



## Press Update – April 2011

### Record Number of UK Visitors

2010 saw a 10% increase in UK visitors to Turkey; the overall total now stands at a record 2.7 million.

Offering a diverse range of holiday experiences encompassing two Wonders of the Ancient World, 9 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, 311 Blue Flag beaches and 15 world-class golf courses, Turkey is a holiday destination with universal appeal.

Turkey continues to offer value for money, as well as excellent standards of quality and service. In support, the Post Office's *Holiday Money Report 2011* records a 13% fall in holiday costs.

### What's New in 2011?

In May, Easyjet launches a **twice-weekly flight from London Gatwick to Izmir**, Turkey's third largest city and gateway to ancient Ephesus and Pergamum. Also starting routes to the city are Pegasus and Aer Lingus, from Stansted and Dublin respectively.

Anadolujet has started a **direct service between London Stansted and the capital, Ankara**, the perfect base for those wishing to explore Hattusas, the former Hittite capital.

Hotel openings in Istanbul include the **Edition Hotel** (May), the first in Europe, and **Le Meridien**, situated in the business and shopping district of Levent. The House Hotels chain is opening its third property, **House Hotel Bosphorus** (May). Down south, June sees the opening of the **Kas Peninsula Gardens**, whilst Kusadasi awaits its first golf course with adjoining resort hotel, **Club La Costa** (t.b.c.).

### Exciting Events

The **Istanbul Shopping Fest** (18 Mar-26 Apr) is expected to further boost the city's profile, with extended opening hours, discounts, competitions and giveaways available in malls and on high streets citywide.

Amongst the high-profile sporting events taking place in 2011 is the **Turkish Grand Prix** (Istanbul, 6-8 May), the **Winter Universiade** (Erzurum, 27 Jan-6 Feb) and the **Youth Olympic Games** (Trabzon, 23-30 July).

Highlights on the cultural calendar include the annual **Aspendos Opera & Ballet Festival** (Antalya, 9 June-2 July.), held at the atmospheric Roman theatre; the **12<sup>th</sup> Istanbul Biennial** (17 Sep-13 Nov); **Istancool** (26-29 May); expected to once again attract a raft of A-Listers from the worlds of art and entertainment; and Antalya's **Sunplash** (22-29 May), the coolest music festival in the Med.

## **Feature Ideas**

**Learning Holidays** - Come back from your holiday with more than just sunburn and tacky souvenirs - learn a new skill! With an ever-expanding array of special interest and learning holidays now on offer in Turkey, from carpet weaving and cookery to belly dancing, there has never been a better time to expand your horizons.

**Final Fling** - 2011 presents the last chance to raft on Coruh River, northeast Turkey following the construction of the Ispir Dam. Explore a lesser-known corner of Turkey: soak up the dramatic scenery in the fertile valleys of the Kackar Mountains and enjoy rapids of up to class 6.

**Year of North Cyprus** - In Turkey, it's North Cyprus year. Combine an action-packed city break in Istanbul with a laid-back jaunt in unspoilt North Cyprus. Access to North Cyprus from the UK involves a touchdown in Turkey, so this affords the ideal opportunity to explore two vastly different destinations in one trip.

**Istanbul, Fashion Capital** - Turkish fashion is having a moment with designers du jour including Erdem, Hussein Chalayan and Hakaan Yildirim - as modelled by Victoria Beckham in Turkish Vogue last summer. Other up-and-coming names include Arzu Kaprol, Bora Aksu and Dilek Hanif, with the high street ably represented by brands such as Mudo and Mavi Jeans. Explore the hottest hangouts, favoured by the fashion pack and hunt out bargains with your own personal shopper.

**Cross Golf in Cappadocia** - Manicured lawns, strict dress codes and sandy bunkers give way to fairy chimneys, fields and a whole lot of fun. It's a world away from the stuffy, middle-aged image that golf often has - any one can join in and no prior golfing experience is necessary. The Cross Golf season runs from 1 April to 15 October.

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