

HATAY

In the light of the archaeological researches, Hatay is one of the settlements that date back to the very past (early ages). Dating back to the Paleolithic Age, its history is an indication that the city offers very good conditions in terms of climatic conditions and soil fertility. Indeed, Hatay has been a city that many civilizations wanted to have throughout history.

Another feature that makes the Hatay region attractive and makes it open to migrations in every period of history is that it is located at the crossroads of the roads connecting Anatolia to Syria and Palestine via Cukurova. In addition, the most suitable ports that can be used to get out of Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean are also in the Hatay region. On the one hand, a big city that connects the roads, on the other hand, strategic harbors that open the doors of the city to the world, that connect cities and seas...

Features that make Hatay a world city are not only limited to these of course.

The first known civilization steps in Hatay were unearthed in the excavations at Tell Tainat and Tell Atçana. Furthermore, documents and historical artifacts showing that the late Hittite Principality united and founded the Hattena Kingdom were found in Çatalhöyük near Kırıkhan today.

The name Hatay was given by Atatürk.

Antioch is known to have been named after Antiochus, the father of Nicator I in 300. During this period, water channels were built and water was brought from Defne (Harbiye) to the city. With the Olympics that began in 195 B.C., it became famous as the "City of Olympics".

Between the years A.D. 29-40, one of the apostles of Jesus Christ, St. Pierre came to Antioch and tried to spread religion, and those who believed in Jesus Christ were called Christian here. Later, the city became an important center of Christian religion.

Hatay joined Turkey totally as a province with the name "Hatay" on July 23, 1939.

Yavuz Sultan Selim conquered this land in 1516 and the period of the Ottoman Empire began.

This domination continued until 1918. During World War I, French troops took over the rule of Hatay. Thus, Hatay joined Syria under the auspices of France.

After the War of Independence, the independent government of Hatay was established in 1938 with the intervention of the Turkish Government upon the efforts made for France to give independence to Syria. Lasting for 10 months and 21 days, Hatay State joined the soils of the Republic of Turkey by the decision of Hatay Assembly on June 29, 1939.

Hatay has a very important place with the first illuminated street of the world (today's Kurtuluş Street), the first use of the word "Christian", being the third largest city in the Roman period, and having the first mosque of Anatolia in its bosom.

Hatay still lives its history today and makes it live with the legendary tolerance of civilizations, and perhaps with the coexistence of its people who have lived in peace and brotherhood for centuries.

Trip Suggestions on Titus Tunnel Route

You can leave the city center early in the morning and go to Hıdırbey from Samandağ - Batıayaz road. After walking through the bay road, you can visit the Moses Tree.

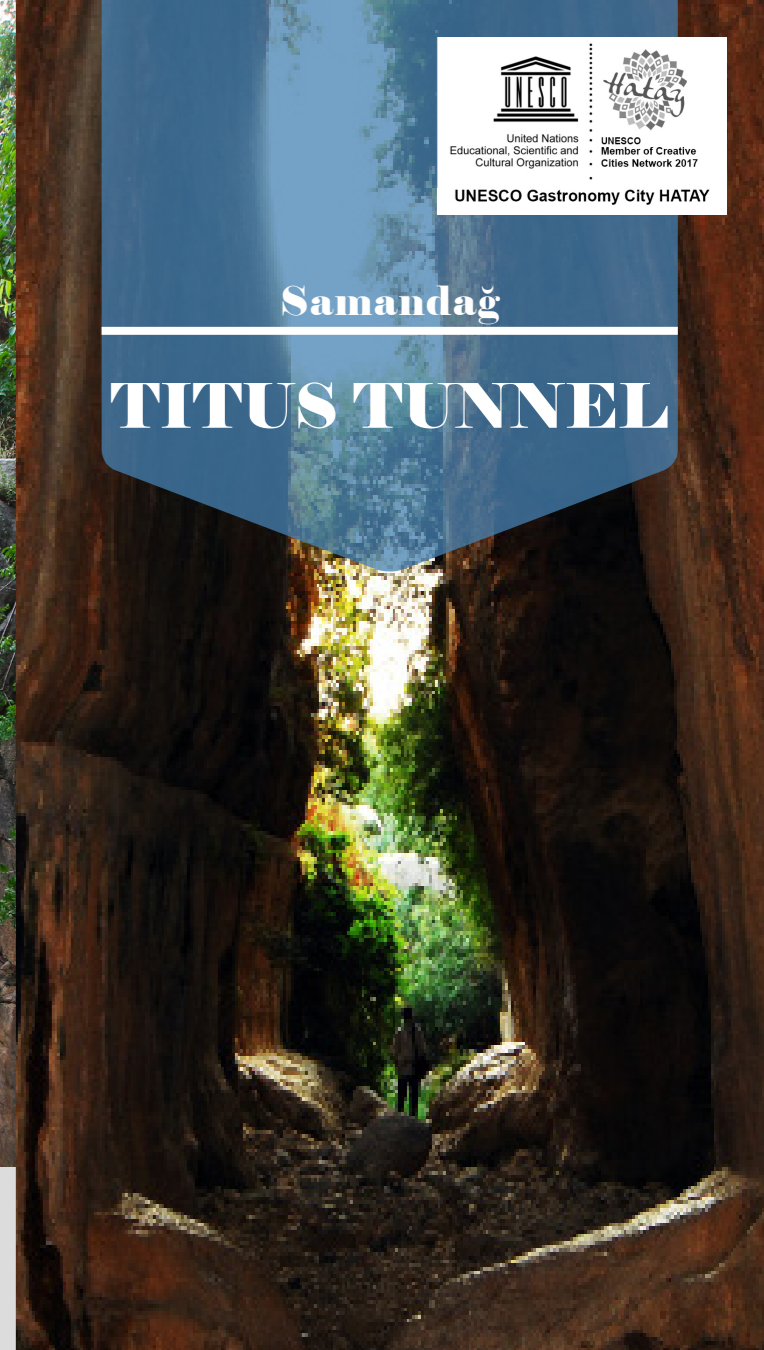
After having a local breakfast here, you can visit Vakıflı Village and Church, the only Armenian village in Turkey, and buy organic products produced in the region.

