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NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS *EVERY* HUNTER SHOULD MAKE

BOAR, GLORIOUS BOAR

Forget about kebabs, baklava and the Trojan horse; Tony Jackson reveals the incredible hunting opportunities that the vast, beautiful country of Turkey presents

Turkey, a vast country of nearly 800,000km², is one of just a handful of countries that enjoy transcontinental status, with the extreme west (including most of the city of Istanbul) being in Europe, while over 95% of the country is actually positioned in western Asia.

Largely mountainous, Turkey enjoys extensive natural forests of pine, oak and spruce, with few main roads or railways, resulting in a magnificent landscape largely devoid of human presence. Although Turkey has a population of 80 million, the vast majority live in cities and towns and, as a result, the sparse rural human presence provides wild boar and bezoar ibex with a perfect habitat in which to flourish. All the land is owned by the state and there are only seven licensed professional hunters in the country.

Turkish wild boar are considerably larger than those found in Europe, and a keiler (male) can weigh over 300kg, while tusks can range from 20cm to 26cm and occasionally up to 30cm. In addition, as Turkey is a Muslim country and no domestic pigs are kept, the wild boar blood remains

unpolluted by cross-breeding, while hunting pressure remains low. However, the massive size of the wild boar, their large numbers and fine trophy tusks ensure that knowledgeable hunters from outside the country who seek the finest sport make Turkey their number one destination.

TROFE HUNTING SAFARIS

Since 2002, this well-established and respected company has provided outstanding sport and services for clients seeking sport with wild boar and ibex, and is represented in the UK by Jeremy Boyd, a well-known sportsman who has hunted extensively around the world and even finds time to operate two driven shoots in Devon.

In the southern part of Turkey, mountainous rugged areas are home to ibex and huge wild boar, but as Jeremy points out, the country here is too steep to drive wild boar and so all hunting takes place at night. However, there are vast areas available throughout Turkey for stalking and, of course, driven wild boar.

RIGHT: A successful night hunt with fellow hunters Bruno and Jeff

BELOW: The landscape of northern Turkey is easier to drive the boar in as the south is very mountainous



“NIGHT HUNTS COVER APPROXIMATELY 2-3KM AND CAREFUL, SILENT STALKING IS ESSENTIAL”





LEFT: Another big sow taken on a driven hunt

The prime region for driven wild boar is in the north of the country, in the Black Sea area. Trofe Hunting Safaris have sole hunting rights on an outstanding half a million acre reserve called Corum (pronounced 'Chor-um'). Three hours' drive north-east of the capital Ankara, it is Jeremy's favourite region for driven wild boar although, as he points out, the company also hunts in the west and south of the country and are always looking at new areas.

DRIVEN WILD BOAR

Turkish legislation forbids the breeding of animals specifically for hunting and, in addition, no hunting is allowed in fenced areas or National Parks. As a result, wild boar around here are just that: wild!

Trofe Hunting Safaris ensures that any area which is driven will not have been used for hunting for at least a year

CONTACT

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BELOW: Modern hotel accommodation is used while in Corum

in order to be certain that there are sufficient animals of high quality available. As a result, there is a 25% chance of shooting a trophy boar with tusks of over 25cm and, on average, a party of 10-12 hunters will shoot between 30 and 45 wild boar over three days.

Five days before the start of a hunt, guides check the region for wild boar activity. A hunting party can be assured that the 12-20 beaters are experienced and will employ 10-16 well-trained hounds to drive the area. For the hunting party, the day starts with an early breakfast, a drive to the hunting ground, followed by the day's sport and then a return to the hotel for dinner. In the morning, there will be two drives and then, after a barbeque lunch, a further drive in the afternoon.

There are no high seats, and Rifles will be 300-400m apart, with each knowing exactly where his neighbours are standing. In addition, every hunter will be wearing a blaze orange vest. Shots may be from 20m to 250m and there is no limit on the number of boar that can be shot.

As the hunting regions are extensive, a party of 10 to 12 hunters is required to cover the area and the beaters will be bringing in two to three thousand acres at a time. Every detail of the hunt and how the Rifles must observe maximum safety are made clear to the party before hunting takes place. Before the hunt gets underway, the Rifles draw pegs and are then placed on their stands. They do not have a guide with them, but will be shown where their neighbouring Rifles are standing.

