



Caves ***of ANTALYA***

Antalya Metropolitan Municipality
ANTALYA INTRODUCTORY BOOKLETS
Caves of Antalya

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In the past, caves provided the basic needs of protection, nutrition, and shelter to humans against the severe climate conditions. In today's world, they still are of great importance as they shed light on the first phases of human history.

Turkey is among the most important geographies of the world with its caves. Antalya, which has a rich cultural heritage in terms of caves, is home to one-fifth of the caves registered in Turkey. Thus, eight greatest caves of Antalya, especially the Karain Cave which bears traces of the Paleolithic (Old Stone) Age, and is a nominee for the world heritage list in this respect, has opened to tourists.

Our aim is to both enhance cave tourism and protect our cultural heritage by promoting the caves in different regions of Antalya, with this booklet that we have prepared to add a new one to our works with the goal of protecting all our values of Antalya. In addition, as Antalya Metropolitan Municipality, we are happier than ever to present to you the information of the magnificent caves of our city.

With our sincere wishes that you enjoy your visit while discovering the abundant natural, historical, and cultural beauties of our city with this guide...

Turkey is an attraction point for both local and foreign tourists, with its abundant historical and natural beauties. In the case of cave tourism, Turkey, especially Antalya with its deep and huge caves, holds great potential.

Antalya, a city builded at the foot of the Taurus mountain range, is rich in cave formations. The Taurus Mountains' main skeleton is generally composed of limestones, and the majority of the caves were formed within these limestones. All of the caves in Antalya are karstic caves, in other words, they are underground cavities formed by the dissolution of limestones by surface waters containing organic acids.

Antalya is the province with most caves in Turkey, in terms of having 735 caves out of 3505 registered in Turkey, that is, one out of every five caves.

With many caves that have not been opened to tourism, there are 8 touristic caves in Antalya. An average of 527,000 people visit these caves annually.

CAVE	LOCATION	ANNUAL VISITOR
Damlataş Cave	Alanya / Çarşı neighborhood	282.000
Dim Cave	Alanya / Kestel neighborhood	200.000
Cüceler Cave	Alanya / Tırılar neighborhood	2.500
Yalandünya Cave	Gazipaşa / Beyrebucak neighborhood	25.000
Altınbeşik Cave	Antalya / İbradı	8.000
Zeytintaşı Cave	Serik / Akbaş neighborhood	7.500
Yeşilkaraman (Karataş) Cave	Aksu / Yeşilkaraman neighborhood	600
Karain Cave	Döşemealtı / Yağca neighborhood	2.000

DİM CAVE



*Photograph:
Ahmet Ali Atalay*

Dim Cave is located in Alanya district of Antalya, it is near the eastern slope of the Dim Stream valley, 145 km from Antalya and 11 km from Alanya city center. It is on the western slope of Cebel Reis Mountain, at an altitude of 232 m above sea level. The cave was discovered with the contributions of MTA (General Directorate of Coal Research and Exploration) in 1986 and was opened to visitors in Sep-

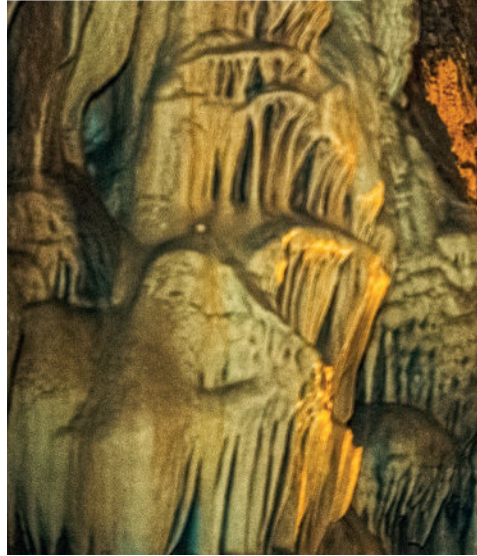
tember 1998 after making the needed arrangements.

The Dim Cave Enterprise was accepted as a member of the “International Show Caves Association” (ISCA) of the International Association of Caves Open for Tourism, on October 24, 2002. Dim Cave is the first and only cave in Turkey to be opened to tourism by a private enterprise, and is operated in accordance with the rules of the ISCA.



Photographs: Göktuğ Özgül

It was named as “Gavurini Cave” by the people of this region, because it was used as a shelter by people in prehistoric and historical periods.



