



Eskişehir, Turkey as a crossroads for leisure, travel and entertainment



Mehpare Tokay Argan

Bilecik Seyh Edebali University, College of Applied Sciences, Bozüyük Bilecik, Turkey

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 29 June 2015

Received in revised form 23 February 2016

Accepted 8 March 2016

Available online 25 March 2016

Keywords:

Turkey

Eskişehir

Leisure

Leisure city

ABSTRACT

Eskişehir is located in the Central Anatolian Region, on a junction linking Anatolia with the west. Its unique nature and features that make it different from other cities endow Eskişehir with a distinct character. These differences stem from the city's natural landscape, as well as, its manmade recreational areas that were later created, which reinforced the city's image and identity. In its October 2014 issue, the *Worldwide Traveler* advertised Eskişehir – which it described as virtually being a European city in the middle of Anatolia with its excellent architecture, bridges, and canals – as a city that will leave a memorable impression in the minds and hearts of its visitors with its unique characteristics. Eskişehir, with its historical buildings, green parks, charming and always lively hangouts, convenient local transportation, and its status as being a youth and cultural center, has the potential to attract both domestic and foreign travelers.

© 2016 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

As cities change dramatically, leisure is the key to actualizing lifestyles for both residents and visitors. Leisure time usually involves an individual leaving aside routine activities like work and instead spending time on more enjoyable activities (Argan, 2013). Urban planning has played an important role in leisure, life quality, wellbeing and sustainability issues, and requires a comprehensive analysis of its impact on many physical, psychological and socio-cultural environments and urban life. In this respect, Eskişehir has, in recent years, been one of most prominent cities in Turkey.

Eskişehir is an attractive commercial, industrial and educational destination in the Central Anatolian Region of Turkey. It has become one of the most popular cities in Turkey, setting an example for other municipalities (Samkar & Alpu, 2013). The role of the local administration is one of the most important indicators in terms of shaping city image; at the same time, from the point of view of local administrations, the city oriented towards cultural and touristic attractions can bring about a special relationship between the city and the residents or visitors. For this reason, Eskişehir is noteworthy.

Although the central Anatolian cities are characterized by conservatism and are ruled by Islamist local administrations, Eskişehir is from this perspective quite different. The lifestyle of both residents and city's local administrations is based on a Western-oriented philosophy. As the management style of local governments in Turkey has an effect on the image of the city, it can be stated that many medium-sized cities in Turkey are displaying increased conservatism. However, a Modernist and European-oriented administration in Eskişehir has implemented a

series of action plans in order to attract both domestic and foreign tourists.

With the features and conditions of the geography in which it is located, its lifestyle and a quality of life that is close to European standards, Eskişehir stands in contrast to many conservative cities in Turkey. The main reason for these differences lies in the socio-cultural, economic, and political fabric of the city. In addition, the vision held by its mayor, and the projects he has initiated during four terms, have made the city a trademark city and thus Eskişehir has taken its place among the cities sought out by visitors. Additionally, the fact that the city is a university town leads to a proliferation of leisure alternatives, which in turn gives visitors a sense of freedom and escape. This study summarizes the leisure activities that domestic and foreign tourists who want to make use of their leisure time can experience in Eskişehir, or to put it more clearly, it is an overview of Eskişehir as a recreational city.

1.1. Eskişehir's early history

Based on the archaeological studies conducted in the province of Eskişehir, it was concluded that the first settlement was established in Şarhöyük and its surroundings around 3500 BC. Various claims have been made based on the findings at Demircihöyük that the prehistoric settlement in Eskişehir and its surroundings date back to 5500 BC. The foundations of Eskişehir, one of Turkey's oldest cities, were laid in the ancient city of Doryleum, founded in the antique age. Although the city was destroyed several times by enemy forces throughout ancient history, it was later rebuilt. In order to be able to resist invasions, the city was relocated at least three times. Because the city, first founded around the Porsuk stream, that is to say on the plain, posed as a vulnerable state against outside invasions, the second city was styled as a

E-mail address: mtokayargan@gmail.com.

the Black Sea Region, to the northwest is the Marmara Region, and to the west and southwest lies the Aegean Region (Figs. 1 and 2). With its 13,925 km² surface area, Eskişehir covers 1.8% of Turkey. It is 792 m above sea level (Ertin, 1994).

A rise in the rate of population growth has been observed in Eskişehir from the second half of the 19th century onward. One of the most important reasons for this is the migration of Turkish populations wishing not to live within the new states established in the Ottoman geography in Anatolia. Indeed, a significant portion of Turks coming from countries like Crimea, Bulgaria, and Greece with this migration were moved to Eskişehir and its surrounding regions. The other reason is that its industry was highly developed in the early years of the Republican period (Güneş & Yakut, 2007). Another characteristic of the population in Eskişehir is that the population is mainly concentrated in the city center. Today, the population of the city of Eskişehir based on the urban 2013 census is 812,320 people. A large portion of this population resides in the city center, while the rest lives in the rural area (Üsküdar et al., 2014). As the city's population actively lives in the city center, density of urban space and a young population creates a sense of crowding.

1.3. Socio-economic conditions

In terms of human resources, Eskişehir has a high level of education. Ninety-nine percent of the population is literate. There are two state universities in the city center (it is one of those major cities in Turkey with more than one university). Moreover, the size of the student population in comparison to the urban population might be higher than



Source: Uğur Aydan and Serhan Saner (2015). Anadolu University. Research Institute of Earth and Space Sciences.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1008195>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1008195>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)