk's scenic surrounds. Cemil, a retired İstabullu textile engineer and a fervent foodie, also has high hopes for his new kitchen.

be put off by the hideous exterior that hides the characterful 140-year-old stone house behind. Though simple, rooms are comfortable and filled with the wrought-iron work of Adnan, the owner. There's also a pleasant courtyard. Neither try-too-hard-traditional-Turkish nor overly keen to please, this is a relaxed, understated and tranquil place.

Homeros Pension (☎ 892 3995; www.homerospension.com; 1050 Sokak 3; r per person €11; 🍷) With a firm family feel, as well as a quirky character, the Homeros boasts two terraces with good views. The owner, Derviş, is welcoming and eager to please. A carpenter, he has cobbled together from his flea-market finds much of the pretty furnishings in the comfortable rooms.

Hotel & Pension Nazar (☎ 892 2222; www.nazarhotel.com; 2019 Sokak 14; s/d €17/22, s/d with air-con €22/31, f with/without air-con €53/39; 🍷 🍷) The mantra of owner Osman is 'clean and welcoming', but Nazar is much more besides: there's a pool set in a courtyard-garden, a large terrace with stunning views of the fort, and superb home-cooking courtesy of Ayşe, his mother. Nothing is too much trouble for the charming family and you'll leave feeling part of it. Rooms are well equipped, well maintained and comfortable.

Akay Hotel (☎ 892 7249; www.hotelakay.com; 1054 Sokak 7; s €14-25, d €28-33; 🍷 🍷) Spread over two buildings, the hotel's main asset is its small pool set in a peaceful garden full of birdsong. The large roof terrace also has good views, and there's a small courtyard.

Also recommended if the above are full:

Tuncay Pension (☎ 892 6260; www.tuncaypension.com; 2019 Sokak 1; r per person from €10; 🍷) Friendly and welcoming, with rooms around a cool courtyard with fountain.

Alihan Guesthouse (☎ 892 9496; alihanguesthouse@yahoo.com; 1045 Sokak 34; r with shower per person €11; 🍷) Newly renovated by the keen-to-please İsa, his wife Melissa and Sheila the dog, it's a mishmash of styles but is friendly, informal and cheap.

Eastern Selçuk

Kiwi Pension (Alison's Place; ☎ 892 4892; www.kiwiipension.com; 1038 Sokak 26; dm €4-7, s/d without bathroom €8/16, with bathroom €11/22, air-con €5 extra; 🍷) Owned by the energetic Alison, an English woman, and her Turkish husband, the Kiwi Pension is well run, friendly and fun. Rooms are simple but spotless and bright (complete with fresh daisies in a bedside glass), and a few have balconies. Guests can use the pool table, kitchen and laundry facilities and have access to a large and lovely private pool set 1km away in a mandarin orchard. The pension's located in a quiet neighbourhood of modern apartments south of the centre.

Diana Pension (☎ 892 1265; brothers_place@mynt.com; 3004 Sokak 30; s/d with shared bathroom €7/14, with bathroom €8/17; 🍷 🍷) If you're counting your Turkish lira, the Diana is cheap and cheerful with a pretty courtyard and terrace. It's also quite close to the train station.

Nur Pansiyon (☎ 892 6595; 3004 Sokak 16; www.nurpension.com; 🍷 🍷) Near Diana Pension, the Nur has similar rooms and prices.

Hotel Jimmy's Place (☎ 892 1982; www.artemisguesthouse.com; 1016 Sokak 19; deluxe r for 1-3 people €39, s €14-19, d €17-25; 🍷 🍷) Well travelled themselves, the friendly, efficient and accommodating Turkish-Australian couple who run this hotel claim to know 'what travellers want'. They do: there's a pool, a terrific Turkey-focused 'Travel Library', a travel agency, a roof terrace with views and a lift large enough for wheelchair access. Bron, the Australian co-owner and a trained nurse, is 'happy to help those with special needs'. Rooms are bright, cheerful and comfortable with orthopaedic mattresses. It lies just a few minutes from the bus station.

If the above are full, try **Wallabies Hotel** (☎ 892 3204; www.wallabieshotel.com; Cengiz Topel Caddesi 2; s/d €11/22; 🍷 🍷) where some rooms have aqueduct views, or **Artemis Hotel** (☎ 892 6191; www.artemisguesthouse.net; 1012 Sokak 2; s/d €8/17; 🍷), which is good value and has an enclosed courtyard and serves a good breakfast.

MIDRANGE

Hotel Bella (☎ 892 3944; www.hotelbella.com; St Jean Caddesi 7; s/d €20/28; 🍷 🍷) Less than 100m from

the basilica entrance, the hotel is convenient and central. Rooms are decorated with attractive flourishes à l'Ottoman including ceramic work, kilims and carvings. Best of all is the large roof terrace (which also serves as the restaurant): closed-in and cosy in winter, or open, bright and breezy in summer. There's a bird's-eye view – literally – of the storks' nests on the aqueduct and over the basilica. The set menus for €7 are good value and get consistently good reports from travellers.

Hotel Nilya (☎ 892 9081; www.nilya.com; 1051 Sokak 7; s/d €31/47; 🍷) Close to the St John Basilica and a step back from the bustle of town is the calm and collected Nilya. Good-sized rooms are well decorated in a traditional style. Those on the 1st floor share a pretty veranda overlooking the lovely, verdant and lantern-lit walled garden. If you're after some R&R, go no further.

Eating

RESTAURANTS

Selçuk Köftesi (☎ 892 6696; Şahabettin Dede Caddesi; köfte €2.20; 🍷 8am-9pm winter, 8am-midnight summer) Being recently discovered by tour groups, doesn't detract from the superb home cooking of this family-run place. If you want a table outside, come early or later. The prices are unbeatable too.

Old House Restaurant & Bar (Eski Ev; ☎ 892 9357; 1005 Sokak 1/A; mains €2.75-5.55; 🍷 8am-midnight) With tables set in a little courtyard amid grapefruit and pomegranate trees, and decorated with lanterns, bird cages and wicker chairs, this is a pretty, cool and intimate place that does tasty Turkish dishes. Try the appetising speciality 'Old House Kebap' (€4.45) served sizzling on a platter.

Ejder Restaurant (☎ 892 3296; Cengiz Topel Caddesi 9/E; köfte €3-4.45; 🍷 8.30am-11pm) Receiving warm words from travellers, this simple little place is picturesquely set near a fountain with views of the aqueduct. Run by a welcoming husband-and-wife team, Mehmet does the meat, his wife the veg. All of the food is pretty tasty.

Amazon (☎ 892 3879; Prof Anton Kallinger Caddesi 22; mains €6-8; 🍷 10am-midnight) With its classical music and stools around a bar, the brand-new Amazon looks more wine-bar than restaurant, but the İzmiri chef has a great reputation and serves good international dishes using fresh local ingredients. The set lunch (€5 to €6) is great value. The paintings hung on the walls

are by young local artists and are for sale. Outside there are a few tables with distant views of the Artemis temple.

Okumuş Mercan Restaurant (☎ 892 6196; 1006 Sokak 44; meze €1.65, mains €2.75-4.45; 🍷 7am-11pm) Set in a small courtyard beside a fountain in the shade of a 100-year-old mulberry tree, this place is loved locally for its traditional home fare at good prices.

Turkish puds can be fetched later from the neighbouring **Övalı Patisserie Café** (☎ 892 4882; 1006 Sokak 43; 🍷 8am-midnight). Another place, still smaller and simpler, but with an equally good reputation for food, is **Seçkin Çiğerci** (☎ 892 3546; Tahsin Başaran Caddesi 4; köfte or kebab €2.75; 🍷 6am-10pm). Going since 1956 and run by four generations of the same family from the cosiest kitchen you've ever seen, it's a great place.

CAFÉS & QUICK EATS

Siğir Yaşarın Yeri (☎ 892 3487; Atatürk Caddesi; 🍷 9am-10pm winter, 10am-midnight summer) As well as the stall on the street, there's also a delightful shaded area around the back with a few tables. This place is hugely popular with those in-the-know for its delicious *köfte* and kebabs (all €1.95).

Okumuşlar Pide Salonu (☎ 892 6906; Şahabettin Dede Caddesi 2; pide €1.40-2.25; 🍷 10am-11pm) Next door to the bus station (and one of several branches), this place does fabulous pides (including veggie ones).

If you fancy a cuppa, *gözleme* (savoury crêpe, €1.40 to €1.95) or even a snooze in verdant rambling gardens, pop into the **Karameşe** (☎ 892 0466; St Jean Caddesi 18; meals about €5; 🍷 9am-midnight) across the road from the mosque.

Roma (☎ 892 6436; Siegburg Caddesi 21; 1 scoop €0.40; 🍷 8am-midnight Apr-Dec) Having learnt the art of ice cream-making from his father, Feridun, the owner, now produces some heavenly homemade flavours. His particular recommendations are: walnut, black mulberry and mixed chocolate.

Café Carpouza (☎ 892 9264; Argenta Caddesi 8; snacks €0.90-3; 🍷 9am-midnight) Housed in the 133-year-old former railway workers' lodging in the middle of a large green square, this is a cool, tranquil and relaxing place for breakfast (€2.75), a beer (€1.10) or a cup of coffee (€0.55) either on the veranda or inside the atmospheric building. Run by the municipality, prices are kept low; this place offers the best value in town.

SELF-CATERING

Tuğba (☎ 892 1773; 1006 Sokak; ☎ 9am-midnight) Recently awarded second prize for the 'Best Turkish Delight in Turkey', this well-known chain sells Turkish delight in all colours, flavours and forms, as well as dried nuts, seeds and fruit (great for long bus journeys). They also gift-wrap if you want to cart a year's supply home (€3.85 for 450g). Try the exquisite *duble anterpli* (pistaccio-studded variety).

Every Saturday, Selçuk holds a fantastic **market** (Şahabettin Dede Caddesi; ☎ 9am-5pm winter, 8am-7pm summer) behind the bus station. With its fresh fruit, veg, cheese and olives, it's a great place to stock up for a picnic.

Drinking

Pink Bistro Café (☎ 892 9801; Siegburg Caddesi 24; beer/spirits €1.65/2.75; ☎ 10am-2am winter, 10am-4am summer) The oldest drinking establishment in Selçuk, it's called a café, looks like a pub, but functions as a bar-cum-nightclub. Ask Mesut, the bar tender, to demonstrate some magic tricks.

Café Mosaik (☎ 892 6508; 1005 Sokak 6/B; beer/nargileh €1.65/2.75; ☎ 10pm-1am winter, 9.30pm-3am summer). New on the scene and like a kind of open-ended den, it's carpet-clad and cushioned and decorated *à la Turquie*. It's a fun place for beer or a nargileh with a good mix of European, Turkish and Arabic music.

Getting There & Around BUS & DOLMUŞ

Selçuk's otogar is across the road from the tourist office. While it's easy enough to get to Selçuk direct from İzmir (€2.10, one hour, 80km), coming from the south or east you generally have to change at Aydın, from where buses leave almost hourly to other destinations (such as Bodrum, Marmaris, Fethiye, Denizli and Antalya). Dolmuş to Aydın (€2.25, one hour) leave every 40 minutes from Selçuk.

There are direct buses from Selçuk nightly for İstanbul (€20, 11 hours) via Bursa, and in summer at least one bus daily to Pamukkale (€8.35).

Dolmuş run to Kuşadası every 20 minutes (€1.65, 30 minutes) and Pamucak (€1.10, 10 minutes). There are no buses or dolmuş to Söke; either change at Kuşadası or take a train (below).

If you're going to Priene, Mila or Didyma, the easiest way is to go to Söke and get one of the many buses from there.

TAXI

Taxis charge €5.60 per carload to Ephesus. For a day's tour from Selçuk to Meryemana, then Ephesus and back, count on €33.

One good plan is to take a taxi to Meryemana for a short visit, then have it drop you at the southern entrance to Ephesus (€28). You can spend as long as you like at Ephesus, then walk the 3km back to Selçuk or flag a passing minibüs.

Taxi rides around town usually cost €2.80 and to İzmir airport €100 (though many pensions can organise it for less). You can usually find taxis around the bus station.

TRAIN

Six trains run daily from **Selçuk train station** (☎ 892 6006) to İzmir (adult/child €1.65/1.10, two hours), the first at 6.25am and the last 7pm year-round. Trains also leave every evening to Söke (one hour) – the first at 7am, the last at 6pm – and five leave daily to Denizli (four hours): the first at 9.39am, the last at 11.05pm.

EPHESUS (EFES)

The best-preserved classical city in the eastern Mediterranean, **Ephesus** (☎ 892 6010; admission/parking €5.50/1.65; ☎ 8am-5pm Oct-Apr, 8am-7pm May-Sep) is *the* place to get a feel for what life was like in Roman times. For information on the two different entrance gates, see Getting There & Away (p255).

Ancient Ephesus was a great trading city and a centre for the cult of Cybele, the Anatolian fertility goddess. Under the influence of the Ionians, Cybele became Artemis, the virgin goddess of the hunt and the moon, and a fabulous temple was built in her honour. When the Romans took over and made this the province of Asia, Artemis became Diana and Ephesus became the Roman provincial capital.

To avoid the heat of the day, come early in the morning or in the late afternoon, when it's less crowded with tour groups. If you can, avoid public holidays altogether. Note that the

terrace houses cost an extra €8.35 (and take about an hour) to visit. Though they were closed at the time of writing for restoration, they should reopen soon.

If your interest in ruins is slight, half a day may suffice, but real ruins buffs will want to make a day of it. Bring water with you as drinks at the site are expensive.

Try and borrow an illustrated guide from your pension or hotel; it will really enhance the experience. Or you can hire one of the 15 Ephesus guides (two hours for two to 20 people for €39) that hang around the ticket barriers. Between them, they speak six European languages.

There are also new (and quite good) one-hour **audio guides** (adult/student €4.45/2.25) available. Note that only Turkish lira are accepted for the admission fee. An exchange office operates opposite the ticket office if you need to change money.

History**EARLIEST TIMES**

According to legend, Androclus, son of King Codrus of Athens, consulted an oracle about where to found a settlement in Ionia. The oracle answered in typically cryptic style: 'Choose the site indicated by the fish and the boar'.

Androclus sat down with some fishermen near the mouth of the Cayster River and Mt Pion (Panayır Dağı), the hill into which Ephesus' Great Theatre was later built. As they grilled some fish for lunch, one of the fish leapt out of the brazier, taking with it a hot coal, which ignited some shavings, which in turn ignited the nearby brush. A wild boar hiding in the brush ran in alarm from the fire and the spot at which the fishermen killed it became the site of Ephesus' Temple of Artemis (see p246).

In ancient times the sea came much further inland, almost as far as present-day Selçuk. The first settlement, of which virtually nothing remains, was built on the hill's northern slope and was a prosperous city by about 600 BC. The nearby sanctuary of Cybele/Artemis had been a place of pilgrimage since at least 800 BC.

CROESUS & THE PERSIANS

Ephesus prospered so much that it aroused the envy of King Croesus of Lydia, who attacked it around 600 BC. The Ephesians, who had

CAMEL WRESTLING

Though camel wrestling exists throughout Turkey, it's primarily found along the Western Mediterranean and particularly Aegean coasts. Selçuk holds an annual festival (see the boxed text, p246), which is a great place to witness this ancient sport.

Wrestling camels known as *tülüs* are bred by crossing two distinct breeds. During winter, these camels undergo certain physiological changes that make them inclined to mate with females and fight off any male rival. Harnessing the behaviour that this brings – aggression and energy – the locals bring together the animals to 'wrestle'.

Though the camels fight hard, ancient rules and practices govern the sport. First and foremost, camels must use accepted 'techniques' for wrestling. A board of judges and referees presides over the match and 14 *urgancı* (ropers) are close at hand to step in and separate the camels if required. The camel's mouths are also bound tightly with string so that they cannot bite one another. Instead, the camels must use their heads, necks and bodies to overcome their opponents.

One of the requirements of the referees is to match camels equally, not just for the safety of the animals themselves but also in order to provide a much more entertaining wrestle. Camels are matched by their experience, past prizes they may have won, their weight, their wrestling skill and the wrestling styles they use.

For a camel to be declared a winner, he must either force his opponent to flee the ring or force him to fall on to his side. Sometimes the fighting is ferocious, but so high is the confidence of the owner in his camel that he will let him continue wrestling even when the fight looks hopeless. Very often the 'losing' camel does indeed turn out victorious. It is also said that top-grade champions never ever flee the ring.

If you get the chance to watch a wrestle, do so: it's a colourful event. Town criers publicise the event, then the *tülüs* – decked out in all their finery – are proudly paraded through the streets by their owners, accompanied by drummers and musicians. Locally, camel wrestling has a large and devoted following. Fans know their camels' names as they do their favourite footballer or pop star. Camels usually take their names from the places they were born, from Turkish folkloric heroes or even from TV or film stars. When we visited, we met camels called 'David Beckham' and 'Colonel Gaddafi'...

neglected to build defensive walls, stretched a rope from the Temple of Artemis to the town, a distance of 1200m, hoping to win the goddess' protection. Croesus responded to this quaint defensive measure by giving some of his famous wealth for the completion of the temple. But he destroyed Ephesus and relocated its citizens inland to the southern side of the temple, where they built a new city.

Neglecting again (or perhaps forbidden) to build walls, the Ephesians were forced to pay tribute to Croesus' Lydia and, later, to the Persians. They then joined the Athenian confederacy, but later fell back under Persian control.

In 356 BC the Temple of Cybele/Artemis was destroyed in a fire set by Herostratus, who claimed to have done it to get his 15 minutes of fame, proving that modern society has no monopoly on a perverted sense of celebrity.

The Ephesians planned a grand new temple, the construction of which was well under way when Alexander the Great arrived in 334 BC. Much impressed, Alexander offered to pay for the cost of construction in return for having the temple dedicated to himself. The Ephesians declined his offer, saying tactfully that it was not fitting for one god to make a dedication to another. When finished, the temple was recognised as one of the Seven Wonders of the World.

LYSIMACHUS & THE ROMANS

After Alexander the Great's death, Ionia came under the control of Lysimachus, one of his generals. As the harbour silted up, it became clear the city would have to move westwards. Unable to convince the Ephesians to budge, Lysimachus blocked the old city's sewers during a downpour, causing major flooding. The Ephesians then moved reluctantly to the western side of Mt Pion, where the Roman city remains.

Little survives of Lysimachus' city, although it finally got a defensive wall almost 10km long, which served it well as it allied itself with the Seleucid kings of Syria, then with the Ptolemies of Egypt, later with King Antiochus, then Eumenes of Pergamum, and finally with the Romans. Long stretches of the wall survive on top of Mt Coressos (Bülbül Dağı), the high ridge of hills on the southern side of Ephesus. A prominent square tower, nicknamed 'St Paul's Prison', also survives on a low hill to the west.

