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# The Konya News

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# Konya is the Heart of Tolerance





Karatay Mayor Hasan Kılca shared a message on the occasion of the 752nd Vuslat Anniversary of Rumi. Emphasizing that the foundation of Mevlana's journey from Balkh to Konya centuries ago was love and affection, Mayor Kılca said, "Konya is the heart of tolerance, sincerity, and affection. The hundreds of thousands of guests—domestic and international—who visit our city each year are, in fact, in search of love, sincerity, and a deep spiritual connection."

Highlighting once again that Konya is the heart of tolerance, sincerity, and affection, Mayor Hasan Kılca noted that Konya is not only the capital of the Great Seljuk heritage, but also the most precious capital of our spiritual world.

## THE **"CULINARY HISTORY BOOK"** OF THE KARATAY MUNICIPALITY RECEIVES GLOBAL RECOGNITION




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# KONYA CUISI
## NATIVE and ORIGIN

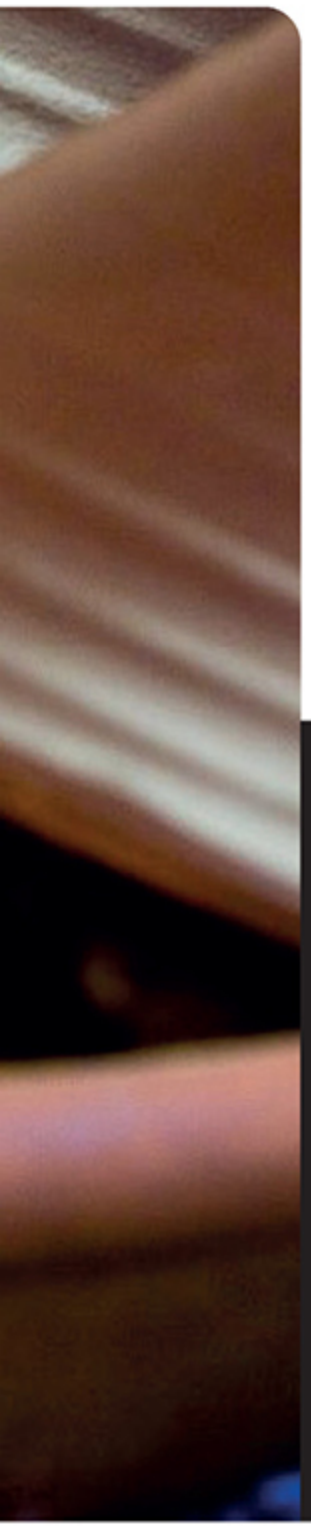






NE
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Let's get to know Nevin Halıcı, the doyenne of Turkish culinary culture, whose kindness, knowledge and culture I admire.

***Could you tell us your life story?***

I was born in Konya. I completed my primary, secondary and high school education in Konya. After Girls' Technical Higher Teachers' School, I completed my master's degree at Selçuk University and my doctorate at Gazi University. I worked as a food teacher in Kızılcahamam, İzmir, Çumra and Konya. I am currently retired and live in Konya and İstanbul. My interest in food led me to become a food writer. I have published twenty-five books on Turkish Cuisine.

***Which city do you think has the richest cuisine?***

If we put Istanbul Cuisine, also known as Turkish Cuisine, first, we can say Konya Cuisine. Konya Cuisine is the richest cuisine in every way, descending from the Seljuks and not influenced by foreign cuisines among the regions included in my research.

***Your area of expertise is Mevlevi cuisine. What is the connection between Ateşbaz-ı Veli and Turkish Culinary Culture and Mevlevi Dervishness?***

Ateşbaz-ı Veli is the head chef of Rumi. He is also the person in charge of dervish training. Ateşbaz-ı Veli's rules related to Mevlevi are valid both in the kitchen and in training. Ateşbaz-ı Veli is the first cook to have a monumental tomb built in his name in the 13th century.

***What is the place of salt in Mevlevi cuisine?***

Salt is sacred and important not only in Mevlevi Cuisine, but everywhere where food and cuisine are concerned. Traditionally, cooks would give each other salt as a gift when visiting.

***What are the effects of Mevlevi cuisine on the Seljuks?***

It is almost the same as the period cuisine. However, a more distinguished cuisine than the folk cuisine is seen in the lodge. We can say that there have been transitions, without a doubt.

***Which Mevlevi dishes still exist today? In my district,Ardanuç, tutmaç and herise soup are also cooked. (I came across it in the past.)***

You can see it in detail in my book Mevlevi Cuisine. It is true that these two dishes are found in most parts of Anatolia. Originating from Central Asia, tuttuç and herise are soups made in the dervish lodges of the Seljuks.

***What are the effects of Seljuk cuisine on Ottoman cuisine in terms of food culture?***

The Seljuks have transferred territorial, administrative and military influences on many civilizations that came after them; cuisine is one of them. The Seljuk tradition has countless effects on Ottoman cuisine, from food to table settings.

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# A JOURNEY SPANNING CENTURIES FROM OBRUK TO SAVATRA



Karatay Municipality is preserving the history of Anatolia with projects that uncover thousands of years of ancient heritage. From the 800-year-old Obruk Caravanserai to the Roman-era Savatra Ancient City, the ongoing work both preserves cultural heritage and highlights Karatay as a leading destination for cultural tourism.

The work carried out by Karatay Municipality to preserve historical structures and bring them into tourism reveals the region's deep-rooted history while also increasing its tourism potential.

The 800-year-old Obruk Caravanserai from the Seljuk period was revived through a meticulous restoration process and brought back to life as a "Museum Hotel." Having hosted thousands of visitors so far, the structure continues to keep Karatay's cultural memory alive.

At the Savatra Ancient City, which has a history spanning thousands of years, archaeological excavations continue uninterrupted with the cooperation of Karatay Municipality, Selçuk University, Konya Metropolitan Municipality, and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Through the excavations, Roman-era structures such as the theatre, the council building, ancient roads, and mosaics have been brought to light.

## *AN ACCOMMODATION EXPERIENCE INTERTWINED WITH HISTORY*

Located on the Konya–Aksaray road, right next to the Kızören Sinkhole, the Obruk Caravanserai Museum Hotel offers visitors not only accommodation but also an unforgettable experience intertwined with history. Restored in full respect to its original architectural details, the structure showcases elegant examples of Seljuk architecture. From kitchen tools to Turkish baths in the rooms and the artifacts displayed, every element reflects the Seljuk atmosphere.

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### *A SENSORY JOURNEY WITH THE RUMI SCENT MUSEUM*

The Rumi Scent Museum located within the museum hotel offers visitors a sensory journey into the mystical world of Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi. A 175-year-old distillation device, wooden containers from the Ottoman period, traditional incense burners, and rosewater flasks bring the scents of the past into the present. In the museum's most special section, ten different scents inspired by the Masnavi are presented to visitors. These scents are not merely essences; they also carry deep meanings belonging to Mevlana's philosophy.

### *THE TABLE OF THE PAST: THE RUMI TASTE MUSEUM*

Located right next to the Rumi Scent Museum, the Rumi Taste Museum invites visitors to the table of the past. The museum displays ceramic plates, earthenware pots, bronze mortars, and healing bowls from the Seljuk and Principalities periods. Eight-lobed cobalt-blue decorated artifacts, slip-ware vessels, and figurative plates reveal the artistic richness of the era. Visitors also have the opportunity to taste flavours inspired by Ottoman and Seljuk cuisine in this authentic atmosphere.

### *HISTORY EMERGES AT THE SAVATRA ANCIENT CITY*

Another project that sheds light on Karatay's thousands-year-old history is the excavation work at the Savatra Ancient City, which began in 2021 and continues with the cooperation of Karatay Municipality, Konya Metropolitan Municipality, Selçuk University, and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.




