



Halil Rahman Mosque, Şanlı Urfa



# THE SOUTHEASTERN ANATOLIA REGION

The Southeastern Anatolia Region has a very rich history and cultural heritage, as can be seen in its magnificent historical sites. Its history begins around 7,000 BC in the New Stone Age. Between 2,000 BC and 1,500 BC came the Hurris who were followed by the Hittites sometime around 1,200 BC.



In the land which encircles the Firat (Euphrates) and the Dicle (Tigris) Rivers, lived Abraham, the patriarch claimed by three world religions. Some think that Abraham was born in what is now called Şanlı Urfa, supposed to have been Ur of the Chaldees, and later moved south from the city to Harran. In Harran, which was an important Mesopota-

mian historic and cultural center, the ruins of one of the largest and oldest Islamic universities can be seen among the archeological remains. Restoration of the 18th-century mansion, Küçük Hacı Mustafa Hacıkamiloğlu Konağı, is now complete. It has reopened and now serves as an art gallery.





Relief of Teshup, Gazi Antep Archeology Museum

When you travel from the south to the north over the Mesopotamian plains, the first high mountain to be seen is the picturesque Mount Nemrut, with the mausoleum of the Commagene King Antiochus at its 2,150 meter peak.

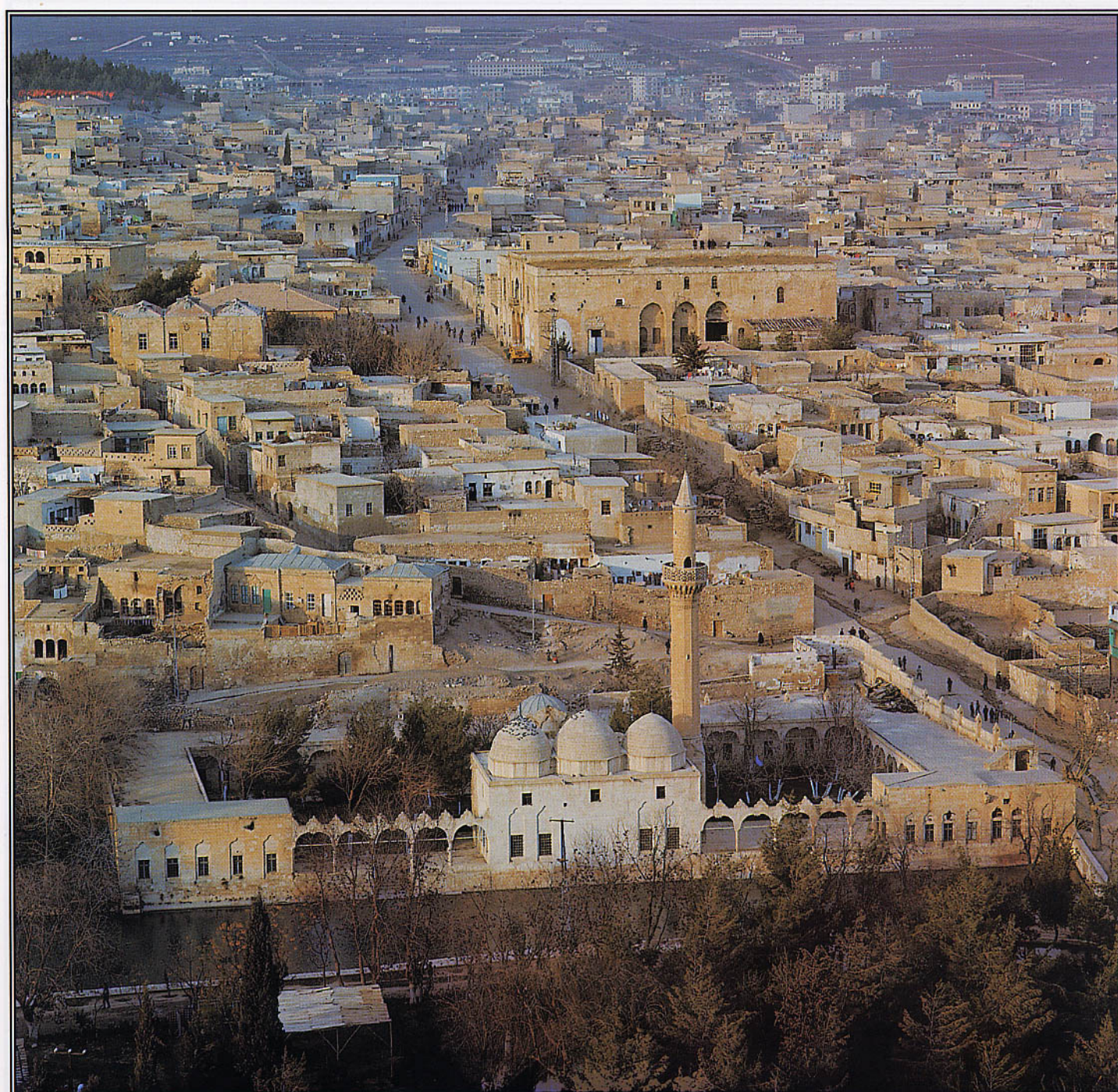
The most important areas of the region are Diyarbakır, whose city walls are a superb example of medieval military architecture; Mardin, with its regional architecture; and Gazi Antep, a large trade and industrial center which contains the remains of late Hittite cities.