With its brisk sea traffic, rich commerce and right of sanctuary in the Temple of Artemis, Roman Ephesus was the capital of Asia Minor and its population rapidly grew to around 250,000. Successive emperors vied with one another to beautify the city and it drew immigrants from all around the empire. Despite the fame of the cult of Diana, Ephesus soon acquired a sizeable Christian congregation. St John supposedly settled here with the Virgin Mary, and St Paul lived in the city for three years (probably in the AD 60s).

THE END

Unfortunately, despite efforts by Attalus II of Pergamum, who rebuilt the harbour, and Nero's proconsul, who dredged it, the harbour continued to silt up. Emperor Hadrian tried diverting the Cayster, but eventually the sea was forced back to Pamucak. Ephesus began to decline. It was still an important enough place for the Third Ecumenical Council to be held here in AD 431, but by the 6th century AD, when the Emperor Justinian was looking for a site to build a basilica for St John, he chose Ayasuluk Hill in Selçuk.

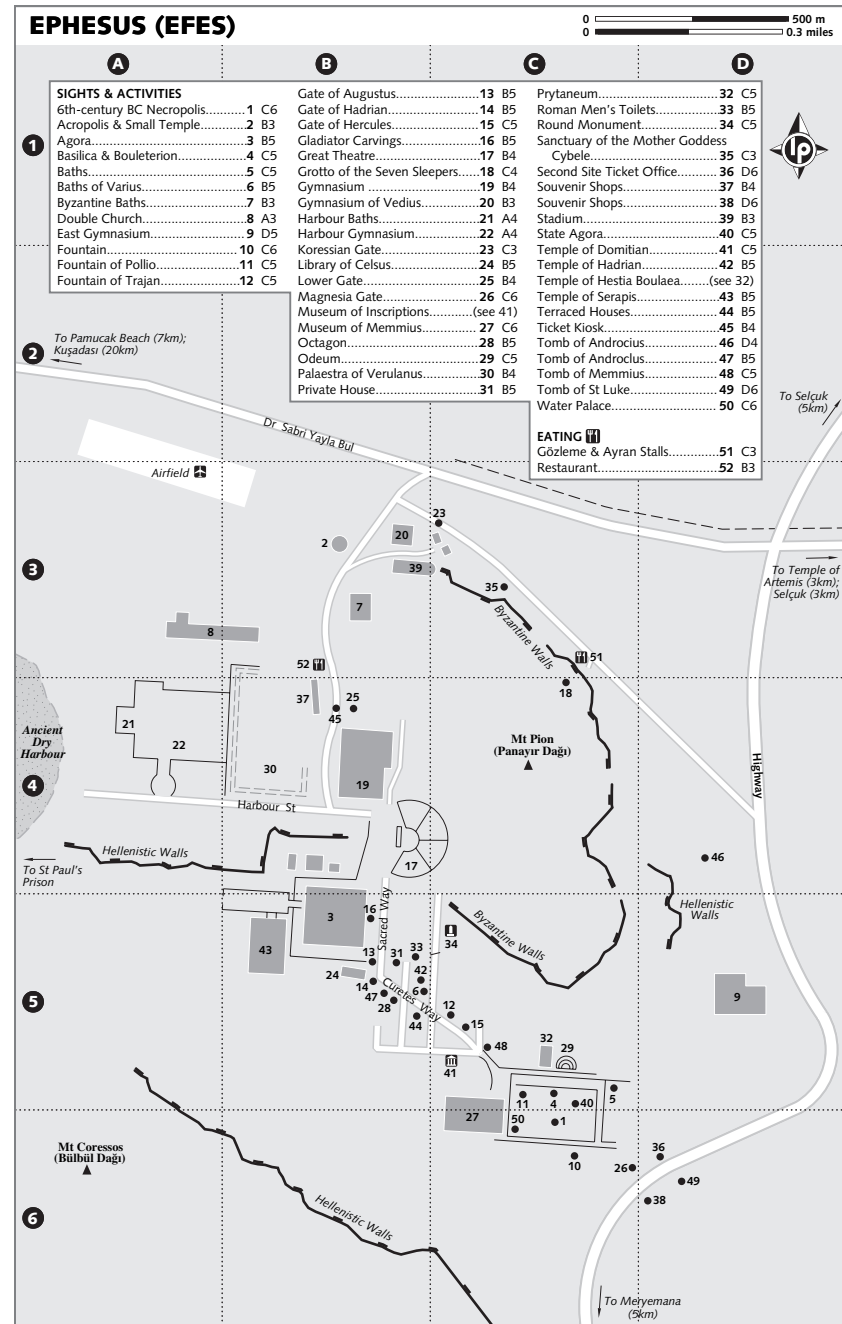
Sights

GYMNASIUM OF VEDIUS & STADIUM

As you walk along the side road from Dr Sabri Yayla Bulvarı, the first ruin you will pass on your left was once the Gymnasium of Vadius (2nd century AD), with exercise fields, baths, toilets, covered exercise rooms, a swimming pool and a ceremonial hall. A bit further along is the Stadium, dating from the same period. The Byzantines removed most of its finely cut stones to build the castle on Ayasuluk Hill. This 'quarrying' of precut building stone from older, often earthquake-ruined structures was, unfortunately, a constant feature of Ephesian history.

DOUBLE CHURCH

At the car park, which is ringed with *çay bahçesis* (tea houses), restaurants and souvenir shops, to the right of the road are the ruins of the Church of the Virgin Mary, also called the Double Church. The original building was a museum, a Hall of the Muses – a place for lectures, teaching and debates. Destroyed by fire, it was rebuilt as a church in the 4th century. Later it served as the site of the third Ecumenical Council (AD 431) which condemned the Nestorian heresy. Over the centuries several



other churches were built here, somewhat obscuring the original layout.

HARBOUR STREET

As you walk down into the main site along a path bordered by evergreen trees, a few colossal remains of the **harbour gymnasium** are off to the right. At the end of the path you reach marble-paved Harbour St, which was the grandest street in Ephesus, a legacy of the Byzantine emperor, Arcadius (r AD 395–408). In its heyday, water and sewerage channels ran beneath the marble flagstones and 50 streetlights lit up its colonnades. There were shops along its sides, and the **harbour baths** and triumphal columns at the harbour end. It was and is a grand sight, but at the time of writing most of it was fenced off from visitors.

GREAT THEATRE

At the eastern end of Harbour St is the Great Theatre, reconstructed by the Romans between AD 41 and AD 117. The first theatre on the site dated from the Hellenistic city of Lysimachus, and many features of the original building were incorporated into the Roman structure, including the ingenious design of the *cavea* (seating area), capable of holding 25,000 people: each successive range of seating up from the stage is pitched more steeply than the one below, thereby improving the view and acoustics for spectators in the upper seats. Among other modifications, the Romans enlarged the stage, pitched it towards the audience and built a three-storey decorative stage wall behind it, further improving the acoustics.

The Great Theatre is still (sometimes controversially) used for performances.

Behind the Great Theatre, Mt Panayır rears up, with a few traces of the ruined **city walls** of Lysimachus.

SACRED WAY

From the theatre, walk south along marble-paved Sacred (or Marble) Way, noting the remains of the elaborate water and sewerage systems beneath the paving stones, and the ruts made by wheeled vehicles (which were not allowed to drive down Harbour St). The large open space to the right of the street was the 110-sq-m **agora** (marketplace), heart of Ephesus' business life and dating back to 3 BC. It would have been surrounded by a colonnade and shops selling food and craft

items. Note the fine carvings of gladiators that survive along the Sacred Way.

On the left as you approach the end of the street is an elaborate building, which used to be called a brothel but is now believed to have been a **private house**. Either way, its main hall contains a fine mosaic of the *Four Seasons*.

The Sacred Way ends at the embolos, with the Library of Celsus and the monumental Gate of Augustus to the right, and Curetes Way heading east up the slope.

LIBRARY OF CELSUS

Celsus Polemaeanus was the Roman governor of Asia Minor early in the 2nd century AD. According to an inscription in Latin and Greek on the side of the front staircase his son, Consul Tiberius Julius Aquila, erected this library in his father's honour after the governor's death in 114. Celsus was buried under the western side of the library.

The library held 12,000 scrolls in niches around its walls. A 1m gap between the inner and outer walls protected the valuable books from extremes of temperature and humidity. The library was originally built as part of a complex, and architectural sleight of hand was used to make it look bigger than it actually is: the base of the façade is convex, adding height to the central elements; and the central columns and capitals are larger than those at the ends.

Niches on the façade hold statues representing the Virtues: Arete (Goodness), Ennoia (Thought), Episteme (Knowledge) and Sophia (Wisdom). The library was restored with the aid of the Austrian Archaeological Institute and the originals of the statues are in Vienna's Ephesus Museum.

As you leave the library, the **Gate of Augustus** on the left leads into the agora. This monumental gateway was apparently a favourite place for Roman ne'er-do-wells to relieve themselves, as a bit of ancient graffiti curses 'those who piss here'.

CURETES WAY

As you head up Curetes Way, a passage on the left leads to the famously communal **Roman men's toilets**. The much-copied statuette of Priapus, with the penis of most men's dreams, was found in the nearby **well**. It's now in the Ephesus Museum in Selçuk.

You can't miss the impressive Corinthian-style **Temple of Hadrian**, on the left, with beauti-

ful friezes in the porch and a head of Medusa to keep out evil spirits. It was dedicated to Hadrian, Artemis and the people of Ephesus in AD 118 but greatly reconstructed in the 5th century. Across the street a row of shops from the same period are fronted by an elaborate 5th-century mosaic.

Across from the Temple of Hadrian are the magnificent **Terraced Houses** (Yamaç Evleri; admission €9.50). It's a crying shame that the off-putting admission fee will deter most people from visiting a site that offers the next best chance after Pompeii (Italy) to appreciate the luxury in which the elite of the Roman world lived. In places, the Terraced Houses still stand to two storeys; their walls are covered in frescoes and their floors in elaborate mosaics. To add insult to injury, only the 1st floor of the terraces was open at the time of writing. Some small finds from the houses are on display in the Ephesus Museum in Selçuk (p247).

Further up Curetes Way on the left is the **Fountain of Trajan**. Of the huge statue of the emperor (AD 98–117) that used to tower above the pool, only one foot now remains.

UPPER EPHEBUS

Curetes Way ends at the two-storey **Gate of Hercules**, constructed in the 4th century AD, with reliefs of Hercules on both main pillars. To the right a side street leads to a colossal **temple** dedicated to the emperor Domitian (r AD 81–96), part of which serves as a rarely accessible **Museum of Inscriptions**.

Up the hill on the left are the very ruined remains of the **Prytaneum** (a municipal hall) and the **Temple of Hestia Boulaea**, in which a perpetually burning flame was guarded. Finally, you reach the **Odeum**, a small theatre dating from AD 150 and used for musical performances and meetings of the town council. The marble seats at the bottom suggest the magnificence of the original.

To the east of the Odeum are more **baths** and, further east, the **East Gymnasium**. There is a second **site ticket office** across from the slight remains of the **Magnesia Gate**.

Festivals & Events

During the **International İzmir Festival** (see p230) in mid-June to early July many events take place at Ephesus. The world-class acts – opera, ballet and music – are certainly worth getting tickets for. Tickets are sold at the Ephesus Museum (p246) in Selçuk.

Getting There & Away

Many pensions in Selçuk offer free lifts to Ephesus. Note that there are two entry points roughly 3km apart. You may prefer to be dropped off at the upper entrance (the southern gate or *güney kapısı*) so that you can walk back downhill through the ruins and out through the lower main entrance. It's a pleasant 30- to 45-minute walk from the tourist office in Selçuk to the main admission gate.

Frequent Pamucak and Kuşadası minibuses pass the Ephesus turn-off (€0.50, five minutes, 3km), leaving you with a short walk to the main ticket office.

A taxi from Selçuk to the main entrance should cost about €5.55.

AROUND SELÇUK Meryemana (Mary's House)

Believers say that the Virgin Mary came to Ephesus with St John towards the end of her life (AD 37–45). In the 19th century, nun Catherina Emmerich of Germany had visions of Mary at Ephesus. Using her descriptions, clergy from İzmir discovered the foundations of an old house on the wooded slope of Mt Coressos (Bülbül Dağı), not far from Ephesus. Pope Paul VI authenticated the site on a visit in 1967 and it quickly became a place of pilgrimage. A service to honour Mary's Assumption is held in the chapel every 15 August. Mass is held at 7.15am Monday to Saturday (evening service at 6.30pm), and at 10.30am on Sunday. Note that 'appropriate dress' is required to enter.

The tiny **chapel** (☎ 894 1012; admission per person/car €6/1.65; ☎ 8am–7pm) is usually mobbed by coach parties. There are information panels in various languages, but if you are interested in why over a million people visit here each year, we recommend *Mary's House* by Donald Carroll, which traces the extraordinary history of the site over 2000 years. You can also write to the **American Society of Ephesus, Inc, George B Ovatiman Foundation** (327 North Elizabeth St, Lima, Ohio, 45801, USA). A small shop also sells brochures (€1.65 to €2.75).

To Muslims, Mary is Meryemana, Mother Mary, who bore İsa Peygamber, the Prophet Jesus. Below the chapel a wall is covered in rags: Turks tie the bits of cloth (or paper or plastic – in fact anything at hand) to a frame and make a wish.

If you want refreshments, head for **Café Turca** (☎ 894 1010; Meryemana Evi; coffee/breakfast €1.10/3.85;

(☞ 7.30am-7pm). Otherwise, the site is a great spot for a picnic – it's cool, verdant and full of birdsong.

The site lies 7km from Ephesus' Lower (northern) Gate and 5.5km from the Upper (southern) Gate. There's no dolmuş service so you'll have to hire a taxi (around €28 return from the otagar) or take a tour.

Grotto of the Seven Sleepers

If you're driving from Meryemana to Ephesus you'll pass the road leading to the Grotto of the Seven Sleepers. According to legend, seven persecuted Christians fled from Ephesus in the 3rd century AD and took refuge in a cave on the northeastern side of Mt Pion. Agents of their persecutor, Emperor Decius, found the cave and sealed it. Two centuries later an earthquake brought down the wall, awakening the sleepers who ambled into town for a meal. Finding all their old friends long dead, they concluded that they had undergone some sort of resurrection. When they died they were buried in the cave and a cult following developed.

The grotto is actually a Byzantine-era necropolis (admission free; ☞ 24hr) with scores of tombs cut into the rock. It lies around 200m from the car park (1.5km from Ephesus); follow the well-trodden path up the hill.

It's probably not worth a special trip, although the shady and kilim-covered *ayran* (yogurt drink) and *gözleme* places by the junction make great places for a spot of R&R after Ephesus. The *gözleme* are famous.

Çamlık Steam Locomotive Museum

Trainspotters will delight in this open-air museum (☞ 894 8116; Köyü Selçuk; admission €1.65; ☞ 8am-5pm Oct-Apr, 8am-6pm May-Sep), 10km from Selçuk on the Aydın road. The attractively landscaped site has over 30 steam locomotives, some as old as the 1887 C-N2 from the UK, and all of which you are free to climb on. Atatürk had his headquarters here and kept his special white train at this station during Aegean manoeuvres. A new restaurant has opened here but it's open to tour groups only.

Pamucak

☞ 0232
Pamucak beach, a long, wide crescent of soft sand that's reasonably clean, lies about 7km west of Selçuk. The beach is crowded on summer weekends with free campers and Turkish

families, but mostly deserted at other times. From February to March, the estuary wetlands (a 15-minute walk from the beach) attract flamingos.

Dereli Motel Restoran (☞ 893 1205; www.dereli-ephus.net; per tent & per person €10, s/d cabin €28/70; ☞ May-Oct) offers inviting cabins with private bathrooms, some with fridge, and little verandas right on the beach (just 50m from the sea) or overlooking a rose garden. This well-run, German-managed complex also incorporates a restaurant, shop and shady camping area. The beach is kept litter-free, and the restaurant is very reasonably priced. Bring mosquito repellent though!

Minibuses run every half-hour from Selçuk (€1.10, 10 minutes, 7km) in summer and every hour in winter. To/from Kuşadası, go to Selçuk first.

ŞİRİNCE

☞ 0232 / pop 960

Up in the hills 9km east of Selçuk, amid grapevines and peach and apple orchards, sits Şirince, a perfect collection of stone-and-stucco houses with red-tiled roofs. It was probably originally settled when Ephesus was abandoned but what you see today mostly dates from the 19th century. The story goes that a group of freed Greek slaves settled here in the 15th century and called the village Çirince (Ugliness) to deter others from following them. In 1926 a governor of İzmir decreed that its name be changed to the more honest Şirince (Pleasantness).

A century ago a much larger and more prosperous Şirince was mainly inhabited by Ottoman Greeks and acted as the economic focus for seven monasteries in the hills around. The villagers, who moved here from Salonica and its vicinity during an exchange of populations in 1924, are ardent fruit farmers who also make interesting fruit wines (€3.90 to €5.55), which range from melon to black mulberry. They're delicious served cold as an apéritif.

It is an idyllic place, but in recent years the cruise ships with their 'Authentic Turkish Village' day trips have all but turned it into a parody with high prices and souvenir shops cheek-by-jowl the entire length of the main street. Of course, if you ignore this and stay the night (at a stiff premium of course) you'll be well rewarded with the chance to see the real village after the tour buses have gone.

The minibus from Selçuk drops you at the centre of the village near the restaurants.

Sights & Activities

Although you may want to drop into the ruined **Church of St John the Baptist** and examine its fast-fading frescoes, the real pleasure of a visit to Şirince lies in wandering its pretty backstreets and looking at the lovely old houses.

If you're interested in lace and other textiles, Şirince is also a good, if not exactly cheap, place to shop. Incidentally, if a local woman invites you to inspect her 'antique house', you should assume she'll have lace for sale.

Sleeping

Şirince is a captive market and prices, with a few exceptions can be ludicrously inflated for what you get. Rooms are with bathroom and breakfast is included.

Doğa Pansiyon (☞ 898 3004; r €16.50-33.50) Lying around 200m southwest of the main street up the hill on the periphery of the village, the tiny Doğa has minute but homely and clean rooms and is one of the better 'value' places to stay. There's also quite a pleasant terrace.

Dionysos Pension (☞ 898 3130; www.sirincerehber.com; r €44.50) A tiny but delightful old village house, the Dionysos has four well-maintained and spotless rooms that have retained some of their original features. It's not great value, but the pension has tonnes of character and a dear little garden-terrace outside. Follow the signs from the village centre and look out for the two churches – it lies between.