After you leave Vakıflı Village and visit Hızır Shrine near the sea, we recommend you to eat fish in local restaurants. You can leave from Çevlik after visiting Titus Tunnel, Rock Tombs and Dor Sanctuary.

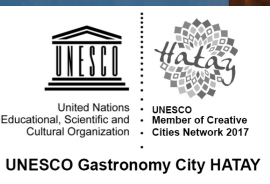
On the way back to the city center, you can visit St. Simeon Monastery. Here you can also see a magnificent sunset. We recommend you to dine in Harbiye or the city center on the way back.



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Samandağ

TITUS TUNNEL

Samandağ

Çevlik

The town of Samandağ is an ancient city founded on the plain where Mount Silpius (Kel Dağ) and Mount Musa embrace the Mediterranean and to which the River Orontes (Asi) gives life. Although the city was founded by Seleucus Nicator I, there are cave settlements dating to the Paleolithic Age. The most important reason for the establishment of this city in the Hellenistic Age is the desire to dominate the Mediterranean Sea.



Samandağ - Çevlik beach is one of the longest beaches in the world with its length of 14 km. It is a holiday resort known for rock tombs and Titus Tunnel, built in the late Roman period.

Çevlik coast is one of the spawning points for sea turtles.

The tunnel was carved by human hand, and is a natural engineering wonder that protects the city from flood disasters.



Hızır Shrine

The Shrine is in the district of Samandağ. It was founded on the rock that is considered the place where Hızır and Moses met in this region and sailed from here. The name Hızır is also used as Hıdır (Khidr). It is one of the places that Muslims and Christians accept as sacred.

According to the spiritual belief, Hızır is a spiritual power who helps those in need, and gives peace and blessing to them. Located on the coast, Hızır Tomb is visited by people who want this spiritual power to reach them urgently. Incense is burned and sacrifices are done there. They ask for healing from the Almighty Creator through Khidr.



Rock Tombs (Cradle Cave)

There are rock tombs called Cradle Cave or Cave with Cradle (Beşikli Mağara) at a point overlooking the sea in the Çevlik region of Samandag. If you turn right through the sea-side entrance of the Titus Tunnel and continue through the gardens, you can get to the rock tombs 100 meters later. It was named as "Besikli Mağara (Cradle Cave)" by the locals because of the flat-roofed two stone cist graves, which were formed and processed in the same dimensions side by side inside the grave island.

This graveyard area emerged when the rocks were carved during the Roman period of Seleukeia Pieria (Samandağ) and they were called the necropolis (City of the Dead). There are oyster and ivy decorations on the ceiling of the cave structure. One of the most important historical ruins of the city destroyed by two big earthquakes in the 6th century, Beşikli Mağara (Cradle Cave) still preserves its mystery and attracts visitors.

Vespasianus's mind-blowing project: Titus Tunnel

Titus Tunnel

In order to divert the flood waters from the mountains to save the city and harbor in another direction during the Roman Period in the 1st century A.D., the tunnel was built totally by human force.. The building of Titus Tunnel started during the period of Roman Emperor Vespasianus in 69 B.C., and was completed by his son Titus in A.D. 81.

It has an average height of 7 meters and a width of 6 meters, a length of 1380 meters, of which 130 meters is closed and the other part is open. The rocky area where the tunnel was excavated was used as the necropolis (cemetery) area of the city.

This natural engineering wonder that protects the city from flood disasters. An engineering marvel, the tunnel still stands upright today with all its majesty despite all these years.



Dor Sanctuary

Located on the road to the Kapisuyu of Samandağ, Dor Sanctuary offers its visitors a unique view where the blue of the Mediterranean Sea, the majesty of Mount Silpius (Kel Dağ) and the warmth of the plain meet. It was in the center of the ancient city of Seleukeia (Cevlik) in history. It was all made of white marble. It was also known as the temple of the king. Today only its column fragments, headings, marble pieces and foundation stones remain.

