



TURKISH THORACIC SOCIETY

WASOG-BAL CONGRESS 2014

MEETING POINT FOR DIFFERENT CULTURES

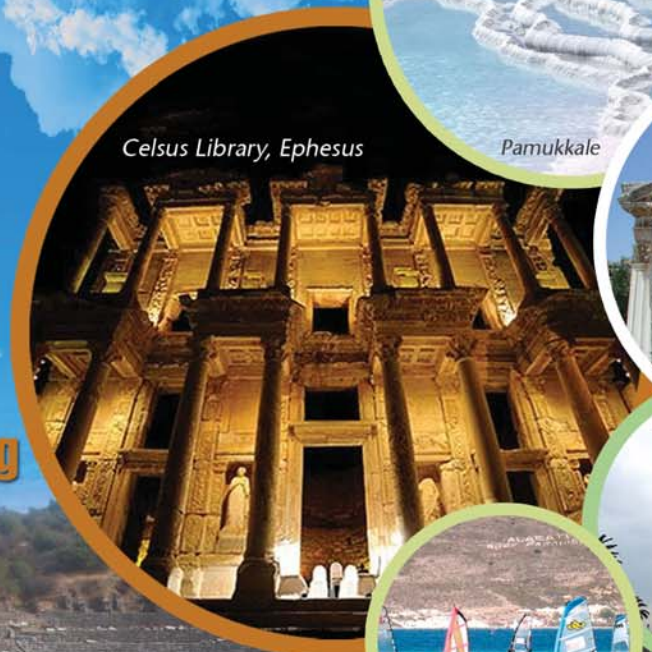
October, 2014
İzmir / TURKEY



Pamukkale



Temple of Hadrian



Celsus Library, Ephesus



İzmir Clock Tower



Alaçati

www.wasogbal2014.org



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MEETING POINT FOR DIFFERENT CULTURES

İZMİR

Area : 11.973 km²
Population : 3.370.866
Traffic Code : 35

Izmir is the third biggest city in Turkey, with a population of around 2.5 million, the second biggest port after Istanbul, and a good transport hub. Once the ancient city of Smyrna, it is now a modern, developed, and busy commercial centre, set around a huge bay and surrounded by mountains. The broad boulevards, glass-fronted buildings and modern shopping centres are dotted with traditional red-tiled roofs, the 18th century market, and old mosques and churches, although the city has an atmosphere more of Mediterranean Europe than traditional Turkey.



The climate is comfortable, with a relatively mild summer due to the refreshing breeze from the Aegean. The long attractive palm-fringed promenade, Birinci Kordon, which stretches the entire length of the city up to the Alsancak Ferry Terminal, is a popular spot for evening walks, and there are many cafes along the waterfront. Izmir has a good selection of culture and entertainment, from the Archaeological and Ethnographic Museums, to the Izmir State Opera and Ballet and Izmir State Symphony Orchestra, to the many bars and clubs. The cosmopolitan and lively city gets even busier during the International Izmir Festival (mid-June to mid-July) with music and dance, with performances also in nearby Cesme and Ephesus.

History

The history of Izmir stretches back to around 3000 BC when the Trojans founded the city in Tepekule in the northern suburb of Bayrakli. This was the birthplace of Homer, who was thought to have lived there around the 8th century BC. The Aeolians, the first settlers, were eventually taken over by the Ionians, and then the Lydians destroyed the city around 600BC before a brief recovery following Alexander the Great's arrival in 334 BC.



After his death, Alexander's generals followed his wishes and re-established Smyrna on Mount Pagos in Kadifekale, and the city then prospered under the Romans. It was destroyed by an earthquake in 178 AD but later reconstructed and became a major commercial port. After the Byzantines, the city had a turbulent time under the Arabs, Seljuks, Crusaders and Mongols, until Mehmet I incorporated it into the Ottoman Empire in 1415. Under Suleyman the Magnificent, Smyrna became a thriving and sophisticated city and a huge trading centre, despite its frequent earthquakes. It was cosmopolitan, with Greek Orthodox, Jews and Muslims, and many languages were spoken amongst locals and visiting traders.

Following World War I and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, Republic of Turkey has founded and Izmir became one of the most important cities of the country.