# THE 59TH KONYA MINSTRELS FESTIVAL CONCLUDED WITH A MAGNIFICENT PROGRAM

The 59th "Konya Minstrels Festival," held this year in Karatay, concluded with an unforgettable final program. The event received full marks from the people of Konya, with 25 minstrels and folk poets from 19 different cities and 3 countries taking the stage.

Before the final program, minstrels and folk poets performed open-air shows at Mevlana Square and Kültürpark, offering enjoyable moments to citizens. The final program, held at the Sultan Veled Hall of the Mevlana Cultural Centre, took place with great attendance.

Beginning with the Turkish National Anthem, the program featured 25 minstrels and folk poets from Azerbaijan, Iraq, Iran, and 19 different provinces of Türkiye. With their heroic chants (koçaklama), love songs (güzelleme), and duels (atışma), the minstrels won the admiration of the art lovers in the hall. The "dudak değmez" performances received particular praise from the audience.

The jury of the program consisted of Prof. Dr. Sinan Gönen, Prof. Dr. Ali Yakıcı, and Ahmet Yıldırım. Folk poets from Azerbaijan, Iraq, Iran, and various cities of Türkiye—including masters such as Hilmi Şahballı, Mürsel Sinan, Nurettin Türkan, Osman Taşkaya, Fuat Özdemir, Selahaddin Kazan, Mustafa Aydın, Vahit Köroğlu, İhsan Yavuzer, Temel Şahin, Emri Karakuş, Nihat Sönmez, Zikri Aliyar, Zafer Kazancı, Tahsin Kuştaş, Halil Daylak, Hüseyin Çifci, Mümtaz Sağlam, Belit Ocuşlu, Milad Abdeli, Şergiye Zengilanlı, Özlem Olgaç Özlemi, Ahmet Poyrazoğlu, Behram Aktemur, and Arif Yıldırım—also performed, adding great value to the event.



### *YAKICI: KONYA IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CULTURAL BASINS OF THE MINSTREL TRADITION*

Delivering the opening speech, Gazi University Faculty Member Prof. Dr. Ali Yakıcı stated that "The minstrel tradition is a continuation of the bard tradition. Minstrelsy is the continuation of the bardic tradition. This tradition, which began with Yunus Emre in Türkiye, has continued for centuries with increasing richness. Minstrels are among the most important elements forming Türkiye's cultural memory. Konya is one of the centres of this tradition. Konya, which raised Âşık Ömer, Şem'i, and my great grandfather Âşık Mehmet Yapıcı, is a deeply rooted cultural basin of the minstrel tradition."

Prof. Dr. Yakıcı also mentioned about the history of the Minstrels Festival:

"In 1931, under Atatürk's instruction, a Minstrels Festival was held in Sivas through the mobilization of Muzaffer Sarısözen and under the leadership of Ahmet Kutsi Tecer. This festival, where Âşık Veysel was introduced for the first time, holds an important place in our cultural history. With the reshaping of cultural policy in 1965 during the senate term of the late Feyzi Halıcı, it was decided to revive this tradition. Starting in 1966, this festival has become a cultural revival where our people meet their art."

Yakıcı said that "I extend my sincere thanks to everyone who has carried this tradition to the present day, especially to Konya Culture and Tourism Association President Ahmet Yıldırım, and to Karatay Mayor Hasan Kılca for his great support in keeping this art alive."

### *KILCA: WE KEEP THE 59-YEAR TRADITION ALIVE*

Karatay Mayor Hasan Kılca stated that "Konya has been the centre of art, culture, and spirituality for centuries. As Karatay Municipality, we are not just an urban administration. We serve with an understanding dedicated to touching hearts, enriching culture, and elevating values."

Expressing great pride that this 59-year tradition continues in Karatay, Kılca said:

"Here today, we come together in a festival where the strings meet the words, the words meet the hearts, and our roots echo through art. In fact, today we are not only celebrating a festival; we are honouring a tradition that has united hearts for centuries, that exalts the value of words, and that raises high the flag of song, love, and brotherhood."

### *A 60th-YEAR ANNOUNCEMENT FROM HASAN KILCA*

Recalling that they have continued the Minstrels Festival with different themes since 2019, Mayor Kılca mentioned past themes such as "Love for Karabakh," "National Technology Initiative," "Tribute to Âşık Veysel," "2023 Mevlana Year and Palestine," and "In Memory of Feyzi Halıcı."

Announcing an important plan for next year, Kılca said that "Next year, for the 60th Minstrels Festival, we will carry out a program worthy of this tradition. Sixty minstrels will come together in Karatay, and we will organize three days of full events. We will realize this great gathering in a manner befitting Konya and our country. The Minstrels Festival is now 59 years old, a great plane tree. I wish this beautiful tradition will always live and continue for many more centuries."

### *MINSTRELS ARE THE MEMORY OF THIS NATION*

Emphasizing that the Minstrels Festival has now become a tradition in Karatay, Mayor Kılca stated that "That this event takes place in Karatay is very special and meaningful for both our district and our city. We are delighted to be part of this deeply rooted tradition that has been sustained with great dedication since 1966. You are the memory of this nation. God willing, the sound of your instruments will continue to echo in Karatay's squares, in Konya's streets, and in every corner of Anatolia. As long as God grants us life, we will always stand by you."

At the end of his speech, Mayor Kılca also remembered the pioneers of the festival:

"I wish God's mercy upon all minstrels who have passed, especially the late Feyzi Halıcı and Ali Berat Alptekin, who played a role in the birth of the Minstrels Festival. I extend my gratitude and respect to all minstrels, lovers of the "saz" and the word, who have come to this program from every corner of our country and our cultural geography."

At the conclusion of the program, a riddle (muamma) was posed to the audience, and Mayor Hasan Kılca presented gifts to the three participants who answered correctly—an enjoyable surprise that received great appreciation.

The final program held at the Sultan Veled Hall of the Mevlana Cultural Centre was attended by Konya Deputy Governor Aydın Erdoğan, Karatay District Governor Cengiz Ayhan, AK Party Karatay District Chairman Akif Demirci, Hüdapar Konya Provincial Chairman Mehmet Zülfi Tam, Turkish poet Feyzi Halıcı's siblings Nevin Halıcı and Hasan Halıcı, and many citizens.

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# 800 Years of History Welcomed 90,000 Visitors

Karatay Mayor Hasan Kılca emphasized the importance of preserving cultural heritage, sustaining it, and passing it on to future generations in his message published on Museums Week, celebrated between May 18–24. Mayor Kılca stated that "the Obruk Caravanserai Museum Hotel has welcomed 90,000 visitors since its opening."

One of the most significant projects implemented by Karatay Municipality toward this goal, the Obruk Caravanserai Museum Hotel, both preserves traces of the past and contributes to cultural tourism.



### *800 Years of Heritage Brought into the Present*

The Obruk Caravanserai, an approximately 800-year-old Seljuk-era structure, was restored and revitalized by Karatay Municipality following a meticulous four-year restoration. Located along the Konya–Aksaray road, the historic structure was rescued from its derelict state and transformed into both a museum and a hotel. During restoration, original architectural details were strictly preserved, ensuring that the historic character was maintained and passed on to future generations.

Situated right next to the Kızören Sinkhole, the Museum Hotel has brought vitality to regional tourism by welcoming 90,000 visitors since its opening. The structure, where Seljuk architectural elements are prominently showcased, attracts both architecture enthusiasts and history lovers.

### *A Historical Experience Within the Museum Hotel*

The Obruk Caravanserai Museum Hotel offers not just accommodation, but a journey through time. From kitchen utensils to Turkish baths in the rooms, from the exhibited artifacts to the furniture used, every detail reflects the traces of the Seljuk period. The stunning view of the Kızören Sinkhole—180 meters in diameter and 145 meters deep—makes the experience even more unforgettable.



