

AYVALIK'S CULTURE AND ART POTENTIAL, SWOT ANALYSIS, SOLUTION SUGGESTIONS¹

Sabriye Çelik Uğuz* – Balıkesir University, Türkiye

Ayhan Gökdeniz - Balıkesir University, Türkiye

*Corresponding Author

Email: sabriye_celik@yahoo.com

ORCID: 0000-0003-2550-657X

Abstract

Cultural assets constitute the history, collective memory and identity of a city. These are; old and modern monuments, archaeological sites, historical places, commercial-industrial spaces, architectural structures, streets, squares, cultural landscapes, old and ongoing cultural practices, traditional-local products, collections, archives, libraries, second-hand bookseller-bookstores, art venues and works. Ayvalık which has many of these cultural and artistic values is a remarkable destination. The aim of the study is to create a culture -art inventory of Ayvalık and to show the development of the district with its cultural and artistic values. For this purpose, Ayvalık's culture-art inventory was created and the current situation, potential for cultural tourism and art tourism were examined with the SWOT analysis technique. As a result of the findings, applicable and sustainable solution suggestions were presented.

Keywords: Culture, Art, Tourism, Ayvalık, SWOT Analysis

¹ This study is an updated and developed version of the paper presented within the scope of the Ayvalık Vision Workshop Program.

1. INTRODUCTION

Cultural tourism is shaped by the interest and motivation of tourists in the historical places, monuments, buildings, cultural, artistic and scientific values of a region, community, group or institution (Silberberg, 1995: 362). Travels made to see, learn and experience tangible and intangible values of past, modern cultures are called cultural tourism (Richards, 1996; Hughes, 2002:165). Cultural tourism, as a means of knowledge, experience, rapprochement, education and acculturation, is seen as an important type of tourism and cultural activities are supported for the development of destinations (Richards, 2007:2).

In this study, the culture-art inventory of Ayvalık district which is located in Edremit Gulf of Balıkesir province and has cultural/artistic attractions, is presented and the current status, potential of the city's cultural tourism, art tourism are examined with SWOT analysis. By offering a different, innovative and holistic tourism approach, various suggestions are included for the transformation of the district into an art destination brand with its cultural/artistic values.

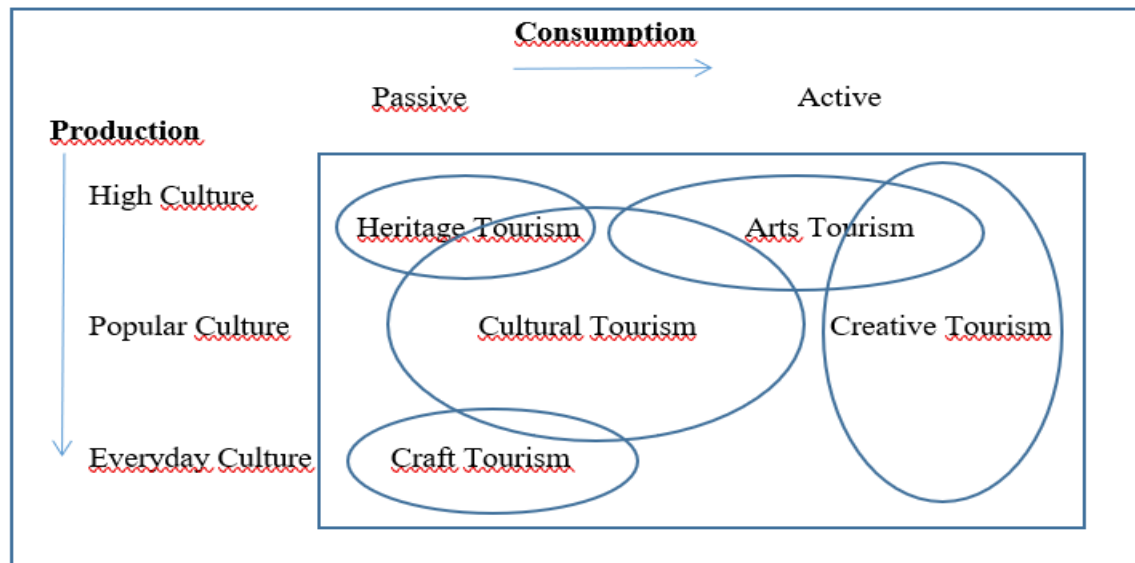
2. CONCEPTS OF CULTURAL TOURISM AND ART TOURISM

Cultural tourism is defined as people visiting cultural attractions outside their place of residence in order to gather new information and experiences to meet their cultural needs (Richards, 1996). All objects and events shaped by humans such as monuments, museums, art galleries, cultural exhibitions, cultural landscapes and nature, world heritage sites, cultural routes, language, cultural parks, ruins, popular celebrations, festivals, ethnic and gastronomic heritage, industrial heritage and cities constitute the main source of cultural attraction (Swarbrooke, 1999:306; Richards, 2001:23). This cultural heritage and ongoing cultural/art practices of a destination include knowledge and live experiences. At the same time, it develops the identity of the city. Thus, culture-art turn into a touristic product and become an integral part of socio-economic life (Cheirchanteri, 2019: 1).

Cultural tourism, which progresses from the tangible heritage of the past to the intangible products of contemporary culture (Richards, 2007:2), includes heritage tourism due to visiting historical sites and artifacts, art tourism due to benefiting from contemporary art events and expands towards creative tourism (Bonet, 2003). Cultural tourism is used as an umbrella concept

due to its wide content and variety of activities (Smith, 2003: 31). The rich content of cultural tourism and its relationship with other types of tourism are seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Content of Cultural Tourism



Source: Richard, 2011: 32

Since people are interested in both 'high' and 'popular' and everyday forms of culture in their free time, types of heritage, handicrafts, art and creative tourism within cultural tourism have both developed rapidly and become an important market. Large art exhibitions create significant tourist mobility in many cities and these exhibitions have become an important part of the cultural strategies of many museums. As in the visual arts, performing arts including music, dance and theater shows have also increased the number of tourists. As people use their increasingly limited free time to develop their own skills and experience local culture, creativity has also become linked to cultural tourism. Developments in cultural tourism in recent years can be summarized as follows; increasing interest in everyday and popular culture in the destination, the increasing role of art, the growth of creative tourism and the increasing cultural consumption (Richard, 2011: 32). When the literature on cultural tourism is examined, some common characteristics of cultural tourists are identified. These are: (1) they have higher levels of education than the general traveling population and have a higher tendency to learn, (2) they are more female than male and mostly constitute the third age group, (3) they tend to stay longer than other tourists, (4) they have higher incomes and spend more money on vacation, (5) they spend more time in a region while on

vacation, (6) they are more likely to stay in hotels or motels (Prentice, 1989a and 1989b; Silberberg, 1995: 362; Stebbins, 1996).

3. CITY OF CULTURE AND ART: AYVALIK

Ayvalık district of Balıkesir province within the North Aegean and Edremit Gulf; has geographical attractions with its location, climate, pine forests, olive groves, underwater-surface wealth, Ayvalık Islands Nature Park and other protected areas, magnificent bays, beaches, coastline and transportation facilities. In addition to its unique natural beauties, the district is at the forefront with its cultural appeal with its ancient settlements and archaeological remains, architectural structure, cultural landscapes-routes, food culture, traditions, cultural-art venues and events.

The district, which has hosted different cultures throughout history, has a rich culture influenced by the cultures of Lesbos, Crete and Western Thrace due to the population exchange and is famous for its cuisine, mainly due to the diversity of these cultures. Ayvalık cuisine is shaped by olive oil dishes and appetizers (made with seafood, herbs, cheese and olives) (Efe, Soykan, Cürebal and Sönmez, 2016: 129-130). With this rich culinary culture, Ayvalık has many traditional and local products, and has products with geographical indication registered by the Turkish Patent and Trademark Office (Table 1).

