

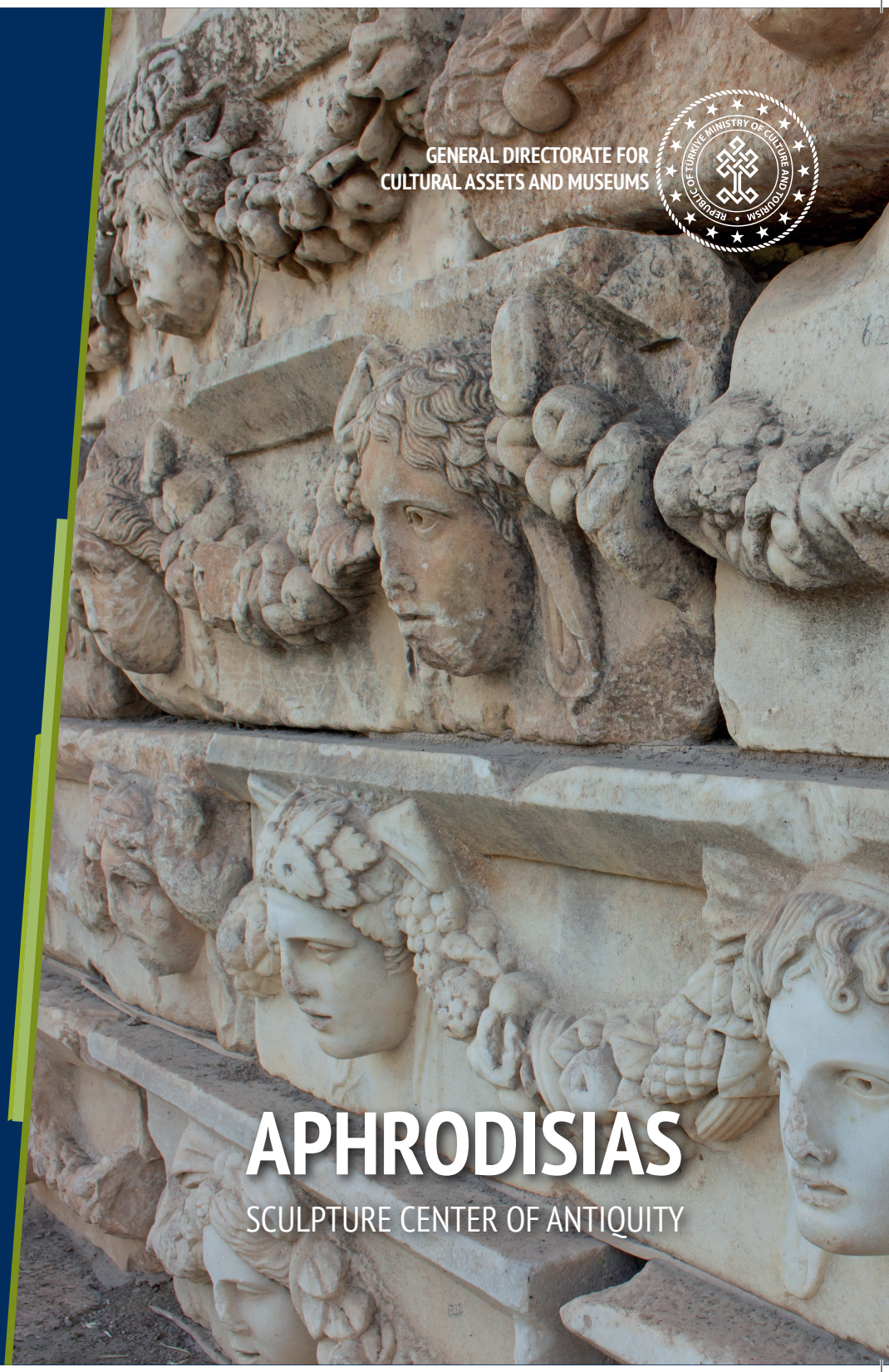
Visiting Hours		
<b>April 1-October 1</b> Opening Time: 10:00 Closing Time: 19:00 Ticket Office Closing Time: 18:30	<b>October 1-April 1</b> Opening Time: 08:30 Closing Time: 17:30 Ticket Office Closing Time: 17:00	Open everyday.
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GENERAL DIRECTORATE FOR CULTURAL ASSETS AND MUSEUMS

