



SARIKAMIŞ



EVERY SEASON IS YET ANOTHER MARVEL IN SARIKAMIŞ:

As one of the most important ski resorts of our country with its snow-covered slopes for most of the year, Sarıkamış charms the visitors with its pristine nature, historical places, rich cultural identity, local cuisine, authentic traditions and peculiar values. Sarıkamış, which is one of the highest settlements with its 2100 m. altitude, provides many alternative tourism activities in summer months as well with its verdant yellow-pine forests, trekking, cycling and culture routes throughout valleys and forests, scenic vehicle roads and jeep safari routes.

Settled on high plateaus, Sarıkamış is located in the south-west of Kars Providence. The district that resides on the edge of Kars Plateau which is surrounded with Allahuekber, Soğanlı and Güllü Mountains, hosts a wide range of yellow-pine forest population requiring high altitudes and resistant to cold winters and winds,





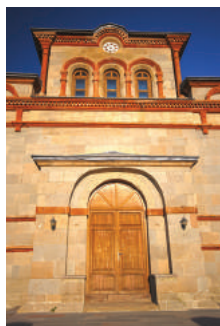
HISTORY

Sarıkamış settlement has a rich historical and cultural background. The most important cause of this is the region has been a settlement for various tribes and the region has been located in the route that passes from Anatolian peninsula to Caucasus. The first signs of life on the area, which has a history that dates back to 9000 B.C., are from Chalcolithic and First Bronze ages. Then, Hurrians, Urartians, Scythians, Med, Parthians, Bagratian Kingdom of Armenians, Romans, Sassanians, Byzantians, Seljukians, and Ottomans appear on the stage of history.

Russian architectural style is dominant in Sarıkamış, which was occupied for almost 40 years after 1877-1878 Ottoman-Russia War. Most prominent examples of Russian architectural style are the buildings used as military posts and garrisons in military areas. Most significant historical place in Sarıkamış District is Katerina Hunting Lodge, built by command of Czar Nicholas II between 1890-1914. The most interesting feature of the building, that is totally made of wood in a rectangular fashion/scheme, is that the woods are fastened to each other without any nail .

There are various churches, castles, ancient settlements and tombs within the borders of the district. The region on Erzurum-Horasan-Sarıkamış-Kotanlı-Kars route, used since ancient ages, is hosting the castles built for protection, defense and surveillance. Most significant castles that have survived until today are Micingirt, Visan, Zivin, Hamamlı (Kız), Keklikdere Kızlar (Maiden) (Toprakale) and Köroğlu. Yağbasan Castle in the 5 km west of Karapınar Village, and Kırankaya (Asboğa) Castle on Kars-Sarıkamış peripheral highway are the other archeological sites within the region.

In Sarıkamış, there are various churches and chapels that belong to early and late Christianity eras. Some of these churches which were built on hidden yet dominant places of the nature, are in the shape of caves carved into stones. The churches within Keklik Valley and Kızlar (Maiden) Castle, İznos Church that looks Komdere Valley within İznos Military region, Küp (Cubic) Church, which is situated in Bayrakepe side, is on right across İznos and the church surrounded with countless tombs on Susuz Upland of Karakurt Town, remained intact . Partially carved into stone and partially made of clay, Küp (Cubic) Church is remarkable with its interesting architectural design. Karakurt Church as well as Yanık (Burnt) Church in the district center with its arch embellishments and faux (fake) columns on its exterior walls are both significant examples among their kind.



SARIKAMIŞ MARTYRDOMS

Many martyrdoms were built in Erzurum (Horasan, Pasinler, Köprüköy and Şenkaya Districts), and Kars (Sarikamiş and Selim Districts) in the form of monuments, memorials and sculptures in memory of the tragedy undergone in the eastern front during Battle of Sarikamiş in 1915 against Russian Empire. The heavy loss of the tragic battle, which happened on Allahuekber Mountains between December 15, 1914 and January 5, 1915, was nearly 90 thousand Turkish soldier who froze to death without even a single shooting. Many of the martyrdoms are located in the borders of Sarikamiş District, on which the battle was most intense.

The martyrdoms that are spread on a vast area from the ridges of Allahuekber Mountains to villages and district centers are partially in the form of monuments and partially sculptures. You can visit the martyrdoms of Allahuekber Dağı, Allahuekber Dağı Meçhul Asker (Unknown Soldier), Batı Kışla, Yukarı Sarikamiş, Millet Bahçesi Meçhul Asker, Makineli Tüfek, Dikenli Tabya, Turnagöl, Ağababa, Yayıklı Köyü Kırklar, Divik Yayla, Tekçam, Soğanlı Dağı, Hamamlı, Mescitli (Deliktaş), Yağbasan, Bardız and Çakırbaba along "Sarikamiş Martyrdoms Route".





SARIKAMIŞ SKI RESORT

Located on the northern mountain side of Bayraktepe that is 2634 m. altitude, Sarıkamış Ski Resort serves to ski lovers with its long ski track, qualified rest facilities, natural yellow-pine forests that prevent avalanches and large crystal snowflakes which are indigenous to this area except the Alps. The snow preserves its initial form, although it is sunny for most of the year in Sarıkamış. Various national and international ski activities are carried on in Sarıkamış, which is undoubtedly among the most significant ski centers in our country. Alpine discipline and northern discipline skiing can be performed on about 1m snow-covered areas between November 15 and April 15, also there are tracks for Alpine skiing touring and sledge tours. Besides, there's a 5 km of 'cross country' track, which is registered by International Ski Federation.

