



Turkey

Didim



Turkey

Temple of Apollo



Didim's Greatest Monument:

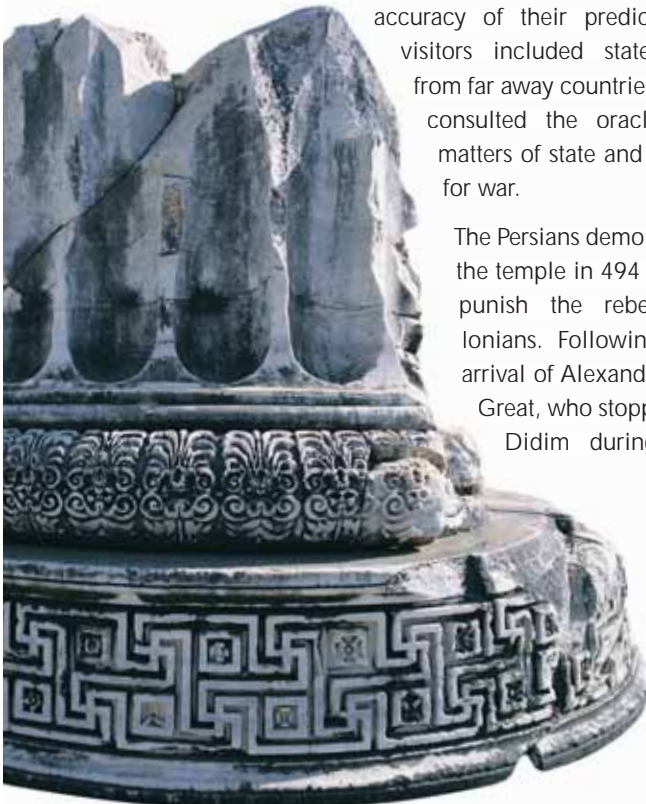
TEMPLE OF APOLLO

Didim (Didyma in antiquity) was home to one of the most famous oracles of antiquity. The sanctuary was part of the illustrious city of Milet (Miletus in antiquity). Visitors anxious for a vision of the future flocked to the "Sanctuary of Oracles". The Temple of Apollo, built to honour Apollo, the god of the sun, arts, music and prophecy, became one of the most respected sanctuaries of the ancient world, where visitors eagerly listened to cryptic omens of the future passed down by the oracles.

The founding legend of the Temple of Apollo concerns the shepherd Branchos, who learned the secrets of prophecy from the god himself. The temple was originally built in the 8th century BC, and the sanctuary was administered by the Brahchidae, who claimed descent from the legendary Branchos. Over time the oracles became famous for the

accuracy of their predictions, visitors included statesmen from far away countries who consulted the oracle on matters of state and plans for war.

The Persians demolished the temple in 494 BC to punish the rebellious Ionians. Following the arrival of Alexander the Great, who stopped in Didim during his





quest to conquer the world and defeated the Persians, the temple was rebuilt in a more grandiose fashion. Construction began in 300 BC on the orders of Seleucus, one of Alexander's commanders, and lasted for many years. The rebuilt temple was even larger than the original and complemented by diverse ancillary structures. When Christianity started to spread in Anatolia the reconstruction work was abandoned and unfinished. The temple was no use to monotheism, and when the local population adopted Christianity oracles and fortune tellers were banned and severe punishments were promulgated against those involved in these activities. The new religion banned the oracles from their traditional activities in the sanctuary. Earthquakes chipped away at the structure - including a devastating 14th century tremor. However, the present day ruins give a strong impression of the temple's original grandeur.

Today only a few columns stand upright, but the renowned Temple of Apollo was once the third largest sanctuary of the ancient world. The original structure had 124 columns in double file, and the roof was almost 20 metres high. In many aspects, including its original layout, the Temple of

Temple of Apollo



Apollo was different from the other temples of the ancient world. The decorations and upright columns that have stood the test of time indicate the meticulous splendour of the temple's design and execution.

