

Ayvalık, Worth Exploring Paradise on Earth











The “Windy City” is waiting for you as well!

Ayvalık that is located in the North Aegean is a district of Balıkesir... There is Gömeç on its northeast, and Bergama and Dikili, which are districts of İzmir on its south. The Aegean Sea stretches along on its west. Lesbos Island that is the administrative center of the North Aegean Islands Geographical Region of Greece and the settlements on it are so close to Ayvalık that they can be seen with naked eye.

Ayvalık, which resembles an open-air museum, stands out not only with its rich history but also with its distinctive characteristics and extraordinary beauties it offers. Ayvalık is really a different world with its carefully protected culture, unique architecture, extraordinary nature, very clean air, coastline stretching for miles, bright clean sea, fine sand, eye-catching bays, lyrical islands, atmosphere that inspires artists, rich cuisine and open-minded people... With its Cunda, Küçükköy, Sarımsaklı and Altınova, it is a heaven on earth “worth exploring”.

Ayvalık is also known as the “windy city”. Northeaster blowing from the sea to the shore carries the oxygen of Mount Ida (Kazdağı) and the iodine of the Aegean Sea into the town. Ayvalık has a unique atmosphere that uplifts the soul.





fotograf: kadir bost
- aylık 2011



goksel kantarci photography



Ayvalik Houses Open their Monumental Doors to the Whole World!

Surely, there is no one left who has not yet heard of the fame of Ayvalik's old houses that are harmoniously lined up on the winding narrow streets, leaning against each other...

In Ayvalik, the old people constructed commercial buildings along the seashore, the houses more inland and religious buildings especially towards the hills. The reason for building the commercial structures close to the sea was to transport the produced goods by sea. Because at one time, olive, olive oil and soap were exported to the four corners of the world.

The doors of the old Ayvalik houses that have become prominent as unique examples of woodwork or cut stone masonry; which attract attention with their cast-iron balcony railings, window screens with excellent workmanship, and the originality of the motifs on the balcony corbels are especially worth seeing. These monumental doors are nothing less than works of art. Each one of them is embellished with extraordinary examples of hand workmanship. Besides the doors, the bells, knobs, handles, dates and insurance plates on them are also very interesting.







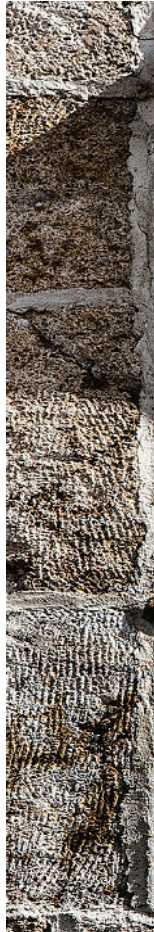
Religious Structures Worth Seeing...

Even though Ayvalık does not have the appearance of a holy town center, it has very spectacular religious buildings. Just like the houses, effects of the Neo-Classical architecture can be seen on all of these buildings.

Religious structures in Ayvalık can be listed as follows:

Central Church of Taxiarchis (Merkez Taksiyarhis Kilisesi) that was restored and opened to visitors as a “memorial museum” in 2013... The church was built in 1844 for the Archangel Gabriel. In spite of its plain exterior, its interior is very impressive. Icons of saints and angels, the Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary and Adam and Eve eating the forbidden fruit are depicted on the walls.

Church of Faneromeni (Ayazma Kilisesi), dated 1890, is located on a narrow street that terminates on the seaside... The rectangular-planned church draws attention with its decorations on the entrance facade.





Church of Agia Triada (Aya Triyada) is situated on the old İzmir road on a location towards the hills of Ayvalık... The house where the famous writer Venezis was born is also located across Agia Triada. It is trying to resist the natural conditions.

Saatli Mosque (Saatli Cami), which was converted from the church named **Agia Ianni (Aya Yanni)** that was built in 1870, is located in the center of a large courtyard. Its interior is very plain and has a comforting light.