The parts opened to tourism of Dim Cave, which is 410 m in total, is 360 m long, 10-15 m wide and high. The cave consists of 4 main halls, namely Pamukkale Hall, Organ Hall, Chandelier Hall, Lake Hall; and a passage. All halls are full of dripstone formations such as various stalactites, stalagmites, columns, curtains, macaroni and wall formations, and some of them still continue with their formation nowadays, too.

In the dripstone the shapes that hang down from the ceiling are called stalactites while the shapes that grow upwards from the cave floor are called

stalagmites, and are the counterparts of stalactites. Sometimes the stalactites hanging from above and the stalagmites growing from the bottom unite to form cave columns. The curtain-shaped dripstones formed on the walls, by the water leaking or dripping from the ceiling edges or the ceiling near the edges, are called curtains (wall dripstone formations).

At the end of the cave, there is a lake with a water surface of 200 m², 17 m deeper than the entrance. The temperature of the cave is constant throughout the year and is 18° C.





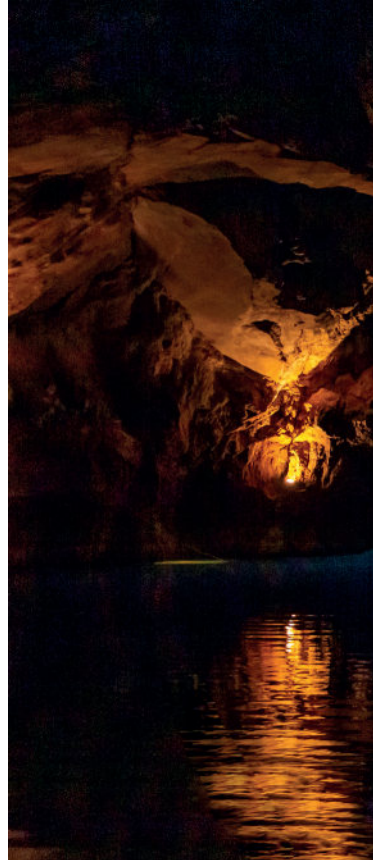




Photograph: Sefa Seyitođlu

ALTINBEŐIK CAVE





It is one of the most beautiful caves of our country, located in Altınbeşik Cave National Park, approximately 5 km southeast of Ürünlü village in İbradı district. The cave is under the General Directorate of Nature Conservation and National Parks of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and is operated by İbradı Municipality.

It was found during the research for Oymapınar Dam in 1966, and took its name from Altınbeşik Hill. The exploreable part of this cave, which has the world's 3rd largest and Turkey's largest underground lake, is 2200 m with its arms. The cave starts with a 125 m long lake, the depth of which reaches up to 15 m in some places.

A bridge formed of a natural rock block in the middle of the lake, and a nearly vertical travertine, at a height of 44 m covering the entire hall at the end of the lake, are present. Since the cave is completely filled with water in winter and spring, it is only suitable for visits in summer and autumn.



Photographs: Sefa Seyitoğlu





DAMLATAŞ CAVE





The cave is located on the seaside, 3 km from the Alanya city center. It was discovered by chance, during the opening of a quarry to be used in port construction in 1948.

Filled with fascinating stalactites and stalagmites, it is Turkey's first cave opened to tourism. These stalactites and stalagmites are thought to have formed between 10.000-15.000 BC. The name "Damlatas" (eng: dripstone) was given because of the water drops dripping from the stalactites.

The temperature is 22 °C, humidity is 95%, and constant pressure is 760 mm, inside the cave. The air of the cave consists of 71% nitrogen, 20.5% oxygen, and 0.025% carbon dioxide. The cave has become a popular destination for asthma patients due to its capability of curing respiratory diseases, especially asthma, with its high humidity, and 8-10 times more carbon dioxide content than the average.





Fotoğraf: Göktuğ Özgül

KARAIN CAVE





Photograph: Göktuğ Özgül

It is located in Yağca village, 5-6 km from the old Antalya-Burdur highway, in Döşemealtı. It is 27 km from Antalya. The cave can be reached by climbing 522 steps, it's a long shot but it's definitely worth it. The excavations in the cave have been continuing since 1946.

The oldest known human remains in Anatolia were found in the Karain Cave, which is one of the most significant places, in the sense

of paleolithic history in Anatolia and the Near East. The cave has always been used by humans in prehistoric, proto-historic, and classical antiquity periods. In other words, in all three periods of the Stone Age: the Paleolithic period (Old Stone Age), the Mesolithic period (Middle Stone Age), and the Neolithic period (New Stone Age); in Chalcolithic (Copper Age), Bronze Age and so on.