### *Rumi Fragrance Museum*

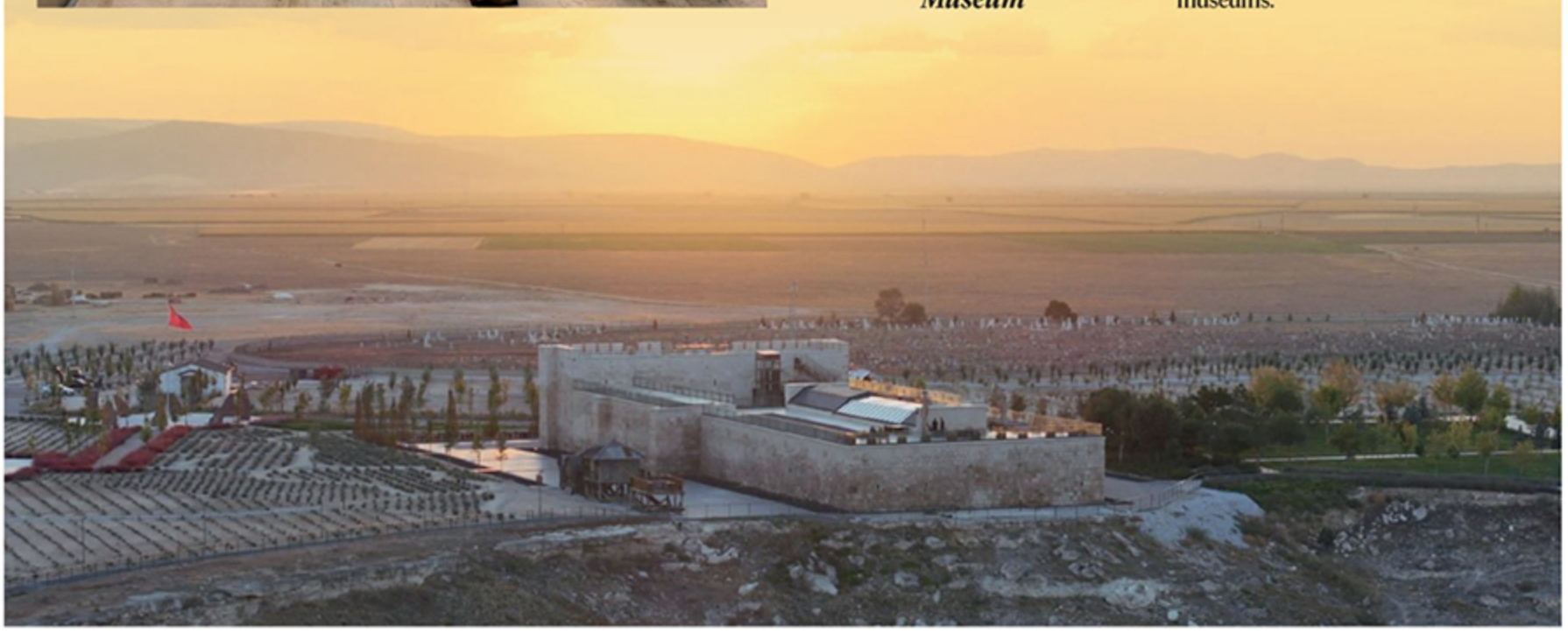
Located at the heart of the Museum Hotel, the Rumi Fragrance Museum takes visitors on a sensory journey through the mystical world of Mevlana Jalaluddin Rumi. The 175-year-old distillation device at the entrance and Ottoman-era wooden containers illuminate historical richness. Three incense burners reflect the traditional incense culture, while rosewater flasks and traditional dowry chests carry cultural details to the present day. One of the most special sections of the museum is the area where ten different scents inspired by the Masnavi are presented. These fragrances are not merely essences but symbols carrying deep meanings. Guests have the opportunity to deeply feel Rumi's philosophy in these sections.

### *Experiencing the Past at Today's Table: Rumi Taste Museum*

Located right next to the Rumi Fragrance Museum, the Rumi Taste Museum invites visitors to the table of the past. The museum consists of two sections exhibiting ceramic plates, earthenware vessels, bronze mortars, and healing bowls from the Anatolian Seljuk and Beyliks Periods. Additionally, the museum features figurative plates, octagonal cobalt-blue decorated pieces, slip-decorated vessels, bronze oil lamps, and human-figured twin candlesticks. This collection provides visitors with a unique visual and cultural experience. In the Taste Museum, meals inspired by Ottoman and Seljuk cuisine are served at tables filled with traditional flavours.

### *Kılca: Museums Are Living Spaces of Cultural Memory*

Karatay Mayor Hasan Kılca said, "Konya is the cradle of civilization with its history, architecture, and cultural identity. As Karatay Municipality, we carry out important work to preserve, promote, and sustain these values. Museums Week offers an important opportunity for cultural awareness. Museums are the most special places where one meets art, culture, history, and civilization. These spaces contribute to both the intellectual and emotional development of individuals and strengthen our bond with the past. As Karatay Municipality, we reinforce this bond with exemplary projects like the Obruk Caravanserai Museum Hotel, carrying our history not only to today but also to the future. Since its opening, our Obruk Caravanserai Museum Hotel has become one of the key destinations for thousands of domestic and international visitors and was awarded the 'Project Award' by the Union of Historical Towns. This shows what a right investment we have made. On this occasion, during Museums Week, I invite all our citizens to connect with our cultural heritage and to visit our museums."






By Ezgi Ulu

# THE "CULINARY HISTORY BOOK" OF THE KARATAY MUNICIPALITY RECEIVES GLOBAL RECOGNITION

With its efforts in cultural municipalism aimed at preserving its ancient past and carrying it into the future, the Karatay Municipality has received a prestigious award with the book "Boncuklu Höyük and Çatalhöyük; 10,000 Years of Culinary Culture," which covers the culinary culture of Boncuklu Höyük and Çatalhöyük, cooking and preservation methods, and other living conditions of the era. The book was deemed worthy of the "Best of the Best" award in the "Food Culture" category for the years 1995–2025.

Published under Karatay Municipality Cultural Publications, the book titled "Boncuklu Höyük and Çatalhöyük; 10,000 Years of Culinary Culture" not only explores the culinary culture of Boncuklu Höyük and Çatalhöyük, but also examines in detail the settlement patterns, agriculture and livestock, nutrition, and many other aspects of those periods.

With this work, which has shaped the evolution of culinary arts and gastronomy publishing, Chef Ulaş Tekerkaya has been invited to the Gourmand World Cookbook Awards, which will bring together the most distinguished chefs, writers, and visionaries and will be held between



26–30 November 2025. At the event to be held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Tekerkaya was deemed worthy of the "Best of the Best" award in the "Food Culture" category for the years 1995–2025 for this unique work.