The Atatürk Dam Lake is the region's holiday and water sports center. There are many beaches along the shore of the lake which can give you an unforgettable holiday experience under the Mesopotamian sun.



Midyad, Mardin





Şanlı Urfa





Atatürk Dam (GAP)



# THE SOUTHEASTERN ANATOLIA PROJECT - GAP

The Southeastern Anatolia Project is the largest and most multifaceted development project in Turkey as well as one of the largest development projects in the world. The project includes active farming with extensive irrigation systems and electricity production. It will also benefit the tourism, mining, petrol, education, health, communication, industry and transportation sectors.



System, which is the largest in the world, in terms of length and rate of flow. The waters of the Fırat (Euphrates) River will pass through tunnels which are 26.4 kilometers in length and 7.62 meters in diameter, and be distributed to the vast crop lands of the southeastern Anatolian plains from central and branch channels, bringing a production boom and prosperity to the region.

The Southeastern Anatolia Project covers the lower parts of the **Fırat** and **Dicle** Rivers and the provinces of **Gaziantep**, **Şanlı Urfa**, **Adıyaman**, **Diyarbakır**, **Mardin**, **Siirt**, **Batman** and **Şırnak** on the plains between the rivers. The project will also bring with it a change in the climate of the area.

The Atatürk Dam and Hydroelectric Plant, the largest in Turkey and the sixth largest in the world, is situated on the Fırat River in the town of **Bozova** in Şanlı Urfa. Atatürk Dam, which is the foundation of the Southeastern Anatolia Project, began operation in 1994 and is important not only for energy production but also for irrigation.

The water obtained from the reservoirs of the Atatürk Dam will be carried to the Harran plain by the Şanlı Urfa Tunnel



Atatürk Reservoir (GAP)



# FROM GAZİ ANTEP TO MARDİN

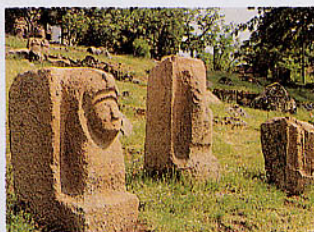
To explore the sites along Turkey's southern border, take the highway which connects Gazi Antep, Şanlı Urfa and Mardin to Syria and Iraq.

**Gazi Antep** (685 km southeast of Ankara) is located on a wide and fertile plain cultivated with extensive olive groves and vineyards and produces a wide variety of agricultural crops. It is especially known throughout Turkey for its excellent pistachios. Industry also contributes to the local economy.

The 36 towers of the city's fortress were originally constructed in the Justinian era and were later rebuilt by the Seljuks. The Archeology Museum has important artifacts from Neolithic, Hittite and Roman times. The Hasan Süzer House, from the turn of the century, has been beautifully restored as the Ethnographical Museum. The artisans of Gazi Antep specialize in copperware and furniture inlaid with mother-of-pearl. The kitchens there produce some of the best lahmacun, a delicious pizza topped with spicy meat and herbs, and also baklava, a honey and nut pastry.