Kırkınca Pansiyon (☞ 898 3133; www.kirkınca.com; r €50-72, apartments €83-111) Composed of a collection of old houses (offering 15 rooms) and six 'apart houses', the Kırkınca is attractively kitted-out (three of the apartments have four-poster beds) and has lots of character. The biggest boon is the shaded roof terrace of the main building with lovely views overlooking the hills and town. The sitting room contains an ancient Greek amphora with crystallised wine inside.

Nişanyan Evleri (☞ 898 3208; www.nisanyan.com; s/d from €58/89; ☞) Worth the fairly steep 250m climb to the top of the village is this very attractive, 19th-century, renovated stone house. It's Şirince's smartest place to stay. The five rooms are individually decorated à l'Ottoman, there's a library, several sitting areas, a 'gourmet restaurant' (mains €7 to €13) and a pretty

terrace with gorgeous views. Three smaller, restored village houses can also be rented out nearby (€92/139 for one/two people per night). If you don't want to walk here from the village, call for a lift.

Eating

Artemis Şirince Şarapevi Restaurant (☞ 898 3240; pides €1.10-3.35, salad €1.50-2.25, grilled mains €3.85-7; ☞ 8am-midnight) Housed in the old Greek school overlooking the valley, this is a great place for a bite to eat. The interior has old stoves and darkened floorboards; outside there's a lovely, large terrace with great views. It looks expensive but isn't, and the food is good. You can also come here for a drink.

Arşipel Café (☞ 898 3133; meze €1.65-2.75, mains €5.50-7.25; ☞ 9am-11pm) Part of the Kırkınca Pansiyon is the new Arşipel Café, which offers an excellent and imaginative menu at reasonable prices. Try the delicious speciality: *kırkınca* kebab (sliced sirloin steak with green pepper, onion and mushroom served with yogurt and garlic and fried aubergine). There are tables outside.

Overlooking the main square where the buses stop with a pleasant shaded terrace and serving both mains and snacks at good prices is **Sultan Han Restaurant** (☞ 898 3179; snacks €1.40-2.25, mains €2.75-5.50; ☞ 8am-11pm).

Getting There & Away

Minibuses (€1.10) leave from Selçuk to Şirince every 15 minutes in summer, and every half-hour in winter.

TİRE, KAPLAN, ÖDEMİŞ & BİRGİ

Pleasant as Selçuk is, no-one could call it undiscovered. However, it's possible to make a straightforward day trip into the Aegean hinterland, which will give you a fascinating insight into less-touristy Turkey. You can do this by dolmuş, but it really works best if you hire a car.

Tire is a modern town with a fascinating old bazaar quarter. Head uphill to find the Tahtakale neighbourhood where it's possible to inspect *hans* (caravanserais) dating back to the 15th century and still in use as shopping centres. Poke around the backstreets and you will be able to watch felt-makers hard at work at a craft that has all but died out elsewhere in Turkey. There are also several interesting 15th-century mosques. Tour groups are brought here for the big Tuesday market, a

FILLING FISH

One day, all the fish of the sea came together to plead with God not to be eaten. But God said: 'All creatures must eat and be eaten. What will men eat if they cannot eat fish?' 'All right then,' replied the fish, 'let them eat us but not be filled!' And so it was that men never feel full after eating fish... (And why many Turks today prefer meat!)

Traditional Turkish tale transcribed by Frances Linzee Gordon, with thanks to Mustafa Kemal Gobi

leave for Birgi from Ödemiş otogar (€1.50, 20 minutes, 8km).

KUŞADASI

☎ 0256 / pop 47,660

About 22km southwest of Selçuk lies Kuşadası, which suffers from the double indignity of being a cruise-ship port and a major package-holiday resort. English-style pubs and karaoke bars are filled with football strips signed 'Elaine and Gary from Tredegar, South Wales', 'The Essex Police' and 'The Catholic Girls'. Then there are the tattoo parlours and shopping centres. Prices are also higher than other towns (particularly alcohol because of high municipality tax). Rip-offs are all too common, and you'll get plenty of 'Hi, where are you froms' from the carpet touts near the cruise-ship port. For the first time, too, the traditional Turkish hospitality seems a little jaded.

Nevertheless, outside high season it is a laid-back town with some lovely beaches and stunning views. A room at a nice pension with a rooftop terrace also makes a decent base for excursions to the ancient cities of Ephesus, Priene, Miletus and Didyma. Plus, the nightlife is cheesy but full-on. And if you look hard enough, the old Kuşadası is not too far beneath the surface either: there are some lovely bars in the old quarter.

There are also signs that the city fathers have at last cottoned on to the need to clean up their act, with the building of an attractive new waterfront esplanade.

Orientation

Kuşadası's central landmark is the Öküz Mehmet Paşa Kervansarayı, an Ottoman caravanserai that is now a hotel, known as Club Caravanserai. It lies 100m inland from the cruise-ship docks, at the intersection of the waterfront boulevard, Atatürk Bulvarı, and the town's main street, the pedestrianised Barbaros Hayrettin Bulvarı, which cuts inland.

Just beyond the PTT on the northern side of Barbaros Hayrettin Bulvarı, a passage leads to the old Kaleiçi neighbourhood (part of old Kuşadası) of narrow streets packed with restaurants and bars.

Turn right off Barbaros Hayrettin Bulvarı to find raucous Barlar Sokak (Bar St) and the hillside pensions overlooking the harbour.

The most useful dolmuş stand is 1.5km inland on Adnan Menderes Bulvarı. The otogar is right out on the bypass road.

great place to stock up on lunch supplies for a relaxing picnic.

About 1km off the Selçuk-Tire road (26km from Selçuk and 15km from Tire) is a restaurant that's well-known in the area. It's a great – and reasonably priced – place to stop for lunch or dinner. **Değirmen** (☎ 529 0066; meals €5; ☎ 8.30am–9pm) is set in expansive gardens full of climbing roses, pools, waterfalls and old trees. Cold meze (€1.65) and grills (€3.35) are the specialities.

Alternatively, take the road to **Kaplan**, a tiny village perched high in the hills, and enjoy a meal and the sensational views from **Kaplan Restaurant** (☎ 512 6652; meals €6; ☎ 8am–10pm).

Ödemiş is less interesting except on Saturday when there's a lively market. But from Ödemiş you can take a dolmuş or drive on to **Birgi**, an undeveloped village that's home to the gorgeous **Çakıroğlu Konağı** (admission €0.75; ☎ 8.30am–noon & 1–5.30pm Tue–Sun), one of the finest historical houses open to the public in Turkey. The three-storey wooden house, completely covered in frescoes, was probably built in 1761 for Şerif Aliğa, a tradesman who owned the local tanning yards and had two wives, from İstanbul and İzmir. To keep them happy he had vistas of their home towns painted on the upstairs walls. Next door, **Konak** (☎ 531 6069; Çakırağa Sokak 6) is a café in a restored house.

Birgi also has a fine **Ulu Cami** (1311) with carved doors and windows and an old stone lion incorporated into the stonework, and the **Birgivi**, a shrine on the outskirts of town that is popular with devout Muslims.

Getting There & Away

There are hourly minibuses to Tire from Selçuk (€1.50) and hourly onward buses from Tire to Ödemiş (€1, 34km). Dolmuşes

Information

INTERNET ACCESS

B@h@ane Internet Café (Öge Sokak 4/A; per hr €1.40; ☎ 8.30am–midnight) You can take drinks up here from the downstairs café.

Funny Internet Café (İsmet İnönü Bulvarı 16/A; per hr €1.10; ☎ 24hr) A couple of doors down from Anker Travel.

MEDICAL

Özel Kuşadası Hastanesi (☎ 613 1616; Anıt Sokak, Turkmen Mahallesi) Kuşadası's excellent private hospital is 3km north of the centre on the Selçuk road, and has English-speaking doctors.

MONEY

There are several banks with ATMs on Barbaros Hayrettin Caddesi.

POST

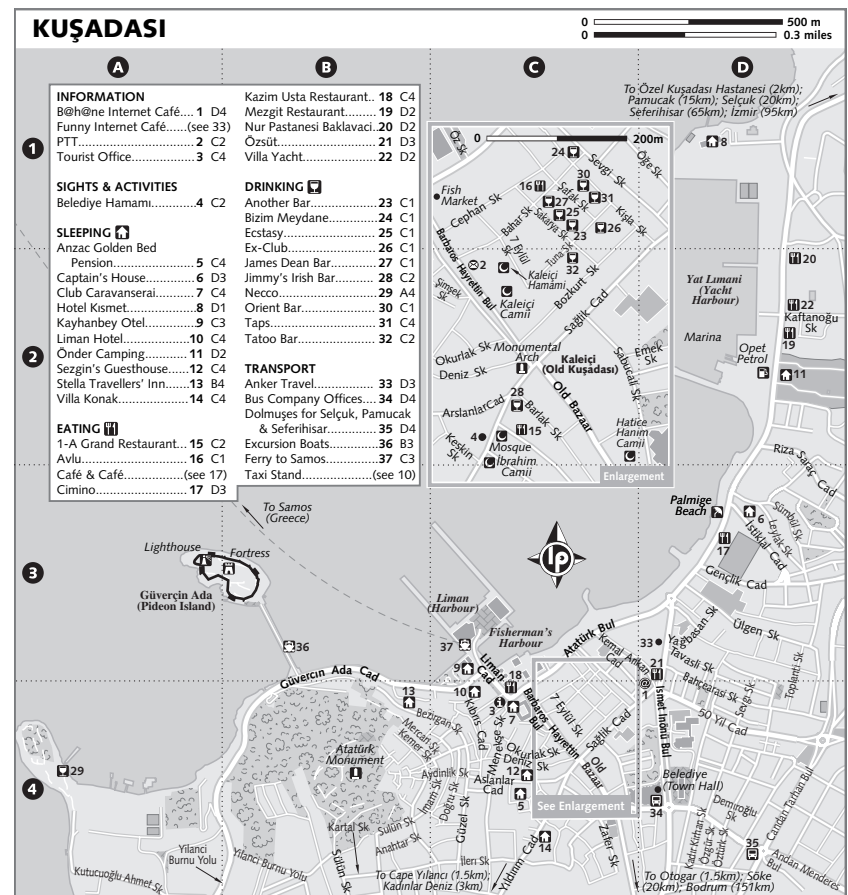
PTT (☎ 612 3311; Barbaros Hayrettin Paşa Bulvarı 23–25; ☎ 8.30am–12.30pm & 1.30–5.30pm Mon–Sat winter, 8am–midnight daily summer)

TOURIST INFORMATION

Tourist office (☎ 614 1103; fax 614 6295; İskele Meydanı, Liman Caddesi; ☎ 8am–noon & 1–5pm Mon–Fri) Near the wharf where the cruise ships dock, about 60m west of the caravanserai.

Sights & Activities

Kuşadası (Bird Island) gets its name from the small Güvercin Adası (Pigeon Island) connected to the mainland by a causeway. Unfortunately, the small stone **fortress** that is its most prominent feature is usually locked,



but that doesn't stop it from being a popular stroll for Turkish families. Kids will love the pigeon, duck and rabbit quarters.

The town's most prominent landmark is the **caravanserai** near the harbour. In the early 18th century, Öküç Mehmet Paşa, sometime grand vizier to sultans Ahmet I and Osman II, ordered the building of this caravanserai, together with the **Kaleiçi Camii** and **hamam** (bathhouse), and the city walls. Today, it's a hotel (opposite) hosting regular 'Turkish Nights'.

You can swim from the rocky shores of Güvercin Adası, but **Cape Yılançı** (Yılançı Burnu), the peninsula less than 1.5km to the south, is more enticing. Alternatively, catch the **şehirliçi** (intracity) dolmuş to the northern beach near the yacht marina or further north to the beach opposite the Tur-Yat Mocamp in Kuştur.

Kuşadası's most famous beach is **Kadınlar Denizi** (Ladies Beach), 2.5km south of town and served by dolmuşes running along the coastal road. Kadınlar Denizi is small, crowded with big hotels and woefully inadequate for the high summer crowds. The coast south of Kadınlar Denizi has several small beaches, each backed by big hotels.

Kuşadası's **hamams** are of the 'un-Turkish type', where there's mixed bathing (albeit with towels). The **Belediye Hamamı** (☎ 614 1219; Yıldırım Caddesi 2; admission €14; ☎ 9am-7pm Apr-Oct) is up the hill from Bar St. It's a restored **hamam** (the original dates back 600 years) and is atmospheric and clean.

Sleeping

Kuşadası is chock-a-block with hotels and still more are being built. Even so, only a few places stay open from November to March.

BUDGET

Camping

Önder Camping (☎ 618 1590; www.onderotel.com; Atatürk Bulvarı 84; per person/tent/caravan/car €2.20/1.10/2.20/1.10; ☎) A 10-minute walk north of the centre is this peaceful and quite well-run camping ground with tennis court, swimming pool, laundry facilities and a decent restaurant. Plots are shaded by pine trees and olives.

Pensions

Beware the pension touts at the otogar and harbour (who are paid commission). Decide where you're heading before arrival and stand your ground.

Anzac Golden Bed Pension (☎ 614 8708; www.kusadasihotels.com/goldenbed; off Aslanlar Caddesi, Uğurlu 1 Çıkmazı 4; dm €8-11, s with shared bathroom €11, s/d with bathroom €17-20/22-25; ☎ ☎) Bright, light and spotless, the pension's biggest attraction is its lovely terrace lined with geraniums in flowerpots where you can have breakfast while admiring the views over town. Tucked away in a cul-de-sac (follow the signs from Aslanlar Caddesi), it's peaceful and tranquil and you'll be warmly welcomed by Yusuf and Sandra, the Turkish-Australian owners, and their Shitzu dog, Zia. The pension is on a hill, but the owners happily reimburse taxis (up to YTL5).

Liman Hotel (Mr Happy's; ☎ 614 7770; www.limanhotel.com; Kıbrıs Caddesi, Buyral Sokak 4; s €11-17, d €14-25, f €31; ☎ ☎) With a great location close to the ferries, beaches, town centre and bazaar, the Liman is also very clean and comfy. The carpet's so thick you leave footprints and the bathroom (and even the balcony) is top-toe in maroon marble. Mattresses are new and there's wireless internet connection and a book exchange. The biggest boon is the lovely view from some rooms and, if yours is without, the rooftop terrace. There's also a lift large enough for wheelchair access. The manager's (aka Mr Happy's) mantra is 'come as a guest; leave as a friend'. You will.

Captain's House (☎ 614 4754; www.captainshousepan.siyon.com; İstiklal Caddesi 66; s/d €11/22; ☎ ☎) Decked out in nauticalia that extends even to the bathrooms, the conveniently placed Captain has 18 rooms that are clean and adequate (even if the stains on the common carpets could tell a story or two). Four rooms have large balconies with side sea views. The restaurant (next door) has a good reputation and is a popular local nightspot (with live music every night except Sunday from 10.30pm to 1.30am). It's also across the road from the public Palmiye beach.

Sezgin's Guesthouse (☎ 614 4225; www.sezginhotel.com; Aslanlar Caddesi 68; s/d €12/20, f with 3 or 4 beds & kitchen €40; ☎ ☎ ☎) Priding itself on its 'casual and relaxed atmosphere', the recently updated and expanded Sezgin's offers a pleasant garden and pool, as well as 'special events' including BBQs Turkish-style, belly dancing and organised tours.

Stella Travelers' Inn (☎ 614 1632; www.stellahos.tel.com; Bezirgan Sokak 44; dm/s/d €8/22/28; ☎ Apr-Nov; ☎ ☎) Never judge on appearances: this ugly modern block contains a lovely pool set high

on a terrace with simply stunning views. The hotel's a bit 70s-student-common-room, but the 20 rooms are clean, spacious and have direct sea views and balcony. It's good value. To get here, take a taxi (for which you'll be reimbursed on arrival).

MIDRANGE & TOP END

Villa Konak (☎ 612 2170; www.villakonakhotel.com; Yıldırım Caddesi 55; s/d with half board €47/62; ☎ ☎) Hidden away from the hubbub in the old quarter of town is the Villa Konak, a restored 140-year-old stone house. Rooms, simple but attractively done with the odd Orientalist flourish, are arranged around a large and rambling courtyard-garden complete with pool, ancient well, and citrus and magnolia trees. It's peaceful and cool and there's a bar, restaurant and library.

Club Caravanserai (☎ 614 4115; www.kusadasihotels.com/caravanserai; Atatürk Bulvarı; s/d €47/70; ☎ 1 Mar-15 Nov; ☎) Constructed by a grand vizier in 1618, this is an attractive caravanserai that boasts a supremely central location and four-star prices at reasonable rates. Unfortunately, the central courtyard is rather ruined by the carpet shops, and the 'Turkish Nights' shows at summer weekends – unless of course you like this kinda thing (€40 with dinner, €30 without).

Hotel Kismet (☎ 618 1290; www.kismet.com.tr; Atatürk Bulvarı 1; s/d €87/124; ☎ 15 Mar-15 Nov; ☎ ☎) Who would have thought in Kuşadası? Created by a descendant of the last sultan, the electric gates and avenue give an inkling of what lies beyond: minutely manicured grounds, a gorgeous pool and stylish décor all in neutrals. Be sure to bag a room with a balcony or veranda overlooking the seafont. The only downer is the piped music of cheesy crooners.

If the above are full, try the new **Kayhanbey Otel** (☎ 614 1190; www.kayhanbey.com; Güvercin Ada Caddesi; s/d €75/100; ☎ ☎ ☎) with 72 comfortable (albeit anodyne) rooms with balconies with lovely sea views. There's also a **hamam**, and outdoor pool on the roof terrace.

Eating

For cheaper options, it's simple: head inland. The Kaleiçi, the old part of Kuşadası behind the PTT, has some atmospheric dining rooms as well as a few cheap and cheerful joints.

The town's prime dining location is down by the picturesque harbour but competition keeps bills down. Always ask in advance the

price of seafood, check wine prices (and ensure you get the bottle, quantity and type you ordered), and always check your bills after a meal.

RESTAURANTS

Avlu (☎ 614 7995; Cephane Sokak 15; stews with free coffee or tea €1.40-1.95; ☎ 8am-midnight) Hidden in the old town amid a maze of streets, this **lokanta** (restaurant) is well worth seeking out. It offers 1st-class home cooking in a clean and cheerful environment at unbeatable prices. A long-standing local fave, in recent times it's been discovered by the more daring cruise-ships tourists too; if you don't want to queue at lunchtime, come earlier or later. There's a great pick-and-point counter for those unsure what to order. It's a good choice for veggies too, as well as for sampling delectable Turkish puds.