Çınarlı Mosque (Çınarlı Cami), another converted religious structure... Previously it was the Church of **Agia Iorgi (Aya Yorgi)**. It is dated 1790 and is a harmonious combination of elegance and glory.

Mosque of Hayrettin Pasha (Hayrettin Paşa Camisi), which is named after its neighborhood stands out with its plainness and is also an old church... It was built in 1850. Its name was **Kato Panagia** back then. Its surroundings are filled with the most beautiful examples of old Ayvalık houses.

Hamidiye Mosque (Hamidiye Camisi) was built during the reign of Abdul Hamid II for the small number Muslims who lived in Ayvalık. It is on a small hill at the Sakarya neighborhood.

Right across the Çamlık Bay there is the Tımarhane (Asylum) Island, which was called **Agia Paraskevi** by the Greeks. There are the ruins of a monastery on the island. This monastery located at the bottom of a huge rock is known as the **Taşlı (Rocky) Monastery**.





الله

من الذي ابتغى الخلافة بالعبادة والصلوة

الله

والعظماء والصلوات على النبي وآله
والصالحين والبررة والأتقيين
والذين آمنوا وهدوا للصلوة والصدقة
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والصيام والصلوة والصدقة

فواجعت من صلاة النبي وآله

والصالحين والبررة والأتقيين
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The Jewel of Ayvalık: Cunda

Cunda, Turkey's fourth largest island in the Aegean Sea is located right across Ayvalık. Motorboats going to the island depart on the hour from the pier at the Cumhuriyet Square. The journey takes about 15-20 minutes.

Public buses or dolmuş that cross a bridge, which may be "the first bridge over a strait in Turkey", can also reach Cunda, which is "the jewel of Ayvalık", overland". This road that is called the "Gönül Yolu" (Road of Feelings) is 8 kilometers long.

There is a **Taxiarchis Church** also in Cunda. The neo-classical building, which is a single-domed basilica-type structure, dates from 1873. Recently, the church was restored by the Rahmi M. Koç Museum and Cultural Foundation and opened to visitors as a museum. Vintage cars, motorcycles and bicycles, steam-operated engineering vehicles, marine tools and equipment, children's toys, baby toys, different models of clocks, typewriters and cameras from the past to present, toy car models, models and mock-ups of important structures, and home tools and equipment used in the everyday life are on display in the museum.









Church of Panagia (Panaya) was built in 1850 on one of the hills overlooking Cunda. On another hill, there is the **Church of Agia Ianni (Aya Yanni)**.

Moonlight Monastery is located at a bay that is 5 kilometers west of Cunda. Its old name was **Agios Dimitrios, Ta Selina**... A graceful structure surrounded by olive trees and merged with the sea.

This time we come across the **Leka Panagia (Panaya) Monastery**, which reveals itself among the olive trees in Cunda. Due to the reason that the monks themselves worked in the construction of the monastery, it is considered to be one of the most unusual examples of the traditional monastery architecture.

Monasteries of **Agia Iounnou Tou Prodromou** located on the Tavuk (Chicken) Island right next to Cunda and **Agia Iorgios** on the Güvercin (Dove) Island bring past to present.









Very Colorful, Very Lively Cunda Bazaar

Those who go to Cunda must definitely see the Taş Kahve (Stone Coffeehouse) that is among the best-known coffeehouses in Turkey. It is a historic venue and has an uncommon architecture. It has high ceilings, ostentatious stained glass windows. Swallows fly inside it.

In Cunda if one climbs uphill from the shore, a large stone building that is an old chapel and the windmill behind it are reached. This is the **Sevim-Necdet Kent Library**... Additionally, the quiet and charming **Cafe Nostalji** offering an amazing view of Ayvalık and Cunda awaits you there.