**Wood Carving,  
Kahraman Maraş**



**Yesemek Open Air Museum,  
Gazi Antep**

West of Gazi Antep, the **Dülük Forest** makes a good day's outing, or you can stay overnight in the campsite. In the woods, stroll through the archeological site which dates back to prehistoric times. A Hittite school of sculpture was centered in **Yesemek**, where the 200 works of art still reveal the beauty of the Hittite period. Next to the Syrian border, on the banks of the Fırat River, **Kargamış**, once a late Hittite capital, is another important archeological site. The site's finds, including immense bas-reliefs, have been moved to the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations in Ankara.

The ruins of **Belkis (Zeugma)** are on the edge of **Nizip**. There is a mound which was turned into a citadel and mosaics from the Roman period which are well worth seeing.

**Kilis**, near the Turkish-Syrian border en route to Gazi Antep, was originally known in the Assyrian archives as **Kilizi**. Kilis is important for its cotton and silk weaving and also for its leather products. This most charming area is dotted with vineyards and





Mosaic from Zeugma of Achilles being sent to the Trojan war, Gazi Antep Archeology Museum





Hercules shaking hands with Mithradates, king of Arsameia (Eski Kale), Adiyaman



olive groves on all sides. Also interesting are the Canbolat Bey complex, the old baths and a center that once housed a dervish order. Several other sites worth seeing nearby include **Ravanda Castle**, situated between Kilis and Gazi Antep. Five km to the northeast is the town of **Kuzeyne (Korus)** that is like an open-air museum with its castle and mosaics. What makes it special is that here one can view ruins from Hittite, Roman, Byzantine, and Islamic times all in one place. An ancient Roman center is found 20 km east of Kilis in the town of **Korus (Kiriz)**. Ruins of a castle, a temple and a theater await your visit.

In the 12th century BC, **Kahraman Maraş** (78 km north of Gazi Antep) was the capital of the Hittite state of **Gurgum**. A massive citadel built in the 2nd century BC now houses the city museum with a good collection of Hittite sculptures. Other sites include the 15th-century Ulu Mosque and the Taş Medrese. The city is famous throughout Turkey for its ice-cream thickened with gum arabic and beaten with a wooden paddle.

**Adiyaman** is 153 km northeast of Gazi Antep. The Archeological Museum houses regional finds from the Lower Fırat which date from the Neolithic and Chalcolithic



**Mt. Nemrut, Adiyaman**



**Karakuş Tumulus,  
Adiyaman**

ages. Good quality kilims woven in bright colors sell for reasonable prices in the bazaar. Surrounding monuments include the ruins of an Abbasid citadel (restored by the Seljuks) and the 14th-century Ulu Mosque. The discovery of oil in the region has brought prosperity to Adiyaman. Five km to the north is **Pirin (Perre)**, that boasts a large Roman necropolis dug out of the rock and soil. The Haydaran rock tombs and a relief of King Antiochus shaking hands with the sun god are found 17 km north of Adiyaman in the village of Taşgedik.

Adiyaman and **Kahta** (which also has good accommodation and camping facilities) make good bases from which to visit **Nemrut Dağı (Mount Nemrut) National Park**. You can hire transportation in either town. On the summit of Nemrut Dağı, the highest mountain in Northern Mesopotamia at 2,150 meters, sits the gigantic funerary sanctuary erected in the first century BC by King Antiochus I of Commagene. The engineering involved continues to amaze visitors seeing for the first time the artificial tumulus as it is flanked by terraces on which rest the colossal statues of Apollo, Zeus, Hercules, Tyche and Antiochus. Time has inflicted heavy damage on the sculptures - their torsos sit with their beautifully carved heads at their feet.





**Cendere Bridge,  
Kahta-Adiyaman**

At ancient **Eskikale** (Arsameia of **Nymphaios**), a magnificent relief in the ruins of what scholars believe might have been the Commagene Palace depicts Hercules greeting the Commagene king, Mithradates. Anatolia's largest Greek inscription is also located here. Opposite this site, separated by the **Eski Kahta River**, are the remains of **Yenikale** (New Castle) built by the Mamluks. Other nearby sights include the 2nd century Roman bridge at **Cendere** (which is still in use) and another



**Spices**

Commagene royal tumulus, **Karakuş**. At **Karakuş** there is a nine meter high pillar dating from the first century BC with an eagle on top.

