

## PRESS RELEASE

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF SKÅL INTERNATIONAL MEET IN TURKEY.

The Executive Committee of Skål International met recently in Turkey. It is normal for the current President of Skål to host the first meeting in his or her own country. The current President of Skål International invited the Executive Committee to Turkey on 03-10 February where they were hosted in various locations in Turkey.



On arrival in Istanbul the group were met by President Hulya Aslantas and her husband Cem, of Universal Travel, Istanbul who provided complimentary transfers and a luxury coach to take the Executive Committee to Ankara and Cappadocia.

The Executive Committee were hosted in Istanbul at the executive floors of Hilton Istanbul and The Marmara hotels. A welcome reception and dinner was held at the rooftop restaurant of La Maison hosted by the General Manager and Skålleague Deniz Anapa, the newly elected Senior Vice President of Skål International Turkey. The newly opened Topaz Restaurant was the venue of the second evening with an exquisite menu and offering splendid views of the Bosphorus. The Executive Committee on both evenings were accompanied by the President of Skål International Istanbul, Kemal Özyigit, members of his Board and the President of Skål International Turkey, Salih Çene.

The tour began in Istanbul where some members were able to experience a typical Turkish Hamam, visit the famous Topkapi Palace, the Grand Bazaar and the Dolmabache Palace where they were received by the Director, Mr. Taner Kisa and had a private tour of the Palace.

The Executive Committee also visited the famous Baklava factory of Karaköy Güllüoğlu and was personally greeted by the Managing Director, Mr. Nadir Güllü, who took the group on a tour of the factory and invited them to sample the world famous desert after a "baklava show" sharing the secrets of the fine bakery.





The Executive Committee attended a Press Conference at the Dedeman Hotel, where President Aslantas launched her banner for the year and shared some of her projects for Presidential year and introduced the Executive Committee members. Each Director had the opportunity to comment on recent developments in world tourism and took questions from the floor. The Press Conference was attended by over 20 journalists. The guests participated in the monthly luncheon of Skål International Istanbul which was attended by over 200 guests and presided over by the President of Skål International Istanbul and Kemal Ozyigit next to the President hosting lunch at Dedeman.



The Executive Committee then left by coach from Istanbul for the four and a half hour drive to Ankara. On arrival in Ankara the group was met by the President of Skål International Ankara, Savas Colakoglu and members of the Club. The Executive Committee were hosted at the beautiful Bilkent Hotel. <http://www.bilkentotel.com.tr/eng/default.asp>



While in Ankara the Executive Committee paid an official visit to the Mausoleum of Kemal Mustafa Ataturk, founder of the Republic of Turkey. A wreath was laid and the official guest book was signed by the President of Skål International Hulya Aslantas on behalf of Skål International. A visit to the fascinating museum followed.



The Executive Committee were then guests of Skål International Ankara at the monthly luncheon of the Club at the Cengelhan Restaurant which was presided over by the President of Skål International Ankara, Savas Colakoglu and which was attended by 100 guests.



Following the luncheon a private visit was arranged to the Anatolian Civilisations Museum, one of the world's most famous and rich museums on prehistoric findings. The Executive Committee paid a courtesy visit to the Minister of Culture and Tourism, Mr. Ertugrul Gunay, to thank him for his support of the 75<sup>TH</sup> Anniversary Gala Dinner in Paris and spent more than half an hour, exchanging ideas on tourism with the Minister. The

Minister presented the Executive Committee with a recently prepared photographic history of Turkey. President Hulya Aslantas presented her presidential give and a banner to the Minister.

The group had a chance to also listen to a classical music concert at the Bilkent Concert Hall the same evening.



Orjhan Hallik, Skálleague and Manager of Bilken Hotel, receiving the Presidential Gift from Hulya Aslantas.

The Executive Committee meeting was held on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> February at the Bilkent Hotel. The Annual General Meeting of Skál International Turkey was also held at the Bilkent Hotel on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2009 to coincide with the Executive Committee meeting. The Executive Committee then joined members of Skál from all over Turkey for the Gala Dinner at the Bilkent Hotel.



On Sunday evening the group left by Coach for the four hour drive to Cappadocia where they were met on arrival by the President of Skál International Cappadocia, Murat Özgüç of Travelatelier. The Group were hosted at the luxurious Cappadocia Cave Resort. The Executive Committee were hosted to dinner by the Assistant General Manager and newly approved Skál member, Didem Bulgurlu. [www.ccr-hotels.com](http://www.ccr-hotels.com)



A hot-air balloon ride was planned for early morning the next day (Monday) but weather conditions prevented this, much to the disappointment of the Executive

Committee. Later during the morning the Executive Committee paid a courtesy call on the Governor of Nevshier which is the principle town in the Cappadocia area. The Governor presented the Executive Committee with a locally produced photographic book on the Area. The Group were then taken on a guided tour of the underground city of Kaymakli, to the Goreme Valley through the lunar landscapes of Cappadocia, lunch at the Museum Restaurant and a visit to the Turasan winery was followed by a wine tasting of the locally produced quality wines.



President Skål International Hulya Aslantas presenting her Presidential Gift to Didem Bulgurlu and Murat Ozguc, President Skål International Kapadokya.

The Executive Committee flew from Kayseri to Istanbul for their onward connections. For half of the participants who had to overnight before their connection, Feza Solaklar, member of the Board of Skål Istanbul and Sales and Marketing Director of Accor Hotels hosted them at Novotel for their final overnight.

Commenting on the weeklong stay in Turkey the members of the Executive Committee said they were very impressed by the tourism facilities which they had seen and they were particularly impressed with the level of generosity which they had experienced from everyone they had met. The Executive Committee thanked Hulya and Cem Aslantas especially for making the trip possible and all those who had contributed in any way to the success of the trip.

With our appreciation to all those Skålleagues who hosted the Skål Executive Committee in Turkey.