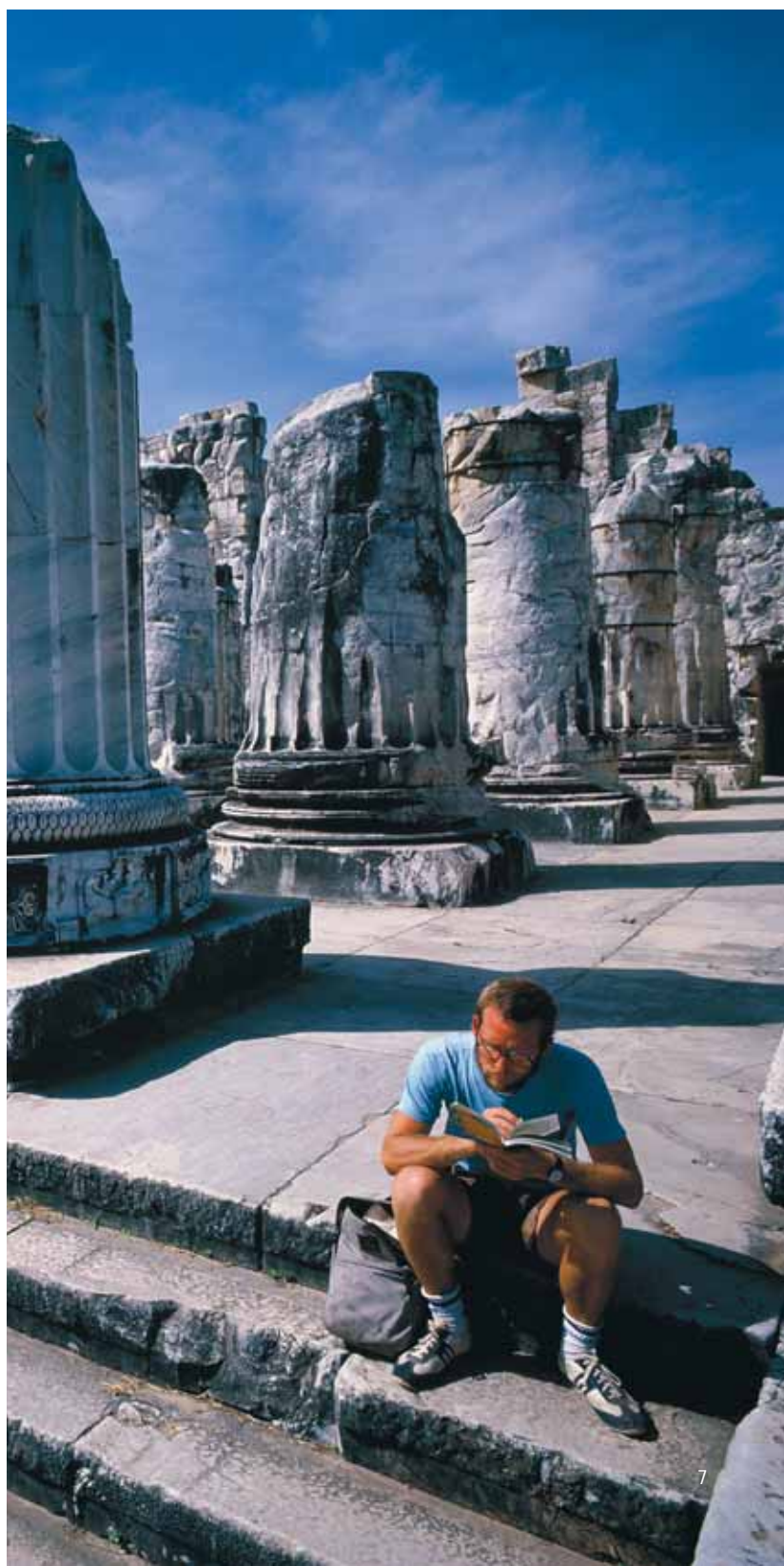
In ancient times, visitors to the temple arrived by sea at Panormos Harbour, which was situated near the present day Mavişehir, and followed the sacred way up to the



Temple. Both sides of the this way were lined with statues, many of which were removed in 19th century. Today the statues are on permanent display at the British Museum. However a few of the statues have remained in situ and can be seen here today. Along with the temple itself, visitors can see the petrifying Medusa Head, which has become a symbol of Didim.

