

Discover unknown Turkey in the company of a 17th century Ottoman traveller

A new cultural route in northwest Turkey has been inaugurated with the launch of a guidebook by Kate Clow and Caroline Finkel with Donna Landry. The trail is named for the 17th century Ottoman gentleman-adventurer Evliya Çelebi, on the 400th anniversary of his birth. Pioneered in 2009 with a horseback expedition team guided by Turkish horseman Ercihan Dilari of **Akhal-Teke Horse Riding Centre** in Avanos, it is Turkey's first long distance riding, walking, and biking route.

The guidebook—the *Evliya Çelebi Way*—allows modern travellers to follow in Evliya's tracks, as he set out on the pilgrimage in 1671. The 600km-long route follows the early stages of his journey to Mecca, and runs from the village of Hersek on the Gulf of İzmit to the town of Simav in Kütahya province. Traversing a little-known region of Turkey, it crosses highlands and plains, forests and river valleys, all with stunning scenery and varied vegetation. The route passes through great cities and towns such as Bursa and Kütahya, where monuments of the early Ottoman era abound, and out-of-the-way villages where local people welcome you warmly.

The *Evliya Çelebi Way* contains all the information you need to enjoy the trail—practicalities such as what to wear and where to stay; notes on Evliya Çelebi's life and his great travel account, comparing what he saw with what you can see today; background on the history and monuments of the region; remarks on the environment. The route description is divided into day-sections, describing what you will see as you travel, and giving estimated riding and walking times as well as altitude charts. GPS points can be downloaded from the website.

The launch of the *Evliya Çelebi Way* on 30 November 2011 was sponsored by the **Turkish Tourism Office** in London and held at **Daunt Books**, Marylebone High Street, London, to whom we are most grateful. The book can be obtained from Daunt Books and elsewhere.

www.evliyacelebiway.com