Ayvalık is an important destination in demand in domestic and international tourism with its rich history, unique nature, cultural potential, products with brand value, extraordinary cuisine, registered buildings, narrow streets and peerless beaches in a special geography. Ayvalık is also an population exchange city. According to the Population Exchange between Turkey and Greece, which was stated in the Treaty of Lausanne signed on July 24, 1923, Cretan, Macedonian and Lesbos Turks were settled in the district. Ayvalık has many registered buildings with a historical past and each building has a different story. Ayvalık, which has a strong brand image in the national and international arena, also has a different and diverse social life. The interaction between local people and visitors is without any problems. Ayvalık is a region with a strong touristic infrastructure, hotels and local restaurants, many beaches and touristic attractions (Gökdeniz, 2019: 14).

Agricultural products and especially olives and olive cultivation are the most important sources of income in Ayvalık. Tourism and fishing activities are also among the other sources of income. Ayvalık is one of the places where the olive, olive oil and soap industry is most developed around Edremit Gulf. Especially after the population exchange, important steps were taken in the olive oil industry (Efe, Soykan, Cürebal and Sönmez, 2013).

Architectural ruins, ceramic finds, religious buildings (monastery, church, chapel), commercial-industrial buildings (lighthouse, olive and olive workshops-factories, windmills, agricultural terraces, salt pan structures, ancient quarries) and examples of Greek civil architecture from the Ottoman Period which located on the coastline, in rural areas and on the islands of Ayvalık (Özgen, 2022: 30-31) constitute the cultural resource values of the district. In 2022, there are 5 urban protected areas, 13 archaeological protected areas and 2325 registered structures (monuments & civil architecture examples) within the inventory of immovable cultural assets and protected areas of Ayvalık (BKVKBK, 2022). Among the 2325 registered structures; there are 13 churches, 26 chapels, 10 monasteries, 20 windmills, 3 salt pans, 2 lighthouses, agricultural terraces, sheep pens and farms on 12 islands, 2 ancient quarries, 6 ancient settlements, 3 fortified ancient settlements and 1 watchtower (ADRA, 2024).

Ayvalık's urban architecture is formed in a gradual order, starting from the settlement where the harbor and industrial structures are located on the coast and more houses and churches are located in the hill and middle regions. The monumental and symmetrical facade layout of Ayvalık houses, the entrance doors that imitate ancient temple architecture, the column capitals of the doors with plant arrangements, the corner moldings with Ionic and composite heads on the facades, the leaf motifs above the windows, the console ends under the windows, the pediment acroteria and the corner decorations are indicators of the Neoclassical architectural understanding (Akın, 2015: 130). Ayvalık, which is a member of the Historical Cities Union and was accepted to the UNESCO World Heritage Temporary List in 2017 with the "Ayvalık Industrial Landscape", is an open-air museum with 2325 registered structures (Gökdeniz, 2017: 26-33).

The people, institutions, events, places and activities that form the urban identity and culture of Ayvalık are very important, and in this process, the presence of both born in Ayvalık and lived/living culture-art people who were influenced by Ayvalık and used it as the subject of their works makes the district a cultural capital and a unique art destination center (Çelik-Uğuz, 2020:

246-250). Many culture-art people of Ayvalık who were born in Ayvalık culture and connected by being inspired by the city's culture and life are as follows:

- **Person of Culture (Academician, Educator, Researcher, Journalist, Urban Historian and Designer):** Ali Akdamar, Ali Onay, Arzu-Erkan Acurol, Ayhan Uçar, Aydın Ayhan, Ayhan Gökdeniz, Aykut Kazancıgil, Aysel Namlı, Bekir Çoşkun, Berrin Akın, Bilal Şimsir, Bilgin Şentay, Bülent Şentay, Ceynur Karagözoğlu, Cihat Teker, Damien Dessane, Emin Çölaşan, Emin Özdemir, Esra Başak, Fethi Namlı, Güler Sabancı, Hayri Kaan Köksal, Hakan Dinç, İlber Ortaylı, İlhami Soysal, İnci Kut, Kenan Öztürk, Lütfi Zafer Demirer, Mevlüt Oğuz, M. Müjdat Soylu, Muhtar Kent, Müşerref Hekimoğlu, Necati Güngör, Özkul Çobanoğlu, Rahmi Genç, Rahmi M. Koç, Sabih Kadanoğlu, Serdar Şahinkaya, Serhan Ada, Serkan-Serdar Ceyhan, Şerif Kaynar, Şinasi Tekin, Taylan Köken, Turgut Özdemir, Türkel Minibaş, Uğur Mumcu, Zakir ve Hüseyin Güven, Zeynep Gül Gürsoy.
- **Literary Person (Poet, Writer, Editor, Translator):** Abbas Sayar, Acem Özler, Agapi Venezis-Molivyati, Ahmet Angın, Ahmet Erhan, Ahmet Günbaş, Ahmet Metol Tulum, Ahmet Uysal, Ahmet Yorulmaz, Alev Alatlı, Arif Damar, Asım Bezirci, Asuman Ercan, Ataol Behramoğlu, Aysel Çelik, Aysun Kara, Ayşe Kilimci, Aziz Nesin, Bedri Karayağmurlar, Behçet Kemal Çağlar, Bülent Güldal, Canan Gürtunca Sanlı, Cem Seyhun Ünbay, Cengiz Bektaş, Cenk Geçermiş, Cevat Çapan, Demir Özlü, Deniz Çöğendezoğlu, Derya Bengi, Derya Sönmez, Doğan Hızlan, Ece Ayhan, Elif Su Alkan, Emine Nilgün Yurtsever, Emine Sevgi Özdamar, Erdinç Ozan, Erdoğan Alkan, Erkan Acurol, Ergun Melin, Esme Aras, Ezgi Güven, Fakir Baykurt, Faruk Ergelen, Ferda İzbudak Akıncı, Fethi Naci, Feyza Hepçilingirler, Filiz Ali, Fotis Kontoğlu, Gültekin Emre, Gülten Akın, Gürsel Koyuncu, Hacer Dikduran, Hakan Dinç, Halil Genç, Halim Yazıcı, Hayri Kaan Köksal, Herkül Milas, Hikmet Esen, Hıfzı Topuz, Hulki Aktunç, Hüseyin Peker, Hüseyin Yurttaş, İdris Meriç, İhsan Durusel, İhsan Tavşangil, İlias Venezis, İsmail Gümüş, Leyla Çapan, Mehmet Coral, Mehmet Mez, Melih Bozcan, Metin Eloğlu, Mevlüt Asar, Mina Urgan, Mustafa Olpak, Mustafa Seyit Sütüven, Muzaffer Hacıhasanoğlu, Necati Cumalı, Nedim Atilla, Neşet Karaçaltı, Nevzat Çelik, Nihan Taştekin, Nihat Keklik, Oğuzhan Akay, Oktay Akbal, Oktay Rifat, Onur Çalı, Öner Yağcı, Pelin Özer, Pelin Onay, Pınar Kür, Rıza Apak, Reyhan Yaman, Sabahattin Ali, Sabahattin Yalkın, Salah Bırsel, Salim Kaptan, Samih Rifat, Semra Aktunç, Sencer Asena, Seray Yalçın, Serdar Çelik, Sevda Özdemir, Sevsen Aslantepe, Siddık Akbayır, Soloup, Süreyya Sami Berkem, Şahin Alpay, Şevket Süreyya Aydemir, Şükrü Elçin, Şükran Kurdakul, Tahir Yüksel, Tahsin Saraç, Tahsin Şentürk, Tanju İzbek, Tansel Asya Rauner, Tozan Alkan, Turgut Baygın, Uğur Bilge, Ulgen Zeki Ok, Yunus Emre Yurdakul, Zeki Ömer Defne
- **Theatre, Dance, Cinema Artists (Director, Producer, Choreographer, Playwright and Actor):** Ali Rıza Goral, Avni Yalçın, Aydın Teker, Bahri Gündemir, Bedia Enes Öztep, Beren Saat, Burcu-Can Ceylan, Bülent İnal, Defne Kırmızı Işık, Değer İmsel, Enver Alay, Enver Öksüz, Ercan Kubaş, Erkan Cılak, Fadıl Şekercioğlu, Fazıl Bıçakçioğlu, Gizem Dalgıç, Gönül Dramalı, Güner Namlı, Hakan Urul, Hamdi Döker, Hayrettin Filiz, Hülya Avşar, Hüsnüye-Fazıl Doğan, İbrahim İlkdoğan, İbrahim Fuat Aybar, Kıvanç Sarlıcalı, Kıvanç-Muharrem Onursal, Leman Komili, Levent Üzümcü, Mana Uygur Balcı, Mustafa Aybar, Mustafa Mat, Meliha-Kenan Alatur, Nail Pehlivan, Nejat Danışman, Nevran Yıldız, Nihat Durak, Niyazi Üke, Nur Akalın, Perran Kutman, Rasim Öztekin, Rüştü Selis, Sadi Master, Selahattin Atamtürk, Selen Yıldız, Simay-Eray Dinç, Tomris Giritlioğlu, Tozan