Temple of Apollo





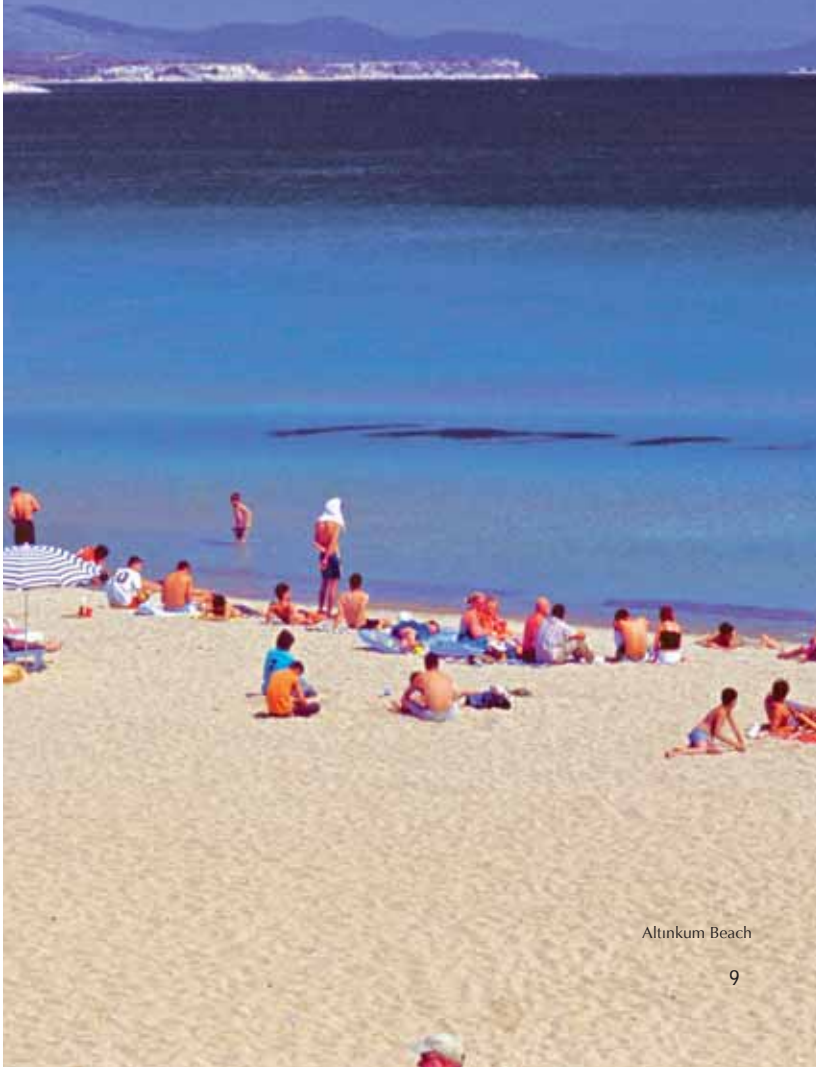
One the Best Beaches of the Aegean Sea:

ALTINKUM

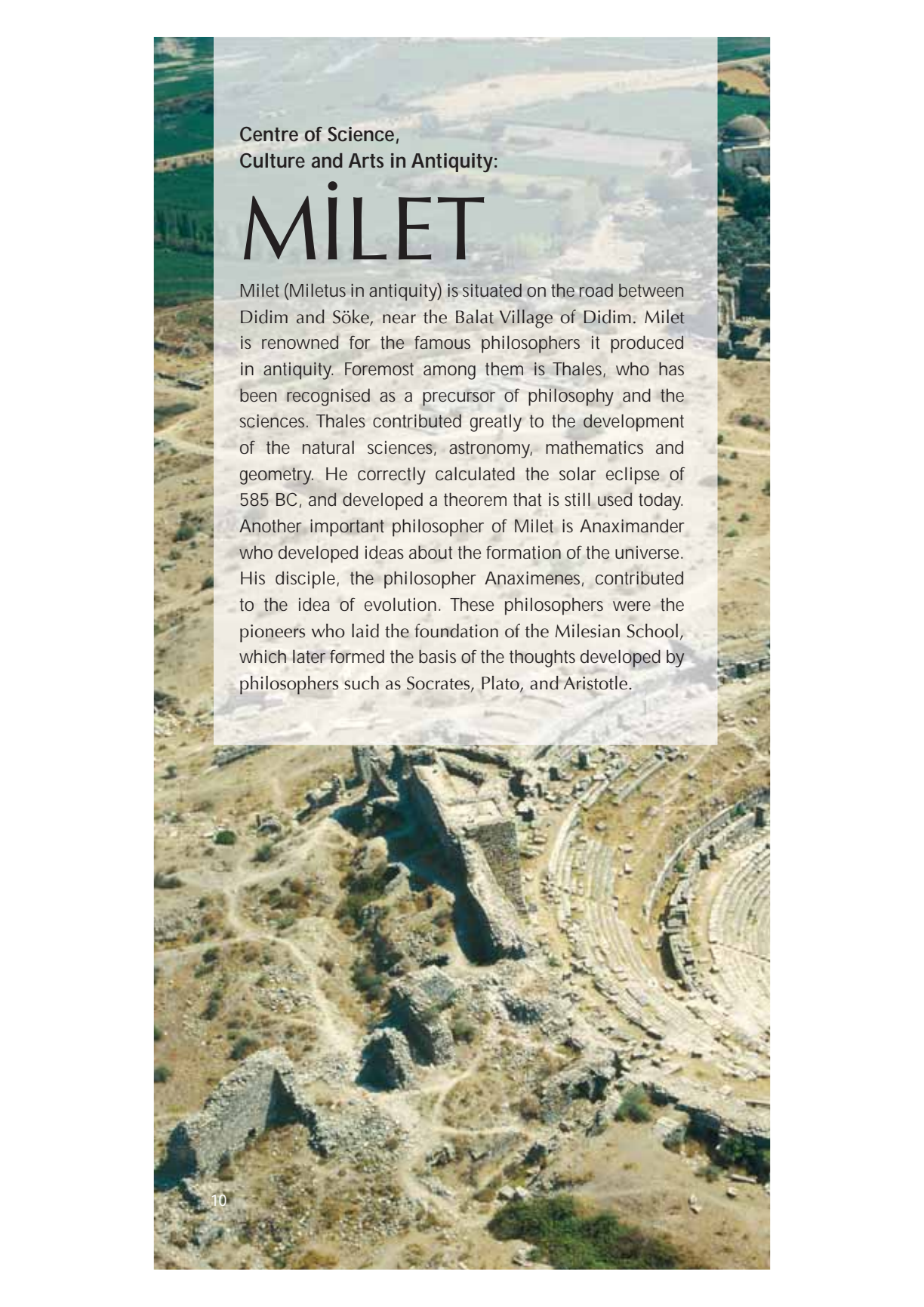


The Blue Flag Altinkum Beach, one of the best in Turkey, is only 10 minutes from Didim. The sea is quite shallow here, and the long, wide, sandy beach is well sheltered from the waves, making it popular among families with children. The shore of Altinkum is suitable for windsurfing, canoeing, and other water sports. Large waves are only seen during winter swells.

The waterfront of Altinkum, behind the beach, is lined with entertainment facilities, restaurants, and hotels that make the town a popular resort.



Altinkum Beach



Centre of Science,
Culture and Arts in Antiquity:

MILET

Milet (Miletus in antiquity) is situated on the road between Didim and Söke, near the Balat Village of Didim. Milet is renowned for the famous philosophers it produced in antiquity. Foremost among them is Thales, who has been recognised as a precursor of philosophy and the sciences. Thales contributed greatly to the development of the natural sciences, astronomy, mathematics and geometry. He correctly calculated the solar eclipse of 585 BC, and developed a theorem that is still used today. Another important philosopher of Milet is Anaximander who developed ideas about the formation of the universe. His disciple, the philosopher Anaximenes, contributed to the idea of evolution. These philosophers were the pioneers who laid the foundation of the Milesian School, which later formed the basis of the thoughts developed by philosophers such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle.

Milet Theatre





Milet maintained its prime position in science and culture for thousands of years. The great 6th century architect, Isodoros, who built the magnificent Ayasofya (Hagia Sophia) in İstanbul, was born and raised in the city.

Maritime trading propelled the development of Milet and it became an important centre of commerce. Many ancient structures have reached our times in quite good order. The most prominent of them are the grand theatre, with seating capacity for nineteen thousand people, the Temple of Athena, and the Faustina Bath, which was one of the largest of ancient bathhouses. The city's agorae, ports, and temples are also fascinating.