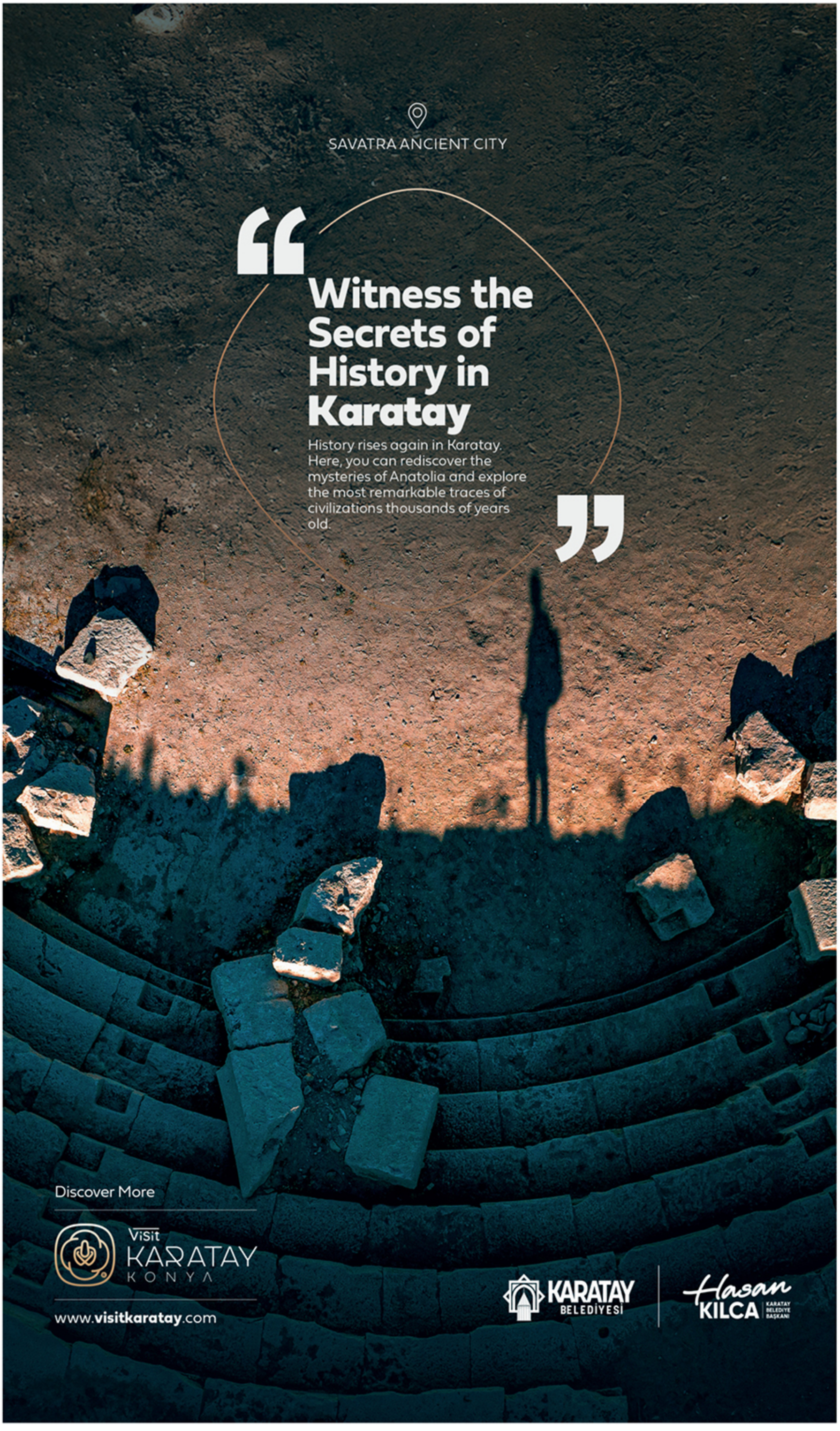
Stating that this award is not a personal achievement, Chef Ulaş Tekerkaya said that,"This success is the shared pride of everyone who is devoted to carrying Anatolia's 10,000-year-old culture into the future. Our journey, which began with the 'Best of the World' award in Sweden in 2022, will be crowned with the 'Best of the Best' in Riyadh in November 2025. I am eager to share the joy of receiving this wonderful award on behalf of my country and our culture."

Ulaş Tekerkaya continued, "I extend my sincere gratitude to Karatay Mayor Mr. Hasan Kılca and his valuable team for their support in making this significant achievement possible. I also wholeheartedly thank my editor Dr. Mustafa Akturfan, Prof. Dr. Ümit Sormaz, Archaeologist Numan Çakmak, the excavation teams of Boncuklu Höyük and Çatalhöyük, and all friends who supported me with their contribution, knowledge, and efforts during the preparation of the book."

***THIS AWARD IS THE MOST CONCRETE PROOF THAT ANATOLIA IS THE CRADLE OF CIVILIZATIONS***

Karatay Mayor Hasan Kılca stated that "the book is a unique resource for both our country and the science of gastronomy, adding that with "Boncuklu Höyük and Çatalhöyük; 10,000 Years of Culinary Culture" we aim to carry the culinary heritage of these lands into the future."

Mayor Hasan Kılca said that "The work which is presented to Konya's cultural and culinary memory is also very valuable for us. As a reflection of our municipality's appreciation for our cultural heritage, our book titled 'Boncuklu Höyük and Çatalhöyük; 10,000 Years of Culinary Culture' has been awarded a very prestigious international prize. As the Karatay Municipality, we do not see municipal work merely as infrastructure and superstructure services. One of our fundamental duties is to preserve, maintain, and pass on to future generations the ancient past upon which these lands are built. With this understanding, we documented the thousands-year-old culinary culture of Boncuklu Höyük and Çatalhöyük, located within our district and shedding light on human history. This award is the most concrete proof that Anatolia is the cradle of civilizations. The work, prepared with great effort and dedication, received the 'Best of the Best' award in the 'Food Culture' category for the years 1995–2025. This award is not just an achievement for a single book; it is the result of the respect we show toward the history and culture of Karatay, our Konya, and all of Anatolia. I thank Chef Ulaş Tekerkaya for giving us this pride."


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# KARATAY MUNICIPALITY COMPLETES THE RESTORATION OF THE BURHAN DEDE TOMB

**By** Ahmet Özkan



Karatay Municipality has added another project to the efforts carried out to preserve the historical and cultural heritage located in the district. Considered one of Konya's spiritual values, the Burhan Dede Tomb has been revived through restoration works carried out in accordance with its original form.

Karatay Municipality continues to strengthen the historical identity of the district by carrying out numerous projects aimed at preserving its cultural and spiritual values; including the restoration of historical mosques, tombs, fountains, and examples of traditional architecture. In this context, the Burhan Dede Tomb has also been restored and returned as part of Konya's spiritual heritage.



### *THE HISTORICAL STRUCTURE HAS BEEN TAKEN UNDER PROTECTION*

Located in Sarıyakup Neighbourhood, the Burhan Dede Tomb was registered as an immovable cultural asset that must be preserved under the Law No. 2863 on the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets by the decision of the Konya Regional Council for the Protection of Cultural Heritage dated 17 February 2017 and numbered 4263. The tomb was classified as a second group protected structure. The restoration project prepared for the area owned by Karatay Municipality was approved by the Konya Regional Council for the Protection of Cultural Heritage on 24 September 2024. Following the approval, implementation works began on 12 June 2025. During the restoration process, the use of traditional construction techniques and original materials was prioritized, and the works were completed accordingly.

### *KILCA: WE ARE CARRYING KARATAY'S SPIRITUAL HERITAGE INTO THE FUTURE*

Karatay Mayor Hasan Kılca stated that the revival of the Burhan Dede Tomb carries great importance for the cultural memory of Konya.

Mayor Kılca said that "Karatay is a place where history and culture are intertwined, with a deep-rooted past. Through the restoration and preservation projects we carry out across our district, we both strengthen the city's identity and preserve the cultural heritage entrusted to us by our ancestors. The Burhan Dede Tomb is one of the important works we approached with this understanding. We have completed its restoration in accordance with its original form. With the completion of the landscaping, we will open the tomb for public visits."

### *THE CENTURIES-OLD TOMB HAS BEEN PRESERVED WITH ITS ORIGINAL ARCHITECTURE*

Built using traditional Sille stone material on a stone foundation, with brick-reinforced geometric stone walls, the Burhan Dede Tomb is one of the original examples of traditional architecture with its flat interior ceiling and single-slope exterior roof. It is believed that the four sarcophagi inside the tomb belong to Burhan Dede, his wife, daughter, and son. Burhan Dede has been remembered with great respect by the people of Konya for centuries. Visited by the public, the tomb carries significant spiritual value in both religious and folk culture. Having remained for many years within private property in the courtyard of a house, the tomb was brought to light and taken under protection as a result of the urban transformation and expropriation works carried out by Karatay Municipality. With the meticulous restoration works carried out by the municipality, the tomb was revived in full fidelity to its original architectural character.