Photograph: Göktuğ Özgül

Neanderthal humankind, and wild animal skeletons were found during the excavations. The excavations revealed that the region was used as a settlement area about 500.000 years ago, and the cave was also discovered to be the largest cave where

people have lived, in our country. It was declared as a first degree archaeological natural protected area, in 1997.

Archaeological findings from the excavations are exhibited in the Antalya Museum, and the Karain Museum right next to the cave.



ZEYTİNTAŞI CAVE



Photograph: Göktuğ Özgül



Photograph: Göktuğ Özgül

Located on the south slope of Zeytinlitaş hill, southeast of Gökçeler neighborhood of Akbaş village, and 15 km north of Serik district; Zeytintaşı Cave is 54 km from Antalya, and 16 km from Serik.

It was discovered during quarrying in 1997. The average temperature inside the cave is 23 °C, and the relative humidity is 70%.

The cave is 14 m in depth, and has 2 floors. The upper floor is 136 m, and the lower floor is 97 m in length, with the side corridors they have. The upper floor was opened to tourism in 2002. The lower floor of the cave is 0.5–7 m in height, and 0.5–8 m in width. This floor, which is 12 m lower than the upper floor, has been closed to visitors in order to protect it from destruction.

The stalactites, stalagmites, and columns that continue their formations in the cave are covered with all kinds of dripstones.



Photograph: Ebru Açıklım

The most characteristic feature of the cave is the numerous “pasta stalactites” it has, which still continue their formation, and they can be found with up to 3 cm in width and 70 cm in length. The hall where the pasta stalactites are, is called the Spaghetti hall.



Photograph: Göktuğ Özgül

KARATAŞ (YEŞİLKARAMAN)