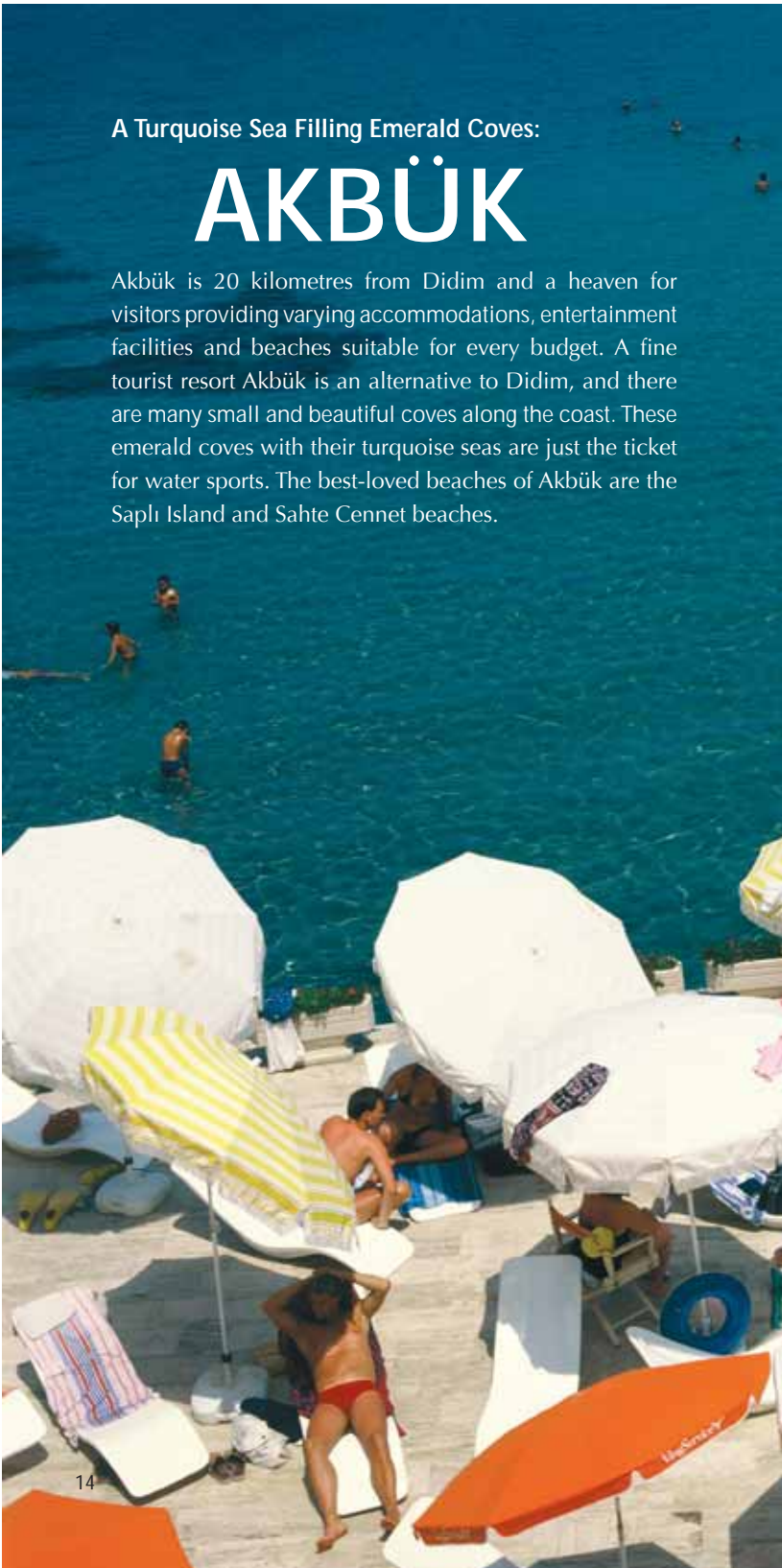
Milet maintained its strategic importance for centuries and eventually came under Seljuk dominion. After the collapse of the Seljuk Empire, it became the capital of the Menteşeoğulları Principality. Later the city was incorporated into the Ottoman Empire. The most important structure dating from the era of Turkish domination in Milet is the İlyas Bey Mosque, which was built in 1404.



A Turquoise Sea Filling Emerald Coves:

AKBÜK

Akbük is 20 kilometres from Didim and a heaven for visitors providing varying accommodations, entertainment facilities and beaches suitable for every budget. A fine tourist resort Akbük is an alternative to Didim, and there are many small and beautiful coves along the coast. These emerald coves with their turquoise seas are just the ticket for water sports. The best-loved beaches of Akbük are the Saplı Island and Sahte Cennet beaches.





An Ideal Destination for Nature Lovers:

LAKE BAFA

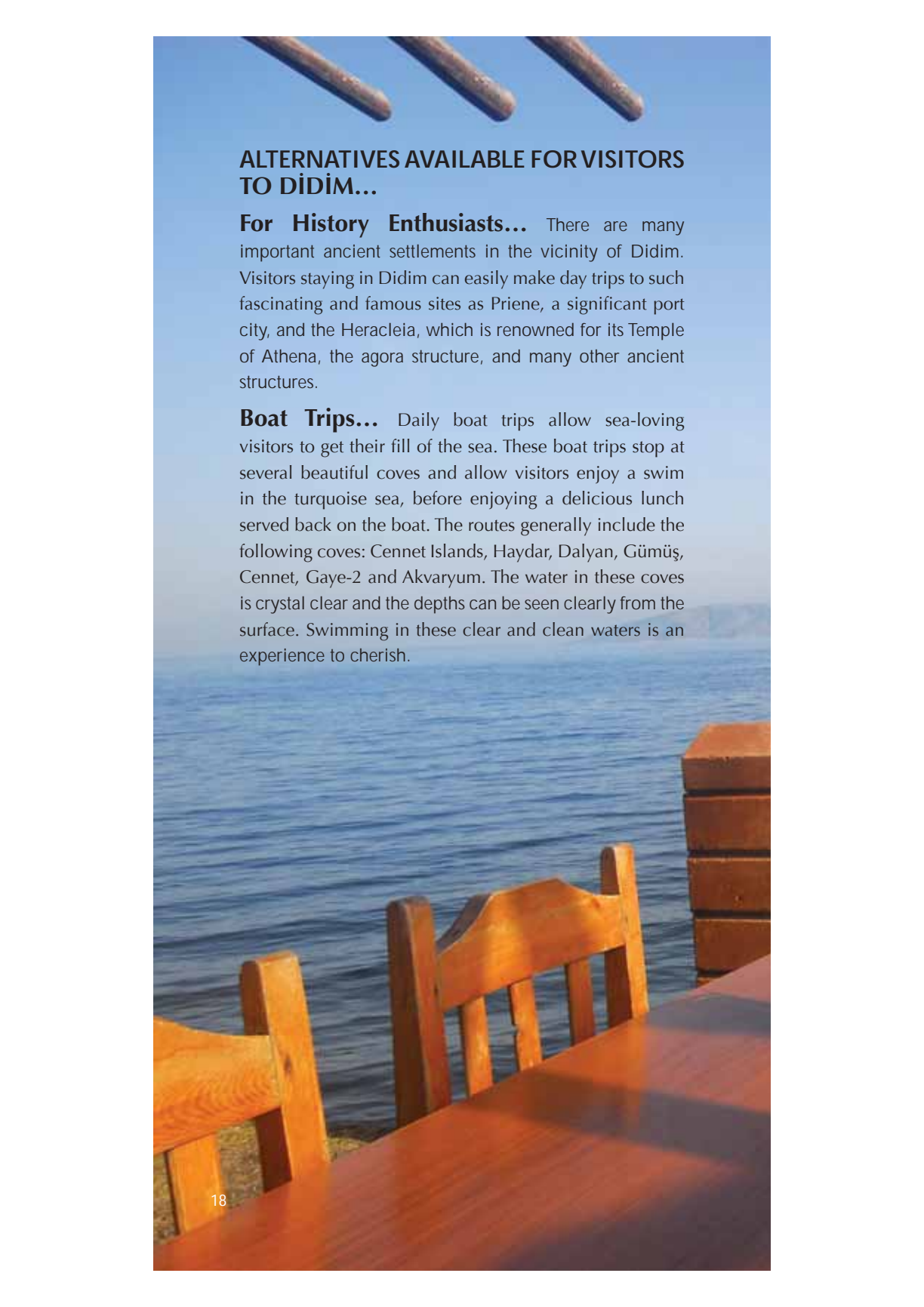
NATURE PARK

There are many natural beauty spots in the vicinity of Didim. A perennial favourite is Altinkum Beach. Another spot of outstanding beauty is Lake Bafa Nature Park, 30 kilometres from Didim. The lake was, in ancient days, part of a bay. The lagoon gradually filled with silt and formed the lake. The lake now provides a habitat for many birds, including several endangered species. Occasional boat trips are organised on the lake.

Lake Bafa is surrounded with olive orchards and pine forests, and its shores are suitable for those who wish to stay away from the crowded cities. Walks on beautiful trekking routes around the lake provide photographers with a visual feast and superb vantage points.







ALTERNATIVES AVAILABLE FOR VISITORS TO DİDİM...

For History Enthusiasts... There are many important ancient settlements in the vicinity of Didim. Visitors staying in Didim can easily make day trips to such fascinating and famous sites as Priene, a significant port city, and the Heracleia, which is renowned for its Temple of Athena, the agora structure, and many other ancient structures.

Boat Trips... Daily boat trips allow sea-loving visitors to get their fill of the sea. These boat trips stop at several beautiful coves and allow visitors enjoy a swim in the turquoise sea, before enjoying a delicious lunch served back on the boat. The routes generally include the following coves: Cennet Islands, Haydar, Dalyan, Gümüş, Cennet, Gaye-2 and Akvaryum. The water in these coves is crystal clear and the depths can be seen clearly from the surface. Swimming in these clear and clean waters is an experience to cherish.