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# THE PROJECT THAT PRESER
# THE AREA BEHIND THE T

*On the other hand, with the demolition of the Mevlana Bazaar and Altın Bazaar by the Metropolitan Municipality, a special texture has been brought to the transformed area.*

By Zeynep UÇAR

Work continues at full speed in the Karatay Arasta. The project, one of the largest revitalization projects in Türkiye, is being implemented with the support of the Ministry of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, in cooperation with Konya Metropolitan Municipality and Karatay Municipality. The foundation of the Karatay Arasta, laid on February 10, has reached a significant stage in a short time.

According to the Presidential Decree published in the Official Gazette with the signature of President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the area located behind the Tomb of Mevlana within the borders of Aziziye Neighbourhood has been designated as an "Urban Renewal Area." The decision was made in accordance with Article 2 of Law No. 5366 on the "Renewal, Preservation and Use of Worn Historical and Cultural Immovable Assets." On the other hand, with the demolition of the Mevlana Bazaar and Altın Bazaar by the Metropolitan Municipality, a special texture has been brought to the transformed area.

Within the scope of this project, Karatay Municipality and Konya Metropolitan Municipality are carrying out one of Türkiye's largest transformation projects in the 100,000-square-meter area located between the rear of the Mevlana Tomb and Ali Ulvi Kurucu Street.

### *THE HISTORICAL TEXTURE OF KONYA WILL BE PASSED ON TO FUTURE GENERATIONS*

Within the scope of the project, Karatay Arasta, which constitutes the first phase of the Urban Renewal Project behind the Tomb, is rising in Aziziye Neighbourhood. The bazaar, an important part of this major transformation covering a total area of 100,000 square meters, will consist of 84 commercial units on a land area of 6,427 square meters and a construction area of 3,004 square meters. When the project is completed, Konya's historical texture and cultural heritage will be preserved and passed on to future generations.

### *KILCA: ONE OF TÜRKİYE'S LARGEST TRANSFORMATION PROJECTS*

Karatay Mayor Hasan Kılca provided information about the construction of the Karatay Arasta, which continues behind the Mevlana Tomb. Stating that investments in tourism continue with determination, Mayor Kılca emphasized the importance of the project and noted that significant progress has been made in a short time.

Mayor Kılca said, "Our urban renewal efforts behind the Mevlana Tomb continue rapidly. This area constitutes the first phase of the transformation process aimed at revitalizing the historical texture of our city. Karatay Arasta also began within this framework, and work continues at full speed. The Karatay Arasta, which will consist of 84 independent sections, will be a bazaar worthy of Konya."

Emphasizing that the project will greatly contribute to both tourism and urban aesthetics, Kılca stated that "Especially tourists visiting Hz. Mevlana will also stop by this bazaar. Here, we are creating new living and tourism areas in line with Konya's historical texture. We are building new spaces that breathe in the heart of our city. When the Karatay Arasta is completed, it will become one of Konya's new attraction centres. May our bazaar already be auspicious for our city and for Karatay."



The Konya News



# RVES THE SPIRIT OF KONYA:
# OMB IS BEING RENEWED







### *WE ARE CARRYING KARATAY'S ANCIENT PAST TO THE FUTURE*

Karatay Municipality is also carrying out many projects to bring the district's rich cultural assets to tourism and pass them on to future generations.

Karatay Mayor Hasan Kılca gave information about the work carried out on historical structures and stated that "as a municipality, we restore and revive the historical structures that reflect the identity of Konya and Karatay. It is important to preserve the most significant structures of traditional architectural texture. We identify one by one the houses in Konya that bear historical architectural features and have been damaged over time, and we first put them under protection. After the approval of our prepared projects, we begin restoration works on these structures in a way that reflects the identity of Konya and ancient Karatay. As Karatay Municipality, we are carrying out work in many parts of our district in this context. It is extremely important that we protect our history and transfer such structures to the future. Through these projects, we are carrying the ancient past of our Konya and Karatay centuries ahead."

# KARATAY BECOMES A GLOBAL MODEL IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT






At the 7th Urban Economy Forum (UEF7) held in Toronto, Canada, Karatay Municipality represented Turkey and received the title of "Turkey's first pioneer city" in the field of Sustainable Development Goals. Karatay Mayor Hasan Kılca presented the district's urban transformation and cooperative housing projects during the meeting.

Mayor Hasan Kılca shared Karatay Municipality's projects based on environmental sustainability and economic accessibility, presenting the district's urban vision on an international platform. Within the scope of the forum, Karatay received thc titlc of "thc first pionccr city in Turkey" in the area of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This significant achievement was formalized through a cooperation agreement signed between Karatay Municipality and the Urban Economy Forum (UEF). The agreement was signed by UEF President Reza Pourvaziry and Mayor Hasan Kılca.

### *Karatay Becomes Turkey's First Pioneer City*

The 7th Urban Economy Forum in Toronto aims to strengthen inter-city cooperation, reshape urban economies, and advance sustainable development efforts on a global scale. The forum stands out as one of the world's leading platforms for urban economy, focusing on housing finance, efficient use of resources, and building resilient cities.

Within the scope of the forum, Karatay Municipality took a significant step toward becoming a global exemplar by receiving the title of Turkey's first pioneer city in the field of Urban Sustainable Development Goals.

### *Kılca: We Act with a Human-Centred Urban Approach*

In his speech at the forum, Karatay Mayor Hasan Kılca emphasized that Karatay is the fastest-developing district of Konya. Providing information about the district's transformation and housing production efforts, Kılca noted that Karatay is the largest central district of Konya in terms of land area.

Kılca said, "Karatay is a rapidly growing and developing district. This requires the creation of new housing areas and the strengthening of social and technical infrastructure. With the increasing population, our goal is to increase the usage area per person in all fields—from social facilities to educational spaces, from places of worship to playgrounds, from green spaces to community centres. Under the leadership of our President, Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, we support our country's global mission with model urbanization works at the local level. Our foremost goal is to build resilient cities in accordance with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and to enhance the quality of life of our citizens."

### *184,000 m2 Expropriated*

Karatay Mayor Hasan Kılca stated that the district also contains older residential areas, and that urban transformation activities are carried out with this sensitivity.

Mayor Kılca said, "Old buildings in the city centre, registered structures, and divided ownership through inheritance complicate redevelopment efforts. In these areas, we are decisively implementing Urban Transformation and Mass Housing Projects. Between 2019 and 2025, 184,000 square meters of land had been expropriated and that a total of 23,420 housing units were built through 47 housing cooperatives established together with previous periods. These projects constitute approximately 16% of the district's total housing stock. Our aim is to ensure every citizen can access a safe, modern, and comfortable standard of living."

### *"We Are Building Not Just Buildings, but Livable Neighbourhoods"*

Mayor Kılca emphasized that they arc not only constructing housing but also developing projects that are compatible with nature and enriched with social spaces. He also stated that

"It is as important to build nature-friendly projects as it is to construct housing. In this context, we strengthen public-private partnerships and support green financing solutions and environmentally friendly practices."

### *Stating that they include social areas in every new housing project, Kılca stated that*

"We are adding parks, sports areas, walking paths, and children's playgrounds to our neighbourhoods. A city is not made up of buildings alone; it becomes truly livable when it offers spaces where people can breathe peacefully, where children can play safely, and where families can spend joyful moments together. Our goal is to build a city that places people at its centre."