In the great Upper Mesopotamian plain, **Şanlı Urfa**, thought by some to be the ancient city of **Ur** and later known as **Edessa**, proudly exhibits the legacy of all the civilizations that have prospered in this region. Some of the oldest signs of civilization, dating to 7000 BC, were found 70 kilometers northwest of Şanlı Urfa, at the village





Halil Rahman Mosque, Şanlı Urfa





Typical houses, Harran-Şanlı Urfa



of **Kantara**. The recent development of dams and a hydroelectric plant stand in stark contrast to the ancient site of a temple and Neolithic settlement which is nine thousand years old. The temple has been identified as a religious center for moon worship. This site is still the only one of its kind in the world. Visitors can view small idols and religious figures as well as some very early and beautiful mosaic work from the settlement. On a hill 20 kilometers north of Şanlı Urfa lies **Göbekli**. This settlement is perhaps 9000 years old, and may rest atop even older settlements in lower layers of the artificial hill. The probable work place of an ancient idol maker can be seen here where many finished and unfinished human and animal figures and tools have been found. The Şanlı Urfa area, in the second millennium BC, was a city of a Hurrite state. Some believe that Abraham was born in a cave near where the Mevlid Halil Mosque now stands. Today the cave is a pilgrimage site and flocks of pigeons do not seem to disturb the elderly men praying around the entrance. The remains of a castle with two lone Corinthian columns rising above the ruined walls stands atop a small crest. At the foot of the hills, the lovely Halil Rahman Mosque is built around a quiet pool in which sacred carp swim. The 17th-century Ottoman Rıdvaniye Mosque and the Fıfırlı Mosque, formerly the Church of the Apostles, are worth a detour. The archeology and ethnography museum, one of the best in Turkey, houses important Neolithic and Chalcolithic



**Ulu Mosque Ruins  
Harran, Şanlı Urfa**



**Ibises in  
Birecik-Şanlı Urfa**

finds from the Lower Fırat region. To capture the spirit of Şanlı Urfa, wander through the vaulted eastern bazaar and linger in the courtyards of the old hans (inns). See if you can find Gümrük Hanı and Barutçu Hanı - the most interesting of the old hans.

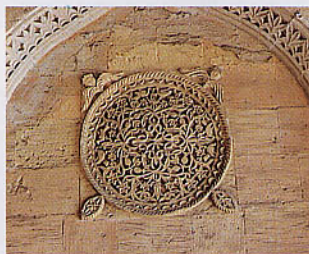
Believed to be the ancient city of Haran mentioned in the Old Testament, **Harran**, 48 km south of Şanlı Urfa, is known more now for its unusual beehive dwellings than as the place where Abraham actually spent several years of his life. Harran, which was also known as Helenopolis, was burned and destroyed by Mongolian invaders in 1260. Included among the archeological finds are those of the largest ancient Islamic university, city walls dating from the eighth century, four gates and a citadel. The GAP project will transform Harran into one of the most fertile areas in Turkey.

**Birecik**, 80 km west of Şanlı Urfa, straddles the Fırat River and is dominated by the citadel. It is a good place to take a break with good accommodations and camping facilities there. The endangered Ibis also lives in a protected environment there.

**Diyarbakır**, known in ancient times as **Amida**, has been a cradle of 26 civilizations during its 5000 year history. The city is spread across a basalt plateau close to the banks of the Dicle (Tigris) River. The black basalt triple walls which encircle the old town



give the city a rather ominous appearance. These ramparts are 5.5 km in length, have 16 towers and 5 gates, are decorated with inscriptions and bas-reliefs, and represent a superb example of medieval military architecture. The Ulu Mosque, built by the Seljuk



**Stone Carving, Mardin**

sultan Melik Shah, is notable for its original design and for its utilization of both Byzantine and more ancient architectural materials. The mihrap (prayer niche showing the direction to Mecca) of the nearby Mesudiye Medrese is made of the local black



**Deyrulzaferan Monastery, Mardin**

basalt. The Nebii Mosque represents the typical Ottoman style, while the Safa Mosque exhibits Persian influences in its tiled minaret. The third century Aramaic Church of the Virgin Mary (Meryemana Kilisesi), which is still in use today, also makes for an interesting visit. For an example of early domestic architecture, stop at the restored home of the writer Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı. The



**Hasankeyf, Batman**

Deliller Han (Inn) of 1527 by the Mardin Gates, converted and refurbished into a hotel, recreates the atmosphere of the days when trading caravans stopped in Diyarbakır. Just outside the city walls, by the river, stands Atatürk's house, now a museum. South of town at the Dicle Bridge, built in 1065, you can take a great picture of the Dicle River, the bridge and the city walls.