Festivals... Perhaps the most important festival in Didim is the White Gold Festival organised at the Akyeniköy Neighbourhood in the first week of April each year. Visitors who attend the festival will be able to watch ancient Turkish games, such as oil wrestling contests, and the equestrian team sport Jereed. The festival attracts many local people of Akyeniköy and quite a large group of domestic visitors, and provides an alternative for those who would like to learn about a different aspect of life in Turkey.

Nearby Holiday Heavens... Didim is conveniently close to several of Turkey's other great tourism centres. Day trips from Didim take you to Bodrum and Kuşadası, and allow you to experience different aspects of the Aegean Sea, its culture and the fantastic entertainment facilities that dot the seaside towns.

WHAT TO EAT?

As in all seaside towns, the local cuisine features lots of delicious seafood. Picturesque restaurants serve the bounty of the Aegean Sea, often at tables with a vista of the waterfront where the fish are hauled in. Numerous restaurants, bars and cafes along the Yalı Caddesi (Yalı Street) serve snacks and light food. There are also many roadside restaurants serving home-cooked food, especially flat pastry rolls (*gözleme*) with various fillings.



TRANSPORT

BY AIR: Those travelling to Didim by air should either fly to Bodrum Airport, which is 90 kilometres from Didim, or to İzmir Adnan Menderes Airport, which is 150 kilometres away. From Adnan Menderes Airport there are taxi and bus services to İzmir. At the coach terminus of İzmir there are regular services to Didim. There are also trains departing İzmir central station towards Aydın. Alight at Söke station, and enjoy a short bus ride to Didim.

Bodrum Airport

Tel: (+90 252) 523 00 80

Web: www.bodrum-airport.com

Adnan Menderes Airport

Tel (International): (+90 232) 455 00 00

Tel (Domestic): (+90 232) 274 26 26

Web: www.adnanmenderesairport.com

BY ROAD: There are two principal roads leading to Didim. The first route passes through Aydın, and the other through İzmir. The first route is less crowded and easier to drive. However if your itinerary covers İzmir then you should follow the second route.

For those who prefer public transport vehicles there are regular and comfortable coach connections to Didim from all major cities of Turkey.

İzmir Coach Terminus

Tel: (+90 232) 472 10 10

Web: www.izotas.com.tr

Aydın Coach Terminus

Tel: (+90 256) 212 50 50

BY SEA: There is a regular ferry service between Bodrum and Didim during the summer season.

Bodrum Ferry: (+90 252) 316 08 82

IMPORTANT ADDRESSES AND PHONES**Aydın Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism**