### *"Our Urban Development Practices Have Become a Global Model"*

Mayor Hasan Kılca expressed his pride in Karatay's recognition as "Turkey's first pioneer city," stating:

"Our urban development practices are now being evaluated as a global model. Karatay has become Turkey's first pioneer city in the field of Sustainable Development Goals. This title also contributes to our country's global vision."

Kılca also said that "In urban transformation processes, along with housing supply, we prioritize balanced population and traffic distribution, access to social spaces, the preservation of green areas, and the principles of horizontal urbanization. We continue planned urban development with firm steps. Every investment is part of this vision, and we will continue to move forward decisively in this direction."



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Hasan KILCA
KARATAY BELEDİYE BAŞKANI

# Wedding Meal in Konya

By Doğa İŞKAN

WEDDING PILAF; is the most important element of Konya culture and gastronomy. Serving food at weddings is the Sunnah of our Prophet (PBUH). Of course, in addition to the spiritual aspect, it has a special place and importance for Konya with its magnificent taste and integrity. Preparations start during the week before going to the pilaf, (Stomach is soothed by drinking vinegar). Before and after the pilaf, it is talked about and discussed like a football match.

SHOEMAKERS; They have acquired the habit of HITTING THE TABLE WITH A SPOON and asking for food over and over again during pilafs. They have become famous in the city for eating too much and torturing the cooks and waiters and have set an example for many professional groups.

There is no distinction of rank or profession at the pilaf table. Everyone eats the same food from the same bowl and experiences the same excitement and pleasure. If there are other concerns at the pilaf table, they forget about it and focus on the meal.

Since Konya is an agricultural city, pilafs used to be made between the morning hours (08:00 / 12:00), but today they are preferred at any time (except in rural areas).

Young people of marriageable age or their parents are not asked "when will you have the wedding", but when will we eat the pilaf.

Wedding tables

The service usually starts after the tables are filled with 10 people. In busy weddings, the guests waiting around the table expect the previous table to be full as soon as possible and their appetite increases even more. As soon as they sit down at the table, they help the waiter clear the table and start a new service because of their impatience.













The Konya News













Starter;

YAYLA SOUP is added and everyone starts eating from the same bowl. Although many people find it strange to eat from the same bowl, its abundance and taste have a special importance for Konya. The bread given with it is consumed only with soups. (Guests generally do not eat bread with pilaf.)

• PILAF WITH MEAT starts to be served second; the guests who are hungry enough are served rice in additions until they are full. The fact that the rice is in grains and offers a magnificent taste with its meat increases the demand even more.

• SEMOLINA HALVA; It is the first dessert in the Konya wedding pilaf menu and it means the end for those who are unfamiliar with the menu, but later on, you learn that another legendary soup will follow. While dessert is served last in many menus, it is served after the first pilafs in the Konya wedding pilaf menu. In recent years, it has also been eaten with ice cream.

• Okra Soup; In addition to its appetizing feature, it is the crown jewel and legend of Konya wedding pilafs with its stomach-soothing and authentic preparation, flavor and warmth. It may not be produced in the region, but Konya consumes it the most among the regions where it is produced. Kilos of flower okra are lined up one by one while they are dried in advance, and then they are picked one by one after they are boiled. Each one has a different story. Maybe that is why its value is accepted as GREEN GOLD for us.

• 2nd MEAT PILAF; It is put on the table as the last main course and if there is a demand, another one is added as an extra so as not to waste. Our elders eat it as plain meatless pilaf, combined with zerde dessert.

• ZERDE DESSERT; It is the messenger that the menu is coming to an end and is served with the last drinks. And it is preferred plain.

• COMPOUND & SOFT DRINKS; Previously prepared by boiling naturally sour cherry and apricot compotes have been replaced by all cold drinks upon request.

• SUBMARINE; It is a well-known feature in Konya, a presentation style where meat is placed both under and on top of a rice dish to be served to special guests of wedding hosts in order to honour their guests. In the past, in order not to be rude to other guests (as a courtesy), twice as much meat was placed under the rice and served to the wedding guests. This is the reality of talking about SUBMARINE in a geography without a sea.

• PRAYER: To our LORD, who made such a menu a blessing for us. To the wedding hosts, preparers and servers who made it possible, and to our young couples who got married, prayers are made at every table so that their families will always have abundance, peace and happiness.

There should be one coordinator at each table. He manages the table like an orchestra conductor and informs the waiter of the demands of the table. He is not good for those who eat with appetite, but for those who do not, with classic phrases like, "Come on, why do you wait, eat more, the rest will come", you will remember that you are at the Konya wedding pilaf table.

In the old Konya wedding traditions, when guests were invited, no one was discriminated against and "THOSE WHO HOLD A SPOON, LET THEM COME" was invited to weddings. Everyone carried their own wooden spoon in their pocket and ate with their own spoon.

WEDDING TORT; It is a type of meal prepared by the wedding cook before the wedding, consisting of yoghurt, sumac onion, sauce or sautéed vegetables on dry bread, depending on the available ingredients, for the guest and his/her relatives.

WEDDING CLOSURE; In old Konya weddings, the method of serving the wedding pilaf with whole meat instead of sautéed meat, according to the possibilities and preferences, is called CLOSURE.

LAST WORD;

WE WISH MERCY AND GRATITUDE to our ANCESTORS who have contributed to the transfer of this Culture from the Ottomans to the present day, especially to the chefs Piri Ateshbaz-i Veli, and to our valuable chefs...

By Ertuğrul Yıldırım



# KARATAY THERMAL HOLIDAY VILLAGE LEADS HEALTH TOURISM FOR 5 YEARS

The Karatay Thermal Holiday Village, brought to the district by Karatay Municipality, has become an important stop in health tourism with its 5-star comfort and natural thermal waters. The facility, which has been in service since 2020, offers high-quality service to its guests.

The Karatay Thermal Holiday Village, built by Karatay Municipality in İsmil Neighbourhood, consists of a total of 112 apartments in 1+1 and 2+1 types across 7 blocks. With its pools containing brown thermal water, the facility offers visitors health and tranquillity; it receives great interest from citizens thanks to its family-friendly structure, separate pools for men and women, social living areas, affordable pricing policy, and friendly service approach.

Since its opening, the facility has hosted more than 400,000 people, attracting thousands of visitors not only from Konya but also from Karaman, Ankara, Kayseri, Istanbul, Antalya, and even from abroad.

## *HEALTHY LIVING THROUGH THE POWER OF THERMAL WATER*

According to the analysis conducted by Istanbul Technical University, the brown-coloured thermal water of Karatay Thermal is particularly beneficial for rheumatic diseases, skeletal system traumas, joint and muscle disorders, post-operative pain, lower and upper back pain, and many skin diseases. It also provides effective results for healthy aging, stress management, anti-obesity, and vitality treatments.

With a temperature of 44.5 degrees, the thermal water has a mineralization value of 3,100 mg/l, which is significantly above the Turkish average. Containing ions such as calcium, sodium, bicarbonate, sulphate, chloride, fluoride, and bromide, the thermal water offers natural support against many ailments.

## *DR. UYAV: HEALING WATER SUPPORTS BOTH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH*

Dr. Murat Uyav, who works at the Karatay Thermal Holiday Village, explained the health benefits provided by the facility.

Dr. Uyav, referring to the scientifically proven properties of thermal water, said:

"We frequently emphasize that thermal water is a source of healing. The basis of this healing lies in the temperature of our thermal waters and the minerals and certain chemical components they contain. Our water reaches up to 44 degrees and contains elements valuable to health such as carbonate, sodium, magnesium, fluoride, and bromide."