Alkan, Uğraş Salman, Yahya Akıncı, Yavuz Bingöl, Yavuz İmsel, Yıldırım Yanılmaz, Zafer Par.

- **Visual/Plastic Artists (Painting, Sculpture, Ceramics, Photography and Graphics etc.):** Abbas Sayar, Abdullah Şengörenoğlu, Alev Gözonar, Ali Akdamar, Alp Tamer Ulukılıç, Ana Gomez de Pablos, Ara Güler, Arif Aşçı, Arif Buz, Arzu Erşen, Asuman Vural, Ayşe Karamustafa, Ayşen Büyükyıldırım, Ayşen-Burhan Yıldırım, Ayşenur Kocatopçu, Ayşın Özen, Avni Arbaş, Bahadır Gökay, Banu Küpeli-Yasin Ürüçoğlu, Bedri Karayağmurlar, Bengü Karaduman, Betül Aydiner, Burhan Uygur, Bülent Korkmaz, Bülent Kürşad, Bülent Şavkın, Canan Bayraktar, Çiler Süyev, Dilek O'Keeffe, Dilşad Atasoy, Elvan Alpay, Emine Alışık, Emine Berkan, Emine Boyner, Esat Albayrak, Eyüp Öz, Fikret Mualla (Saygı), Filiz Yamaner, Fotis Kontoğlu, Fuat Mensi Dileksiz, Fuat Çağatay, Fügen Leman, Gülay Yakar, Gülbün Tuncel, Gülgün Haksal, Gülseren Kayalı, Gülsün Karamustafa, Gülizar Demet Gökden, Güven Zeyrek, Hakan Urul, Hale Arpacioğlu, Haluk Cekan, Hatice Kübra Erişir, Hilal-Ayhan Taşkiran, Hyesung Lee, İnci Larsen, Kadri Kaya, Kemal Çalışkan, Kenan Çizer, Mehmet Aksoy, Mehmet Sümbeli, Meral-Cemal Erez, Metin Benek, Metin Eloğlu, Mustafa Rüçhan, Muhittin Karakuş, Mustafa Sevinç, Muzaffer Akyol, Naile Cimit, Nazım Timuroğlu, Nedim Gündür, Nejat Çınar, Nena-Kemal Çetinel, Nil Gürler, Nurettin Belikırık, Olcay Kıncay, Orhan Oruk, Orhan Peker, Önder Aksoy, Özgü-Ekrem Aydar, Özcan Tunç, Özkan Tarhan, Rabia-Uğur Çalışkan, Sabriye Çelik Uğuz, Sadık Karamustafa, Sakine Özkan, Semih Poroy, Sencer Gülün, Serhat Öztürk, Sibel Sümer, Soloup, Suna Tüfekçibaşı, Şebnem Altuntaş, Şevket Koca, Taner Kalkan, Teoman Madra, Teoman Manacioğlu, Tefik Başaran Sirkeci, Tuğba Aksezmener, Tulya Madra, Tunca Subaşı, Turgut Alp Can, Türkan Gündoğdular, Ulviye Baykal Kılıç, Vahit Basmacioğlu, Yıldırım Alp, Yücel Kurşun, Yüksel Erdoğan, Zeki Kobak, Zeynep Başkurt.
- **Art Consultant, Critic, Curator, Entrepreneur:** Beral Madra, Cemil İpekçi, Defne Koryürek, Hasan Hüseyin Gül, Kenan Öztürk, Melisa Sabancı Tapan, Öykü Güneş, Selçuk Kaltahoğlu, Şerif Kaynar, Vassıf Kortun.
- **Music Artists (Instructor, Conductor, Composer and Singer):** Ahmet Ali Aslan, Ali Darmar, Ayla Erduran, Ayşe Öktener, Ayşegül Yordam, Çağrı Çalışır, Erdim Sertoğlu, Ergün Tekincan, Filiz Ali, Gönül Tuna, Hatice Hilal Ak, İlhan Usmanbaş, Kamuran Gündemir, Mesut Duran, Mesut Yün, Nejat Yavaşoğulları, Selda Yankın, Serdar Ataşer, Yalın, Volkan Güleç, Yavuz Bingöl.

In addition to many cultural people who contribute to the culture-art life of Ayvalık, there are 122 literary person, 80 theater, dance, music, cinema artists, and 20 applied artists who have lived/are living in the city by producing artistic productions. Following in the footsteps of Orhan Peker, who carried Turkish painting to universal dimensions and admired the naturalness of Ayvalık and produced original works in this city, 118 visual/plastic artists and more than 40 artist workshops (workshops/home-workshops) remind visitors of the artistic trace and provide an artistic experience. At the same time, art houses (residence, studio, initiative), art galleries, art academies, art associations and touristic businesses (coffeehouse, cafe, bar, bistro, restaurant, guesthouse, mansion, guesthouse, boutique hotel) that organize events such as art-themed talks,

workshops, exhibitions, and art squares, graffiti, which is the symbol of street art, create an art-filled atmosphere for both locals and tourists. Many events, from music to literature, from talks to visual/plastic arts, from theater to dance and cinema screenings, from workshops to festivals, are offered to art viewer/audiences in the district. Ayvalık's culture- art inventory in terms of cultural tourism and art tourism is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Ayvalık's Culture-Art Inventory
in Terms of Cultural Tourism and Art Tourism**