Address: Hasanefendi Mah. 1913 Sokak, No: 67

Tel: (+90 256) 212 85 06

Didim Municipality

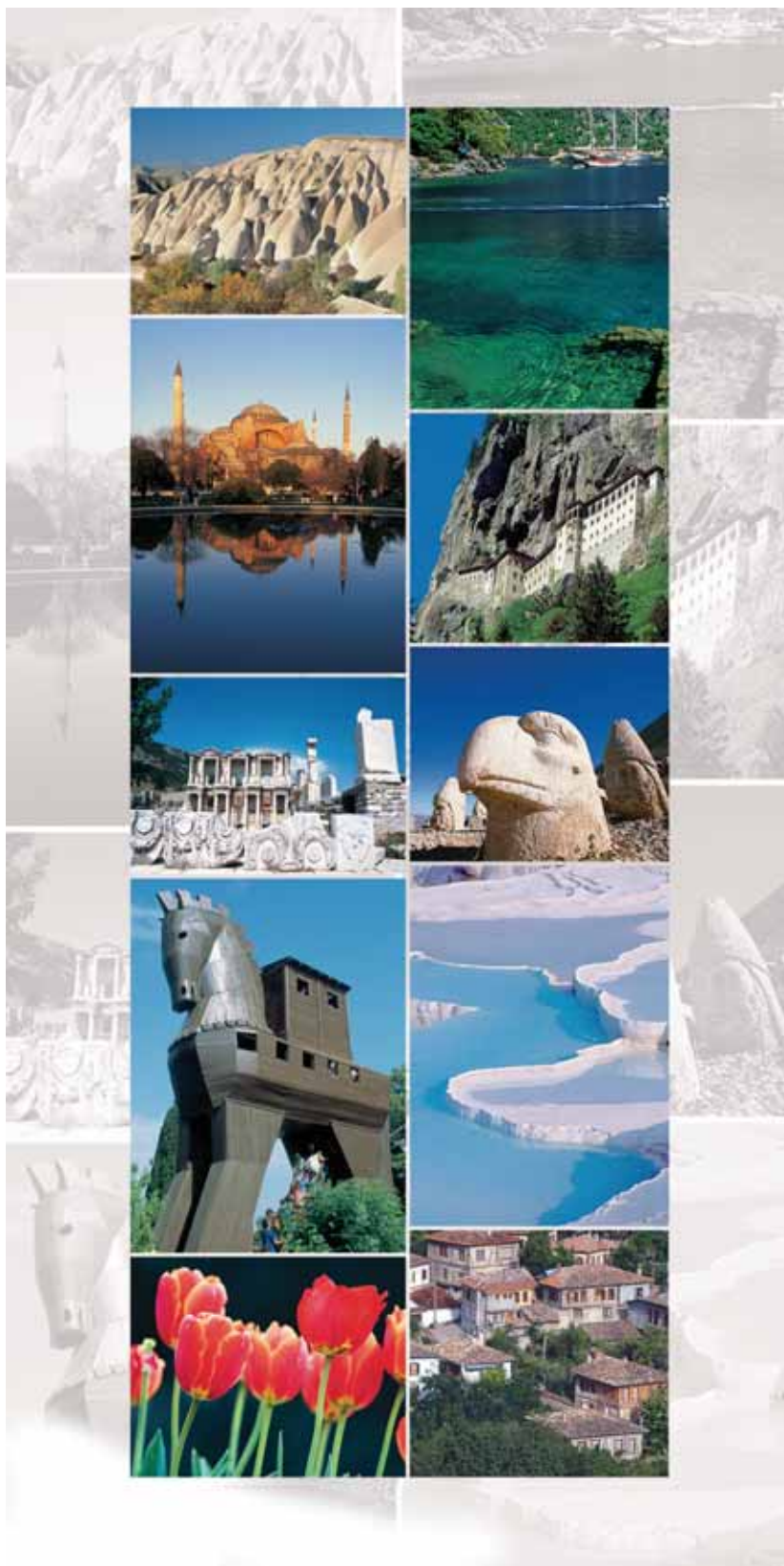
Address: Cumhuriyet Mahallesi, İnönü Bulvarı No: 180

Tel: (+90 256) 811 26 60

Didim State Hospital

Address: Cumhuriyet Mah., İnönü Bulvarı 09270

Tel: (+90 256) 811 57 57



Cultural Heritage is Fragile

The world's cultural heritage is like a big puzzle. Each monument, each object, is an irreplaceable part of the overall picture which gives us insight into our origins, our development and our lives today. It helps us to understand and appreciate other cultures. Each discovery, each new interpretation adds to the puzzle and makes the picture clearer. We must ensure the protection of every single piece today, so that future generations may have the opportunities to enjoy the puzzle.

Many people are not aware that our cultural heritage is under stress from natural disasters such as earthquakes and floods, and from slower acting processes such as pollution or human actions. Even the most innocent gestures such as collecting ancient pieces of pottery or mosaics as souvenirs have a destructive impact if repeated by thousands. Touching an object of stone, metal or textile leaves traces of grease, acid or sweat on its surface. Climbing a monument wears down the structure underneath and can dismantle it. Writing or engraving names inflicts permanent damage. Strolling around narrow crowded places with bulky bags or backpacks might knock over an object or scratch a mural painting and ruin it. There are countless ways in which one can unknowingly contribute to the destruction of cultural heritage.

In 2020 there will be 1.6 billion visitors per year worldwide. Let us raise awareness of this issue so that we may join together to protect and enjoy the diversity and richness of our cultural heritage.

International Organization for Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ICCROM)



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A HOLIDAY DESTINATION WHERE THE SEA,
SUN AND HISTORY MEET....

Didim

Didim, an hour's drive from the city of Aydın, is one of Turkey's prime holiday destinations. It has a rich cultural heritage, golden beaches, and a coast of intricate coves, each a wonder of nature. The Temple of Apollo in Didim is one of the largest and best-preserved temples of the ancient world. There are few better beaches on the Aegean coast than the beautiful Altinkum, and it's easy to hop on a boat trip to one of the picturesque coves to enjoy a swim. Fascinating ancient cities and gorgeous natural wonders await you. Didim is not a run-of-the-mill summer resort; the tourist attractions are only the start. The vibrant life of the Didim continues well after the summer season closes down. Large communities of ex-pat Europeans, especially the British, have settled in Didim, and consequently with its shopping centres, markets and supermarkets Didim is full of bustling international activities year round.



Photos

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