The **Gift Market** in Cunda is a humble but also a very colorful market. There are all sorts of products symbolizing Ayvalık. You can be sure that you will find everything that one can think of as a "Gift".

Public market is set up on Saturdays in Cunda. It is a small but rich market...

When in Cunda, one must stop by **Çataltepe**, which is named after a hill with two large rocks and has a marvelous shore. The sea is crystal clear and the sand is very fine...

Belediye Plajı (Municipal Beach) on the Lale (Tulip) Island was also renovated and expanded recently. An ideal place for feeling refreshed in the sea with a Blue Flag.









Cunda, the Seafood Center!

Restaurants in Cunda are literally competing with each other with their rich cuisines. Unique and even limitless tastes are being created with the mutual cultures of immigrants from Crete, Lesbos and the natives of Ayvalık in these kitchens.

Cunda is a stop for those who want to taste more than the usual appetizers... The Island that cheers the palate with its olive oil dishes is also a seafood center. The best of each kind of fish and seafood are offered here: **çipura** (sea bream), **barbun** (red mullet), **karagöz** (shipshead bream), **mercan** (red sea bream), **sinarit** (dentex), **levrek** (sea bass), **gopez** (bogue), **kalamar** (squid), **ahtapot** (octopus), **karides** (shrimp), **karadiken** (sea urchin), **akivades** (cockles), **ayvada**...

...And of course, **papalina** (sprat). Sprat is a very special fish found only in Ayvalık. Tiddler of the sardine. Crispy flavor when fried in olive oil.

There is **Pateriça 1st and 2nd villages**, which are two tiny settlements on the other side of Cunda. The beach in the first village is one of the cleanest waters to swim in Ayvalık...













Ayvalık is Different with Every Corner...

There are many special places worth seeing in Ayvalık, where the transportation is safely provided every hour of the day with dolmuş, buses or taxis.

The first place that comes into mind is the **Şeytan'ın Kahvesi (Devil's Café)** in the Palabahçe Square, which resembles a natural film plateau. It is quite a different pleasure to drink verjuice from a special cup while sitting under a magnificent sycamore tree and watching the environment that smells of history. The Cafe also occasionally hosts artistic events.

Another stunningly beautiful corner of Ayvalık is **Macaron...** With its windy and winding streets that are sometimes wide, sometimes narrow; lined with décor-like old houses on both sides and its two cafes (**Camlı Kahve** and **Mercan'ın Kahvesi**) facing each other, it offers quite a different beauty to its visitors.

The **At Arabacıları (Carriage Drivers)** Square that immediately embraces one with its small but original architecture and vibrant environment is yet another treasure of Ayvalık.

It is necessary to emphasize that the pulse of Ayvalık beats at the seaside cafes on the **Cumhuriyet Square**. Cheerful crowds spend joyful moments there by cooling off with the sea breeze that usually starts at noon...

There is the Atatürk Statue made by Hüseyin Gezer near the cafes. The reliefs on the statue depict the first "military bullet" of the Turkish War of Independence.



SANTİFİKON SATILIK

ZEYTİN

ZEYTING
müstahsil
NATİ
SİZ
ZEYTİN
ZEYTİN
ÜRÜNLE

TUBORG









Don't Leave Ayvalık Without Visiting!

By the way, let's give a short list of "must-see" places for those who visit Ayvalık:

-Small and historic **Sebze Hali (Vegetable Market)**, which is the sign of abundance with its colorful counters.

-**Cheese mongers** that are located at different parts of the town and are known for their richness of variety.

-Confectioners that not only conquer the palatal taste but also the hearts with their curd **cheese dessert** that is special to Ayvalık.









-**Ayvalık Toast Mongers** that are swarmed with those who miss toasts with kaşar (cheese), sucuk (special Turkish sausage), sausages and mixed flavors.

-Mobile counters that sell roasted **Cretan chickpeas**, which are smoky-smelling, hard as iron but with a unique taste and they are available only in Ayvalık.