| Source Values | Ayvalık |
|--|--|
| Heritage Sites and Attractions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castles, bridges, mansions, ancient monuments (ruins, ruins, archaeological sites) etc. • Museums and historical centers • Historical squares and streets • Historical gardens and landscape gardens | <p>*Classical-Hellenistic-Roman-Byzantine-Ottoman Period Settlement and Historical Remains: Architectural remains, ceramic findings and religious structures (monasteries, churches, chapels) on the coastline, rural areas and islands, commercial and industrial structures (lighthouses, olive and olive workshops/factories, windmills, agricultural terraces, salt pan structures and ancient quarries) and examples of Ottoman Period Greek civil architecture</p> <p>*2325 registered structures (monuments & civil architecture examples): 6 ancient settlements, 3 fortified ancient settlements and 1 watchtower,</p> <p>*Nesos/Pordoselene settlement (below Cunda Duba Mevkii, 2400 years old Classical-Hellenistic-Roman ancient settlement traces),</p> <p>*Ayvalık Academy (1803): Ayvalık Müttelip School and Workshop (Ayvalık Cumhuriyet Primary School)</p> <p>*Consulate buildings and stone houses</p> <p>*Yorgolo Han-Municipality Building (award-winning building by the Historical Cities Union)</p> <p>*Despina House-Ayvalık Girls' Vocational High School Historical Building (Evening Girls' Art School, Girls' Art School, Girls' Institute, Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School)</p> <p>*Cunda's Historical Girls' School (Alibey Cultural Center and Bekir Coşkun Library)</p> <p>*Museums: Cunda Sevim and Necdet Kent Library, Cunda Rahmi M. Koç Museum, Kürşat Ayvalık Olive Oil Industry Museum, Ayvalık Rahmi M. Koç Museum, Taksiyarhis Memorial Museum, Ayvalık Anatolian Civilizations Exhibition, Küçükköy Migration Museum, Ayvalık Municipality Olive Museum and Gallery</p> <p>*Historical Squares and Streets: At Arabacılar Square, Cumhuriyet Square (Atatürk Statue and First Bullet Monument), Cunda Square. Custom Square, Macaron Area (Mercanköşk), Palabahçe Square, (Paleo, Palio Baktshé-Old Garden), Dr. Fazıl Doğan Square, 13 Nisan Main Street (İzmir Road, Ayazment/Altınova Main Street)</p> <p>*Turkey's first Bosphorus bridge: Between Cunda Island and Dolap Island</p> <p>*Gönül Road: Between Ayvalık and Lale Island</p> |
| Historical Events and Famous People: | <p>*Atatürk's Visit to Ayvalık (Atatürk's arrival in Ayvalık on April 13, 1934)</p> <p>*The First Bullet Fired at the Enemy in the National Struggle in Ayvalık</p> <p>*The Liberation of Ayvalık from Enemy Occupation</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p>* The Liberation of Altınova from Enemy Occupation and the Great Republic March Torchlight Procession</p> <p>*Ali Çetinkaya, Zarbalı Hulusi Bey (A. Hulusi Zarplı), Dr. Fazıl Doğan</p> <p>*The 1821 Rebellion, the 1844 and 1944 Earthquake</p> |
| <p>Local People and Traditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnic groups and Minority cultures • Customs, traditions and customs | <p>*Refugees or Islanders: Those who migrated from the Balkans and Crete, Lesbos (Lesbos, Crete and Western Thrace Culture),</p> <p>*Sowing and planting operations on solstices</p> <p>*Hıdırellez, Kermes celebrations</p> <p>*Social practices and rituals related to birth, wedding and death</p> |
| <p>Language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and Minority languages • Language schools | <p>*Ottoman Turkish Summer School (established under Cunda/Harvard University)</p> |
| <p>Faith Centers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temples, cathedrals • Monasteries, churches and chapels • Mosques, tombs and cemeteries | <p>*13 Churches, 26 Chapels, 10 Monasteries</p> <p>*Mosques and Tombs: Çınarlı Mosque, Saatlı Mosque, Hayrettin Paşa Mosque, Hamidiye Mosque (the only mosque built during the Ottoman period), Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque, Çamlık Martyrs Mosque (Çamlık Tepe), Beş Yatırlar Tomb</p> |
| <p>Rural Areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Islands • Villages • Farms • National parks and other protected areas | <p>*Ayvalık Islands (Hekatonnesoi/ Hundred Islands/ Apollon Hekatos): 22 islands – the largest is Alibey Island (Cunda-Moskhonisi), Lale Island (Dolap, Soğan-Krommydonisi) is two islands with residences.</p> <p>*3 Greek Villages: Cunda Island Pateriça Locality</p> <p>*Küçükköy Art & Bosnian Village (Yeniçarohori)</p> <p>*Kozak Plateau-Green and Authentic Villages: Olive, grape, pistachio, a wide variety of agricultural products, archaeological remains)</p> <p>*Farms Focused on Agriculture, Art and Tourism: Gökada Farm, Sural Farm (Altınova), Leone Natural (Küçükköy), Simlarda Country Club, Mira Farm House (Murateli)</p> <p>*Protected Areas: Ayvalık Islands Nature Park, Sarımsaklı Nature Park, Devil's Table Local Wetland and Karakoç Stream Local Wetland (Rich flora and fauna, cultural heritage values)</p> |
| <p>Gastronomy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional Food and Drinks • Local Cuisine • Cooking Classes • Olive Oil Tasting • Wine Making and Wine Tasting • Local Product Rituals | <p>*Food Culture in Ayvalık: It is a synthesis of Cretan, Midilli, Thessaloniki and Balkan cuisines</p> <p>*Ayvalık Flavors: Ayvalık toast, papalina, curd dessert, curd cookies, Kirli Hanım cheese, Sepet/Kelle cheese, Cretan roasted chickpeas, Cretan appetizers, Kozak grapes, mastic coffee, mastic ice cream, mastic cookies, grape juice, black mulberry juice, chickpea and simit bread, sage, lokma dessert, rusk and pistachio halva (Bağyüzü village), Cunda beer, herbs such as chicory, tangle, nettle, istifno, Arnavutoğlu yogurt</p> <p>*Seafood (sea bream, bream, dentex, papalina, sprat, red mullet, sea bass, gopez, coral, bluefish, calamari, octopus, shrimp, blackthorn, akivades, quince, etc.)</p> <p>*Olive Oil Dishes</p> <p>*Appetizers (herb, cheese, olive)</p> <p>*Geographically Indicated Products: Ayvalık Blackthorn (2024), Ayvalık Kelle Cheese/Ayvalık Basket Cheese (2024), Ayvalık Mastic Cookie (2023), Ayvalık Curd Dessert (2022), Edremit Gulf Green Scratched Olives (Ayvalık, Burhaniye, Edremit, Gömeç and Havran) (2015) Ayvalık Olive Oil (2007)</p> <p>*Products in the Registration Process: Ayvalık Kirli Hanım Cheese</p> <p>*Slow Food Product: Ayvalık Kirli Hanım Cheese</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>*Olive Meetings and Festivals: Olive oil tasting, olive oil cooking and olive setting workshops, olive oil soap making workshops</p> <p>*Independence Day: Celebration held at the end of the olive harvest</p> <p>*Olive Festival: First celebrated on November 15, 1943) and Olive Growers' Song</p> <p>*Kozak Grape Harvest and Auction: Harvest, auction and wine making (Bağyüzüköyü)</p> |