1-A Grand Restaurant (☎ 614 8409; Yıldız Sokak 1/A; mains €5-6; ☎ 9am-2am 20 Apr-1 Nov) Set in a square just off Bar St, this lovely place is a whole world away from it. Tables are set in a garden-courtyard under old fig and orange trees and the place is so mellow and laid-back that even the dogs are asleep curled up on the benches. There's a daily happy hour from 10pm to 11pm (all cocktails €3). The food (both European and Turkish) has a good reputation and it claims to do the best steaks in town. There's also free internet access to customers.

Mezgit Restaurant (☎ 618 2808; Atatürk Bulvarı 86; meze €1.65; 500g fish €8-10 ☎ 9am-midnight) A new, family-run place, it's already established itself locally as a great place for fresh fish at fair prices – it's half the price of the port. Daily prices are chalked up on the board.

Kazım Usta Restaurant (☎ 614 1226; Liman Caddesi 4; 500g fish €11-20; ☎ 6am-midnight) Opposite the tourist office, this restaurant is now considered the top fish restaurant in town, though it's not cheap. The sumptuous fish soup (€4) is a speciality. If you want a table on the waterfront, reserve at least a day in advance.

CAFÉS & QUICK EATS

Nur Pastanesi Baklavacı (☎ 612 3926; Atatürk Bulvarı, Liman Apt 106; puddings €1.40; ☎ 7am-midnight) Brand new and family-run, this patisserie is a fabulous place for homemade pastries and puds at a quarter of the price of town. There's also good ice cream (€0.30 per scoop). Try the exquisite baklava (four pieces €1.55).

Özsüt (☎ 612 0650; İsmet İnönü Bulvarı 30; ☎ 9.30am-midnight; ☎) Also new, this well-known İzmiri

chain has the usual delicious selection of traditional Turkish puds served up in smart surroundings, as well as great coffee and ice cream (€0.85 per scoop). Try the wonderful *aşure* (Noah's pudding) or *tavuk göğsü kazandibi* (burnt chicken breast pudding!) for €1.95.

Gimino (☎ 614 6409; Atatürk Bulvarı 56/B; ☎ 10am-midnight) A place to meet-and-eat locally, this mellow bistro-cum-café serves good cappuccino (€2.75) and mainly Italian-style fare (€2.75 to €14). It's opposite the seafront and plays good jazz music.

Nearby but a little livelier is **Café & Café** (☎ 612 5191; Atatürk Bulvarı 52; beer €2.75; ☎ 9am-midnight), which is also a great spot for a sundowner, while the **Villa Yacht** (☎ 618 1577; Marina Karşısı, Atatürk Bulvarı 94; beer/nargileh €1.65/2.25; ☎ 8.30am-3am) is a good, new place if you fancy trying a nargileh.

Drinking & Entertainment

What you'll make of the famous Barlar Sokak (Bar St) probably depends on your penchant for Irish-theme pubs, karaoke bars and cheesy pick-up lines, but it's a good place to meet up with other travellers. For local bars with bags of character and atmosphere, head for old Kuşadası. Everywhere the party never gets going before midnight. From October to March, it shrinks to almost nothing.

Orient Bar (☎ 612 8838; Kışla Sokak 14; beer €2.20; ☎ 1am-4am 15 Apr-Oct) With white-washed walls covered in trinkets, and wooden tables under vines, rustic meets raucous in the highly popular local hang-out. The music is European and the price of a beer is not prohibitive.

Jimmy's Irish Bar (☎ 612 1318; Barlar Sokak 8; beer €3.35; ☎ 8pm-4am 5 Apr-Nov) Love it or loathe it (and the burly bouncers with radio earplugs say everything about the clientele), Jimmy's is a popular get-together for travellers. Large screens beam in the compulsory football matches.

In the old town, there's a string of fabulous bars-cum-nightclubs that are well designed, glam and much more Turkish than tourist. Beer costs €4.50 and all are open 10pm to 4am May to September, though a few sporadically open at weekends in winter. The most popular currently are the following.

Another Bar (☎ 614 7552; Tuna Sokak 10) Converted from an old citrus orchard, tables and stools are dotted among the remaining trees and a large, central palm. There's also a large screen and a dance floor.

Ex-Club (☎ 614 7550; Tuna Sokak 13) More club than bar and with a sound system, disco balls and laser lights to prove it, this partly open-air place is crammed with dancers on the floor as well as around the balustrade above.

James Dean Bar (☎ 614 3827; Sakarya Sokak 14) Set in a 200-year-old building, this club is open-air amid orange trees and beautiful bars draped with beautiful people.

Ecstasy (☎ 612 2208; Sakarya Sokak 10) bar is similar. Known to be gay-friendly are **Tattoo Bar** (☎ 612 7693; Tuna Sokak 7) and the British pub-style **Taps** (☎ 612 1371; Tuna Sokak 4).

MEYHANES

Kaleiçi (the old part of Kuşadası) is home to several *meyhanes* (taverns) where meze and rakı (aniseed-flavoured grape brandy) are served up accompanied by live music.

Bizim Meyhane (☎ 614 4152; Kışla Sokak; beer/rakı €2.75/2.20; ☎ 8.30pm-4am) Low-beamed and draped with musical instruments on the old stone walls, this place looks more barn than bar. Run by a sister and brother who themselves sing and play instruments, it's atmospheric, infectious and fun. Join the locals tossing back the rakı, singing, dancing or scribbling little messages on the wall!

BEACH CLUBS

Recently, a new phenomenon has come to Kuşadası: the beach club. Functioning as a beach club during the day, they transform themselves by night into a restaurant, followed by a lavish nightclub-on-the-sea.

Two such places can be found on the way to Pigeon Island. Considered the hippest (and the first on the scene) is **Necco** (☎ 613 3055; Yılanlı Burnu; admission weekday €5.50, weekend with drink ind €11, beer from €4; ☎ 10am-7pm & 8pm-midnight end May-end Sep). It's very popular with the well-heeled and well-dolled up.

To get here, take a dolmuş towards Kadınlar Denizi (Ladies Beach; €0.55). It can drop you at the roundabout from where it's a short walk. On foot, ask the locals for the handy shortcut (about 1km from town).

Getting There & Away BUS

Kuşadası's otogar is at the southern end of Kahramanlar Caddesi on the bypass highway. Several companies have ticket offices on İsmet İnönü Bulvarı and offer *servis* (shuttle minibuses) to save you the trek out there. Note

that dolmuş leave from the centrally located Adnan Menderes Bulvarı.

In summer, three buses run daily to Bodrum (€7 to €8, 2 to 2½ hours, 151km); in winter, take a dolmuş to Söke (€1.65, at least every 30 minutes all year). For Didyma, Priene and Miletus, change also at Söke. For more information about getting to the 'PMD' ruins, see p264.

For Selçuk, (€1.65, 25 minutes), dolmuş run every 15 minutes. For Pamucak or Ephesus, take the Selçuk dolmuş (which can drop you off there). For Seherihisar (€2.80; 70 minutes), dolmuş leave every 45 minutes all year.

BOAT

All Kuşadası travel agents sell tickets to the Greek island of Samos.

From 1st April to 31st October, boats depart daily from Kuşadası to Samos at 8.30am. From 1 May, there's an additional boat at 5pm. Note that ferries do not operate in winter. Tickets cost €32 for a single, €38 for a same-day return and €59 for an open return.

If you stay the night you will be landed with a €9 tax for leaving Greece and another €9 tax for coming back into Turkey. Some pensions discount these tickets, so ask, and flash your student card. You must be at the harbour 45 minutes before sailing time for immigration formalities.

A recommended travel agency is **Anker Travel** (☎ 612 4598; www.ankertravel.net; İnönü Bulvarı 14; ☎ 9am-7pm winter, 9am-9pm summer). It's also a licensed ticketing agent so can sell domestic and international flights.

Getting Around

For Adnan Menderes airport, note that buses can no longer drop you off (since the building of the highway about 10 years ago). You must now take a bus to İzmir otogar (€4.70, 1¼ hours, 80km), take the free shuttle service to the centre, then take a bus (see p234, or a taxi (€67)).

Şehiriçi minibuses (€0.85) run every few minutes in summer (every 15 to 20 in winter) from Kuşadası otogar to the town centre, and up and down the coast. Kadınlar Denizi minibuses speed along the coast road south to the beach. You can pick up a minibus heading north along the coast to Kuştur (€1.85) at the junction of İstiklal Sokak and Atatürk Bulvarı.

SÖKE

☎ 0256 / pop 69,370

Söke is a modern town that's enlivened only by Wednesday and Sunday markets. However, it's the main transport hub for this part of the region and you may be forced to come here to change buses as you travel around the coast.

If you get stuck here, the **Hotel Haymanali** (☎ 518 1726; www.hotelhaymanali.com; Sekiler Caddesi 55; s/d €17/28, summer extra €5.50; ☎), about 70m from the bus station on the main road, is the best of the very few options in town and is comfortable and well run.

You can also base yourself here for visiting the Dilek Peninsula or Priene, Miletus and Didyma, cutting out the transport time from Selçuk or Kuşadası.

Buses run to İzmir (€4.45 to €5.55, usually every 15 minutes), to Denizli (for Pamukkale; €5.55, three times daily), Bodrum (€6.65, every hour) and to Ayden (€2.50, every 20 minutes). For dolmuş services see the table, below. For Selçuk, go to Kuşadası and change.

DOLMUŞ SERVICES FROM SÖKE'S OTOGAR

Destination	Fare	Distance	Frequency (per day)
Bafa	€2.75	30km	every 20 min
Balat (for Miletus)	€2.20	35km	every 30 min
Didyma	€2.50	56km	every 20 min
Güllübağçe (for Priene)	€1.40	17km	every 20 min
Güzelçamlı	€1.95	22km	every 20 min
Kuşadası	€1.65	20km	every 20 min
Milas	€3.35	82km	every 20 min

DİLEK PENINSULA

About 26km south of Kuşadası, the Dilek Peninsula juts westwards into the Aegean, almost touching the Greek island of Samos. West of the village of Güzelçamlı is **Dilek National Park** (Dilek Milli Parkı; admission per person/car €1.65/4.75; ☎ 8am-8pm), a peaceful, mountainous nature reserve with some fine walking and horse-riding areas, and unspoilt coves for swimming.

Just outside the park entrance, look out for a brown sign with 'Zeus Mağarası' written on it, which indicates the location of a cave where you can swim in water that's icy-cool in summer and warm in winter.

National park dolmuş drop you off at **İçmeler Koyu**, a protected cove with a small but cigarette butt-strewn beach, lounge chairs and

umbrellas. About 3km beyond İçmeler Koyu an unpaved road heads 1km downhill on the right to **Aydınlık Beach**, a quieter pebble-and-sand strand about 800m long with surf and backed by pines.

Less than 1km further along is a *jandarma* (police) post. Shortly afterwards a turn on the left is signposted **Kanyon**. If you follow this path all the way it will eventually bring you back to Güzelçamlı, after about six hours' stiff walking through beautiful, peaceful pine forest. Alternatively, you can just take a turn up and down the hill and then return to the main road.

After another 500m you reach the turn-off for **Kavaklı Burun** (also known as Kalamaki Beach and the last dolmuş stop), a sand-and-pebble surf beach. As at Aydınlık, there's a second entrance to the beach at the far end, another 1km along. It's 8.5km back to the park entrance.

Sleeping & Eating

Ecer Pension (☎ 646 2737; necipecer@mynet.com; s/d with or without private bathroom & breakfast €11/22) Though you'd be forgiven for mistaking it for a ramshackle farmhouse, the pension's rooms are simple, tidy and clean. Run by a charming Turkish-German couple, Anneliese and Nected, you can sip their homemade wine in their rambling garden. It lies 200m east of the bus station on the main road. You can request a wild boar dinner for €6.50.

The owners' son can also arrange horses and guides (€20 to €22 per person for three hours) or take you on a trek (from one hour to eight hours) in the park. The scenery is beautiful and you can hope to see among other things ruined Byzantine monasteries and wildlife including wild horses and boar.

Although camping is not allowed in the national park, there are several sites near the gate at Güzelçamlı.

Outside the park are several, similar fish restaurants perched right on the water; choose the most popular when you visit. The beaches in the park have small cafés selling cold drinks and simple meals, as well as picnicking facilities.

Getting There & Away

Minibuses from Söke travel as far as İçmeler Koyu (€1.65, 35 to 40 minutes); minibuses from Kuşadası continue right down the peninsula to Kavaklı Burun (€1.95). You pay the

park entrance fee while on the bus. Minibuses generally run from 7am to midnight in summer and 7am to 6.45pm in winter, but the later dolmuşes fill up quickly, especially at weekends.

You can walk the 2km from Güzelçamlı to İçmeler Koyu in 30 minutes.

PRIENE, MILETUS & DIDYMA

☎ 0256

Ephesus may be the *crème de la crème* of the Aegean archaeological sites, but south of Kuşadası lie the ruins of three other, much-less-frequently visited (but still important) ancient settlements. Priene occupies a dramatic position overlooking the plain of the Büyük Menderes (Meander) River; Miletus preserves a spectacular theatre; and Didyma has a Temple of Apollo vaguely reminiscent of the great temples at Karnak in Egypt.

Beyond Didyma lies **Altınkum Beach**, one of Turkey's finest and busiest beaches, its swathe of 'golden sand' popular with the English package-holiday brigade for whom innumerable British-style cafés dish up the tastes of home. If you end your tour of the ruins at Didyma, you might want to take a quick dip in the sea at the beach before returning to base.

Getting There & Around

If you start early in the morning from Kuşadası or Selçuk, it's just about possible to get to Priene, Miletus, Didyma and Altınkum Beach in the same day using public transport. However, it can be awkward and time-consuming as dolmuş services are patchy and you may have to keep backtracking to Söke. To avoid worries about connections you might prefer to opt for an organised tour from Selçuk or Kuşadası.

If you do want to do it yourself, start out by catching a dolmuş from Kuşadası (€1.65, 20km) to Söke and then another to Güllübağçe (for Priene; €1.40, 17km). When you've finished at Priene, wait for a passing dolmuş heading for Miletus or Söke, hitch the 22km across the flood plain to Miletus, or return to Söke and set out again.

Getting from Miletus to Didyma can be tricky. Dolmuşes do run from Miletus to Didyma (€1.65) but if there's no sign of a dolmuş from Miletus to Akköy, you will either have to try hitching or return to Söke and start out all over again. From Akköy, there are

dolmuşes every 20 minutes to Didyma (€1.40) and Altınkum.

Lost already? If so it's easy to pick up an organised tour (around €20 per person) from Selçuk otogar, at least in high summer. Minibuses usually leave around 9am, and spend one hour at Priene, 1½ hours at Miletus, 2½ hours at Didyma and 1½ hours at Altınkum Beach, before returning to Selçuk at about 6pm.

In high summer, tours may run daily and you may need to book in advance. At other times, however, they may only operate when enough people have expressed an interest. In winter, note that there are fewer direct dolmuşes and you have to change more frequently from town to town.

Without a doubt, hiring a car is the easiest way to visit these places! There are a multitude of agencies competing for business in the town centre or ask at your hotel. Most international agencies rent out cars for around €50 a day, while a host of smaller travel agencies do it for about half that. Shop around.

Priene (Güllübağçe)

An important city around 300 BC when the League of Ionian Cities held congresses and festivals here, **Priene** (☎ 547 1165; admission €1.10; ☎ 8.30am-6.30pm May-Sep, 8.30am-5.30pm Oct-Apr) was smaller and less important than nearby Miletus. As such, its Hellenistic buildings did not vanish beneath newer Roman ones.

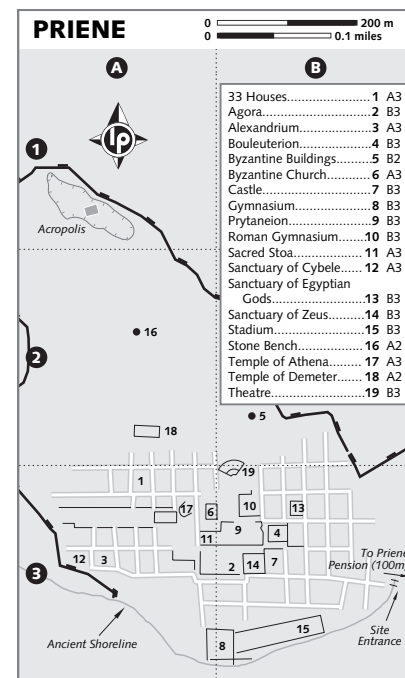
Priene was laid out on a grid plan, an idea that originated in Miletus. Of the buildings that remain, the five standing columns of the **Temple of Athena**, designed by Pythius of Halicarnassus and regarded as the epitome of an Ionian temple, form its most familiar landmark. The **theatre** is one of the best-preserved examples from the Hellenistic period. It had a capacity to seat 6500 people; look out for the finely carved front seats for VIPs. Also worth seeking out are the remains of the **bouleuterion** (council chamber), a **Byzantine church**, the **gymnasium** and the **stadium**.

Although the Priene ruins are interesting there's a strong chance that what will most linger in your mind is their beautiful setting beneath steep Mt Mykale.

Various factories and workshops sell onyx at quite good prices.

SLEEPING & EATING

All of the following are on or just off the main road, Atatürk Caddesi.



Priene Pension (☎ 542 8787; fax 547 1565; camping per person €5.50, s/d winter €14/28, summer €22/28) Currently the only hotel in town, the Priene boasts a beautifully kept garden. Rooms are simple but quite spacious and clean.

Around 30m beyond the Priene, where the dolmuş stops is the **Şelale Restaurant** (☎ 547 1009; ☎ 8am-11pm). Attractively positioned in the shadow of a ruined Byzantine aqueduct, it serves tasty trout (€5.60), which you can net yourself – if you have the stomach – from the restaurant's pool. Next door is the brand-new **Vila Sultan Café Bar Restaurant** (☎ 547 1204; köfte €2.75, kebab €3-4; ☎ 8am-11pm) in a converted kilim factory. The tables are set in a lovely courtyard with a fountain and orange trees and it offers excellent traditional fare. There are plans to rent rooms (probably €20 per person) and family bungalows (€33 to €50) here in the future.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Dolmuşes run every 15 minutes between Priene (Güllübağçe; €1.40, 17km) and Söke; the last one back to Söke leaves Priene at 7pm.

Miletus (Milet)

The ancient town of **Miletus** (☎ 875 5562; admission €1.10; 🕒 8.30am-6.30pm May-Jun, 8.30am-7.30pm Jul-Aug, 8.30am-5.30pm Oct-Apr) lies 22km south of Priene. Its **Great Theatre**, rising up as you approach from the south, is the most significant – and impressive – reminder of a once-grand city, which was a commercial and governmental centre from about 700 BC to AD 700. Later, the harbour filled with silt and Miletus' commerce dwindled. The 15,000-seat theatre was originally a Hellenistic building, but the Romans reconstructed it extensively during the 1st century AD. It's still in good condition and exciting to explore.