-**Traditional tradesmen restaurants** that one comes across when least expecting on a street corner or inside a street.

-The **Tenekeciler (Tinsmiths) Street**, formerly known as the Meyhaneciler (Barkeepers) Street, and modest restaurants there.

-Colorful **Antikacılar (Antiquarians) Market** that is located on the ground floor of the Ayvalık Palas Hotel in the Gümrük (Customs) Square.

-**Profitilya**, also called the **İlk Kurşun Tepesi (First Bullet Hill)**, with a magnificent view. Ayvalık was established on the foothills of it.

-Just nearby, **Cennet Tepesi (Paradise Hill)**, which “feasts one’s eyes” with the silhouettes of Mount İda (Kazdağları) and Lesbos.

-**Çamlık** that is established on a hill located right on the edge of the city.

-**Kır Kahvesi (The Countryside Café)** that invites people to tranquility and the **Belediye Gazinosu (Municipal Casino)** that faces the **Timarhane (Asylum) Island**, both are in Çamlık.





-Delikli Taş (Hollow Stone) near the Çamlık Bay. It is considered as one of the symbols of Ayvalık.

-Çamlık Camping in the verdant forest, near the seaside.

-Ada Camping in Cunda that is by the "glassy" sea.

-Gece Pazarı (Night Bazaar), full of surprises, open during the tourist season on the Talatpaşa Road.

-And of course, the rich and cheerful Thursday Bazaar that is established on the narrow, cobblestoned side streets.









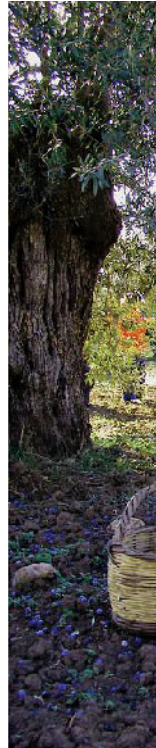


“Immortal Tree” Olive; its Past and Present and All Characteristics At the Zeytin Müzesi (Olive Museum)...

Ayvalık, a tourism paradise, is also an “olive land” and “olive oil country”.

In other words, olive and olive oil is a cultural wealth for Ayvalık...

More than two million olive trees all over the town are also the most important source of income for many people...







These trees shimmering with the changing lights of the day and resembling a cover that is a natural wonder, were created centuries ago by the grafting of wild olive trees called "delice" (crazy).

Ayvalık olive takes its unique characteristic features from the region's soil structure, dominant northern winds that blow to the olive groves over the Mount Ida, and its gentle sloped, arable nature where the olive groves are created.

Now, there is also an **Olive Museum** in Ayvalık. It was opened in 2012, in a building that served as the Vakıflar Olive Oil Factory between 1960s and late 1980s.

In the Ayvalık Municipality Olive Museum you can see many objects left from the factory period: Stones and knives to prepare the olive pulp, cars carrying this pulp, presses that press olive oil out of the pulp, mechanisms that separate the black water and the oil and a great number of tools and equipment that belong to the olive oil manufacturing technology...

The museum that was designed with the modern museology concept has panels that tell the story of olives, olive oil and soap. In addition, Ayvalıkians who contributed significantly with their devoted work in the making of Ayvalık an "olive land" are remembered with respect.

Ayvalık Municipality Olive Museum can be visited daily from 8am - 5pm except on Mondays.









Contemporary Music Foundation: Ayvalık International Music Academy

In Ayvalık where cultural and artistic activities continue not only during the tourist season but also throughout the year, an important organization continues to work meticulously since many years: **AIMA–Ayvalık International Music Academy**.

The Academy regularly hosts world-renowned artists; and puts its signature under important successes in the name of music in Ayvalık with concerts, workshops of composition and creative writing, piano / guitar master classes and summer workshops for children.