Highlighting the effectiveness of thermal water in rheumatic and muscular disorders, Dr. Uyav continued:

"Our thermal spring water plays a supportive role in rheumatic diseases—except for inflammatory and feverish rheumatism types—muscle pain, fibromyalgia, ankylosing spondylitis, and similar ailments. It also provides significant relief for joints with restricted mobility and muscle problems that develop after trauma or surgery."











### *"A COMPLEMENTARY TREATMENT ENVIRONMENT WITH ANTI-STRESS EFFECT"*

Noting that the natural environment of Karatay offers a major advantage for health tourism in addition to the physical effects of thermal water, Dr. Uyav stated that "The steppe climate surrounding our facility helps our guests relax psychologically. This contributes to the resolution of issues such as stress, fatigue, and sleep problems that negatively affect daily life."

Dr. Uyav emphasized that a thermal holiday provides not only physical but also mental rejuvenation, adding that Karatay Thermal Holiday Village offers a complementary treatment environment with its anti-stress effects.

### *PRAISE FROM VISITORS*

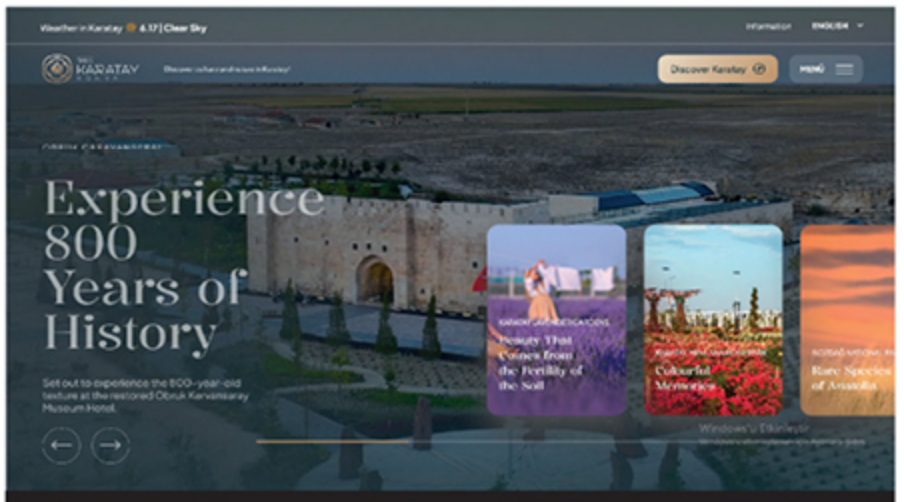
Guests who visited the Karatay Thermal Holiday Village expressed their satisfaction with the services and comfort offered by the facility. In addition to the healing and serenity provided by the thermal water, visitors noted that their holiday was enjoyable thanks to dedicated areas for children and various social amenities. Many visitors stated that they plan to return to the Karatay Thermal Holiday Village.





# FEEL THE SPIRIT OF ANATOLIA IN KARATAY






Karatay Municipality has launched the digital tourism platform Visit Karatay to promote the district's historical, cultural, and natural riches. The platform, accessible via visitkaratay.com, offers a comprehensive digital guide for both domestic and international tourists.

Carrying the traces of Seljuk civilization, shaped by Mevlana's climate of tolerance, and standing out with its natural beauty, Karatay will now also be promoted in the digital world. With the "Visit Karatay" project launched by Karatay Municipality, the district's museums, historical structures, parks, gastronomy, and events have been gathered under one roof and presented to local and foreign tourists.

Additionally, content is regularly shared on Instagram, X, and Facebook under the username @ visitkaratay. In this way, visitors have the opportunity to discover Karatay step by step in the digital environment.

### *KARATAY'S DIGITAL GATEWAY TO THE WORLD*

With its modern and user-friendly interface and Turkish, English, and Arabic language support, the platform brings all the riches of Karatay into the digital world. From the district's historical and cultural values to museums, gastronomy, natural beauty, thermal tourism, and events, a wide range of information is gathered under one roof through "Visit Karatay."

### *PLACES TO DISCOVER IN KARATAY*

Karatay offers visitors not only a historical and cultural journey but also a rich experience full of nature, gastronomy, thermal tourism, and festivals. Some of the highlights featured on the Visit Karatay platform include: Mevlana Tomb, Shams Tabrizi Tomb, Alaaddin Mosque, Obruk Caravanserai, Savatra Ancient City, Boncuklu Höyük, Karatay Madrasa (Tile Works Museum), İnce Minare, Panorama Konya Museum, Koyunoğlu Museum, Mengüç Street, Türbeönü Bazaars, Melike Hatun Market, Karatay Lavender Gardens, Bozdağ National Park, Karatay City Park, Justice Park, Caravan Park, Karatay Zoo, Karatay Thermal Holiday Village, Gastronomy, Karatay Lavender Days, Rose Festival, and local-national organizations.

### *KILCA: WE ARE PROMOTING KARATAY TO THE WORLD*

Karatay Mayor Hasan Kılca stated that "With the "Visit Karatay" project, the district has entered a new era in tourism. Karatay's historical and cultural riches are now being promoted to the world through digital platforms. Karatay, shaped by Mevlana's climate of tolerance, carrying the traces of the Seljuks, and standing out with its natural beauty, has a very special potential in tourism. To promote these values not only to Türkiye but to the entire world, we launched the 'Visit Karatay' project. In the digital age, we aim to promote our tourism destinations in the most effective way. We want to turn our district into an attraction centre. We aim for everyone who comes to Karatay to experience history, culture, and nature intertwined. Through 'Visit Karatay,' we bring the values of our district together with visitors from all around the world."