The best time for driven shooting is September until the beginning of February, when the season closes. The weather is normally dry, but will be cool and, as hunters may be standing for a couple of hours each drive, they need to wear base layers that can be added or quickly removed. Lightweight waterproofs are also recommended.





"HUNTING REGIONS ARE EXTENSIVE AND BEATERS WILL BE BRINGING IN TWO TO THREE THOUSAND ACRES AT A TIME"

NIGHT STALKING

The company owns hunting grounds on the mountainous Mediterranean coast, and here guests can not only stalk wild boar at night, but also stay in luxury coastal accommodation or even on yachts! Hunting areas are baited and widely distributed to avoid stress, and before a night hunt takes place a guest is always taken for a test shoot. The hunt is not too tiring and each guest hunter is allotted a 4WD, driver and guide. The approach to a bait point is made by vehicle, with the final approach made walking with the guide.

Night hunts cover approximately 2-3km on flat ground and five to 15 bait points will be visited. At least three wild boar will be seen, and careful, silent stalking is essential. When a suitable boar is located, the guide will set up a tripod for the hunter. A shot animal will be collected and prepared for a photo shoot next day. These hunts are available throughout the year.

SNOW STALKING

Fit hunters who would like to try something different will find snow stalking testing! The hunt takes place during the day on the vast rangelands of eastern Anatolia. The climate is

ABOVE: Jeremy with a beautiful bezoar ibex in southern Turkey

severe and animal food sparse, so wild boar actively forage during the day and can be seen from a long way off. A hunter may walk up to 6km in a day in mountainous terrain. This is hard, tough hunting, but the reward, a massive boar, can prove incredibly exciting! Trofe Hunting Safaris is the only company organising these hunts. However, there is a limited number available.



RIGHT: Trofe Hunting Safaris guarantee a certain number of boar seen each outing



ABOVE: A happy client with his first wild driven boar

FLIGHTS

For driven shooting, Jeremy Boyd accompanies parties from Heathrow for the three-hour flight by Turkish Airlines to Istanbul, and then a 50-minute flight to Ankara, the capital of Turkey. There is then a three-hour drive by mini-bus to the hotel where the party is staying. The Corum hunting ground is vast and the hunting regions are between 20 minutes and an hour and a half's drive from the hotel. The flight cost is £250-£300.

PARTY NUMBERS

There are in the region of eight to 12 parties from the UK each year for three to four days' hunting, depending on the type of hunting chosen, and each party will comprise 10 to a dozen hunters.

BELOW: Trophy boar range from 20-26cm, but do occasionally hit 30cm

ACCOMMODATION

Jeremy uses the superb four-star Hotel Anitta, in Corum, which is reasonably close to the hunting areas. Guests normally land at Ankara mid to late afternoon and arrive at the hotel by seven or eight o'clock in the evening. Breakfast is at 6.30, with a departure for the hunting ground at 7am.

HUNT COSTS

A three-day driven hunt for wild boar is £1,950. The price includes all hunting licences and the hotel. A four-day driven hunt is £2,590. Rifle hire is £35 a day, and gratuities £30-£40 a day. Trophy preparation is £40, and there is a charge of £150 for a tusk trophy over 20cm.

RIFLES

Hunters may bring their own rifles and temporary importation licences are organised by Jeremy Boyd. Turkish Airlines co-operate fully with any hunters who wish to take their own rifles.

Recommended calibres are the .270 or .300 range using 150-180gr bullets. However, suitable rifles (Blaser and Sauer with good 'scopes) can be hired in Turkey at a cost of £35 a day, including ammunition.

WEATHER

The weather is normally dry, but temperatures can be cool with a wind chill in the mountains. Snow is possible during the winter months in the north of the country, but during the summer it is hot and wild boar have very little hair!

CLOTHING

Jeremy Boyd recommends Kuiu clothing, which is specifically designed and ideal for mountain hunting. The company has a UK outlet and full details can be found on their website. [G3](#)