| <p>Modern Culture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Movies and Music • Local TV, Radio • Newspaper, Blog, Library • Theme, Cultural Parks and Centers • Shopping and Fashion • Technology and Media | <p>*43 films and 11 series shot in whole or in part in Ayvalık</p> <p>*Kırlangıç Olive Oil Factory-Kırlangıç Life Center: Ayvalık Anatolian Civilizations Museum and Exhibition, stores, art workshops, public spaces</p> <p>*Necmi Komili Primary School/Küçükköy (Garden and playgrounds with permaculture principles and workshops)</p> <p>*Boğaziçi Ayvalık Schools</p> <p>*Sabancı University Creative Technologies Workshop and Ayvalık Summer School (art, ecology and technology workshops)/Küçükköy</p> <p>*Ayvalık District Public Library</p> <p>*Hezarfen Ayvalık Library / Ayvalık Bibliography: A site about Ayvalık's past and future</p> <p>*Citizen's Place</p> <p>*Newspaper: Ayvalık Newspaper, Ayvalık Newspaper Papalina, Ayvalık Newspaper, Ayvalık Magazine, etc.</p> <p>*Radio: Ayvalıkzade Radio, Radio Kuzey Ege (Cunda Agency)</p> |
| <p>Themed and Special Interest Trips and Excursion Programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Routes • Routes and Corridors • City Tours • Excursions | <p>*Ayvalık Historical City and Art Tour, Cunda Art Route, Küçükköy Art Route,</p> <p>*Adramytteion Themed Culture Routes</p> <p>*Ayvalık Outdoor Activities and Tours (hiking, cycling, motorcycle, camping and caravan etc. tours)</p> <p>*Sarımsaklı Wetland Bird Watching and Viewing Walking Path</p> <p>*Ayvalık Olive Route</p> <p>*Ayvalık Islands Diving Tour, Cultural Tour by Boat (Daily Boat Tour)</p> |
| <p>Sports and Leisure Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants and spectators • Traditional games and sports • Health centers | <p>*Ayvalık, the City of Sports and the Center of Water Sports: Turkish Sailing Federation's Sailing League 3rd Leg Races and 2025 Stars Cup, Pergamon O-Week's Ayvalık Stage, Ayvalık J70 Turkey Championship, Ayvalık Golden Fin Underwater Competition Turkey Championship, Ultimate Cunda, Ayvalık Granfondo, Ayvalık Half Marathon-Ayvalık Weekend Sports Event</p> <p>*Healthy Life Centers: Ayvalık Horse Farm, Kozak Yaylası, Simlarda Country Club-Ayvalık Aquapark Children's Entertainment Center</p> |
| <p>Festivals, Special Events and Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Folklore • Art and Artists • Performing Arts • Sports and Special Interest Events | <p>*Festival, Celebrations, Festivity and Events Olive Kernels Summer Concerts, Harvest Run, World Bird Watching Day, Trophy 2021 International Culture and Folk Dance Festival, Ayvalık Women's Dance Festival, Ayvalık Küçükköy Traditional Bosnian Teferiç Festival, Ayvalık Culture and Art Days, Ayvalık International Film Festival, Ayvalık International Music Festival (AIMA), Ayvalık International Theater Festival, Ayvalık International Olive Harvest Festival Ayvalık Flavors Festival, Ayvalık Winter Festival, Ayvalık Sky Observation Festival, Ayvalık Literature Days, Ayvalık GastroFest etc.</p> |
| | <p>*Olive Culture: Approximately 2,000,000 olive trees and 81 Monuments, Monumental and Olive Trees Worth Preserving and 22 Oil Plants (Olive Oil Factories),</p> <p>*60 Agricultural Enterprises/Farms</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Agriculture, Industry and Trade:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business and factory visits • Mines • Agricultural attractions • Artistic attractions • Tourist attractions • Famous stores and shopping malls • Bazaars and markets • Leisure shopping | <p>*Agriculture and Tourism Unity: Kürşat Olive House and Museum, Mehmet Akyalı Olive Oil Factory-Trip Area, Good Life Academy, Özgün Academy, Cunda Aşıyan, Zarbalı Ayvalık, ZOI Cunda, Ayvalıkzade, Mutluköy Nostalgia,</p> <p>*20 Windmills, 3 Tuzla, 2 Lighthouses, Agricultural Terraces, Pens and Farms on 12 Islands</p> <p>*2 Antique Quarries: Badavut Quarry and Dolap (Lale/Soğan) antique quarry (in pool form)</p> <p>*Iron, gold mines and ornamental stones (Altınova quarry / chalcedony, agate, heliotrope and opals).</p> <p>*7 Local Markets: The most famous are Thursday Market (Aromatic and Medicinal Plants Festival) and Cunda Market</p> <p>*Special Day Market Area: Gri Alan (Art & Design Market), Küçükhan Ayvalık, Devil's <u>Coffee</u> (New Year's Market, 8 March Market etc.)</p> <p>*Markets and Passages: Ayvalık Market (Historical Vegetable and Fruit Market-Bedesten), Historical Antique Dealers' Market/Eminzade Business Center ('Time Travel' Antique Dealer Deniz Arbak and Collector Bilge Yılmaz with antique and collection information event), Antique Dealers' Street-Antique Market, Tenekeçiler Market (Meyhaneler Street), Yeniçarohori Antique Art, Süner Passage,</p> <p>*Historical Inns: Georgala (Yorgola) Inn (Old Tax Office/ Ayvalık Municipality Service Building), Jewish Inn (close to Devil's Coffee)</p> <p>*Coffeehouse and Grocery Store: Devil's Coffee, Camlı Coffee, Mercan's Coffee (Ayvalık Macaron), Artisan Grocer, Cunda Stone Coffee, Cunda Grocer, Faik'Soda Man</p> <p>*Historical Bakeries and Clubs: Güler Dessert House (1942), İmren Bakery (1946), City Club, Macaron Bakery- Muhallebicisi, Cumhuriyet Bakery (Cunda), Karadeniz Bakery (Cunda), Bilir Brothers Bakery</p> <p>*Second-hand bookseller and Bookstores: AHTO Bookstore, Çiçek Second-Hand Bookseller (second-hand bookseller Meetings with Can Ceylan), Eflatun Book-Kahve, Eski'z Bookstore, Evin Bookstore, Geylan Bookstore</p> <p>*Thematic Businesses: Cafes, bars and taverns, boutiques, hotels and tradesmen's restaurants.</p> |
| <p>Sanatlar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sanatçı kişiler ve sanat olayları • Tiyatrolar, konser salonları, kültür merkezleri, sanat akademileri • Sanat kurumları (galeriler, vakıflar, müzeler ve akademiler) • Sanat ve Sanatçı atölyeleri, • Sanat Evleri (rezidans, stüdyo) • Kültürel Sergiler | <p>*The rich intellectual life in Ayvalık: The existence of many writers, poets, filmmakers, theater artists, musicians, visual artists, art critics and curators who lived/live in the district,</p> <p>*"City Center Art" Program: Prepared and presented by Turgut Baygın, Program consultant Selçuk Kaltalıoğlu, Director Nail Pehlivan</p> <p>*Music in Ayvalık</p> <p>-Gerard Digenis Music School, Arion and Orphee Music Associations (from the 1896-97 and 1898 editions of the Eastern Trade Yearbooks)</p> <p>-Three music cafes- Cafes Shantant (with theater performances) (Eastern Trade Yearbooks, 1890 edition)</p> <p>-World-famous musician Kamuran Gündemir</p> <p>-Ayvalık Band (Ayvalık Municipality Band): The band starts with the "Mavi Yıldırım" play at the People's House founded by Dr. Fazıl Doğan in 1936. In 1937, it was established as the Ayvalık Municipality Band by Mayor Hasan Basri Akın. Between 1951-2019, Bandmaster Ergün Tekincan</p> |