There are also other art institutions in Ayvalık. Sanat Fabrikası (Art Factory), working under the umbrella of **Ayvalık Culture and Art Association (AYKÜSAD)** and **Ayvalık Art Association (ASD)** is the leading one among them. AYKÜSAD organizes notable activities year round. It organizes photography contests, theater festivals, and cultural tours.

The hall of Sanat Fabrikası, located in a historical building, is again among the important stops of art-lovers due to its full program... Here plays, poem reading and memorial days and concerts alternate. The now traditional theater festival is welcomed each year with increasing interest.









Boat Trips in Ayvalık, the “Town of Islands” are Like a Dream!

There is one more “beauty” in Ayvalık that must be experienced “absolutely”: Daytrips by boat...

The boats that make a tour of the islands with lunch served onboard, depart from Cumhuriyet Square between 10.00-10.30 am and return around 6 pm. We can say that these boat trips are dreamlike journeys during which one can explore islands and bays accompanied by music and various animations; and also make the most of the sea and sun.

In Ayvalık there is the sea everywhere and it is very clean in many places. Six Blue Flag beaches wait for you to enjoy swimming in this spotless water. These beaches are the Ayvalık Municipality Public Beach, Haliç Park Hotel, Grand Temizel Hotel, Ortunç Club, Engürü Holiday Village and Küçükköy Camps Front Sarımsaklı Beach...









All Sorts of Beauties in Ayvalık Await the Diving Enthusiasts...

Underwater tourism in Ayvalık is the leading activity of the recent years and is gradually gaining momentum. Because the town has exactly 22 islands. Accordingly, there are around 60 diving spots available that make diving possible all the year round. Ayvalık islands generate an ecological niche in terms of underwater flora and fauna.

The oldest reefs for deep, night, flow and reef diving in Ayvalık are **Deli Mehmet**, **Ezher Bey Stone** and **Kerbela** shallows... Red coral was mapped in 34 places. With this feature, it outshines even the Red Sea corals. Red starfish is seen only in this region in Turkey. Sea hare, too.

Daily diving trainings are given in Ayvalık for those who are interested; test divers are made. There are also long-term courses. First, theoretical knowledge is given and then training divers are carried out.

Ayvalık is also well known with the abundance of underwater hunting. People who spearfish return to their boats loaded and therefore happy. Additionally, as the seabed offers an extraordinary visual richness, it is the favorite for underwater photographers...



AYVALIK DIVE SPOTS





D24
ALI REİS

KIZ ADASI

D27 DELI MEHMET D28

D25

D20

D21

D22

D23

PATRICA

MIRMIRCALAR

B. KARA ADA

D26

YUMURTA ADASI

K. KARA ADA

D18

HASIR ADASI

19 KULAÇ
D17

LALE ADASI

ALİ BEY ADASI

THE STRAIT

THE INNER HARBOR

AYVALIK

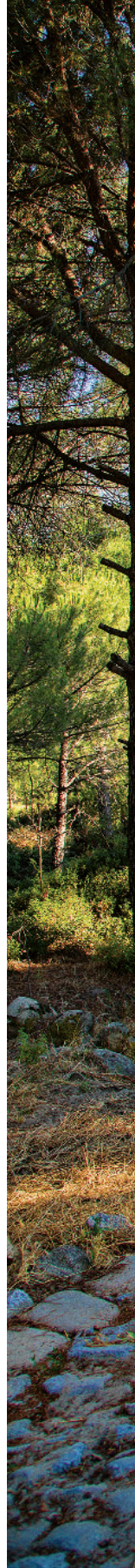
SARIMSAKLI



When We Say Nature Tourism It is the Ayvalık Islands Natural Park...

The Ayvalık Islands Natural Park that is Turkey's largest deserves all praises for its unique landscaping. Here you will find noble red pines, olive trees that are friends with the sea, giant eucalyptus trees, sheltered bays that have harbored who knows which pirates, quiet harbors, attractive beaches, salt lakes, mysterious islands. The view turns into almost a dream when the church and monastery ruins that suddenly appear are also added.