Deliller Han (Inn), Diyarbakir





Zeynel Bey Mausoleum, Hasankeyf, Batman

In **Silvan**, 77 km east of Diyarbakır you should stop at the graceful Ulu Mosque, which dates from 1185, to admire the fine flowing lines of stone-relief work that outline the pointed arch portal.

Çayönü, one of the earliest Neolithic settlements yet to be discovered, dates from the seventh millennium BC.

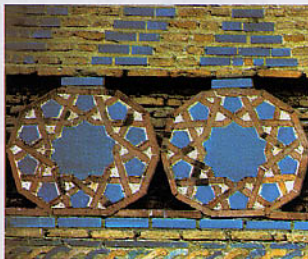
From a distance, the golden stone houses of Mardin blend into the rock of the hills on which the city is built. On closer inspection, the stone carving and decoration of the houses and public buildings reveals the city to be an architectural treasure chest. The citadel was built in 975-976 by Hamdan. It is a kilometer long from east to west, and from 30 m to 150 m wide. Ulu Mosque is Mardin's oldest mosque built in 1186 in the time of the Artukid ruler, Kutbeddin Ilgaz. The 15th-century Kasım Paşa Medrese is remarkable for its fine stonework. At the lovely İsa Bey Medrese, from the 14th century, you can admire the magnificently carved portal and climb to its roof to enjoy a fantastic view of the Mesopotamian Plain.

Only 7 kilometers east of Mardin is the Syriac-Jacobite Monastery of **Deyrulzaferan**, which was once a thriving religious community. At nearby **Kızıltepe**, the 13th-century Ulu Mosque, one of the best examples of Artukid architecture, has superb mihrap reliefs and a beautiful portal.



**Midyat**, famous for its silver jewelry known as 'telkari,' also has many elegant and historic houses. Eighteen kilometers east of town is the active Syriac-Jacobite monastery of **Deyrelumur (San Gabriel)**, which dates from the beginning of the fifth century.

**Batman** is Turkey's most important oil-pro-



**Ulu Mosque Tiles, Siirt.**

ducing center, with oil wells pumping the precious fuel dotting the surrounding area. North of Batman, the **Malabadi Bridge**, built in 1147, spans the **Batman River**. Undisturbed by time, peaceful waters still reflect the widest single-arch bridge of its day. Two guard towers ensured the bridge's security.



**Tigris (Dicle) River, Hasankeyf-Batman**



At **Hasankeyf** are the ruins of the 12th-century capital of the Artukids. The bridge, which once spanned the Dicle (Tigris) and connected the two parts of the city with the ruined palace inside the citadel, evokes the ghosts of a vanished dynasty. The 15th-century Zeynel Bey Mausoleum, attractively decorated with turquoise tiles, reveals Persian influence.

**Siirt**, 192 km northeast of Diyarbakır, was an especially eminent city at the time of the Abbasid Caliphate. Among the city's monuments, be sure to visit the 12th-century Seljuk Ulu Mosque and the 13th-century Asakir Çarşı Mosque. At **Aydınlar (Tillo)**, only 7 km from Siirt, the 18th-century Ibrahim Hakki Mausoleum Complex and nearby private Ibrahim Hakki Astronomical Museum are worth a visit. Ibrahim Hakki, who studied science under Şeyh İsmail Fakirullah, wrote over forty works, the best of which are *İlahi name* and *Marifetname*. Siirt produces fine and large pistachio nuts and is known as well for its excellent goat-hair blankets and kilims.