-*Music and Dance Ensembles: Ayvalık Karagöz Roman Orchestra, Ayvalık Rebetiko Ensemble, Ayvalık Cretan Association Population Exchange Choir, Ayvalık Kdonia Polyphonic (Kdonia Polyphonic Ayvalık Music Ensemble), AHSÖMDER- Turkish Classical Music Choir, Ayvalık One Sea Two Collars Arm in Arm "Dances and Songs of the Same Seas.", Dance Aivali, Azulmavi Flamenco Ayvalık, Ayvalık Dance Workshop, Danshane Ayvalık, Feel The Beat Drum Camp (Marlo Ayvalık).*

***Theatre in Ayvalık**

-*Ayvalık Turkish Hearth, Ayvalık Sports Dormitory-Representation Branch, Ayvalık Teachers' Union, Ayvalık "Okutanları", Ayvalık People's House-Representation Branch and later on, Performance Branch, theater works and shows belonging to schools*

- *Ayvalık Municipality Theater, Art Factory, TiyatrODA Group, Ercan Kubaş Art Theater*

***Culture and Arts Centers/Areas:** *Alibey Cumhuriyet Culture Center (Bekir Coşkun Library), ASKEV- Greenhouse (Event Area, Botanical Garden, Library, Melin Cafe), Ayvalık Amphitheater, Ayvalık Municipality 19 Mayıs Cihan Şişman Youth Center, Ayvalıkevi, Ayvalık International Music Academy (AIMA)- Haluk Barutçuoğlu House, ÇYDD Fahamet-Ali Kemal Sabuncugil Education House, FA- Fabrika Ayvalık/Ayvalık Art Factory, Gri Alan Ayvalık (Independent Art Area), İsmet İnönü Culture Center, KıraArthane (digital art center), Küçükköy Culture Center, KüçükHan Ayvalık, Muhip Özyiğit Culture and Arts Center, Mutluköy Life Center (educational and social event venue in cooperation with MEB-Komili), Palabahçe Square (Film Set), Prof. Dr. Türkan Saylan Cultural Center, Sabancı University Creative Technologies Workshop and Ayvalık Summer School (art, ecology and technology workshops), Devil's Coffee, Vural Cinema Nejat Uygur Stage*

***Culture and Art Civil Society Organizations:** *Ayvalık Culture and Art Association (AYKÜSAD), Ayvalık Art Association (ASD), Ayvalık Culture and Art Foundation (AKSV), Ayvalık Art Culture and Education Foundation (ASKEV), Ayvada Art Center Association (AYSAM), Olive Kernels Association, Support Design Academy – Art and Education Support Association, Ayvalık One Sea Two Columns Arm in Arm "Dances and Songs of the Same Seas." Culture and Art Association, Ayvalık Ayazma Association, Ayvalık Art and Handicrafts Association (ASED), Anatolian Arts Kadir Ünlü Music Association (ASKÜD), Ayvalık Art Community Association (AYSAT), Ayvalık Mesut Duran Music Association, Ayvalık Music Association, Ayvalık History Research Art Education Association, Gönül Tuna Music, Culture and Art Association, Altınova Culture Art Tourism Promotion and Development Association, Ayvalık City Studies Association, Ayvalık Gastronomy and Cooking Association etc.*

***Museum and Gallery:** *Atelier Art Center-Galeri Su, Artura Gallery (Xylography Museum), Atelier Baykuş, Barkhan Museum/Gallery, Galerİda, Kapkarga Art Gallery, Karagöz Art Gallery, Kydonies Art Gallery (Ali Ege Art Gallery), Küçükköy City Museum and Art Gallery, Olgay Art House and Gallery, Orhan Peker Art Gallery, Şevket Koca Art Gallery & Studio*

***Artists' Workshops, Art Houses and Artistic Activities:** *Ahmet Yorulmaz House, Adra Academy-Art Workshop, Atelier Adatepe, Atelier Ayvada, Atelier Bovindo, Atelier Ida, Atelier Happy heArt,*

| | |
|--|--|
| | <i>Ayvalık, Boğaziçi Ayvalık Schools (art workshops in partnership with Olive Kernels Association and Boğaziçi University), Barbara Residency, Bedri Karayağmurlar Painting Workshop, Botanical Academy, Support Design Academy (Turgay Gönenç Cinema Library, art gallery, art workshop, art shop and cafe), Emine Boyner-Atelier Patika, Fikret Mualla House, Gate 27 Guest Artist Program (Artist Residency), Hakan Urul Workshop, Karagöz Art House, Santimetre Studio Martch Art Studio, Mutluköy Guesthouse, Mustafa Rüçhan House, Oktay Ekinci Cartoon House- Ayvalık Bookstore, Orhan Peker Workshop (Şevket Osman Karaca House), Özgü-Ekrem Aydar Painting Workshop, Yer Ayvalık Guest Artist Program, ZeliCunda and Çiğdem Celasin, Moka, Yasemin Atasel, Deep Art Ceramics Workshops.</i> |
| Traditional Handicrafts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local handicrafts Local souvenirs | <p><i>*Cretan Blanket (produced by KEDİ)</i></p> <p><i>*Atelier Latif, Atelier Patika, Bilart Art House, Stone Shop Art House, Miniature Atelier, Mehmet Karaaslan Çini Atelier, Artura Art Craft, Atelier Kuca, Kechevi etc.</i></p> <p><i>*Olive oil cosmetics and cleaning products and olive themed gift products</i></p> |
| Architectural Style and Diversity: | <i>*Historical houses in neoclassical style (Stone/Greek houses) and narrow streets</i> |
| Cultural Landscapes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural and urban cultural landscapes Observation terraces Panoramic viewpoints | <p><i>*Asar Hill/Çamoba village, Maden Hill/Büyük Maden Island</i></p> <p><i>*Heaven Hill, First Bullet Hill (Profitilya)</i></p> <p><i>*Lovers Hill, Cunda Fährisin Hill, Pınarboğazı Viewing Terrace</i></p> <p><i>*Devil's Table, Timarhane Island, Bunny Ears Hill, Çamlık Hill</i></p> <p><i>*Altınova Aktepe</i></p> |

Source: Compiled from various sources.

Evaluation of Cultural And Art Tourism In Ayvalik Through Swot Analysis

In this study, Ayvalık's cultural and artistic inventory (Table 1) is used as a basis to conduct a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) in terms of cultural and art tourism. The findings obtained from the analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. SWOT Analysis of Ayvalık in Terms of Culture and Art Tourism

| STRENGTHS | WEAKNESSES |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Possession of geographical attractions (suitable climate comfort, fertile soils, blue coasts and coves, ease of transportation and availability of alternative transport options),</i> <i>• The richness of natural, cultural, and archaeological values of the Ayvalık Islands (Hekatonnesoi) and the Ayvalık Islands Nature Park,</i> <i>• A high number of Blue Flag awards (21 Blue Flag beaches / total of 49 in Balıkesir, 1 Blue Flag marina, 3 Blue Flag yachts) (TÜRÇEV, 2024),</i> <i>• Presence of 5 urban and 13 archaeological protected areas, and 2,325 registered buildings (including monumental structures and civil architecture),</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Lack of destination management,</i> <i>• Inadequate infrastructure and service quality,</i> <i>• Insufficient promotion and marketing,</i> <i>• Festivals and events taking place only on a local scale,</i> <i>• Seasonality and overcrowding issues due to second homes and domestic tourism,</i> <i>• Infrastructure, roads, parking, water, waste, electricity, security, and environmental pollution problems caused by exceeding physical carrying capacity during summer months,</i> |

| | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 100 individuals involved in culture, including 122 literary figures; 118 visual/plastic artists; 80 performing artists (theatre, dance, music, cinema); and 20 applied arts practitioners, • Over 40 artist workshops (including home-based studios), 13 art museums/galleries and houses, and 18 culture and arts centers, • Progress toward becoming an “Art Destination”, • Presence of olive culture, which is also the most important livelihood source, • Cultural influences from Lesbos (Midilli), Crete, and the Balkans, • Rich variety of local products leading to a diverse cuisine (mezes featuring seafood, herbs, cheese, olives, and olive oil), • Existence of 60 agricultural enterprises/farms, • Local markets (most famous being Ayvalık Thursday Market), • Organization of more than 30 festivals, celebrations, and events in various fields, • The district attracting the most tourists in the province (According to 2022 accommodation data compared to Edremit Bay and the entire Balıkesir region, Ayvalık was the most visited district with 370,429 tourists) (Çelik-Uğuz & Karakaş, 2023: 191), • Availability of 424 accommodation facilities (with a total of 21,253 beds): (8 facilities with Investment Certificate / 170 beds, 26 facilities with Tourism Operation Certificate / 3,452 beds, 378 facilities with Municipal Certificate / 14,637 beds, and 12 public-private campsites with Municipal Certificate / 2,994 beds) (Çelik-Uğuz & Karakaş, 2023: 190), • Presence of 20 A-group and 1 C-group travel agencies, • Existence of 20 camping and caravan areas (Çelik-Uğuz & Karakaş, 2021: 1641–1642), • 57 daily excursion boats with Tourism Operation Certificate (with a total capacity of 4,122 people), • Having 60 diving spots and year-round diving opportunities, making it a major attraction center, • Presence of 4 diving schools, • No significant safety or security concerns for domestic and international visitors. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of representation and ineffective operation of tourism associations established through public-private partnerships, • Very slow progress in both the registration of cultural assets and the restoration of registered buildings to give them a new identity, • Lack of Eco-Agro and Eco-Art tourism; only 7 agricultural enterprises have ties to art and tourism, • Inability to implement a holistic tourism approach that combines nature, culture, art, and education-based tourism types, • Budget shortages in local governments for transforming idle architectural structures into art institutions, • Low number of products with registered geographical indication, • Existence of approximately 41,000 second homes, • Being a destination predominantly preferred by domestic tourists (Out of the total 370,429 tourists who visited Ayvalık in 2022, 49,642 were foreign nationals, and 195,487 were domestic visitors) (Çelik-Uğuz & Karakaş, 2023: 191), • Low occupancy rates of facilities (Between 2010–2022, the average occupancy rate of accommodation facilities with a Tourism Operation Certificate in Ayvalık was 43.32%. This rate was 39.07% in the Edremit Gulf and 37.28% in Balıkesir. For facilities with a Municipal Certificate, the occupancy rate was 28.94% in Ayvalık, 30.81% in Edremit Gulf, and 31.86% in Balıkesir) (Çelik-Uğuz & Karakaş, 2023: 193), • Short average length of stay (In 2022, the average stay in both Tourism Operation Certified and Municipal Certified facilities was 2.3 nights) (Çelik-Uğuz & Karakaş, 2023: 192). |
| OPPORTUNITIES | THREATS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having a strong image in the Northern Aegean region, • Increasing interest in cultural tourism, particularly art tourism, • Ayvalık’s potential to lead the process of becoming an “Art Corridor” within the Edremit Gulf, • The adaptability of the new 3S tourism trend that emerged after the COVID-19 pandemic—slow, small, smart—to cultural and art tourism, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing competition in Northern Aegean tourism, • Infrastructure deficiencies compared to some national and regional destinations, • Cultural assets not being addressed within a comprehensive project framework (in terms of permits, financing, and administrative approvals), • Time delays in restoration projects due to prolonged formalities and/or overly detailed reviews by administrative units, and delayed issuance of permits and construction licenses, |

| | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural heritage elements and artistic events offering alternative experiences for innovative tourists, • Possibility of conducting cultural tourism and its subtypes in all four seasons, • Local community's belief in Ayvalık's development through culture and art, and a high level of awareness in cultural tourism, • Active involvement and efforts of central and local governments, educational institutions, and NGOs in the fields of culture, art, and tourism, • The contribution of tourism—especially cultural tourism—to the district's socio-cultural and economic development, • Ayvalık ranking first among Balıkesir districts in terms of destination brand personality based on Wikipedia content (Özgürel, Kesgin & Avcıkurt), • Membership in the Union of Historical Towns (Tarihi Kentler Birliği), • Inclusion of the "Ayvalık Industrial Landscape" on the UNESCO World Heritage Tentative List in 2017, • Presence of the Ida-Madra Geopark as part of the ongoing UNESCO process, • Availability of research, studies, and projects in the fields of culture and tourism, • Possession of a rich and distinctive exchange-based (mübadil) culinary heritage, • Presence of natural conservation and protected areas, • Restoration of old buildings such as historical houses, soap factories, and olive oil mills to be repurposed as art studios, boutique hotels, restaurants, cafes, and souvenir shops. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Degradation of architectural texture and/or cultural landscape, • Emergence of new issues as a result of exceeding physical, social, economic, and ecological carrying capacities, • Licensing, rent, and workplace-related challenges faced by small-scale culture, art, and tourism businesses, • Global uncertainties and crises in health, climate, economy, and politics, • Local residents not adequately benefiting from the social and cultural environment provided by tourism or from tourism-generated income, • Lack of reorganization by local governments in terms of service delivery for historical settlements (old city/old town), such as street improvements, nostalgic lighting, or smaller fire and garbage trucks, • Creation of an unplanned and temporary destination image through overly popular tourism projects, • Failure to restore privately owned, registered historical buildings in old settlements in accordance with their original form, along with the spread of nepotism, • Some registered historical buildings in old settlements—such as churches, inns, baths, and buildings with significant historical narratives—still remaining unrestored. |
|--|---|

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Ayvalık possesses significant socio-economic potential due to its demographic structure, agricultural strength, historical and cultural fabric, architectural diversity, artistic identity, and tourism appeal. With its archaeological findings, religious and civil architectural monuments, and commercial and industrial structures, Ayvalık is a prominent cultural heritage site encompassing both ancient and recent periods. The district stands out with its industrial buildings such as olive oil factories, soap houses, oil presses, and commercial warehouses—structures related to olive cultivation and production, a key local trade. The presence of olive processing plants/factories, lighthouses, windmills, agricultural terraces, salt pans, and quarries contribute to Ayvalık's industrial heritage attractions.

Recognized for its cultural and artistic profile, Ayvalık is a strong candidate to become the "cultural capital" and an "art destination" of the region. As a unique, original, and emerging art destination, it serves as an alternative tourism hub and a center of attraction for both artists and tourists. The goal should be to transform this growing interest into tourism activity by offering tourists distinctive and memorable experiences through art, and to reinforce the destination image of Ayvalık through the sharing and storytelling of these experiences.

To achieve these goals, the following actionable and sustainable recommendations are proposed:

- Ayvalık should make greater use of the power of culture and art, which form the core of its urban identity.
- The future vision of Ayvalık—particularly in tourism—must be rooted in art.
- Tourism in Ayvalık should rapidly evolve under the scope of cultural tourism, with a particular focus on art tourism and creative tourism. A corresponding tourism strategy should be developed.
- Art routes should be designed in collaboration with travel agencies and tour guides, and art tours should be organized to attract more "art tourists."
- Ayvalık should expand its artistic activities to become the cultural and artistic hub—if not the "art capital"—of the Northern Aegean, attracting both domestic and international tourists for this purpose.
- Idle architectural monuments should be transformed into new and functional spaces such as museums, galleries, theaters, cabarets, symphony or opera houses, and tourism-related businesses. These venues can then be used for cultural and artistic purposes, such as painting and sculpture exhibitions.
- Local partnerships, stakeholder collaborations, and community participation must be strengthened in the field of culture and the arts, in line with sustainable development goals.
- The potential benefits of cultural and art tourism—such as increasing visitor numbers, length of stay, tourist spending, and ensuring fair income distribution—should be communicated to local residents through an action plan.

- A “Destination Management Organization” (DMO) should be established in Ayvalık with the aim of developing and promoting the image of “Ayvalık: The Art Destination,” serving as a model for other local governments.

Ensuring sustainable tourism development in destinations like Ayvalık is the fundamental responsibility of local tourism stakeholders and especially destination management authorities. In other words, strategic planning and implementation should be carried out by these management organizations. For Ayvalık, there is an urgent need for a destination management body capable of making and executing strategic decisions regarding regional tourism planning, marketing, and branding. Such organizations operate within a strategic framework to assess and manage the region’s carrying capacities—economic, social, ecological, and beyond. For tourism in Ayvalık to be sustainable, the establishment of a DMO and the creation of a strategic tourism plan are essential. The primary mission of this management body should be to prioritize and implement a "Growing with Art" project in collaboration with local stakeholders.