**By** Doğuhan İŞKAN

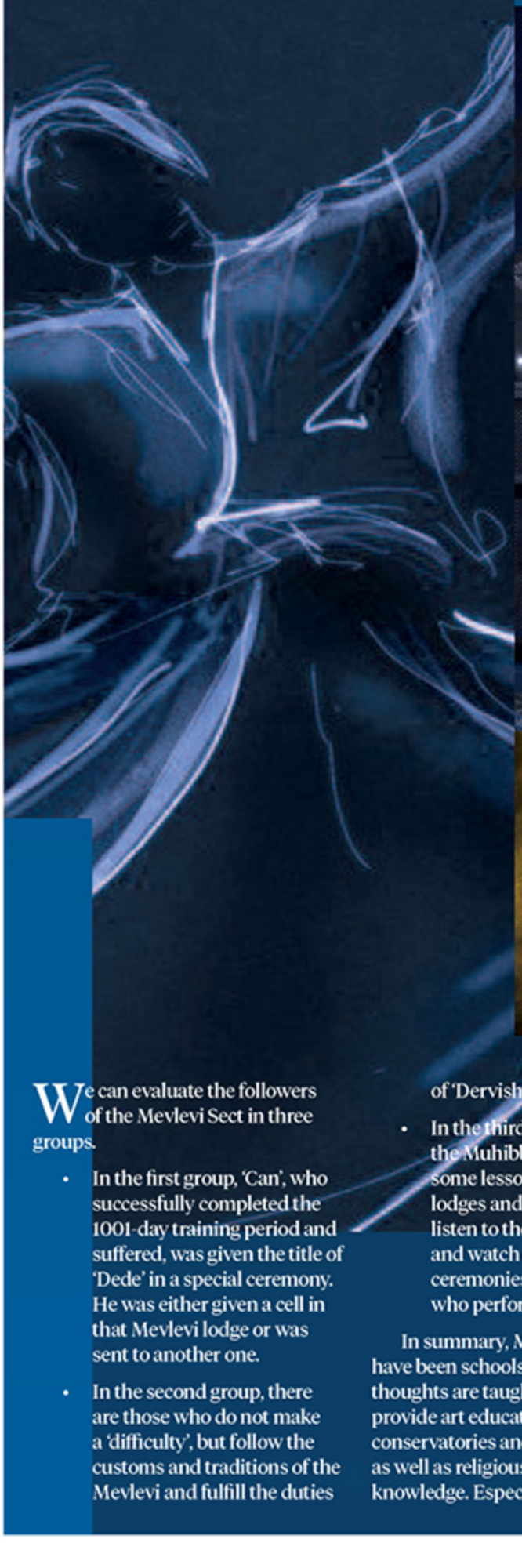


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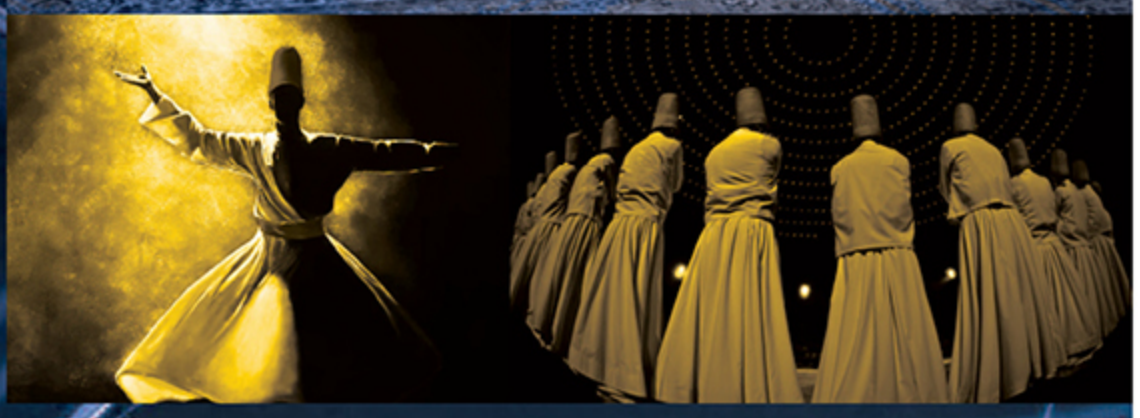


# Mevlevi order and dervish education

It was founded by his son Sultan Veled, his student Çelebi Hüsameddin and his grandson Ulu Arif Çelebi in order to pass on the teachings of Mevlana to future generations, and later it was administered by Makam Çelebi, who was chosen from among the Çelebis from that lineage.







We can evaluate the followers of the Mevlevi Sect in three groups.

- In the first group, 'Can', who successfully completed the 1001-day training period and suffered, was given the title of 'Dede' in a special ceremony. He was either given a cell in that Mevlevi lodge or was sent to another one.
- In the second group, there are those who do not make a 'difficulty', but follow the customs and traditions of the Mevlevi and fulfill the duties of 'Dervish'.
- In the third group, there were the Muhibbans who attended some lessons in the Mevlevi lodges and who came to listen to the conversations and watch or learn the Semâh ceremonies, as well as those who performed the whirling.

In summary, Mevlevi lodges have been schools where Mevlana's thoughts are taught and which provide art education, such as conservatories and academies, as well as religious and literary knowledge. Especially the Mevlevi lodges in Istanbul played an important role in the training of Turkish music masters.

Mevlevi Mausoleum and Mevlevi Lodge in Konya were accepted as authorities. Makam Çelebis resided here. This first Mevlevi Lodge built around the tomb was called 'Âsitâne-i Âliyye'. Mevlevi lodges are of two types: Asitane, which can provide 1001 days of education, and Zaviyahs, which are smaller than these and do not have an educational organization. Asitane were more centralized than the others and had a more organized structure. 'Dedes' were trained only in Asitane, and the architectural section called Matbah-ı Şerîf, where the 1001-day ordeal took place, was only found in Asitane. The Postnishins in the Asitane had a higher status than the Postnishins in the Lodges. Lodges were established in many cities and even villages of the Ottoman Empire. Until the 17th century, Zawiyahs had spread within the expanding borders of the Empire and served a wider segment. There were nearly 140 Mevlevi lodges within the borders of the Ottoman Empire.

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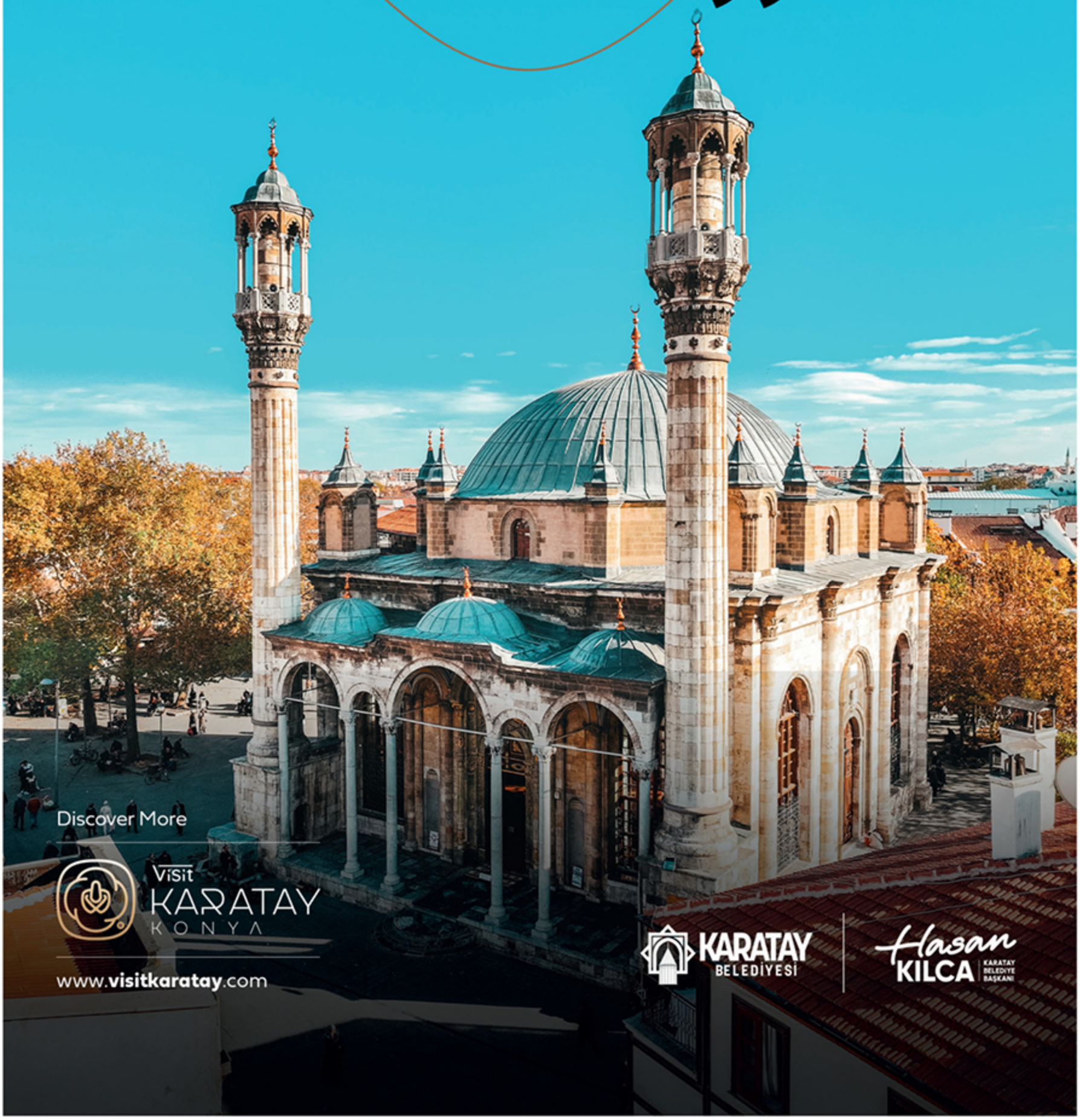
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