It's well worth climbing to the top of the theatre where the ramparts of a later Byzantine castle provide a viewing platform for several other groups of ruins. Look left and you'll see what remains of the **harbour**, called Lion Bay after the stone statues of lions that guarded it. Look right and you'll see the **stadium**; the northern, western and southern **agoras**; the vast **Baths of Faustina**, constructed for Emperor Marcus Aurelius' wife; and a **bouleuterion** between the northern and southern agoras.

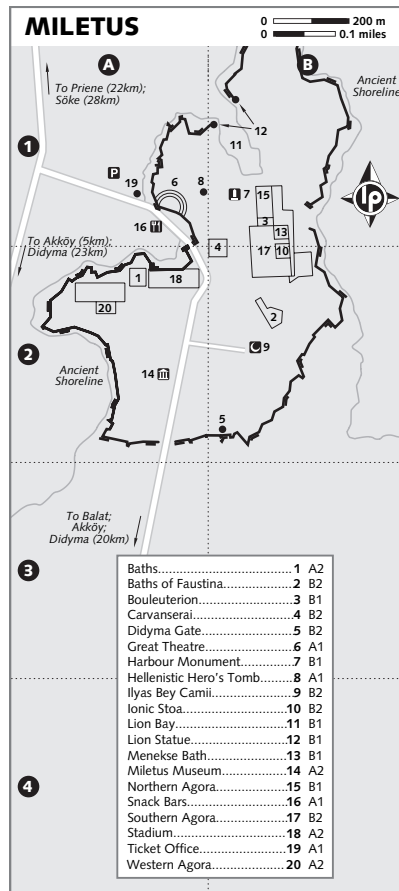
Some of the site is under water for much of the year and although it may make it hard to walk around, it also makes it more picturesque.

South of the main ruins stands the fascinating **Ilyas Bey Camii** (1404), dating from a period after the Seljuks but before the Ottomans, when this region was ruled by the Turkish emirs of Menteşe. The doorway and **mihrab** (niche indicating the direction of Mecca) are exquisite, and you'll probably have them to yourself.

Across the road from the Great Theatre, there are a couple of cafés (open 7am to 6pm) serving reasonably priced snacks including delicious **gözleme** (€1.10) and refreshing freshly squeezed orange juice (€0.85). With such fabulous views, it's a great place for a break.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

From Söke take a dolmuş (€1) to Balat and ask to be dropped at the Miletus turn-off, from where it is about a 1km walk. From Miletus there are no dolmuşes anywhere. As there's not much traffic about, it may be quicker to return to Söke (€2.50) and start out again for Didyma. For current information on local



timetables (which change regularly), ask the ticket office at Miletus. If you get stuck, they can sometimes call the Balat dolmuş station and request a pick-up.

Didyma (Didim)

Didyma was the site of a stupendous temple to Apollo, occupied by an oracle as important as the one at Delphi. But ancient Didyma was never a real town; only the priests who specialised in oracular temple management lived here. Modern Didim is a popular stop for tour groups, and carpet shops gush forth touts at the approach of each new bus. No guides are available at the site.

The ruins of the **Temple of Apollo** (☎ 811 0035; admission €1.10; 🕒 8.30am-7.30pm 15 Apr-Sep, 9am-5.30pm

Oct-14 Apr) that you see today belong to a late-4th-century BC temple built to replace the original one (destroyed by the Persians in 494 BC), and a later construction sponsored by Alexander the Great. It was never finished, although its oracle and priests continued hard at work until Christianity became the state religion, thereby bringing pagan practices to an end.

The temple porch held 120 huge columns with richly carved bases reminiscent of Karnak in Egypt. Behind the porch is a great doorway where oracular poems were written and presented to petitioners. Covered ramps on both sides of the porch lead down to the **cella** (inner room), where the oracle sat and prophesied after drinking from the sacred spring. The grounds contain fragments of rich decoration, including a photogenic head of Medusa (she of the snake hairdo). There used to be a road lined with statues that led to a small harbour, but after standing unmoved for 23 centuries the statues were taken to the British Museum in 1858.

Lovely Altinkum Beach (p264) is nearby.

SLEEPING & EATING

Medusa House (☎ 811 0063; www.medusahouse.com; s/d €28/56) Just around the corner from the temple on the Altinkum road is this restored stone village house with five pleasantly decorated rooms set in a very attractive garden (complete with original Greek urns and shaded terraces).

Oracle Pension (☎ 811 0270; s/d €17/28) Next door to Medusa House, the Oracle has simple, rather weary-looking rooms, but this is more than made up for by the stunning views over the temple just next door from the shaded terrace.

Apollon Café & Bar (☎ 811 3555; snacks €1.40-4, mains €5.50-11; 🕒 8pm-midnight) Across from the temple entrance, the Apollon is located in a traditional stone house and has seating either in the cool interior or on the pleasant terrace overlooking the temple. The menu is extensive and prices reasonable.

Getting There & Away

Dolmuşes run frequently between from Söke and Didim (€3.35, one hour) and Altinkum (€3.35, 1½ hours). There are also frequent dolmuşes from Didim to Akköy (€1.40, 30 minutes) from where you may be able to hitch to Miletus.

HERAKLEIA (LATMOS)

☎ 0252

About 30km south of Söke, the highway skirts the southern shore of the huge Bafa Gölü (Lake Bafa), once a gulf of the Aegean but left behind as a lake as the sea retreated. At the southeastern end of the lake is a village called Çamiçi (Bafa), from which a paved road is signposted 10km north for Kapıkırı (for Herakleia). Watch carefully for the sign, which is easily missed.

At the end of a twisting, rock-dominated road, you'll come to the ruins of Herakleia ad Latmos in and around the village of Kapıkırı, a wonderful spot where rocks and ruins are so closely entwined it's hard to tell where the one ends and the other begins.

Above the village looms dramatic **Besparmak Dağı** (Five-Fingered Mountain; 1500m), the ancient Mt Latmos that featured in Greek mythology as the place where the hunky shepherd boy Endymion happened to fall asleep. While he was napping, the moon goddess Selene glanced down and fell in love with him. Endymion had asked Zeus to grant him eternal youth and beauty in exchange for staying asleep for eternity. The unfortunate Selene could only gaze down at him night after night, as the moon is forever fated to look down on us mere mortals.

Bafa Gölü is an area where Christian hermits took refuge during the 8th-century Arab invasions (note the many ruined churches and monasteries in the vicinity). The monks reputedly considered Endymion a saint for his powers of self-denial.

Much of the pleasure of visiting Herakleia comes from the chance it offers to observe traditional Turkish life in action. During the day women sit by the road making lace; in the evenings villagers herd their cattle along the main street. Beehives dot the fields, and camomile flowers grow wild by the roadsides in spring and summer. In the morning you'll awaken to the sound of clucking chickens or braying donkeys.

Note that there's only one small shop and no bank or ATM in the village.

Sights & Activities

As you enter the village in summer, you may be asked to pay an admission fee of €2.80 (if the ticket attendant is around). Bear right at the ticket booth, and you'll come to the Agora Pension.

A path behind the Agora car park leads westwards to the large **Temple of Athena**, on a promontory overlooking the lake. Though only three walls remain, the large and beautifully cut building blocks (put together without cement) are impressive. Other signposted paths lead eastwards to the **agora**, the **boulevard** and, several hundred metres through stone-walled pastures and across a valley, to the unrestored and oddly sited **theatre**; its most interesting features are the rows of seats and flights of steps cut into the rock. Stretches of **city wall** dating from around 300 BC are also dotted about the village.

Afterwards, you can stroll down the road to the lake, passing: the **Temple of Endymion**, partly built into the rock; the ruins of a **Byzantine castle**; and the city's **necropolis**.

At the lakeside, near the ruins of a **Byzantine church**, there's a small beach of white coarse sand. The island just offshore can sometimes be reached on foot as the lake's water level falls. Around its base can be seen the foundations of several ancient buildings.

The Agora Pension offers boat trips around the lake to see the birds and the ruins and to swim. Half-day tours cost €30 and full-day tours €50. The restaurants by the lake also offer tours.

Sleeping & Eating

Pensions offer half-board, but you can normally request bed and breakfast only if you so wish.

Haus Yasemin Pansion (☎ 543 5598; www.bafa-see.de; s/d €22/45) Greeted by discarded toys and lines of washing, this welcoming place has a firm family feel. The traditionally styled rooms are simple but spotless and there's a nice terrace with views over the village. It's better value than most.

Agora Pension (☎ 543 5445; www.herakleia.com; s/d with shower & half board €45/60, bungalows half-board €39/67; ☎ ☑) Though rooms are quite attractively decorated with traditional touches, prices are rather too steep. The hotel's setting is its biggest asset, with flower-filled gardens and a peaceful outlook (rural views complete with sheep and cows guaranteed!). There's also a *hamam* and shaded terrace with hammocks. Mithat, the son of the owner, can act as guide to the area and take you hiking (€10, four hours).

Herakleia Selene Restaurant (☎ 543 5579; fish mains €5.55, köfte €2.75; ☎ 7am-midnight) This is a

great restaurant (with unbeatable prices), with a lovely position right on the waterfront. A fine spot for either a meal or, as the locals do, a beer at sunset. You can also come here to swim and have lunch. The friendly owner, Güray, rents out boats at reasonable prices (€11 for the whole boat, maximum six people, for two hours). Camping is also possible here (€1.40 per tent including use of bathrooms).

The **Kaya Restaurant & Pansiyon** (☎ 543 5380; meals €5.55; ☎ 8am-midnight) is another good restaurant. To get to both, take the road that forks left down to the water just before the ticket booth if entering the village.

Getting There & Away

Minibuses from Bodrum (€3), Milas (€1.50, 45 minutes) or Söke (€2.30, one hour) will drop you at Bafa. Unfortunately dolmuşes no longer run from Bafa to Herakleia, but you can get a taxi (€5.55), or if you've decided where to stay, you can call the pensions for a free pick-up. From Bafa, dolmuşes run to Milas and Söke only.

MILAS

☎ 0252 / pop 44,260

As Mylasa, Milas was capital of the Kingdom of Caria, except during the period when Mausolus ruled the kingdom from Halicarnassus (present-day Bodrum). Today, it's a fairly sleepy but still sizeable agricultural town, with many homes where carpets are handwoven. Don't be put off by what you see from the otogar – the town is actually quite attractive and makes a pleasant break from the bright lights of the coastal resorts. On Tuesday there's an excellent local market.

Since Milas is actually closer to Bodrum's international airport than Bodrum itself, you could stay the night in Milas if you arrive late in the day during high season when Bodrum is likely to be full.

Orientation

Approaching Milas from Söke, you pass the otogar 1km before reaching the road to Labranda on the left. To the right, İnönü Caddesi is marked for 'Şehir Merkezi' (city centre). It's another 1km to the centre of town at the Milas Belediye Parkı.

Sights & Activities

Coming into town along İnönü Caddesi, watch for signs pointing to the right for the

belediye; opposite the *belediye* turn left for the **Baltalı Kapı** (Gate with an Axe). Cross a small bridge and look left to see the well-preserved Roman gate, which has marble posts and lintel, plus Corinthian capitals. The eponymous double-headed axe is carved into the keystone on the northern side.

Return to the road and continue south, turning right at the traffic roundabout next to the shady Milas Belediye Parkı, in the centre of which is a model of the Gümüşkesen monumental tomb.

Continue straight on for three blocks, turn right, then turn again at Gümüşkesen Caddesi to reach the tomb, 1.4km from the roundabout on a hill west of the centre.

The **Gümüşkesen** ('That Which Cuts Silver' or 'Silver Purse'; admission €2.50) is a Roman tomb dating from the 2nd century AD and thought to have been modelled on the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus. As in the Mausoleum, Corinthian columns support a pyramidal roof, beneath which is a tomb chamber with fine carvings on the ceiling. A hole in the platform floor allowed devotees to pour libations into the tomb to quench the dead souls' thirst. There's no reason to pay to go inside the enclosure as you can see everything perfectly adequately over the wall.

You might also want to see some of Milas' fine mosques, especially the **Ulu Cami** (1378) and **Orhan Bey Camii** (1330), built when Milas was capital of the Turkish principality of Menteşe. The larger, more impressive **Firuz Bey Camii** (1394) was built shortly after Menteşe was incorporated into the new and growing Ottoman Empire.

Milas has kept some of its older houses and there is some very impressive Ottoman and early-20th-century architecture, especially along Atatürk Bulvarı and behind the *belediye*.

Sleeping & Eating

Yazar Otel (☎ 512 4203; Kadiağa Caddesi 70; s/d €17/25; ☎ ☑) Conveniently located for the Tuesday bazaar (which starts at its steps), this new hotel is small but cheerful, comfortable and clean. Rooms have TV and minibar. It lies right next door to the Halk Bank.

Akdeniz Otel (☎ 512 2217; Kadiağa Caddesi 32; s €5.55, s/d with bathroom & air-con €14/22; ☎ ☑) Around 120m from the Yazar on the same street, Akdeniz is quite clean and good value. Worth considering if the Yazar is full.

Bacanlar Sofrası (☎ 512 1134; Menteşe Caddesi 15; köfte €2.75; ☎ 6.30am-11pm) Around 100m from the Yazar Otel (exit and then turn first right), it does excellent home-cooked Turkish fare (including veggie dishes) at pleasing prices.

Dilek Pastaneleri (☎ 512 4140; Kadiağa Caddesi 32; coffee from €1.10, ice cream €0.85; ☎ 7.30am-midnight) On the same street as Yazar Otel, this is a pleasant place for breakfast, snacks or coffee and cake. A portion of pizza costs €1.65.

Getting There & Away

The otogar is on the main Bodrum to Söke road, 1km from the centre, although dolmuşes from Bodrum (€2.80, one hour) drop off in town as well. There are also frequent dolmuş services from Söke (€3.35, 82km).

A small **dolmuş station** (☎ 512 4014; Köy Tabakhane Garajı) in the town centre offers timetabled minibus services to Ören (€1.65) and Iasos (€2).

AROUND MİLAS

Beçin Castle

Just over 1km along the road from Milas to Ören (watch for the brown sign immediately after a corner), a road on the right leads to **Beçin Kalesi** (Beçin Castle; admission €2.75; ☎ 8am-dusk), a Byzantine fortress on a rocky outcrop that was largely remodelled by the Turkish emirs of Menteşe who used Beçin as their capital in the 14th century.

Although the walls are striking, there's not a lot to see inside. Press on for another 500m for other remnants of the 14th-century Menteşe settlement, including the **Kızılhan** (Red Caravanserai), **Orhan Bey Camii** and the **Ahmet Jazi tomb** and **medrese** (seminary).

Labranda

Set into a steep hillside in an area that once supplied the ancient city of Mylasa with its water, the site of ancient Labranda is surrounded by fragrant pine forests peopled by beekeepers. Late in the season (October) you can see their tents pitched in the groves as they go about their business of extracting the honey and rendering the wax from the honeycombs. It's a beautiful place to visit that's well worth seeking out, not least because so few people make it up here.

Labranda (admission €2.50; ☎ 8am-5pm) was a holy place, where worship of a local god was going on by the 6th century BC and perhaps long before. Later it became a sanctuary to Zeus, controlled for a long time by Milas. The great

Temple of Zeus honours the god's warlike aspect (Stratius, or Labrayndus, which means 'Axe-Bearing'). There may have been an oracle here; certainly festivals and Olympic Games were held at the site.

Two men's banqueting halls, the **First Andron** and **Second Andron**, are in surprisingly good condition, as is a fine 4th-century **tomb** and other buildings. Excavated by a Swedish team in the early 20th century, the ruins are interesting enough but it's the site itself, with its spectacular views over the valley, which is most impressive.

Labranda seems to have been abandoned around AD 1000. Today, a caretaker will show you around; he speaks only Turkish, but the site is well labelled.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

The junction for the road to Labranda is just northwest of Milas on the road to Söke. It's 14km to the site. The road passes through the village of Kargıcak, 8km along, but even if you could find a *dolmuş* going as far as that you'd still have a long walk ahead of you. Hitching is possible but not reliable, particularly later in the day.

A taxi from Milas shouldn't cost more than €16 – the drivers near the Otel Arı seem more willing to negotiate than those near the Ören *dolmuş* station. Be sure to agree on a price that includes at least an hour's waiting time.

Euromos

The ancient city of Euromos once stood on a site about 12km northwest of Milas and 1km from the village of Selimiye. Today, almost all that remains of it is the picturesque **Temple of Zeus** (admission €2.75; ☞ 8.30am–5.30pm Oct–Apr, to 7pm May–Sep) with some unfluted columns, which suggest it was never completed.

First settled in the 6th century BC, Euromos originally held a sanctuary to a local deity. With the coming of Greek (then Roman) culture, the local god's place was taken by Zeus. Euromos reached the height of its prosperity between 200 BC and AD 200. Emperor Hadrian, who built so many monuments in Anatolia, is thought to have also built the temple here.

If you're interested in ruins, you can clamber up the slopes to find other bits of the town. Look up behind the ticket booth at the big stone-fortification wall on the hillside. Climb up through the olive groves, go over

the wall and continue at the same altitude (the path dips a bit, which is OK, but don't climb higher). After 100m you'll cross another stone wall and find yourself on flat ground that was once the stage of the ancient **theatre**. It's badly ruined, with olive trees poking up from the few remaining rows of seats. The town's **agora** is down by the highway, with only a few toppled column drums to mark it.

Soft drinks are sold at the site in summer.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

To get here, take the Milas to Söke bus or *dolmuş* and ask to get out at the ruins. Alternatively, take a *dolmuş* from Milas to Kıyıkışlacık, get out at the road junction for Iasos and walk the short distance north along the highway until you see the Euromos ruins on the right.

Kıyıkışlacık (Iasos)

☞ 0252

About 4km southwest of Euromos (8km northwest of Milas) a road on the right (west) is marked for Kıyıkışlacık ('Little Barracks on the Coast'), which is about 20km further on. Iasos was originally built on a hill at the tip of a peninsula framed by two picture-perfect bays. Today, it's a sleepy Aegean fishing village set amid the tumbled ruins of the ancient city.

The small harbour is crowded with fishing boats. A handful of small pensions and restaurants cater for travellers who want to get away from it all for a few days.

SIGHTS

About 100m before you reach Iasos proper, the road forks. Bear right along the gravel road where the large yellow sign reads: 'Balık Pazarı Açık Hava Müseyi', and you should come to the **Balıkpazarı Iasos Müzesi** (Iasos Museum; admission €2.75; ☞ 8.30am–5.30pm Tue–Sun) and, opposite it, a small cabin (the ticket office). Housed in the old fish market, the museum holds the village's most interesting ruin, a monumental Roman tomb (as well as various other Classical fragments).