REFERENCES

-
- ADRA (2024). Adramytteion Antik Kenti ve Egemenlik Alan, Edremit Körfezi Güney Sahası Arkeolojik Yüzey Araştırmaları Arşivi, Kültür Envanteri Listesi 2024.
- Akın, B. (2015). Ayvalık Evleri’nin Cephe Karakterinin Oluşumuna Etki Eden Faktörlerin Değerlendirilmesi, Sanat Tarihi Dergisi XXIV (2): 121-138.
- BKVKBK, (2022). Balıkesir Kültür Varlıklarını Koruma Bölge Kurulu Müdürlüğü, Taşınmaz Kültür Varlıkları ve Sit Alanları Envanter Listesi, 2022, <https://korumakurullari.ktb.gov.tr/Eklenti/102741,balikesir-envanterpdf.pdf?0>
- Bonet, L. (2003). Cultural Tourism, In: Towse, R. (ed), A Handbook of Cultural Economics, Cheltenham-UK-Edward Elga Publishing Inc., pp.187-193.
- Cheirchanteri, G. (2019). Industrial Cultural Heritage as an Alternative Tourism Model: Case study of the Wider Lavreotiki area inSoutheastern Attica WMCAUS 2019, IOP Publishing Series: Materials Science and Engineering, 1-9.
- Çelik-Uğuz, S. (2020). Ayvalık an as Art Route for Tourism Guides within the Frame of Art Tourism, Cases on Tour Guide Practices for Alternative Tourism, Eds. Gulsun Yıldırım, Ozlem Ozbek, Ceyhun Çağlar Kılınç and Abdullah Tarınc, June 2020, Chapter 13, pp. 240-256, IGI GLOBAL, USA: Hershey PA, 2020, ISBN13: 9781799837251.

- Çelik-Uğuz, S., Karakaş, M. (2021). Alternatif Turizm Türü Olarak Kamp ve Karavan Turizmi: Edremit Körfezi'nde Bir Değerlendirme, 21. Ulusal Turizm Kongresi (UTK20) ve 5. Uluslararası Turizm Kongresi, 15-17 Ekim 2021, (Online sunum), İç Turizm konulu Tam Metin Bildiri Kitabı, Aralık 2021, ss. 1636-1648, ISBN: 978-605-254-505-8.
- Çelik-Uğuz, S. ve Karakaş, M. (2023). Ayvalık Turizminin Arz ve Talep Boyutu İle İncelenmesi, FAREAST 1st International Conference On Social Sciences, July 2-6, 2023, Hanoi, Vietnam, Conference Book, 30.07.2023, ss. 183-196, Academy Global Publishing House, ISBN: 978-625-6830-03-5.
- Efe, R., Soykan, A., Cürebal, İ., Sönmez, S. (2013). Edremit Yöresi Yağhaneleri: Geçmişten Günümüze Zeytin, Zeytinyağı ve Sabun Sanayii, Ana Gıda Yayınevi.
- Efe, R., Soykan, A., Cürebal, İ. Ve Sönmez, S. (2016). Balıkesir'deki Yöresel ve Geleneksel Ürünler Coğrafi Bir Yaklaşım. Balıkesir 2. Kent Sempozyumu, 20-22 Kasım 2015, Balıkesir, Bildiriler Kitabı, ss. 129-154.
- Gökdeniz, A. (2019) Ayvalık Stratejik Turizm Planı (2019-2023) Ve Destinasyon Yönetim Örgütü Modeli, Detay Yayıncılık, Ankara, S.14.
- Gökdeniz A., (2017), "UNESCO Süreçleri ve Bir Başar Hikayesi "Ayvalık Endüstriyel Peyzaj" Başlığı İle Geçici Liste'de (Tentative List)", Uluslararası Sosyal ve Ekonomik Bilimler Dergisi (International Journal of Social and Economic Sciences), Doi: www.nobel.gen.tr, 7(1), 26-33.
- Hughes, H.L. (2002). Culture and tourism: A framework for further analysis. Managing Leisure, 7(3), 164-175.
- Özgen, H.M. (2022). Güncel Kültür Envanterinin Kamusal Planlama Süreçlerindeki Önemi: "Adramytteion (Ören) Ve Körfez Güney Sahası (Burhaniye-Gömeç-Ayvalık)" Örneği, Balıkesir Arkeoloji Buluşmaları Sempozyumu Mysia Ve Çevre Kültürleri 2021, 7-9 Ekim 2021 Balıkesir, Tam Metin Bildiriler Kitabı, Ege Yayınları, Kasım 2022 ss. 17-44.
- Özgürel, D., Kesgin, M., & Avcıkurt, C. (2022). Bir destinasyon olarak Balıkesir ilinin marka kişiliği: Vikipedi içeriklerinin analizi [Brand personality of Balıkesir province as a destination: Analysis of Wikipedia contents]. In L. Altınay, O. M. Karatepe, & M. Tuna (Eds.), *Daha iyi bir dünya için turizm* (Vol 2, pp. 1-13). USF M3 Publishing. <https://www.doi.org/10.5038/9781955833103>

- Prentice, R.C. (1989a). Visitors to Heritage Sites: A Market Segmentation by Visitor Characteristics. In: D. T. Herbert, R. C. Prentice, and C. J. Thomas, eds. *Heritage Sites: Strategies for Marketing and Development*. Aldershot, UK: Avebury, pp. 1–61.
- Prentice, R.C. (1989b). Pricing Policy at Heritage Sites: How Much Should Visitors Pay? In: D. T. Herbert, R. C. Prentice, and C. J. Thomas, eds. *Heritage Sites: Strategies for Marketing and Development*. Aldershot, UK: Avebury, pp. 231-271.
- Richards, G. (Ed.). (1996). *Cultural Tourism in Europe*. Wallingford: CAB International.
- Richards, G. (2001), *Cultural Attractions and European Tourism*, Wallingford Oxon, UK: CAB International Publishing.
- Richards, G. (2007), Global Trends in Cultural Tourism, In: Richards G. (ed), *Cultural Tourism: Global and Local Perspectives*, Binghamton, NY: Haworth Hospitality Press, 1-24.
- Richards, G. (2011) Cultural tourism trends in Europe: a context for the development of Cultural Routes. In: Khovanova-Rubicondo, K. (ed.) *Impact of European Cultural Routes on SMEs' innovation and competitiveness*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing, pp. 21-39.
- Silberberg T. (1995). Cultural tourism and business opportunities for museums and heritage sites. *Tourism Management* **16** (5): 361– 365.
- Smith, M.K. (2003). *Issues in cultural tourism studies*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Stebbins, R (1996). 'Cultural Tourism as Serious Leisure' In *Annals of Tourism Research* 23: 948-950.
- Swarbrooke, J. (1999). *Sustainable Tourism Management*, Wallingford: CABI Publishing.
- URL: Ayvalık Belediyesi, <https://ayvalik.bel.tr> (Accessed: 15.03.2025).
- URL: Ayvalık Kaymakamlığı, <https://ayvalik.gov.tr> (Accessed: 15.03.2025).
- URL: Ayvalık'tan Yolu Geçenler, <https://yoluayvaliktangeccenler.tr.gg/> (Accessed: 15.03.2025).
- URL: BKVKBK, (2022). Balıkesir Kültür Varlıklarını Koruma Bölge Kurulu Müdürlüğü, Taşınmaz Kültür Varlıkları ve Sit Alanları Envanter Listesi, 2022, <https://korumakurullari.ktb.gov.tr/Eklenti/102741,balikesir-envanterpdf.pdf?0> (Accessed: 15.03.2025).
- URL: Hezarfen, Ayvalık'ın dünü ve yarını hakkında bir site, <https://kaankoksal.blogspot.com/> (Accessed: 15.03.2025).
- URL: Türk Patent ve Marka Kurumu (2024), Coğrafi İşaret ve Geleneksel Ürün Listesi, Balıkesir, <https://ci.turkpatent.gov.tr/veri-tabani> (Accessed: 15.03.2025).

URL: Türkiye Çevre Eğitim Vakfı (TÜRÇEV) (2024). Yıllara Göre Mavi Bayrak Sayıları, https://www.turcev.org.tr/v2/icerikDetay.aspx?icerik_id=121, (Accessed: 15.03.2025).

DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT

The author(s) declare that they have no conflicts of interest.