

DEMRE - MYRA
ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH
RESEARCH ON HISTORICAL PHASES
(RESTITUTION)



Visiting Hours		
April 1-October 1 Opening Time: 08:30 Closing Time: 18:45 Ticket Office Closing Time: 18:30	October 1-April 1 Opening Time: 08:30 Closing Time: 17:30 Ticket Office Closing Time: 17:00	Open everyday.
Address: Demre, Antalya E-posta: antalya@kulturturizm.gov.tr • Phone: 0242 871 68 20		
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ST. NICHOLAS MEMORIAL MUSEUM

A SITE FOR CHRISTIAN PILGRIMAGE

From a Pilgrimage Site to a Museum



St. Nicholas Church was a pilgrimage site during the Middle Ages. Pilgrims traveling by sea to Jerusalem visited Andriake, the port of Myra, on their way, and from there reached the Church of St. Nicholas. Although the church has undergone many transformations since it was first built, its present form is largely the work of Constantine IX, the Byzantine Emperor, in 1042. In 1862 it was repaired and the bell tower, which reaches to the present day, was added by Alexander II, the Russian Tsar. In addition to being an important example of Byzantine architecture, the 11th century murals are also worthy of note. These murals, which depict council scenes, religious meetings where decisions were made about Christianity, are among the finest examples reflecting the style of the time.



Santa Claus, depicted as a person who brings gifts to children dressed in red and white all over the world, was in fact Bishop Nicholas, who became a saint over time thanks to his deeds, and the places where he was born and lived are within the borders of Türkiye. The memory of Saint Nicholas, who dedicated his life to doing good, sharing what he had with the poor and providing the poor with aid by secretly leaving gifts from windows or chimneys, lives on in Demre. The church built in the saint's name in this place where he served and died as a bishop for many years is used as a memorial museum and is visited by almost 1 million people every year. St. Nicholas was born in Patara within the borders of Antalya in the middle of the 3rd century AC and, after his education, worked as a bishop in Myra, now called Demre. In those years Myra was the capital of Lycian Province and the bishop who served there was considered the second greatest religious authority in Anatolia. After his death, a monumental tomb and then a church were built in the name of Nicholas, who won the love of the people of Myra with his good deeds and his important place in the Christian world. Events under the name of "Santa Claus World Peace Appeal" are organized in Demre every year on December 6, the date of his death, to honor the memory of the Saint, who still holds an important place in the world of Christianity. In these events, people from different religions participate in peace prayers, ceremonies are held and Anatolia, where thousands of different cultures and religions have lived together brotherly, once again becomes the meeting point of religions and cultures.

From St. Nicholas to Santa Claus