If, instead, you bear left, the road continues to the port, then up over the hill and along the coast. The hill above the port is covered with ruins, including a walled **acropolis-fortress** (admission €2.75; ☞ 8.30am–5.30pm Tue–Sun). Excavations have also revealed the city's bouleuterion and agora, a gymnasium, a basilica, a Roman

temple of Artemis Astias (AD 190) and numerous other buildings.

SLEEPING & EATING

Climb the hill behind the restaurants to find the delightful **Cengiz** (☞ 537 7181; cengiz1955@gmail.com; s/d €11/22), the **Zeytin** (☞ 537 7008; s/d €11/22; ☞ Apr–20 Oct) and **Kaya Pension** (☞ 537 7439; www.iastos.de; s/d €14/28; ☞). All have simple, spotless rooms and lovely terraces with gorgeous views. The rooms of the Cengiz and Zeytin have balconies (some with sea views – ask for Nos 1, 2 or 6 at the Cengiz), but the Kaya has a nice pool. At the Zeytin, you can learn how to make mosaics. All places lie on Kıyıkışlacık Köyü, the main road, on the hill above the harbour.

If you haven't yet feasted on Turkish fish, here's your chance. Restaurants offer delicious fresh fish at feasible prices. The **Dilek Restaurant** (☞ 537 7307; meals around €7; ☞ 9am–midnight May–Sep) has a great, open meze buffet (with around 20 different types of meze) for €8, and fish (such as sea bream) for around €5. **Iasos Café Bar** (☞ 537 7073; meals about €7–8; ☞ 10am–midnight) also serves fish as well as snacks (from €1.10).

GETTING THERE & AWAY

In theory, during summer and on Thursdays during the rest of the year (for the Güllük market), municipality boats sail from Güllük to Iasos (€2.75, 15 minutes) and back. In practice, they often don't, so check. You can also hire a fishing boat yourself (€11 one way, 20 minutes) if you want to.

Between Iasos and Milas (€1.65), *dolmuş*es run every hour in summer (every 1½ hours in winter).

ÖREN

☞ 0252

Though Ören has tried hard to hang on to the tranquil atmosphere once common to villages all along the Turkish coasts, it seems to be slowly going over to the enemy. Look around and you'll see building sites and new buildings everywhere. Nevertheless, outside the high season it can still seem tranquil and quiet.

The actual village – with the PTT, shops and old Ottoman houses with geranium-filled gardens – is about 1.5km inland from the beach, surrounded by the ruins of the ancient city of **Keramos**, which flourished from the 6th century BC until at least the 3rd century AD. Bring funds with you unless you want to have to trek about 4km back along the road to

Milas to use the ATM machines outside the gates of the Kemerköy power station.

Hamile Dağı (Pregnant Woman Mountain) soars above the village. With a bit of imagination the jagged western hump becomes the face, the swollen middle hump the belly, and the long ridge closest to town the legs of the woman. Paragliders launch from the 'knees', now sprouting radio towers.

Ören's 1km-long **beach** is especially popular with long-staying Turkish holidaymakers.

Sleeping & Eating

Ören has a handful of pensions and hotels near the waterfront.

Hotel Alnata (☞ 532 2813; www.alnatahotel.com; per person with half/full board winter €19/22, summer €25/35; ☞ ☞) Ören's top hotel, the three-star Alnata is decked out in white marble and Aegean blue and is comfortable and well run. All rooms have balconies, some with direct sea views. There's a nice pool as well as a pebble beach with sunlounges. Various water activities are offered, along with boat trips. Bikes and windsurfers can also be hired.

Hotel Keramos (☞ 532 2250; otelkeramos@ttnet.net.tr; Atatürk Bulvarı; s/d low season €11/22, high season €14/28; ☞ May–Oct; ☞) Where the modern-meets-neoclassical, the curiously designed Keramos has small but sparkling rooms with nice balconies overlooking gardens.

Hotel Kardelen (☞ 532 2678; www.orenkardelen.com; Yalı Mevkii Milas; s/d winter €8/16, summer €16/31; ☞) Across from the minibus stop, the Kardelen has simple and rather stark but spacious rooms. Its biggest bonus is the large rooftop terrace, as well as the good value it offers – it's hard to find cheaper.

In summer, there's a mass of places along the seafront selling pide, kebabs and fish. You're best advised to browse and pick the most popular: places change fast in Ören.

Kerme Restaurant (☞ 532 2065; Atatürk Bulvarı 22; meze €1.65–1.95; ☞ 10.30am–midnight winter, 8.30am–midnight summer) Well established, reliable and open all year, Kerme serves good meze as well as fresh fish at fair prices (€11 to €13 per 500g). Try the flavoursome *barbun* (red mullet), the restaurant's speciality.

Getting There & Away

Minibuses run from Milas to Ören village and beach and back (€1.95, one hour), every hour. To Bodrum (€3.35) and Muğla (€3) three minibuses leave daily.

BODRUM

☎ 0252 / pop 40,870

Bodrum may be just as much of a hyperresort as Kuşadası and Marmaris, but with its sugarcube houses, draped in bougainvillea, and the palm-lined streets it has been more successful at clinging to its original charm.

Despite the influx of charter deals and lager louts in high summer, a short walk along the waterfront will show Bodrum is gaining a reputation as the Monte Carlo of the Aegean, with a smart new marina, sophisticated restaurants and millions of dollars worth of sailing craft laying over for a night or two. Bodrum's outstanding Museum of Underwater Archaeology is also well worth a stop in itself.

But it's certainly not a place for those whose idea of a dream holiday revolves around peace and quiet. For years the outdoor Halikarnas disco revelled in its fame as the loudest disco in the Med and these days it has competitors too. Come in spring or autumn, however, and Bodrum reverts to a pleasant, relatively low-key resort.

Not surprisingly, tourism is the local economy's lifeblood, although there's a plentiful tangerine crop in winter.

History

Aeons ago Bodrum rose to fame on the back of the Mausoleum, the spectacular tomb of the Carian King Mausolus that Roman historian Pliny the Elder designated one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Sadly, not much remains to be seen today. Most visitors will be more impressed by the Castle of St Peter, standing sentinel over the town's twin bays.

Herodotus (c 485–425 BC), the 'Father of History', was Bodrum's most famous son. Between the two World Wars, writer Cevat Şakir Kabaağaç lived in political exile here and wrote an account of idyllic voyages along the Carian and Lycian coasts, then completely untouched by tourism. The 'Fisherman of Halicarnassus' called his most famous book *Mavi Yolculuk* (Blue Voyage), a name since co-opted for all cruises along these shores. More recently the late singer Zeki Muran settled in Bodrum, putting it on the map for gay travellers.

Orientation

The road to Bodrum winds through pine forests before cresting a hill to reveal a panorama of the town with its striking Crusader castle.

The otogar is around 400m inland from the sea, on Cevat Şakir Caddesi, the main road into the town centre. Walk down towards the sea, passing the fruit market, and you'll come to a small white mosque called the Adliye Camii (Courthouse Mosque). Turn right, and you'll be heading west on Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi towards the Marina, passing several pensions. If you turn left at the Adliye Camii and cut through the bazaar to walk along Dr Alim Bey Caddesi (which later becomes Cumhuriyet Caddesi to the east), you reach the hotels and pensions facing the western bay.

If you head straight on from the Adliye Camii towards the castle you'll be walking along Kale Caddesi, which is lined with boutiques. At the end of Kale Caddesi, beneath the castle walls, is the main plaza, Kale (İskele) Meydanı. Here you'll find the tourist office, teahouses and the day-excursion boats. Some ferry ticket offices are here. Others are further out along the pier beyond the castle.

Information

There are many ATMs and currency exchanges along Dr Alim Bey Caddesi and Cevat Şakir Caddesi.

Can Laundry (☎ 316 4089; Türkuyusu Caddesi 99; per 5kg/10kg load €2.50/3.85; ☎ 8.30am–9pm Mon–Sat, 10am–9pm Sun)

Cybernet Internet Café (☎ 316 3167; Üçkuyular Caddesi 7; per hr €1.10; ☎ 24hr)

Minik Laundry (☎ 316 7904; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 236; 4kg wash & dry €4.15)

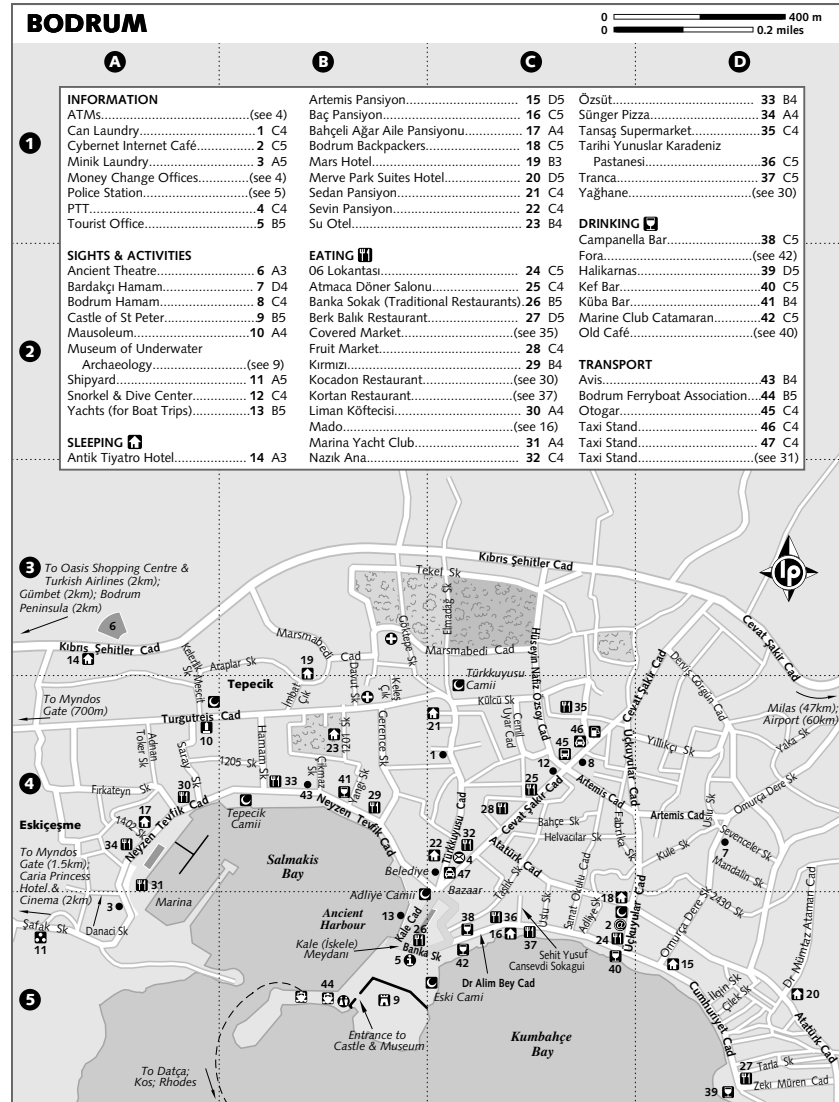
PTT (☎ 316 2760; Cevat Şakir Caddesi; ☎ post office 8.30am–5pm, telephone exchange 8am–midnight)

Tourist Office (☎ 316 1091; Kale Meydanı; ☎ 8am–5pm Mon–Fri, daily in summer)

Sights & Activities

CASTLE OF ST PETER

When Tamerlane invaded Anatolia in 1402, throwing the nascent Ottoman Empire temporarily off balance, the Knights Hospitaller based on Rhodes took the opportunity to capture Bodrum. They built the Castle of St Peter, which defended Bodrum (not always successfully) until the end of WWI. It was later used as an informal storage space for the booty collected during underwater archaeology missions, and then became Bodrum's **Museum of Underwater Archaeology** (☎ 316 2516; admission €5.55; ☎ 9am–noon & 1–7pm Tue–Sun summer; 8am–noon & 1–5pm winter).



This excellent museum, arguably the most important underwater archaeological museum in the world, is a veritable lesson in how to bring ancient exhibits to life. Items are imaginatively displayed and well lit, and good information panels, maps, models, reconstructions, drawings, murals, dioramas and videos all help to animate them. It's undoubt-

edly one of the best museums in Turkey and in the Mediterranean (and could also teach some of the Victorian, cupboard-like museums in the West a thing or two!).

The views from the battlements are spectacular and worth coming for that alone. As the museum is spread throughout the castle, you need two hours to do it justice. Arrows

suggest routes around it (red for long; green for short), but guides are not available. In the future, there are plans to open a Mycenaean room, and to install a lift.

As you head up the stone ramp into the castle past a **Crusader coats of arms** carved in marble and mounted on the stone walls, keep an eye out for bits of marble filched from the ancient Mausoleum. The ramp leads to the castle's main court, centred on an ancient mulberry tree. To the left is one of the biggest collections of **amphorae** in the world, dating from the 14th century BC and recovered from the waters of southwest Turkey. The castle'd courtyard café, amid displays of Greek and Roman statuary, provides a shady resting place.

The chapel contains a full-sized reconstruction of the stern half of a 7th-century eastern **Roman ship** discovered off Yassiada. Visitors can walk the decks, stand at the helm, look

below decks at the cargo of wine and peek into the galley.

Follow the path to the left of the chapel to ascend to the towers. Up the ramp is the **Glass-Shipwreck exhibit** (admission €2.75; ☎ 10-11am & 2-4pm Tue-Fri). As you enter, look for the castle-shaped dove-cote on the castle wall. Discovered by a sponge diver in 1973 and excavated by Professor George Bass and a team of marine archaeologists, the 16m-long, 5m-wide ship sank in AD 1025 while carrying 3 tonnes of mainly broken glass between Fatimid Syria and the Black Sea.

Further up in the castle are the **Snake Tower**, with an amphora exhibit, and the **German Tower**, decked out in medieval European style.

Descend past the Ottoman toilets to the **Gatineau Tower** and the dungeons beneath. Over the inner gate is the inscription 'Inde Deus abest' (Where God does not exist). The

dungeon was used as a place of confinement and torture by the Knights from 1513 to 1523. A sign warns that the exhibits of torture implements might not be suitable for children, but most video game-hardened visitors will find the display dummies and the taped groans more laughable than disturbing.

The **English Tower**, built during the reign of King Henry IV of England (whose coat of arms is displayed above the entrance to the uppermost hall), is now fitted out as a medieval refectory. The standards of the Grand Masters of the Knights Hospitaller and their Turkish adversaries hang from the walls. Look for the suits of Turkish chain mail and the graffiti carved into the stone swindow ledges by Crusaders.

See if you can seek out the extraordinary **Bronze Age shipwrecks**, which yielded finds including Canaanite gold jewellery, bronze daggers, ivory and the gold scarab of Queen Nefertiti of Egypt. Look out in particular for the 14th-century BC *Uluburun*, the oldest excavated shipwreck in the world. The *Tektaş Burnu* is the only ancient Greek shipwreck (thought to date around 480 BC to 400 BC) from the Classical Period to be fully excavated in the world. The Treasure Room containing the artefacts occasionally closes if the humidity is high.

Inside the **French Tower** (admission €2.75; ☎ 10am-noon & 2-4pm Tue-Fri) are the remains of a great and powerful woman. Though popularly said to belong to Queen Ada (a Carian princess who died sometime between 360 BC and 325 BC aged 29, and whose tomb was discovered by Turkish archaeologists in 1989), there is no concrete evidence for this. Buried with a gold crown, necklace, bracelets, rings and an exquisite wreath of gold myrtle leaves, her identity doesn't lessen the incredible value of the find. Using modern reconstruction techniques, experts at Manchester University have modelled what she might have looked like; a video in Turkish explains their work.

MAUSOLEUM

Following the Persian invasion, Caria was ruled by a satrap (or 'king') named Mausolus (c 376-353 BC), who moved the capital here from Mylasa and called this town Halicarnassus. After the satrap's death, his wife undertook construction of a monumental tomb, as planned by Mausolus himself. The Mausoleum, an enormous white-marble tomb

topped by a stepped pyramid, came to be considered one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and stood relatively intact for almost 19 centuries, until it was broken up by the Crusaders in 1522 and the pieces used as building material.

Though most of the **Mausoleum** (Turgutreis Caddesi; admission €2.75; ☎ 8am-5pm Tue-Sun) is long gone, the site is still worth visiting. It's a few blocks inland from Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi. Coming from the castle, turn right near the Tepecik Camii on the shore of the western bay onto Hamam Sokak, which leads up to Turgutreis Caddesi. Turn left and follow the signs.

The site has pleasant gardens, with the excavations to the right and a covered arcade to the left. The arcade contains a copy of the famous frieze partly recovered from the castle walls; the original is now in the British Museum in London. The four original fragments on display were discovered more recently. Models, drawings and documents give an idea of why this tomb made Pliny's list of Wonders. Other exhibits include a model of Halicarnassus at the time of King Mausolus, and a model of the Mausoleum and its precincts.

A description written in 1581, supposedly taken from an eyewitness account of 1522, describes how the Knights Hospitaller discovered the buried Mausoleum, uncovered it, admired it and then returned to the castle for the night. During the night, pirates broke in and stole the tomb treasures, which had been safe as long as they had been buried. The next day the knights returned and broke the tomb to pieces for use as building stone. In reality, modern research suggests that tomb robbers had already beaten the knights to the treasure and that earthquakes had shattered it long before they ever set foot in Turkey.

Don't hold your breath in expectation over the actual site. Of the remains, only a few pre-Mausolean stairways and tomb chambers, the Mausolean drainage system, the entry to Mausolus' tomb chamber, a few bits of precinct wall and some large fluted marble column drums survive.

OTHER RUINS

A restored **ancient theatre** (Kibris Şehitler Caddesi; admission €2.75; ☎ 8am-5pm Sat-Thu), which could originally seat 13,000 people, is cut into the rock of the hillside behind town on the busy

A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF BAHADIR BERKAYA

Early one morning, a local man was out spear-gun fishing around Karataş off the western Mediterranean coast. Suddenly, he was shaken to spot what he thought was a dead body lying on the seabed. Frightened, he fled for home as fast as he could to his wife. Managing to summon his strength later, however, he returned to take a closer look. Lying in just 5m of water was a shimmering statue.

As news of the find spread, Bodrum's Museum of Underwater Archaeology finally sent three of their top archaeologists to investigate. There they were astonished to discover that the statue was neither stone nor marble – but bronze. Deciding to keep the find strictly secret, they made camp and during three days and three nights, they slowly freed the statue from the sea bottom. On the fourth day, they raised it. Standing over 2m high and dating back some 2000 years, the statue was a sensational find and soon hit the international headlines.