# APHRODISIAS

SCULPTURE CENTER OF ANTIQUITY



As in the words of the famous philologist and traveler Azra Erhat, no matter which region of Türkiye you travel to, you cannot find any land not bearing the traces of thousands of years of history.

These traces sometimes appear in the form of a monument like a bridge or a caravanserai in deserted locations, and sometimes it becomes an ancient city adorned with many magnificent buildings.

Aphrodisias, located within the borders of Aydın province, in a fertile valley watered by Dandalaz Stream, is one of the most important of these ancient cities. Excavations in Aphrodisias, the center of sculpture production for 600 years and the place where the most famous sculptors of the period were created, where the magnificent examples of the Roman Period sculpture were created, continue to unearth the works that prove how justified this reputation is based on.

This ancient city, whose story of being discovered by chance, dates back only 60 years, is a place where Roman Emperors granted privileges, artworks are exported even to Italy, and is adorned with monumental structures. Because it has been out of sight, it has managed to survive well-preserved without being plundered. In addition to the buildings such as the Temple of Aphrodite, the Stadium, the Theater and the Sebasteion, it is one of the places that will enchant its visitors with its museum where the magnificent sculptures of master artists can be seen.



#### Discovery of a Photographer

It is uncommon for a photographer to discover an ancient city. The owner of this discovery is Ara Güler, one of the most famous photographers who grew up in Türkiye and immortalized many celebrities from Picasso to Salvador Dali, from Alfred Hitchcock to Winston Churchill with his lens. Güler, who was assigned to take photographs at the opening of the Kemer Dam in 1958, finds himself in a village when he gets lost on his way back. He is amazed at what he sees and takes photos of the peasants and artefacts that come into contact with history. On his return to Istanbul, he makes inquiries about this ancient city. When he finds no satisfactory information, he realizes that no one knows this place. Archaeologists and researchers flock to the ancient city as the photos he sent to Times Magazine have a major impact around the world. The excavations that started in 1961 reveal how important a settlement this city actually is.



#### The Favorite of Roman Empires: Aphrodisias and Temple of Aphrodite

The factors that played a role in the selection of the location of the settlements in the ancient period, to a large extent was their strategic importance. Being suitable for defense, lying on a trade route or having a port are also reasons for preference for establishment of a city. However, the factor that played a role in Aphrodisias' being a settlement is the Temple of Aphrodite... It is thought that the city was formed around this temple, which is dated to the 3rd century BCE.

Tetrapylon, which is among the most visited monuments of Aphrodisias today and admired with its elegant ornaments and architectural details, was the monumental entrance to the Aphrodite Cult Area. Following a street extending from the city centre, the front courtyard of the temple is accessed by going through this gate. If you examine this monument, which is dated to the 2nd century CE, you can see the high reliefs, which are among the most beautiful architectural decorations of the period. One of the details that may attract your attention among the embellishments is the cross motif made covering the figure of Aphrodite. It is extremely important in these years as it is a physical proof of changes in belief and social structure.



#### The Best Sculptures of The Roman Period Were Produced Here

One of the reasons why Aphrodisias was famous during the Roman Period is the sculpture school. The city, where the most beautiful sculptures of the period were produced and talented sculptors were raised with the advantage of its proximity to quality marble quarries, has gained a great reputation as an art center. Emperors and dignitaries assigned the artists here to make their sculptures; they decorated their palaces and mansions with works produced in Aphrodisias.

Its rightful reputation in the field of sculpture from the 1st century BCE to the 5th century CE, that is, for approximately 600 years, enabled the artists of Aphrodisias and the city to enrich.