The ski slopes on Bayraktepe are located on a plateau ascending from a 2200 to 2900 m altitude. With two new opened, there are nine tracks, their total length is more than 25 km. . There are five tracks between summit and the middle station and from first stage to down there are more two tracks. In addition, there are two more tracks from summit to Karanıklıdere. There's also a 2400 m long track in first stage has been prepared for novices. Tracks of the second stage vary in terms of difficulty levels. Karanıklıdere Track on 1610 m altitude has an inclination of 28%. The track called as 'The Track for Crazies' by people of Sarıkamış is only for very experienced skiers.

Transportation to the tracks is provided by chairlifts with 2400 people per hour carrying capacity. computerised, bottom heating chairlifts with capacity of four people per compartment ascend through two stages in company with the view of yellow-pine forests. The first stage, surrounded by yellow-pine forests, is slightly inclined and convenient for beginners. Chairlift is used to reach to the summit for second stage. Four track options are available on the summit with Allahuekber and Aladağ as well as Sarıkamış settlement views. Remember/Note that there are cafes available for resting breaks at both stages.



SARIKAMIŞ TREKKING ROUTES

Trekking routes are 256 km long in total with 21 different destinations. Every nature lover can easily go trekking on the routes that pass through Keklikdere, Komdere and Inkaya Valleys generally accompanied with yellow-pine forest texture nearby Sarıkamış. It is almost impossible to get lost on the routes marked by red-white signs with 50 meter intervals on pathways and 200 meter intervals on earth roads. You can find the GPS coordinates of the routes guided by signboards on each crossroad, on www.sarikamistrekking.com Also the guidebook with detailed maps that you can acquire upon sending an email to info@sarikamistrekking.com , will be useful while you're planning your activities. Cycling routes that follow forest and village roads in the region are almost 356 km long in total. The culture routes that pass through historical and cultural locations within the district borders, as well as 428 km long scenic vehicle road accompanied with historical and natural beauties, are welcoming nature lovers.

You will have a chance to completely explore Sarıkamış, during your trekking. The adrenalin secreted while you're passing through lonely forests, will remind you that you're sharing this planet with other creatures. In the refreshing atmosphere of eternal serenity, you will be grateful for being here after taking a deep breath

Best Trekking: tracks

- Komdere Valley (10 km)
- Zirve, Şaşırdere, Hotels (12 km)
- Hotels, Katerina's Hunting Lodge (9 km)
- Keklikdere - Kızlar (Maidens) Castle (Toprakkale) - Belencik Bridge (14 km)
- Hamamlı Martyrdom - Şehitemin Upland (10 km)
- Kızılcubuk, Sarıkamış (10 km)
- Sarıkamış, Hotels, Summit (12 km)

7 Days of Trekking Suggestion

- 1st day: Sarıkamış-Katerina Hunting Lodge (8 km)
2nd day: Sarıkamış-Hotels-Summit (12 km)
3rd day: Hotels-Soğuksu-Keklidere Maidens Castle (10 km)
4th day: Keklik River - Maidens Castle - Belencik Bridge (14 km)
5th day: Komdere Valley (10 km)
6th day: Çamyazı-İnkaya Valley-Micingirt Castle (9 km)
7th day: Hamamlı Martyrdom-Şehitemin Upland (10 km)





ALTERNATIVE TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES

Needless to say that the offerings of Sarıkamış for nature lovers aren't limited with trekking and cycling routes. The district has convenient places for activities such as horse riding, hunting, camping and caravan tourism as well. Transhumance as the most important tradition of Anatolian lifestyle is another element of alternative tourism. Sarıkamış hosts the beautiful uplands such as Şehitemin, Çatak, Yağbasan, Karahamza, Yolgeçmez and Yenigazi. Besides, as the height brings some advantages to people who wants to have physical fitness, sportsmen and sportswomen of branches such as athleticism and football prefer it. We can recommend different activities such as paragliding and rock climbing for lovers of the extreme sports.



DON'T RETURN WITHOUT

- Trekking through Komdere and Keklik Valleys
- Camping in Keklik Valley and Şehitemin Upland
- Taking photos of the fairy chimneys in Komdere Valley
- Watching Keklik Valley from the peak point of Maidens Castle
- Exploring the churches in the region especially the K p (Cubic) Church
- Visiting Micingirt and Zivin Castles on the old trade road.
- Eating dried goose meat in winter months.
- Tasting flatbreads and pancakes offered in the villages.
- Enjoying 360 degrees sightseeing and ski tracks at the peak of Bayrakepe after a climb with a chairlift.



TRANSPORTATION AND ACCOMMODATION

Railway, airway and highway transportation is available to reach the Sarıkamış. Kars is located at

- 1424 km away from İstanbul,
- 1076 km away from Ankara,
- 1655 km away from İzmir,
- 1449 km away from Antalya,
- 436 km away from Trabzon and
- 202 km away from Erzurum.

Those who want to reach to Sarıkamış via highway can choose among Giresun-Tirebolu-Torul-Erzincan-Erzurum-Sarıkamış, Trabzon-Erzurum-Sarıkamış or Hopa-Artvin-Ardahan-Kars-Sarıkamış ways through Black Sea Region. Those who come over Central Anatolia may follow Ankara-Yozgat-Sivas-Erzincan-Erzurum-Kars way. Transportation to Sarıkamış from Erzurum and Kars is provided via dolmuş (charter minibus) and buses.

Sarıkamış is 55 km away from Kars provincial center and airport. There are flights to Kars from İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir every day. Accommodation alternatives vary from camping to 5 star hotels. Keklik Valley, Soğuksu picnic area, Komdere Valley and some upland provide enjoyable camping opportunities for nature lovers. Sarıkamış is convenient for trekking activities in all seasons except winter months.





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