Returning to Bodrum exhausted but exhilarated, the archaeologists stopped for a coffee in Kaş. There in the harbour they got chatting to an old sponge diver, who told them of the strange, 'biscuit-shaped' objects he had seen underwater. Promising to investigate, they returned a few days later to Kaş where they were shown the spot by the sponge diver some 10km out to sea.

Diving deep, first to 50m, then to 52m, the archaeologists were astonished to discover the remains of an incredible wreck. Collecting from it a biscuit-shaped copper ingot, they dispatched it for dating.

When the results returned, they discovered it dated to earlier than the 14th century BC! That night, the wife of one of the archaeologists had a child. They named her 'Tunc' (bronze) after the Bronze Age site they had discovered.

In the course of the subsequent excavations, a veritable treasure trove was unearthed: a gold chalice, a gold medallion and the gold scarab of Queen Nefertiti, as well as no fewer than 10 tonnes of copper and 1½ tonnes of tin – enough to equip an entire army with bronze weapons. *Uluburun*, as it's now known, was one of the world's largest archaeological discoveries in the last two centuries.

It can be seen today displayed in Bodrum's Museum of Underwater Archaeology (p272).

With thanks to Bahadır Berkaya (Archaeologist, Bodrum Museum of Underwater Archaeology) and one of the three archaeologists involved in the tremendous discoveries of October 1982

main road to Gümbet. Recently, tombs dating to before the theatre were discovered here.

Just beyond the marina are the recently restored remains of the **Shipyard** (Şafak Sokak; ☎ 9am-6pm). In 1770 the entire Ottoman fleet was destroyed by the Russians at Çeşme and had to be rebuilt from scratch in boatyards like this. The shipyard was fortified as a defence against pirates, and the restored tower was finished in 1829. The site is mainly used as a children's playground and is memorable for the views from the top, where several old tombstones date from the period when the Latin alphabet was replacing Arabic.

Also newly restored are the remains of the **Myndos Gate** (Myndos Kapısı) at the far western end of Turgutreis Caddesi. This is the only surviving gate in what were originally 7km-long walls probably built by King Mausolus in the 4th century BC. In front of the twin-towered gate are the remains of a moat in which many of Alexander the Great's soldiers drowned in 334 BC.

HAMAMS

Across from the otogar, **Bodrum Hamam** (☎ 313 4129; Cevat Şakir Caddesi, Fabrika Sokak 42; full massage €25; ☎ 6am-midnight) is convenient and clean with separate sections for men and women. Though the exterior looks unpromising, the **Bardağcı Hamam** (☎ 313 8114; Oruçca Dere Sokak 22; bath/massage €8/17; ☎ 7am-midnight), founded in 1749, has a lovely marble-clad interior and great atmosphere. Bathing is mixed.

BODRUM'S BIG BLUE

With its good visibility (up to 20m or 25m on a good day), clean water, and pleasant and steady temperatures, Bodrum is a good place for diving or snorkelling; it's also a very good place to learn.

Marine life sometimes spotted includes octopus, turtle, barracuda, jack fish (usually end of June) and parrot fish. Sadly, coral life doesn't start much before 40m (limiting it to advanced divers only), but the diving clubs are pushing hard for something else: to be granted permission to dive some of the hundreds of incredible wrecks lying just off Bodrum's coast (at depths of 12m to 25m). If permission were ever granted, Bodrum could comfortably claim the best wreck diving in the world. Most likely, permission will eventually be granted to visit one or two wrecks (in an effort sensibly to conserve them); keep your ears to the ground.

The **Snorkel & Dive Center** (☎ 313 6017; www.snorkeldiveshop.com; Cevat Şakir Caddesi 5; ☎ 10am-6pm winter, 9am-midnight summer) is an excellent source of current information and also sells good-quality snorkelling and diving equipment (mask/snorkel €19/6) in Bodrum, as well as organising dives (full day's diving with two dives, boat, all equipment, insurance, hotel transfers and lunch per person €45). All-day snorkelling trips cost €17 per person. The company also runs PADI, NAUI and CMAS courses. A PADI Open Water course costs €350 per person (including all equipment, tuition and books). It normally takes four days, though three days is possible at a push.

BOAT TRIPS

Dozens of yachts are moored along Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi on the western bay and around the ancient harbour for day trips around the bay. Most excursions depart at 10am, return at 5pm to 5.30pm, and cost around €14, including lunch plus afternoon tea and a cake.

Usually, you sail to **Aquarium**, a small cove with beautiful clear water that's good for swimming; then to **Karaada** (Black Island), where hot springs gush out of a cave and swimmers rub the orange mud from the springs onto their skin; followed by **Tavşan Burnu**, a pleasant bay for swimming. The boat then visits the other side of Karaada, before visiting **Meteor** with its 15m-deep pool that's good for diving in, before returning home. Boats sometimes also go to **Ortakent Bay**, a pretty cove backed with beachfront restaurants and hotels.

A nice alternative idea is to take a water taxi (€1.40, five minutes) to **Bardağcı** where there is a pleasant beach, which is generally uncrowded and a good place to relax.

Festivals & Events

For two weeks in August each year, the Castle of St Peter hosts national and international ballet stars at the **International Ballet Festival** (☎ 313 7649), which showcases classical, modern and experimental dance. Check out www.biletix.com for information on tickets. In the first week of October, there is a colourful international **Yacht Festival**.

Sleeping

In high summer, especially at weekends, Bodrum fills up quickly, so try to arrive early in the day. If you're planning to stay a week or so and thinking hotel rather than pension, check the package-holiday brochures in case they offer a cheaper deal.

When picking somewhere to stay, bear in mind how close you are to the clubs if you want a good night's sleep – action rarely kicks off before midnight and usually goes on until 4am. Theoretically, double-glazing cuts down on the noise, but unless your room also has air-con you will need to sleep with the windows open in summer. Nowadays, the western bay is as noisy as the eastern bay.

Regrettably, few places bother to stay open for the trickle of winter visitors.

BUDGET

There are various camping grounds on the Bodrum Peninsula's northern shore. Check with the tourist office for information and bookings.

Sevin Pansiyon (☎ 316 7682; sevinpansiyon@hotmail.com; Türkkuuyusu Caddesi 5; s €8-14, d €14-17 in winter, s €19-22, d €25-36 in summer; ☎ ☎) Behind the post office, the Sevin's biggest asset is its central position. It's also a friendly place with good facilities (including laundry services and free internet access). Its 37 rooms vary considerably so check out several (though the smaller ones are cheaper).

Bodrum Backpackers (☎ 313 2762; www.bodrumbackpackers.com; Atatürk Caddesi 31B; dm/s/d €8/11/22, mattress & bedding on terrace with/without breakfast €5.60/3.40; ☎) Founded by a former backpacker, this clean and well-run place now caters to them. With a pleasant and chilled-out roof terrace (draped with snoozing backpackers when we visited!), it can also organise boat trips, airport pick-up and car hire. Tariq, the manager, is helpful, friendly and efficient. With a British-style pub next door, however, don't come here for a good night's kip.

Sedan Pansiyon (☎ 316 0355; off Türkkuuyusu Caddesi 121; s/d with bathroom €11/22, with shared bathroom €8/16) Rooms are arranged around a ramshackle but peaceful courtyard, tucked away off the street. Some rooms are better than others, but it's friendly and good value, and guests can use the kitchen.

Bahçeli Ağar Aile Pansiyonu (☎ 316 1648; 1402 Sokak 4; s/d €17/33) This endearing little pension is located in a passageway off Neyzen Tevfik

Caddesi, opposite the marina. Run by İbrahim and family, and with a little courtyard filled with chirruping canaries, it has an intimate feel, and guests have use of the kitchen. Rooms are small and simple, but spotless, quiet and peaceful; all have balconies.

Mars Hotel (☎ 316 6559; Araplar Sokak 29; dm €5.50, s/d low season €14/22, high season €22/36, without air-con €8 less; ☎ ☎) Set back from the road, the Mars is quiet, peaceful and good value. Rooms, though simple and smallish, are clean and bright, and eight look over the pleasant, medium-sized pool. Murat, the owner is keen to please and there's free bus station transfers.

MIDRANGE

Artemis Pansiyon (☎ 316 1572; www.artemispansiyon.com; Cumhuriyet Caddesi 121; s/d €22/33, plus €5.50 per person in summer; ☎) Rooms though simple boast brand-new bathrooms, and four have direct sea views. The biggest boon is the terrace with panoramic views over the bay.

Baç Pansiyon (☎ 316 2497; bacpansiyon@turk.net; Cumhuriyet Caddesi 14; s €28-33, d €44-50, plus €10 per person in summer) Small but stylish and all in marble, wood and wrought iron, this centrally situated hotel also boasts about the best hotel views in Bodrum. A gem amid the market maelstrom, it sits right above the water and four of its 10 comfortable rooms have delightful balconies over the water.

Su Otel (☎ 316 6906; www.suhotel.net; Turgutreis Caddesi, 1201 Sokak; s/d €45/72; ☎ ☎) Down a cul-de-sac, this brightly coloured, modern construction looks a bit like Legoland scaled up. Nonetheless, it's well designed, comfortable and tranquil and has a pleasant pool set in gardens. Rooms – again in primary colours – have balconies, with some overlooking the pool. If you're in Bodrum for more than a week, the Su also has a couple of lovely old cottages (from €105 for up to three people) for rent. One of the cottages holds up to eight people.

Merve Park Suites Hotel (☎ 313 7013; www.mervesuiteshotel.com; Atatürk Caddesi 73; s/d winter €23/39, summer €46/78; ☎) Despite the rather pretentious name, this small hotel has tasteful rooms around a pretty courtyard decorated with antiquities collected by the İstanbullu owner-antique dealer. It also boasts two lovely terraces (one with a pool).

TOP END

Antik Tiyatro Hotel (☎ 316 6053; www.antiquetheatrehotel.com; Kıbrıs Şehitler Caddesi 243; s/d in summer from

€92/120, winter €72/90; ☎ ☎) Rooms, arranged around a lovely pool set on the edge of a terraced hillside, have stunning views over the castle and sea. They're simple but stylishly decorated with original art work and antiques. Double-glazing keeps out most of the noise of the busy nearby road.

Eating

In July and August prices are double those of İstanbul. As elsewhere, check prices before ordering fish (see also the boxed text, p73).

Restaurants open and close all the time. Those described here have proved more long-standing and dependable.

WESTERN BAY

Liman Köftecisi (☎ 316 5060; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 172; meze €2.20; ☎ 8am-midnight) Famous nationally, the trendy Liman has a lovely position on the seafont, yet serves delicious food at very decent prices. *Köfte* (grilled meatballs) are the speciality. Of the six types (€3 to €6.65), try the *Liman köfte* – served with yogurt, tomato sauce and butter. The service is also exemplary.

Kırmızı (☎ 316 4918; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 44; meze €2.50-5.55, mains €5-12; ☎ 11.30am-midnight) Serving Mediterranean food made from the freshest local ingredients, the Kırmızı is a small but characterful place spread over three floors. The walls are used to exhibit the works of local artists, and Duygu, the charming owner, will accord you a warm welcome. The €2.75 three-course fixed lunch is astonishing value.

Sünger Pizza (☎ 316 0854; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 218; pizza for one person €3.35-6, salads €2.25-4; ☎ 8am-midnight) Named after the owner's grandfather who was a *sünger* (sponge) diver, this place packs out to its rafters with locals who are after the 'best pizza in Bodrum'. Grab a table on the rooftop if you can.

Marina Yacht Club (☎ 316 1228; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 5; beer €2.75, mains €7-14; ☎ 8am-2am) Despite the rather grand entrance and chichi yachting surrounds, the food and prices are quite reasonable here and there's live music every night from 9pm to 1am. It serves either traditional Turkish food or Italian food in the Café Vela.

Yağhane (☎ 313 4747; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 170; mains €9.50-17; ☎ 10.30am-midnight) Housed in an old olive mill built in 1894, this is an attractive and atmospheric place, with the walls hung with the works of local artists. The menu, which specialises in old Ottoman and Mediterranean

dishes, is select and imaginative. Try the delicious regional speciality *et çöktürme* – sliced beef with garlic yogurt, grated potatoes and butter (€11). The wine list is also impressive.

Kocadon Restaurant (☎ 316 3705; Saray Sokak 1; meals €15-25; ☎ dinner May-Oct) Set back from Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi in the cobbled courtyard of a very attractive 200-year-old stone house, is this highly civilised and atmospheric place that specialises in old Ottoman cuisine. The excellent three-course set menu (for lunch or dinner, €19), which includes an open buffet of 12 meze and a fish dish, is fab for a splurge. The à la carte menu is select and enticing. This claims to be Bodrum's best; it may well be.

Özsüt (☎ 313 6033; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 122; ☎ 8am-2am summer, 9.30am-11pm winter) Brand-new on the scene, this ever-popular and award-winning İzmir chain does the usual delicious traditional Turkish puds and cakes and ice cream (€0.69 per scoop). Try the delectable *Özsüt'un Aynası* (mirror of Özsüt).

CENTRE

At the very southern end of the bazaar, Banka Sokak (locally known as Meyhaneler Sokak – Tavern St) is a lovely narrow alleyway shaded by foliage, and filled with attractive, traditionally decorated restaurants. It's firmly on the tourist trail but is still pleasant if you don't mind forking out an extra lira or two.

Nazik Ana (☎ 313 1891; Eski Hukümet Sokak 7; meat mains €2.25, veg mains €1.40; ☎ 9am-10pm, closed Sun in winter) Housed in an attractive 100-year-old stone house with walls decorated with photos of old Bodrum, this simple but atmospheric place is a huge hit locally, particularly with the policemen from next door. With its point-and-pick counter, it's a great place to sample different Turkish dishes. If you don't like something, it's so incredibly cheap it doesn't really matter. It lies off Cevat Şakir Caddesi.

Atmaca Döner Salonu (☎ 313 4150; Cevat Şakir Caddesi 39; beer €1.10; ☎ 11am-10pm) Very popular locally for its delicious *döner kebaps* (sandwiches €1.65, plate €3 to €3.65), at dirt-cheap prices, this place also has a secret, shaded garden behind the stall front. It's clean and cool and the food's delicious.

EASTERN BAY

Catering to the package tourists, the area along Dr Alim Bey Caddesi and Cumhuriyet Caddesi is packed with bars, pubs and restaurants. Though the restaurants have pleasant

seaside table, they can be very pricey, particularly in summer.

06 Lokantası (☎ 316 6863; Cumhuriyet Caddesi 115; meze €1.65, mains €2.50-4.45; ☎ 9am-3am winter, summer 24 hrs) Though simple, the Lokantası is clean, well run and much-loved locally; its prices are unbeatable. Fresh fish is also served as are good veggie options.

Tranca (☎ 316 6610; Cumhuriyet Caddesi 36; mains €11; ☎ 11am-midnight) Jutting out into the bay, the family-run Tranca probably boasts about the best views of anywhere. Its specialities are *tuzda balık* (fish baked in salt) and *testi kebabi* (casserole served in a clay pot that's broken at your table), both cost €25 to €30 with a minimum of two people. Reserve a seafont table if you can.

Kortan Restaurant (☎ 316 1300; Cumhuriyet Caddesi 32; ☎ 9am-1am Apr-Sep) Worth a visit just to see the interior of this lovely, 350-year-old former tavern, the Kortan also boasts five tables on a pretty terrace (phone to reserve one). The speciality is grilled fish (€11 to €22 for 500g). Try the delectable *barbun* (red mullet).

Berk Balık Restaurant (☎ 313 6878; Cumhuriyet Caddesi 167; meze €2.25, all fish €20 per kilo; ☎ noon-1am) Run by a group of friends, this restaurant specialises in fish and seafood, served on a terrific upstairs terrace that buzzes like a village taverna. It's absolutely packed with locals tossing down octopus in garlic and butter or excellent fresh fish at pleasing prices.

Mado (☎ 313 5655; Cumhuriyet Caddesi 24; pastries & puds €3.35; ☎ 9am-1am) With a gorgeous terrace right on the waterfront, this high-quality chain serves the usual range of tantalising Turkish puds and pastries as well as ice cream (scoop €0.85).

SELF CATERING

The large covered market about 250m north of the bus station is a great place for picnic-hunting, selling very fresh fruit and veg as well as Turkish sweets, dried fruit and nuts at great prices (though you may want to bargain a bit). Around the back of the market there is also a large **Tansaş supermarket** (☎ 313 4932; Garaj Üstü; ☎ 8.30am-10pm).

Tarihi Yunuslar Karadeniz Pastanesi (Cumhuriyet Caddesi 13; ☎ 7.30am-midnight) does great fresh bread (good for a picnic or breakfast *en plein air*).

Drinking & Entertainment

In summer, bars and clubs sprout up everywhere. The roads east of Adliye Camii are

dotted with pubs and café-bars that come thicker and faster the further east you go. The beachside cafés have big-screen TVs and happy hours before the clubs open around 10pm. In all these places local beer, rakı and spirits will be much cheaper than imported liquor.

Halikarnas (The Club; ☎ 316 8000; www.halikarnas.com.tr; Cumhuriyet Caddesi; admission weekday/weekend €17/20; beer & spirits from €5.55; ☎ 10pm-5am 18 May-31 Oct) Since the 1970s, the Halikarnas has been a clubbers' institution. With top-quality sound and light equipment (including two Class IV lasers you can see in Greece), it's an extraordinary experience, particularly when at capacity (5000 people). Internationally known DJs are billed as well as world-touring shows. On Monday to Wednesday, there's free alcohol from 10pm to 1am. Note that it doesn't get going much before 1am.

Marine Club Catamaran (☎ 313 3600; www.clubcatamaran; Hilmi Uran Meydanı 14; admission weekday/week-end €17/22, beer €5.55; ☎ 19 May-Sep) This floating nightclub sets sail at 1.30am for 3½ hours of frenzied fun. Its transparent dance floor can pack in no fewer than 1500 clubbers and attendant DJs. Between 3am and 5am, a free shuttle operates every half-hour back to the Eastern Bay. Day trips (€30, 10.30am to 5.30am) are also offered. It lies on Hilmi Uran Meydanı (square) off Dr Alim Bey Caddesi.

Kef Bar (☎ 313 3937; Cumhuriyet Caddesi 134; ☎ 9am-3am or later) A new, multipurpose place with tables right on the beach, you could pass the whole day here if you so fancied. From 9am to 8pm, it behaves as both café and beach club (with its own shower and changing rooms); from 8pm to 11pm, it's a bar (with happy hour); and from 11pm it's a club-cum-bar.

Fora (☎ 316 2244; www.forabar.com; Hilmi Uran Meydanı 10; ☎ 10am-4am May-Oct; ☎) Right above the water, this modern and minimalist place boasts great views over the marina. It's cool and peaceful during the day and fast and fun during the night. There's a happy 'hour' between 9am and 11am daily.