The Ayvalık Islands Natural Park, which is 17,950 hectares wide, includes 20 of the 22 islands connected to Ayvalık. Their names are as follows: Cunda Island (Alibey), Pınar (Spring) Island (Mosko-Kılavuz), Çıplak (Bare) Island, Yellice (Windy) Island (Poyraz Island), Güneş (Sun) Island, Maden (Mine) Island, Küçükmaden (Small Mine) Island, Kız (Girl) Island, Yumurta (Egg) (East) Island, Balık (Fish) Island, Kara (Black) Island, Hasır (Straw) Island, Güvercin (Dove) Island, Taşlı (Stony) Island, Yelken (Sail) Island (Ayiyo), Yalnız (Lonely) Island, Yuvarlak (Round) Island, Göz (Eye) Island, Yumurta (Egg) (West) Island and Tavuk (Chicken) Island.





The Ayvalık Islands Natural Park that has a great potential for nature tourism has already become a visiting place for nature lovers once the “**Step by Step Ayvalık**” project was planned and realized by the Ayvalık Chamber of Commerce in 2013...

In the park there are two separate **Hiking and Mountain Bike Tracks** leading to **Pateriça** on one side and the **Hakkibey Lighthouse** on the other side. Both tracks are 10 kilometers long. The rich and variable geographical structure, with its soft and sloping surface features are ideal characteristics for mountain bikers.

There are exactly 752 different plants within the park’s boundaries... Furthermore, it has five plant species that are not found anywhere else in Turkey. There are also four plant species that have a narrow spread in our country.

One more surprising information: The number of bird species in Ayvalık is exactly 243... Given the fact that the total number of bird species determined in our country is 470, it becomes clear that 50% of these are seen within the borders of the Ayvalık Islands Natural Park.











Neighborhood That is Small in Size But Great Historically: Küçükköy

Küçükköy is a neighborhood very close to Ayvalık and is small in size like its name. However, it has a great history. At first the Greeks lived there. Lastly, Bosnians that come from the Balkans were settled there during 1893 and 1913.

It is a different, nice and colorful place with its “miniature” square looking like a natural décor, houses dating from the 19th century, hospitable and friendly people, the **Merkez (Central) Mosque** that was a church (**Ayiou Athanasaïou–Aya Athanasïu**), its böreks (pastry) with minced meat, cheese, eggplant and zucchini, and the **Kent (Town) Museum**.

Another one of the most important riches of Ayvalık is Sarımsaklı, located next to Küçükköy... **Sarımsaklı** is a very long, very spacious and very clean beach. It is 8 kilometers long. It offers a crystal clear and calm sea.





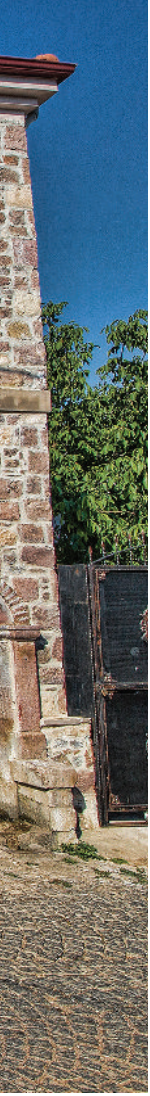
Beaches, hotels, hostels are lined up on Sarımsaklı... Aside from the beaches, this is in fact a real land of hotels. A large part of the foreign tourists that visit Ayvalık prefer to stay at Sarımsaklı.

In Sarımsaklı, where a public market worth seeing is set up on Tuesdays, there are plenty of options available for those who want to have fun. It has entertaining nightclubs, lively cafes and shining discos.

Sarımsaklı is also a golden opportunity for surfers. The wind provides very favorable conditions for those who love windsurfing. Kite surfing is also gradually increasing.

