



Visiting Hours		
April 1 - October 1 Opening Time: 09:00 Closing Time: 19:00 Ticket Office Closing Time: 18:30	October 2 - April 31 Opening Time: 09:00 Closing Time: 17:00 Ticket Office Closing Time: 16:30	Closed on Saturdays and Sundays.
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GENERAL DIRECTORATE FOR
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ANAVARZA

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE

THE MAGNIFICENT CITY OF ANTIQUITY



Çukurova, one of the most suitable areas in the world for agriculture, has fed civilizations throughout its history with its fertile soils. Therefore, it is not surprising that dozens of different civilizations chose this place as their habitat. Ancient cities where the traces of these civilizations can be seen are scattered all over the plain. One of them is Anavarza Ancient City, which has hosted many civilizations, from Rome to Byzantium, from the Abbasids to the Armenians.

It is believed that the foundation of Anavarza dates back to the Assyrians, and it has been proven through epigraphic research that the name is derived from the Persian word “NEZARBA”, meaning.

“INVINCIBLE”. The settlement, which was located on a busy road in the Hellenistic Period, became a commercial center in time and became wealthy. CE The city, rebuilt in 19 BC as a result of the visit of the Roman Emperor Augustus and whose name was changed to Kaisareia after that date, showed a greater development both economically and politically, supported Septimus Severus during the civil war and with the reward of this victorious emperor, it grew after the 2nd century. In 204 it received the title of metropolis and reached the position of the leading city in the region when the Council of State began to assemble in the city. In the 4th century, the population reaches up to 100 thousand. The fact that it was appointed one of the two capitals of Cilicia by Theodosius II in 408 is proof that it was one of the most important settlements in the region during those years.

This magnificent city, which has many civilizations in its history, continues to fascinate visitors with its ruins. Thanks to its cultural richness, it has been on the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List since 2014. One of the largest ancient cities in the world in terms of area, Anavarza, which takes you back in time hundreds of years ago, deserves to be visited with its history and legends.



City of Dioskorides, one of the Founders of Medicine and Pharmacy

Dioscorides, the source of the legend of “Lokman Hekim”, is the most important person educated in Anavarza.

Dioscorides, considered the founder of medicine, pharmacy and botanical sciences, is said to have written the oldest medical book in the world, “Materia Medica” here. He lived in the 1st century CE, Dioscorides, whose fame spread throughout Rome, who served as a physician in Neron’s army and was even favoured by the emperors as a private physician, produced many medicines and remedies for various ailments. Even today, some plants bear the names he gave them. It is not surprising that a person who knows plants so well grew up in Çukurova, which attracts attention with its rich flora.



Lower and Upper City:
Two Different Periods, Two
Different Stories

Anavarza consists of two parts, Lower and Upper City. The part of the Lower City was built on the plain. The section on steep cliffs that dominates the entire surrounding plain and forms the only elevation in this region is called Upper City.

The most remarkable ruins of the ancient city are generally found in the section LOWER CITY. Among these ruins, most of which date from the Roman Period, are theaters, temples, stadium, baths, mosaics and aqueducts. One of the gates on the 4 km long city wall is an ancient triumphal arch. The Colonnaded Street, about 2,700 meters long and 34 meters wide, is the widest and largest street in the ancient world, and part of it has been uncovered during ongoing excavations. It is believed that the number of columns on its side once exceeded 7 thousand. The aqueduct, built by the Emperor Domitianus in 92 CE, is 25 km long and one of the longest and most spectacular examples of its kind in the Ancient Period. It is among the amphitheaters with only three examples in the whole of Anatolia and, moreover, is the most undamaged in Anavarza. The most important among the Byzantine Period buildings are the Church of the Apostles and the Southwestern Church, which date to the Justinian Period.

In the UPPER CITY, the city walls, most of which are dated to the Byzantine Period, are the first recognizable ruins. In addition, there are churches and chapels in various places. The building called Kaya Church (Rock Church) is one of them, as it was partly built by carving the rocks. The church of Armenian Kings is dated to the time of the Armenian kingdom that once ruled the city and made it its capital. From the inscription surrounding the building, one can learn that high-ranking leaders are buried in the church. Other ruins that can be visited in the Upper City are chapels that were built independently and next to these two churches, the cisterns that were built to meet the water needs of the people in the castle, and the necropolis area where various sarcophagi and tombs can be seen.