Küba Bar (☎ 313 4450; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 62; beer €8.35, meals €25; ☎ 9am-4am summer, 9am-2am winter, Wed-Sat only Dec & Feb) With its chic black and marble counters, this place is popular with İstanbul socialites and fashionistas tempted out from their peninsula summer homes. It's fun but a tad expensive.

Campanella Bar (☎ 316 5302; Cumhuriyet Caddesi; ☎ noon-4am) Though small, this Orientalist-

style bar is full of atmosphere and usually has live music playing.

If you fancy a puff on a nargileh, the **Old Café** (☎ 316 1928; Cumhuriyet Caddesi 110; nargileh €5.55, beer €2.75; ☎ 10am-midnight winter, 24hr summer) has comfortable seats in either the Ottoman-style salon or on the beach outside.

The castle and the antique theatre are often used for cultural events such as opera and ballet performances. Check out www.biletix.com to see if anything is on while you're in town.

Getting There & Away

AIR

The **Bodrum international airport** (☎ 523 0101), 60km away, is nearer to Milas than Bodrum. Check the charter-flight brochures for bargains, especially at the start and end of the season, but prepare to be disappointed as there are fewer flights than you might expect.

Turkish Airlines (THY; ☎ 317 1203; fax 317 1211; Kıbrıs Şehitler Caddesi) is in the Oasis Shopping Centre, about 2km out of town off the Gümbet road. To get here, take a dolmuş (€0.55) from the otogar asking for 'Oasis'.

To get to the airport, you can take the Havaş (airport) **bus** (☎ 523 0040; €7.25) run in conjunction with Turkish Airlines, which leaves two hours before all Turkish Airlines departures from the Turkish Airlines office. It also meets flights and drops passengers at the otogar. If you're not flying with Turkish Airlines, an expensive taxi (€39 to €45 from the centre) is really your only option.

BOAT

Ferries for Datça and the Greek islands of Kos and Rhodes leave from the western bay. For information and tickets contact the **Bodrum Ferryboat Association** (☎ 316 0882; www.bodrumferryboat.com; Kale Caddesi (Ümrüklük Alanı 22), on the dock past the western entrance to the castle. Check times as they can change.

For Kos, hydrofoils (€30 one way, €35 same-day return, €60 open return, 20 minutes) and ferries (€25 one way or same-day return, €50 open return, cars €100/200 for one way/return, one hour) leave Bodrum daily May to October at 9.30am (returning at 4.40pm). Only ferries operate from November to April, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday (weather permitting).

For Rhodes, hydrofoils (€50 one way, €60 same-day return, €100 open-day return, 2¼

hours) leave Bodrum daily from June to September at 8.30am on Monday and Saturday and return at 4pm the same day.

For Datça, hydrofoils (single/return €10/13, €26/52 for cars, two hours) leave Bodrum daily either at 9am or 5pm from April to May, and twice a day at 9am and 5pm from June to October. No same-day returns are available. The ferry docks at Körmen on the peninsula's northern coast, and the onward bus journey to Datça (15 minutes) is included in your fare.

You don't need to book in advance unless you have a car (on the ferries only).

SERVICES FROM BODRUM'S OTOGAR

Destination	Fare	Duration	Distance	Frequency (per day)
Ankara	€19	12hr	689km	1 nightly
Antalya	€14	8 hr	496km	2
Denizli	€11	5hr	250km	1
Fethiye	€10	6hr	265km	2
İstanbul	€22	12hr	851km	2 nightly
İzmir	€8	4hr	286km	3
Konya	€17	12hr	626km	6
Kuşadası	€7	2½hr	151km	2
Marmaris	€8	3hr	165km	hourly
Milas	€3	1hr	45km	hourly
Muğla	€6	2hr	149km	hourly
Söke	€6	2hr	130km	2 nightly

BUS

Bodrum has bus services to more or less anywhere you could wish to go. The table (above) lists some useful summer daily services. For Gökova, change at Muğla. For Pamukkale, change at Denizli and go from there (€2.75, 10 minutes, 14km).

CAR

Major car-rental agencies can be found on Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi. **Avis** (☎ 316 2333; www.avis.com; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 92/A) rents compact cars without air-conditioning from €30 per day. **Thrifty Car Rental** (☎ 313 1802; www.thrifty.com; Neyzen Tevfik Caddesi 58/A) is another. Officially cars start at €40 per day, but shop around and you should be able to bring it down to €30 to €35 or less, depending on the season and length of hire.

Getting Around

Short hops around town in a dolmuş cost €0.55.

BODRUM PENINSULA

☎ 0252

The Bodrum Peninsula consists of high hills, dramatic rocky outcrops and unexpected marine vistas but, as Bodrum's backyard, it is entirely given over to tourism, with grim patches of Legoland-like housing eroding the hillsides. These range from the seriously scary at Gümbet to the more low-key at pretty little Gümüşlük. There is little to entice the independent traveller except for a sunset swim and fish meal, or a stay at one of the boutique hotels, whose style and luxury are unrivalled along the coast.

Getting Around

Several of the beach villages make for enjoyable day trips from Bodrum. Dolmuş from Bodrum's otogar ply back and forth to most places on the peninsula and fares rarely rise above €1. In low season, you need to watch out for the departure times of the last minibuses back to Bodrum. Alternatively, you can hire a scooter and ride around the peninsula, although the main road from Bodrum to Turgutreis is basically a highway.

Note that there's no dolmuş from Gümüşlük to Yalıkavak and no dolmuş service from Yalıkavak to Gököylü, so you'll have to keep returning to Bodrum to proceed along the northern coast.

Gümüşlük

About 18km from Bodrum is Gümüşlük, a hamlet on the shore of a fine natural harbour protected by high headlands. New building work is prohibited, ensuring that the actual village retains its quiet charm. However, that hasn't been enough to protect the views. Ranks of half-built villas massing on the hillside opposite illustrate the difficulty of shielding anywhere on the coast from developers.

PENINSULA PECULIARITIES

As you potter around the peninsula, look out for the interesting architectural anomalies. The odd-looking igloo-shaped buildings are *gümbets* (stone cisterns) once used to store fresh water for times of need. On many hilltops, old windmills still wave, though most are redundant, making way for modern living. More unusual are the *kule evleri* (stone tower houses), similar to those seen on the Mani Peninsula in Greece. In Ortakent, you can find two fine 17th-century examples – on the older stone house, look out for the turned-up corners of the roof. It's an architectural affect that can be traced to Minoan Greece. The 'horns' are said to hark back to the cult of the Minoan bull and were probably put on the houses to ward off the evil eye.

SIGHTS & ACTIVITIES

Gümüşlük makes the best day trip from Bodrum. Come here to swim or climb the headlands and to take lunch on the shore; or come for an afternoon swim and stay for a sunset dinner.

Little remains of ancient **Mindos** apart from slight ruins on Taşan Island, the rocky islet to the north, which is reachable on foot or by swimming from in front of the Fenerci Restaurant.

The **beach** to the south is long and generally uncrowded. Though weedy in places, the sea is fine for swimming.

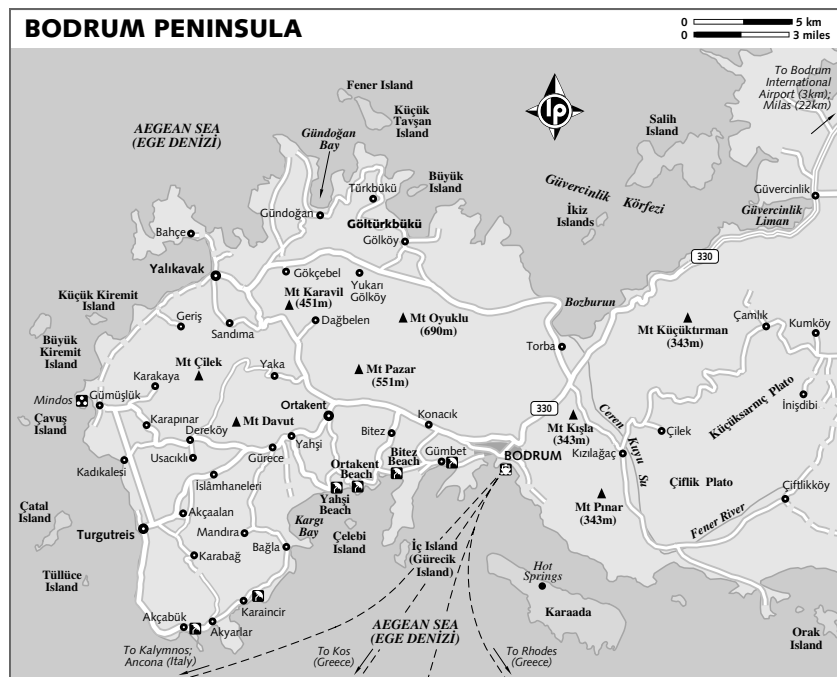
SLEEPING

In the off season (mid-October to mid-May) most of Gümüşlük's pensions are closed. If you want to visit early or late in the season, phone first.

Özak Pansiyon (☎ 394 3388; fax 394 3037; Yalı Mevkii 95; camp site €5.55, r €36; ☎ May–20 Sep) At the quiet southern end of the bay, this place with its conical huts and palm roofs has a real beach-camp feel to it. It's friendly and lively and has a bar and volleyball court. Rooms are around a large courtyard and though simple are white, bright and very clean.

Hera Pansiyon (☎ 394 3065; fax 394 4021; Yalı Mevkii 89; apt for 2/4 people €44/55) Well run by a charming family, the Hera has eight simple but spotless and pleasant apartments set in a garden on the seafloor. There's also a reasonably priced restaurant and a shaded lounging area. It lies just over halfway along the bay.

Sisyphos Pansiyon & Restaurant (☎ 394 3016; www.gumusluk.net; Yalı Mevkii 97; s/d €28/39, s/d bungalows €28/39, 2-bedroom apt €56; ☎ May–Oct) Next door to the Özak and perched almost on the waterfront is this 80-year-old, bougainvillea-clad pension. With a large, rambling garden that's filled with birdsong, this is the right place for some R&R. The 15 rooms boast



delightful balconies, some directly overlooking the sea.

Taka.com (☎ 394 3045; Yalı Mevkii 19; r winter/summer €17/28) For those on a budget, this is the best option. Though rooms are small and poorly maintained, they have direct sea views.

EATING & DRINKING

Bati Restaurant (☎ 394 3079; meals €6; ☎ 8am-3am May-Oct) An old travellers' favourite, this is a great place for both eating and drinking. A 120-year-old fig tree leans on the restaurant and provides shade for its customer. There's also a fun, cushion-clad chilling area in one corner. The friendly owner is a mine of information about the town and his *güveç* (casse-roles; €6.65 to €8.85) are well worth sampling. There are veggie varieties too (€4.45).

For a mellow drink in the evening under giant, grass-roofed parasols, try the new **Gusta Restaurant Café Bar** (☎ 394 4228; Yalı Mevkii 95; beer €1.65; ☎ 8.30am-2am summer only) or **Club Gümüşlük** (☎ 394 3401; beer €1.65; ☎ 6.30am-2am) at the northern end of the bay, which is a popular haunt for younger locals (and is open all year).

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Dolmuş run from Gümüşlük to Bodrum (€1.40, 30 to 40 minutes) at least every half-hour and to Turgutreis (€0.85, 15 minutes) every 20 minutes. Vehicles are banned from entering the village, but there is a municipal car park (€2.75 per 12 hours) 300m from the waterfront. The last dolmuş to Bodrum departs at midnight (10pm out of season).

Yalıkavak

In the northwestern corner of the peninsula, 18km from Bodrum, is Yalıkavak. As Dağca is to Marmaris, so Yalıkavak is to Bodrum: a smaller, quieter version with the constant threat of similar development looming over it. In the meantime it's remarkably pleasant, with no high-rise buildings to spoil the harbour and several attractive hotels and restaurants.

Yalıkavak's *köfte* are rightfully famous throughout Turkey; there's no better place to try them.

SLEEPING

Adahan (☎ 385 4759; www.adahanotel.com; Seyhülislam Ömer Lütfü Caddesi 55; s/d €78/100; ☎ May-Oct; ☎ ☎)

With its imposing wooden doors that conceal the jewel within, this newly built hotel is designed like an old caravanserai. Spacious and comfortable rooms are arranged around an arcaded courtyard containing a lovely pool. Anatolian antiques furnish some corners and from the kitchen come scintillating smells – the charming owners also run a gourmet restaurant. It lies around 80m from the new yacht harbour on the road to Gümüşlük.

4 Reasons Hotel (☎ 385 3212; www.4reasonshotel.com; Bakan Caddesi 2; d low/high season €110/165, 3-4 person apt €165-200; ☎ ☎) Set atop a hill 2km from Yalıkavak, the hotel's mantra and 'four reasons' to visit – serenity, design, attitude and quality – are all in evidence here. The almost Zenlike feel starts with the tranquil setting and spacious, neutral rooms (complete with tree branch placed above the bed!) and extends to the yoga classes on Saturdays. There's a lovely pool set in gardens.

Otel Windmill (☎ 385 4805; www.windmillotel.com; s/d winter €17/28, in summer €28/44, 4-person apt €83; ☎ ☎) Named after the converted windmill (containing an attractive apartment) in the corner, the hotel's biggest attraction is its pool that appears to 'flow' riverlike around the hotel. Rooms are simple but furnished with nice Orientalist flourishes.

Miray Hotel (☎ 385 4920; www.e-mirayhotel.com; Begonvil Sokak 17; s/d €28/39; ☎ ☎) If the Windmill is full try this place, with comfortable rooms and a pool.

EATING & DRINKING

All of the following are found at the northern end of the bay.

Cumbalı (☎ 385 4995; İskele Meydanı 126; 400g fish €8; ☎ 8.30am-midnight) A favourite for fish, Cumbalı does delicious dishes at pleasing prices 'to attract locals as well as tourists' as the patron puts it. The seafood *meze* (€2.75 to €9) are sumptuous, which you can eat right on the seafront.

Kavaklı Köfteci (☎ 385 9349; Çarşı İçi Yalıkavak; meatballs €3.35; ☎ 7.30am-midnight) Around 50m inland from the Café Yalıkavak, this place is famous for its Yalıkavak meatballs served up on simple wooden tables with garlic bread. Smoky-flavoured, slightly spiced and succulent, they're gorgeous! Fight for a table if you have to.

Café Yalıkavak (☎ 385 4095; İskele Meydanı 13; coffee €2; ☎ 7am-1am) Next door to the Cumbalı, this café sells traditional Turkish pastries and puds

and is fabulous for coffee-and-cake or an ice cream on the seafront.

Değirmenci (☎ 385 2419; Yeldeğirmeni Yarı; ☎ 8am-1am) Right beside the old windmill on the seafront, this new place has live music daily from 9pm to midnight.

GETTING THERE & AWAY

Dolmuş go to Bodrum (€1.40, 25 minutes) every half-hour in summer (but only when full in winter). Surprisingly, although the road is good, there's no dolmuş to Göltürkbükü. You'll have to take a taxi for around €14 to €17 daytime and €22 to €25 at night, or return to Bodrum and catch another dolmuş (€1.40, every 45 minutes) from there.

Göltürkbükü

About 18km north of Bodrum, the twin villages of Gökçöy and Türkbükü have decided to merge their names in a cunning plan to fool visitors (www.golturkbuku.com).

GÖLKÖY

Gökçöy is set around a narrow beach backed by a sprawl of tourist accommodation. In July and August family pensions open to accommodate most arrivals. Unfortunately, these simply furnished places have the monopoly in summer and if you won't pay €50 for a double, someone else will. Many also have restaurants.

Set right on the waterfront, the newly renovated **Salba Beach Club** (☎ 357 7170; www.salbabeachclub.com; Sahil Sokak 13; s/d €25/50; ☎) has a sunbathing platform and a nice garden. Rooms are small but quite attractively decorated and have lovely views over the bay. The upper rooms share a balcony.

Made up of a series of modern buildings decorated traditionally, **Sultan Hotel** (☎ 357 7260; fax 357 7261; Sahil Sokak 3; s/d €39/67; ☎ Apr-Nov; ☎) is set in a peaceful garden. Rooms are simple but spotless and have little balconies from where you can hear the water lap. There's also a sunbathing platform.

Opposite the Salba Beach Club, **Yör & Mutfak** (☎ 357 7033; Sahil Sokak 14; ☎ 8am-midnight May-Oct) is a good antidote to the expensive hotel restaurant. It does good, home-cooked snacks such as *mantı* (ravioli; €3.35) and *köfte* (€3.85).

TÜRKBÜKÜ

About 1.5km around the point from Gökçöy is Türkbükü, a gated wonderland of summer

homes for Turkey's rich and infamous. In July and August the A-listers are flown in by sea plane to their luxurious digs and yachts are packed in tight in the small harbour. There's not much to do apart from people-watch.

SLEEPING & EATING

Much beloved by the fashionable, the rich and the beautiful, **Maki Hotel** (☎ 377 6105; www.makihotel.com.tr; Keleşarımı Mevkii; d from €100; 🏠 🚿 🚿) offers comfort *and* style. There's a gorgeous pool set just above the sea, a restaurant with a fine Italian chef and rooms that are hyper-hip (right down to the chrome and orange-painted balconies). Out of season, room rates drop dramatically.

Though built in the 1990s (but designed to look much older), the **Ada Hotel** (☎ 377 5915; www.adahotel.com; Tepecik Caddesi 128; d €238-277; 🏠 🚿 🚿 Apr-Oct; 🏠 🚿 🚿) has already established an enviable reputation. Designed to resemble an old stone house, the hotel boasts a hamam, library, pool and movie theatre. Room adornments

range from real antiques to candles and CD players.

Famous throughout Turkey, the restaurant at **Divan Hotel** (☎ 377 5601; Keleşarım Caddesi 6; meze €4.45-14, fish mains €11-27; 🏠 🚿 11.30am-1am) is considered by many as the top table in town. With an İstanbullu chef with a reputation for creativity, the dishes are superb. Try the sole wrapped in shrimp, sautéed Mediterranean herbs and saffron. It even has its own patisserie from where it dreams up its own designs.

Perennially popular **Ship Ahoy** (☎ 377 5070; meze €4-12, fish mains €10-14; 🏠 🚿 8am-6am May-Aug), a pretty place on the seafront, serves up superb fish and meze. A famous Turkish singer occupied one table when we visited. From 11pm to 6am it magically metamorphoses into a nightclub.

Another place with a redoubtable reputation is **Mey** (☎ 377 5118; Atatürk Caddesi 61; fish mains €20-22; 🏠 🚿 11.30am-2am May-Sep), popular in particular for its lavish fixed menu (which includes three types of fish).