And **Şeytan Sofrası (Devil's Table)**... It is one of the most "worth seeing" places. It is a flat hill formed by volcanic structuring. It has a magnificent panorama. **Ayvalık, Cunda and the Islands** spread in front of you... This breathtaking view spellbinds viewers especially during the sunset hours.



















Altınova... One More Spotless Beach in Ayvalık!

Altınova, whose history dates back to the Bronze Age, was also known as Ayazmend earlier.

Atatürk gave Altınova's name with respect to its fertile soil. There are two religious structures in Altınova that is a district of Ayvalık. Mosque of Hacı Bayram Veli and the Küçük (Small) Mosque... The Mosque of Hacı Bayram Veli, according to the marble inscription next to its door, was built in 1490-1491, during the reign of Beyazıt II.

We suggest that you visit the building dated 1888 in the Merkez (Central) District, which is being used as an olive oil factory and the houses from the 15th century, which are also in the same district.







Altınova has a valuable plain as its name. It has 25 thousand acres of land that is arable for all types of agriculture. Olives and olive growing are well developed on these lands.

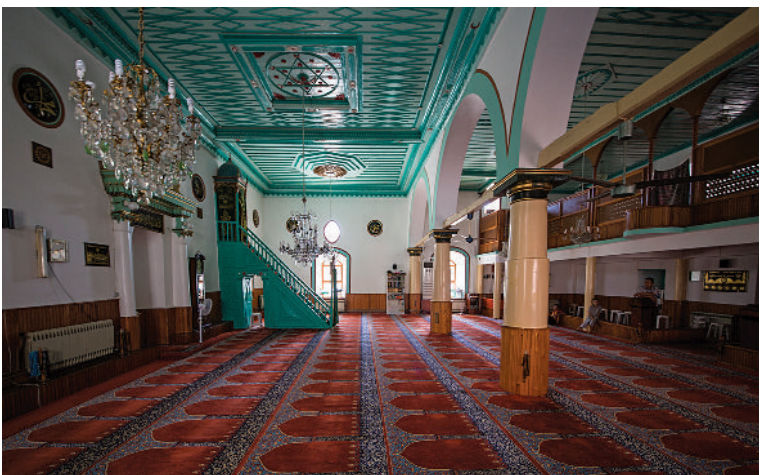
On the 2-kilometer long coastal area of the region that is called İskele ("Quay") there is a natural "Sand Island". This interesting island increases the 11-kilometer long Altınova coast to 13 kilometers. The sand island is reached by a concrete bridge.

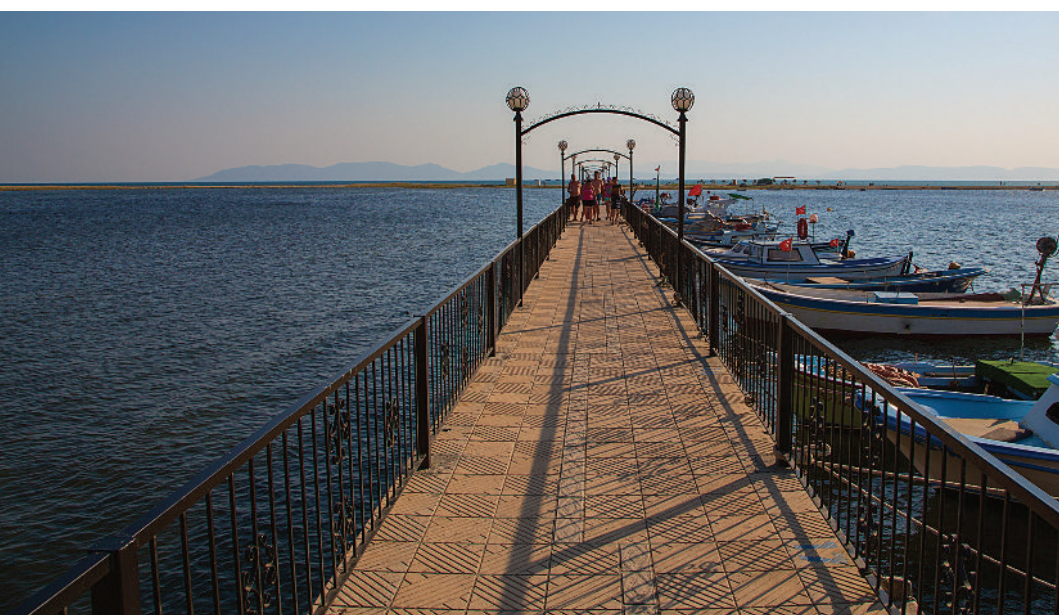
Altınova ("Golden Plain") has a valuable plain true to its name. It has 25000 dunams (1 dunam = 920 square meters) of land suitable for all types of agriculture. Olives and olive cultivation is very advanced on this land that is irrigated by the Madra Creek and the Karakoç Stream. Cotton, potatoes, watermelon, tobacco, sugar beet and crops are also grown.

