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TOURISM IN TURKEY G61

The modern Republic of Turkey was created in 1922 after the decline of the Ottoman Empire. It is transcontinental, meaning that geographically some of the country is in Europe and some is in Asia. Look at the map on the right to see an illustration of this. This position has given Turkey a unique blend of Eastern and Western culture.



Pendant and chain

The tiny coins hanging from the pendant look similar to the kuruş, although they are miniature copies. A kuruş is a silver coin - 100 of them are equal to one modern Turkish lira. The coins are added for extra jingle and also as a sign of wealth.

Pair of earrings

The same miniature coins can be seen on the earrings. They would have made quite a statement. This style of dangly earring is called a chandelier.





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Mulberry prayer beads



These prayer beads, or tespih, are made from the wood of the mulberry tree. There is a picture of a mulberry tree below on the right. They grow in the subtropical areas of Asia, Africa and the Americas and the warmer parts of Europe - like Turkey.



The trees grow very quickly and can spread rapidly in the wild. This means that it is readily available. It is easy to shape and carve and lighter than some other types of wood, although it is in the hardwood category.

Prayer beads are used in many different religions to focus the mind when praying. Islamic prayer beads usually have 33 or 99 beads how many does this set have? The number of beads represents the 99 names of Allah. The user passes each bead through their fingers repeating religious phrases such as subhanallah (glory be to God), Alhamdulillah (praise be to God) and Allahuakbar (God is great). Each phrase is repeated 33 times as 33 beads are passed through the fingers.

Beads can be made from many different materials, including stone, glass, plastic and precious metals.

Onyx bowl



Onyx is a form of quartz, which occurs naturally in many parts of the world. It is banded - look at the lines and ripples on the bowl. On the right there is a close up picture of the bands in a brown/orange piece of onyx.



In central Turkey there are large areas where onyx can be found in a variety of colours including pink, grey, cream and black. Items that are commonly made from onyx include chess pieces, beads, tiles, vases and bowls - like the example in the box.

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Spoon from Izmir



Izmir is the third largest city in Turkey. It is a costal town with a large and busy port. Izmir is a vibrant city, known for its arts festivals and cultural attractions.

This wooden spoon was most likely made for decoration rather than for using. Woodcarving has been a traditional Turkish art for thousands of years. There are several wooden items that Turkey is famous for making - walking sticks, saddles for donkeys and spoons for using during folk dancing. The wood used to make these spoons is usually oak, boxwood or pear. We don't know for certain if this is what this spoon was for, but considering its decoration it is quite likely.



Pottery from Izmir

This beautiful little plate is also from Izmir. The production of pottery has a long history in Turkey, which a visit to the Izmir Art and Sculpture Museum or to the Museum of Archaeology in Istanbul will show.



Plates like these are often made for tourists and make a colourful souvenir. Notice the small holes on the back of the plate. A piece of string or wire can be passed through here to hang the plate to the wall for decoration (but please don't do this in the classroom).

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Bottle from Pamukkale



This bottle comes from Pamukkale - a spectacular site in south western Turkey. The picture on the side of the bottle and the picture on the right show what the site looks like. You might think it is made from ice, but the strange shapes are actually made from minerals found in hot springs. The name Pamukkale means cotton castle in Turkish and the ancient city Hierapolis was built on top of it in the third and second centuries BC. Pamukkale is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and attracts many tourists.



The area is well known for its wine-making. Sarabi means red wine and rekolte 1962 means crop of 1962. So we know when this red wine dates from.

Evil-eye bells from Permagon



Evil eye charms, or nazar boncuk, are found all over Turkey. They are used to keep evil spirits away. The charms are usually made from blue glass (like the examples in the box) and worn as jewellery, but they are also seen painted on to pottery, tiles and the walls of homes and offices. The symbol can also be seen on aeroplanes and ships. The pictures on the right show several examples.





Many countries have the same superstitious belief about the evil eye, especially those in the Mediterranean. The belief is that when someone is praised or has some good luck they run the risk of arousing envy and greed in others, known as the evil eye. This will then attract evil spirits and bad luck.



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Painted wooden doll



There are many different regional traditional styles of costume in Turkey. They are usually made in bright colours and involve several layers, including the waistcoat that can be seen on this little painted doll.

Dolls like this are usually sold as souvenirs for tourists.

Decorated camel bone



Painting on camel bone is a common craft in many countries in the Middle East and North Africa. Sometimes these pieces are turned in to decorative boxes or jewellery. There are some examples on the right.

This particular piece shows three rows of soldiers on horseback .





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Beadwork bird



Beadwork is an ancient craft that has been practiced in many countries, especially those located on important trade routes, like Turkey, where glass beads, thread and other materials passed through. The beadwork bird in the box is made from hundreds of tiny glass beads that have been carefully stitched together. It is not clear when it dates from, but it is most likely to be the 1960s or 1970s.



The example in the picture on the right shows some beadwork birds of a similar style with the word 'Mashallah' (God has willed it) stitched at the top. This particular piece was hung on a rear view mirror in a car. Perhaps that is what the bird in the box was used for as well.

There are several examples of beadwork items made by Turkish prisoners of war held in British camps during the First World War. Prisoners weren't asked to carry out any physical work, so they passed the time and relieved boredom by playing games or making things, such as bead work bags, mats and animals such as snakes.

Turkey still plays an important role in the craft of bead working today. The 2007 International bead and beadwork conference took place in Istanbul, with speakers coming from all over the world.

Coffee heater



In Turkish this pot is called a cezve. It is used to brew coffee over a fire or on a stove. Finely ground coffee beans are added to cold water and left for about 5 minutes until it starts to boil and a foam forms on top. sometimes sugar or spices are added. The long handle stops the hands from being burnt. The coffee has a particularly strong taste and is drunk when it is extremely hot.

The cezve is traditionally made of copper, as this one is, and has either a wooden or copper handle. A cloth is needed to hold the handle if it is made of copper. The cezve is often beautifully decorated, as it is used to serve coffee to guests and displayed in the house as an ornament.