Baykan County in Siirt is home of the Veysel Karani Mausoleum. Veysel Karani was the beloved friend of the prophet **Muhammad** who was killed in battle in 657. The mausoleum is located 38 km north of Siirt and 8 km southwest of Baykan at the intersection of the **Siirt-Diyarbakır-Bitlis** highways. A



Women making "yufka"



Ulu Mosque, Mardin

**Veysel Karani** memorial service is held each year on May 16-17.

**Şırnak**, on the north face of **Mount Cudi** (2,114 meters), derives its name from the Moslem belief that Noah's Ark landed on this mountain: Şır - City, Nak - Noah. Forty-five kilometers from Şırnak, **Cizre** is the supposed location of his tomb.





Mt. Cudi Şırnak



## TOURIST INFORMATION OFFICES

ADİYAMAN - (Provincial Directorate) Atatürk Bulv., No : 84  
Tel : (416) 216 12 59, Fax : (416) 216 24 78  
- (Info.) Tel : (416) 216 10 08

BATMAN - Ziya Gökalp Mah., Yaşar Kemal Cad., No : 10, Kültür Merk. Binası  
Tel : (488) 213 90 84-213 90 83, Fax : (488) 213 90 82

DİYARBAKIR - (Provincial Directorate) Vilayet Cad., Kültür Sarayı, Kat : 6  
Tel : (412) 221 78 40-223 63 41-228 22 15,  
Fax : (412) 223 15 80-224 42 02  
- (Info.) Dağkapı Burcu Giriş Bölümü,  
Tel : (412) 228 17 06, Fax : (412) 228 17 06

GAZİ ANTEP - 100. Yıl Atatürk Kültür Parkı İç, Vilayet Arkası  
Tel : (342) 220 13 08-230 59 69, Fax : (342) 234 06 03

KAHRAMAN - G.M.K. Bulvarı, Atatürk Parkı Sabancı Kültür Merkezi  
MARAŞ Tel : (344) 235 15 02/03, Fax : (344) 235 15 01

KAHTA - Hükümet Binası, Mustafa Kemal Cad.,  
Tel : (416) 725 50 07, Fax : (416) 725 50 07  
- (Info.) Valilik Bahçesi Önü, Tel : (344) 223 03 55

KİLİS - Neşet Efendi Konağı, Topaloğlu Sok., No : 2,  
Tel : (348) 814 09 96-814 02 53, Fax : (348) 813 49 09

MARDİN - Hükümet Konağı, Kat 2,  
Tel : (482) 212 37 76 - 212 58 45, Fax : (482) 212 18 52

SİİRT - Özbek İşhanı, Kat : 5 56100  
Tel : (484) 223 57 90-224 60 01, Fax : (484) 223 28 70

ŞANLI URFA - Atatürk Bulv., Vilayet Binası Kat : 3,  
Tel : (414) 312 53 32, Fax : (414) 312 08 18  
E-Mail: sanliurfa\_kulturturizm\_mud@mynet.com

ŞIRNAK - İsmet Paşa Mah., Hükümet Konağı  
Tel : (486) 216 20 89-216 17 08, Fax : (486) 216 15 52



REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
MINISTRY OF CULTURE AND TOURISM  
General Directorate of Information ©  
[www.kulturturizm.gov.tr](http://www.kulturturizm.gov.tr)

### Photos

Bünyad Dinç, Necmi Erol, Taneri Serpengüzel,  
Muharrem Şimşek, Murat Tan, İbrahim Zaman, İsa Çelik  
Yavuz Meyveci, Sabit Kalfagil, Mehmet Tektaş, Murat Öcal,  
Fatih Müderrisoğlu, Zeynel Yeşilay, Hasan Basri Özsu,  
Semra Türker, Sıtkı Fırat, Şemsi Güner, Erdal Yazıcı,  
Murat Solakoğlu, Ara Güler, Faruk Akbaş, Yusuf Tuvi,  
Necmettin Külâhçı, İzzet Keribar, Ahmet Kuzik,  
the Archives of Governorship of Adıyaman, the  
Ministry of Culture and Tourism and Gazi Antep Provincial  
Directorate of Culture and Tourism

Printed in Turkey by

AJANS-TÜRK BASIN ve BASIM A.Ş.

Tel: 0(312) 278 08 24 • Faks: 0(312) 278 18 95

ANKARA - 2005

For Free Distribution





IRAQ

SYRIA