Let us also remind you that the Altınova open-air market is held on Wednesdays. You can find anything and everything in this small but rich market. After all, Altınova is in a way the land of vegetables and fruits... Tomatoes, pepper, eggplant, melon, watermelon is grown from local seeds and sold on the fertile land alongside the road between Altınova and İskele. What is more, they are all fresh and delicious. You can find the same kind of fresh and delicious products in the center of Altınova as well.

In Altınova which is distinctive with its spotless beach, pleasant and cool picnic / hiking points scattered in the forest and drinking water that tastes like spring water, it is a great pleasure to explore its small but famous restaurant, its oven that is known for its stone oven bread, and its yogurt unlike anything else.

Along the coast of Altınova that has a very lively atmosphere in the summer, sports like surfing, sailing, canoeing, water skiing, etc. are carried out.









Bergama, Assos, Lesbos and Koca Seyit Airport... All are next to you!

Ayvalık is also a very active customs gate used for round-trips to Lesbos. There are daily ferries from Ayvalık to Lesbos. Average travel time is approximately 2 hours... It is possible to make reservations for Lesbos through the tourist agencies in Ayvalık.

Moreover, on one side there is Bergama and right next to it the Kozak Plateau, and on the other side Mount Ida and Assos... All are as close to Ayvalık as a daily round trip...

Finally, it is necessary to emphasize that reaching Ayvalık is very simple. Buses of different companies come and go to Ayvalık every hour of the day. Koca Seyit Airport being only 40 kilometers away from Ayvalık is another convenience.

Istanbul-Edremit and Ankara-Edremit flights are gradually becoming more frequent. The opening of Koca Seyit to international flights brought a new vitality to the Gulf region.





Gümrük

Zeytin Müzesi

Taksiyaris Kilisesi

Saatli Camii

Çınarlı Camii

Şeytan'ın Kahvesi

Ayvalık Tostu

Hagia Triada Kilisesi

Hayrettin Paşa Camii

Ayazma

Marina

Amfi Tiyatro

Hastahane



Cennet Tepesi

İlk Kurşun
Tepesi

ÇAMLIK / SARIMSAKLI



KÜÇÜKKÖY



ALTINOVA

Madra Barajı

Kum Ada

İskele

Hacıbayram Camii

Küçük Camii

CUNDA

Patrıça

Rahmi Koç Müzesi

Cunda Kültür Merkezi

Taksiyaris Kilisesi

Taş Kahve

Despotun Evi

İskele

Marina







Yes, Ayvalık is a place like this... It is an elegant lace that nature and history has woven together. It grasps one with its culture, its colors, its scents, its energy and atmosphere, and almost draws one in. And, the open-minded people of Ayvalık are inviting everyone who wants to discover the beauty of their town to Ayvalık, and sincerely want to share these beauties with them!



AYVALIK



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