CAVE

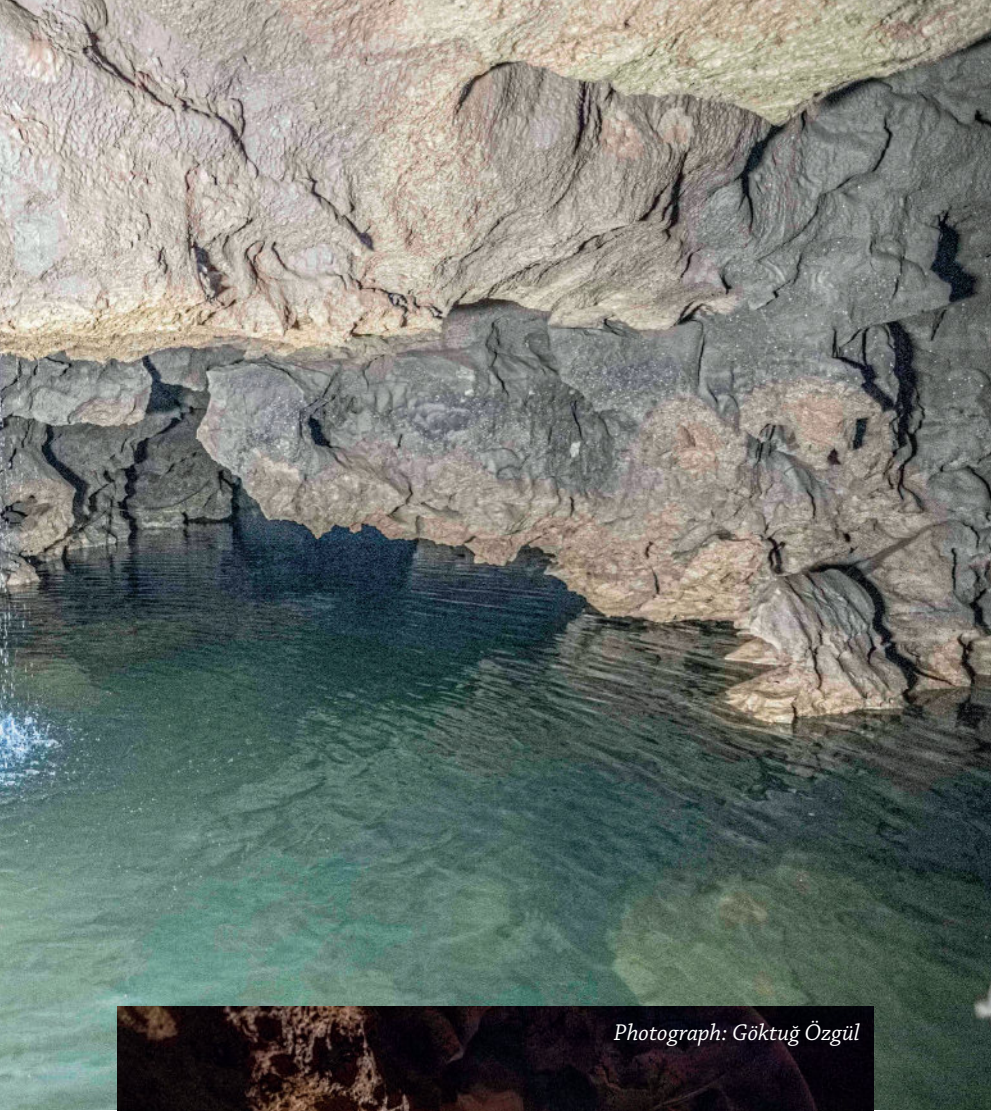




The Karataş Cave is located in the Yeşilkaraman neighborhood of Aksu district, 23 km from Antalya.

The 213 m long Karataş Cave contains curative mud, various stalactite, and stalagmite formations, ponds and galleries. It was opened to visitors in 2011 by a private family company.

It is considered to be the cave, where wounded soldiers were treated with the curative mud, and the weapons were preserved, during the Sagalassos landing in 333 BC, during the reign of Alexander the Great.



Photograph: Göktuğ Özgül



Photograph: Göktuğ Özgül

YALAN DÜNYA CAVE





It is located in the Beyrebucak neighborhood of the Gazipaşa district, and is 7 km away from the town center. There are numerous stalactites, stalagmites, and columns in this 5 millions years old cave.

Although the cave is 4 km long in total, only 450 m has been opened for visitors. The temperature of the cave is constant throughout the year, and is 28°C. The cave is believed to have healing effects on asthma patients.



Photograph: Göktuğ Özgül





CÜCELER CAVE





The cave is located in Tirilar village, alongside the Sapadere Canyon road, in Demirtaş town of Alanya district. It is 18 km from Alanya town center and 13 km from Demirtaş. The cave can be reached by completing the 170 m walking track through the trees. The 155 m long cave consists of 6 galleries. The cave was opened to visitors in 2012. The colorful festivity of the stalactites, stalagmites and columns, is the most distinctive feature of this cave. In addition to stalactite and stalagmite formations, there are also many travertines where water flows.



CAVES OF ANTALYA THAT ARE NOT OPENED TO TOURISM

Besides the caves that are opened to tourism, Antalya also has caves that have been identified, and pre-explored caves such as: Kocain Cave, Beldibi Cave, Sırtlanini Cave, Geyikbayırı Cave, Konakaltı Cave, Küçükdipsiz Cave, Yerköprü Cave, Gürleyik Cave, Derya Cave, Karataş Semahöyük Cave, Çimeniçi Cave, Mahrumçalı Cave, Peynirdeliği Cave, Tilkiler Cave, Mavi Mağara, Düdensuyu Cave, Aslanlı (Yaren) Cave, Hasbahçe Cave, Kadınıni Cave, Korsanlar Cave, Âşıklar Cave, Kekova Adası Deniz Cave, Asırlı Adası Deniz Cave, Güvercinlik Deniz Cave, Güvercinini Deniz Cave, İncirli Deniz Cave, Hıdrellez Cave ve İnbaş Cave. These caves have not been opened to visitors, nor have been illuminated. However, they are appealing to some groups, and can be entered with a guide and necessary equipment.

KOCAİN CAVE







The cave is located in İndağı, northwest of Ahırtaş neighborhood, in the district of Döşemealtı. It was discovered in 1919, and was declared as a first degree archaeological natural protected area, in 1990. The cave has the status of being the 111th Natural Monument of our country, as declared in 2013, according to the National Park Law.

Kocain Cave is 687 m long and has a total area of 36 decares. It is the cave with the largest entrance (35x70 m in size), in Turkey. It ranks 29th in the world and 1st in Turkey in terms of its one-piece gallery. The cave contains a cistern from the Roman period, columns with a height of 50-60 m, and stalagmites with a diameter of 8 m and a height of 45 m.





#WeAreStrongTogether



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