

Princes' Islands

The Princes' Islands (Turkish: K1z1l Adalar (Red Islands) or more commonly Adalar (Islands) as they are officially named; classical , are a chain of nine islands off the coast of Istanbul, Turkey, in the Sea of Marmara. These islands are Büyükada with an area of 5.36 km², Heybeliada (Greek: Halki) with an area of 2.4 km², Burgazada (Greek: Antigoni) with an area of 1.5 km², Kinaliada (Greek: Proti, meaning "The First", being the closest island to Istanbul) with an area of 1.3 km², Sedef Adas1 (Greek: Terebinthos) with an area of 0.157 km², Yass1ada (Greek: Plati) with an area of 0.05km², Sivriada (Greek: Okseia) with an area of 0.05km², Ka_1kadas1 (spoon island, named for its shape) with an area of 0.006 km², and Tav_anadas1 with an area of 0.004 km². During the summer months the Princes' Islands are popular destinations for day trips from Istanbul. As there is no traffic on the Islands, the only transport being horse and cart, they are incredibly peaceful compared with the city of Istanbul. They are just a short ferry ride from both the Asian (at Bostanc1 and also Kartal) and European sides (from Sirkeci/Eminönü, Kabata_ and Yenikap1) of Istanbul. Most ferries call in turn at the four largest of the nine islands: K1nal1ada, Burgazada, Heybeliada and finally Büyükada. Ferry services are provided by Istanbul Seabuses (ODO), a firm operated by the municipality of Istanbul. In spring and autumn the islands are quieter and more pleasant, although the sea can be rough in late autumn and winter. During the Byzantine period, prince and other royalty were exiled on the islands, and later members of the Ottoman sultans family were exiled there too, lending the islands their present name. During the 19th century the islands became a popular resort for Istanbul's wealthy, and Victorian era cottages and houses are still preserved on the largest of the Princes' islands. The Princes' Islands have become more and more ethnically Turkish in character due to the influx of wealthy Turkish jetsetters, a process which began in the first days of the Turkish Republic when the British Yacht Club on Büyükada was appropriated as Anadolu Kulübü, for Turkish parliamentarians to enjoy Istanbul in the summer. However, the Greek, Armenian and Jewish communities still constitute a small part of the islands' population. The islands are an interesting anomaly because they allow us to have a rare and incomplete insight into a multicultural society in modern Turkey, possibly alike to the multicultural society that once existed during the Ottoman Empire in places such as nearby Istanbul/Constantinople For many Turkish people the islands are fondly remembered as the home of famous short story writer Sait Faik Abas1yan1k and football legend Lefter Küçükandonyadis.